

Framing Conscientious Objection: How Israeli Newspapers with Different Ideological Orientations Cover Rightist and Leftist Conscientious Objection in Israel*

Hila Lowenstein
Bar Ilan University, Israel

Introduction

“If you think of the long and gloomy history of mankind, you will find more hideous crimes have been committed in the name of obedience than have ever been committed in the name of rebellion.”
C. P. Snow

The subject of obedience (or disobedience) to the law in democratic regimes has been under debate since the dawn of mankind and it reappears whenever there seems to be a conflict between the operation of the laws of democratic rule and moral principles. Shlomo Avineri (1998) focuses this point and claims that in a democratic regime the question of obedience stems from internal tension between two value systems: on the one hand, democratic decisions of the majority, and on the other hand individual ethics. These individual ethics further complicate the issue of disobedience, as from the liberal viewpoint the need to specify the moral authority to rebel against the regime is obvious when the regime is non-democratic – the legitimacy of this regime is not acknowledged by the individual and therefore there is no obligation to obey its rules (1998: 168), however when the regime is democratic and provides each citizen with the right and the power to take part in politics and influence the country’s matters – who determines which relationship is ethical and worthy of obedience and which is not?

Israeli society conducts a constant debate on the issue of conscientious objection to military service. This debate includes the definition, status, properties, and appropriate treatment of this issue. Avi Sagi (2005) claims that among many parts of Israeli society there is an absolute linkage between conscience and ethics, and therefore the conscientious objector is perceived as operating from an ethical

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basis. This perception is common among both rightist and leftist elements, and therefore the bone of contention concerns the actual ethical arguments (2005: 70).

The issue of conscientious objection in Israel has aroused many controversies in the past few years: On the left side of the political map conscientious objection initially started with individuals and isolated groups, spreading to more extensive groupings that included figures perceived as the “spearhead” of Israeli society and of the military, while on the right it has appeared almost for the first time (Elgazi 2003; Ha’Ezra 1999), both in overt Rabbinical calls to refuse to evacuate settlements during the disengagement campaign and in the acts of soldiers who obeyed these calls. The controversial ethical claims cited by Sagi (2005) were manifested extensively following the outbreak of these acts of objection. The main dispute concerned the issue of categorizing the various acts of objection: Are both types of objection to be considered conscientious objection (aimed at defending the integrity of the individual – and therefore perceived as a more legitimate act), are both to be considered civil disobedience (aimed at bringing about political change and therefore worthy of different treatment), or should each case be examined separately?

A derivative of this question is whether the two types of conscientious objection are symmetrical and thus justification of one necessarily means justification of the other (and requires the same attitude towards its implementers)? The researchers are disagreed. Chaim Gans (2004) believes that they are not symmetrical. He thinks that soldiers must be permitted to refuse to serve in the territories (based on end result criteria – there are enough soldiers to fulfill this duty and the objecting soldiers can be given other roles, so that the value of equality will be only minimally impaired), however soldiers should not be permitted to refuse to evacuate settlements, not due to ideological discrimination, rather due to the different result of their actions: “Permitting settlers to refuse to evacuate settlements after Israel has committed itself in a peace agreement to evacuate settlements means certain and clear damage to the important values of respecting international agreements and achieving peace” (2004 20). Leon Shelef (1989), in contrast, believes that these extremes of the political continuum are symmetrical: “The same rules controlling the concept of consideration for soldiers who wish to avoid military service in the territories [...] can be applied in the same manner to soldiers [...] who wish to be exempted from the task of evacuating the territories [...]” (1989: 143). According to Shelef, this symmetry has implications both for military policy and for legal issues (1989: 144). However it is interesting to examine the issue not only in the framework of the theoretical dispute rather within another, more influential realm – the media.

This subject is important because the significance of mass media exceeds the limited factual reporting of events (Bloch Elkouf 2003). Over the years, the

media has become one of the most important power centers and a stage for struggles between political, financial, and other interests (Barzilay 1996). This force is augmented since according to various studies (Gamson 1992; Iyengar 1991) the public's views are influenced by the way in which the media frames the subjects it discusses, particularly in cases in which they lack prior knowledge, as the frame serves as a type of prism, a moral mold through which reality is perceived (Caspi 2001).

Through which prism does Israeli press frame conscientious objectors who object to military service in the IDF for ideological reasons? What meaning does it give to facts that according to Gamson (1989) have no intrinsic meaning and their meaning stems "from being embedded in a frame or story line that organizes them and give them coherence, selecting certain ones to emphasize while ignoring others" (1989: 157)? These are the questions examined in this study which analyzes the manner in which two Israeli newspapers with different ideological orientations¹ framed highlighted cases of rightist and leftist conscientious objection in Israel in the years 2002-2005.

I use these cases of conscientious objection as test cases for examining the manners in which the printed press frames a subject that is compatible with or contradicts the ideology with which it is identified. I will analyze the various frames presented by the newspapers regarding the two different types of conscientious objection: objection to military service in the IDF by soldiers belonging to the political right and objection to military service in the IDF by soldiers belonging to the political left, and I will examine whether these frames reflect the ideology of the newspaper that uses them.

Therefore my research questions are as follows:

RQ1: Do differences exist between the level of approval/disapproval expressed in coverage of rightist conscientious objection and the level of approval/disapproval expressed in coverage of leftist conscientious objection *within* the same newspaper? I.e., is one type of objection framed in a more approving or disapproving manner compared with the other type of objection within the same newspaper? How (in which framing modes) is this expressed?

RQ2: Do differences exist between the level of approval/disapproval expressed in coverage of rightist and leftist conscientious objection *between* the two newspapers? I.e. is one type of objection framed in one newspaper in a more

¹ I base my words on the concept (common in the research literature as well – Ro'eh 1997) that the newspapers "Yediot Aharonot" (hereafter: "Yediot") and "Ha'aretz" manifest ideological differences, the orientation of "Ha'aretz" being politically leftist in comparison to "Yediot", which does not profess an ideological orientation.

approving or disapproving manner compared to the same type of objection in the other newspaper? How (in which framing modes) is this expressed?

Despite the many recent studies on the subject of framing (Bloch Elkon 2003), there is still an absence of a comprehensive and organized treatment creating a clear conceptual definition (Scheufele 1999). The present study contributes by attempting to combine framing modes indicated in various studies, sorting and demonstrating them according to clear categories, and maybe it will serve as a research tool for future studies. Conscientious objection is an interesting test case for revealing and analyzing frames used by newspapers, particularly since to date there has been no integration of the various framing modes in one cohesive model that would explain how they combine to influence creation of the frame. Examining the framing modes of two types of objection implemented by people from opposite sides of the political map enables more thorough illustration of possible uses of these framing techniques and exposure of a large number of frames that may be used by the printed press.

The two-fold comparison (linear – within the same newspaper between the different types of objection, and lateral – between the two newspapers regarding coverage of the same type of objection) affords a more comprehensive picture of the varied framing techniques used by newspapers, and more important – by exposing the frames created as a result of the use of these techniques, it will be possible to examine whether and how they reflect the different ideological orientations of the newspapers.

Literature Review

When constructing a picture, an important element is the picture frame. Framing rejects unnecessary details and directs the attention to the main subject of the picture. This is what we mean when we refer to frames in our context. The framing theory claims that the media tends to grant meaning to the events it reports beyond the explicit content of the text or picture. Each event is always reported within a frame that provides it with context and gives in meaning, although not always intentionally or consciously. In this context we distinguish between framing created by the media (media frames) and framing that serves media consumers by receiving and processing events (individual frames), where the latter is also dependent on the consumer's personal and cultural traits and not only on the manner in which the news is presented. In the present setting I will concentrate on media frames, although I would like to state that the types of frames are related, i.e. the manner in which news is framed influences the reality perception of media consumers and thus also their worldview (Scheufele 1999).

The psychological premise that forms the basis of framing claims that frames are a cognitive tool that helps make sense of complex information. This is a type of cognitive shortcut that helps ease the burden of information processing (Tversky and Kahnman 1981). According to Durham (1998) frames make the world more understandable and identifiable. Our knowledge of the world depends on the way in which we interpret the frames we receive. Entman (1991) claims that frames are an information processing scheme.

Frames indicate the elements that create the problem and the elements that are supposed to provide the solutions (Entman 1993). Framing forms a type of culturally familiar “package” (Gamson and Modigliani 1989) through which the public discourse is organized in a manner familiar to the public, and this “package” is automatically ascribed to existing schemes. These frames form an image of the worldview and determine the public climate, usually unconsciously. This contributes to a potentially strong influence on the public (Entman and Rojecki 1993), since the public relies on a symbolic reality that it receives from the media and which is constructed of selective interpretation.

According to Entman (1993) frames involve two concepts: selection and salience. Framing means selecting certain aspects of reality and making them more salient in manners such as definition or solution of the problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, etc. (1993: 22). McCombs, Shaw and weaver (1997), in their attempt to define framing, claim that framing is an expansion of the agenda-setting theory. They used the term second-level agenda-setting in order to describe the salience effect of media coverage characteristics on the public interpretation of these stories (1997: 102).

The connection between frames and the agenda theory is not coincidental (although many studies sought to emphasize the difference between the two, for example Popkin 1994, and Scheufele 1999) and it emphasizes the meaning of framing for the public. The manner in which information is framed influences the behavior used by the recipients, although this is not a universal effect (Entman 1993). In this context it must be stated that no definite and cohesive model of framing has been formed to date, and it is unclear whether this is a theory, model, paradigm, or worldview (D’angelo 2002). This is the basis of the dispute regarding inclusion of this theory under the umbrella of the agenda-setting school (which deals mainly with the question of what to think about, while framing deals with the ensuing question: how are meanings transferred, or how to think).

News frames are perceptual tools on which the media and individuals rely in order to transmit, interpret, and evaluate information (Semetko and Valkenburg 2000). Framing effects are judgment changes caused by changes in the definition of problem solving. According to Scheufele (1999) “frames serve as a bridge between extensive social domains and cultural domains and contribute to daily

comprehension of social interaction (1999: 1). According to Tuchman (1978) journalists are among the strongest social actors when referring to the construction of social reality by creating and recreating social meanings.

In this context, it is sometimes customary to distinguish between “open” and “closed” manners of presenting a news story. Ro’eh and Cohen (1992) state that the manner of coverage can be examined and the degree of openness or closure can be deduced according to three variables: (A) rhetoric of balance, (B) rhetoric of factualism, and (C) rhetoric of neutralism. The more balanced, factual and neutral the coverage, the more open it is considered. The less balanced, or more poetical, mythological and charged, the more closed it is. While the media consumer can read the open story in a number of manners (among other things in accordance with personal individual framing), a closed story has only one possible reading – that which is constructed by the journalist (1992, 468).

According to Gamson (1992), frames have maximal social power when they are formulated in terms of compelling action. In such cases, when the term is accepted, the use of a different term risks being perceived by the public as untrustworthy or not being understood at all. I.e., frames have an extended effect and their power is as great as that of language itself (1992, 50). Thus it is obvious that different social groups wish to frame new facts in such a manner that they will serve their interests. Politicians compete with other politicians and with journalists on the issue of news framing (Entman 1993).

Based on these conceptions, the media serves as a location in which different social groups, organizations and ideologies, struggle to define and construct a social reality (Lind and Salo 2002). These social and political elements require media with direct access to the public in order to transmit their message, however the framing power is the hands of the journalists and the media. How does this framing take place?

As stated, the research literature on framing has no cohesive model consisting of uniform categories concerning the operation techniques of framing (Scheufele 1999). An attempt to unify the framing techniques mentioned in the extensive research literature on the subject in a cohesive framework of analysis leads to three major framing mechanisms: rhetorical, formal, and quantitative. Each type includes a variety of framing techniques.

The rhetorical mechanism: The techniques included in this category are patterns through which the media organizes words or expressions in a manner that provides them with meaning. Ro’eh and Cohen (1992) refer to this as the theatricality versus the neutrality of language. These techniques include use of ideologically-charged metaphors, examples, sayings, descriptions, and expressions, and reference to myths. In addition, title content is considered a significant framing

element. Some studies have examined frames stemming from articles merely by examining their titles (Van Dijk 1991; Ro'eh and Nir 1998), based on the perception that they are the most important part for the reader who often deduces the meaning of the text only on this basis. Other means are the description of event consequences and pressing a causal theme on them. Gamson and Lasch (1983) expand the description of the manner in which this mechanism is operated, using the concept of "roots" (1983: 400). They claim that certain interpretive packages analyze the causal dynamics that emphasize a series of events in a characteristic way. Packages may differ regarding the location of the root, i.e. the emphasized point of causality. The journalist's original point of departure will channel the interpretation towards a certain causality. Aside from causality and presenting a certain order of events, the report often includes a framework consisting of an introduction and a conclusion, and this may have a great effect on its quality. Ro'eh and Nir (1991) indicate how the manner in which radio news reports people's statements may have an effect on the impression that the listener forms about the reliability of the speaker and the degree of identification aroused. Thus, for example, quotes will usually form a more reliable and stronger impression than indirect speech. The literary level and the use of idioms and literary expressions may also have an effect, while use of exceptionally low- or high-level language may form an absurd impression (1991, 468).

The formal mechanism: The techniques included in this category are use of certain title colors and sizes, and also selection of a certain type of picture. Similar to the journalistic text, photographs also undergo a process of screening and selection by the editors and sometimes the use of a certain photograph expresses the newspaper's view on the reported subject (Nir 1984). Dor (1991) shows how pictures of a confrontation can lead to the reader/viewer's identification with a certain side, according to the angle of photography. He shows how in many pictures of Palestinian demonstrators in confrontation with IDF soldiers featured in Israeli newspapers in the initial days following the outbreak of the al-Aksa Intifada, Israeli soldiers were photographed from behind, seemingly passive, while the "rioters" occupies most of the space, facing the camera and appearing to be attacking it – and the reader as well.

The quantitative mechanism: Naturally, giving a wider platform to a certain view increases the chance of presenting the various claims that support it and its influence on the public. The main technique which creates this mechanism is the allocation of time and space. For example, Libes and Bar-Nachum (1994) show how giving precedence to the IDF's version of the terror attack on Nitzanim in 1990 and pushing criticism of this version to the margins and far from prime time

contributed to creating a feeling of success, rather than one of failure, as they believe should have been created (1994: 402). There are other ways in which the scope and salience given to the various angles of an event affect its framing. For example, Dor (1991) shows how reports of Palestinian victims were pushed to the back pages of Israeli newspapers at the beginning of the Al-Aksa Intifada, while the Israeli victims were stressed – creating the impression that the Palestinians are the aggressors and the Israelis the victims.

Revealing these techniques demonstrates Gamson's (1989) claim concerning facts' lack of intrinsic meaning. Ro'ch and Feldman (1984), in their study of the rhetoric of numbers in the press, show how even the use of numbers – seemingly a symbol of tangibility and transparency – has a biased rhetorical structure. Analysis of texts according to the framing mechanisms detailed above enables us to discover how the texts make information more salient merely by their selection, repetition, and connection to meaningful cultural symbols. Thus, the roles of frames are very meaningful: Frames define problems in terms of familiar cultural values, diagnose the reasons for these problems, form moral judgments concerning their effects, propose solutions, and examine their plausibility and efficiency. This description would indicate that the media has almost unlimited power, while the public is described as passive and sustained only by these frames. For this reason it is necessary to add restrictions and to say that the power of frames in the media is indeed strong but not absolute: The public has power too (Entman 1993, 52). The effect of frames depends among other things upon the schemes that have previously been acquired by recipients and it is difficult to change these schemes (1993, 55). However there is no doubt that the media has an essential role in social life, if only due to the fact that “the media has direct access to the public in such a way that participants in social movements are at a disadvantage” (Lind and Silo 2002: 213).

The issue of conscientious objection is particularly relevant for such an examination as this is an ideological issue whose many aspects have for some time exceeded the philosophical domain and entered the public domain, where they are located at the center of a keen and controversial debate in which the media is taking a significant part. Analysis of the representation of such an ideological issue in the media enables us to more extensively reveal the manner in which printed press uses frames. Moreover, Israel – which experienced conscientious objection from its very inception (Elgazi 2003) – has seen recent expansion of the issue of the legitimacy of conscientious objection, emphasizing debate on its generalization potential² – particularly following the rise in the numbers of rightist objectors, who have now put this theoretical question to a practical test. For this reason,

² For a more extensive discussion of this issue see Avineri 1998; Gans 2004.

conscientious objection in Israel serves as an interesting test case enabling more extensive analysis of manners in which subjects are framed, due to its implementation by people from opposite sides of the political map.

As stated, the newspapers I am comparing have different ideological orientations. Therefore analysis of the manner in which they frame various cases of conscientious objection enables us to examine whether the newspapers' ideology is expressed in the manner in which they frame the cases of objection that are compatible with or contradictory to it. My premise is that although the newspapers prefer to emphasize their use of professional norms and although most of them refuse to admit that political ideology affects their presentation of the news (Ro'eh and Feldman 1984), such an effect is inevitable. All cultural media have a certain cultural foundation that defines the possible types of schemes for interpretation of various political events (Wolsfeld 1997). Therefore my research hypotheses are:

H1: In the "Ha'aretz" newspaper the framing of leftist conscientious objection will be more approving compared to the framing of rightist objection.

H2: In the "Yediot Aharonot" newspaper there will be an identical framing of rightist and leftist conscientious objection: framing expressing disapproval of this act.

H3: The "Ha'aretz" newspaper will frame leftist conscientious objection in a more approving manner compared to "Yediot Aharonot."

H4: The "Ha'aretz" newspaper will frame rightist conscientious objection in a more disapproving manner compared to "Yediot Aharonot."

The study strives to reveal the manners in which ideology is expressed in frames, however such examination would be more complete if we could add a newspaper professing a rightist ideology. Another limitation of the study is that there is a time difference between the cases of leftist objection studied (these cases took place during the years 2002-2003), compared with the cases of rightist objection (that took place in 2005, after implementation of the disengagement plan). It is possible that during these years the attitude towards conscientious objection in general changed, and this must be taken into consideration as another explanation of the differences between the frames. However, the time difference is not detrimental to the two main purposes of the research: exposure and analysis of the framing process (regarding this purpose the time difference may actually serve as an advantage as it enables us to examine whether there has been a change in certain framing techniques over the years), and examination of the manner in which ideological orientation is expressed in these frames.

Method

The research method that I have used in this study is content analysis of cases of leftist and rightist conscientious objection in the newspapers “Yediot Aharonot” and “Ha’aretz.” For each type of conscientious objection I analyzed the coverage techniques of four cases:

Leftist conscientious objection

1. *The Officers Letter*- On January 25 2002, a petition was published, signed by 50 combat reserve officers. In the petition the soldiers declared that they are unwilling to serve in the territories. The letter led to the establishment of the “Courage to Refuse” movement, today numbering 632 reserve soldiers. As a result of the letter, a number of officers were dismissed from their units and others were jailed for various lengths of time.

2. *The twelfth-graders’ letter*- The first twelfth-graders’ letter was sent in 1970 to then Prime Minister Golda Meir by a group of high school students facing enlistment, in which they expressed their reservations with Israeli occupation of the territories. Since then a number of similarly-minded letters have been sent, the last in 2005. The letter examined in the present study was sent in September 2002 and it was signed by close to 250 teenagers. Following the proclaimed refusal of some of them, a number of signatories were jailed. In 2003 five of the letter signatories were convicted of disobeying orders and each received a one-year prison sentence. I chose to examine this twelfth-graders’ letter, since this is the only letter that was covered by both newspapers: “Yediot” and “Ha’aretz.”

3. *The Pilots Letter*- The letter was published on 24 September 2003 and was signed by 24 pilots of the air force. The pilots declared on the letter that they “Resist to the illegal and immoral attack acts like those Israel implements in the occupied territories.” As response to the letter the chief of general staff grounded the signatories. The pilots who didn’t regret were dismissed of active service.

4. *The Sayeret Matkal letter*³- Three months after the publication of the pilots letter, a petition was published, signed by 13 sayeret Matkal soldiers. In the

³ Sayeret Matkal is an elite unit which is affiliated to the intelligence branch in the General Staff. It is considered as one of the best units of IDF.

petition they declared that they wouldn't serve in the territories. Five of the signatories were dismissed from the unit.

Rightist conscientious objection

1. *Yossi Filnet*- on 3 January 2005 the IDF started to clear off the Shalhevet outpost which included two caravans. Tens of settlers arrived to the place in order to prevent the evacuation. Yossi Filnet, a regular soldier, had joined them and called the other soldiers to stop the evacuation. Filnet himself wasn't one of the soldiers that participated on the evacuation, but this was an active trial to disrupt implementation of orders.

2. *The Officers Letter*- On 5 January 2005 thirty four reservist officers published a letter on which they declared that they would not participate in evacuations of settlements. The six most senior signatories were dismissed two days after the publication.

3. *Avi Bieber* - On 26 June 2005 the "Shirat Hayam" outpost was cleared off as a part of the disengagement process. Avi Bieber, a regular soldier, was one of the soldiers who participated in the evacuation. He refused to continue the mission and was jailed for 56 days.

4. *The teenagers petition*- On 4 September 2005, hundreds of teenagers published a petition in which they declared that they would not serve in an army that carry out the disengagement process.

I chose these cases as they are the main cases of conscientious objection that occurred in Israel over the past years and which received extensive coverage in the media, enabling more thorough exposure of frames and framing techniques. I chose to examine the coverage of the twelfth-graders' letter – although this event was less salient than the others and therefore received less coverage – as it is paralleled by a similar case on the right of the political stage, enabling better comparison of the framing techniques.

In examining such an issue, attempting to grasp the ways in which ideology is expressed in texts, I am more interested in the "how" and less in the "how much." For this reason, I focused mainly on a quality content analysis, revealing the framing techniques used by the newspapers. However, in order to receive a more complete picture of the frames used by the newspapers, I included a formal and quantitative examination in my analysis. The content analysis included examination of the terms used in the articles, the point of view from which the cases were

described, designation of the objectors, the manner in which they were presented, and the description of developments. The formal analysis included examination of formal means, such as type of pictures and location of articles, and the quantitative analysis included examination of numerical means, such as number of articles, number of editorials, number of approving or disapproving opinion pieces, etc. Exposure of these techniques facilitates exposure of the general frame they form. Comparison between frames used in articles covering ideologically-different cases of conscientious objection enables us to examine whether the newspaper identified with them or disapproved of them.

The content, formal, and numerical analysis which I performed regarding coverage of these eight cases of conscientious objection was performed on two levels: linear and lateral, in accordance with the two research questions. I.e., after revealing the frames that were formed through these techniques, I compared between the frames used in covering the cases of objection both within each newspaper (by comparing between rightist and leftist objection) and between the two newspapers (by comparing the same type of objection between the two newspapers). As stated, such double comparison contributes to examination of the manner in which framing expresses ideology, and thus enables more comprehensive and thorough examination of the framing techniques used in the newspapers.

Results

Analysis of the articles reveals a number of main frames through which the various cases of conscientious objection were covered. These frames are scattered over an axis of approval/disapproval towards the acts and in addition to the different types of frame and their directions, there was also a change in their intensity.

The disapproving frames were actually divided into a number of types:

The disloyalty frame – This frame appeared only in the “Yediot” coverage of the conscientious objection of Avi Bieber, in which he was described as an anomaly compared to his fellow soldiers – who obeyed their orders and were shocked by his act.

The conceited frame – In this frame the conscientious objectors were described as unmoved by the results of their acts, unafraid of possible responses, on the contrary. This frame appeared only in “Yediot”’s coverage of the rightist officers’ letter (when covering leftist objectors the conceited frame in “Yediot” was replaced by determination and belief in the moral course they had chosen).

The rebellion frame – In this frame the conscientious objectors were described as rebelling against the army and its ideology. This frame appeared in both rightist and leftist cases of conscientious objection in both newspapers and was the leading frame in their coverage. However, this frame appeared more frequently and in a clearer and more explicit manner in “Yediot” compared to “Ha’aretz.”

The mocking frame – This frame appeared only in coverage of the case of Yossi Filant in “Yediot”, in which he was described as under the illusion that his act will lead to cancellation of the disengagement plan and as a hero figure for residents of his hometown, who drew new and unrealistic ideas from his act.

The danger frame – In this frame conscientious objectors were described as performing an act that endangers the continued competent existence of the army. This frame appeared in both newspapers and in coverage of both types of conscientious objection, although similar to the rebellion frame it was used in a wider and more dramatic manner in “Yediot” – particularly regarding rightist objectors.

The artificial frame – This frame appeared in both newspapers only regarding leftist objectors (particularly pilots and fighters of Sayeret Matkal - the General Headquarters reconnaissance platoon), and it described the objectors as performing a professional, calculated and well-planned PR move, and not an innocent and real act of conscience.

The violence frame – Both newspapers used this frame to cover the acts of Avi Bieber and Yossi Filant, who refused to participate in the evacuation of Jewish settlements, a move accompanied by attempts of evacuees and their supporters to resist the evacuation. This frame appeared in a more salient and explicit manner in “Yediot”, which in contrast to “Ha’aretz” made an express connection between the violent rioting that accompanied the evacuation and the acts of conscientious objection, and called Yossi Filant’s objection “the height of the battle.”

The illegitimate status frame – This frame was used only towards the leftist conscientious objectors: In “Ha’aretz” use of this frame was more extensive and it appeared both in coverage of the officers’ letter and in coverage of the Sayeret Matkal letter. “Yediot” used this frame also when covering the Sayeret Matkal letter. In this frame conscientious objectors are described as lacking legitimacy for such objection since they do not serve as infantry soldiers amongst the Palestinian population in the territories, do not perform the acts to which they are objection in

any case, and therefore there is no basis for their claims and no justification for their refusal to serve.

The approving frames were actually also divided into a number of types:

The conscientious frame – This frame appeared in “Ha’aretz” only when covering leftist conscientious objection and in “Yediot” also when covering the rightist officers’ letter. In this frame objectors were described as performing a moral course of action, which they had taken as a last resort, with the intention of helping the IDF and not of harming it, when they could no longer accept the existing situation in good conscience.

The patriotism frame – This frame appeared in “Yediot” and in “Ha’aretz” only when covering leftist conscientious objectors, and in “Yediot” it was used more extensively. In this frame objectors were described as “the salt of the earth”, contemplating whether to depart from the values they were taught to uphold but doing so from a patriotic viewpoint.

The resolve frame – This frame appeared in “Yediot” and in “Ha’aretz” only when covering leftist conscientious objectors, and in “Yediot” it was used more extensively. In this frame conscientious objectors were described as resolutely supporting their acts due to their belief in the way they had chosen and feeling that this was their mission.

In coverage of leftist conscientious objection, there was no absolute and uniform framing direction, rather it was possible to discern the existence of the two types of frames, while the dominant frame in both newspapers was that of disapproval. In “Yediot” it was possible to discern that the frames changed mainly on different days and that contrasting frames did not appear concurrently (aside from a small number of cases). In two cases these frame changes took place in a format of approval-disapproval-approval (in the officers’ and pilots’ letters) and in one case the format was disapproval-approval-disapproval (in the Sayeret Matkal fighters’ letter) i.e., in the first day of coverage a certain type of frame appeared, on subsequent days conscientious objectors were framed in a contrasting manner, and after a number of days the main frame was moderated and there was a return to the frame that had appeared on the first day, however in a reduced form. In “Ha’aretz”, in contrast, a number of frames appeared concurrently in coverage of leftist objectors.

The use of contrasting frames in coverage of leftist objects indicates that there was no dichotomous separation between the types of frames in which rightist objectors were covered compared with the type in which leftist objectors were

covered, as leftist objectors were framed both approvingly and disapprovingly in both newspapers. However rightist objectors received almost no such ambivalent coverage (in both newspapers) rather they were framed mainly in the various types of disapproving frames. How were these frames formed? How were the differences expressed? Through which means were the frames of disapproval formed, and through which – the approving frames? As stated, there are three main mechanisms through which frames are formed. They also formed the framing differences between the various cases of conscientious objection in Israeli coverage of these cases.

Content Characteristics

The cause of the act – conscientious or not: When covering the various cases of conscientious objection, the two newspapers referred to the reasons that led to the decision. Both in “Yediot” and in “Ha’aretz” it was possible to discern similar framing of leftist objection: a frame that emphasizes the conscientious elements of the act and the indecision of the signatories. This type of description was not mentioned in the cases of rightist objectors, where when the claim of conscience was mentioned it appeared as a quotation of the signatories, with the reservation: “The signatories state that...” (Mey-tal 2005b) “The objector defines himself as...” (Shragai 2005). However it should be stated that in both newspapers the conscientious description of leftist objectors appeared mainly in the first days of coverage (and in “Yediot” it is emphasized and explicit particularly in magazine articles that interviewed the objectors and less in the news pages⁴), while later on – when the frame focuses on the army’s responses and not on initial exposure of the act and becomes disapproving (in “Yediot” in a more severe manner), there is almost no reference to causality. In contrast, in rightist cases of conscientious objection no descriptions of the objectors as conscientious and moral were mentioned even in the first articles.

When covering leftist objectors, “Ha’aretz” mainly emphasized their indecision, thus forming empathy towards the objectors and framing the act as circumspect and self evident (with the exception of the Sayeret Matkal letter, which was described as a media-oriented act). Thus for example, in the first article to describe the pilots’ letter, Ha’aretz wrote: “The members of the group debated this issue for over three months with much deliberations [...] side by side with the moral indecision accompanying the decision” (Galili 2005), and in the officers’

⁴ In two cases of leftist objectors’ letters, “Yediot” was the first to reveal their existence in a magazine article in its weekend supplement, “Shiv’ah Yamim”, in which the objectors were interviewed and explained their move.

letter: "...Whether to continue dealing only with the moral aspect" (Harel 2002) In "Yediot" the conscientiousness was emphasized in a more explicit manner, as the articles in "Shiv'ah Yamim" framed the objectors in a very approving way, saying explicitly that "they simply do not wish to disregard their moral conscience" (Musko 2003a) The first news articles also maintained this frame: "The decision to object: there is no moral justification" (Musko 2003b), "the officers' related that they had been exposed to acts of oppression in the territories" (Serna 2002), "to reopen the issue of fighting in the territories"(Serna 2002).

In contrast to their emphasis on the viewpoint of leftist objectors and the conscientious elements and moral deliberations leading to the act, the two newspapers did not mention the causality of the rightist objection movement: Rightist officers are described in "Ha'aretz" as refusing to participate in the evacuation, without mentioning any reason (in "Yediot" the perception of this refusal as conscientious appears in a quote of the officers), Filant "came to the settlement outpost to confront the evacuating forces" (Shragai and Harel 2005) and Bieber "*defines himself* as "a conscientious objector" (Shragai 2005). "Yediot" brings his response when "asked why he acted as he did" (Saban 2005) – while there is no need to ask leftist objectors why they acted as they did, as the newspaper frames the reason as obvious – and conscientiously justified – according to the first articles. Such a description of the act's detachment and of the lack of causality reinforces the disapproving frame of the act and reduces the possibility of identifying with the objectors or with the act.

The army's response – exaggerated or fair: In all the cases of conscientious objection letters the IDF hurried to express its disapproval of the acts and its conduct was identical: condemnation of the act, giving an opportunity to repent, and dismissing the insistent objectors from active service. The army's responses occupied the main frame in the two newspapers, which emphasized them in their headlines in the days following the initial exposure of the cases. Emphasizing the army's response in the headlines was an important part of the disapproving frame in both newspapers. In "Ha'aretz" compared to "Yediot" there were more titles and boxes that expressed responses of leftist conscientious objectors or their supporters, and this contributed to partial moderation of the disapproving frame, however the weight and emphasis given to the army's responses were much greater than those of the objectors and their supporters. An interesting question in this context is whether the newspapers emphasized the army's response and limited themselves to it, without expressing an alternative (thus possibly indicating that they accept it, that it reflects the spirit of the newspapers, considering the great emphasis given to it), or whether they also expressed conflicting views – in

commentaries or articles citing disapproving factors – and thus added another frame that gave the reader a choice.

In answer to this question, a big difference was revealed between “Yediot” and “Ha’aretz” (within “Ha’aretz” there is an even more interesting difference regarding the direction of conscientious objection). While “Yediot” merely expressed the army’s response (regarding both leftist and rightist objection, with a similarity that was expressed even in the form of the titles: for example “They were flown away” about the pilots’ letter compared with “They will be stripped of their ranks” about the rightist officers’ letter), “Ha’aretz” did not limit itself and also published a number of commentaries (written by the newspaper’s military reporter): about the leftist officers’ letter, the pilots’ letter, the Sayeret letter, and the rightist officers’ letter. The mere existence of the commentaries indicates differences between the framing in “Yediot” (which was more disapproving since it adopted the army’s response as an uncontested possibility) and the framing in “Ha’aretz”, however the contents of the commentaries indicate another difference – not between the newspapers, rather within the “Ha’aretz” newspaper concerning its attitude to the army’s response in the various types of conscientious objection. While the commentaries concerning leftist objection (and also in some of the articles dealing with the army’s response) claimed that it is undoubtedly necessary to punish the objectors, however this punishment should be “sensible”, “a short reserved response” (Harel 2002b), the commentary that dealt with the army’s response to the rightist officers’ letter (the only one referring to rightist objectors) claimed in its titles that “From the army’s viewpoint the message is clear: We have to stop blinking in face of the threats of conscientious objection.” I.e. “Ha’aretz”, in contrast to “Yediot”, did not present the army’s response as the only and desirable frame, rather it also presented commentaries. In the cases of leftist objection, these commentaries undermined the army’s response and existed as a dissenting frame, while in the case of the rightist officers the commentary did not say that the army’s response was “inflated”, rather the opposite – it was framed as efficient and justified.

Implications of the Act – Personal Price or Danger to the IDF

Not only the causality of the acts of conscientious objection was framed differently, the implications of the act also indicated framing differences, both between the two newspapers and regarding the various types of objection within the same newspaper – “Yediot.” In “Ha’aretz” there is almost no reference to implications of the act – neither as endangering the IDF nor as a heavy personal price paid by the objectors, neither among rightist objectors nor among leftist objectors: In covering the leftist and rightist letters of objection there is no reference to the

implications, and an article dealing with the Sayeret letter said that if the disengagement plan will be implemented the various initiatives of conscientious objection will diminish, and concerning Avi' Bieber's conscientious objection it claimed that "he hopes that many will continue in his footsteps" (Mey tal and Yehoshua 2005) but the newspaper did not form a frame emphasizing this claim. In contrast, "Yediot" refers to the implications of the act, and there are also differences between the framing of rightist objector's implications and that of leftist objectors' implications. While in the first articles describing leftist objectors (both in the "Shiv'ah Yamim" magazine and on the news pages) the implications of the act are a change in the IDF ("Eventually the IDF will really need that parachuted seniors' home if it ignores the challenge posed by this group of objectors"- Musko 2003) and a heavy personal price ("They know that the price will be heavy but they are resolute", "We don't mind going to jail and losing our friends, we want to save the country"- Serna 2002), in most cases of rightist objection the implications of the act are framed as a danger to the existence of the IDF, definitely not as a heavy personal price due to their belief in their ways and their conscience. For example: The newspaper writes about Filant's act: "The IDF's nightmare has come true" (Mey-tal and Yehoshua 2005). About the rightist officers' letter it says that this is a "dangerous turn of events" (Mey tal 2005b) and they were designated "the objection front", forming an association of war between them and the IDF. Of their quotes in the article, the quote chosen for the title was "For every officer dismissed dozens more will refuse to serve" (Mey tal 2005b), and not, for example, a quote such as "The Land of Israel is our mother and the IDF is our father" which emphasizes their ideological indecision. While the article dealing with the rightist twelfth-graders' letter ended with the disapproving response of the IDF speaker, a response that did not appear in the article about the leftist twelfth-graders' letter. It must be stated that in the cases of leftist conscientious objection there is a change in the self-sacrifice frame, and in later articles focusing on responses that disapprove of the act it was also possible to find titles such as "The officers' objection – an achievement for Arafat" (Rapaport and Tsimuki 2002), however despite the fact that this emphasizes disapproving responses, it does not constitute framing the act as an existential danger to the IDF.

Soldier Quotes in the Titles – Conscientious or Not

As stated, titles are a very central manner of framing and they are perceived as very significant (Van Dijk 1991; Ro'eh and Nir 1998). The present study also indicated that titles are the most conspicuous element reflecting the entire frame, and they too attested to change of frames. Analysis of titles reveals two main findings: First of all, in both newspapers it was possible to discern similar changes between frames

in the titles (and articles) regarding leftist conscientious objection: On the first day of the event the titles quoted the objectors, while on subsequent days the entire direction of the frame changed, and this was evident in titles that quoted disapproving elements, mainly responses by the Chief of Staff and military factors. Secondly, when dealing with rightist objectors, the “Ha’aretz” titles did not include quotes of their claims, rather twice there was a laconic report of the conscientious objection, something like: “A soldier defied his orders”, and in the case of the officers’ letter the title of the first article dealt immediately with the army’s response and not with the content of the letter. At first glance it seems that in “Yediot” the use of titles dealing with rightist objectors is identical to that of leftist objectors: The first title dealing with the subject was a quote of the objectors, while on subsequent days (or sometimes subsequent articles on the same day, as in the cases of leftist objectors) disapproving elements were quoted. A more extensive examination shows that the first titles were indeed quotes of the rightist objectors, however the newspaper chose to emphasize different contents. While quotes of leftist objectors included (as in “Ha’aretz”) conscientious claims: “We refuse to fight the ‘War of the Settlement’s Peace’” (Harel 2002), “Ashamed to be pilots” (Musko 2003), “I will not be a murderer”, the quotes of rightist objectors were not conscientious, rather statements such as: “I’m proud of what I did” (Savan et al. 2005), or “Don’t evacuate” (Mey tal and Yehoshua 2005) – demonstrating the disorder characterizing their act.

The Viewpoint Used To Describe the Chain of Events – of the Objectors or of A “Third Side”

Analysis of the cases indicates a difference between leftist and rightist conscientious objection also in the viewpoint through which the chain of events was described. Most cases of leftist objection – both in “Yediot” and in “Ha’aretz” – were described in the first exposing article from the viewpoint of the objectors (“Yesterday Captain Yonatan and Captain Alon entered the offices of Halutz”- Musko 2003a) or from the viewpoint of a “third side”: “50 officers signed” (Harel 2002), “13 reserve soldiers signed” (Harel 2003c) etc. Cases of rightist objection were described only from the viewpoint of a “third side.” In “Yediot” in an article about the rightist officers’ letter the response of the “shocked regiment commander” (Mey tal 2005b) appeared in proximity to the description of the chain of events, and in “Ha’aretz” the chain of events of the rightist objection movement was described from the viewpoint of the army.

Descriptions of the Soldiers

As stated, differences were revealed between the framing of the causality of rightist and leftist objection movements. Another difference that extended this frame existed in the soldiers' description. In both newspapers it was possible to see that leftist objectors received a longer and more detailed description than rightist objectors. The content of the description presented another difference between the two types of objection: Leftist objectors – in addition to their description as conscientiously undecided – were described as convinced of the justness of their ways, the pilots are described in both newspapers (in “Yediot” in the most extensive and explicit manner) as belonging to an elite group, the articles in the “Shiv’ah Yamim” supplement describe the objectors very empathically, as Zionists and patriots (in the pilots’ letter part of this description appears even in the news report) and as belonging to a select brigade. The military history of the signatories is stressed – particularly in “Yediot” which devoted to it entire boxes on the news pages. The military history of rightist objectors is also mentioned, however in the case of Bieber and Filant (who were not high-ranking) it is stated in few words, while in the case of the officers (in contrast to the leftist officers’ letter) it is not expanded on. Moreover, in both newspapers rightist objectors are not described as undecided and the considerations preceding their act are not mentioned (with the exception of the description of Avi Bieber’s act, however there too the conspicuous frame is of his opposition to his fellow soldiers: “For Bieber the disengagement began earlier than expected and he decided to disengage from his fellow soldiers”- Saban 2005). “Yediot” even cites a disapproving description: The rightist officers are not described as convinced of their justness, rather as expressing arrogance: “The calls do not scare them, on the contrary”, while Bieber is described as a disturbed kid who dropped out of various schools (there is a quote of a school mate who described him as “hanging out with disturbed American kids”) and as a traitor to his fellow soldiers.

Legitimacy of the Act – A Media-Oriented Act or a Justified Act

In general we can see that in both newspapers there is a frame that disapproves more of rightist than of leftist objectors. However, leftist objectors as well do not receive sweeping and unambiguous approval even in “Ha’aretz”, and in this context of criticism towards the act – it is more conspicuous and more extensively mentioned in “Ha’aretz.” Beginning with coverage of the pilots’ letter, “Ha’aretz”

published a commentary titled “The 27 plane descenders⁵ in a media production.” Such commentary on the act did not appear in “Yediot” regarding the pilots’ letter, rather it first appeared in the case of the Sayeret Matkal letter, where the subheadings already said that only 9 of the 13 fighters were in active service. “Ha’aretz” took this frame one step further when it described the letter as “arousing the necessary media and public interest”, creating a feeling that it has no conscientious rationale at all. Similar criticism appeared in “Ha’aretz” (and not in “Yediot”) also of Filant’s wish to “be judged before a court open to the army and to the media” (Harel et al. 2005) and of Bieber who “Livnat and the other objection movements helped the media to find him” (Shragai 2005). I.e., compared to “Yediot”, “Ha’aretz” expressed more critical commentary of the rationale of the acts of objection – of both types.

Formal Characteristics

Pictures

As stated, framing is also performed through visual elements. This is particularly conspicuous in the broadcasted media, however it is also significantly expressed in the printed press (Dor 2001). The most salient formal elements indicating differences between the newspapers are pictures: First of all, their existence or absence, and secondly, the type of pictures selected. “Yediot”, as a popular newspaper, published more pictures, which occupied a very extensive space both on the front pages and on the content pages (sometimes more than the words), while the quality “Ha’aretz” newspaper made relatively limited use of pictures, and frames were formed mainly through article content and titles. In “Ha’aretz” no significant differences were revealed between pictures of rightist and leftist objectors – in both cases these were face pictures, and the only difference was that in the case of the pilots’ letter there were also “day-after” pictures of the pilots’ base. The weight given to pictures of disapproving elements was also identical.

⁵ “The 23 boat descenders” (of whom one was the father of a signatory of this letter) are twenty three Palmach fighters, who disappeared, together with an accompanying British officer, on their way to sabotaging the refineries in Tripoli, Lebanon, on May 18 1941. The use of this paraphrase reinforces the disapproving framing arising from the news article, as on one hand they are indeed connected to a mythological-heroic deed perceived as patriotic self-sacrifice, and on the other hand the article criticizes the media-orientation of this act, giving the reader a feeling that the two cases are contradictory, demonstration a type of “generation decline.”

In “Yediot” pictures reflected the general frame, and therefore they too revealed differences between the various types of conscientious objection. I.e., in “Yediot” it was possible to discern that in cases of leftist objection – which received approving coverage in the magazine articles and in the first articles in the news pages – empowering pictures of the objectors were published, pictures usually taken from a low angle. The pilots, for example, were photographed wearing flight suits (emphasizing their special status and the severity of the act) on a light blue background – reminiscent of the symbols of the state and thus framing them as Zionists – backgrounded by rays of light portraying them as saviors, and the magazine article of the officers integrated pictures of Palestinian prisoners, reinforcing the justification of their claims.

As mentioned, in “Yediot” in cases of leftist objection there was a change in frame from an approving orientation to a disapproving orientation (and in the case of the officers’ letter and of the pilots’ letter there was also a return to approval) and this change was also expressed in the pictures: The disapproving articles gave much weight to disapproving military elements, there were pictures (even on the front page) of soldiers who disapprove of the objectors’ act, there were no more pictures of Palestinian prisoners, nor pictures of the pilots on a background of rays of light. However, the pictures of the objectors were not replaced with their portraits (as with rightist objectors), rather they remained the same group pictures (in the pilots’ letter members of the group were still shown wearing flight suits or on a background of airplanes), with facial expressions expressing gravity, somberness, and strength.

Proportionally, there was no difference between the number of pictures of rightist compared to leftist objectors in “Yediot” and the main difference was the quality – the type of picture. When describing rightist objectors the pictures also reflected the general frame, which in “Yediot” was disapproving and emphasized the danger of the act, and therefore - in contrast to the leftist objectors who were at first photographed in a manner imparting strength and reinforcing the legitimacy of their act - when describing the rightist objectors the initial pictures (and also subsequent pictures) were usually small portraits of some of the signatories. Moreover – in the officers’ letter and in Filant’s case there were also other pictures: Illustrations not related to the objectors, rather to rightist activities in general, such as a picture of a demonstration against the disengagement plan, or of Hesder Yeshiva soldiers⁶ wearing a *talit*. Their appearance (and their great

⁶ Hesder Yeshiva soldiers combine higher religious studies with a shortened military service in a religious setting. The Hesder Yeshivas are affiliated with the national-religious sector and constitute a combination between the religious obligation to study Torah and develop spiritually and the national-religious sector’s

weight – these two pictures covered more than half a page) reinforces the danger frame – this is not a group of objectors, rather an entire public, or in this case: all soldiers who wear a *talit*.

Title size

Similar to the use of pictures, title size is also a conspicuous characteristic of popular newspapers. Therefore “Yediot” obviously featured giant headlines (with a small number of emotionally-arousing words) compared to “Ha’aretz”, which used standard-size headlines (and also did not devote the entire front page to the matter). What I tried to examine, assuming that a larger title indicates the significance that the newspaper attributes to the matter, frames it as “hot” and worthy of serious attention (Caspi 2001), was whether there were differences in the title size in “Yediot” between its description of leftist and rightist objection. However such differences were not found. In both types similar use was made of very large headlines (I have detailed the differences in their contents in the section on formal characteristics), at first in titles that described the act and on subsequent days in titles that described the disapproving responses. I.e., title size indicates that in “Yediot” the two types of objection are accorded the same importance – and it is a very substantial importance.

Use of a Logo

This characteristic appeared only in “Yediot Aharonot” and it also includes a content element. “Yediot” added a logo to some of the cases of objection. The logo expressed the general frame of the act – which was usually disapproving. For example, the logo of the Sayeret Matkal letter was “Rebellion in the unit” (and in that case the frame was indeed disapproving from the first articles) while the logo of the rightist officers’ letter changed from the neutral “Officers’ letter” to “Regiment of objectors”, emphasizing the danger of their act, as in the entire frame.

The pilots’ letter is the only exception in this context, as the initial articles framed the pilots approvingly, while the logo was “Pilots’ rebellion” (which by the way aroused the ire of the pilots, who claimed that it framed them negatively: “We’re not rebels, we just want to uphold the law”, Binyamini 2003). Later – when the frame changed and framed them disapprovingly – the logo changed to “Pilots under pressure.” I.e., we can see that there were no differences between the logo of the rightist objectors (which in this context actually only included one act) and that

perception of the duty to serve in the IDF and to become integrated in Israeli society.

of the leftist objectors, and that the logo expressed disapproval of the act – usually compatible with the general frame (except for the initial articles dealing with the pilots’ letter).

Location of the Articles

Another technique used by the newspapers to demonstrate the significance of an event was its location: Important events appear on the front pages of the newspaper, while events perceived as secondary (or on days when there are events perceived as more important) are pushed to inner pages. This aspect revealed differences between the newspapers, however not regarding the type of objection: In both newspapers in the first days the articles appeared on the front pages. The difference between the newspapers was revealed on subsequent days: While on subsequent days “Yediot” relegated articles on the subject to inner pages (and focused mainly on disapproving quotes by military figures), in “Ha’aretz” these quotes as well appeared on the front pages and were presented as equally important. This finding was true both for rightist and leftist objectors in both newspapers. However this finding must be restricted as it is possible that it also stems from the different duration of coverage: Since “Yediot” devoted a larger number of articles to the objectors (particularly leftist objectors), the articles on subsequent days, which did not add much, were relegated to inner pages, while in “Ha’aretz”, due to the relative sparsity of articles on the issue in general, the articles that appeared were selected to appear on the front pages.

Quantitative Characteristics

Duration of Coverage and the Number of Articles on the News Pages

In both newspapers it was possible to discern a similar phenomenon: Leftist objectors received more articles on the news pages than rightist objectors, and the duration of their coverage was longer. This affected the framing of the acts’ significance: A case with lengthier coverage is framed as more significant, as having more meaningful implications. A greater number of coverage days also enables the existence of additional frames, and this is what happened in “Yediot”, in which it was possible to discern changing frames in coverage of leftist objection, enabling expression of an alternative to the disapproving frame that usually appeared concerning leftist objection. In contrast, in cases of rightist objection, the coverage was relatively shorter, and this may have also affected the existence of the only – and disapproving – frame. In “Ha’aretz”, in contrast, in which the coverage of both types of objection was short compared with “Yediot”, despite the paucity of

articles a number of different frames existed concurrently, i.e. on one day there were a number of frames in the articles, and the change did not take place over a number of days. It is possible that the quantitative differences between the number of articles devoted to leftist objectors and those devoted to rightist objectors express the significance attributed by the paper to the leftist objection movement (as the disapproving frame indeed existed in a more moderate manner than in “Yediot”).

The Number of Articles in the Supplements

Similar to the finding concerning the number of articles on the news pages, the newspaper supplements also afforded more space to leftist objectors. This was particularly conspicuous in “Yediot Aharonot”, which devoted two large articles in its weekend supplement (including cover pictures) to leftist objectors. The mere existence of the articles emphasizes the significance of the act as perceived by the newspaper, and this is reinforced by their content – which provided the objectors with an extensive platform for their claims (whether questioned by the reporter or not), and the article about the officers’ letter even expressed approval of the officers and their act. “Yediot” did not devote articles in the “Shiv’ah Yamim” supplement to rightist objectors (i.e., the platform given them to present their claims – whether the newspaper would have framed it approvingly or disapprovingly – was smaller than that allocated to the leftist objectors), and their framing took place only on the news pages. A similar phenomenon was expressed in “Ha’aretz”, in which there were indeed no articles giving an extensive and approving stage to objectors (the pilots promised “Yediot” exclusivity and the leftist officers’ letter was a “Yediot” scoop) however articles on the support of leftist objectors appeared in the supplements, and this was not true of cases of rightist objection.

The Number of Commentaries

Due to the quality character of “Ha’aretz”, it presented a larger number of commentaries (and their length of appearance was also greater compared to “Yediot” – both in cases of rightist and leftist objection). Quantitatively, there were more commentaries about cases of leftist objection (again representing the great significance attributed to these acts), some of which supported the act and criticized the IDF response, and some of which criticized the acts and mainly voiced criticism of the objectors’ media-oriented conduct. In the two commentaries that appeared in the case of rightist objection, the IDF response was justified and the phenomenon of conscientious objection was described as spreading, i.e., the

articles reinforced the disapproving frame. Two commentaries appeared in “Yediot”: One in the “Shiv’ah Yamim” supplement concerning the officers’ letter, in which the act was justified, claiming that the IDF cannot ignore it, and the second on the news pages concerning the Sayeret Matkal letter, justifying the act and claiming once again that the IDF cannot ignore it. No commentaries appeared in “Yediot” regarding rightist objection and this solidified the disapproving frame.

The Number of Opinion Pieces and Editorials

On this point the findings in “Yediot” and “Ha’aretz” were identical, contributing to reinforcement of the frame disapproving of cases of rightist objection. First of all, in “Yediot”’s portrayal of cases of leftist objection, there was a type of constant parallelism between approving and disapproving opinion pieces (on the news pages). For example, in the case of the pilots’ letter, Captain Yonatan, one of the signatories, was quoted as declaring “We are brave” (on the front page) in contrast to the words of another captain, who disapproved of the act: “You are traitors.” Such a format frames the act as controversial and presents to the public the option of supporting it. In contrast, in cases of rightist objection this format did not exist at all, and therefore the only frame presented was that indicated in the news pages: a disapproving frame, with no possibility of expressing an alternative. Secondly, in each of the cases of leftist objection there were more opinion pieces approving of the act than disapproving it, while in cases of rightist objection, the case of Filant and of the officers’ letter, there were no opinion pieces at all. In Bieber’s case there was one opinion piece that denounced conscientious objection in general – both rightist and leftist. I.e., in cases of rightist objection even in the opinion pages there was no option of presenting a different frame than that presented in the news pages. In addition, the only editorial that appeared in “Yediot” was “Their darkness illuminates” (which is the motto of Sayeret Matkal), supporting the conscientious objection of the Sayeret Matkal fighters.

In “Ha’aretz” the opinion pieces did not appear on the news pages, rather only in the opinion columns, and they indicated a similar finding to that found in “Yediot”: When covering cases of rightist objection there were no approving opinion pieces (versus two disapproving), while when covering leftist objection there were more articles that supported the acts than articles that denounced them. This forms the same frame: Leftist acts of conscientious objection are controversial, there are those who approve of them and those who disapprove of them (and according to the number of articles the former are greater), while rightist objection is not discussed at all, it is not controversial – according to the frame indicated in “Yediot” it is a unequivocally negative and dangerous act, and this is also indicated in the “Ha’aretz” frame (although in a more moderate manner).

Allocation of Time and Space to Statements by the Objectors and To Disapproving

Allocation of time and space contributed a great deal to the framing of cases of rightist and leftist objectors and it reflected the frames and their change. The time allocation was identical in both newspapers – in both of them leftist objectors received a greater length of coverage than rightist objectors. In both newspapers and in both types of objection the allocation of space to the two contrasting views, that of the objectors and that of the IDF, could be discerned, while the weight given to each was the factor that created the frame. In both newspapers we can see that on the first day more space was allocated to the objectors' statements, while on subsequent days the focus was on disapproving responses, thus creating the disapproving frame (which received greater weight). This does not mean that the objectors' response did not receive any weight, however it was less substantial than the disapproving responses, which usually constituted the major part of the articles and were also accompanied by pictures and titles quoting them, similar to the first days when articles allocated space to the objectors' statements. However differences between the two newspapers were revealed: In "Yediot" space allocation to responses of leftist objectors was lower than in "Ha'aretz" (where their responses appeared to a greater degree both in the articles themselves and in the subheadings), while regarding space allocation to the responses of rightist objectors there was no difference between the newspapers, and in both there was less allocation compared to that given to leftist objectors – both in the articles themselves and in the subheadings. As stated, this was one of the main ways in which the various cases of objection were framed, and we can see that this means contributed to decreasing the frame of disapproval towards leftist objectors in "Ha'aretz" compared to "Yediot" and to reinforcement of the frame of disapproval towards rightist objectors in both newspapers.

Focusing on Disapproval or Approval of the Act

The various acts of conscientious objection aroused many responses – in both directions – in the political, military, and public domain. Both newspapers expressed both types of responses – disapproving and approving - however it is possible to discern two differences: First of all, between the two types of objection – In both newspapers the articles dealing with rightist objectors gave less of a voice to supportive responses compared to responses supporting leftist objectors (this may also be related to the length of coverage, which was shorter). Secondly, differences were revealed between the newspapers concerning the leftist objection movement: "Yediot" focused mainly on disapproving responses, while "Ha'aretz",

despite the significant weight given to the army's response, focused more on its support. For example, in articles dealing with those who joined or withdrew from the objectors, "Yediot" titles emphasized the quitters ("The objector: I've changed my mind, I was wrong"-Musko 2003), while "Ha'aretz" gives both the same weight ("One officer joined and another reconsidered"- Galili, Harel and Alon 2003). The case of the pilots' objection illustrates this point and enables more precise comparison, as both "Yediot" and "Ha'aretz" published simultaneous articles dealing with the same related subjects: A petition of support signed by dozens of intellectuals, reservations of one of the senior signatories concerning the content of the letter, and the response of the El-Al pilots' committee. While in "Yediot" these events were framed from an angle of disapproval with the pilots' act, in "Ha'aretz" they were framed in a more neutral angle, which in certain cases was even favorably inclined. For example, Brigadier General Yiftach Spector was described in "Yediot" as "regretting the letter" (Brot 2003) while in "Ha'aretz" he was described as "reserved about its content" (Harel 2003b) and his lack of regret was emphasized. "Yediot" devoted an entire page to the "scandal" in El-Al, while in "Ha'aretz" the response of the El-Al pilots' committee received a tenth-page sized article, with no mention of the "dozens of furious passengers" (Egozi and Yehoshua 2003). In contrast, an article about the support of dozens of intellectuals for the signatories received greater emphasis in "Ha'aretz."

This is the idea on which the framing theory is based: "Each story has a number of viewpoints, a number of alternative options of categorization, analysis, or emphasis. Selecting one viewpoint over the other is a selection of a certain frame, through which the journalist observes and reports what he sees" (Caspi 2001) – Both newspapers focused on a more disapproving frame of the rightist objection movement compared to the leftist objection movement. Concerning leftist objection, "Yediot" emphasized a more disapproving viewpoint than "Ha'aretz", which chose to moderate the disapproving frame and focused on an angle compatible with its ideological and quality orientation.

Discussion and Conclusions

"The moment we abandon the groundless wish to confirm the "accuracy" of coverage through additional observance of reality as it is; the moment we are willing to relate to news stories as stories – then we are also ready for comparative research."

Yitzchak Ro'eh, "The press as storyteller, news coverage as a story"

The present study's point of departure, well phrased in these words of Yitzchak Ro'eh (1989), is that there is no "objective reality." There is no one story, "positive facts as they exist" (1989: 460), rather there is a "symbolic reality", a story that consists of viewpoints which reflect various meanings and variations of a worldview and are reflected in the various frames that are indicated in the texts. Only such a point of departure, claims Ro'eh (1989: 460), enables comparative consideration of various media, within the same culture or between different cultures, and opens an expanse of issues – such as ideological issues or those dealing with different world pictures that are revealed through detailed analysis of the content format.

Conscientious objection in Israel is an interesting test case for examining this question, as this is a controversial phenomenon in both philosophical and social fields, enabling analysis of different meaning frames stemming from newspapers with different ideologies, or in other words – examination of the connection between the basic ideology of the newspaper and the frames it uses. The conclusions of this study indicate that this connection isn't as direct as it would seem at first glance, and that it is influenced by intervening elements, the main one being the newspaper's (popular or quality) nature.

Conclusions Concerning the First Research Question

As I stated at the beginning, the question of classifying objection to military service in Israel – as civil disobedience or as conscientious objection which arouses different sentiments – is a focus for extensive philosophical discussions (Gans 2004; Sagi and Shapira 2004). This question expanded in time, mainly in face of the increasing cases of rightist objection, which gave a practical emphasis to the question of whether the two types are symmetrical, i.e., the same rules justifying consideration for leftist objectors can apply to the same degree to rightist objectors, or whether these are different types of objection that should also be accorded different legal consideration.

Regarding the articles that dealt with the two types of objection in "Yedioth" and "Ha'aretz", we can see that although the two newspapers (particularly from the second day of coverage) frame leftist objectors in a disapproving manner, both reflect the view of Chaim Gans (2004) and create a more approving frame for the leftist objection movement and a more disapproving frame for the rightist objection movement. Both newspapers frame leftist objection at first as conscientious objection (particularly in the titles, which include quotes such as: "We will not continue destroying, demolishing, humiliating, and desecrating" (Serna 2002), or "Ashamed to be pilots" (Musko 2003a), but also in the linguistic rhetoric used in the articles themselves and in the commentaries). This reinforces

the approving frame, as both in the philosophical field and in the normative social field conscientious objection is perceived as a more legitimate and justified act, worthy of a lesser punishment, if any punishment at all (Sagi and Shapira 2004). In “Yediot” this is even more emphasized (in contrast to the research hypothesis, which anticipated identical framing of the two types of objection – in a disapproving manner) as besides the fact that the newspaper did not frame the rightist objection as conscientious objection, it also formed a frame resembling civil rebellion, by using a rhetoric of violence and danger (and without mentioning moral motives) which does not appear in the coverage of leftist objection (aside from coverage of the pilots’ letter, designated “The pilots’ revolt”, side by side with articles expressing approval of the act). Ha’aretz also similarly framed the act of the leftist objectors as an act of conscience (albeit in a less distinct manner than “Yediot”), and similarly to “Yediot” it gave them larger and more conspicuous space than the rightist objectors.

Another content difference between rightist and leftist objectors is the sparseness of opinion pieces supporting rightist objectors. This is a significant element in the framing of rightist objectors, as it prevents creation of a frame defining it as a controversial act but not as an act whose illegitimacy has received absolute approval and it has almost no support. In contrast, in framing leftist objection, both newspapers permitted a simultaneous frame contradictory to the main disapproving frame, and thus gave readers more choice. Researchers in this field (Gamson 1996) claim that a profusion of frames is preferable, as it affords the public the freedom to choose from a large reserve, reducing the force of the main frame. Such profusion of frames was not found in the cases of rightist objection – neither in “Yediot” nor in “Ha’aretz”, and thus the main existing frame, which in these cases was disapproving, wields all the influence.

However it must be stated that in both newspapers the approving frame of leftist objection appeared in comparison to rightist objection, and mainly in the initial days of coverage. The main frame throughout most of the days of coverage in both newspapers is a frame expressing disapproval of leftist objection (albeit in a less conspicuous manner than disapproval of rightist objection), expressed mainly in the allocation of a great deal of time and space to disapproving responses and by embracing the IDF response as a central viewpoint. The focus on the IDF response existed also in “Ha’aretz”, which even sweepingly denounced the objection movement in an editorial in response to the pilots’ letter.

These findings lead to the conclusion that in contrast to the research hypotheses, the basic ideology of the newspapers only partially influenced their framing of the objection movements: In “Yediot”, although the newspaper has no professed ideological orientation, the frame was more disapproving of rightist objection than of leftist objection, whose coverage also revealed an approving

frame, particularly in the first days of coverage, while in “Ha’aretz” the frame was indeed more disapproving of the rightist objection movement (and this is compatible with its ideology) however this was a relatively weak disapproving frame, a frame that was more inclined to use a rhetoric of neutrality and facts that a “branded” rhetoric. More important – approval of the leftist objection movement was also relatively weak, and in most cases it was expressed mainly in the initial article and later replaced by a disapproving frame (expressed mainly by embracing the IDF viewpoint), not compatible with the newspaper’s ideological orientation. I must state that although the disapproving frame did not exist unambiguously, and in many cases in coverage of leftist objection it was possible to find the opposite frame simultaneously, the main frame was disapproving. I will now review a possible explanation for these results, while referring in detail to the frame differences between the newspapers, which enables wider illustration of the explanation.

Conclusions Concerning the Second Research Question

The findings indicate that both newspapers expressed disapproval towards the two types of objection, however their disapproval of the rightist objection was greater compared to the disapproval expressed towards the leftist objectors. An interesting question in this context is whether – despite the identical framing direction of both newspapers – there were differences in the manner of framing, and whether these differences can be explained in a different way than that examined in this study. The answer to both these questions is affirmative.

As described in the literature review chapter and demonstrated in the findings chapter, the general frame is formed in a news article by using many means: linguistic, formal, and quantitative. Therefore it is only natural that different newspapers – although eventually expressing the same general frame – will use different manners of framing and different dosages in order to form the total frame. When covering the cases of objection it was also possible to distinguish many differences between the manner of framing implemented by “Yediot” and “Ha’aretz.” One of the purposes of my study is to use conscientious objection as a test case for demonstrating the manner in which the newspaper’s ideological orientation affects symbolic organization of the verbal and visual discourse, or in other words – the various manners of framing. My research hypotheses were based on the premise that ideology is reflected in rhetoric. Therefore I hypothesized that the differences in the newspapers’ ideological orientation would be reflected in the frame they chose to use concerning each of the cases of objection, however analysis of the findings shows that there is an intervening factor which I took into consideration in the research assumptions but I must have minimized its

significance, as it was revealed as affecting the frame created more than the ideological variable: Comparison between the manners of framing used by “Ha’aretz” and those used by “Yediot” shows that sometimes the fact that “Yediot” is a popular newspaper and “Ha’aretz” a quality newspaper has a great effect (even greater than the significance of the ideological effect) on the manners in which the objection movements were framed.

For example, analysis of the differences revealed between “Yediot” and “Ha’aretz” shows that in contrast to the research hypothesis, in “Yediot” there was a more disapproving frame of rightist objection than in “Ha’aretz” throughout the days of coverage. This frame was expressed, for example, in the size of the titles, the type of pictures devoted to the event, connecting the deed to an entire public, using “branded” terms such as “danger”, “nightmare” and threatening quotes in the titles such as “For every officer dismissed dozens more will refuse to serve”- Mey tal 2005b. Such a frame did not appear in “Ha’aretz” which mainly used a rhetoric of facts and neutrality, without using terms such as those that appeared in “Yediot.” This in contrast to the research hypothesis which anticipated a more disapproving frame of the rightist objection movement in this newspaper.

Similarly, the first articles in “Yediot” that dealt with cases of leftist objection included pictures of the objectors taken from a low angle, titles that included quotes such as “No longer will we destroy, demolish, humiliate, and desecrate”, they received extensive coverage and were described as willing to pay a heavy personal price for the act at which they arrived after thorough deliberation (“The price: “Tears on the way to the base””- Serna 2002). This frame does not confirm the research hypothesis concerning reflection of the connection between ideology and rhetoric, as “Yediot” does not profess to a leftist ideology (Ro’eh 1997), and it seems that in the initial days of coverage, the frame expressed by “Yediot” towards leftist objectors was more approving than that expressed by “Ha’aretz” which did not devote a separate magazine article, photographed the objectors’ base and not the soldiers themselves, used terms that indeed express approval, however less explicitly, and did not quote them throughout entire articles on the news pages.

However in subsequent days the framing in “Yediot” changed and was replaced by a disapproving frame, while in “Ha’aretz” there was a similar but less forceful change (among other things since the intensity of approval was low to begin with and therefore there was no great difference between initial and subsequent articles) and it was possible to find more instances of approving framing than in “Yediot.” I.e., after the initial articles, the framing in “Ha’aretz” was more approving of the leftist objectors than the coverage in “Yediot” (confirms the research hypothesis), although the salience of this approving framing was lower compared to the approval expressed by “Yediot” in the initial days of

coverage, expressed mainly in the greater allocation of time and space to the objectors and more limited allocation of space to expressions of disapproval.

In general, we can see that in contrast to “Ha’aretz”, in which there were usually a number of frames simultaneously, particularly in cases of leftist objection (disconfirming the research hypothesis concerning the existence of a main frame compatible with the ideological orientation of “Ha’aretz”), in “Yediot” the frames usually did not appear simultaneously, rather changed on a continuum of approval-disapproval-approval, or disapproval-approval-disapproval, each of these frames expressed very dramatically, as a type of dichotomous framing “black or white”, with no connection to ideology. My claim is that the use of certain means of framing characteristic of popular press, which has a tendency to dramatization and to prefer form over content, may constitute a possible explanation for these framing differences and for the lack of compatibility between ideology and rhetoric.

It is possible that since “Ha’aretz” is a quality newspaper – and despite its ideological orientation – it is more committed to rules of journalistic ethics, to use of a rhetoric of balance and facts, and therefore it framed the rightist objection movement in a more approving manner compared to “Yediot”, and leftist objection in a less disapproving manner than “Yediot.” Its editors perceive accuracy and focusing on facts as more important than attracting readers by creating drama, even if this drama is compatible with its ideology. “Ha’aretz” expressed the most approving framing of leftist acts of objection, which are compatible with its ideology and that of its readers, mainly in the commentaries and opinion pieces and also in the allocation of time and space, which was greater for leftist than for rightist objectors. This was also the reason that it was more critical than “Yediot” of the legitimacy of the act of objection by soldiers who do not serve in infantry units in the territories, or who are not currently in active service, and also of the media aspects of the act, voicing the possibility that this is civil disobedience motivated by political considerations with the cooperation of the media – and not conscientious objection. I.e., the research premise must be restricted by the claim that the frame used by the newspapers depends on two parameters: both the quality parameter and the ideological parameter, which are inextricably bound.

Here I must state that despite the above and in spite of the many examples revealing contradictions between the newspaper’s ideological orientation and the frames it uses, we must remember that the effect of the newspaper’s qualitative nature does not automatically cancel the ideological aspect, rather constitutes an intervening factor which mainly reduces the ideological force and limits it in certain cases. The correlation between ideology and framing as stated in the research hypotheses was also evident: The main frame used by “Yediot” expressed disapproval towards the two types of objection, and in “Ha’aretz” leftist

objectors were framed in a more approving manner (and supporting a moderate military response) than rightist objectors.

I.e., the explanation attributing much significance to the qualitative aspect, which sometimes overpowers the ideological aspect, is not compatible with all the study findings. If the qualitative nature of the newspaper indeed guided it more than its ideology, than also when dealing with rightist objectors “Ha’aretz” should have simultaneously presented (with the same weight) an alternative frame to the main disapproving frame (as required by its quality nature). In addition: How can we use this explanation regarding findings that “Yediot Aharonot” used a frame that disapproved of rightist objection and emphasized its danger, when in cases of leftist objection this frame was used must less intensively? If “Yediot” – in its definition as a popular newspaper – tends towards dramatization and appeals mainly to its readers’ emotions, and this is its guiding line (Limor and Man 1997), it should have used the same dramatic frame of danger and intimidation also regarding leftist objectors, or alternately framed rightist objectors (at least at the beginning) as saviors of the country and devoted to them too a magazine article arousing the required public debate, however this was not done.

These findings can be interpreted in a number of ways that guide the discussion to a call for future studies. First of all, the findings may indicate that in contrast to the common assumption “Yediot” does indeed have an ideological orientation, maybe not a solid and familiar agenda like that presented by “Ha’aretz” and maybe it is also presented in a less explicit manner due to a wish to avoid losing some of its readers (maybe this is the primary reason that the main frame expressed by the newspaper towards leftist objectors was disapproving), but it is still possible that “Yediot” chose to express greater approval of leftist objectors due to its ideological orientation. This is reinforced by the fact that the newspaper proposed David Zonenshein, one of the leading signatories of the officers’ letter, as a candidate for the “society” category of its “People of the Year” contest for 2002⁷. Avi Bieber was not proposed as a candidate for 2005.

This hypothesis regarding the ideological orientation of “Yediot” may be examined by comparing frames used by “Yediot” in other politically-controversial events that reflect an ideological orientation (for example – the disengagement plan). It is also possible to examine the change in such frames over time, in order to check whether – if this hypothesis is confirmed - it is possible to indicate the starting point of this phenomenon (and to try and explain it accordingly – for example, is this a change that occurred due to the entrance of a new editor?). In

⁷ The “People of the Year” contest is a contest held by the “Yediot Aharonot” newspaper, in which readers annually rank selected figures in the fields of politics, entertainment, culture, etc.

addition, we should examine how another popular newspaper, such as “Ma’ariv”, which in the research literature is described as having very similar traits to those of “Yediot” (Caspi 1997; Limor and Man 2001) framed these types of objection, with the intent of isolating the variable of the newspaper’s quality as much as possible and assessing the weight of the newspaper’s qualitative traits in influencing the frame that it chose to reflect.

Secondly, it is possible that the differences between the ideology and the manners of coverage as revealed in the comparison between “Ha’aretz” and “Yediot” stem from entirely different motives: Maybe “Yediot” chose to initially express approval of the leftist objectors because it was the newspaper that exposed these cases (and maybe this is the reason that it expressed greater disapproval of the Sayeret Matkal objectors – which it did not expose – compared to the pilots’ letter and the officers’ letter, which were an exclusive scoop), while “Ha’aretz” criticized these acts more than expected – in contradiction of its ideology – in order to minimize the significance of the “Yediot” scoop. It must be stated that this possible explanation is particularly appropriate in the case of the pilots’ letter, as the pilots even employed a public relations expert in preparation for their move, which was timed to receive exclusive exposure in “Yediot” and on the second channel. This exclusivity undoubtedly affected the competing newspapers, “Ha’aretz” and “Ma’ariv” (whose title of the pilots’ letter, by the way, was “Shame on the wings”) who referred to the matter in their commentaries (in “Ha’aretz” in a severe editorial) in which they strongly criticized the move.⁸ It is difficult to examine (and the newspaper editors would certainly deny it) whether this fact influenced the manner of framing. However if it is true, this is a worrisome finding that is unflattering to all the newspapers, and particularly to “Ha’aretz” – the most quality newspaper.

Another significant possible explanation is located in the time differences between the cases of objection studied. While the cases of leftist objection took place during 2002-2003, the rightist objectors acted in 2005, after the disengagement plan was implemented. It is possible that during these years there were social changes in Israeli society that affected the varied treatment of the objectors. In order to try and answer this question it would be interesting to examine whether cases of leftist objection in 2005 were framed in the same manner as rightist objectors.

“The media can conceal or intensify contrasts, emphasize or hide them, sharpen or mitigate them” (Caspi 2001) – Indeed, analysis of the cases of objection

⁸ The chain of events leading to this move is further clarified in the article by Ran Binyamini in “Ha’Ayin Hashvi’it,” <http://www.idi.org.il/hebrew/article.asp?id=eaedd37996de3c4b8e55bdd1038f3a88>

discussed in this study demonstrates these activities (and particularly the effect of ideology on them), however it also proposes additional explanations worthy of thorough research. I hope that this study has further illuminated the issue of conscientious objection in Israel and that it will indeed constitute a point of departure for future research. A recurrent claim of Yitzchak Ro'eh (Ro'eh 1997 1989) is that stories create facts and not the opposite. This is confirmed by the results of the present study.

In addition to the attempt to provide explanations of these differences between the two aspects of the newspapers' character and their manner of framing there remain many open questions, which cannot be covered in the framework of the present study, as there are still main issues worthy of thorough examination. Are there more meaningful manners of framing? What can we learn from including a rightist popular newspaper in the research corpus? Will identical findings be revealed in the coverage of other political phenomena? To what degree does the qualitative character affect the ideological orientation and vice versa? Can they be separated?

This study attempted to unite the various framing techniques in an analysis framework that would provide one comprehensive umbrella, while attempting to serve as a starting point for answering these and other questions, however there remains much to be investigated. The most significant question in this context relates to the normative social aspect. Considering the fact that readers approach the text with limited prior knowledge and complete their understanding while reading and extracting various meanings from the text (Ro'eh 2001), a subject worthy of separate research would deal with the effect of these frames on public opinion. "News reports reflect a consensus, describe anomalies, and indicate the way in which society perceives itself", claims Yitzchak Ro'eh (1992). The status of objectors in Israel and the military response to their actions are not cohesive and absolute and they are controversial both in the social and academic field. What is the effect on public opinion of these different frames expressed by the newspapers? Examining changes in the narrative of reference to conscientious objection and to other cases may constitute a certain criterion not only of developments and changes in the world of the press, rather also of developments and changes in Israeli society in general.

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