Dr. Ada Gebel

**Between Thought and Leadership: Yitzhak Breuer and the Question of Sovereignty in the Land of Israel, 1936-1946**

The article discusses Rabbi Dr. Yitzhak Breuer, who was one of the leaders of Agudat Yisrael in the Land of Israel in the 1930s and 1940s.

In the article, I seek to examine a test case where Breuer’s principled positions as a thinker clashed with the political reality in which he operated as a political leader. Breuer’s perception of modern nationhood in general, and Jewish nationhood in particular, led him to adopt an extremely unusual position regarding the terms “sovereignty,” “state,” and “nation.” These philosophical foundations shaped his approach toward the Arab-Jewish conflict. I aim to discuss Breuer’s perceptions through a comparative perspective examining other players in the Jewish discourse of the period who expressed their opinion on these issues, including Brit Shalom, Jabotinsky, and so forth.

I will seek to argue that Breuer found himself in a complex reality in which he had to examine whether and how his thought could be implemented in a given political reality. As a leader, he chose pragmatism over ideology on more than one occasion.