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**Mother-tongue and Father-land:
Jewish Perspectives on Language and Identity**

**Lingua-madre e Terra-patria:
prospettive ebraiche su lingua e identità**

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ABSTRACTS

Yael Sela, FASHIONING BIBLICAL POETRY AS A DIASPORIC MOTHERLAND IN THE BERLIN HASKALAH

Moses Mendelssohn's (1729-1786) translation of Psalms, published in 1783 in Berlin, had little resonance among its intended non-Jewish German readership. Yet in enlightened Jewish circles, particularly among the young scholars of the emerging Haskalah movement (maskilim), the publication of the translation was instantly hailed as a historical event of salvific dimensions. Subsequently reprinted in a bilingual Hebrew-German edition titled *Sefer Zemirot Israel* for a broad Jewish readership, Mendelssohn's Psalms translation – rather than the translation of the Pentateuch – gained a pivotal role in the formation and dissemination of the Haskalah ideology that sought to provide a novel response to Exile. Addressing some hitherto unexplored questions about the early reception and interpretation of Mendelssohn in German Jewish thought, the article demonstrates how some maskilim fashioned Mendelssohn's translation as an act that redeemed the songs traditionally associated with King David, the “first messiah,” and the Temple state, thereby defying exilic loss and the temporal distance to the pre-exilic past. Renegotiating the mythology of Exile, they demarcated a new, non-geographical, diasporic motherland, offering a model of redemption from messianic urgency. Considered, on one hand, in light of Mendelssohn's translation theory and, on the other hand, against the backdrop of late eighteenth-century German politics of national literatures, which appropriated biblical Hebrew poetry as a model for national German poetry but denied a continuous link between the ancient Hebrews and contemporaneous diasporic Jews, the article explores how in *Sefer Zemirot Israel*, the maskil Joel Bril (1762-1802) constructed a foundational story of origins that rendered Hebrew lyric poetry (*melitsah*) the locus of the birth of the nation of Israel and of its eternal salvation, thereby claiming for Judaism a place as an a-historical, diasporic eternal nation among other nations.

Thomas Hainscho, A HOMELESS PATRIOT: FRITZ MAUTHNER'S SEARCH FOR A HOMELAND IN LANGUAGE

This paper investigates the political dimension of Fritz Mauthner's writings in respect to his language critique and his ambivalent relationship to Judaism. Its aim is to oppose the common understanding of Mauthner as a German-nationalist. For doing so, Mauthner's relation to Judaism is contextualised within his philosophical views on patriotism, mother-tongue, and the formation of social communities. By suggesting an anti-nationalist interpretation of his philosophy, it is argued that participation in a certain linguistic practice can explain what it means to belong to a certain community according to Mauthner. The paper discusses to what extent Mauthner's writings can be interpreted as anti-nationalist and concludes that he is too contradictory to be understood distinctively as a nationalist or an anti-nationalist.

Sabine Sander, SPRACHE ALS PORTABLES MUTTERLAND? ROSENZWEIG UND WITTGENSTEIN ÜBER MÖGLICHKEITEN UND GRENZEN VON SPRACHE

This paper is concerned with a comparison of two philosophical works which, at first glance, could not be more different: *The Star of Redemption* by Franz Rosenzweig and the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* by Ludwig Wittgenstein. Large parts of both works were written on the war front in World War I. What is shown is that language in both works was situated around the tension between language crisis and creative *poiesis*. In the strangeness and alienation of everyday war life, language

served as a portable home and residuum of familiarity and trust and thus advanced to a scholarly counter-world in which the experiences of crisis were intellectually transcended.

PHILIPP VON WUSSOW, THE POLITICAL IDEAS OF OTTO NEURATH. SCIENCE, JUDAISM, AND THE RISE OF EXPERTOCRACY

This article examines the political ideas of Otto Neurath (1882–1945), a major figure of the Vienna Circle. As it seeks to demonstrate, even the most technical aspects of Neurath's philosophical work – the philosophy of language, the argument in favor of visual language, and the theory of protocol statements – must be read as parts of a new political religion. The political religion of the Vienna Circle was meant to erase all traces of religion and tradition. In particular, it was devised to replace Judaism, which most members stemmed from: It induced the Jews to give up their traditions and habits and become members of a rational world society led by technological planning experts. The following analyses trace Neurath's political ideas from a remote expert opinion on the Jewish colonization of Palestine to his late political treatise on expertocracy and democracy, and proceed to some of the expert writings on science, philosophy, and language from there. Neurath spoke the language of democratization, but his own authoritarian inclinations came shining through. Ultimately, he advocated for expertocratic rule in the language of democratic empowerment.

LILIANE WEISSBERG, I NOMI DI FREUD. MADRE, PADRE E LA LINGUA DELLA GENEALOGIA

A person's name reflects his or her linguistic and cultural background. It also marks his or her genealogical affiliation, and may tell of his or her gender. Patronyms refer to the father; last names to a person's familial lineage. Every choice or change of names is meaningful. In his psychoanalytic work, Sigmund Freud analyzes his patients' language, and focuses as well on their use of names. The present essay discusses Freud's concept of names and naming, and the significance of names in Freud's work.

YEMIMA HADAD, *GILGUL* OF MEANING: MARTIN BUBER ON *VATERLAND* AND THE LAND OF THE FATHERS

The contemporary reader of Martin Buber's work will be struck and bewildered by his use of seemingly Neo-romantic and even *völkisch* vocabulary. Scholars have often noted Buber's uncomfortable vicinity to German nationalism and faulted him for teaching a Jewish version of blood-and-soil nativism. In this essay, I will explore the relationship between man (*adam*) and land (*adama*) in Buber's thought, arguing that, rather than borrowing from German nationalism, Buber reclaimed German concepts by restoring their Biblical origins and by refurbishing their religious and ethical meaning. Buber himself viewed this strategy as an act of re-translation that refused to relinquish the language of German nationalism. Confronting German nationalism and ethnic supremacy with an alternate meaning of its catchwords, Buber offered a subtle, yet no less radical, critique of *Volkism*. By restoring the ethical and religious meanings to concepts such as fatherland (*eretz ha-avot*/Vaterland) and soil (*adama*/Boden), Buber intended (1) to protect the Hebrew Bible from *völkisch* attacks and from neo-Marcionite theologies (such as Harnack's) that sought to separate the New Testament from the Hebrew Bible; and (2) to shield Zionism against *völkisch* and nativist influences. Thus, Buber stressed anew the ethical message and obligations that lay at the core of his Zionism and which he most clearly articulated in terms of his 'Biblical Humanism'.

VIVIAN LISKA, ESILIO EBRAICO TRA ESPERIENZA E METAFORA NEL PENSIERO CONTEMPORANEO

The idea of the Jew as paradigmatic exiled and migrant without soil and roots constitutes one of the sources of antisemitic discrimination. The condition of exile was, however, since biblical times, also an element of Jewish self-understanding. After the Second World War and the destruction of the European Jewish world, but also in face of the foundation of a Jewish nation-state, the role of the Jew as “eternal wanderer” had to be reconceived. In this context, some of the major Jewish and non-Jewish thinkers invoked Jewish exile to propagate a universally valid alternative, and even counterforce, to nationalist territorial ideologies. The article addresses fundamental questions raised by these concerns, and critically probes approaches to Jewish exile in the writings of Emmanuel Levinas, Maurice Blanchot, Giorgio Agamben and Alain Badiou.

GABRIELE GUERRA, „ALLE ZOGEN, ZOGEN INS LAND, ZOGEN VOM LAND“. ZUR MYSTIK VON RAUM UND ZEICHEN BEI KARL WOLFSKEHL

The text focuses on the poetic work of Karl Wolfskehl (1869-1948), an exponent of a literary and cultural season specific to the German intellectual climate around 1900. In particular, it investigates one of his poetic collections in which a mysticism of Jewish belonging clearly emerges – after 1933 – which sees in the Jewish Experience of the Exodus and the Diaspora (*Galut*) the absolutely central moment of identity, full of pathos, because it is the expression of a belonging based on the word and the poetic sign, conceived mystically as a new secret space of the Hebrew. This is why in the text we speak of ‘secret Judaism’ (as a parallel to the concept of ‘secret Germany’, invented precisely by Wolfskehl within the *George Kreis*).

PABLO M. DREIZIK, EL LENGUAJE PERDIDO DE LAS LIEBRES. ESPECISMO Y LENGUA MAUSCHELN EN LA OBRA DE FELIX SALTEN, SHOLEM YANKEN ABRAMOVITSH Y BERNARD MALAMUD

The condition of Yiddish as a privileged means of self-awareness of European Jews during the early twentieth century remained associated with certain artistic representations of animality. While representations of animality were generally seen as a means of demeaning minority communities – and even preparing their destruction – this essay examines these same representations as forms of cultural response and resistance by these communities. This resistance and cultural responses occurred through the use of Yiddish-speaking animals. The artistic representation of these talking animals aimed not only to respond to possible perpetrators who were strangers to the harassed community, but also to the new claims of the Jewish classes who denied their own recent past of destitution and marginalization.

ANGY COHEN – YUVAL Evri, UNCANNY BELONGINGS: AN ESSAY ABOUT LANGUAGE, BELONGING AND COLONIALISM IN THE WORK OF JACQUELINE SHOHET KAHANOFF, JACQUES DERRIDA AND ALBERT MEMMI

This essay reflects on three modalities of ‘Sephardi subjectivity’, that is, three ways of constituting the Sephardi-Jewish self, as they appear in the work of Jacqueline Kahanoff, Jacques Derrida and Albert Memmi. These three authors are approached as instances of a generation of Sephardi writers who witnessed the collapse of the Levantine world of their ancestors. We discuss their position in

between cultures and their responses to this historical 'in-betweenness', as well as their experience of language and their sense of belonging against the backdrop of colonialism, cosmopolitanism and decolonization.

LISA BLOCK DE BEHAR, 'SIEMPRE EL OTRO, SIEMPRE EL MISMO'. SOBRE LA IGUALDAD DIFERENTE DEL SER JUDÍO Y ALGUNAS OBRAS LITERARIAS Y CINEMATOGRAFICAS QUE LA REPRESENTAN

This essay attempts to identify the contradictions of a paradoxical formulation that focuses on a different kind of sameness, an apparent logical error that would question the Jewish condition. Through a poetic sameness, it would overcome the defamation caused by atavistic repetitions of stigmas that challenge the definition and its conceptual features, by defying lucidity and reason. This article will explore how this different sameness manifests itself in literary fiction and cinema, and how it recurs throughout history. By representing the Jew 'in the image' of those who are not so, cinema – an art of copies – makes evident this paradoxical difference that the literary imagination also approaches.