

## *ENGLISH ABSTRACTS*

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN'S SONGS TO THE REVIVAL OF HEBREW

Yael Reshef

The implementation of the idea of speech revival was intended from inception to be performed by children, due to the special capacity for language acquisition at a tender age. The activity of the proponents of the idea therefore focused for many years on young children – first in the lower grades of elementary schools, and later on also in kindergartens. The central place of songs in the educational work at this age lead writers, educators and grammarians to invest efforts in filling in the gaps that existed in that field of Hebrew culture at that time.

This paper focuses on the linguistic aspect of these songs, and discusses three types of roles they played in expanding the knowledge of Hebrew in the budding speech community: (1) The songs promoted the acquisition of Hebrew vocabulary, and served as a means for lexical expansion; (2) The songs promoted the children's familiarity with morphological and syntactic constructions of the higher, literary linguistic registers; (3) Children's songs were the harbinger of the transition to the new pronunciation system within the cultural system, both in the writing of new lyrics and in the setting of familiar lyrics written according to the Ashkenazi pronunciation to music according to the new pronunciation. The exposure to high register of Hebrew and to grammatical rules that do not form part of the spoken register through

the singing of songs contributed to the formation of register differentiation, an essential component in the transformation of Hebrew into the language of culture of the emergent speech community.

“GO ABROAD AND FEEL AT HOME” – ON  
DOMESTICATION IN TRANSLATED HEBREW  
CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

Zohar Shavit

This article examines how “domestication” – the process of transforming foreign elements of a translated text into familiar ones – has historically served to ease the tension between the strange and the known, by making what is foreign – familiar and recognized.

Based on several late nineteenth and early twentieth-century translations into Hebrew of classic works of children’s literature, including texts such as *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, *Tom Sawyer*, *Max und Moritz* and *Das doppelte Lottchen*, I maintain that at an early stage of its development, when the newly-emerging Hebrew culture used translated literature to build up a body of Hebrew children’s literature, translators felt a need to sustain and to fortify the new culture’s own identity. In order to do so they endeavored to make translated literature look and feel like an integral part of the Hebrew-language native bookshelf. Their approach to domestication involved converting nearly everything possible that belonged to the world of the source system into the world of the target system: first names, colloquial expressions, customs, religious holidays, and calendars, references to Jewish history and allusions to the Jewish canon. Only later,

when Hebrew literature was more confident in its existence as a robust and autonomous entity, did it open its gates to invited “strangers” and incorporate them in their own form – no longer cloaked in domestic garb but as legitimate strangers.

## ANTINOMISTIC IDEAS INGRAINED IN BIALIK’S CHILDREN’S LITERATURE

Ziva Shamir

Bialik’s literary works for the young reader (poems, nursery rhymes, stories, legends etc.) are seemingly naïve and pleasant works of art, with no hidden messages. A close reading reveals, however, a sinewy vein of political ideas, encouraging the young generation to forsake the old customs and habits of diaspora Jewry and start a new life in the old-new homeland. This revolution involved a new outlook on the many rabbinical prohibitions which made Jewish life so difficult and burdensome. This article traces the texts in which these ideas are ingrained, giving the children “permission” to abandon some of the 613 Commandments, to enable them to lead a new life. As opposed to Yehuda Leib Gordon who used heavy weapons in order to convince his readers, Bialik never preached his antinomistic ideas. Conversely, he intertwined them between the lines, hoping to establish in Eretz Israel a new life, unreligious and yet bound in many affinities to the mainstream of traditional Hebrew culture.

POLITICS, HEROISM AND CREATIVITY: ON  
ISRAELI BIOGRAPHIES FOR CHILDREN AND  
YOUNG ADULTS

Shai Rudin

Biographical writing in Israel for children and young adults started at the end of the 1960s, peaking mainly at the beginning of the 21st century. This was a period in which Israeli society shifted from collectivist to individualist values.

A comprehensive mapping of Israeli biographies for children and young adults shows didactic writing in two waves. The first wave is devoted to Jewish personages who contributed largely to the shaping of the Zionist idea. This wave began in the 1960s and continues to this day. The second wave, appearing at the beginning of the 21st century, has introduced into the literary system of children and young adults additional personages connected to politics and international creativity, and not necessarily connected to the Jewish people and their return to Israel. Hence, since the beginning of the 21st century, we have witnessed two parallel waves of writing rather than a totally ideological divergence.

This article maps the three thematic categories encompassing the corpus of original biographies for children and young adults. The corpus includes 55 works: biographies dealing with political personages; biographies dealing with personages connected to acts of heroism (occurring in the pre-State of Israel, or during the Holocaust); and biographies dealing with personages who have contributed spiritually, namely writers, poets and scientists. In addition to close readings of selected works illuminating the values rendered for the readers, the article focuses on the poetic strategies of

the authors. As a result, one may learn from the biographies about the lack of oriental-derived personages from the Zionist narrative, the scarcity of women perceived as worthy of a biography, and the balance existing between left- and right-wing personages.

### MIRIAM YALAN-SHTEKLIS AND YEHUDA ATLAS: A CONTINUATION OR A REVOLUTION?

Einat Baram Eshel

Miriam Yalan-Shteklis and Yehuda Atlas are considered key representatives of different generations of authors of Hebrew children's literature. Yalan-Shteklis is associated with the introduction of lyrical poetics into children's poetry in the middle of the 20th century, whereas Atlas is considered a realistic revolutionary in children's poetry at the end of the same century.

The notable differences between the two authors confirm the convention of the "rebellious development" of Hebrew children's poetry in the second half of the 20th century. Yet it seems that the "continuation" that links the corpuses of these two authors, alongside an investigation into the complex influence that Yalan-Shteklis had on the works of Atlas, have been entirely ignored. In my article, I make an effort to fill in the missing pieces and elucidate on what is common to both authors: a gradual, consistent and continuous subversion against the accepted discourse of children's literature.

The discussion focuses on two main issues: one dealing with Yalan-Shteklis's and Atlas's responses to the question "what is permissible to talk about" in children's poetry; and

the second dealing with both authors' innovations regarding the question "who is allowed to speak" in poetic texts. The discussion thus presents twentieth-century Hebrew children's poetry in a continuing chain of influences and intertextualities that exist alongside the most prominent poetic shifts that characterize it.

NO MORE "LITTLE JEWS WITHOUT BEARDS":  
INSIGHTS INTO YIDDISH CHILDREN'S  
LITERATURE IN EASTERN EUROPE PRIOR TO  
WORLD WAR I

Nathan Cohen

The first modern publications in Yiddish that were intended for young readers in Eastern Europe – either original works or translated from foreign languages – appeared at the turn of the 20th century as sporadic initiatives of a few writers. A more systematic literature for children in Yiddish started relatively late, and was linked to the developing Yiddish school system.

A growing number of writers and cultural activists, including Sholem Aleichem and Y.L. Peretz, became gradually aware of the importance and need for appropriate literature for children. Within less than a decade, the Yiddish book market was enriched with a variety of publications focused upon young readers whose ages ranged between 5 and 12. These publications included translations (or adaptations) from foreign languages as well as original works by known Yiddish writers. The first Yiddish periodicals for youngsters as well as textbooks also appeared then, prior to the First World War. Yiddishists and publishers established publishing companies

for this purpose and initiated pretentious projects of which few were realized, or partly realized.

The article reviews and examines the first initiatives for publishing Yiddish children's literature and periodicals; their initiators and their purpose, and to what extent these publications were accepted and their contribution to modern Yiddish literature.

*HAMODIA HATZAIR: A PLATFORM FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF ORTHODOX CHILDREN'S  
LITERATURE*

Yossef Fund

*Hamodia Hatzair* (Young Modia) is a children's supplement to *Hamodia*, the Orthodox Agudat Israel movement's newspaper.

*Hamodia Hatzair* appeared as a booklet for four and a half years (1952-1958), with two interruptions (hereafter, 'the early years'). It returned in 1986 as a column in *Hamodia* and after a decade it changed to booklet format (hereafter, 'the later years'). I reviewed the issues of the early years and the first 800 issues of the later years.

Ya'akov Gellis, the editor of the newspaper in the early years, was a journalist inexperienced in writing for children. He had assistance from some 50 writers, the majority also inexperienced. Each of them wrote one piece or a few pieces of primarily unpolished works confined to the religious field. Some of the pieces were translations of stories written by past years orthodox writers.

Chava Rosenberg, the newspaper's editor in the later years, began her career as a young teacher with no journalistic

experience. She found assistance from four women with good writing ability who contributed to the newspaper for many years and from other women who wrote a few pieces from time to time. The stories were written as 'educational literature' reflecting the values of Orthodox society. Many of these stories concerned the 'world of the child'. The stories were published mostly within the framework of series, and each series was dedicated to a particular area. Long serialized stories were printed alongside them. These stories dealt with various topics, including subjects as the treatment of exceptional children and their integration into the juvenile society, absorption of new immigrants, and the life of the Holocaust generation. The writers dared to use new literary forms and expand into different areas of writing. Their works presented the pleasant aspects of orthodox society and its values, and contributed to proud solidarity among the readers.

This writing created a generation of young readers who love books and encouraged productive creativity in Orthodox children's literature. Seventeen of the long stories were published as books and about 1,350 stories appeared in the newspaper. All that became an integral part of the Orthodox children's literature that has developed since the 1980s.

## JEWISH AND HEBREW EDUCATION ACROSS FRENCH SCHOOLS IN 1920S MOROCCO

David Guedj

The present paper offers an overview of Jewish and Hebrew education in French schools across urban communities in Morocco during the 1920s. By analyzing reports written by Jewish education inspectors in those schools, I show



that Jewish and Hebrew studies in those institutes covered Hebrew language, religious instruction, and Jewish history. Three new developments can be found in the early twentieth century that effected change in Hebrew studies in Morocco after years of traditional Jewish education: the opening up of the curriculum and the addition of new subjects, the introduction of textbooks, and the inclusion of girls in the circle of Hebrew and religious studies in Morocco. The changes to Hebrew studies in Morocco were influenced by many factors, including the community leadership, the educators, the Alliance israélite Universelle headmasters and the teaching staff, the students and parents. I posit that in the period in question, education continued to exist as traditional, but for the first time, Hebrew-Jewish repertoire components of different tones started to appear next to the extant cultural repertoire. Those different tones are the product of cultural interactions between the Jewish communities of Morocco and Jewish communities elsewhere.

#### A PORTRAIT OF THE COMPASSIONATE ONE AS A YOUNG GIRL, OR THE FIRST HEBREW DOG

Naama Harel

The writings of Devorah Baron (1887–1956), the first woman to enter the Modern Hebrew canon, largely depict the life of Jewish women in the late nineteenth century shtetl. Other disadvantaged individuals also abound in her stories, among them the poor, orphans, people with disabilities, as well as animals. Animal oppression in Baron's work is often compared to oppression within humanity (and to women's oppression in particular), but a detailed interpretative account thereof has

not yet been given. This article examines the woman-animal linkage in “ha-Raḥmaniyah” (“The Compassionate One”, 1905), one of Baron’s earliest tales, which she published at the age of eighteen in the Hebrew youth periodical *ha-Chayim veḥa-teva* (*Life and Nature*). Centering around a rebellious girl with a strong sense of justice who attempts to rescue a wretched dog, “ha-Raḥmaniyah” has been perceived as a simplistic children story. Yet already in this early work, Baron creates – through both thematic and structural means – a complex and multi-voiced work. One voice tells of a compassionate and sentimental girl from a hegemonic-masculine perspective, while on the other side the girl is allowed to express a bolder and more challenging stance, which links patriarchal, capitalist, and anthropocentric oppression.

“MUTE FRIENDS” – BETWEEN CHILDREN AND  
ANIMALS IN EARLY 20TH CENTURY HEBREW  
FICTION

Rotem Preger Wagner

The paper explores child-animal relations in early 20th century Hebrew fiction. The first part discusses a story by Shalom Ya'akov Abramovitsh (Mendele Moykher Sforim) about a friendship between a child and a calf, which reveals a comprehensive and extraordinary approach toward animals and humans. The second part is concerned with the early stories of the forgotten Yiddish and Hebrew author Moshe Stavy (Stavsky), who was among the first Jewish-Hebrew writers that dedicated their work to animals. The paper follows the explicit and implicit connections between these texts, which

stem from both the kind of knowledge and perspective they offer on human-animal relations and from their contribution to the representation of children in Hebrew literature and the constitution of a Hebrew children's culture. In both these aspects, Mendele and Stavsky operated in a space where the modern distinction between children and adults, and within it the distinction between children's literature and adult literature, was just coming into being. This paper attempts, therefore, to examine child-animal relations in this crucial time in the formation of modern Hebrew literature through a twofold interest in both the relations between the human and the natural and the relations between adults and children.

“I AM IN SOME WAY MY CHILD”: A STUDY,  
INSPIRED BY LEVINAS, OF THE STAGES IN  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ETHICAL STANCE  
IN DAVID GROSSMAN'S WORKS FOR YOUNG  
READERS

Dorit Lemberger

The article takes examples from David Grossman's writing for children and teenagers as an expression of a “philosophy of childhood” inspired by Emmanuel Levinas's ideas of the Other and the Face. This examination seeks to shed light on the ethical aspect that emerges from the parent-child relations that impact both readers simultaneously.

David Grossman's fiction is replete with parent-child relationships. The ethical aspect, in the sense formulated by Levinas, is one of their conspicuous features. The key principles of ethics, according to Levinas, are to welcome the Other with sensitivity, attention, and responsibility. In

Grossman's writing for young readers, the characters meet the Other in ways that apply simultaneously to the parent and the child. The article itself, however, focuses on an account of his characters' ethical growth and shows how, as the story proceeds, a discourse space is created in which the encounter with the Face of the Other leads to the emergence of an intersubjectivity that culminates in the ability to understand the Other and accept responsibility towards him. Building on Levinas's conceptual structure, it will interpret Grossman's children's books as a dialogical discourse space in which subjectivity is constructed from a positive encounter with the Other. This encounter does not rest on mutuality or equality, but instead on sensitivity towards and responsibility for the Other, formed in the process of reading, both in the plot and in the readers themselves.

### WORLDS OF IMAGINATION: NURIT YUVAL'S WORKS FOR CHILDREN AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT

Vered Tohar

This article is a contemporary comprehension of the works of the Israeli author, illustrator, and editor for children Nurit Yuval (born: Jerusalem 1940). Yuval was artistically active for over fifty years, in which she was a part of the digitation revolution of the book industry in Israel. Regardless of her nonconservative attitude to children's culture, the article focuses on her use of papercuts, which is an ancient Jewish art, in contemporary Hebrew children's literature. A large discussion is devoted to the way she adapted and illustrated the *Mishlei Shualim* [*Fox Fables*] of Berechiah ben Natronai

ha-Naqdan, a popular Hebrew 13th century compilation. In the appendix of the article one can find four lists: a list of her academic articles regarding writing for children, a list of her books as an author, a list of her books as an illustrator, and a list of her books as an adaptor.