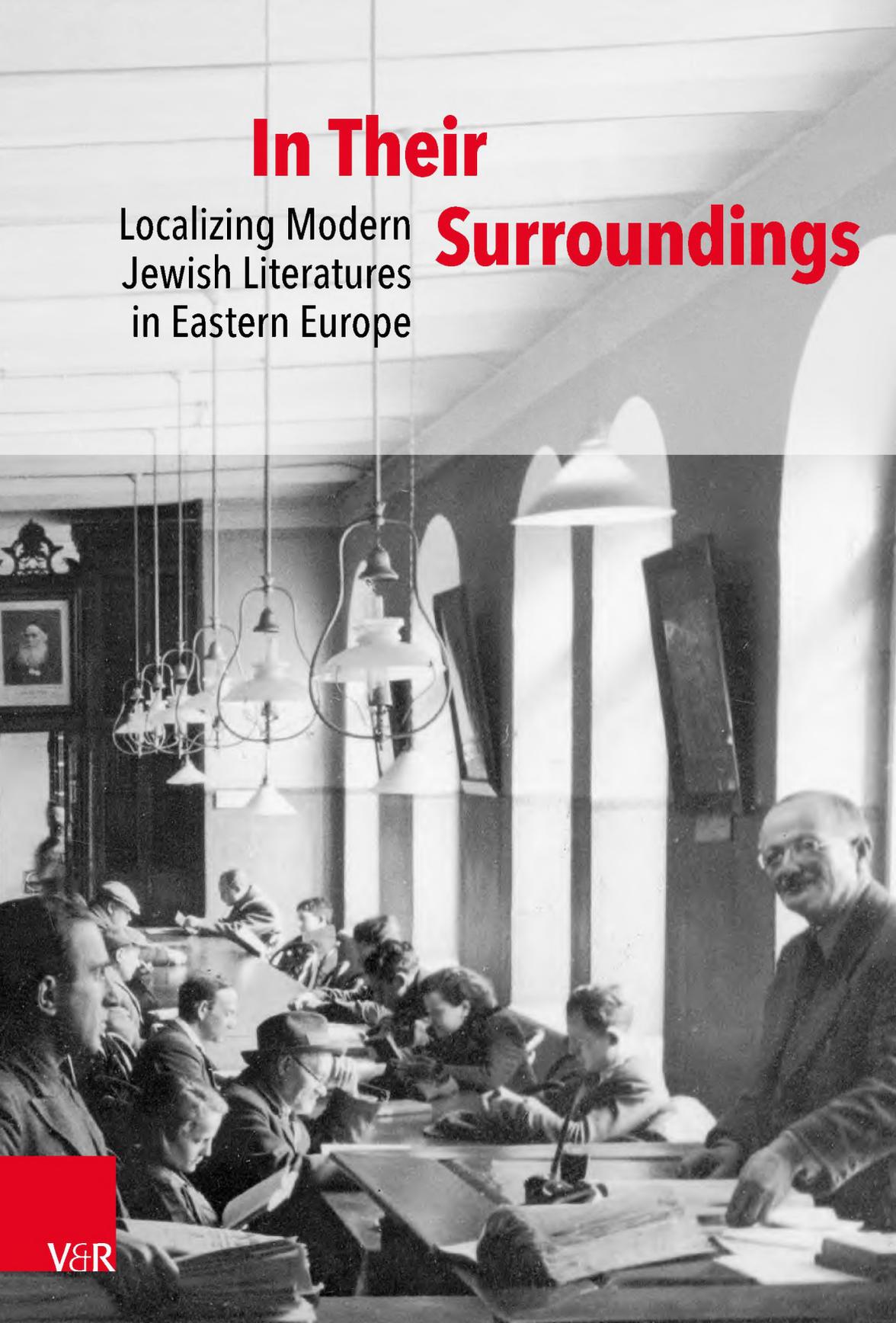


# In Their

Localizing Modern  
Jewish Literatures  
in Eastern Europe

# Surroundings



LILAH NETHANEL

## The Threshold of Sensibilities: David Frishman's Introduction to the Hebrew Translation of George Eliot's Novel *Daniel Deronda* (1893)

This article presents a new reading of David Frishman's 1893 introduction to his Hebrew translation of the novel *Daniel Deronda* by George Eliot. Frishman was a pivotal cultural agent of modern European Hebrew literature, which his translations most beautifully reveal as a culture caught in between, in motion, and in constant reconfiguration. He welcomed the influences of neighboring book cultures. In fact, he believed that Jewish cultural particularism could only be affirmed through the dialogue with other cultures, by means of translation and adaptation.

In what follows, I will discuss Frishman's cultural vision and concept of modern European Hebrew literature, with a focus on his early translations. Based on the introduction to his translated work *Daniel Deronda*, I will explore his conflictual position on this particular translation. The last section of the article is dedicated to Frishman's interpretation of the revival of Jewish national culture as a late "age of sensibilities."

### David Frishman's Cultural Vision

The symbolic assets of modern Jewish literature are to be located beyond the borders of the cities where its authors, publishers, and readers were based. While the majority of Frishman's early Hebrew works were printed in Warsaw, his literary and critical output expresses a complex composition of cultural influences.

As a Hebrew author under the influence of a rising new Jewish subjectivity, Frishman incorporated in his works Romantic themes and narratives, the questions of revolt and tradition, alienation and origin. He experimented with a modern performative literary expression, drawing on Jewish thought and biblical themes, on the one hand, and the urban and in-

**Fig. 1:** The writers David Frishman, Sholem Abramovitsh, and Yankev Dinezon (second row, third to fifth from left) together with the teachers of the Jarocziński Trade School in Łódź, 1909.

dustrialized European literary sphere, on the other. One of his early works, published in 1900, is a Hebrew translation of George Gordon Byron's play *Cain*. Byron's romantic return to the biblical ancestry of the sin is transformed by Frishman into a complex cultural gesture of restoring the biblical Hebrew language. He developed this cultural ges-

ture further in a cycle of biblical short stories entitled *Ba-midbar* (In the Desert). A modern interpretation of the exodus of the People of Israel from the *Book of Numbers*, Frishman uses the themes of exile and return to tell a romantic legend of fear and longing, lyric perceptions, and transgressive figures, following Byron's model.<sup>1</sup>

Rather than an exemplary novelist or poet, Frishman was mainly a cultural agent, a translator and editor, drafting the structure and outlines of the library of modern Hebrew writings (fig. 1). As such, his work gave rise to a most intriguing Jewish particularism, which could only be established and recognized on a semi-global scale, that is, in between other national cultures, in correspondence with them and under their influence.<sup>2</sup>

Frishman's documented conflict with Zionism reveals the fundamental principles of his national cultural vision.<sup>3</sup> Significantly different from the symbolic assets of modern nationalism, Frishman's literary activity was not based on narratives but on sensibilities.<sup>4</sup> He envisioned the creation of a

<sup>1</sup> David Fishelov, *Tirgumo shel Frishman le-"Kayin" me'et Byron, u-mashma'utaw* [Frishman's Translation of "Cain" by Byron, and Its Meaning, in: *Mehkerei Yerushalayim be-sifrut ivrit/Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature* 24 (2011), 125–142.

<sup>2</sup> The term "non-universal global," suggested by Lital Levy and Allison Schachter, remarkably describes the ground of differences sustaining modern European Hebrew literature. *Idem*, *A Non-Universal Global. On Jewish Writing and World Literature*, in: *Prooftexts. A Journal of Jewish Literary History* 36 (2017), no. 1–2, 1–26.

<sup>3</sup> Iris Parush, *Kanon sifrutit ve-ide'ologiya le'umit. Bikoret ha-sifrut shel Frishman be-hashwa'ah le-vikoret ha-sifrut shel Klozner ve-Brener* [Literary Canon and National Ideology. Frishman's Literary Criticism in Comparison to Klausner's and Brenner's Literary Criticism], *Jerusalem* 1992, 17–32.

<sup>4</sup> This concept was already noted in the mid-1860s by the Hebrew critical thinker Avraham Uri Kovner. In his collection of essays entitled *Heker davar* (Investigations), Kovner argues that the modern Hebrew literature in Moses Mendelssohn's time is characterized by its groundbreaking emphatic expression: "Then we first saw that the Hebrew language could render this type of sentiment—one whose origin is not in

modern European Hebrew literature, mainly by means of translation. Far from encouraging direct imitation—in fact, he resented the Hebrew authors of his time who facilely emulated the style of European authors—he strove to achieve a unique Hebrew performance of the European literary canon and to develop a far more complex model of cultural influence.<sup>5</sup> His vision was to expand the Hebrew literary expression, since literature was, in his understanding, crucial for the conception of a new modern Jewish subjectivity, the only language capable of representing the social and cultural issues of the time: alienation and banishment, the meaning of ancient cultures and the origins of culture, the quest for a modern Jewish identity.

Frishman added detailed introductions to several of his early translations in which he presented the original literary work and its author and argued for the necessity and importance of the translation. These texts are important sources from which to draw a picture of Frishman's cultural vision and notion of influence.

### Frishman's Introduction to *Daniel Deronda*

First published in 1893, Frishman's translation of *Daniel Deronda* by George Eliot appeared around fifteen years after the original English version of 1876.<sup>6</sup> With a maze of national identities at its center, the novel recounts the revelation of Daniel Deronda's Jewish origins and reflects

Heaven. We read things, in the Hebrew language, about love, hope, beauty, and similar feelings—things which Hebrew men did not dare speak, let alone read in books" (translated from Hebrew by Mirjam Hadar). Avraham Uri Kovner, *Heker davar. Ve-hu' kevuzat ma'amarim shonim, le-ruah ha-zeman bi-sefat avar* [Investigations. And This Is a Set of Different Articles for the Spirit of the Time in the Hebrew Language], *Warsaw* 1865, 39.

<sup>5</sup> The relation of modern Hebrew literature to non-Jewish European literature was extensively discussed by the major thinkers and critical writers of the period. The Zionist thinker Aḥad Ha-Am (Asher Zvi Ginsberg) discussed the cultural phenomenon of "imitation" in his 1893 essay *Hikuy ve-hitbolelut* (Imitation and Assimilation). The Hebrew scholar and literary critic Joseph Klausner also referred to this issue in his 1905 collection of essays entitled *Yahadut ve-enoshiyut. Kovez ma'amarim* (Judaism and Humanism. Collection of Articles).

<sup>6</sup> George Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, transl. by David Frishman, *Warsaw* 1893. The translated novel was first published in a weekly series by Aḥiasaf publishing. This editorial decision was aimed to reach a wider public. The economic calculation in this case is similar to the penny-book's model of cheap print and modest textual length. See the publisher's foreword, entitled *El ha-kor'im!* (To the Readers!), to the opening of the 1893 translated edition of the novel, i–ii. Mikhal Dekel explains the considerable delay in the publication of the Hebrew translation with the proto-Zionist views expressed in the novel: "This delay was, in part, because Eliot's nationalistic vision preceded the Zionist movement by two full decades." *Idem*, *The Universal Jew. Masculinity, Modernity, and the Zionist Moment*, *Evanston, Ill.*, 2010, 87f.

on the decadent nationalism of the nobility in mid-nineteenth-century England. It presents two narratives: that of the English nobility, embodied in the female protagonist, Gwendolen Harleth, and of the Jewish minority, whose increasing embrace of modern nationalism is viewed through the eyes of Daniel Deronda (fig. 2).<sup>7</sup>

The publication of the novel's Hebrew translation followed the rise of the Zionist movement and was received by the public as a proto-Zionist literary work. Frishman shortened the first half of the original text, beginning with Gwendolen's early life and ending with her romance and engagement to the wealthy Henleigh Mallinger Grandcourt.<sup>8</sup> As a result, the translation is marked by a much greater focus on the figure of Daniel Deronda and his quest for answers about his Jewish identity.

Far from a mere transmission of the original material, the Hebrew translation constitutes a cultural performance, radically altering the novel's narrative center and thematic scope. This cultural performance was encouraged by political tendencies within both, the Hebrew literary field, above all editors and publishing houses, as well as the public, i. e. potential readers. The initial publisher of the translation, Aḥiasaf in Warsaw, was in fact a Zionist institution, founded by Ben-Avigdor (Abraham Leib Shalkovich), himself a novelist and literary agent.<sup>9</sup>

In the publisher's foreword of the 1893 edition, the Zionist perspective is made explicit (fig. 3). It is presented as primary justification for the publication of the Hebrew translation: "Since the novel is distinguished, marvelous and most of its content is dedicated to the Jewish people, their merits and aspirations [...], who would refuse to admit that this admirable book should be translated into Hebrew for the Hebrew readership?"<sup>10</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Marc E. Wohlfarth, *Daniel Deronda and the Politics of Nationalism*, in: *Nineteenth Century Literature* 53 (1998), no. 2, 188–210.

<sup>8</sup> The Hebrew version of the novel followed an editorial decision opposite to the one suggested by the English literary critic F. R. Leavis. Leavis suggested to "extricate" Gwendolen's plot "for separate publication." According to him, such a novel, entitled "Gwendolen Harleth," "would be a self-sufficient and very substantial whole" (144). Concerning Deronda, the critic claimed, "As for the bad part of Daniel Deronda, there is nothing to do but cut it away" (143). Leavis considered the tragic figure of Gwendolen to be Eliot's important achievement in the novel. Idem, *The Great Tradition*. George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad, London 2008 (first publ. 1948).

<sup>9</sup> On the Jewish literary infrastructure in late nineteenth-century Warsaw, see Nathan Cohen, *Distributing Knowledge. Warsaw as a Center of Jewish Publishing, 1850–1914*, in: Glenn Dynner / François Guesnet (eds.), *Warsaw. The Jewish Metropolis. Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky*, Leiden 2015, 180–206. On the literary agency of Ben-Avigdor and his enterprises in Warsaw, see Shachar Pinsker, *Warsaw in Hebrew Literature 1880–1920. New Perspectives*, in: *Studia Judaica* 18 (2015), no. 1, 105–137.

<sup>10</sup> El ha-kor'im!, i. All Hebrew passages quoted in this article were translated by Mirjam Hadar, unless indicated otherwise.

Fig. 2: Gwendolen Harleth at the roulette table.

The author indicates that "most of the novel" is dedicated to unique traits and hopes of the People of Israel. This perception is reinforced in the translated version by omitting much of the story's first part and focusing on its second "Jewish" part. Frishman's introduction follows and underpins the publisher's foreword, stressing the political leaning of the novel toward Jewish national revival. As if to give his formal consent to the Zionist

interpretation, Frishman writes: “Upon its publication, critics said about this book that ever since Lessing’s *Nathan the Wise*, nothing like it had been written about the Jewish people [the People of Israel] and their faith, their tribulations and futures, and everything else concerning it, as well as its legacy.”<sup>11</sup>

But in the following sentence, Frishman expresses his reservations about the political role contributed to the novel: “And this is not merely a book about philosophy, as the book Lessing wrote: It will capture the reader’s interest not only because of its scholarship, but through the many imaginative scenes the narrative includes.”<sup>12</sup> Frishman’s cultural aspiration in translating *Daniel Deronda* into Hebrew differs from its presumed political affinity with the Jewish readership: Eliot’s philosemitic approach and her support of the rising Jewish nationalism. By pointing

at the importance of “the story which allures the reader’s heart,” Frishman suggests that the literary condition of the national revival belongs to the emotive order rather than the rational or “philosophical” one.<sup>13</sup> Looking at the translated version, it seems that Frishman worked against this argument, by consenting to omit many of the “attractive images” the novel contains. In the following paragraph from the introduction, he discusses this editorial decision (figs. 4 and 5):

“Why has this wonderful story not been translated until now? It is because the first part of the story does not deal at all with Jewish and Hebrew matters only, but with life in general and that of the English aristocracy and their families. And so the translators—fearing that this first part would be taxing for the Hebrew readership and cause them to lose patience, while waiting for the other parts—refrained. This was on the mind of the present Hebrew translator as he offers

<sup>11</sup> Eliot, Daniel Dironda, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Eliot, Daniel Dironda, 3.

<sup>13</sup> This is in fact the central claim of Frishman as a critical writer. Iris Parush already noted that Frishman’s perception of the national revival culture is based upon a revival of sensibilities. Idem, *Kanon sifrutit ve-ide’ologiya le’umit*, 144.

you his translation, and this is what moved him to write this short introduction. The [novel’s] first part, [like the rest] too, by means of its rich imagery, and especially its many reflections based on psychology and causality, extends much wisdom to any reader, any human. But for any reader who wishes to read this novel as a Hebrew, the translator felt obliged to adjust and abridge this first part.”<sup>14</sup>

The abridged translation placed Frishman in a conflictual position. In the thriving Hebrew book culture of late nineteenth-century Warsaw—with the translation of contemporary European literature and the popularization of modern Hebrew reading—the fundamental question of Jewish modernization resonated once more: What was the designation of Jewish particularism and how did it relate to the European idea of universalism? Frishman’s distinction between the reader as a human being and as a national “Hebrew” evoked a remotely similar notion held by maskilic author Naphtali Herz Wessely (1725–1805). In Wessely’s 1782 manifest *Divre shalom ve-emet* (Words of Peace and Truth), he articulated the rise of Jewish modernity by distinguishing between secular and religious knowledge. This distinction was further elaborated by Eastern European

<sup>14</sup> Eliot, Daniel Dironda, 5.

Fig. 3: Title page of the Hebrew translation of *Daniel Deronda*.

Jewish thinkers throughout the nineteenth century, until it reached a significant culmination in the national revival period. By conjuring a universal image of the reader, “the reader as a human being,” Frishman leads the discussion beyond the maze of national identities, to the question of Jewish subjectivity. To him, this was the hallmark of particularism.

However, in the conclusion of the paragraph, Frishman admits that his “national” obligation toward the Hebrew reader had led him to shorten the novel’s first part. Frishman’s apparent contradiction could be partly explained by David Damrosch’s theory of translations and modern national literatures, according to which nationalism should be affirmed through the symbolic expansion of the national language by embedding other national literatures, cultural traditions, and poetic sensibilities.<sup>15</sup> The translation is not merely a source of outside inspiration: It is destined for the representation of the modern Jewish self.

In the following paragraph, Frishman carefully elaborates on the apparatus of sensibilities represented in the first part of the novel. He does so only implicitly, by marking these omitted sections as “foreign” to the Hebrew reader’s expectations:

“The Hebrew reader will encounter many images and scenes in the first part that will be foreign to him and his sensibilities. The Hebrew reader has not yet tried to follow the footsteps of those who play the game of roulette in splendid holiday resorts; nor is he acquainted with how the English aristocracy spend their holidays together; shoot at targets in order to see who hits the mark and who does not; ride on horseback in order to see whether ‘my horse will arrive before yours.’ The Hebrew reader does not want to spend his time reading about a young man who has lost his heart to a girl when neither of them is Jewish, and indeed, neither of their forefathers attended the events on Mount Sinai, so that none of this will touch their hearts. If some Hebrew writer, say Ploni Ben-Ploni [a John Doe], writes a tale about a lass called Sarah-Rivkah, the reader will be delighted. But when an author called Shakespeare decides to write about a young woman named Ophelia, the Jewish soul is put off. She would be blessed if her name were Rahel-Leah, but if it is Gwendolen it is repulsive and will not please, even if the author had tried a thousand times to describe the mysteries and riddles of her soul and the most beautiful qualities of her heart.”<sup>16</sup>

<sup>15</sup> David Damrosch, *Translations and National Literature*, in: Sandra Bermann/Catherine Porter (eds.), *A Companion to Translation Studies*, Chichester et al. 2014, 349–360, here 351.

<sup>16</sup> Eliot, Daniel Dironda, 5f.

This description of the Hebrew reader is eccentric and parodic. Frishman chose to illustrate the reader’s expectations by distinguishing between the Jewish and non-Jewish names of female protagonists. He contrasts the generic names Sarah-Rivkah or Rahel-Leah—the biblical “mothers” of the Jewish nation—with Shakespeare’s Ophelia and Eliot’s Gwendolen, representing the female legacy of English literature. This distinction meant to establish a set of cultural segregations between the biblical and the modern, the Jewish community and the gentile society, the identification of the self and the representation of others. Frishman sought subjectivity at the margins of the imposing discourse of identities—not in Eliot’s London but in Ben-Avigdor’s Hebrew Warsaw; not through the gender-identified epic narratives of emigration and colonialism, but by revealing “the inner soul” through the feminine legacy of literature.

As Mikhal Dekel has already pointed out, by omitting Gwendolen’s romantic storyline, Frishman “sacrificed aesthetic achievements for a national aim,” as the latter admits himself.<sup>17</sup> And indeed, by the end of the nineteenth century, the modernization of Hebrew book culture faced a new phase of politization following a series of developments: the assassination of Tsar Alexander II in 1881 and increasing politization of Russian Jewry; the violent attacks by civilians against the Jewish population in the southern regions of the Russian Empire and its coverage in the Jewish press; the Dreyfus affair in France and Émile Zola’s newspaper article *J’Accuse ...!*, which incorporated the modern principle of publicly imposing authorship; the explicit national turn of major outlets of the Hebrew press and authors, such as notably the daily *Ha-Meliz*; and finally, the post-1881 writings of prominent Jewish authors, among them Yehuda Leib Gordon, Aḥad Ha-Am, and Sholem Yankev Abramovitsh. Frishman’s early translations, published during the 1890s, are all inscribed in that political context. Furthermore, most potential Hebrew readers of the novel were Eastern European Jews, often geographically and culturally foreign to the Western European lifestyle, and to some extent also to Western European Jewry.

The decision to exclude many of the “non-Jewish” chapters of Eliot’s novel was part of Frishman’s ongoing negotiation with the modern Hebrew readership. Only a decade earlier, in 1883, he had published a pamphlet entitled *Tohu va-vohu*, lambasting the Hebrew journal *Ha-Meliz*. Frishman accused the editors of misguiding its Hebrew readers and preventing them from acquiring a modern literacy. In the following years, he also

<sup>17</sup> Dekel, *The Universal Jew*, 88.

challenged Jewish national particularism and Zionist thought.<sup>18</sup> Although his choice to translate Eliot's *Daniel Deronda* served Zionist ideology, it seems that his introduction to the novel is meant to be read "beyond" the contemporary Hebrew reader to whom it is addressed. The introduction is the only textual realm permitting a detailed description of the omitted "non-Jewish" parts of the novel. While the translation itself was shortened in order to adapt the plot to the political expectations of the Hebrew readership, the introduction expresses a critical point of view. This is where Frishman was able to convey his reservations about his own editorial decision.

### The Threshold of Sensibilities

Frishman's continuing textual negotiation with the Hebrew reader is expressed in the following sentences of his introduction to Eliot's novel, where he poses a series of questions:

"What can such things mean to the Hebrew reader? What has he got to do with these scenes from life, which are good for each and every human being as such? What business does he have with psychology or with causality or ethics? Are these the psychological forces driving the Hebrew man, and were these actions committed by a Jewish man? Does he care about a boy whose heart attached itself to a girl, and about the mysteries of the soul he will witness there, while the boy and the girl are strangers to us, after all, and foreign. The Hebrew reader has not yet been acquainted with all this, and therefore the translator saw it right to omit many of these acts and words."<sup>19</sup>

Although addressed to the Hebrew reader, the questions are all formulated in the third person. Their rhetorical function is to place Frishman's criticism beyond the present cultural situation and beyond the historical conditions of modern Hebrew literacy. This form of address appears again in Frishman's introduction to his Hebrew translation of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales, first published in 1896:

"But as for the Sons of Israel—will they understand who Andersen is and what he might mean for them? It would be easy to tell them the following: Look, Andersen's fairy tales were translated into over

<sup>18</sup> See Iris Parush's extensive study on Frishman's critical writings. Idem, *Kanon sifrut ve-ide'ologiya le'umit*.

<sup>19</sup> Eliot, *Daniel Deronda*, 6.

forty languages. All the nations of Europe, and many Asian and African communities have translated these wonderful stories into their languages!"<sup>20</sup>

Frishman reveals his thoughts to an ideal reader, allegedly freed from the constraints of national identity. This figure appears in several of Frishman's early writings. Besides the introductions to Eliot's and Andersen's translations, it is also the addressee of Frishman's 1890s critical essays *Mikhtavim al devar ha-sifrut* (Letters on Literature), this time represented by a female person. The ideal reader has a defined role in Frishman's cultural vision as it was developed during the late nineteenth century. He or she differs from the modern Hebrew reader in their literary education and aesthetic inclinations. As a representation of the universal reader—"the reader as a human being"—he or she opposes the national Hebrew as well as the English reader mentioned in the introduction to *Daniel Deronda*. By soliciting this ideal universal reader, Frishman breaks through the historical and political conditions of modern Hebrew reading and opens the gate to the threshold of modern sensibilities. On this ground, Frishman argues in the introduction to Andersen's fairy tales for the lyric lesson of literature. He considers the representation of sensitivity essential to the Jewish national and cultural revival far more than the dramatic representation of the epic:

"I myself recollect how my most ardent wish was that the Sons of Israel should be given plenty of lyrical poems, an idea I expressed in articles more than once. I argued that only this would provide the Sons and Daughters of Israel with the dew of revival, tenderness and subtlety, pleasure and comfort. Maybe in this way we would manage to smooth out their twisted hearts, and perhaps remove their burdensome mood, the dryness of their soul and their blunted heart, as these [poems] would act to give them some added spirit."<sup>21</sup>

As in the case of Eliot's novel, Frishman does not simply intend to integrate the translated literary work into the modern Hebrew reading circle, but to reconstruct it as a genuine part of the Hebrew literary imagination. For the period of Jewish national revival, his work represents a precise contribution to the Jewish nation-building project: Frishman suggests an alternative Hebrew cultural performance of European literature, turning from the epic

<sup>20</sup> H. Andersen, *Hagadot ve-sipurim* [Tales and Stories], transl. by David Frishman, Warsaw 1896, iii. This edition was printed by Alexander Ziskind Cohen.

<sup>21</sup> Andersen, *Hagadot ve-sipurim*, iii.

tales of origins and territories to the introverted construction of modern subjectivity (fig. 6). The core of modern Hebrew literary revival lays in the sentimental education, apprehended as much from the European Romantic themes of revolt and wandering as from later modernist urban sensibilities: attraction and repulsion, beauty and ugliness, desire and indifference.<sup>22</sup> Besides the adaptation of narratives and themes, Frishman's work builds on emotive expressions inspired by major national European cultures.

This conclusion contributes to our understanding of modern Hebrew literary revival as post-Romantic Jewish "age of sensibility": the legacy of intensities, inclinations, and aesthetic perceptions is the ideal source of cultural influence. This ideal source—a non-national universal one—precedes the conflict-

ual maze of national identities, only to be later reintroduced into the national Hebrew literature through a cultural performance expressing its particularity.

**Fig. 6:** Portrait of David Frishman by N. Kaselovitsh, consisting of the words of one of the writer's poems.

<sup>22</sup> The influence of romantic themes in European literature on Jewish sexual and sentimental conventions was studied by Naomi Seidman. *Idem*, *The Marriage Plot*. Or, *How Jews Fell in Love with Love, and with Literature*, Stanford, Calif., 2016.

Frishman's vision of modern European Hebrew literature is explained in the following paragraph, taken from his introduction to a collection of poems by Aleksandr Pushkin:

"Gabirol and Spinoza were born from the womb of Judean women, Shakespeare and Newton were sons of English women, Goethe and Helmholtz were the cherished children of Ashkenaz [Germany], Copernic and Mickiewicz were beloved among the Poles—each and every nation takes just pride in the best of its children because they are the nation's offspring. Yet the virtue and spiritual joy that these gifted people brought down from heaven through their work, this virtue and joy are the legacy of the whole of humanity. Though these great people are the sons of their nations and homeland in the flesh, in spirit they are brothers to all who were created in the image of God, from the one end of heaven unto the other."<sup>23</sup>

The biblical expression "from the one end of heaven unto the other" is addressed to the People of Israel before their return from exile to the Promised Land. It refers to the divine presence, which is primordial to the historical time and space, indicating the permanent sovereignty of the divine law. Frishman borrows this expression in order to define the ideal sphere of culture, located beyond territorial boundaries and beyond the historical age of nationalism.

European Hebrew literature is, thus, a construct holding an ideal universalism—the figure of "the reader as a human being"—together with a cultural performance of national particularism, that is the Hebrew translation as a unique version of the original. In this construct, Frishman's cultural project aimed for a change of modalities and not of actions or narratives. It aimed at creating an emotive expression, which would inherit the rational discourse and reading practices of modern European Jewry: Passion instead of argumentation, impulse instead of reasoning, free evocation instead of savant quotation, eclectic and autodidactic desire for knowledge instead of instructed transmission.

<sup>23</sup> Aleksandr Pushkin, *Mi-shire Pushkin* [Selected Poems by Pushkin], transl. by David Frishman, St. Petersburg 1899, ii.

## Literature

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*Naomi Seidman*, The Marriage Plot. Or, How Jews Fell in Love with Love, and with Literature, Stanford, Calif., 2016.

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