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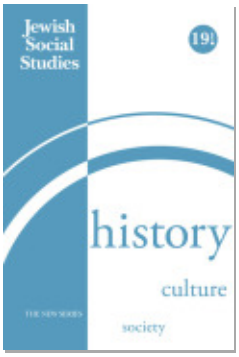

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Modern Hebrew, Esperanto, and the Quest for a Universal Language

Liora R. Halperin

Abstract

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Zionist efforts to promote Hebrew as a modern vernacular not only emphasized Hebrew's standing as a Jewish tongue but also affirmed the language's universalist bona fides. These claims were buoyed by long-standing Jewish and Christian traditions that claimed Hebrew was a transcendent language tied to universal human values. During a period distinguished by modern universal language programs, however, Hebrew's limited reach and apparent artificiality provoked a sense of unease about its universalist claims. This unease was expressed in programs to westernize Hebrew orthography and enhance its global spread and in a series of often anxious comparisons, offered in the Hebrew periodical press, between Hebrew and Esperanto, the most popular universal language program of the day.

Key words: Esperanto, Hebrew language, universalism

South of Rabin Square in Tel Aviv is a small street named for the creator of Esperanto, Ludwig Lazarus Zamenhof (born Leyzer Levi Zamenhof in Bialystok in 1859). In a city defined by its commitment to Hebrew—the "First Hebrew City," in the estimation of its founders—Tel Aviv's recognition of a language claiming to embody transnational ideals and universal human values might seem curious. Scholarship about language and Zionism in Palestine has been primarily concerned with the process by which promoters of Hebrew contended with and eventually prevailed over other ethnic and national languages, languages that offered what might be called alternative particularities, competing loci of identification.[1]

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But Zamenhof Street's placement at the heart of the "First Hebrew City" should remind us that the Hebrew linguistic and cultural revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is not best described as a straightforward embrace of particularism. In an age of universal languages, claims to transcend rather than be limited by the nation multiplied. Socialist-oriented Jews were among the most fervent advocates of fin-de-siècle invented tongues, including Esperanto, which promised to avoid the linguistic imperfections and politics of domination characteristic of imperial languages.[2] Moreover, the stronger nations of Europe, particularly the imperial powers, promoted their languages' universal claims and global reach.[3] Zionists shared in this ethos as well. I show in this article that currents of discussion about linguistic universalism in the Hebrew press and in a range of institutional settings within pre-state Palestine contain both claims about Hebrew's own universal status and criticism that Hebrew was not universal enough.

As the first part of this article illustrates, some Zionist educators, literary figures, and political leaders voiced a belief in Hebrew's universal status that stemmed in part from a conviction that this language, recognized as the language of creation in Jewish and Christian tradition, naturally embodied a set of universal values.[4] Advocates of Hebrew were aware of a Christian rhetoric of Hebrew universalism from as early as the sixteenth century and found it fruitful to invoke this rhetoric when emphasizing the bona fides of the reclaimed national language. At the same time, the claims of rival universal tongues pressed others to reassess Hebrew's status more critically in light of those counterexamples.

The second part of the article brings examples of unrealized proposals to make Hebrew more universal either by modifying its alphabet or, in an unusual but illustrative case, to promote Hebrew internationally as the official universal language. The last part of the article explores a set of discussions about Esperanto within the Hebrew press, considering how news of Esperanto's growth and its frequent congresses throughout Europe resonated among and often troubled Hebrew writers. Esperantist events, which attracted many Jews, provided a consistent opportunity for Zionist journalists and writers to reflect on the essence of that upstart tongue and, as a corollary, to express fears about Hebrew's own potential (and unpleasant) similarity to Esperanto insofar as it, too, could be understood as a constructed, modern, instrumental, and artificial language. Even as late as the interwar period, observers continued to use Esperanto as a foil against which Hebrew's apparent instrumentality, artificiality, and

shallowness might be assessed and critiqued. Scrutinizing the discussions of some of Hebrew's advocates—both those confident about Hebrew's universal bona fides and those deeply anxious about its lack thereof—makes clear that Hebrew's success as a modern language continued to be defined with reference to a contemporary discourse about the notion of universal language, even as Hebrew achieved hegemonic national status among Jews in Palestine.

Making Hebrew Universal

The linguistic universal—always in fact a universalized particular—is typically a stand-in for an ideal future or the recovery of an ideal past.[5] Though collective nostalgia for the past can frequently be reactionary or chauvinistic, this form of aspirational nostalgia, as we might call it, is oriented toward the universal and is tied to the fear that particularity, including national particularity, might be degenerate, limited, provincial, or ephemeral.[6] Hebrew's promoters sought refuge in a classical notion of linguistic universalism—one rooted in the myth of Hebrew as an Edenic language—but also engaged with a secular modern conception of the universal rooted in civilizational advancement, power, and global reach and associated with western Europe. These two loci of the universal, the classical and the modern, coexisted with the explicitly national orientation of the Hebrew revival. As Umberto Eco writes, ambiguity and contradiction in the relation between originality, naturalness, and perfection have been inherent to discourses about universal languages since at least the early modern period.[7] In the case of Hebrew, an elision between premodern and modern markers of universality enabled the universalization of a particularistic modern linguistic nationalist movement but also rendered this effort perennially unstable and open to questioning.

In claiming that Hebrew had a special status and could reasonably be positioned at the center of a universal system of knowledge, Zionists were drawing from and adding a distinctly modern twist to longstanding Jewish and Christian traditions. The notion that Hebrew expresses eternal values is as old as the concept of a "holy tongue" (*lashon kodesh*) itself. The idea that such values needed to be reclaimed or recaptured, however, emerged with particular vigor during the Haskalah. (The origins of this discourse, however, can be found during the Renaissance as well.)[8] Participating in an intellectual culture preoccupied with the origins of language, early maskilim later posited that Hebrew, the most ancient language, must be raised from "the dung heaps of disgrace" as

part of "a return to the pure, ideal state of things."[9] Jewish kabbalists had seen in their intense focus on the Hebrew alphabet and deconstruction of Hebrew words a way of discovering "fragments of the universal design of creation"[10] or, as Gershom Scholem wrote, "the fundamental spiritual nature of the world."[11] Indeed, kabbalists anticipated a day of redemption in which translation would cease to be necessary and, as George Steiner put it, "all human tongues will have entered the translucent immediacy of that primal, lost speech shared by God and Adam."[12] Franz Rosenzweig would later stress the unique capacity of Hebrew to serve as the language of revelation and reflect the unity of humankind. He believed that it could only do so in the absence of a necessarily particularizing national project. Hebrew, he felt, would not continue as a great contribution to humanity if it were transformed into the language of just one nation among nations.[13] Scholem, the preeminent scholar of Kabbalah, warned in his correspondence with Rosenzweig that the Zionist movement was neglecting the particular mystical elements of the Hebrew language by enacting this radical transformation to the vernacular. "It is absolutely impossible," he wrote, "to empty out words filled to bursting, unless one does so at the expense of language itself."[14]

At the same time that Hebrew needed to be freed from rabbinic control and returned to a pristine state, one evocative of the language of Eden, Hebrew revival offered a pathway toward a modern form of the universal: Hebrew would be the vehicle for Jews' acquaintance with world culture and indeed a vehicle for communicating the Jewish genius to the world while remaining an explicitly national language.[15] But this emphasis on the bond between Hebrew and creation was not limited to the long trajectory of Jewish thought. Jews were bolstered by a unique sort of affirmation: a Christian recognition of Jews' status as givers of revelation and guardians of the language of creation, a status that could be reappropriated and harnessed to Zionist language ideology. The rhetoric of modern nationalism in non-Western contexts is replete with attempts to resolve the tension between the national and the universal, often through a dialectical process of recovering a particular group's consciousness through the promotion of a national language while trying to replicate European models deemed universal.[16] These language-revival efforts tended to identify universal relevance with a "golden age," for example the Abbasid period emphasized by Arab reformers during the *Nahda* (Arab Renaissance).[17] In referring confidently to a tradition of Jewish universality, Zionist appeals shared the rhetoric of other non-Western nations that claimed global relevance and sought to account for their

diminution of power relative to Europe, in this case also drawing support from the pro-Hebrew rhetoric of Christian Europe itself.

From the late medieval period and with particular intensity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Christian scholars engaged in a search for the original language of humanity. Many held that Hebrew, as the biblical language of creation, was a natural language, that is, one in which words and letters capture the essence of the thing named.[18] Guillaume Postel, in his 1538 *De originibus seu de Hebraicae linguae et gentis antiquitate* (On the Origins, or, on the Hebrew Language and Ancient People), not only posited Hebrew as the original language but also promoted a return to Hebrew as an instrument for the peaceable fusion of the races.[19] The often axiomatic assumption of Hebrew's primacy sat at the core of the monogenetic hypothesis of human languages, the doctrine of common linguistic origin. That hypothesis was disputed and ultimately replaced by William Jones's and later Franz Bopp's and Friedrich Schlegel's postulation of Proto–Indo European, an Ur-language that was posited as the origin of most European tongues and that, crucially, had no relationship to Hebrew. Thus, the theory of Hebrew's original status eventually gave way to a tradition of historical linguistics that offered a secular response to the search for linguistic origins. Nonetheless, the German philologists continued to focus heavily on linguistic origins, working, as Tuska Benes argues, "in the shadow of Babel, searching for primordial tongues with a view to biblical accounts of their significance."[20]

Even as Hebrew's status as a universal tongue was increasingly questioned (Jean Jacques Rousseau called Hebrew a metaphorical tongue that lacked reason, and other thinkers proposed new theories of language origins),[21] Hebrew nonetheless served as the chief model for a set of language-creation projects in the seventeenth century, the first heyday of such projects. (The second heyday would come in the late nineteenth century with the emergence of Volapük, Esperanto, and Ido, among other competitors.) One such project was developed by John Wilkins, who in 1641 called Hebrew the "first mother tongue," the language "co-created with our first parents." Owing to the fact that Hebrew itself had since been corrupted, however, he proposed to reverse the condition of linguistic miscomprehension created at Babel (see Genesis 11:1–9) by creating a new philosophical language based on Hebrew, which he saw as the language with the best distinction between basic elements. He explained its superiority as follows: "Hebrew is the best Pattern, because that language consists of the fewest Radicals [sic]."[22] Christian Ravis, a seventeenth-century German orientalist, proposed that the original language was not Hebrew

per se but rather a single "oriental tongue" (very similar to Hebrew) that came to be pronounced in different ways after Babel. He argued that Semitic languages were particularly well suited for rational analysis and based his constructed language on Hebrew: his alphabet consisted of 22 units of meaning, corresponding to the 22 letters of the Semitic (Hebrew) alphabet.[23]

Years later, the tradition of Hebrew's elevated status bolstered claims such as the assertion of the international Jewish organization Bnai Brith in 1894 that languages specifically constructed to be universal were not in fact as universal as Hebrew. In this case, Bnai Brith used the example of Volapük, the predecessor of and a competitor to Esperanto: "Volapük has been for a time the fashion among the dreamers of a universal language," the organization wrote in its *Menorah Journal* in 1894, "[but] Hebrew would possess a far more potent claim, as translations of the songs of Hebrew poets, the fiery admonitions of Hebrew prophets, the interpretations of the divine will by Hebrew seers are used in every church of Christendom and every mosque of the Muslim world."[24] Universality, in this view, was not a matter of intelligibility or ease of use; it was measured by the eternal status of the language and its ancient teachings.

That modern Jews were increasingly intrigued by universal languages is not surprising. As Cynthia Ozick has written, "universalism is the ultimate Jewish parochialism."[25] For many Jews, an aspiration to the universal, the cosmopolitan—ultimately, the European—meant an explicit denial of any Jewish national or tribal identity, but for many others, as Amos Funkenstein has written, Jewish distinctiveness lay precisely in the universality of its values.[26] The desire to enact a synthesis of the particular and the universal was particularly powerful among Zionists. Michael Stanislawski explores how Theodor Herzl, Max Nordau, Ephraim Lillien, and Vladimir Jabotinsky believed in a synthesis of cosmopolitanism and nationalism that would incorporate the best features of European civilization into a national framework. Importantly, though, the particular synthesis Stanislawski explores occurred overwhelmingly in European languages: Herzl famously rejected Hebrew precisely because of the transnational character of the model society he described in his utopian novel *Altneuland* (Old-New Land, 1902). Max Nordau, who also wrote in German, ridiculed the East European Ahad Ha'am, who wrote in Hebrew, as Asiatic and uncultured. Stanislawski's discussion of the Revisionist Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky, who did write in Hebrew and pen essays in defense of the language, emphasizes the writer's cosmopolitan leanings mainly through a reading of his Russian-language prose.[27] In contrast to these cosmopolitan thinkers,

according to Stanislawski, the "ostensibly universalist vision" of the mainly East European cultural Zionists did not in fact "veer to any substantive extent away from an insular and insulated Jewish identity."[28]

But Hebrew, though it served as Nordau's foil, was not condemned to narrowness or particularity in all minds. Indeed, the Hebrew Enlightenment of mid-nineteenth-century eastern Europe was "a nationalist brand of enlightenment" that sought to balance the universal and the particular by insisting on "the absorption by Jews of the universalistic ideals of humanism without breaking the particularistic mold of a national culture," as Dan Miron puts it.[29] In this tradition, unlike its West European counterpart, the synthesis of cosmopolitanism and nationalism could and must occur in Hebrew, reconfigured as "a usable national tool."[30] Thus, a Hebraist variety of the same ambition in the European-language writings of Herzl, Nordau, or Jabotinsky also motivated an (often tortuous) search for Hebrew's own universal legacy, a legacy that would be not "insular and insulated" but rather a beacon to the world. "[Hebrew] literature, so full of thoughts," wrote Ahad Ha'am in 1893, "is naturally and eternally bound up with the people and both it and its language became a true national possession."[31] Indeed, Ahad Ha'am would denigrate Yiddish as a "borrowed" language, in contrast to Hebrew, the true national tongue.[32] But a strong national identity was not sufficient. If Hebrew in its modern incarnation was truly to flourish, Ahad Ha'am thought, a set of great thinkers needed to emerge to share their art and literature across cultures.[33] Hebrew's status, however, was uncertain at the turn of the century. As Steven Zipperstein notes, a generation of East European maskilim, whose choice of Hebrew (over Yiddish) had been a statement of cultural openness, "was now making way for a more Europeanized cultural consumer," a new generation of children educated in European languages for whom Hebrew now seemed narrow.[34] Claims of Hebrew's universal status often emerged not out of confidence but out of a deep lack of confidence about its ability to compete.

The most fervent advocates of Zionism's universal qualities, inspired by claims of Jewish universality, were members of Brit Shalom (Covenant of Peace), a group of Jerusalem scholars concerned that Zionism be a source of moral authority inspired by the prophetic tradition and not sullied by politics.[35] But those with decidedly statist and particularistic ambitions for the Zionist movement as a whole also simultaneously held such views about Zionism. Labor leader and future Israeli prime minister David Ben-Gurion repeatedly said that Israel should be "a people of virtue and a light unto the nations."[36] These broader ambitions were reflected in attitudes toward the Hebrew language as well.

Education in Hebrew rather than in a European language was framed not as a retreat from universal values into nationalist ones or a compromise between competing objectives but as an expression of Hebrew's own historical expansiveness. Thus, Zionist educators aspiring to establish humanistic Hebrew education could state that in making Hebrew the conduit for European knowledge, Hebrew itself would rise to the level of a universal language.[37] The idea that Hebrew could be a conduit for universal knowledge in turn influenced the broader educational decision to promote an all-Hebrew school system. Not only would Hebrew be a means to impart the translated literature and ideas of Western nations or the national traditions of the Jewish people, but original Hebrew knowledge would be seamlessly blended with European knowledge to create a Hebrew person who was also open to the world. Yosef Azaryahu, a Hebrew educator who became the chief inspector for the Zionist primary schools in 1919 and, in the early 1940s, the inspector for the general Hebrew high schools, spoke of transmitting to students "a full and unified worldview, Hebrew and human as one."[38] The Bible was now being taught in Hebrew, not in Yiddish or Ladino as in the traditional house of study, and presented within the Hebrew curriculum as a piece of literature to be celebrated as both preeminently Jewish and also the cornerstone of a universal system of knowledge.

The notion that Hebrew was a gift to mankind also facilitated the promotion of higher education in Hebrew and, specifically, the founding of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The president of the World Zionist Organization, Chaim Weizmann, in his address at the university's inauguration in April 1925, insisted that the decision to teach in Hebrew did not compromise a commitment to openness: "a university is nothing if it is not universal," but a Jewish institution was capacious enough to be "a house of study for all peoples." Combining apology with polemic, he insisted that the Hebrew language, the language of this spirit of inclusivity, was the best way to express the institution's contribution to civilization, "for the Jewish people and the Hebrew tongue have never been separated." In this formulation, reclaiming Hebrew was a universalizing move that framed the ancient tradition of Hebrew learning as fundamentally part of "the common labor of civilization."[39] The Earl of Balfour, who had become an object of admiration for his role in penning the 1917 Balfour Declaration expressing Great Britain's commitment to a Jewish national home in Palestine, echoed these feelings in his explicit praise of Hebrew. In his speech to the assembled crowd at the inauguration of the university on April 1, 1925, he acknowledged "the problem of

language," that is, the difficulty of adapting a Western education to "an Eastern language," but expressed his confidence in this endeavor, saying:

> The English Speaking peoples have been brought up on a translation into English of the Hebrew scriptures, and that translation is one of the great literary treasures of all who speak the English language. . . . Now if a translation from Hebrew has had that profound literary effect upon the English language surely I am justified in saying that the language from which the translation is made must be superior to the translation to which it gave birth.[40]

Balfour's words reflected the ambition, voiced by Ahad Ha'am, that Hebrew, the language of the Bible, could ultimately and again be a source of inspiration beyond Jewry, too. A corollary to this claim was the implication that Hebrew would be a path toward peace, a claim particularly important in the pro-Esperanto discourse of the day. Nahum Sokolow, later the head of both the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency for Palestine, expected that the university, though reflecting Jewish ambitions, would "be of considerable service in bringing about a new era of harmony and brotherhood between the nations in the East." Indeed, he continued, "it was in Jerusalem that the ideal of the League of Nations was first preached thousands of years ago."[41] Such praise and high expectations capture the vision of a Zionism that would transcend the concerns of the Jewish people and realize the higher ideals of mankind through a national institution. The Hebrew language, enshrined in the name of the university itself, was elevated and declared fit to express and contain every form of knowledge. The university would, as Chaim Weizmann put it in a 1950 anniversary volume, "pave the way for a synthesis between the spiritual heritage of our people and the intellectual movements and aspirations of our age."[42]

Proposals to Further Universalize Hebrew

This climate of claims to universalism also drove a handful of individuals toward more aggressive proposals to make Hebrew itself a more universal language, not by the invocation of Eden or the Bible but by shedding a degree of particularity and aspiring to the (European) universal. One set of proposals aimed to modify Hebrew orthography, rendering the language in Roman characters as a way of westernizing it and

making it more accessible to the overwhelmingly Western immigrants to Palestine. Turkey successfully took this course, transitioning to the Roman alphabet over the course of the 1920s. A related ambition motivated the distinctive reform efforts of proponents of Soviet Yiddish orthography in the 1920s who, though maintaining the Hebrew script of Yiddish, saw in the phonetic respelling of words derived from Hebrew a way of moving away from the language's many Hebraic and Jewish influences toward a more rational and modern, if not universal, language.[43] A smaller group even advocated for the Romanization of Yiddish, at precisely the time that other ethnic languages in the Soviet Union were undergoing alphabet reform. Romanization, Gennady Estraikh notes, "was a craze of the 1920s."[44] And, indeed, this was the case with Hebrew as well. Arthur Koestler, a Hungarian Jewish writer who spent five years living in Palestine, wrote that "the only way to avoid the dangers of cultural isolation and stagnation seems to be the Romanization of the obsolete and cumbersome alphabet."[45] Support for changing the orthography of Hebrew was most popular among Revisionist Zionists, who were particularly concerned with overcoming the oriental character of Palestine. The most vocal proponent was Itamar Ben-Avi, son of the noted modernizer of Hebrew, Eliezer Ben-Yehudah, and incidentally a supporter of Esperanto as well. Ben-Avi began thinking about Romanization as a student in the 1890s, seeing orthographic reform as a way to bring together Jews and gentiles by creating an "Esperanto" (in this case in script only) that could unite the various *millets* (confessional communities) of the Ottoman Empire. Few of his efforts took off, though in 1928 the *Palestine Weekly* began publishing a supplement in Hebrew written in Latin characters for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the Hebrew script. Ilker Ayturk, who has studied the issue of language Romanization extensively, notes that these proposals, though they had a number of high-profile supporters including Revisionist Zionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky, U.S. Supreme Court justice Louis Brandeis, and educator and principal of the Hebrew Teachers Seminary David Yellin, met with stiff opposition precisely because of the deeply symbolic quality of the Hebrew alphabet.[46] The choice between writing systems was ultimately a choice between two modes of Hebrew universality, the one evocative of Hebrew's status as the language of creation (though one should note that the block letters used today were not used until the Second Temple period, when they were enshrined by the rabbis as an essential part of the holy tongue), the other looking to push Hebrew into a modern Western universality, now defined by the Latin alphabet. Here, too, an invented universal language was the reference point.

This project was, Ayturk argues, "a Jewish Esperanto, not a new language, but rather an Esperanto in the form of a common and accessible alphabet."[47]

Ben-Avi's proposal to Romanize Hebrew was by far the highest-profile project of Hebrew orthographic reform (though one that ultimately went nowhere). However, Ben-Avi was not the only one thinking about orthographic reform as a step toward the greater universalization of Hebrew. A lesser-known proposal came in to a number of Zionist offices from a young Zionist named Naftali Avrahamiyahu, about whom little is known other than that he had served in the Jewish Legion of the British army before being captured by the Turks during World War I.[48] Avrahamiyahu (it is unclear whether this was his original name) had invented a new form of the Hebrew alphabet that included supplementary characters representing vowels (which are normally not written in Hebrew). He closed the letter accompanying his proposal as follows: "In light of the problem of creating a broad culture—maybe even universal—that encompasses all the manifestations of the Hebrew spirit . . . we cannot be satisfied with lack of clarity and precision in language."[49]

Avrahamiyahu's concern with Hebrew's universal reach was not limited to orthography. Stepping far beyond the bounds of language reform, he proposed in 1927 that Hebrew need not be only the symbolic spiritual language of yore or a language aspiring to a modicum of Westernness; it must be treated as a modern universal language in its own right. In his proposal—written over the course of a decade to both Yishuv institutions and universal bodies—he expressed his aim to actualize the rhetoric of universality promoted by the likes of Balfour, Hebrew University chancellor Judah L. Magnes, and even Zamenhof and create a modern expression for received traditions of Hebrew universality. The proposal is notable not for any influence it had but for reflecting in amplified form a particularly Zionist concern about Hebrew's capacity to be a universal language.

Avrahamiyahu boldly proposed that Hebrew be recognized as an "international language of peace," not only a language that could unite all Jews but one that could unite all peoples. The organic spirit of Hebrew, he wrote, is the "spirit of peace." This spirit derives from the fact that Hebrew is the language of the Holy Scriptures, which, through their translation, have become a universal asset. "The language in which the Bible was written," he wrote (as Lord Balfour had), "is likely to prove a link of peace which will unite all mankind into one fraternity."[50] In Avrahamiyahu's view, a view that echoes the words of Ahad Ha'am and David Ben-Gurion, the Hebrew revival and

promotion project in Palestine had simultaneously been serving a larger human aim: "The Jews who have preached the Gospel of peace in the past and who cling to that Gospel to this day, have been reviving this language in Palestine and it is their mission to enforce it as a universal language of peace in the communities within which they reside." The power of the language to draw together Jews—who were so scattered "that they were regarded by some as members of different nationalities"—should logically be used for an even nobler task: the unification of humanity.[51]

Avrahamiyahu employed an explicitly Christian metaphor ("gospel of peace," used in Ephesians 6:15 and Romans 10:15) to frame his proposal. His word choice indicates the extent to which the concept of universal language, though rooted in Jewish texts, was also a Christian innovation that stemmed from the Christian appropriation of Edenic Hebrew as the language of a universal revelation in Christ.[52] To reassert the universal status of Hebrew in the Zionist context, then, was to attempt a double move. Avrahamiyahu both reasserted the Christian framing of Hebrew as universal and appropriated the "gospel of peace" concept as something that only the Jewish people had the capacity to offer to the world.

Avrahamiyahu's unusual proposal made its way around the Yishuv and beyond. He also sent the proposal to the League of Nations and even as far afield as the president of the United States.[53] In 1932, five years after his original proposal, he decided to take his appeal to the Council (executive body) of the League of Nations in Geneva. In addition to repeating his more general suggestion that Hebrew be recognized as the language of international peace, he suggested in this appeal that the word *shalom* ("peace," commonly used as a greeting in Hebrew) be accepted as the international greeting between all men and women and the greeting of the League of Nations in particular.[54] In 1935 he sent an appeal to Jewish communities, synagogues, and rabbis around the world, encouraging them to use the word "shalom" as "the acknowledged greeting word between Jew and Jew." The word, he said, focusing now on the bonds between coreligionists, "will conduce to a closer union between Jews" and the 17 million Jews around the world will "make one another's acquaintance." This Jewish application of the word, consistent with Avrahamiyahu's larger project, would not simply serve Jewish aims but would fulfill both an ethnic imperative and a general human one: "Shalom as an eternal human value has been an everlasting feature of our spiritual heritage ever since we became a nation."[55]

The final component of Avrahamiyahu's fantastical plan was his 1933 proposal to institute a Day of Peace on which a Service of Peace would be conducted in "every town and village" around the world.[56] The text of this service would be in Hebrew and would include an ecumenical prayer.[57] On February 7, 1937, he repeated this proposal to Joseph Avenol, the chief secretary of the League of Nations, with an even more detailed proposal, this time involving a gathering in Jerusalem. Representatives of every country would come together and begin the construction of a "sanctuary of peace," to be built of stones laid by each nation. As they did so, representatives would read passages from the Bible that describe Jerusalem as the city of peace. Each country would pledge to adopt the common "peace salute," *shalom ve-emet* (peace and truth), "to be uttered at meetings and bidding of farewell in family, schools, and society."[58] Later that year Avrahamiyahu addressed the same proposal to U.S. president Franklin Delano Roosevelt.[59]

The effect of all these arrangements, he wrote, using terminology he chose from the book of Isaiah, would be no less than the messianic end times. Avrahamiyahu closed his letter to the Council of the League of Nations with the promise that this day of peace would be "the first in a new era, an era heralding the Peace and happiness of the whole human family, when the prophecy of Isaiah will be fulfilled. . . . 'Nations shall not lift up sword against nation. Neither shall they learn war anymore.'"[60] Peace was not to reside in a constructed language like Esperanto and certainly not in an imperial language like English; rather, Avrahamiyahu's offbeat proposal promised that Hebrew would fulfill this modern objective by virtue of the ancient wisdom associated with that language.

The response to all these proposals was tepid from the side of the authorities, and their impact within Palestine was nonexistent—it is likely that few had heard of Avrahamiyahu. Nonetheless, his grandiose ambition reflects a broader, more widely shared impulse to universalize the Hebrew language, that is, to turn Hebrew from a language of a small group to one that could serve both practically (as a language of communication) and symbolically (as a language embodying the highest human values) to unify the world. In this case, its universal value would not only be symbolic, it would also be practical, insofar as it would accomplish a concrete set of explicitly modern peace-making objectives, objectives being sought not only by creators of invented tongues but by the founders of the League of Nations themselves. Avrahamiyahu's unrealized, clearly unrealizable ambition is particularly poignant for the fact that Hebrew did not become

a language linking nations, and Palestine by no means was a place that quieted strife.

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"Next-of-Kin of the Esperantists"? Hebrew Writers Reflect on a New Universal Language

As Hebrew proponents of various stripes weighed the potential for Hebrew to be or become a universal language, they also were cognizant of a broader discourse of modern linguistic universalism. In modern estimations, linguistic superiority did not need to derive from a relationship to the original language of mankind or to a tradition of revelation. Rather, the modern (and, indeed, early modern) discourse of linguistic universalism belonged on the one hand to imperial tongues and on the other hand to invented languages.

European powers made claims to the universal on the basis of their modern civilization and global reach. As J. Firth, the English linguist and erstwhile professor at the University of Punjab, wrote in 1937, "Statesmen, soldiers, sailors, and missionaries, men of action, men of strong feelings have made world languages. They are built on blood, money, sinews, and suffering in the pursuit of power."[61] Like many small nations, leaders and educators of the Yishuv understood that it would be necessary to teach European languages not only as practical tools but also as means to develop a still-weak Hebrew culture. Exposure to English in Palestine was even more important than the study of other European languages in England, a report on English teaching in the Yishuv contended, for "Hebrew literature is poorer than English both in content and form."[62]

But in a world where European languages were the undisputed global tongues, the universal claims of Esperanto also attracted members of the Jewish community of Europe, promising to achieve world peace and reconciliation by transcending national affiliation. Though its heartland was Poland, Esperantists quickly established branches the world over. The first Esperanto society in Palestine was founded by German Templer A. Schmitz in 1908, but his and other non-Jewish groups were bolstered by the influx of eastern European Jews. Originally called *Lingvo Internacia* (international language), Esperanto ("the hopeful one") was in fact the pseudonym under which Zamenhof published a booklet describing the language in 1887. Jews were among his first targets. Though aiming for a universal tongue, by the early years of the twentieth century Zamenhof despaired for the future of the language and decided explicitly to offer it to the

eastern European Jewish intelligentsia, who he thought would most willingly receive it. Looking not only to bind the world together but also to raise Jews above their parochialism as a "shadow people," Zamenhof hoped to enact a Jewish revival through the adoption of Esperanto and the adherence to a doctrine he called Hillelism, the transformation of Judaism into a "pure theosophical faith." If the Haskalah had striven for Jewish universality and cultural acceptance through language, Zamenhof's new universalism was a product of the Haskalah's failure to culturally integrate the Jews. When he sensed that the Jewish community had rejected his proposal, Zamenhof revised Hillelism as a broader program and, in 1906, changed the name of his doctrine to *Homaranismo* (humanitarianism).[63] Nonetheless, Jews, mainly Yiddish speaking, remained some of the language's most prominent promoters, likely because Zamenhof was attempting to do with Esperanto what maskilim had attempted in several previous generations: to create a linguistic platform for Jews to express universal values.

Throughout the 1920s, Esperantist groups popped up in Palestine, organizing branches in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. These efforts led to several small publications and, in 1927, a Hebrew-Esperanto dictionary written by Ezra Zion Melamed, otherwise known for his Talmud scholarship. Esperantists in Palestine were particularly proud when, in conjunction with the 1934 Levant Fair, an international trade exhibition, a hundred Esperantists gathered in Tel Aviv. An official national Esperanto organization was created in Palestine in 1941 and was accepted into the international Esperanto organization two years later.[64]

Esperantist organizations throughout the world never achieved more than niche appeal and thus were not generally threatening to national leaders. World leaders made appearances at Esperanto congresses in their cities. Indeed, on the occasion of the 1934 Esperantist gathering, the mayor of Tel Aviv, Meir Dizengoff, dedicated Zamenhof Street, where this article began. But a more sustained look at mentions of Esperanto in the Hebrew press reveals a greater ambivalence and alarm about the language and its universal claims. Esperanto emerges in a series of Hebrew-language writings as a convenient foil against which to contrast Hebrew's supposed naturalness and deep association with the transcendent. At the same time, it was a screen on which anxieties about Hebrew's own unstable, unnatural, or constructed nature could be projected. Esperanto is explicitly rejected or criticized in the series of articles written from the early years of the twentieth century until the years just before World War II, but its striking, uncomfortable similarity with Hebrew—a similarity

Norman Berdichevsky has called "uncanny"[65]—provoked unease. Features of Esperanto were also central to the profile of Modern Hebrew, reconstructed to serve modern vernacular needs, taught broadly to a nonnative population, and invaluable as a linking language between immigrant Jewish groups. These uncomfortable similarities threw into question Hebrew's aspiration to be a transcendent language, the repository of culture, and the heir to the garden of Eden.

The comparison between Hebrew and Esperanto may, on the face of it, seem unusual. One language became the symbol of the organic link between a nation and its language and the aspiration to national self-determination; the other was the epitome of a language with no organic link to any nation. One is an ancient language with an exalted lineage that was studied and taught by Jews over the generations, the other an exclusively modern creation. But the immediate opposition between a Jewish nationalism based in Hebrew particularism and the humanist inclusivity of Esperanto obscures Modern Hebrew's embodiment of two characteristics shared by Esperantists: the aspiration to universality through language and the attempt to achieve this end by engineering a language not initially spoken natively by any of its proponents. Of course, unlike Esperanto, Hebrew was not a wholly invented language; those who worked to modernize it had numerous layers of biblical, rabbinic, and maskilic Hebrew to draw from. Precisely the evident differences between the languages make the parallels presented in the Hebrew press particularly intriguing.

Parallels between Esperanto and Modern Hebrew begin with the mythic stories constructed by their followers. Eliezer Ben-Yehudah—the reputed father of Modern Hebrew, the compiler of a magisterial Hebrew dictionary, and founder of a Hebrew promotion society—and Zamenhof, creator of the Esperanto language, share similar biographies: they were born within two years and 250 miles of one another at the end of the 1850s in the Russian Empire, in what is now Poland. The similar mythologies around the two are most significant, however. Both were obsessive, "exaggeratedly bookish," much-ridiculed Jewish visionaries with utopian schemes for the creation of a transformative language.[66] Esperanto, invented in 1887, was an explicitly universalistic response to a problem with particular resonance for Jews: the unease and discrimination experienced by ethnic minorities in Europe. "If I were not a Jew from the ghetto," wrote Zamenhof, "the idea of uniting humanity would not have entered my mind, nor would it have obsessed me so obstinately throughout my life."[67] Having experimented with Zionism in his youth, even becoming a member of a Hibat Tsiyon (Love

of Zion) student group in the early 1880s, Zamenhof firmly discarded any commitment to Zionism.[68] Nonetheless, he was cognizant of the relationship between his Esperantist ideology and the Zionist one; he acknowledged that he was responding to an unhappy situation "which for others would give birth to the ideology of Zionism."[69]

Mentions of Esperanto in the Hebrew press in the late Ottoman period, it should be noted, are dwarfed by the numerous articles about other perceived linguistic threats. At this historical juncture just before World War I, Jews were speaking, teaching, and publishing newspapers in Yiddish, Ladino, and Arabic, and those invested in the promotion of Hebrew were most exercised about the persistence of these linguistic alternatives, particularly Yiddish.[70] But the proliferation of discourse about Jewish languages at the close of the Ottoman period in Palestine, far from negating the significance of Esperanto, meant that news of its growth was being received by a population already uneasy about the status of Hebrew and highly attuned to the symbolism of language in general. Indeed, in a climate of overall sensitivity to the stakes of language choice, many linguistic phenomena, even relatively marginal or numerically small ones, could bear outsize significance. As an analysis of articles published in Palestine's Hebrew newspapers in the first decades of the twentieth century makes clear, mentions of Esperanto in the Hebrew press were not neutral. The characteristics of Esperanto—a purportedly universal but apparently mechanical, unnatural, and limited language—served to highlight the perceived peripheral, instrumental, or unstable status of Hebrew, a language that in the discourses of cultural Zionism was and needed to be deeply natural and organic.

One source of concern was the speculation that Hebrew was serving only as a language of communication and not as a transcendent language of culture—in other words, that it was harnessing an instrumental role associated with Esperanto without aspiring to live up to its promise as a deep-rooted spiritual language, a universal language in a different sense of the word. The vernacularization of Hebrew was successful in part because the language had served a linking function in Palestine—and elsewhere in the Jewish world—even before the rise of Zionism. But the evident benefit of Hebrew's status as a Jewish lingua franca was also cause for concern: an instrumental language of communication, even if spoken fluently, risked being detached from eternal values. As Ahad Ha'am had written in denigration of Yiddish, "For a language to be a national language it is not enough for it to be a mother tongue but it also needs to contain the spiritual treasures of a nation from generation to generation."[71] Gershom Scholem put the point

more starkly in his 1923 critique of the "ghastly gibberish" he found spoken in Palestine: "Nobody with clear foresight would have mustered the demonic courage to try to utilize [Hebrew] in a situation in which only an Esperanto could have been created."[72] These concerns were not merely speculative; Hebrew was indeed serving for many neither as a mother tongue nor as a repository of values but as an instrumental second language, a lingua franca for Jews who preferred to speak other languages in their personal lives, as an anonymous writer complained in the newspaper *Ha-tsevi* in 1912. Mordechai ben Hillel Hacohen had admitted as much in the Yiddish journal *Der Fraynd*: "We use Hebrew in the Land of Israel so that our Sephardic and Yemenite brothers will understand us."[73] Hacohen had made clear that Hebrew did not work well as the main language of interpersonal communication because people found it easier to express their thoughts in German, Russian, French, or Arabic. The article in *Ha-tsevi* argued forcefully against this trend and against Hacohen's admission, which it cited. The practice Hacohen was admitting to, of course, was a function that Zamenhof envisioned for Esperanto, which was designed to be learned as a second language and which functioned as much as a rough pidgin tongue as it did an elevated language of ideals and values. That Hebrew was used in this Esperanto-like way spoke in this analysis to a fundamental problem with Hebrew's development.[74]

This fickle adherence to Hebrew deeply concerned this writer, who reflected on it in light of the Esperantist push for an explicitly functionalist universal tongue. If the function of a language was primarily to be a lingua franca, its specificity was irrelevant and it could easily be swapped for another language were conditions to change. Universality, understood this way, was contingent, suited to a particular time, rather than eternal or perennial. If Hebrew had no historical and national value, the writer argued, "We could speak Russian, French, or any language in the world. We wouldn't need Hebrew." And it would follow, too, that "were we to have another language here that could unite us—for example Esperanto, we would wholeheartedly give up Hebrew." The implications for the Hebrew project itself were drastic, according to the writer:

> If Eliezer Ben-Yehudah heard me, I'd tell him to take those slips of paper [that he was using to record Hebrew dictionary entries] out of his cabinet and just burn them in one of the markets of Jerusalem. Hebrew is just a way to speak to the poor Yemenite as long as he doesn't know Russian?! For this we don't really need dictionaries or literature.[75]

The very premise of the Hebrew revival was the transcendent significance of the Hebrew language; to serve as a universal tongue only in the instrumental sense of Esperanto was perilous. The discussion of Esperanto in this context is, in one sense, a denigration of Esperanto as the ultimate instrumental language, one with no history of its own and no purpose except to enable communication. But the critique of Esperanto in fact reflected a far more pressing concern: a lingering anxiety about the flimsiness of Hebrew's claims to spiritual transcendence, its capacity to encompass and promote both ancient and modern wisdom, as formulated so confidently by the founders of the Hebrew University.[76] In short, an artificial universal language was being presented as a region-specific pidgin.

Along with the threat—or promise—of being a lingua franca with no spiritual weight, Esperanto was critiqued in two other respects: its unnatural, constructed character and the ease with which this entirely logical language could be learned. One of the most explicit discussions of Esperanto in this regard came from the Hebrew writer David Frischmann, who opined on the subject in 1912, on the occasion of the Eighth International Congress of Esperantists in Kraków. Frischmann was a highly regarded literary critic and short-story writer, widely published in the Warsaw Hebrew press, and was a translator into Hebrew from several languages. Though he did not permanently relocate to Palestine, Frischmann traveled there in 1911 and 1912 and recorded his reflections about the land, as well as the Hebrew revival, in a book called *In the Land of Israel*.

Frischmann was a great critic of the unnatural Hebrew being spoken by Hebraists on Nalewki Street, the overwhelmingly Yiddish-speaking center of Jewish commercial and intellectual activity of pre–World War II Warsaw. In contrast, he was proud of the natural language he heard in Palestine: "Hebrew has become a part of life."[77] But Frischmann remained on guard against the potential for the language to become unnatural. Language creation, he stated in his writings from Palestine, had always been a source of contempt, whether it was the work of the evangelical priest Johann Martin Schleyer, who in 1879 created the language Volapük, or Paul Steiner, from Strasbourg, who created the artificial language Pasilingua in 1885.

It is in this context that Frischmann mentions Esperanto, another language created by human beings but one that seemed to be achieving an unprecedented degree of success: "We see an artificial language that has the power to conquer the world. Within twenty-four or ten-times-twenty-four hours a man can learn the language—it has gone beyond a subject of mockery."[78] Frischmann clearly respected

the advances of Esperanto, represented in the scores of congress members, Esperanto signs, banners, and plays that had come to Kraków. Over 150 newspapers and a slew of translations were being published in the language, and its strength and its threat, Frischmann knew, were in the ease with which it could be learned. The implications for Hebrew, even if indirect, seemed evident. In Frischmann's view, the Jewish interest in Esperanto picked up on a common Jewish desire to do things easily rather than exert effort. "It's this ease," Frischmann wrote, "so beloved by our weak generation, that we find also in other fields. . . . [what with] our of love of shortcuts they would give up even on sex as soon as they saw some machine that would give birth to sons and daughters for them."[79] Hebrew had long been in danger of being corrupted and neglected by those who did not care enough to exert effort for it, and he thought that the language needed to be protected from lazy or stupid Jews. It was this desire that he feared would be the demise of the pro-Hebrew movement.

Frischmann had initially been one of the strongest advocates of a nondemocratic Hebrew, a language confined to the upper classes and to men, in part because of his concerns that women were too flighty to comprehend it, a thread in early Hebraist thought documented by Iris Parush. Parush cites several instances in which Frischmann derided women for dealing with Hebrew too lightly and insubstantially: "Every last person knows this secret: that women love to ornament themselves and to make themselves pretty; the Hebrew tongue is merely one more such ornament." A language, Frischmann thought, must be useful, not beautiful, and thus "shall never dwell among or ever be suited to the 'kind' whose power consists only in beauty."[80] Frischmann would go on to modify his blanket condemnation of women learning Hebrew; around the turn of the century he came to understand that women, as mothers, would be essential teachers of Hebrew to children and might be able to inject a kind of lyricism into Hebrew poetry.[81] But language, in any event, needed to be serious. Esperanto seemed to encompass this (feminine?) wish for the insubstantial, the ornamental, and the faddish. This trend, ultimately, was dangerous not because it described Esperanto, a language with few speakers, but because it seemed to him to describe Hebrew.[82]

Frischmann's verdict on Esperanto was negative: "I still have the sense that this 'nice toy' will shatter on the rock on which other experiments like it have shattered." Frischmann called the language "*otiyot porhot*" (letters blooming [in the air]), a phrase derived from the Talmud to refer to insubstantial or meaningless language and used here to call Esperanto a phenomenon without natural roots.[83]

But in attributing its eventual failure to the language's constructed nature, Frischmann evokes Hebrew in a way that destabilizes this criticism and turns it inward. In Frischmann's analysis, natural language is good and unnatural language is bad: "The great workshop of nature doesn't like it when people come in from the outside and mimic its actions and bring artificiality into the world." This fact derives from the essential nature of language as a mysterious, mystical thing, unknowable by man. As such, a person who claims to understand the nature of language or makes a language and organizes advertisements and congresses for it is displaying such arrogance that "it wouldn't be surprising at all if he comes and tries to make God, an artificial God, an easy shortcut God that people can understand for themselves within twenty-four hours. And they'll make congresses with flags and performances and theatre for him."[84] The ambition to create a new language seemed to be the height of arrogance.

This critique of Esperanto, however, contains images that would have been familiar to Zionists. The Zionist and Hebrew revival movements themselves were creations of men who proffered a modern messianism and celebrated its advent with flags, plays, songs, and conventions. And Zionism itself, was it not a kind of "shorthand God," a secularized replacement for traditional Jewish religiosity?[85] Given these parallels, the implications become clear: were Modern Hebrew and its associated culture ultimately artificial creations that offended natural sensibilities?

Frischmann appears cognizant of—and uncomfortable about—this similarity, and he goes on to offer a definition of language that is designed to demonstrate why Hebrew qualifies as a proper language whereas Esperanto does not. There are two rules for language, he posits. First, language is a living organism that continually develops. Second, language must be complex rather than simple. A simple language is a primitive language. "Feral tribes," he claims, have "languages of three or four words" that serve all their needs. "This is exactly like the grammar of Esperanto," he continues, "which is extremely limited [*katsar u-maktsir be-takhlit ha-kitsur*]. It doesn't have any except the most necessary forms," and the effect is that the images in the mind are themselves only the most primitive.[86] Esperanto had a full grammatical system and a vocabulary that, though small, was sufficient to translate numerous European literary works. Nonetheless, in framing Esperanto as a "feral language," effectively inserting it into a category more often applied by orientalist philologists to languages of Africa and Asia, Frischmann is implicitly questioning an aspect of its universality, that is, its capacity to express all modern ideas. Hebrew, in this analysis, is a more universal language than

Esperanto insofar as its complexity enables it to capture and express the abstract and multifaceted reality of the modern world.

Frischmann never explicitly compares Hebrew to Esperanto, but the implied parallelism is clear: where Esperanto is hollow, utilitarian, and lacking grammar, Hebrew is rich, laden with symbolism, and grammatically complete. Where Esperanto lacks the basic linguistic traits necessary for a modern language, Hebrew has what it takes to be a language of universal ideas. But the irony is palpable and the tension is evident: both Esperanto and Hebrew were created in Europe to solve the particularly European Jewish concerns about interethnic conflict and anti-Semitism. In 1912 when Frischmann wrote his article, both languages were attracting speakers in droves but had by no means fulfilled the grand schemes of their visionaries. If Esperanto, then being hailed in the Eighth Esperantist Congress in Kraków with flags, plays, and speeches, was on shaky ground, so too was Hebrew. The presence of Esperanto, laughable and insignificant as it may have been within the linguistic ecology of Palestine, nonetheless reminded supporters of Hebrew that their own language could only questionably fill the universal demands that had been laid upon it, even as it rapidly progressed as a language of education and political organization.

The above comments come from the late Ottoman period, when Hebrew was spoken fluently by only a minority of Jews in Palestine and was still not the dominant language of Zionist institutions. Interestingly, though, Esperanto remained a screen onto which anxieties about Hebrew's capacities were projected even into the British Mandate period, when Hebrew's institutional presence was strong and the language was freely spoken by many adults and nearly all children.

The linguistic situation in Palestine had changed considerably by the 1920s: Hebrew had gone from being the language of a few, challenged by Yiddish and not fully established as the language of education and institutional life, to being the unchallenged common language of Jewish society in Palestine.[87] Moreover, it had been recognized by the British, now ruling Palestine, as one of three official languages, along with Arabic and English.[88] However, with this new institutionalization of Hebrew, other sets of uncertainties arose: the influx of Polish- and German-speaking immigrants who were not quick to adopt Hebrew in all parts of their life, the rise of the power of English, and the continuing mixing of languages in the commercial sphere all appeared to destabilize Hebrew's position.

In 1939, at the end of a period of heavy European Jewish immigration and just before the British-imposed wartime restrictions took effect, Israel Cohen wrote a scathingly anti-Esperanto article in *Davar*,

the newspaper of the Labor party Mapai (Israel Workers' Party). Cohen, the editor of the labor paper *Ha-po'el ha-tsa'ir* since 1934, was a member of the Hebrew Writers Association and the Newspaper Division of the Hebrew Language Committee.[89] Called "A Language That Disappointed," the article was written in recognition of the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of Esperanto; it was also the eightieth anniversary of Zamenhof's birth (he had died in 1917). The heyday of Esperanto had already waned; its promises of heralding brotherly love were dashed by the start of World War II, but its devotees remained faithful. On December 11 of that year, one hundred people would attend an Esperanto conference in Tel Aviv. Among other issues, they addressed the detention of the Zamenhof family in Warsaw, which had been occupied by the Nazis earlier that autumn, and resolved to bring the family to Israel.[90] (To no avail: Zamenhof's son Adam was shot in 1940 at Palmiry, a site of mass killings outside Warsaw. His two daughters, Sofia and Lidia, perished at Treblinka in 1942.[91]) Esperanto's demise followed along with the demise of the European Jewish community, though the destruction of this community brought a population of Jewish Esperantists to Palestine. In April 1941, the fifth conference of Palestine Esperantists was held in Haifa and was attended by refugee Esperantists then living at the Atlit detention camp south of the city.[92]

But even at this moment of crisis—and perhaps because of the dashing of utopian hopes that this crisis augured—Esperanto remained a source of concern to proponents of Hebrew. Cohen was explicit about the parallels between Hebrew and Esperanto as purveyors of potential utopias: "We too were the groomsmen for the revival of a language that did not disappoint, a revival that has in it something of a new being. So we are, therefore, kind of the next-of-kin of the Esperantists, even if peace can't exist between us." Cohen proceeds with a history and critique of this kind of utopian thinking. People in every generation looked to the idea of linguistic universalism, he said. Some thought a European language would prevail as imperialism spread around the world. Some thought that a new language would be necessary. The result of this push for a new language was a world of societies and congresses. Cohen is aware of the irony that the creation of new languages resulted in more, not fewer, languages in the world: "It is a fact," he wrote, "that the search for a world language has already created a small Babel of languages, each of which has its own adherents [*hasidim*] who have special congresses." Hebrew, Cohen implies, is part of this attempted linguistic consolidation through the invention, revival, and promotion of new, previously unspoken language.

Zionists, too, had their own zealots going to conferences. Cohen distinguishes here between Hebrew and Esperanto: Hebrew had ascended from the realm of the unnatural and limited. From being the close kin of Esperanto, it was now Esperanto's opposite. But this transformation had only just occurred. In fact, Hebrew was still a new creation, it was not routine for its speakers, and it was full of crude coinages. Moreover, Cohen admitted that only 20 years earlier there had been fewer Hebrew speakers than Esperanto speakers.[93]

The accounting of similarities functions as a prelude to a critique of Esperanto. Esperanto, Cohen wrote, was the product of "the dreams of cosmopolitans" who had "seen the fallen state of the world" and proposed alternatives (this view echoes Antonio Gramsci's assessment of Esperanto as the product of bourgeois anxieties).[94] The idea, Cohen acknowledged, was attractive, "but after this first blush comes clarity and critique." Cohen's criticism of Esperanto has two parts. First, Esperanto's promoters had diagnosed the problems of the world incorrectly. They assumed that evil in the world came from mutual foreignness and language difference but did not take note that the international spread of English and French did not bring peace. The problem in the world, he wrote, is not mutual estrangement so much as the oppression of national minorities by dominant nationalities. Power differentials, not difference per se, are central. Second, the Esperanto movement offered a faulty, purely mechanistic solution to the scourge of interethnic and international conflict that was plaguing Europe. Zamenhof invented a language but "ignored the fact that a language isn't made by hand from orphaned syllables, but rather grows organically and is granted by nature." A language of culture, he continued, "is nothing except a language of the past, a language of the generations, in which every word has become a symbol."[95] Similarly to Frischmann, Cohen created a distinction between a mechanistic universalism and a universalism rooted in an organic relation to nature.

Esperanto, Cohen contends, is faulty because it lacks precisely those features that Hebrew has in abundance. Esperanto is mechanistic; Hebrew is natural. Esperanto lacks history; Hebrew is steeped in it. Most crucially, where Esperanto lacks spirit, Hebrew is the very expression of spirit: "Individuals can, of course, create a language," but "even if a quarter million people speak it in committees and write books in it, it won't have the spirit of life in it." The implications of language creation go as far as sacrilege, Cohen suggests: "This sort of language, made by the fingers of one person in his workshop, is a disgrace to the man and his name." It is like creating a person according

to the rules of the composition and separation of matter and saying that he was created in the image of God: "There is desecration in it." Further, following Frischmann here, Esperanto is suspect precisely because it is easy to learn:

> The adherents of Esperanto testify that it is possible to learn the language easily and quickly. This was said to praise the language but really it is an insult. A language that can be learned on one foot [*'al regel ahat*], which has neither depth nor breadth, mystical or symbolic meaning, and a hybrid spirit could maybe be an auxiliary language, for commerce, but never a language of culture.[96]

A real language, in contrast, has a lineage that goes back generations and is not learned quickly because it is the work of the collective soul.

The denigration of Esperanto seems to be constructed so as to imply that Hebrew fulfills all of the criteria for naturalness and strength:

> We, too, created a language that was almost a new being. But the two are not alike. Our Hebrew language is not artificial even if making it routine on the tongues of speakers was at first a futile effort. We extracted it from the potential into actuality; we made it speak and opened its drowsy eyes.

And Cohen's final words are dismissive, implying that people paid attention to Esperanto because it was new: "But we need to say today—'It disappointed.'"[97] It is a strange conclusion, coming after the writer admits to the lingering allure of the language. Esperanto did not entirely disappoint; it exceeded expectations, and for a time it had more speakers than Hebrew. If Hebrew was similar to this clearly artificial language, was equally uncertain and seemingly faddish, what did this mean for the future of the language? Indeed, confronted with a language making explicit claims to universality, but apparently limited by its constructed nature, Hebrew's advocates could not but look inward. In retrospect, Hebrew's success is a fait accompli; had its adherents not gained a state, however, modern vernacular Hebrew might have gone the way of Esperanto. Though limited circles of speakers might have persisted along with a small literary elite drawn from the heirs of the Hebrew literary revival in eastern Europe, Palestine, and North America, it would likely not have become a widely used language.

The aspiration to the universal, though it was often the stuff of heady rhetoric and dead-end schemes, constituted an important pole in Zionist negotiations of language diversity. It would be incorrect to

claim that universalism was a dominant trend in Zionist history generally. As Michael Stanislawski correctly notes of many socialist and cultural Zionists, "their universalist pretensions . . . ultimately (if unconsciously) gave way to their nationalism."[98] Nonetheless, this attention to discussions about universal languages reminds us of repeated Zionist statements about the universal essence and capacities of Hebrew, both in light of a long-standing Jewish and Christian scholarly tradition and in light of modern rubrics of linguistic universalism. Such rhetoric expressed practical hopes of expanding Hebrew to convey the full range of experiential and intellectual concepts and symbolically elevating the Zionist project as a whole to a place beyond politics, beyond provinciality, toward a set of utopian hopes not unlike those wrapped up in the Esperanto movement. Moreover, revisiting Hebrew-language writings about universal language, including those about Esperanto, uncovers a persistent set of (not unwarranted) concerns about what might be called the anxieties of modern linguistic universalism, the tendency toward adopting parochial, artificial, instrumental, inauthentic, or pidgin languages in an age of globalization and increasing contacts between peoples. Appeals to the idea of universal language contain within them more troubling and unresolved critiques of Hebrew's own status, both in comparison to other languages and vis-à-vis its own transcendent legacy.

Notes

All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

1 See, for example, Boaz Neumann, *Land and Desire in Early Zionism* (Hanover, N.H., 2011), 150–80; Yael Chaver, *What Must Be Forgotten: The Survival of Yiddish in Zionist Palestine* (Syracuse, N.Y., 2004); Naomi Seidman, *A Marriage Made in Heaven: The Sexual Politics of Hebrew and Yiddish* (Berkeley, 1997), 102–31; Anat Helman, "'Even the Dogs in the Street Bark in Hebrew': National Ideology and Everyday Culture in Tel-Aviv," *Jewish Quarterly Review* n. s. 92, no. 3–4 (Jan.–Apr. 2002): 359–82; idem, *Or ve-yam hikifuhah: Tarbut tel avivit bi-tekufat ha-mandat* (Tel Aviv, 2007), 46–51; idem, "Images of Yiddish in the Newly Established State of Israel," *Mendele Review* 12, no. 13 (July 16, 2008); Rachel Rojanski, "The Status of Yiddish in Israel, 1948–1958: An Overview," in *Yiddish after the Holocaust*, ed. Joseph Sherman (Oxford, 2004), 46–59.

2 See Arika Okrent, *In the Land of Invented Languages: Esperanto Rock Stars, Klingon Poets, Loglan Lovers, and the Mad Dreamers Who Tried to Build a*

Perfect Language (New York, 2009); Umberto Eco, *The Search for the Perfect Language* (Oxford, 1995); Peter G. Forster, *The Esperanto Movement* (The Hague, 1982).

3 In 1605 Richard Carew wrote "An Epistle Concerning the Excellencies of the English Tongue," praising the language for its "copiousness." Speculation that English would emerge as the premier world language surfaced as early as the nineteenth century, following comments to that effect attributed to one of the Grimm brothers. W. Brackenbush's 1868 University of Gottingen dissertation, *Is English Destined to Become the Universal Language of the World?*, concluded that this was by no means ordained. By the early twentieth century, however, the English-as-a-world-language discourse was deeply rooted; see Richard J. Watts, *Language Myths and the History of English* (Oxford, 2011), 134, 262–64. The French language in particular was closely associated with the allegedly universal values of human rights and republicanism and was disseminated, first within France and then throughout a growing empire, on the basis of these suppositions. As early as 1782 the Berlin Academy asked in an essay contest, "How has French become the world's universal language?" The two winners pointed, respectively, to the logic of the language and to its cultural "genius." See Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow, *The Story of French* (New York, 2006), 115–35, and Richard S. Fogarty, *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914–1918* (Baltimore, Md., 2008), 136.

4 In this respect, the Zionist aspiration to the universal entailed not the acquisition of something foreign but the recovery or refiguring of a tradition of Hebrew primacy that had emerged as early as ancient Greece and was further developed in the Middle Ages by Christian, Muslim, and Jewish thinkers. Avraham Melamed provides an excellent history of the evolution of the idea of "Jewish wisdom" as part of a broader conception of "Eastern wisdom" that was promulgated by ancient Greek thinkers even before it emerged in the thinking of the talmudic rabbis, Christian Hebraists, and modern Jewish thinkers; Avraham Melamed, *Rakahot ve-tabahot: Ha-mitos 'al mekor ha-hokhmot* (Jerusalem, 2010).

5 As J. R. Firth writes, "The pursuit of the ideal, of a common universal language and the search for the original, primitive language from which all our languages have sprung, are really forms of the one-language-ideal, a heritage of Judaeo-Christian revelation, and bound up with a Judaeo-Christian philosophy of life"; J. R. Firth, *The Tongues of Men, and Speech* (Westport, Conn., 1986), 72–73. As Raymond Williams writes, to recall and invoke the idyllic countryside is a form of "retrospect as aspiration"; Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London, 1973), 42.

6 See Svetlana Boym's discussion of "restorative nostalgia," the longing for the past, often a national past born of a feeling of loss of identity. It is a sentiment, Boym suggests, that gives rise to the set of practices Eric

Hobsbawm called "the invention of tradition"; Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York, 2001), 41–45.

7 Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 73.

8 I thank Daniel Stein-Kokin for this insight about the premodern origins of concerns about Hebrew's status.

9 Cited in Yaacov Shavit, "A Duty Too Heavy to Bear: Hebrew in the Berlin Haskalah, 1783–1819; Between Classic, Modern, and Romantic," in *Hebrew in Ashkenaz: A Language in Exile*, ed. Lewis Glinert (New York, 1993), 116–17. See also Moshe Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah: Studies in Hebrew Literature of the Enlightenment in Germany* (Leiden, 1979), esp. 73–90.

10 George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (New York, 1975), 63, 498.

11 Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1954), 17.

12 Steiner, *After Babel*, 63, 498.

13 David Myers writers that, according to Rosenzweig, "Jewish nationalism was the content, and historicism the form, of a base materialism that undermined the ethical grandeur of Judaism"; David Myers, *Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton, 2003), 85. See also Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Hebrew as a Holy Tongue: Franz Rosenzweig and the Renewal of Hebrew," in Glinert, *Hebrew in Ashkenaz*, 228–30.

14 Galili Shahar, "The Sacred and the Unfamiliar: Gershom Scholem and the Anxieties of the New Hebrew," *Germanic Studies Review* 83, no. 4 (2008): 301.

15 These ambitions were expressed by the Hevrat Dorshei Leshon 'Ever, founded in 1782. See Shmuel Feiner, *The Jewish Enlightenment* (Jerusalem, 2002), 185–94.

16 Jonathan M. Hess, *Germans, Jews and the Claims of Modernity* (New Haven, Conn., 2002), 7–9, and David N. Myers, *Reinventing the Jewish Past: European Jewish Intellectuals and the Zionist Return to History* (New York, 1995), 14–15.

17 Stephen Sheehi summarizes the central role of the Abbasid period in the writings of the nineteenth-century scholar Butrus al-Bustani; the Abbasid period was a time of exemplary Arab intellectualism, integrating universal knowledge and "allowing the Arabs to enter into the rationalist tradition and a Hegelian concept of universal history"; Stephen Sheehi, *Foundations of Modern Arab Identity* (Gainsville, Fla., 2004), 41.

18 Karl A. Kottman outlines debates among early modern thinkers on the question of the universality of Hebrew; Karl A. Kottman, "Fray Luis de Leon and the Universality of Hebrew: An Aspect of Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Language Theory," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 13, no. 3 (July 1975): 297–310.

19 Eco, *Search for the Perfect Language*, 70.

20 Tuska Benes, *In the Shadow of Babel: Language, Philology, and the Nation in Nineteenth Century Germany* (Detroit, Mich., 2008), 11.
21 Researchers made a range of claims regarding the original language. For an overview of these, see Maurice Olender, *The Languages of Paradise: Aryans and Semites, a Match Made in Heaven* (New York, 2003). Other researchers speculated that Chinese was the true universal language. See David E. Mungello, *Curious Land: Jesuit Accommodation and the Origins of Sinology* (Honolulu, Hawaii, 1989), 174–207.
22 Cited in M. M. Slaughter, *Universal Languages and Scientific Taxonomy in the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge, Engl., 1982), 112.
23 Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "The 'Generall Grammer of Orientall Tongues' and Universal Language Schemes in Seventeenth Century Britain: The Contribution of Christian Ravius," in *History of Linguistics, 1996: Selected Papers from the Seventh International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences, Oxford, 12–17 September 1996*, ed. David Cram, Andrew Robert Linn, and Elke Nowak (Amsterdam, 1999), 134–38.
24 "The Order and the Hebrew Language," *Menorah Journal* 16, no. 3 (Mar. 1894): 165.
25 Cynthia Ozick, *Art and Ardor: Essays* (New York, 1983), cited in Michael Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siecle: Cosmopolitanism and Nationalism from Nordau to Jabotinsky* (Berkeley, 2001), 12.
26 Amos Funkenstein, "Collective Memory and Historical Consciousness," *History and Memory* 1, no. 1 (Spr./Sum. 1989): 21.
27 Ibid., 16–17.
28 Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siecle*, 87.
29 Dan Miron, *From Continuity to Contiguity: Toward a New Jewish Literary Thinking* (Stanford, 2010), 70.
30 Shavit, "Duty Too Heavy to Bear," 120–21; Miron, *From Continuity to Contiguity*, 61.
31 Ahad Ha'am, "Li-she'elat ha-lashon," part A (1893), in *Kol kitvei Ahad Ha'am* (Tel Aviv, 1960), 93.
32 Ahad Ha'am, "Riv ha-leshonot" (1910), in *Kol kitvei*, 403–6.
33 Ahad Ha'am, "Li-she'elat ha-lashon," 96.
34 Steven J. Zipperstein, *Elusive Prophet: Ahad Ha'am and the Origins of Zionism* (Berkeley, 1993), 262.
35 This idea was embodied in Martin Buber's conception of Hebrew humanism, a political ethos that would heal the division between morality and politics. See Paul Mendes-Flohr, ed., *A Land of Two Peoples: Martin Buber on Jews and Arabs* (Chicago, Ill., 2005), 17–22.
36 Ze'ev Tzahor, "Ben-Gurion's Mythopoetics," in *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory, and Trauma*, ed. Robert Wistrich and David Ohana (London, 1995), 65–66.
37 Miryam Segal, *A New Sound in Hebrew Poetry: Poetics, Politics, Accent* (Bloomington, Ind., 2010), 27–28.
38 Cited in Segal, *New Sound in Hebrew Poetry*, 27.

39 *Hebrew University Inauguration, Jerusalem: Inauguration, April 1, 1925* (Jerusalem, 1925), 24–25.

40 Earl of Balfour, speech at the inauguration of the Hebrew University, *Hebrew University Inauguration*, 30–31.

41 *Hebrew University Inauguration*, 49–50.

42 Chaim Weizmann, "Chaim Weizmann's Message," in *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Semi-Jubilee Volume*, ed. Manka Spiegel (Jerusalem, 1950), 5. See also Norman Bentwich, "The Hebrew University of Jerusalem," in *The University Outside Europe: Essays on the Development of University Institutions in Fourteen Countries*, ed. Edward Bradby (London, 1939), 319–21.

43 Gennady Estraikh, *Soviet Yiddish: Language Planning and Linguistic Development* (New York, 1999), 115–26. See also David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture, 1918–1930* (Cambridge, Engl., 2004), 77–81, and Ruth R. Wisse, *The Modern Jewish Canon: A Journey through Language and Culture* (Chicago, Ill., 2000), 167.

44 Estraikh, *Soviet Yiddish*, 127–28.

45 Cited in Ilker Ayturk, "Attempts at Romanizing the Hebrew Script and Their Failure: Nationalism, Religion and Alphabet Reform in the Yishuv," *Middle Eastern Studies* 43, no. 4 (2007): 625.

46 Ibid., 627.

47 Ibid., 627, 632.

48 "Hebrew for Peace," *Evening Standard*, May 16, 1932, Israel State Archive (ISA), folder P 20/49, Jerusalem, Israel.

49 N. Avrahamiyahu, letter to the Hebrew Language Council, Jerusalem, Tishrei [Sept.–Oct.] 1939, Central Zionist Archive (CZA), folder K12/1/1, Jerusalem, Israel.

50 The *Star* reported on May 16, 1932, on this plan "to achieve universal peace," noting that, according to Avrahamiyahu, "The Language in which the Bible was originally written is likely to prove a link which will unite all mankind into one fraternity"; "The Peace Language: British Ex-Soldier's Plan for World Peace," *Star*, May 16, 1932, ISA, folder P 20/49.

51 Ibid.

52 In this understanding, in fact, Jews came to be associated with a narrow, legalistic Hebrew contrary to the spirit of Hebrew embodied in the Christian tradition. Naomi Seidman discusses how this dichotomy was expressed in Hellenistic-era discussions about Jewish translation, understood to be bound to the "body" of the text, versus Christian translation, understood to capture the "spirit" of the text; Naomi Seidman, *Faithful Renderings: Jewish-Christian Difference and the Politics of Translation* (Chicago, Ill., 2006), 1–114.

53 Aviezer Yellin Archives of Jewish Education in Israel and the Diaspora, folder 9.8/4/010, Tel Aviv, Israel; ISA, folder 69.1.1.429.

54 "'Day of Peace' throughout the World: Ex-Serviceman's Idea; Signal from Jerusalem Suggested," *Reuters*, June 17, 1933, CZA, folder K12/1/1.
55 N. Avrahamiyahu, "Peace and Truth: The Appeal from Jerusalem, the City of Peace." Printed originally in the religious newspaper *Ha-hed*, Sivan [June] 1935, ISA, folder P 20/49.
56 On June 17, 1933, Reuters reported on a proposal to the League of Nations to institute an annual "Day of Peace." According to Avrahamiyahu's plan, the day of peace should begin with a signal "from Jerusalem, the future seat of the League of Nations," and be spent in prayer and celebration; "'Day of Peace' throughout the World."
57 The text of the prayer combined excerpts from the Jewish liturgy that would also sound familiar to Christian audiences: "Our Father that thou art in heaven / May it be thy will / Spread over you the tabernacle of thy peace / Grant peace unto us and unto all thy children / Blessed art thou who makest peace."
58 N. Avrahamiyahu to Joseph Avenol, Feb. 7, 1937, CZA, folder K12/1/1.
59 N. Avrahamiyahu to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, dated Sept. 1935, mailed on Mar. 26, 1937, CZA, folder K12/1/1.
60 N. Avrahamiyahu to the Council of the League of Nations, 1932, ISA, folder P 20/49.
61 Firth, *Tongues of Men*, 71.
62 J. S. Bentwich, *The Teaching of English in Hebrew Secondary Schools* (Jerusalem, 1941), 2, CZA, folder J17/317.
63 Esther Schor, "L. L. Zamenhof and the Shadow People," *New Republic*, Dec. 30, 2009, accessed July 17, 2013, http://www.newrepublic.com/article/books-and-arts/ll-zamenhof-and-the-shadow-people.
64 "Toledot ha-agudah le-Esperanto be-Yisrael," accessed Nov. 29, 2011, http://www.esperanto.org/uk2000/.
65 See Norman Berdichevsky, "Zamenhof and Esperanto," *Ariel* 64 (1986): 58.
66 Ibid., 58–71.
67 Letter from Zamenhof to French attorney Henri Michaux [in Esperanto?], organizer of the first World Congress of Esperantists in 1905, dated Feb. 21, 1905; cited in Louis-Jean Calvet, *Language Wars and Linguistic Politics* (Oxford, 1998), 198.
68 Shulamit Laskov, "Zamenhof's Letter to the Biluim," *Zionism* 1, no. 2 (1980): 151–57.
69 Calvet, *Language Wars*, 198.
70 I discuss these anxieties at length in my doctoral dissertation, "Babel in Zion: The Politics of Language Diversity in Jewish Palestine, 1920–1948" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 2011). See also Arieh Saposnik, *Becoming Hebrew: The Creation of a Jewish National Culture in Ottoman Palestine* (Oxford, 2008), 65–104, and Neumann, *Land and Desire*, 150–80.
71 Ahad Ha'am, "Riv ha-leshonot."

72 Cited in Mendes-Flohr, "Hebrew as a Holy Tongue," 231–32.
73 Cited in "'Elbon shel mi?," *Ha-tsevi*, Feb. 25, 1912, p. 2.
74 Ibid.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid.
77 David Frischmann, *Ba-arets* (Warsaw, 1913), 22.
78 David Frischmann, "Otiyot porhot," *Ha-tsefirah*, Aug. 6, 1912, p. 2.
79 Ibid.
80 Cited in Iris Parush, *Reading Jewish Women: Marginality and Modernization in Nineteenth-Century Eastern European Jewish Society*, trans. Saadya Sternberg (Hanover, N.H., 2004), 229.
81 Ibid., 236–38.
82 Frischmann, "Otiyot porhot," 2.
83 "Otiyot porhot" was, incidentally, the title of a collection of Hebrew short stories that Frischmann had published in 1892: David Frischmann, *Otiyot porhot: Sipurim reshimot ve-tsiyurim hadashim* (Warsaw, 1892).
84 Frischmann, "Otiyot porhot," 2.
85 Anita Shapira has written on the overtly religious aspects of the Labor movement: "Its inner character was religious and it parallels the millenarian sects in Christiantiy and the mystical movements that had accompanied normative Judaism"; Anita Shapira, "The Religious Motifs of the Labor Movement," in *Zionism and Religion*, ed. Shmuel Almog, Jehuda Reinharz, and Anita Shapira (Hanover, N.H., 1998), 254. The movement frequently used kabbalistic and messianic terminology, harnessing God to the national movement.
86 Frischmann, "Otiyot porhot," 2.
87 Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Time of Revolution* (Stanford, 1993), 89–92.
88 On Oct. 1, 1920, a notice appeared in the *Official Gazette of the Government of Palestine* entitled "The Use of Official Languages," stating that "English, Arabic, and Hebrew are recognized as the official languages of Palestine"; *Official Gazette of the Government of Palestine* no. 28, Oct. 1, 1920, p. 5. On Aug. 10, 1922, the League of Nations passed a Palestine order-in-council affirming Arabic, English, and Hebrew as the official languages of Palestine. Finally, Article 22 of the official League of Nations Mandate for Palestine in 1923 stated that "English, Arabic, and Hebrew shall be the official languages of Palestine. Any statement or inscription in Arabic on stamps or money in Palestine shall be repeated in Hebrew and any statement or inscription in Hebrew shall be repeated in Arabic." Article 15 prescribed "the right of each community to maintain its own schools for the education of its own members in its own language."
89 David Tidhar, *Entsiklopedyah shel halutsei ha-Yishuv u-vonav*, 19 vols. (Tel Aviv, 1947–71), 4: 1777–78.
90 "T. A. Esperantists Meet," *Palestine Post*, Dec. 11, 1939, p. 2.

91 The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, Yad Vashem, accessed July 3, 2013, http://db.yadvashem.org/names/search.html?language=en.
92 "Esperanto as Usual," *Palestine Post*, Apr. 16, 1941, p. 2.
93 Israel Cohen, "Lashon she-hikhzivah," *Davar*, Apr. 8, 1938, p. 15.
94 Though Esperanto was popular among adherents of socialism, Gramsci called it a product of a distinctly bourgeois anxiety: "The advocates of a single language are worried by the fact that while the world contains a number of people who would like to communicate directly with one another, there is an endless number of different languages which restrict the ability to communicate. This is a *cosmopolitan*, not an international anxiety, that of the bourgeois who travel for business or pleasure"; cited in Peter Ives, *Language and Hegemony in Gramsci* (London, 2004), 56.
95 Cohen, "Lashon she-hikhzivah," 15.
96 Ibid.
97 Ibid.
98 Stanislawski, *Zionism and the Fin de Siècle*, 246.