

## CHAPTER 4

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# How a Cultural Renaissance Preceded a National Renaissance: The Revival of Hebrew and the Rejuvenation of the Jewish People

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The modern Renaissance of Hebrew writing, as well as of the language itself, began about one hundred years before it was given the label in Hebrew, *Hatehiyah* (Revival, Renaissance, Rejuvenation) at the end of the nineteenth century. The “Renaissance” of Hebrew culture has its roots in the Hebrew Haskalah (Enlightenment), which marked a turning point in the modern history of the Jewish people, its culture, and letters. Its beginning can be traced to Prussia in the 1780s when a group of aspiring, young Hebrew writers undertook a new and daring mission—to revitalize the Jewish people by reviving the Hebrew language and Jewish culture. As part of their program, they began publishing a modern, up-to-date monthly journal in the Hebrew language named *Hame’asef* (The Gatherer). The periodical, published during the years 1783–1797 and 1808–1811, was more than just a literary journal patterned after contemporary German literary publications such as *Berlinische Monatsschrift* and *Magazin für die Deutsche Sprache*.<sup>1</sup> The journal became the ideological mouthpiece of a literary and cultural movement that began a concerted effort to affect a cultural revolution among Jews in Prussia and elsewhere in Europe. It also served as an organ for publishing the literary works produced by its circle of writers.

Through their literary endeavor, these writers ushered in modern times in Jewish history and modern trends in Hebrew letters.<sup>2</sup>

This renewal or revival was initiated by a group of young Maskilim (Hebrew enlighteners) who were prompted by the German and the European Enlightenment movements to follow suit and establish their own version of the Enlightenment. Did these Maskilim have any thought of creating a "Renaissance?" While they did not expressly mention the Renaissance, they were aware of the innovative aspects of their activities and their thoughts, as attested in their writings.

The editors of *Hame'asef* wrote a prospectus, *Nahal Habesor* (The Brook Besor, or Good Tidings) in which they proclaimed the emergence of a new age by saying, "And behold wisdom now cries aloud outside." While employing a paraphrase from Proverbs 1:20, the statement highlighted three important concepts relevant to the new components of change during the Enlightenment: the concept of time ("now"), the principle of wisdom, and the dichotomy between "inside" and "outside." A call for immediate action followed: "Hurry up to call her in, hasten to bring her indoors."<sup>3</sup> The use of the biblical idiom and the parallelism between the two components of the statement intensified the message and suggested the image of a bridge, leading from the outside world into Jewish society.

These statements are indicative of a profound awareness of metamorphosis possibly leading into modernism. The editors accompanied these phrases by demands that their fellow Jews follow in the footsteps of the European Enlightenment and adopt its new ideology. The Maskilim believed that the times demanded a change from the traditional Jewish way of life, to a more updated (and, perhaps, "modern") course. Many of these statements heralded the dawn of the new Age of Reason in Europe, constituting the litmus test for discerning the emerging modernism. They were euphoric, hopeful, highflown, and naive. However, they certainly formed the literary and linguistic expression of the awareness of the changing times that students of the Haskalah are trying to identify.

The quotation, "And behold wisdom now cries aloud outside," cited above, is a paraphrase from the book of Proverbs, which served, like some other similar pronouncements, as a source of slogans for promoting and inaugurating the new age. The use of the sacral biblical idiom to present a new, contemporary concept, related to the new times, is of special interest. It signaled the accepted method, during the early (and the late) Haskalah, of employing "the holy tongue" to express secular concepts. The Hebrew language itself—the revived vehicle for communication—subtly reflected, in its sensitivity, the complex transition to

modernity. Modernism was exemplified by the use of Hebrew, the traditional “holy tongue,” *leshon hakodesh*, to express new, modern, and even secular notions. Thus, the study of the ideology of the Haskalah must focus on the problems of the resuscitated Hebrew language.<sup>4</sup>

The Haskalah writers sensed that a new age had emerged in Europe. They referred to it as “the days of the first fruits of knowledge and love in all the countries of Europe.”<sup>5</sup> It is significant to note that the two concepts signifying the new epoch were “knowledge” and “love,” namely, “tolerance,” and that the two were connected. In other words, this phrase suggests that receptivity to happenings in the areas of culture and the humanities in Europe may impact the social level in human relations and in the attitude toward the Jews.

This feeling intensified in the early years of the publication of *Hame’asef*, as seen in the writings of the Maskilim. In the news section “*Toldot Hazman*” (Chronicles), published in the first volume in 1784, Hayim Keslin portrayed the new age with the familiar metaphors:

Ever since the light of knowledge has shone among the nations, and ever since the veil of ignorance has been lifted from the face of the peoples among whom we dwell, God has remembered us as well and has made their leaders act in our favor . . . and they [now] consider us as brothers.<sup>6</sup>

Discerning the change in 1786, the Italian Maskil Eliyahu Morpurgo used a similar metaphor: “Now that the sun of wisdom has come out on the earth in this wise generation.”<sup>7</sup> He highlighted this changing time by comparing it to the earlier period:

Now it is unlike the early days for the remnants of this people, as the seed of peace has given its fruits, fig and vine have brought forth their crop—the crop of wisdom—and the tree of knowledge has given its fruits . . . and a clear spirit [wind] has passed throughout the world, a cloud will spread its lightning [light], and will saturate it under the entire heavens, and its light [will reign] over the corners of the earth.<sup>8</sup>

The Maskilim argued that recognizing the emerging changes on the (non-Jewish) European scene also necessitated that Jews pursue a course of action to implement those changes among themselves. They proclaimed:

The age of knowledge has arrived among all the nations; day and night they do not cease teaching their children [both] language and book. And we, why should we sit idly by? Brethren, let us get up and revive [those] stones from the heaps of dust.<sup>9</sup>

The commitment to the mission that the Haskalah undertook upon itself and the strong sense of urgency to act permeate Shimon Baraz's poem *Ma'archei Lev* (Preparations of the Heart). The poem was published in 1785, on the first anniversary of the founding of the Society for the Seekers of the Hebrew Language, the umbrella organization of the Maskilim that published *Hame'asef*. This Hebrew writer used the seasonal revival of nature as the metaphor for the revival of the Jewish people and Jewish society. He emphasized the notion of the group working together for a unifying goal so as "to teach understanding to those who erred in spirit; enlightenment and knowledge to the impatient; and the earth should be full of knowledge as the water [covers the sea]."<sup>10</sup> The latter part is a partial biblical citation, based on Isaiah, purposefully omitting the name of God. Another Maskil, David Friedrichsfeld, summarized the goals of the Haskalah in this new age, expressing his wish in the form of a prayer: "May God make this community [of Maskilim] the teachers of knowledge and the clarifiers of good tidings, so that the children of Israel will walk in their light."<sup>11</sup>

It may be argued that these statements ought not to be taken as naive, innocent observations, authentically reflecting the current condition. However, even if these were attempts to disseminate propaganda, they represented a clear indication of the Maskilim's awareness of the changing times. To reiterate, this awareness of the ensuing change undoubtedly was coupled with the Maskilim's strong desire for such a change. It was part of their recognition that this change was possible and that they were committed to pursue it. These tendencies represented a new and innovative thrust, signaling a transition from a rather passive attitude toward Jewish existence to a more active one. The occurring change transformed a lofty slogan into an ideal that must be realized and into an enterprise that must be brought to fruition. Since its inception, and for some time to come, the Hebrew Haskalah literature was a tendentious literature, whose goal was to revive the Jewish people and its culture. Hebrew literature undertook a 'national' mission: to bring about a cultural revival for the ultimate rehabilitation of the Jewish people. Hebrew literature adopted a revolutionary goal and mobilized its resources to initiate action to affect the change. The clear signals of modernism that began to emerge from within the pages of *Hame'asef* were thus manifested by the awareness of the need for change, striving to define it, and struggling to execute it. These expressions of modernism, in its myriad, complex forms, continued to gain momentum. Even this awareness gained momentum, while leaving its cumulative impact on the beginning of modern times among the European Jews. It did not occur in one

day nor in one place. Yet, the theme repeated itself like a leitmotif, indicative of this historical trend and attesting to the validity of these observations.

Undoubtedly, the editors of *Hame'asef* discerned that a momentous change was taking place in Europe. They advocated that their fellow European Jews partake in this process and reap its fruits. As the Haskalah progressed, their concerted efforts to introduce the ideas of the European Enlightenment started to bear fruit. In a long, continuous process, lasting over a century, they and their followers affected acute change in the attitude of modern Jews toward traditional Judaism. These Maskilim were cognizant of the innovative nature of their activities and of the fact that they had formed a new social and cultural framework. They were fully aware that they had created a new ideology which spoke on behalf of the new movement. As part of their plans, they established a new literary center, aiming to produce a new type of Hebrew literature, even if they did not name it at first "Haskalah." The Maskilim did not refer to this new orientation as the Haskalah literature, the Haskalah movement, or the Haskalah period.<sup>12</sup> However, the eighteenth-century Maskilim developed a full historical awareness, and it served them in shaping the self-consciousness of the period.<sup>13</sup>

Awareness such as this usually surfaced in public manifestoes, which targeted a certain audience and carried a social message. A writer of such a proclamation usually felt the need to cite the occurring change as the reason for implementing a reform, for he was arguing his position and advocating his cause. One such manifesto was published in *Hame'asef* in 1790 by Mendel Breslau, an editor of the periodical. Breslau called on contemporary rabbis to form a rabbinic assembly in order to alleviate the burden of religious ordinances.<sup>14</sup> He cited the new age as reason for his demand, arguing: "And who is too blind to see that the day of the Lord is coming, and in a short while wisdom and knowledge will become the faith of the times."<sup>15</sup> Breslau's phraseology was based on messianic hopes that were transformed and applied to the new age. In spite of the traditional metaphors, the reference to the proverbial Prophet Elijah, and the designation of the forthcoming great day as "the day of the Lord," Breslau was far from considering it a divine or heavenly phenomenon; rather, he deemed it an earthly one.

You should pay attention to the splendid and awesome things that God has amazingly done in our times. And whosoever would not close his eyes in malice will indeed notice that it is God's hand . . . And why are you indolent to arouse the heart of the people, who are seeking to benefit our

people in their toil, to reestablish the name of Jacob . . . ? My heart cries because of the evil that is happening in Israel. . . . Not so are the ways of the other peoples around us, for they are improving their ways, and remove falsehood from the truth. . . . Be ashamed, the house of Israel, for you have been doing the opposite, and truth is wanting.<sup>16</sup>

These words are charged with great emotional vigor and attest to the great excitement among the Hebrew Maskilim. Breslau's article was written against the background of the call by the English deist Joseph Priestley for the "return of the Jews," in his book *Letters to the Jews*.<sup>17</sup> Thus, Breslau's article was indicative of the awareness of the pending changes. Evidently, the Hebrew language was deceptive, playing a game of allusion and illusion, replete with sacred expressions and hope for a heavenly redemption. Nevertheless, the thrust of the article was completely secular, and its intent and tenor were mundane and earthly. The problem is that the author made use of the 'holy tongue,' with its religious and biblical allusions, in order to communicate with his contemporary readers. However, to read it naively and literally is incorrect.

From a historical perspective, Haskalah can be said to have emerged on the European scene as a reaction to both external and internal forces. Undoubtedly, it was a Jewish response to the new spirit generated by the European Enlightenment, yet it certainly was also an answer to a great need for change emanating from within Jewish society. It came in the wake of inner strife among Jews resulting from messianic movements, a breakdown in the structure of the Kehilah (the organized Jewish community), and a decline in the authority of the rabbinat.<sup>18</sup>

The ideas and ideals of Haskalah were not totally innovative nor even original. Drawing upon European Enlightenment on the one hand and upon medieval Jewish philosophy on the other, its ideology may be characterized as eclectic. Continuously in a state of formation, this ideology lacked a systematized code and its proponents did not have a single, unified view on how to implement their goal. Nevertheless, they were united in their aim to enlighten their Jewish brethren, leaning heavily on Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), his definition of Judaism, and its relations to the surrounding culture.<sup>19</sup> Haskalah's facets, factions, and voices were many, and they varied from the extreme enlighteners to the more moderate ones. Regardless of their position on the Enlightenment scale, the Hebrew enlighteners—as distinguished from the German-Jewish enlighteners, who in general were more radical—had one thing in common: a desire to introduce changes in Jewish culture that was coupled with loyalty to the Hebrew heritage.

Discussion of “modernism” is more often than not relegated to the notion of “secularism”—that creeping change that is said to have affected the thinking, *Weltanschauung*, and behavior of young Jewish intellectuals, the Maskilim. Both “modernism” and “secularism” in the context of this study are still subjects of continuous scholarly discussion, but they are yet to be defined satisfactorily. Nevertheless, the contribution of the Hebrew journal *Hame'asef* and its writers to the growth of modern Hebrew literature by promoting both modernity and secularism, has gained recognition in the past twenty-five years, as more scholars continue to produce critical assessments and analyses of literary works published by writers of the Berlin Haskalah.

It is in the activities of this group of young Hebraists, consisting of writers, educators, and even rabbis, that modern Hebrew writing was reborn and new trends of modern Hebrew letters were begun. This group and its writings represent the beginning of “modernism,” which this writer identifies and defines as a strong awareness of the changing times, a desire to affect change, and a collaborative effort to disseminate ideas and establish tools for change. As modernism, this writer identifies the subtle, covert signals in the writings of the Maskilim, which are indicative of their sensitivities to the changes that were about to take place in Jewish society.<sup>20</sup>

The Maskilim's launching of the Hebrew journal *Hame'asef* was coupled with the formation of a new cultural institution, which manifested a great and innovative achievement: the establishment of a center for literary activities. No longer would the individual writer be completely isolated from his peers; rather, a group of individuals was now functioning both as individuals and as a group. At times they may have been isolated and geographically distant from each other; nevertheless, the established literary center in Prussia united them. They appeared to have a common goal and to share similar literary concepts. Despite their individuality, the Haskalah writers and thinkers continued to work together toward a common goal.

Such a center was established first in Königsberg in 1783 under the umbrella of “The Society for the Seekers of the Hebrew Language,” as stated in the prospectus *Nahal Habesor*. This society for the promotion of the Hebrew language was later transferred to Berlin. This cultural society proved to be quite enterprising. It founded a publishing house with its own Hebrew and German typesetting and used the printing press of an established printer.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the new center for Hebrew literature was able to fulfill its cultural plans, promote its ideology, and disseminate its own books. Participating authors became independent of

religious and traditional community leaders and were free to publish the literary works of Haskalah, including controversial books. One such book was Saul Berlin's *Besamim Rosh* (Incense of Spices), published in 1793. This was a pseudoepigraphical work in the responsa genre, which the author attributed to Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>22</sup> The sum total of the cultural society's publishing enterprise is an impressive and diversified list of Hebrew books.<sup>23</sup>

The emphasis that the authors of *Nahal Habesor* placed on uniting the Hebrew writers as a group in an active center of Hebrew literature and a society for Hebrew language is striking. To disarm any possible rabbinic objection to their modern efforts by employing the traditional phrase "*Hadash asur min hatorah*" (the new [innovation] is forbidden by the Torah), the Maskilim themselves quoted from Hebraic sources the dictum that Torah may be studied only in groups.<sup>24</sup> Obviously, the group was not formed to study Torah in the traditional sense, even though the authors were initially very eager to describe themselves as educated both in Jewish and secular disciplines and as engaged in biblical commentary.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to cultivating the cultural agenda of Haskalah, the writers associated with this center and with *Hame'asef* addressed several important social issues related to Jewish existence, such as the attitude of Jews toward their host country and its citizens, their aspiration to become productive citizens of that country, and the like. Eventually they attempted to present an alternative to the existing structure of the Jewish Kehilah by establishing their own modern school and forming an "enlightened" burial society.<sup>26</sup>

This first, modest effort of the early Maskilim was followed during the second quarter of the 19th century by additional journals and scholarly periodicals devoted to literature and Haskalah. The second half of the nineteenth century saw the development of weekly publications, with a much greater impact on the dissemination of Haskalah. From its early start, Haskalah marks the end of passivity and the emergence of a concerted will to enact change in Jewish society and to fight for an enlightened ideology. Haskalah had to wage war on two fronts.

Externally, the Hebrew Haskalah defended Judaism in the face of the onslaught of European Deism against all revealed, positive religions. It attempted to portray Judaism, in contrast to Christianity, as a rationalistic religion, a religion of reason, befitting the Age of Enlightenment. Some of the Haskalah writings seemed to be apologetic, to be sure; others, however, were motivated by a profound allegiance to Jewish heritage and a strong belief in Judaism, as their authors perceived it.<sup>27</sup>



Internally, the Hebrew Maskilim desired to create a dialogue with the traditionalist rabbis in order to introduce some modernization into Judaism so as to make it contemporary and viable. They sought to prepare Judaism and Jews for the social and cultural trends that were current in Europe during the period of the Enlightenment. The end of passivity, which characterized the ideology of Haskalah, stemmed not only from the Maskilim's belief in the urgency of social emānċipation for the Jews in Europe but, more importantly, from their striving for cultural emānċipation as well.

The Maskilim rejected not so much the idea of Jewish exclusiveness but rather the notion of Jewish seclusiveness. They wanted to create a modern synthesis of Jewish and western culture while retaining their unique Jewish identity. This orientation does not mean that they desired to achieve assimilation as was advocated by some of the more extreme German Jewish enlighteners. The Hebrew Maskilim wished to free their fellow Jews from the ghetto mentality and to introduce them to the mainstream of European society and culture.

The Hebrew Haskalah envisioned a new social order in which the Jews were to be equal partners in European society, actively sharing in and contributing to its affairs. The Maskilim aspired to change the notion of Jewish anomaly that resulted from the *galut* (state of exile). They advocated broadening horizons for Jews and removing the shackles of a *galut* mentality, thus, reawakening in the people a yearning for the glories of the past.

Consequently, the Maskilim began to view the idea of *ge'ulah*, or redemption, in a more practical and mundane fashion. While not denying messianic hopes, the Maskilim advocated an end to passivity in this regard as well. They channeled the Jews' yearning for redemption into the sphere of humanism. The hope of national redemption outside of the European continent, namely, the return of the Jews to the Land Israel, was an idea that was yet to come. The Maskilim still endeavored to solve the Jewish problem within the European context.

All in all, this change of attitude and demand for action resulted in a self-scrutiny and a self-assessment on the part of the Maskilim. These tendencies were manifested by a critical view of the heritage of the past fortified by a search for a better future. The prevailing preoccupation in traditional Jewish circles with the corpus of past literature and its interpretation now began to shift to an outlook to the future, to the mundane, and to the practical.

It took much courage to demand an end to passivity, but it also took a great deal of naïveté to believe that both the Jews and Europe were

ready for a major shift in values and customs, and in existing social and cultural practices.

The contribution of this group of writers to the rebirth of the Hebrew language and Hebrew culture at the beginning of Haskalah may be assessed in the context of several areas of endeavor, beginning with their use of the Hebrew language. In no other realm of their Enlightenment enterprise did the Maskilim face as difficult a task as in this area. They had to cope with the existing classical structures, forms, and idioms of historical Hebrew, which, prior to the period of the Enlightenment, were used continuously in rabbinic responsa, halachic writings, philosophical, historical, and grammatical treatises, as well as in *belles lettres*.

Interestingly enough, the Maskilim's determination to revive the Hebrew language was prompted, in part, by the general inclination of the *Aufklärung* (the German Enlightenment) to resort to the national language—German—in scholarly and literary periodicals and to eliminate the use of Latin. Following this trend of the *Aufklärung*, the Maskilim affirmed their interest in their own national language—Hebrew—and expressed a strong pride in it and in its aesthetic and innate qualities. Their mentor and guide, Moses Mendelssohn, elucidated the beauty of Hebrew poetry in the Bible in his *Be'ur*, the commentary and translation into German of the Pentateuch. In it, he stated his intention to “show that as the heavens are higher than earth so is the exalted state of religious poetry [in the Bible] over secular poetry. . . . Religious poetry [of the Bible] has an advantage and a tremendous value in splendor and beauty over any other poetry.”<sup>28</sup>

Mendelssohn and Naphtali Herz Wessely (1725–1805), a poet, biblical commentator, grammarian, and one of the leading figures of the Hebrew Haskalah in Berlin, who shared similar views, followed Herder's dictum about the divine origin of the Hebrew language and poetry.<sup>29</sup> They further emphasized a strong belief in the potential of biblical Hebrew to be used for modern purposes. Thus, their followers, the young Maskilim, took it upon themselves to explore the modern linguistic capabilities inherent in that ancient language, which they still referred to by its traditional term *leshon hakodesh*, the holy tongue.<sup>30</sup>

In keeping with the prevailing notion that language is “the mirror of the soul” (as postulated by Leibnitz and others)<sup>31</sup> and that language affects thought and morality, the Maskilim rejected Yiddish, which they considered a “corrupted language.” Instead, they preferred the “purity” of German for their vernacular and the revived form of Hebrew for their literary medium of expression.<sup>32</sup> Wessely, the poet laureate and linguist of Haskalah, asked the following question in his treatise on educational

reform: "Why is the holy tongue used for matters of faith and Torah [the five books of Moses], and the German language used for discourse with other people and for secular studies?"<sup>33</sup>

The Maskilim rejected the contemporary rabbinical idiom because of its careless use of grammar, and its mixture of various layers of Hebrew with Aramaic. This rejection, however, was easier said than done. Many of them still resorted to the old rabbinic stylistic practices<sup>33</sup> which they were accustomed. Other writers rejected the rabbinic euphuism, a highly florid, turgid, and lofty use of Hebrew, for yet another type of euphuism, based on the Hebrew Bible.<sup>34</sup>

Indeed, the natural inclination of these young writers was to use biblical Hebrew, which they considered to be the pinnacle of linguistic purity. Although they could muster the biblical idiom in contemporary poetry and in poetic drama, it lacked the vocabulary and linguistic form adequate for philosophical or grammatical treatises. Nor was biblical Hebrew adequate for contemporary issues and modern ideas in secular subjects such as education, history, and the sciences. Trained in the medieval works of Jewish philosophy and theology (as autodidacts, to be sure), the Maskilim's natural inclination was to turn to medieval Hebrew for their nonbelletristic writings.

However, in search of additional sources for enrichment they reviewed some other literary traditions in the medieval Hebrew corpus, and many of these modern Hebrew writers rejected the *piyut* (liturgical poetry) and its high style of Hebrew. The Maskilim could not accept the *paytanim's* (writers of liturgical poetry) excessive use of poetic license in innovating new forms in Hebrew solely for the need of a rhyme or for other aesthetic purposes. The *paytanim's* linguistic freedom in coining new words, regardless of grammatical rules, was severely criticized by many Maskilim.

The literary and linguistic works of these Maskilim manifested the first major effort to search for ways to expand the Hebrew language so as to encompass all facets of modern Jewish life. Haskalah's experimentations with the Hebrew language facilitated its revival as a practical language for secular subjects, mundane matters, and scientific disciplines.

However, at this point, an ambivalent attitude toward the Hebrew language is noted: On the one hand, the Maskilim still referred to Hebrew, as mentioned above, as the holy tongue; they held a mystical concept of it as being endowed with unique traits and as carrying the innate values of the Hebrew *Geist* and Hebrew *Kultur*. On the other hand, they attempted to reduce the *sacred* aspect of the language and supplant it with a secular one. This ambivalence between the sacred and

the secular continued to haunt the Maskilim on a grand scale, and characterized the tenets of early Haskalah.<sup>35</sup> The dominant feature of the Haskalah's use of Hebrew was its attempt to utilize language not only for lofty and scholarly purposes but also for the ephemeral, the temporal, and the immediate. Thus, they dealt with everyday practical concerns such as news, science, inventions, secular knowledge, and other useful information.<sup>36</sup>

This way, language served the purposes of disseminating Haskalah ideology, manifesting a this-worldly attitude and a mundane orientation. As resuscitated by the Maskilim, the Hebrew language was intended to be a practical tool of communication for a greater understanding of the modern world and for a better comprehension of the condition of the Jewish individual against the background of his Jewish and non-Jewish society.

Consequently, Haskalah literature initiated a long process, characterized by the continuous secularization of the Hebrew tongue, leading eventually to the linguistic versatility of Hebrew letters and to the transformation of the literary language into a vernacular. The use of the familiar idiom, taken from the sacred corpus of the Hebrew heritage, in modern contexts, assumed, at first, the form of *melitzah*, or euphuism. This highly florid style, although artificial and inappropriate for everyday use, enabled the writer to make a multidimensional use of language. The subtleties of the Hebrew language were thus developed, reflecting thereby the very problem of the duality of Jewish existence as a traditional culture in a modern, secular world.

The linguistic tension among biblical Hebrew, the talmudic idiom, and medieval usage continued to be felt throughout the Haskalah period. These strands were finally synthesized in the writings of Mendele Mocher Sfarim (Shalom Yaakov Abramowitz [1835/6–1917]) in the later period of Hebrew Enlightenment, toward the end of the nineteenth century. Simultaneous with its effort to revive the Hebrew language, the Haskalah launched a major drive to revive Hebrew culture and Hebrew literature. The literary endeavor was manifested in a number of areas of creativity that included publishing in both the classical and contemporary spheres. Some of these works appeared in *Hame'asef*, while others were issued as books by the Maskilim's publishing house.

A major characteristic of Haskalah as a modern, up-to-date literature was manifested by its writers experimenting with a variety of new or revived literary genres and modes of expression that they found in the classical Hebraic corpus and in the surrounding European literatures. It was the very [MP2]prolific and creative Maskil, Isaac Satanow [MP3]

(1732–1804) who undertook the task of reviving some classical Hebrew genres with a modern slant. He selected the genre of biblical wisdom writing as a model, and patterned his *Mishlei Asaf* (Proverbs of Asaf; 1789–1802) on this classical form.<sup>37</sup> To make his work more attractive, Satanow wrote that he had found an ancient text and attributed it to Asaf, a Levite of yore, thus the title, *The Proverbs of Asaf*. As Satanow stated, he just added his own commentaries below the text and published the book. In so doing, Satanow emulated the traditional façade of a canonical book in which a venerated biblical text is accompanied by a traditional commentary. He recreated the traditional two-tier structure of an ‘ancient’ text combined with a ‘contemporary’ commentary. This age-old practice in Jewish writing became a versatile literary device employed for the dissemination of the ideology of Haskalah. Satanow’s contemporaries did not appreciate his inventiveness, and called him “a forger.” Students of world literature, however, know many other such “forgers” who enriched world literature by utilizing similar artistic devices.<sup>38</sup>

Satanow also revived the medieval genre of religious disputation, based on the well-known historical Judeo-Christian disputations, and composed a contemporary story, *Divrei Rivot* (Words, or Matters of Dispute; ca. 1800).<sup>39</sup> Satanow patterned it on the classical work of Yehuda Halevi, *Hakuzari*, which he had published previously with commentary.<sup>40</sup>

Satanow’s fictional neo-religious disputation is a drama-of-ideas. Following the dispute, Satanow’s king proclaims religious tolerance, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and freedom of religious practices throughout the land. He then proposes a plan to ameliorate the condition of the Jews by reforming Jewish education and making changes in the structure of the Jewish Kehilah and in the institution of the rabbinate. These reforms in Jewish education were similar to the ones advocated by Naphtali Herz Wessely in his educational treatise *Divrei Shalom V’emet*.

This renewed genre served to redefine Judaism in a fashion favorable to the Haskalah, defending the Jewish faith from the assaults of Deism and Atheism. This piece is also considered as a utopia in which the Hebrew author presents his wishes for a better society as a reality.<sup>41</sup> Satanow’s dialogue promoted the ideas and ideals of Hebrew Enlightenment.

Another neo-classical genre was introduced by Saul Berlin (1740–1794), a traditionalist rabbi and a Maskil. He attempted a daring, and to some a deceitful, endeavor by composing a new *Shulhan Aruch* (Jewish code of law). Using a pseudonym to conceal his identity,

Saul Berlin attributed this halachic book of pseudoresponsa, *Besamim Rosh*, cited above, to the medieval authority on Halachah, Rabbi Asher ben Yehiel, known by the acronym of ROSH. Berlin said that he only added commentary to the manuscript that he had found in some old library.<sup>42</sup> The book advocated a new approach to Halachah and even hinted at religious reform.

This preoccupation with old formats, based on the heritage of past Jewish literature, is indicative that the Hebrew Maskilim did not desire a break with cultural tradition. Their plans to revive Hebrew letters were founded on a synthesis of their own culture and European culture.

As another means of bringing Hebrew literature up to date, writers of Hebrew Enlightenment emulated contemporary European literary genres and modes such as epistolary writing, travelogues, utopia, satire, biography, autobiography, and dialogues of the dead.<sup>43</sup>

Isaac Euchel (1756–1804), a prolific writer and editor of *Hame'asef*, is credited with introducing a number of European literary genres to Haskalah literature. Indeed, he was one of the literary innovators and a bridge builder between cultures. Following the pattern of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes* and similar such epistolary writings, he composed an original epistolary writing titled "Igrot Meshulam" (The Letters of Meshulam; 1790), which was published serially in *Hame'asef*. Not only is this an epistolary story and one of the early modern satiric pieces in Haskalah literature, but it may also be considered as utopian in its portrayal of an ideal picture of a Jewish society.

Similarly, Satanow's religious disputation piece, *Divrei Rivot*, which was mentioned above, also contains a section with a utopian element. In it the author envisions the righteous and enlightened king as helping to build an ideal Jewish society that, guided by the ideas and ideals of the Enlightenment, achieves both cultural and social emancipation.

Another Maskil, Saul Berlin, mentioned above, also wrote a satiric masterpiece, *Ktav Yosher* (An Epistle of Righteousness; 1795). He penned it in defense of Wessely, who was engaged in a dispute with traditional rabbis over educational reforms expressed in his book, *Divrei Shalom Ve'emet* (1782). Berlin's satire contains some of the most bitter and critical remarks about contemporary Judaism and Jews.

Borrowing a popular European literary genre, an editor of *Hame'asef*, Aaron Wolfsohn (1754–1835), introduced the dialogues of the dead to Hebrew literature. In his "Sihah Be'erezt Hahayim" (Dialogue in the Land of the Living [= Afterlife]; 1794–1797), he enlisted the figures of Maimonides and Mendelssohn to argue with a fanatic rabbi and to defend the ideals of Haskalah. This piece was serialized in *Hame'asef*.<sup>44</sup>

Another Hebrew Maskil, Tuvyah Feder (1760?–1817), used the genre of the dialogues of the dead in *Kol Mehazezim* (Voice of the Archers; published in 1853; written in 1813). This was an invective against another Haskalah writer, Menahem Mendel Lefin (1749–1826) for the latter's translation of Mishlei (Proverbs) into allegedly Yiddish-like German. I discussed this genre and Feder's book elsewhere. Many other writers published regular and didactic dialogues, the latter of which were used for educational purposes, as was customary at the time.<sup>45</sup>

Another European literary genre, the travelogue, enabled the Italian Maskil Shmuel Romanelli (1757–1814) to depict Morocco's Jewish society in the 1780s in his *Masa Ba'arav* (Travail in an Arab Land; 1793). This genre and Romanelli's book are the subject of a chapter in a previous book.<sup>46</sup> *Hame'asef* published a shorter travelogue by Euchel that described a trip back to his birthplace in Copenhagen.<sup>47</sup>

It was Euchel who contributed to the genre of modern biography in his book-length portrayal of Moses Mendelssohn, *Toldot Rabenu Hebachem Moshe Ben Menahem* (The Life Story of Our Rabbi the Sage Moshe son of Menahem [Mendelssohn]; 1789). This genre, too, served the goals of Haskalah, by promoting the figure of the "Jewish Socrates," as Mendelssohn was called.<sup>48</sup> *Hame'asef* serialized Euchel's biography of Mendelssohn. Other biographies of Jewish luminaries, such as Isaac Abravanel and Moses Maimonides, were also published in *Hame'asef*.<sup>49</sup> These personalities were selected for biographical sketches because their philosophies were thought to support Haskalah ideology. Their portrayal, too, served to exemplify the typology of enlightened and open-minded spiritual leaders who were loyal to Jewish tradition.

Resorting to another popular genre, the enlighteners published hundreds of fables, following both contemporary European trends as well as Jewish literary tradition. Two chapters are devoted to this genre in my cited books.<sup>50</sup> Concurrently, Hebrew writers also expressed their creative energy through other types of writings; some wrote allegorical dramas, biblical dramas, and biblical epics. The Hebrew novel is a phenomenon that would be introduced years later, in 1853, with the historical novel, *Ahavat Zion* (The Love of Zion), by Abraham Mapu (1808–1867). The short story, too, was to emerge in the second half of the nineteenth century, although some initial attempts can be found earlier.

In their efforts to revive Hebrew literature, the Maskilim assigned a unique role and mission to Hebrew literature as an educational medium. Literature was viewed by the Hebrew Maskilim along the lines of the literary aesthetics of European Enlightenment as combining the good and the beneficial. Literary boundaries were extended beyond sheer

enhancement of beauty and aesthetic enjoyment. Paraphrasing the verse in Proverbs, a Hebrew Maskil summarized the aesthetics of Haskalah, saying: "Grace is deceptive, beauty is illusory, the good and the beneficial are to be praised."<sup>51</sup> It was literature's role to advocate the ideology of Haskalah and to promote its ideas. This was a didactic literature whose proponents endowed it with a mission: to educate and to teach the Jewish people in order to ameliorate their social, political, and cultural status in Europe.

The Maskilim were convinced that the only obstacle to their fellow Jews achieving equal rights was their failure to adjust to the European Enlightenment ideology that advocated cultural and social changes. Consequently, they made a concerted effort to introduce the ideology of Haskalah, promoting these changes via the medium of Hebrew literature. Changing Jewish society and its culture was part of their notion of "Renaissance."

This seemingly extraliterary concept of the role of Hebrew literature dominated the literary scene until the period of *Hatehiyah* (Revival, Renaissance, Rejuvenation) toward the end of the nineteenth century. Only through the efforts of such Hebrew critics as Abraham Uri Kovner (1842–1909) in the 1860s and David Frischmann (1862–1922) at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, and others, did the Enlightenment concept of literature change. It was at times modified or discarded completely in favor of the pure aesthetic role of literature, namely, literature for literature's sake. It should be emphasized that aesthetics and the appreciation of beauty had also been evoked by the early Maskilim. For example, a study of poetry in *Hame'asef* reveals the Maskilim's emphasis on the aesthetic qualities and the sublime language of poetry.<sup>52</sup> However, beauty was regarded by many Haskalah writers to be intrinsically related to the beneficial and was pursued by them with this interpretation in mind.

The efforts of the early Hebrew Haskalah were also geared toward reviving Hebrew culture. The major thrust of its activities was reorienting modern Hebrew culture toward the secular and the mundane, highlighting the utilitarian and the practical, and emphasizing aesthetic values that were based on contemporary European standards. The revival of Hebrew was part of the Maskilim's attempt to revive the people itself and resuscitate Hebrew culture. There was no conflict with their German orientation. Their adherence to Hebrew culture exemplified their perception that their Jewish identity could be presented on terms acceptable to their fellow German enlighteners.



Education was deemed by the Haskalah to be the most important tool for enabling the individual Jew to improve himself, in accordance with the *Aufklärung* concept of *Bildung*—the individual's self-development, self-cultivation, and character-formation aiming to achieve moral and aesthetic refinement in order to fulfill one's spiritual potentials—and thus help change and improve Jewish society.<sup>53</sup> In their published essays on modern education, pedagogy, and curriculum, the *Maskilim* advocated introducing into Jewish education a modern secular curriculum and revised religious teaching. Toward this end, they published catechisms and numerous textbooks for use in Jewish schools. Informal education was also on their agenda, and they produced lengthy articles on world history, the history of other religions and cultures, science, nature, psychology, and ethics.

The Hebrew-language Haskalah in Prussia was short-lived. *Hame'asef* ceased publication in 1797 but reappeared in 1808–1809 only to shut down permanently three years later.<sup>54</sup> There had been great expectations upon its founding in 1783, and a bitter desperation at its end. It was Euchel who in 1800 bemoaned the changing times in his florid style:

I have also tasted the dregs of the cup of reeling [the cup of poison], which came up on the nation of Judea and its enlighteners. The days of love have passed, gone are the days of the covenant between me [or between it, namely the Hebrew language] and the children of Israel. . . . They have run away, and they have gone!<sup>55</sup>

However, the phenomenon of the German Haskalah was emulated as other centers of Hebrew literature came into being in Austria and in Eastern Europe. The early Haskalah in Prussia was a breakthrough in modern Jewish history and in the history of Hebrew literature. The *Maskilim* directed their creative and literary energies to establishing a new phase in Hebrew letters that we identify as modern Hebrew literature. In their search for new modes of expression, they initiated the beginning of modernism in Jewish culture and in Hebrew literature, thus leaving their literary legacy for a century of Hebrew writing.

The German Haskalah was equally short lived, and by 1811, with the final demise of the new *Hame'asef*, its Hebrew activities were curtailed and its ideals of reviving the Hebrew language and literature, discussed so far in detail, were transformed to another venue. In the 1820s and 1830s the Haskalah movement flourished in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, especially in Italy and Galicia, having the Hebrew journal

*Bikurei Ha'itim* (1820–1831), published in Vienna, as its main literary organ.

Subsequently, the Haskalah made headway further east in Russia, Poland, and Lithuania. Its ideological platform, as developed initially in Germany, had been modified to fit the needs and the circumstances of the Jews in Eastern Europe. This version of Haskalah continued to disseminate its cultural ideology among its expanding circle of new followers. Concurrently, Haskalah writers and poets continued to produce numerous creative works in prose and poetry, expressing their thoughts and feelings in various literary genres, and finally, as mentioned earlier, in mid-century (in 1853) also produced its first novel, titled *Ahavat Zion* (The Love of Zion) by Abraham Mapu.

The thrust of one hundred years of Haskalah, which had as its goal to revive the Jewish people in the Diaspora, generally aimed to integrate Jewish culture into the European “enlightened” culture. Thus, the Maskilim intended to solve “the Jewish problem” within the European setting, while creating a modern-day “renaissance” of Hebrew Enlightenment, wishing to uplift and invigorate the Jewish people by means of enlightenment, humanitarianism, and tolerance.

However, this trend came to a halt in 1881, mostly as a result of a series of pogroms that were perpetrated against the Jews in the south of Russia. A disillusionment from the mainstream Haskalah emerged as several groups of Maskilim mostly in Russia launched the “Love of Zion” movement, which began reorienting the Jews toward their ancient homeland in the land of Israel. Thus, the Jewish desire for a cultural Renaissance within the parameter of the Haskalah now transformed to a desire for a national Renaissance.

Prior to that there were several rabbinic interpretations of the notion of messianic redemption (*ge'ulah*), traditionally delegated to the divine, in human terms. They called for the establishment of Jewish nationalism in the Jewish historical homeland as the beginning of this human redemption. One was by Rabbi Yehudah Alkalai (1798–1878) who as early as 1834 advocated the building of Jewish colonies in the Holy Land in his booklet titled *Shema Yisrael* (Hear, O Israel). Another was Rabbi Zvi Hirsch Kalischer (1795–1874) who in 1836 presented the notion that “the beginning of the redemption should come through natural causes by human effort.”<sup>56</sup> Both were considered to be the fore-runners or precursors of Zionism, as the notion of divine redemption had been shifting to human spheres even among some traditional rabbis. A more secular approach to the same issue was that of Moses Hess (1812–1875), a journalist and a social activist and one of the thinkers

of socialism, who in *Rome and Jerusalem* (1862) advocated the restoration of a Jewish state.<sup>57</sup>

It was the beginning of a national movement that emerged in the aftermath of the nationalistic trends in Europe in mid-century and the "Spring of Nations" in 1848. In Jewish circles, the national orientation promoted the idea of solving the 'Jewish question' not in Europe but in the land of Israel, which culminated in the emergence of Zionist ideology in the 1890s.

The change of heart in the attitude toward Haskalah permeated the literature ever since the 1870s as the idea of a national "Renaissance" had been slowly developing. In 1875, Peretz Smolenskin (1840/2–1885), the editor of the Hebrew monthly *Hashahar* (Dawn), and a prolific essayist and novelist, began to advocate the idea of "reviving" the people. He criticized the extreme exponents of early German Haskalah who, according to him, were responsible for the radical tendencies that led its followers away from the Hebrew culture and traditional Judaism.

Smolenskin was quite critical of the assimilation trends that came on the heels of the Berlin Haskalah, blaming Moses Mendelssohn and his followers for all the calamities that occurred to Judaism and the Jews in the nineteenth century. His main argument against Mendelssohn and the Berlin Haskalah was that they identified the Jews as belonging to one faith, thus eliminating any notion of Jewish peoplehood.<sup>58</sup> Smolenskin published his views in a series of articles titled "Et Lata'at" (Time to Plant), which to the literary historian Joseph Klausner signaled "the end of the Haskalah period and the beginning of the period of Nationalism and the Love of Zion."<sup>59</sup>

Smolenskin's attack on Mendelssohn and on the Berlin Haskalah was rejected by another prominent Maskil, Abraham Baer Gottlober (1811–1899). Gottlober defended both the German philosopher and his followers in a journal which he launched in 1876, *Haboker Or* ([First] Light of Morning), and argued that Smolenskin misread and misinterpreted Mendelssohn and the other Maskilim.<sup>60</sup>

As the criticism of Haskalah grew, another young writer, Eliezer Ben Yehuda, whose name would rise to the forefront of Hebrew culture in the following half century, entered into the national debate. He was to be considered later as the father of modern Hebrew, in effect one of the revivers of spoken Hebrew.

In an article that he published in Smolenskin's journal, *Hashahar*, in 1878, titled "She'elah Nichbadah" (A Venerable Question),<sup>61</sup> Ben Yehuda advocated the right and the necessity to resort to Jewish nationalism. Following the nationalistic trends that emerged in Europe earlier

in that century, he argued for the legitimate adherence to a new form of Jewish nationalism. He examined the required attributes of a people, a discussion of which flourished at that time, such as a common language, common heritage, common religion, showing their applicability to the Jewish people.<sup>62</sup>

Ben Yehuda then argued that Hebrew literature till then did not affect the life of the Jewish people in any significant way. To him, it was a divisive force that rather than uniting the people under one flag and one goal shattered its unity. That literature, he wrote, looked at the past rather than face the future. Its aspiration to revive the Hebrew language while the Jewish people were dispersed in many countries was futile. Here Ben Yehuda suggested the solution that foreshadowed the national discussion for the next quarter century.<sup>63</sup> He argued that a center had to be created for the emerging nationalism, a center for the whole people, which would be the “heart” “from which the blood will flow in the veins of the people and will give it life,” and this thing was “the settlement of the land of Israel.”<sup>64</sup> Klausner considers Ben Yehuda’s article “the first article for the new Love of Zion that was published in *Hashahar*.”<sup>65</sup> Later Ahad Ha’am advocated the idea of creating a spiritual center in the land of Israel.

Other critics, such as Kovner and Frischmann, were critical of literary aspects of Haskalah. One of the main arguments against the literature of the Haskalah was that it did not reflect the actual life of the people nor did it address the issues related to the people. By the 1890s, one of the most vociferous opponents of Haskalah was Mordechai Ehrenpreis (1869–1951) who heralded the emergence of a new type of Hebrew literature, the literature known as “Hatehiyah,” actually meaning revival or renaissance.

In a seminal article published in 1897 in the intellectual organ of Hebrew writers, *Hashiloah*, Ehrenpreis announced a revision in the attitude of the new breed of Hebrew writers toward their literature. He declared war against that kind of undertaking, which we call “Haskalah.” The group of young writers did not purport to continue the literary work done in previous generations since the time of the Me’asfim, the writers active in the first Hebrew journal, *Hame’asef*, but intended to start a new kind of literature, new in its format and contents.<sup>66</sup> Ehrenpreis believed that the early Maskilim could not have created “a literary movement that was attuned to the life of the nation” because they were dilettantes. He further accused them of not being a product of their time and place, and that they did not relate to the cultural life of their time.<sup>67</sup>

In 1903, Ehrenpreis declared the younger generation’s independence from the shackles of the past: “It is the uprising of the new generation in

our Hatehiyah movement,” he writes. “The new generation will not waste its strength on negative war; it wants a positive endeavor; it does not fight *against* the old, but *for* the new.”<sup>68</sup> Ehrenpreis further pronounces the motto of this new generation, proclaiming its notion of renaissance:

Here we came, men of freedom, full of faith! We freed ourselves of the shackles of sickly, rotting, dying tradition; a tradition that cannot live and does not want to die [ . . . ]. We freed ourselves of the extra spirituality of the *galut*, that spirituality that removed the Jew away from this world, that made our lives to be but a shadow of life. . . . We freed ourselves from the rabbinic culture, that encased us in a narrow cage of legal decrees, restrictions and prohibitions . . . we freed ourselves from that despair that characterized the Jewish street. . . . In as much as we removed ourselves from tradition, we also removed ourselves from its opponent, the Haskalah [ . . . ]. We freed ourselves from the yoke of superficial, fake and arid Haskalah.<sup>69</sup>

This was the new Renaissance that was sounded at the *fin de siècle*.

The major pundit of the national revival movement at the end of the nineteenth century and the first part of the twentieth century was Ahad Ha'am (pseudonym of Asher Ginsberg, 1856–1927). His interpretation of the idea of Zionism argued that prior to any physical revival of the people in the land of Israel, there should first be the preparation and the education of the individual Jew. “We should have dedicated our first actions to the revival of the hearts,” he wrote, and by this he meant the preparation of the people for a united national goal.<sup>70</sup>

Consequently, Ginsberg fostered the idea of building a ‘spiritual center’ in the land of Israel. As compared to Theodor Herzl’s concept of political Zionism, his was a spiritual Zionism. He argued that “the work of revival should not be limited just to establishing the material aspects . . . we have to create there a permanent and free center for our national culture: for science, art and literature.”<sup>71</sup>

While this period was considered to be the “Hatehiyah period,” by its own proponents’ definition, literary scholars such as Shimon Halkin debunked this notion. He argued that the *desire* for “tehiyah” was confused with the “tehiyah” itself. Thus, he asserts that the period was not a Renaissance, but merely a desire for such. This Renaissance, he argued in 1920, was still pending.<sup>72</sup> Perhaps it came to fruition in the pre-State extraordinary development of Hebrew writing as well as the post-1948 revival of Jewish life, culture, and literature in the State of Israel.

## Notes

1. Examples of contemporaneous German literary publications and their launching dates are *Berlinische Monatsschrift* (1783), *Magazin für die Deutsche Sprache* (1783), and *Der Deutsche Merkur* (1782).
2. See Moshe Pelli, "Hame'asef: Michtav Hadash Asher Aden Beyameinu Lo Hayah [*Hame'asef*: A New Publication Never Published Before], *Hebrew Studies*, 41(2000), pp. 119–46. The Hebrew periodical, *Hame'asef*, is discussed in detail in the introduction to Moshe Pelli, *Sha'ar Labaskalah* [Gate to Haskalah], Annotated Index of *Hame'asef*, First Modern Periodical in Hebrew (1783–1811) (Jerusalem, 2000). A literary assessment of *Hame'asef* writers may be found in Moshe Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshabar Habaskalah* [The Circle of *Hame'asef* Writers at the Dawn of Haskalah] (Israel: Hotsa' at ha-Kibuts ha-me' uhad, 2001). See also Moshe Pelli, "Hame'asef(1783–1811)—Peritzat Derech Baperiodica Ha'ivrit" [*Hame'asef* (1783–1811)—A Breakthrough in Hebrew Periodicals], *Hadoar* [Post], 79 (No. 19, August 25, 2000), pp. 18–21; (No. 20, September 9, 2000), pp. 18–20; (No. 21, September 29, 2000), pp. 39–41. Additional discussion on the literary contribution of these writers will be found in Moshe Pelli, "When Did Haskalah Begin? Establishing the Beginning of Haskalah Literature and the Definition of 'Modernism,'" *Leo Baeck Institute Year Book* 44 (1999), pp. 55–96.
3. *Nahal Habesor* [The Brook Besor, or Good Tidings] bound with *Hame'asef* [The Gatherer], 1 (1783–1784), p. 3.
4. The subject of the revival of Hebrew language during the Haskalah is discussed in Moshe Pelli, "Tehiyat Halashon Hehelah Bahaskalah: *Hame'asef*, Ketav Ha'et Ha'ivri Harishon, Kemachshir Lehidush Hasafah" [The Revival of Hebrew Began in Haskalah: "*Hame'asef*," the First Hebrew Periodical, as a Vehicle for the Rejuvenation of the Language], *Lesbonenu La'am* [Our Language for the People], Series 50 (No. 2, January–March 1999 [5759]), pp. 59–75. See chapter 6 on the Hebrew language in Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshabar Habaskalah*, pp. 177–95.
5. *Nahal Habesor*, p. 3.
6. H. K. (Hayim Keslin) in *Hame'asef*, 1 (1784), p. 111.
7. Eliyahu Morpurgo in *Hame'asef*, 3 (1786), p. 131.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 68, based on Job 37: 11.
9. *Nahal Habesor*, p. 13.
10. Shimon Baraz, *Ma'archei Lev* [Preparations of the Heart] (Königsberg, 1785), based on verses from Isaiah 29: 24, 35: 4, 11: 9.
11. David Friedrichsfeld, "Hadlah Mimlitzat Yehudit Hatif'eret" [Glory Ceased from Jewish Rhetorics], *Hame'asef* 2 (1784–1785), p. 34.
12. Uzi Shavit, "Ha'haskalah' Mahi: Leverur Musag Ha'haskalah' Basifrut Ha'ivrit" [What Is Haskalah: Clarifying the Concept "Haskalah" in Hebrew Literature] *Mehkerei Yerushalayim Besifrut Ivrit* [Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature], 12 (1990), p. 51. Shavit argues that the Maskilim were

not aware that they were "Maskilim." I tend to disagree with his notion if by this he meant that they did not consider themselves as Maskilim.

13. Shmuel Feiner, *Hahaskalah Beyahasah Lahistoriah—Hakarot He'avar Verifkudo Bitnu'at Hahaskalah Hayehudit (1781–1881)* [Haskalah in Its Attitude to History—Cognition of the Past and Its Function in the Jewish Haskalah Movement 1781–1881], a doctoral dissertation (Jerusalem, 1990) in the introduction and chapter 1. Published as *Haskalah Vehistoriah* [Haskalah and History] (Jerusalem, 1995), which was translated into English, *The Jewish Enlightenment* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).
14. Mendel Breslau, "El Rodfei Zedek Vedorshei Shelom Aheinu Bnei Yisra'el" [To the Seekers of Justice and the Searchers of Peace for Our Brethren the Children of Israel], *Hame'asef*, 6 (1790), pp. 301–14. See Moshe Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah* [Struggle for Change] (Tel Aviv: Mif'alim universitaiyim le-hotsaah le-or 1988), chapter 5, on Breslau, pp. 166–74.
15. *Hame'asef*, 6 (1790), p. 301.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 309, 313.
17. See Joseph Priestly, *Letters to the Jews* (New York: J. Harrison, 1794) [first edition: 1787]. See Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah*, pp. 166–74.
18. See the works by historians and social historians cited in Pelli, "When did Haskalah Begin?," pp. 55–96.
19. As delineated especially in his *Jerusalem* (1783); see an English edition, Moses Mendelssohn, *Jerusalem* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 1983), translation, Allan Arkush, introduction, Alexander Altmann.
20. The subject of modernism is discussed in Pelli, "When did Haskalah Begin?," pp. 55–96. See also an earlier, shorter version in Moshe Pelli, "Criteria of Modernism in Early Hebrew Haskalah Literature: Towards an Evaluation of the Modern Trends in Hebrew Literature," in *Jewish Education and Learning*, Eds. Glenda Abramson and Tudor Parfitt, published in honor of Dr. David Patterson (Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1994), 129–142.
21. See, for example, the cover of *Hame'asef*, 1 (1783–1784): the printer was Daniel Christoph Kanter in Königsberg.
22. Saul Berlin, *Besamim Rosh* [Incense of Spices] (Berlin, 1793) published by "Defus Hevrat Hinuch Ne'arim" (The Press of the Society for Educating the Youths; in German: Im Verlag der Juedischen Freischule). On Saul Berlin, this book and his work see Moshe Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1979), chapter 9, pp. 171–89, and chapter 4, on Berlin, in Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah*, 140–165. On his satire, see Moshe Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Hahaskalah Ha'ivrit* (Tel Aviv: Kibuts ha-me'uhad, 1999).
23. A list of available books published from 1784 to 1796, with the exclusion of out-of-print titles, appeared at the end of Nahman Barash, *Ein Mishpat* [A Fountain of Justice] (Berlin: n.p., 1796).

24. *Nahal Habesor* [The Brook Besor, or Good Things], 4, bound in *Hame'asef*, 1 (1783). The phrase forbidding innovation, based on a biblical verse taken out of context, is attributed to Rabbi Moshe Sopher (1762–1839).
25. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
26. See chapter 10, on Euchel, in Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah*, 190–230. Also Shmuel Feiner, “Yitzhak Euchel a Ha'yazam' Shel Tenu'at Hahaskalah Begermanyah” [Isaac Euchel—The “Initiator” of Haskalah Movement in Germany], *Zion*, 52 (No. 4, 1987), pp. 427–69.
27. See the chapter 1, on Deism, in Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah*, pp. 7–32.
28. Moses Mendelssohn, Ed., “Sefer Shmot” [Exodus], *Netivot Hashalom* [The Paths of Peace] (Berlin: Hotsaat ha-Kibuts ha-meuhad, 1783), 62b. See also Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Hahaskalah*, p. 30.
29. Joh. Gottfried Herder, *Vom Geist der Ebräischen Poesie*, 2 (Gotha: Cotta, 1890), p. 24. See Moshe Pelli, “On the Role of Melitzah [Euphuism] in the Literature of Hebrew Enlightenment,” chapter 4, in *Hebrew in Ashkenaz: A Language in Exile* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), Ed., Lewis Glinert, pp. 99–110. See my article on the poetry in *Hame'asef* and the Maskilim's perception of language and poetry, “‘Lamenatze'ah Bineginot Maskil'—Melech Hashir Vetofa'at Hashirah Be'hame'asef', Ktav Ha'et Harishon Shel Hahaskalah Ha'ivrit” [Poetry and Poetic Theory in *Hame'asef*, the First Modern Periodical in Hebrew Haskalah], *Dappim Lemehkar Besifrut* [Dappim Research in Literature], 12 (1999–2000), pp. 65–116. See also Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Hahaskalah*, chapter 1, on poetry, pp. 23–72, and my article “‘These Are the Words of the Great Pundit, Scholar and Poet Herder . . .’: Herder and the Hebrew Haskalah,” *Hebräische Poesie und jüdischer Volksgeist: Die Wirkungsgeschichte von Johann Gottfried Herder im Judentum Mittel- und Osteuropas* (Hildesheim, Zürich and New York: Olms, 2003), pp. 107–24.
30. See *The Age of Haskalah*, chapter 4, on the Hebrew language in Haskalah, pp. 73–90, and my article on the revival of Hebrew in Haskalah, “The Revival of Hebrew Began in Haskalah: Hame'asef, the First Hebrew Periodical, as a Vehicle for the Renewal of the Language,” *Leshonenu La'am* [Our Language for the People], 50 (No. 2, 1999), pp. 59–75. See also, Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Hahaskalah*, chapter 6, on Hebrew, pp. 175–95.
31. See E. A. Blackall, *The Emergence of German as a Literary Language 1700–1775* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 4–5. See also *ibid.*, 5, note 2, the English proverb: “Speech is the picture of the mind.”
32. See Shmuel Werses, “Yad Yamin Dohah Yad Smol Mekarevet: Al Yahasam Shel Sofrei Hahaskalah Lileshon Yiddish” [Right Hand Rejects Left Hand Brings Close: On the Attitude of Haskalah Authors to the Yiddish Language], *Hulyot* [Links], 5 (Winter 1999), pp. 9–49.
33. N. H. Wessely, *Divrei Shalom Ve'emet* [Words of Peace and Truth] (Berlin: n.p., 1782), pp. 13a–b. Some scholars read this sentence differently, applying the question mark only to the first part while ignoring the conjunction which unites the clause to the main sentence. I disagree with this reading.



34. See Moshe Pelli, "On the Role of *Melitzah* [Euphuism] in the Literature of Hebrew Enlightenment," *Hebrew in Ashkenaz: A Language in Exile*, pp. 99–110.
35. See my studies on Hebrew in Haskalah cited in note 4.
36. See, for example, the various departments and items devoted to these matters in *Hame'asef*, and their description in the prospectus *Nahal Habesor*. See the index of *Hame'asef*, *Sha'ar Lahaskalah*, in the introduction...
37. More on Satanow and his work see the chapters devoted to him in Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah*, pp. 151–170, and Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah*, pp. 82–139.
38. Lessing published Reaimarus's controversial fragments anonymously; d'Hollbach published his *A Letter from Thrasybulus* saying that he had found it in a library. In Haskalah, Wolfssohn published his dialogue of the dead (see Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, chapter 2a) anonymously, as did David Caro in his *Brit Emet* [Covenant of Truth] (Dessau:n.p., 1820). See *The Age of Haskalah*, p. 174, note 8.
39. I discuss the genre of religious disputation in detail in Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, chapter 4, pp. 101–15.
40. See Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah*, pp. 129–39.
41. For a discussion about the genre of utopia, see Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, chapter 10, pp. 291–327.
42. Saul Berlin's *Besamim Rosh* is discussed in my books: Pelli, *The Age of Haskalah*, chap. 9, pp. 171–89, and Pelli, *Bema'avkei Temurah*, chap. 4, pp. 145–65. See note 4 above.
43. These genres and the Maskilim cited here, Euchel, Satanow, Berlin, Wolfssohn, and Romanelli, are discussed in Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, and *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Habaskalah*.
44. Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, chapter 2, pp. 48–72.
45. See chapters of Feder, the dialogues of the dead and the imaginary dialogue, in Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*.
46. See Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*.
47. "Igot Yitzhak Eichel" [Isaac Euchel's Letters], *Hame'asef*, 2 (1785), pp. 116–21, pp. 137–42.
48. Cited in *Hame'asef*, 1 (1783–1784), 43: "The pundit of our generation, Socrates of our time." Mendelssohn was compared to Socrates by Ramler. See Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn*, 742. Heinrich Heine, at a later date, referred to him as "the German Socrates" in *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1959), p. 94. See chapter 8a, on biography, Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, pp. 237–52.
49. *Hame'asef*, 4 (1788), pp. 113–44, pp. 177–208, pp. 337–68; 5 (1789), pp. 33–64. See Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit*, chapter 8.
50. See Pelli, *Sugot Vesugyot Besifrut Habaskalah Ha'ivrit* and *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Habaskalah*.
51. *Hame'asef*, 1 (1783–1784), p. 132, by Joel Brill.
52. Pelli, *Dor Hame'asfim Beshahar Habaskalah*, pp. 30–37.

53. On *Bildung* see George L. Mosse, *German Jews Beyond Judaism* (Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1985), pp. 1–11, 18–20, 41–3, and several articles in *The German-Jewish Dialogue Reconsidered*, Ed., Klaus L. Berghahn (New York: PeterLang, 1996), pp. 81–97, 125–32. See *Dor Hame'asfim Beshabar Habaskalah*, 77, note 10.
54. The year according to the Hebrew calendar.
55. Shalom Hachohen, *Ktav Yosher* [An Epistle of Righteousness] (Vienna: n.p., 1820), pp. 95–6.
56. See Yehudah Alkalay, *Ketavim* [Writings] (Jerusalem, 1944); Zvi Kalischer, *Derishat Zion* [Search for Zion] (Torun: n.p., 1866); see also Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea* (New York: Doubleday, 1984), pp. 101–14.
57. Moshe Hess, *Roma Virushalayim* [Rome and Jerusalem] (Warsaw, 1899); see also Hertzberg, *Ibid.*, pp. 116–39.
58. Perez Smolenskin, *Maamarim* [Articles], 2 (Jerusalem: Hotsa at Keren Smolenski, 1925), pp. 8–17, 68, 75, 78.
59. Joseph Klausner, *Historiah Shel Hasifrut Ha'ivrit Habadashah* [History of Modern Hebrew Literature], 2nd edn, Vol. 5 (Jerusalem: Ahiasaf, 1955), p. 104.
60. Abraham Baer Gottlob, "Et La'akor Natu'a" [Time to Uproot that which is Planted], *Haboker Or* [(First) Light of Morning], 1 (1, 1786), pp. 4–17; (2, 1786), pp. 77–86.
61. [Eliezer] Ben Yehuda, "She'elah Nichbadah" [A Venerable Question], *Hashabar*, 9 (1878), pp. 359–66.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 362.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 364.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
65. Klausner, *Historiah Shel Hasifrut Ha'ivrit Habadashah*, 5, p. 104.
66. Mordechai Ehernpreis, "Le'an?" [Whither?], *Hashiloah*, 1 (1897), pp. 489–503.
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 490–1.
68. Mordechai Ehernpreis, "Hashkafah Sifrutit" [Literary Outlook], *Hashiloah*, 11 (1903), pp. 186–92, the quotation on 186.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
70. Ahad Ha'am, "Lo Zeh Haderech" [This Is Not the Way], *Kol Kitvei Ahad Ha'am* [The Complete Writings of Ahad Ha'am] 5th edn, (Tel Aviv: Devir, 1956), pp. 11–14.
71. Ahad Ha'am, "Tehiyat Haru'ah" [Revival of the Spirit], *Kol Kitvei Ahad Ha'am*, pp. 173–86 esp. 181.
72. Shimon Halkin, "Tekufat Hachiyah" [The Period of Tehiyah], *Derachim Vetzidei Derachim Basifrut* [Ways and Byways in Literature], 1 (1969), pp. 49–52; the article was written in 1920.