

# A Jew of the Third Kind

## Heine: His Double Life

BY YIGAL LOSSIN

What is Heine's place in Jewish history? Was he one of the greatest Jews, as the eminent historian Heinrich Graetz contends? Or was he just a "passing shadow" in the words of another historian, Simon Bernfeld? A lot has been written about his attitude to Judaism, and its attitude to him, but the last word has not yet been said. What kind of Jew was Heine? Was he a "Jewish spirit working in alien material" as Max Brod suggests, or, as Jeffrey L. Sammons of Yale maintains, a German poet of Jewish descent, just as Norman Mailer, Saul Bellow, and Philip Roth are American writers of Jewish descent? Was he a Reform Jew in the words of his cousin Herman Schiff, or a traitor and apostate with no connection whatsoever to Judaism, as Gabriel Riesser, the champion of Jewish emancipation in Germany, insists? Or perhaps he represents something very simple, so simple, in fact, that it has escaped the notice of his scholars and biographers to this very day?

In any discussion of Jewish genius, the name of Heine is invariably linked with those of

Spinoza, Marx, Freud, Kafka, and Einstein. It also appears on other lists. In *The Non-Jewish Jew*, Isaac Deutscher includes him among the leading heretic revolutionaries who turned their backs on their Jewish roots: Spinoza, Heine, Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky, and Freud. In *Germany's Stepchildren*, Salomon Liptzin links his name with those of Rachel Varnhagen, Ludwig Boerne, Moses Hess, Theodor Herzl, Arthur Schnitzler, Walter Rathenau, Jakob Wasserman, Stefan Zweig, Martin Buber and others. In her essay *The Jew as Pariah*, Hannah Arendt places Heine at the head of the list, followed by Bernard Lazar, Charlie Chaplin (whom she mistakenly thought was Jewish), and Franz Kafka. And some may recall that in the keynote address at the First Zionist Congress in Basel (1897), Max Nordau spoke glowingly of "the Judaism of the Prophets and the Tannaim, the Judaism of Hillel, Philo, Ibn Gabirol, Judah Halevi, Maimonides, Spinoza, and Heine."

Heine? The Judaism of Heine? When the literary historian Hugo Bieber collected texts in which



Heine refers to Jews or Judaism, they amounted to a volume of more than 300 pages. The cover of the American edition of his book declares: "This anthology will come as a great surprise even to those who have read and reread Heine's writings many times."

Separating out the Jewish element from all the other aspects of the poet's work, as did Bieber, reveals a fascinating picture, unique in the annals of the Jewish people, but it still does not solve the riddle and paradox that is Heine. Scholars continue to have a hard time explaining how the author of *The Rabbi of Bacherach*, in which the Torah is described as "the book which God wrote with his holy hand," could state elsewhere that Judaism is not a religion but a "misfortune," an "incurable malady," an "insanity," or a "long lost cause." Why in the first two chapters of his book does Heine eulogize the Orthodox rabbi of Bacherach, and in the third present us with a Jewish convert who claims that Judaism is too gloomy for his taste, and he therefore prefers the joyful pagan cult of Astarte? And how is it that the poet of "Sabbath Princess," praising the traditional Jewish lifestyle, concludes another of his "Hebrew Melodies," "The Disputation," with the statement that both the rabbi and the priest "stink"? Many consider this a case of Jewish self-hate, while others see here a love-hate relationship, and still others have attributed it to Heine's mischievous, unpredictable personality and his tendency to build up in order to tear down, to caress and then to bite.

Heine's life was a strange and wondrous odyssey. The young Jew who vowed "If I forget thee O Jerusalem" was baptized in a Protestant church and married a French shopgirl in a Catholic wedding. The Romantic poet crowned the leader of the liberal school of "Young Germany," who advocated Saint-Simonean socialism, collaborated with Karl Marx, and after years of declaring himself to be a Hellene, a pagan, and a citizen of the world, closed the circle of his life by stating with pride that his "ancestors

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belonged to the noble house of Israel," and that he was a "descendant of those martyrs who gave the world a God and a morality, and who have fought and suffered on all the battlefields of thought."

Anyone wishing to solve the riddle of Heine's Jewish identity must beware the danger of blowing things out of proportion. The available material on the subject is so rich and intriguing that it is easy to get carried away and forget that Heine's genius was all-encompassing, and that the Jewish element is merely one aspect of the world in which he lived and expressed himself. Attempts to categorize him by means of Sir Isaiah Berlin's terms of hedgehog vs. fox will inevitably arrive at the conclusion that he was the ultimate fox. There is much to be said about his Jewishness, his Germanness, his Hellenism, his French

connection, his Spanish guise, and even “The English Legend of Heinrich Heine,” to quote the title of one of the more interesting books on the subject. He features in different ways in the annals of Liberalism, Socialism, and Communism. The complex struggles of his mind have also occupied theologians, who follow with fascination his path from Hegelian atheism, through adoration of the Greek gods, to a return to the God of the Old Testament. While he left a strong mark on each of these circles, there can be no doubt that his international renown and undying fame were carried “on wings of song,” a phrase he coined in

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one of his most famous poems. “It was Heinrich Heine who gave me the most perfect idea of what a lyrical poet could be,” wrote Nietzsche. “In vain do I search through all the kingdoms of antiquity or of modern times for anything to resemble his sweet and passionate music.”

No volume of poetry in the German language has ever been bought, read, or sung more than Heine’s *Buch der Lieder* (*Book of Songs*, 1827). It has been set to music by the finest composers, among them Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Liszt, Brahms, and even the young Wagner. As of 1994, 4,579 different melodies had been written for the *Book of Songs* alone, and for his poetry as a whole some ten thousand musical compositions can be counted, a record for any work of world literature save the Bible.

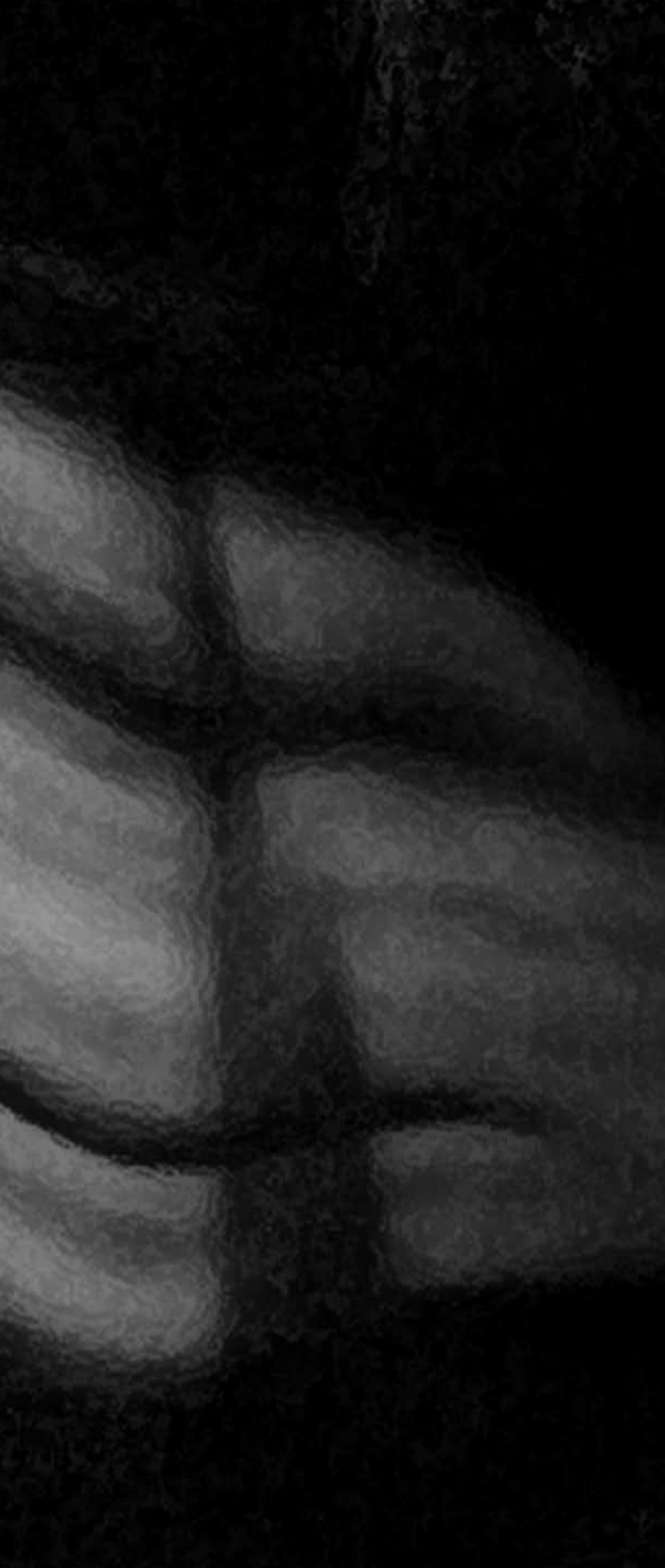
Heine himself, if we take him at his word, never aspired to fame as a poet. Rather, he wanted to be remembered by future generations as “a brave soldier in mankind’s war of liberation.” He was for the 19<sup>th</sup> century what Voltaire was for the 18<sup>th</sup>, the most sharp-witted writer in Europe. He was a satirist who fought fearlessly against the tyranny and follies of the regimes of the Age of Reaction and the Holy Alliance, and paid dearly for it by being ostracized and exiled. Indeed, he spent his last twenty-five years, nearly half his life, in political exile in Paris, where he was hounded by Prussian agents, surrounded by Austrian spies, and threatened with prison should he ever set foot on German soil. In admiration for his Romantic poetry and satirical wit, his French hosts dubbed him the *Voltaire au Clair de Lune*. For the English, he was the “Bard of Democracy,” the German poet second only to Goethe. He has been the subject of more English-language books, dissertations, and biographies than any other German writer, including Goethe. His works have been translated into every modern language, and new translations continue to appear. Heine himself boasted that he was the first European poet to be translated into Japanese.

Heine was also the first, and indeed one of the few, of the noted German poets who was a journalist as well. He edited a political magazine in Munich, and later served as foreign correspondent in Paris. His journalistic writings, like his other prose—stories and essays—had a tremendous impact on both the content and style

of whole generations of writers and newspapermen. If the German language has been depicted as a hefty, severe, impeccably-dressed lady, then Heine has been portrayed as a young lover undoing her buttons and releasing her from her tight corset to reveal a lovely, playful, witty maiden. His unique free style of writing derived from a desire to eliminate the distinction between art and life, to take literature out of the ivory tower of pure Goethe-like poetry and the search for the blue flower of Romanticism so that it became involved in contemporary life. Through Heine, the generation of "Young Germany" was introduced to writing with a political social message.

Heine was a poet-prophet, a sort of seismograph recording indications of every future tremor with a sensitive stylus. He predicted the Communist revolution even before Karl Marx ("Communism, although little talked of now and still sprawling on its meager straw mattress in hidden attics, is nevertheless the somber hero that has been assigned a great, if only fleeting, role to play in the modern tragedy, and is just waiting for its cue to come on stage"), but he also painted it in harsh colors ("We see the triumph of Communism as a threat to our whole modern culture"). With spine-chilling prescience, he foresaw the birth of Nazism out of the spirit of Romanticism. The Romantic nostalgia for ancient Teutonic myths and the folklore of cruelty and evil as typified by the Brothers Grimm was destined, Heine predicted, to release the dark, aggressive, cataclysmic forces in the German people. "Christianity," he wrote, "and this is its greatest merit, subdued to a certain extent the brutal German belligerence, but it could not entirely quench it; and when the taming





talisman, the cross, falls to pieces, then will break forth again the ferocity of the old combatants... There will be played in Germany a drama compared to which the French revolution will seem but an innocent idyll...Take heed, then! Ye have more to fear from a freed Germany than from the entire Holy Alliance with all the Croats and Cossacks." This warning was followed by an even more astounding prophecy: "If one day Satan... should be victorious, there will fall on the heads of the poor Jews a tempest of persecution which will far surpass all their previous sufferings...I shudder at the thought and an infinite pity ripples through my heart." Heine, alone in his generation, was thus the first to foresee the Holocaust. That being said, nowhere in his ominous caveats did he ever accuse the Germans of collective guilt. He saw the nation as divided in two, and praised the "better and more beautiful half of the German people, but that is precisely the half that does not bear arms."

While Heine may not have been a philosopher with a systematic theory, his ideas fertilized different and even opposing strains of 19<sup>th</sup> century thought. Graetz compared him to a sovereign flinging handfuls of gold coins out the window of his carriage as he rode by. His ideas were borrowed not only by Marx, but by his polar opposite Nietzsche as well. Marx's famous slogan "religion is the opium of the masses" (1844) was taken, without citing its source, from *Ludwig Boerne: A Memorial* (1840), and the Nietzschean thesis that "God is dead" (*The Gay Science*, 1882)

comes from another book by Heine, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (1835). The works of yet another fan, Sigmund Freud, are similarly studded with quotations from Heine.

Just as he knew how to charm readers on all levels, so Heine was equally able to infuriate and reap trouble. Wagner called him a false poet, Treitschke warned that he was the start of “the Jewish invasion into German literature,” and Goebbels had his books burned. Indeed, animosity toward him continues to this day. Where Nietzsche was allowed to denounce Christianity and express his repugnance for the Germans, the same leeway could not be afforded the Jew Heine. Where Lessing, Kant, Goethe, and Schiller were forgiven for their cosmopolitan worldview, the same attitude was condemned as subversive and a betrayal of the fatherland in the case of Heine. At a time when the majority of literary controversies of the 19<sup>th</sup> century are dead and forgotten, Heine stands alone as the only writer still capable of stirring up a storm on the bicentennial of his birth.

The opposite poles of the Germans’ ambivalent attitude to Heine is best demonstrated by two famous individuals: Richard Wagner and Friedrich Nietzsche. In the early liberal period of his life, Wagner composed music for “The Two Grenadiers” and took his ideas for two operas—*The Flying Dutchman* and *Tannhäuser*—from Heine. In his later antisemitic period, he ignored this creative debt, presenting Heine in his infamous essay “Judaism in the

Music” as driven by a “remorseless demon of denial” and a symbol of Jewish usurpation of German culture. On the other hand, Nietzsche had enormous admiration for Heine. “He possessed that divine malice, without which perfection itself become unthinkable to me...And with what mastery he wields his native tongue! One day it will be said of Heine and me that we were by far the greatest artists of the German language that have ever existed...”—thus spake the author of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

For all the controversy, one sometimes gets the impression that there were two Heines. Metternich, the leader of the post-Napoleonic Age of Reaction, ordered Heine’s books censored and banned, forbade them to be printed or sold, and saw to it that orders for his arrest be posted at every border crossing. Yet he also kept a copy of the *Book of Songs* at his bedside. “I have learned,” wrote Heine, “how much he [Metternich] loves my poems, and that he once told His Highness that he from time to time shed tears while reading them.”

Bismarck, the Iron Chancellor who united Germany—a move Heine considered a threat to world peace—declared that the name Heine could not be uttered but in a single breath with the name Goethe.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, some began to take exception to this image of Heine as the second greatest German poet. Karl Kraus, the angry Viennese satirist, fired the first shot in 1910 by

claiming that Heine “has so loosened the corsets of the German language that today every little shopkeeper can fondle her breasts.” This sort of criticism in the age of modern poetry had a strong impact; the literary profession followed Kraus’s lead, deriding Heine’s poetry for being too pure, plain, and frivolous, and even finding fault with its immense popularity. Accordingly, in 1953, when thirty intellectuals, among them Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse, and Martin Buber, were asked to name their favorite German poems, none of them mentioned even one by Heine. Only in the ‘60s, when a new generation of critics appeared, was Heine’s poetry rehabilitated, and he again took his place in the Hall of Fame of German literature. Anyone visiting the cemetery of Montmartre today can not but be amazed at the constant stream of visitors from all over the world, many

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of them German youngsters, who arrive holding the *Book of Songs* in one hand and flowers in the other. The huge heap of fresh flowers blanketing Heine’s grave every day of the year is concrete proof of the deep affection in which this *enfant terrible* of German poetry is still held. Every now and then there is a visitor from Israel who comes to place a small stone on the grave and intone *Kaddish*, the Jewish prayer for the dead.

“Heine,” wrote Hannah Arendt, “is the only German Jew who could truthfully describe himself as both a German and a Jew.” Throughout

the generations of assimilated or converted Jews, no writer identified as thoroughly with Judaism as Heine, an attitude which, Arendt believes, derived from a desire to seek the truth uncompromisingly. “Hebrew Melodies,” and even more so *Confessions*, caused a sensation, but when told on his deathbed that everyone was talking about his return to Judaism, Heine replied: “I make no secret of my Judaism, to which I never returned, because I never left it.”

Scholars have been reluctant to take this statement at face value. In *Heine: A Modern Biography*, Jeffrey Sammons contends that ending “Hebrew Melodies” with the word “stink” indicates that Heine’s “return” was not connected to any “traditional doctrines.” Similarly, in *Heine’s Jewish Comedy*, S.S. Praver concludes that Heine did not return to the Jewish religion.

This is undoubtedly true, but the question remains: if not to the Jewish religion, then to what did he return? What was the nature of the Judaism to which he never returned because he never left it? The difficulty with which scholars are struggling lies most probably in the view that Judaism is a religion and the Jews a religious sect, a view that prevailed in the era of the Emancipation and is still current nowadays to some extent, primarily in the U.S. German, French, American Jews, and so on wished to believe that they were German, French, or American by nationality, and Jewish only by religion. Secular Judaism, or national Judaism, Heaven forbid, were still inconceivable notions. In Heine’s time,

there were only two kinds of Jew: Orthodox or Liberal. As he saw it, the Orthodox, the ghetto Jews, lived in the past, while the Liberal Jews, the members of the Enlightenment with whom he associated himself, had no roots or self-esteem and were suffering from an identity crisis. Heine thus sought a third alternative: Judaism as primarily a historical entity to which the Jews were tied not by bonds of faith or *Shulkhan Arukh*, but by a collective memory, a survival instinct, and a national solidarity. “I am not a fervent champion of the Jewish religion,” he explained, “but I confess that I will be fervently in favor of the rights of the Jews and their equality as citizens.” In *Confessions*, which relates the odyssey that was Heine’s life, he lauds Moses (using the Hebrew title *Mosche Rabenu* in the original German) not as the founder of a religion, but as the creator of a nation: “What a giant! How small Sinai appears when Moses stands on it!...He took a poor shepherd tribe and created a nation out of it which also should defy centuries; a great, eternal, holy people, a people of God, who could serve as a model for all other nations, indeed, as a prototype for all mankind—he created Israel!” Here on his deathbed, Heine proudly acknowledged his connection to the nation of Israel, which “gave the world a God and a morality.” As for his conversion to Christianity, a step he took to ensure his livelihood, he invariably spoke of it with disparagement and derision, contending, for example, that “converts to Christianity are committing perjury, because

a Jew will never believe in the divinity of another Jew.” He preferred to see himself as “a Jew with heart and soul who was baptized out of a desire for luxury”—a formula that would not pass any rabbinical test today. Yet despite the problematic issue of his conversion, Heine’s personality reveals a new type of Jew which, although unusual at the time, would become commonplace within two or three generations when Jews began to define themselves as a nation. Ahad Ha’am, the father of Spiritual Zionism, explained this revolutionary new version of Judaism of the third kind by distinguishing between the “I believe” Jews and the “I feel” Jews.

The great Victorian critic Matthew Arnold wrote that “Heine had all the culture of Germany; in his head fermented all of the ideas of modern Europe.” One could add that those ideas also included some of the central tenets of modern Zionism. Sixty years before Ahad Ha’am’s essay “Slavery within Freedom,” Heine maintained the paradox that subjugated Eastern European Jews were freer than the liberated Jews in the West. Eighty years before Bialik,<sup>1</sup> he proposed the concept of self-defense, and eighty years before Tchernichowsky<sup>2</sup> he called for vengeance against the enemies of Israel. He also heralded the age of national revival by his invectives against the Reform Movement for its willingness to forego its historical roots in the name of civil rights. By doing so, he warned, “they are fatally enfeebling Judaism.” When Leopold Zunz, the founder of the Science of Judaism, was preparing a book of his sermons for

1 Hayyim Nahman Bialik (1873–1934), the greatest Hebrew poet of modern times.

2 Saul Tchernichowsky (1875–1943), one of the great Hebrew poets of the Tehiya (national revival) era, translated the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into Hebrew and created a storm at the turn of the century with poems that were critical of Jewish religious traditions and lauded the pagan ideal of beauty.

publication, Heine did not expect it to generate a religious awakening, but “something much better, the awakening of power. This is what is now lacking in Israel.” Had he been familiar with modern terminology, he would undoubtedly have used a term such as the “strengthening of Jewish identity.” There are, in fact, many surprising examples of how this man, who is generally presented in Jewish history books as a symbol of the generation of assimilation and conversion, could actually be seen as one of the earliest, most paradoxical, precursors of the Zionist revolution. His criticism of the excessive spirituality of Judaism might also earn him this title. Decades before Berdyczewski,<sup>3</sup> Tchernichowsky, and the “neo-Canaanites”,<sup>4</sup> he hailed “the holy Astarte” and “the joy of life in the pantheon of the gods.” Thus it might also be said that Heine was the first “neo-Canaanite.” Given these attitudes, can he still be considered a Zionist? Although his poetry and prose contain expressions of Zionist leanings, nowhere does he state that the Land of Israel itself is the solution to his own problems or those of the Jewish nation. No matter how much he admired Judah Halevi, it never occurred to him to follow him eastward to the wilderness of Palestine. In fact, when Heine was forced to leave Germany for fear of arrest, he went to the west, to the lights of Paris, to the “New Jerusalem,” as he called the city that granted him asylum for the remainder of his life.

And so we ask again, what was the nature of the Judaism to which he never returned because

he never left it? In contemporary terms, it is a secular, free, or national Judaism, what might be said to be the default option today for millions of Jews who, now that “God is dead,” are no longer compelled to choose between the Orthodox or Reform varieties. This “Judaism of the third kind” does not oblige its followers to commit to any articles of faith or practical commandments. Its test is purely emotional. Ahad Ha’am characterized it by explaining: “I can comment on the beliefs and judgments passed down to me by my forefathers without fearing that it will break the bond between me and my nation.” And that is precisely what bad boy Heine did. But since he was ahead of his time, he brought the wrath of the Jewish establishment down on his head. In the opinion of Gabriel Riesser, Heine was a malignant thorn in the flesh of Judaism, a nuisance and an obstacle to the integration of the Jews into German nationality. So enraged was Riesser that on one occasion he even challenged Heine to a duel. During the controversy surrounding the plan to erect a monument to Heine in Mainz in 1906 (fifty years after his death!), the Orthodox and Reform communities set aside their differences and joined with the chief rabbi of the city in submitting a petition to halt the project. Yet despite the repeated attempts to disparage him, Heine remained the most popular poet among German-speaking Jews. They sang his songs, laughed, and wept with him, and, most oddly, although they were thoroughly

<sup>3</sup> Micha Josef Berdyczewski [Bin-Gorion] (1865-1921), the pioneer of modernism in Hebrew literature, called for a “reevaluation of all values” and other Nietzschean notions.

<sup>4</sup> The neo-Canaanite Movement, or Young Hebrews, was an ideological/political movement that emerged on the eve of World War II and claimed that a new Hebrew nation was being created in Palestine. They rejected not only religion, but also the cultural traditions that had evolved in the course of two thousand years of exile, and sought to break all ties with Diaspora Jewry itself. Instead, they wished to establish the new Hebrew culture on mythical, pre-Israelite, and Canaanite foundations, thereby giving rise to the name of the movement.


assimilated, many found their way back to their forgotten Jewish roots through his words. One of these people was Theodor Herzl. So scanty was Herzl's knowledge of Jewish tradition that when he reached one of the most festive chapters in his prophetic novel *Altneuland*, he resorted, incredibly, to Heine to help describe an imaginary visit to the Temple in Jerusalem:

Singing and lute-playing now resounded in the great hall, taking Friedrich [Herzl's alter-ego] back both to his own youth and to the time when Israel was young. The worshippers around him were whispering prayers, but he suddenly remembered the 'Hebrew Melodies of Heinrich Heine'—those German verses in which the poet called the Sabbath the 'quiet princess.' The cantor started an old song, one that had roused nostalgic echoes for hundreds of years in the hearts of people dispersed all over the globe, in the synagogues of every country, the beautiful words of the poet Solomon ben Halevy—*Lecho daudi likras kalle*. But in Friedrich's heart the words sounded in German, as Heine had translated them, and he also remembered that Heine, though a German poet par excellence, was not ashamed of the ancient Hebrew melodies.

Whereas at the First Zionist Congress in 1897, Max Nordau compared Heine to Hillel, Judah Halevi, Maimonides, and Spinoza, eight years later in his eulogy for Herzl, he included him in a somewhat different, and more dramatic, list, stating that Herzl's ideas of Judaism were "in the

spirit of Judas Maccabeus, Bar-Kokhba, Judah Halevi, Spinoza, and Heine."

Herzl, Nordau, and Bialik never imagined that Heine would be dethroned or banned in the Jewish State as well. The religious politicians, the swing vote in any coalition, consider him a convert who defiled Judaism, and have therefore prevented the city of Jerusalem from naming a street, a neighborhood or even a football stadium after the man who confessed that the words "on the rivers of Babylon" brought tears to his eyes, who vowed time and again "if I forget thee, O Jerusalem," and who wrote "Judah Ben Halevi," one of the most moving songs of Zion. Tel Aviv once managed to sidestep the coalition, naming an insignificant alleyway on the border of Jaffa after the Rabbi of Bacherach, Heine's fictional hero. Only after noted Israeli poets voiced loud protests and organized demonstrations was Shlomo Lahat, then Mayor of Tel Aviv and a native Berliner who was suckled on Heine's poetry, able to surmount the difficulties imposed by the city ordinance from 1942 that forbids naming a street after a convert, and give a little road the name of the great poet. Unfortunately, it is not a residential street, but merely a section of a byroad on the outskirts of the city. And so, Israelis can not stroll along Heinrich Heine Blvd., sip coffee in a café on Heinrich Heine Ave., or demonstrate in Heinrich Heine Sq. At most, we might hear on the news of a traffic accident on Heine Rd. in the direction of the soccer stadium. Haifa, always known for being unconventional, deserves



higher marks for naming a square near the water tower in the Central Carmel after Heine, and building the Heinrich Heine Community Center in Kiryat Haim.

That is all that can be said, at least for the time being, on the way in which the State of Israel commemorates the greatest Jewish poet in recent generations. Eighty years ago, Bialik suggested that translating all of Heine's works and including them among canonical Hebrew literature would be a fitting memorial to this extraordinary Jew who was, in his eyes, a "symbol of the Jewish soul and its endless wanderings." As Bialik saw it, by means of the translation project the nation would be fulfilling the commandment to redeem captives. "Remember Heine!" he ordained.

JERUSALEM, 1 JANUARY 2000

**JERUSALEM LIFTED THE BAN ON HEINRICH HEINE**

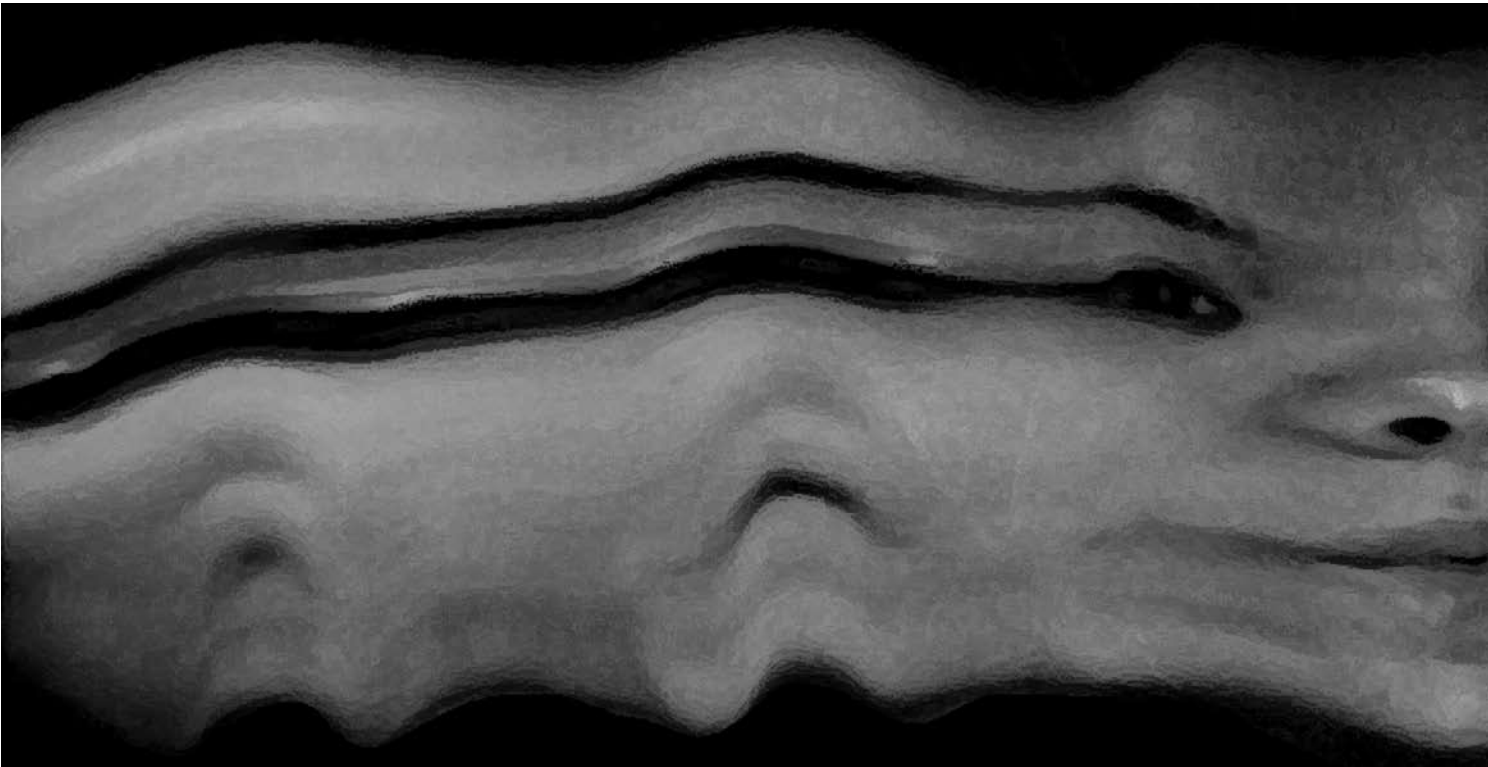
When my book *Heine: His Double Life* was first published in Hebrew in January 2000, it led to some rather unexpected developments. A group of distinguished Jerusalemites gathered in the home of the late Haim Cohn, a justice of the Supreme Court born in Luebeck, Germany, decided that the ban on Heinrich Heine was no longer tolerable, and resolved to lobby for rehabilitation of the shunned poet. Former ambassador Michael Shiloh, director of the Mishkenot Sha'ananim cultural center, offered to host an international conference on "Heine in Jerusalem." Ruth Cheshin, president of the Jerusalem Foundation established by former mayor Teddy Kollek, declared the Foundation's

willingness to sponsor the conference. Naomi Kaplansky and Geula Cohen, members of the steering committee, approached the Israel Postal Authority with the request that they issue a Heine stamp on the occasion of the conference, and to the astonishment of us all, received a favorable reply. What is more, the Israeli government officially licensed issuance of the stamp. A few angry religious members of parliament raised the subject in the Knesset hoping to overturn the decision, but after a heated debate they were voted down. We were even more astounded when the Jerusalem City Council, where religious and ultra-Orthodox parties carry crucial weight, resolved to name a street after Heine. And thus, in one of the prettiest areas of the city, opposite the Old City wall and near the historic windmill, there now stands a street sign that reads: Heinrich Heine, Jewish-German poet, lover of Jerusalem. The unveiling ceremony, held on December 13, 2001 (the 204<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Heine's birth) was attended by former Israeli President Yitzhak Navon, Mayor Ehud Olmert, former Mayor Teddy Kollek, Prof. Dr. Gert Kaiser, Rector of the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf, and Prof. Dr. Joseph A. Kruse, director of the Heinrich-Heine-Institut, who brought greetings from the mayor of Düsseldorf. Several papers reported the event under the headline "Jerusalem Lifted the Ban on Heinrich Heine," and the speakers made a solemn promise that Jerusalem would never again forget the poet who vowed time and again throughout his life: "If I forget

thee, oh Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning.” There were even those who insisted that it was not Heine who was being rehabilitated; rather, it was a mark of the rehabilitation of

the State of Israel as a modern enlightened country. And so, the ban on Heine was lifted.

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Yigal Lossin, a senior producer at Israeli Television, is known for his acclaimed documentary *Pillar of Fire: the Rebirth of Israel*, as well as a hardcover companion, or “visual history,” published by Shikmona Publishing Company (1983). A former head of the New York office of Israel Radio and Television, Lossin has written, produced, or directed (and sometimes all three) several other films and documentaries, including *Out of Spain* (1992) and *Jerusalem 3000* (1999). A review of Lossin’s latest book, *Heine: His Double Life*, appeared in *Contemplate 3*, where it was hailed as an “overwhelming success” by Egon Friedler. The preceding excerpt from *Heine: His Double Life* was reprinted with the author’s and the publisher’s permission.

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