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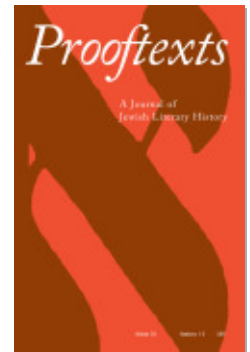
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# *Ho!* and the Transnational Turn in Contemporary Israeli Poetry

ADRIANA X. JACOBS

*Since its 2005 inaugural issue, the Israeli literary journal Ho! has situated translation at the center of its efforts to revitalize and redirect the flows of contemporary Hebrew poetry from the Israeli local to an expanding global network of Israeli writers and poets who live in translational states, living and working outside of Israel and, in several cases, in other languages. Ho!'s commitment to translation is closely connected to its embrace of a transnational model of Hebrew literature. In this article, I examine the critical reception of Ho!'s first issues and the debates that followed between its authors and critics over what constitutes the Israeli here and now, a question that also forces a reevaluation of where Hebrew literature's diasporic past—and present—is located in contemporary Israeli culture. By retracing the comparative and multilingual encounters of modern Hebrew literature's Jewish, diasporic past, and reengaging these encounters via translation, Ho! advances a transnational model as the present and future of Israeli literature.*

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“To be contemporary is to create one’s time, not reflect it”

—MARINA TSVETAIEVA

“The future of poetry is the present, and it has already arrived.”

—JOYELLE MCSWEENEY<sup>1</sup>

If a radical shift in literary production and circulation from the diaspora to Palestine marked Hebrew literature of the twentieth century, what distinguishes the Israeli literary scene moving into the new millennium is the global movement of authors and texts beyond Israel’s borders. Today, many Israeli writers and poets live in states of translation, writing and publishing outside of Israel and, in several cases, in languages other than Hebrew.<sup>2</sup> Travel, globalization, and digital networks

have given shape to a contemporary Israeli literary culture that is both local and transnational. This traffic has shaped and facilitated the production and reception of literary translation as Israeli literature continues to challenge its own norms through the inclusion of texts that originate in other places, times, and languages, and as Israeli writers move—and reside—between different geographic and linguistic borders.

In what follows, I propose a reading of contemporary Israeli literature that foregrounds “the world beyond” in its reframing of Israeli literature as deterritorial, diasporic, and cosmopolitan.<sup>3</sup> Borrowing David Damrosch’s formulation of world literature as a “mode of circulation and reading,” I will trace the movements of contemporary Hebrew poetry and translation “through the shifting spheres of world literature,” using the literary journal *Ho!* as my primary case study.<sup>4</sup> Founded, along with several other Israeli literary journals, in 2005, *Ho!* has distinguished itself by situating translation and translators at the center of its efforts to revitalize and redirect the flows of contemporary Hebrew poetry.<sup>5</sup> *Ho!*’s dedication to a generative translation practice is closely connected to its editorial commitment to a transnational model of Hebrew literature and to “openness to world literature.”<sup>6</sup> Indeed, Dory Manor, *Ho!*’s founding editor, is a poet and translator who lived for several years in France and has published highly acclaimed Hebrew translations of classic French poetry (he was the recipient of the 2007 Shaul Tchernichovsky Prize for translation).<sup>7</sup> The journal’s emphasis on classical forms and prosody, and on the sonnet in particular, has combined with its interest in translation to form a larger project of recovering Hebrew literature’s diasporic legacy, while also acknowledging diasporic/transnational Hebrew literary production in the present.<sup>8</sup> Bringing these temporalities into contact has allowed the journal to imagine continuities that reframe contemporary Israeli writing as comparative, multilingual, and transnational, a project that carries both aesthetic and political stakes. By selecting texts that deemphasize territoriality, and emphasize translation and transnational movement, *Ho!* hypothesizes an alternative history for Hebrew literature that envisions its continued development as a diasporic, cosmopolitan, and multilingual literature, rather than one that decisively favored a national, territorial, and monolingual ethos.<sup>9</sup> In so doing, *Ho!* has challenged Hebrew literature’s Anglo-American modernist legacy and offered in its place a world-oriented model

for contemporary Israeli literature that acknowledges both its increasingly transnational movement and its active, internal (and still contested) multiculturalism and multilingualism.

This study examines the early critical reception of *Ho!*'s first issues, with particular attention to the debates between its authors and critics over what constitutes "the contemporary" in Israeli literature and the forms and histories that this category accommodates. While *Ho!*'s model privileges Hebrew and circulates primarily within an Israeli market, its commitment to a neoformalist and translational poetics insists on "the past as a serious factor" in the shaping of contemporary literature, whether through the composition of sonnets, the retranslation of nineteenth-century French poetry, or revisiting the legacy of European seafaring literature.<sup>10</sup> Further, I reflect on how *Ho!*'s recentering of Hebrew literature's diasporic past in contemporary Israeli culture and its emphasis on the role of translation and translators not only complicates claims to contemporaneity in the Israeli context, but also reimagines Israeli literature as a world literature.

In his provocative introduction to *Ho!*'s inaugural issue, Manor not only challenged prevailing trends in contemporary Israeli poetry, but also emphatically situated a poetics and politics of return at the center of *Ho!*'s agenda:

The journal *Ho!* has come into being from a sense of urgency. An urgency to return poetry to a central place in Israeli culture; an urgency to return a rich Hebrew language that isn't anorexic to the heart of Israeli writing; an urgency to raise onto the literary stage a new generation of writers and poets. We aspire to return to Hebrew literature something of that spark, of that (Slavic?) self-denial that it lost somewhere in the past fifty years.<sup>11</sup>

Manor's call to "return poetry to a central place in Israeli culture" is implicit in the very name of the journal. The word *ho*—in English, *oh* or *o*—commonly introduces an apostrophe, an exclamatory figure of speech from the Greek ἀποστροφή, "turning away." When it occurs in literary writing, lyric poetry in particular, it usually signals a speaker's sudden turn toward an absent addressee, often a personification of a

concept or idea (e.g., Shakespeare’s “O cunning Love!” and Shelley’s “O wild West Wind”). This name is consistent with the journal’s editorial preoccupation with the formal, classical elements of poetry, but without the object that usually follows the apostrophic performance, the word *ho* also assumes multiple potential addressees and directions.<sup>12</sup> In one respect, the name literally “calls” the reader forward, as an invitation. On the other hand, the apostrophe marks a turn toward what is absent; in this case, what is absent for the editors and writers of *Ho!* is “good” Israeli poetry written in a “rich” and vibrant Hebrew—a kind of Hebrew poetry that thrived, in their view, until the “tyranny” of free verse and colloquialism took hold in the Israeli poetry of the 1950s and 1960s (a point of contention on which I will elaborate further). At the same time, Manor described *Ho!*’s “poetic revolution” as the offspring of the very movement that it was now rejecting.<sup>13</sup> On behalf of a world-oriented contemporary Israeli poetry, *Ho!* turned and returned—*through* and *in* translation—to a European tradition of classical prosody that had been a dominant formal mode for Hebrew poetry until the mid-twentieth century.

It is this move, in particular, that shapes the international content of the first issue, which includes prosodically attentive Hebrew translations of writers like Federico García Lorca (1898–1936), Jacques Roubaud (b. 1932), Osip Mandelstam (1891–1938), and Tristan Corbière (1845–1875). *Ho!*’s translation and retranslation of classic European texts not only reinterprets these works for a present-day Israeli audience, but also “recenters” these forms as part of an apostrophic turn to Hebrew literature’s European, diasporic past.<sup>14</sup> In this respect, *Ho!*’s neoformalism, which applied to both the original works and translations that it published, was both an indictment of contemporary *haruzfobia* (rhymephorbia, Manor’s neologism) and a revisionary continuation of forms that were present in the work of Hebrew modernists like Leah Goldberg and in the early output of *dor ha-medina* (Statehood Generation) poets like Dahlia Ravikovitch and Yehuda Amichai. The mutual reciprocity of translation and writing that *Ho!* invoked was also a legacy of modernism.<sup>15</sup> But by situating a neoformalist poetics at the center of *both* their own original writing and their translation practices, they problematized the category of contemporary writing and its relation to understandings of twenty-first century Israeli (literary) identity as it is defined not only linguistically and geographically, but also in the very forms of its expression.<sup>16</sup>

The roots of *Ho!*'s concerns over the state of Hebrew literature in the twenty-first century date to the 1960s, when the poet Natan Zach and his contemporaries adopted free verse as the form that, in their view, best accommodated a local and contemporary Israeli poetic idiom. His 1966 manifesto, "Le-akliman ha-signoni shel shnot ha-ḥamishim ve-ha-shishim be-shiratenu ha-ḥadasha" (The Stylistic Climate of the 1950s and 1960s in Our New Poetry) rejected the classical models that characterized the poetic output of Hebrew modernists like Goldberg, Avraham Shlonsky, and Natan Alterman, viewing them as outmoded and favoring instead a modernist Anglo-American aesthetic.<sup>17</sup> In this, his primary motivation was, as Chana Kronfeld has shown, "to liberate concrete and personal poetic expression from the collectivist abstractions of the past, which were associated both with the socialist realism of the 1948 Palmach generation and the heavily symbolist nationalism of Alterman's topical poetry."<sup>18</sup> But in so doing, Zach neglected to acknowledge how a classical prosodic model had continued to develop in Hebrew poetry of the mid-twentieth century, persisting in the work of *dor ba-medina* poets as they continued to write into the post-Statehood period.<sup>19</sup> In this respect, *Ho!*'s emphasis on the classical prosodic models that had given shape to a diasporic, pre-Statehood Hebrew poetry was bound to a critique of the relation between literary norms and Israeli national identity.

This was not, however, the first time that these writers were staking this claim. In fact, rhymed and metered poetry was part of the platform of the short-lived journal *Ev*, a precursor to *Ho!*, which was active between 1993 and 1996 (Manor was among its founding editors).<sup>20</sup> The 2000 publication of Manor's debut poetry collection, *Mi'ut* (Minority), also provoked discussions on the "return to form" in Israeli poetry, including a sharp contestation of this emerging neoformalism by none other than Zach.<sup>21</sup> Herman's 2001 debut, *Ḥad keren* (Unicorn), a collection of poetry, and the 2003 publication of Maya Arad's *Makom aḥer, ve-'ir zara* (Another Place, A Foreign City), a novel in verse, affirmed neoformalism to be more than a short-lived fad or gimmick, and rather a potentially enduring mode for contemporary literature.<sup>22</sup> In the wake of the critical reception of *Ho!*'s first issue, specifically those that appeared in the pages of *Haaretz*, several *Ho!* contributors issued responses that defended their work against charges of nostalgia and anachronism by emphasizing the comparative, multilingual, multicultural and transnational

relations that their formal practices allowed them to engage and activate *in the present*.<sup>23</sup> Arad put it even more succinctly: “[rhyme and meter] are the basic forms of poetry across all cultures and languages.”<sup>24</sup> In other words, forms may develop within certain linguistic and national frames, but their long, transnational and translational history make them prime material for comparison.<sup>25</sup>

Manor’s own translations of nineteenth and early twentieth-century French poetry also offer a constructive context for *Ho!*’s commitment to rhyme and meter. For example, his consideration of the place of rhyme and meter in contemporary Hebrew poetry accords with Valéry’s theory of form, and particularly the relation Valéry drew between form and originality, which is evident in his oft-cited aphorism “Ce qui est le meilleur dans le nouveau est ce qui répond à un désir ancien” (what’s best in the new is what answers to an old desire).<sup>26</sup> Herman addressed this relation in her response to Zach, but also cautioned, as did Valéry, that any mode of writing risks becoming a cliché when it assumes hegemonic status. For Herman, rhyme and meter also comprise an embodied poetics, and this relation shapes her critique: “Those saying that a rhyming poem is mechanical and artificial should ask themselves: is a heartbeat mechanical and artificial?”<sup>27</sup> Her response interweaves lines from Yona Wallach’s landmark poem “Yonatan,” a work of free verse, as evidence of how rhyme and meter inhere even in the most radical and experimental forms of poetry that were being published in the 1960s (in fact, “Yonatan” opened Wallach’s 1966 debut collection *Devarim* [Things]).<sup>28</sup>

By introducing the journal primarily with translations of poets whose work bridged late Romanticism and Modernism, *Ho!* also reenacted a transformational moment in the history of Hebrew literature. Recent scholarship on modern Hebrew literature—Shachar Pinsker’s *Literary Passports*, Allison Schachter’s *Diasporic Modernisms*, Alan Mintz’s *Sanctuary in the Wilderness* and Michael Weingrad’s *American Hebrew Literature*, to name a few—has challenged the persistent diaspora-to-nation teleology, and in particular the emphasis it places on linearity and continuity. These works share an interest in addressing the radical bifurcation that occurred in Europe and the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century between Hebrew writers, editors, and publishers who embraced Zionism and territorial nationalism, and those who remained committed to modern Hebrew as a diasporic literary language. By calling attention to the

multilingual and geographically unsettled affiliations of early modern Hebrew writers, these investigations also propose a way of situating the early decades of modern Hebrew literature in more comparative and international frameworks.<sup>29</sup> But this work has coincided as well with closer considerations of Mizrahi writing (particularly in light of the increasingly mainstream success of the *Ars Poetika* poets), LGBTQ+ literature and its history, Palestinian Hebrew writers, the poetry of *ha-periferiya*, the periphery, and Israeli literature's "exuberant multilingualism."<sup>30</sup> In a literary and scholarly context that has been actively challenging the hegemony of Ashkenazi Hebrew writing for the better part of two decades, it is worth considering what *Ho!* stood to gain by reaffirming European modernism as a model for Israeli contemporary writing, and by emphasizing the translation of these works as a model for global comparativism.<sup>31</sup>

In *What is World Literature*, Damrosch argues that "all works cease to be the exclusive products of their original culture once they are translated; all become works that only 'began' in their original language."<sup>32</sup> In this respect, translation proves to be apostrophic; it brings literary texts into a new temporality that, in Jonathan Culler's words, "resists narrative because its now is not a moment in a temporal sequence but a now of discourse, of writing."<sup>33</sup> In the first issue of *Ho!*, Manor invoked the long-standing formulation of translation as a mode of crossing (of and between languages, geographies, temporalities) in his claim that it brings "new horizons" into the view of the contemporary Israeli reader. Translation simultaneously creates and narrows distances, he argues, making visible what is missing or lacking in Israeli culture, and that missing element is not just poetry written in a "rich" Hebrew but also the possibility of considering the movement of Israeli literature beyond its "own present state of being."<sup>34</sup> While a translational mode may be inherent in the very act of writing poetry, it is also a mode and practice that displaces history as much as place, culture, and language.<sup>35</sup> In his reading of modernism and its reconfiguration of notions of citizenship, Jahan Ramazani takes into account the more expansive and even "cofounding" networks of belonging that artists construct in their work:

Although national labels impute singularity and coherence, poets make and remake their often-interstitial citizenship . . . a concept of poetic

transnationalism—perhaps even poetic citizenship of a kind—allows for the complex tessellations of modern and contemporary writing, poems formed by both unwilling imaginative inheritances and elective identifications across national borders.<sup>36</sup>

Zach's conviction that the European model no longer shaped a poetry that reflected Israeli realities had formed the basis of his critique and rejection of this poetry. Fifty years later, *Ho!* argued that Zach's Anglo-American modernist turn prevented Israeli literature from forging alternative literary affiliations and networks. In this respect, the journal contended, the recovery of the European model, and with it, its affiliation to the legacy of diasporic, European Hebrew literature, acknowledged Israel's existing "poetic pluralism."<sup>37</sup> Instead of "replacing one tyrannical literary model with another," as Manor described it, *Ho!*'s turn to this model activated a reconsideration of the past and present borders of the Israeli literary canon, *including* its Western influences. This turn has allowed for a pluralism that takes into account, across fourteen issues (to date), a wide range of writing that includes Mizrahi authors, writers from the former Soviet Union, Israeli expats in Europe and the United States, gay and lesbian writers, and American Hebraists like Robert Whitehall-Bashan. The Israeli poet and scholar Almog Behar also observed that journals like *Ho!* and *Ha-kivun mizrah* (Eastward), a journal of Mizrahi literature and culture, share "an opposition to the hegemonic project of 'the negation of the diaspora' (*shlilat ha-galut*) in contemporary Israeli culture," though the very names of these journals claim distinct cultural and historical orientations.<sup>38</sup>

Michael Gluzman's review of *Ho!*'s second issue, which appeared in *Haaretz*, offered a trenchant critique of *Ho!*'s intervention in Israeli literary culture through a reading of the journal's name and the implications of naming a contemporary Israeli literary journal after a figure of speech. Citing examples of other, earlier journal titles and their relation to their respective editorial agendas, Gluzman affirms, "a journal's name is a kind of identity card":

*Akshav*, for example, which appeared in 1957, introduced a new generation of writers who offered a new, defiant poetry. The name

*Akhshev*—“now”—highlighted the journal’s contemporaneity. In 1972, the appearance of *Siman kri’a* [exclamation mark] introduced a new literary agenda for both original and translated literatures—its name was a play on the graphic sign that denotes what is extraordinary and awe-inspiring. So what does ‘Ho!’ symbolize?...“Turning away” is exactly what *Ho!* does: instead of a dialogue with flesh-and-blood readers about the here and now, *Ho!* turns aside to address an absent and imaginary audience. Its subject matter is distinctly lyrical: sonnets, shipwrecks, Leah Goldberg . . . In European poetry “O” is always attached to some object . . . but here “Ho” is detached from everything; it stands alone, like an homage. But an homage to what? Maybe an homage to European poetry since the apostrophe didn’t really catch on in modern Hebrew. Though we have [Saul] Tchernichovsky’s “Hoy artsi! moladeti!” [Oh my land, my homeland!] (where the European “oh” becomes “hoy” after the Yiddish “oy”) and [Yonah] Wallach’s “Ho yam, shamayim” [O sea, sky], Hebrew can’t claim an apostrophic tradition comparable to that of European writing.”<sup>39</sup>

Gluzman’s critique of *Ho!* largely concerns the question of what it means to be contemporary and how literary journals (in the Israeli context) have staked a claim to contemporaneity. He credits *Akhshev* and *Siman kri’a* for aligning their agendas with contemporary inclinations, and for their inclusion of culturally relevant translations. *Ho!*’s embrace of neoformalism, on the other hand, signals, in his view, a turn *away from*—rather than *toward*—contemporary tastes. Whereas *Akhshev* and *Siman kri’a* addressed an existing contemporary audience, *Ho!*’s audience, Gluzman contends, is “absent and imaginary.”

In fact, the “new” literature that *Akhshev* and *Siman kri’a* advanced also relied on the circulation of past models and texts. *Akhshev* took its name from the title of Amichai’s 1955 debut collection *Akhshev u-va-yamim ha-aḥerim* (Now and in Other Days), thereby positioning its contemporaneity in relation to other temporalities. For both Amichai, and the journal, the restless frame of the “now” allows for a constant traffic and translation between the past, present, and future. Reflecting on almost fifty years of activity, *Akhshev*’s editor Gabriel Moked

remarked, “*Akhsbav* means that we deal with the here and now, but that our present also includes the biography of our past and anticipations of our future.”<sup>40</sup> *Siman kri’a*’s first issue included translations of Sholem Aleichem’s *Tevye der milkbiker*, Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*, and William Faulkner’s “A Rose for Emily” and “Barn Burning,” works that were hardly coetaneous with the literature of 1972 but became so in translation.<sup>41</sup> The apostrophic turn to an absent audience that Gluzman raises as his critique of *Ho!* arguably was part of the cultural performance of journals like *Akhsbav* and *Siman kri’a*, which in their own time also challenged contemporary poetic norms, tastes, and even forms. In the act of addressing what is absent, the space for a future audience is acknowledged and made possible.<sup>42</sup> Instead of marking positions of detachment and critical distance, this turn, which *Ho!* enacts through form and translation, proves to be radically relational. Although it was evident even in the first two issues that “rhyme and meter” comprised only a fraction of the poetic forms and styles that the journal represented, this turn to form allows for attachments in contemporary Hebrew writing that connect it simultaneously to its diasporic past as well as to its transnational present and future.<sup>43</sup>

Gluzman’s review also addresses in depth the inclusion in this issue of a section on seafaring literature, titled “Yordei yam,” seafarers.<sup>44</sup> While these texts—a combination of translations and original writing—attempt to redress a perceived lacuna in Hebrew literature, which does not boast a seafaring literary tradition as extensive as that found in other Western European literatures, they ultimately underscore, in Gluzman’s view, *Ho!*’s detachment from contemporary Israeli literary tastes. While Gluzman overstates this gap—some cases in point are the sea adventures of the biblical Jonah, Yehuda Halevi’s “Shirei tsiyon,” Benjamin of Tudela’s *Masa’ot* and early twentieth century Hebrew accounts (both non-fictional and fictional) of Jewish immigration to Palestine, a passage undertaken by sea<sup>45</sup>—his comments nevertheless offer a global comparative framework for reading these texts: “Seafarers wander from place to place,” he observes, “discover new territories, are separated from their homes for long periods of time, and are found between continents, times, and cultures.”<sup>46</sup> *Ho!*’s seafaring section combines original Hebrew works by contemporary authors (Moshe Sakal, Sivan Beskin, and Roe Chen), as well as translations of poems by the seventeenth-century English

poet Andrew Marvell (translated by Ronen Sonis) and the nineteenth-century French writers Victor Hugo and Tristan Corbière (in Manor's translation). This unapologetic interweaving of contemporary Hebrew translations of older work and contemporary original Hebrew texts constitutes and exemplifies *Ho!*'s trans-historic take on a comparative and world literature model.

Narratives of exile, travel, and pilgrimage, long a staple of Jewish and Hebrew diasporic literatures, complicate the Zionist desire for settlement and territorial belonging, as Sidra Ezrahi has shown, making the subject of seafarers particularly fecund ground for *Ho!*. Ezrahi's readings of texts by Halevy and S. Y. Abramovitch, for example, consider the consequences of arrival and settlement on a literary tradition impelled in large part by conditions of displacement, mobility, and translation. Invoking the figure of Scheherazade as a classic example of the "suspended ending," Ezrahi argues that "to historicize the end of the narrative is to invite a form of epic closure that threatens the storytelling enterprise itself."<sup>47</sup> Ezrahi's reading of narrative suspension may elucidate *Ho!*'s inclusion of original Hebrew works dedicated to the figure of the sixteenth-century Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan. Although Magellan is credited with embarking on the first circumnavigation of the globe, he was killed before he could complete the circuit. In fact, only one of the five ships in his fleet returned to the original point of departure.

Before I turn to this section, I also want to consider Gluzman's astutely deployed references to Tchernichovsky (1875–1943) and Wallach (1944–1985) and to the productive relations that I discern between their poems and the texts that comprise *Ho!*'s section on seafaring literature. Tchernichovsky's poem, "Hoy artsi moladeti," for instance, celebrates centuries of settlement in the "Land of Israel" and occupies, with no small thanks to Naomi Shemer's recording, anthemic status in Israeli culture. (It inspired the design of the reissued 50-shekel note, which also includes a microtext of the poem.) Written in 1933, its dense landscape imagery connects various historical layers, from biblical times to the Yishuv:

הוי, ארצי! מולדתי!	Oh my land, my homeland!
הר-טֹרְשִׁים קָרָה.	Icy stone mountain.
עֵדֶר גְּלֹפָה: שֶׁה וְגֵדִי.	A languishing herd: lamb and goat.

זֶה־בִּהָדָר שֶׁמֶח.	A merry golden splendor.
מִנְזָרִים, גֵּל מַצְבָּה,	Monasteries, a swell of tombstones,
כַּפּוֹת־טֵיט עַל בֵּית.	mud roofs cover homes.
מוֹשְׁבָה לֹא-נוֹשְׁבָה,	An uninhabited village,
זֵית אֶצֶל זֵית.	a grove of olive trees. <sup>48</sup>

Tchernichovsky structures the poem around a double reading, with images that alternate between conditions that challenge settlement (stone mountains, deserts, the abandoned village) and signs of life that anticipate the possibility of setting down roots (the golden splendor, *hadar*, also refers to the genus *Citrus*). But for all its emphasis on settlement, Tchernichovsky's poem concludes notably on a *tabula rasa*: "and everything sinks into a sea of light, / and blue covers everything." Tchernichovsky's blue (*tekhelet*) is a biblical blue—of the *avnet* (priestly sash) worn by the High Priest, of the tapestries that adorned the *Mishkan*, and notably of the *tallit* (the model for the flag of the State of Israel).<sup>49</sup> But this blue also indicates the formless sky and the illusion of space that it creates in the blinding light of the desert, where new histories can be projected and inscribed, and where old histories may be erased. Placing these poems side by side allows Tchernichovsky's blue to migrate into the opening lines of Wallach's poem, "Ho yam, shamayim":

הו ים, שמים, עטפוני בערפלים	Oh sea, sky, wrap me in mists
התמזגו עם אד עיניי שלי,	blend together with the vapour of my eyes,
שחפים שלכם לבנים ינמיכו	your white gulls will descend
לשבת מרפרפים ודבקים במוטות	to alight fluttering and clinging to the poles
להיות מפרשים חיים באניתי.	to be live sails on my ship. <sup>50</sup>

In Wallach's poem, the grammar of "sea, sky" evokes acts of mirroring and doubling that occur in nature (as in Tchernichovsky's poem) but that are also activated by the speaker's relation to this external reality. Concrete images fashion the poem's extended body-ship metaphor, but the poem also indicates that these relations are a matter of perspective and imagination. At the end of the third stanza, with the help of a swarm of jellyfish that surrounds her head like "transparent garlands," Wallach's figure "[floats] like a sign that hints of return." But a return to where? Wallach famously never travelled outside of Israel, but this poem depicts its

speaker and the world-space in which she is located as “open systems without fixed borders.”<sup>51</sup> This allows for a relation to the world that is entirely fluid and leaves its return in a state of suspension: “Even those close to me won’t be able to ensnare me/ my ship will be described as *one-of-a-kind*.”

*Ho!*'s inclusion of the seafaring genre and its explorations of themes of home and homeland in Hebrew writing also aligns with the journal's interest in Hebrew modernism and particularly the work of Goldberg. For *Ho!*'s writers, Goldberg has served as a paragon—the first issue even included a questionnaire that tested readers' knowledge of Goldberg's life and work<sup>52</sup>—not only because she was “perhaps the most outstanding of the classically oriented poets in modern Hebrew literature,” but also for the ways in which she approached and explored her place in Israeli literature and culture through a complicated cultural, linguistic, and historical prism.<sup>53</sup> The translatability of the past was a continuous theme in Goldberg's oeuvre, and one through which Goldberg often articulated her ambivalence toward the emerging national culture in Palestine, and later Israel. But translation and travel also develop in her work, as it does later for the *Ho!* writers, as thematic modes for articulating a complex relation between memory, language(s) and writing that broke down the binaries of past and present, Israel/Diaspora, and Hebrew/foreign languages, which shaped literary and national identity in Israel in the early to mid-twentieth century. Consider Goldberg's poem “Tel Aviv 1935” where Goldberg reflects, from the vantage point of the 1960s, on the year of her immigration:

הַתְּרַנִּים עַל גַּגּוֹת הַבָּתִּים הֵיוּ אֵז	The masts on the housetops then, were
כְּתַרְנֵי סְפִינֹתוֹ שֶׁל קוֹלוּמְבוֹס	like the masts of Columbus's ships, and
וְכָל עוֹרֵב שֶׁעָמַד עַל חֻדְמֵם	every raven that perched on their tips
בְּשֵׁר יִבְשֵׁת אַחֲרָת.	announced a different continent. <sup>54</sup>

Drawing together a European history of exploration and discovery and traditional Jewish imagery, Goldberg enacts an apostrophic moment. In the Genesis account of Noah's Ark (Genesis 6–9), the raven is sent out repeatedly (*va-yetse yatso va-shov*), leaving the question of arrival in suspension, as it is in Goldberg's poem, where the raven on the rooftop simultaneously announces the settlement project and the persistent memory of “a different continent.”<sup>55</sup> Interweaving the local Zionist narrative of immigration and settlement with diasporic wandering complicates, even reverses,

the possibility of fixed points of departure and destination. Taken together, this landscape of houses that each claim their own, distinct horizon could even serve as a metaphor for a world literary model. As Manor pointed out in *Ho!*'s first issue, translation is a creative act that makes present and possible (linguistic, historical, geographic) relations that are missing or dormant in a literary culture. And while Goldberg's poem deals predominantly with the subject of immigration, its language and imagery of displacement also proposes a metapoetic reading. Like their inhabitants, the houses are in a constant state of translation and mobility, but *batim* also refers to stanzas in Hebrew, and this detail, when combined with the poet's reliance on synecdoche, calls attention to the practices of Modernist fragmentation and collage that shape the poem. Indeed, apostrophe and synecdoche open and close the poem, as we observe in its final lines: ". . . if you but turn your head / there's your town's church floating in the sea." Readings of this poem have addressed the risks associated with nostalgia, the traumatic persistence of the (European) past on the present, "like a constant cloud cover," as well as the speaker's detachment from this event (it is "you" not "I" who witnesses this scene).<sup>56</sup> But Goldberg's turn to this iconic image of her childhood has an animating force, bringing into view what Culler has called "the apostrophic *now*," not only to expose and highlight the constant traffic between past and present, but also to show how the idea of *home* remains unsettled in the Israeli context.<sup>57</sup> In "Kakh ve-lo kakh" (This Not That), Goldberg's adaptation of a children's story by the Russian writer Korney Chukovsky, the protagonist Anat directs her father to draw her a picture of a house, the sea, and a boat. In her father's drawing, the house floats on the sea and the boat sits on land. "Lo kakh!" Anat says, not like that, but, in Goldberg's "Tel Aviv 1935," this reversal and dislocation of familiar tropes aptly represents the new immigrant order.<sup>58</sup>

*Ho!*'s inclusion of a world literature (in translation) preoccupied with themes and tropes of travel and exile not only challenges the ways in which Israeli literature has privileged arrival and settlement but also inscribed Hebrew literature in a world context by underscoring relations between contemporary Israeli/Hebrew literature, the long tradition of Jewish and Hebrew diasporic writing about travel and exploration, and the European and classical legacy of seafaring literature. For example, Sivan Beskin's poem "Monolog ha-sirena" (The Siren's Monologue), which is included in *Ho!*'s seafaring section, imagines what Odysseus heard as his

ship passed by the Sirens' island, a scene vividly recounted in Book XII of Homer's *The Odyssey*. And while Beskin draws from this classical source, the language of the poem advances more contemporary understandings of the dynamic of home and return in the Israeli context:

בשביל מה שפכת שעוה לאזני המלחים השזופים? עוד תגיע לזיתים, לשזיפים, לקרמים, לאדמה, לאהבה.	Why did you pour wax into the ears of those sunburned sailors? Soon enough you'll reach the olives, the plums, the vineyards, the earth, and love.
כף או כף תגיע—אל תחשש! אם יצאת מהתפת חי... בוא אלי, חובל, תסמך עלי, אני אסביר הכל: אפשר לנטש	One way or another you'll get there—don't worry! If you could get out of hell alive. . . Come to me, Captain, trust me, I'll explain everything: you may abandon
את הבית—אי-אפשר לשוב באותו הגוף, אותו הלב.	your home—but you can't go back with the same body, the same heart. (ll. 5–14)

The enjambment that separates “abandon” and “home” recasts the phrase “you may abandon” as an invitation and possibility, which stands in contrast to the negative relation in which Beskin places “home” and “return” in the following line. As a result of this enjambment, home no longer inhabits a coherent syntactical unit and has become a dislocated fragment. The siren attempts to persuade Odysseus to let go of the desire to return home by calling attention to his own altered present state, thereby drawing a relation between home and body. Nevertheless, she offers him a solution, a way to go back:

אז בוא אלי. עצר את ההפלגה—כאן. רק כף תוכל למנע הרבן של נפשך, רק כף לא תעקור מהאי	So come to me. End your sailing—here. This way alone can you prevent the ruin of your soul, only this way you won't detach from the island
את השרש שהיא צמחה במאמץ עלאי, את היתר החלודה שהיא תקעה. רק כף תוכל לשוב לאיתקה.	the root she planted with such heroic effort, the rusted peg that she fastened. This way alone can you return to Ithaka.

(ll. 49–54)

Words like *ta'akor* (to detach, uproot, deracinate) and *tak'a* (to stick in, fasten) are loaded in the Israeli context, where in the context of Beskin's poem, they conjure associations with narratives of exile and settlement.<sup>59</sup> The stanza also alludes, in the phrase the "ruin of your soul" (*hurban shel nafshekha*), to the traumatic arrival of Jewish immigrants to the Yishuv/Israel, as recounted, for instance, in Yosef Hayim Brenner's classic narratives of immigrant (nervous) breakdown. And yet, though the siren's invitation to stay on her island would allow Odysseus to evade the realities of the present, and be destroyed by them, it comes at the price of narrative closure. Odysseus's return, we know, will not be easy, and he will spend almost a third of the book convincing his old friends and family of his true identity, but his return also presents an opportunity to retell his story:

And great Odysseus told his wife of all the pains  
 he had dealt out to other men and all the hardships  
 he'd endured himself—his story first to last—  
 and she listened on, enchanted ...  
 Sleep never sealed her eyes till all was told. (XXIII, ll. 349–353)<sup>60</sup>

The peg fastened on the wall, in the penultimate line of Beskin's poem, refers to the peg holding Odysseus's bow, an instrument only he can handle. The numerous comparisons that Homer's text draws between the bow and the musician's lyre (which also rests on a peg) suggest that return is necessary to reactivate the "rusted peg" of lyric possibility. Through her own retelling and revising of *The Odyssey*, Beskin explores tropes of home and return in the Israeli context through a more nuanced and comparative framework. Her poem acknowledges that the past is not a fixed point and that every turn to it must revise and rewrite it—the present and future of (Israeli) poetry rely on this.

Ariel Hirschfeld, a prominent Israeli literary scholar, was nevertheless not persuaded by the journal's revision of modern Hebrew's literary past and attributed to the journal a damaging aesthetics of anachronism. In a piece titled "Narkis ke-dahlil" (Narcissus as Scarecrow), which appeared in *Haaretz*, Hirschfeld adamantly states that his objection to *Ho!*'s agenda had more to do with the quality of its writing than with the journal's neoformalist poetics, but also notes that the

least successful texts in the journal were those that adhered to classical prosodic conventions.<sup>61</sup> For Hirschfeld, the problem with *Ho!*'s rejection of Zach and the poets of the 1950s and 1960s is that it erroneously reads in Zach's critique of the earlier generation (Goldberg, Alterman, Shlonsky) a decisive break from its forms and language, rather than a desire to bend and stretch existing forms in new directions and, in his words, "attune the Israeli ear to the rhythms and flows of spoken language." If anything, he rightly noted, classical poetic conventions remained active well after Zach's manifesto.<sup>62</sup> Hirschfeld attributed to *Ho!* a "philistine" nostalgia for poets like Goldberg and Alterman which, in his view, disregards how these poets assumed positions of anachronism (both in their poetic material and forms) for ironic purposes, bringing "invigorating energy" to their work. That *Ho!* turns to these writers as paragons not only indicates to Hirschfeld that its contributors are out of step with their own time, but also reveals the extent to which their own work falls short of the "innovative" force of the earlier generation's classicism. "The writers in this issue of *Ho!*," Hirschfeld writes, "are mere anachronists, and anachronism, to quote Roland Barthes, is obscene (*anakronizm hu zima*)."<sup>63</sup> By bringing Barthes into this discussion, Hirschfeld directs a blow against the *Ho!* project through the very literary traditions—Western European, French—that they (and Manor in particular as a translator of French literature) turn to as models (not to mention Barthes's self-proclaimed "constant pessimism with regard to translation").<sup>64</sup> But the Barthes quotation also allows Hirschfeld to distinguish between the anachronism of Goldberg/Alterman and the "real" anachronism of the *Ho!* contributors.

The line that Hirschfeld cites appears as follows in Barthes's *A Lover's Discourse*, under the heading "Love's Obscenity":

Whatever is anachronistic is obscene [*tout ce qui est anachronique est obscène*]. As a (modern) divinity, History is repressive, History forbids us to be out of time. Of the past we tolerate only the ruin, the monument, kitsch, what is amusing: we reduce this past to no more than its signature. The lover's sentiment is old-fashioned, but this antiquation cannot even be recuperated as a spectacle: love falls outside of interesting time; no historical, polemical meaning can be given to it; it is in this that it is obscene.<sup>65</sup>

*A Lover's Discourse* is a collection of eighty textual fragments arranged alphabetically, through which Barthes attempts to perform and simulate “the lover’s discourse.” At the same time, it offers a meditation on the place and status of love and lovers in contemporary culture, and the currency of the language and narratives of love in modern times. For Barthes “the lover’s sentiment” presents a historical problem and holds a “disruptive appeal” because it is unfashionable, clichéd, and unoriginal.<sup>66</sup> One way to understand Barthes’s use of the obscene in this context is to dig back into its deeper etymology, to the Greek *ob skene*, off-stage, where acts that could not be made public—like certain acts of violence and sex—were staged.<sup>67</sup> Anachronism is obscene, in this respect, because it draws attention away from the stage of the present, from the events of the now. And while this understanding of anachronism accords with *Ho!*’s apostrophic turn away from Israeli literature’s “present state of being,” Hirschfeld applies Barthes’s *obscène*, particularly its connotations of indecency (which the Hebrew translation *zima* underscores), towards a critique of the journal’s poor taste and predilection for kitsch. In his reading of anachronism, Hirschfeld elucidates a crucial distinction between contemporaneity and fashion, one that proposes a valuable reassessment of Hebrew modernism’s reliance on classical prosody and a way of understanding and problematizing its revival in *Ho!* Unfortunately, his evaluation of the journal’s content did not address any texts in any depth, which opened him, I would contend, to the exaggerated charge that he was allowing his personal tastes to get in the way of his critical judgment.

In his equally scathing response to Hirschfeld, Manor reiterated his position that a return to classical forms and prosody, and a recentering of Goldberg and Alterman as paragons for contemporary Israeli literature, hardly constituted a rejection of heterogeneous and innovative Hebrew writing. On the contrary, he argued, *Ho!*’s turn to the past activates the possibility of a diasporic, transnational, and multilingual writing in the present precisely because it is not bound to a nationalist ethos. Rejecting the politics and poetics of engaged literature, *Ho!* affirms the “relevance,” as Manor puts of it, of writing that “takes place outside of Israel’s borders or outside of an Israeli reality” altogether.<sup>68</sup> Objecting to Hirschfeld’s charge of “real anachronism,” he nevertheless concedes: “we are all, whether we want to or not, children of our time.”<sup>69</sup> Notably, the cover image of

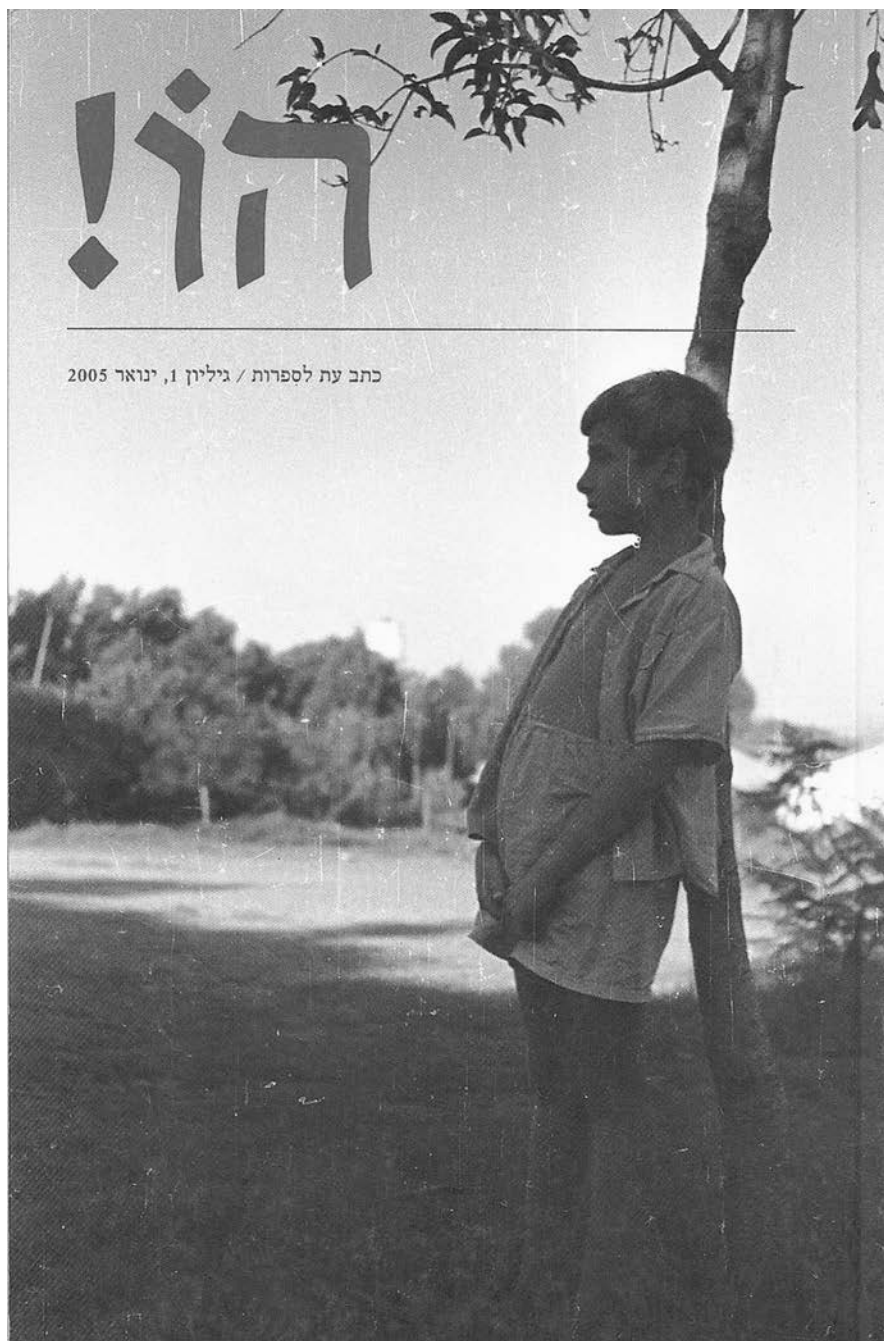
*Ho!*'s first issue was a sepia-toned photograph of a child leaning against a tree, looking outside of the frame. The photographer, Yoske Rabinowicz, was a member of Kibbutz Na'an, where this photograph was taken sometime in the 1950s, and the photograph's sepia tones lend it a nostalgic and archival quality. The child could be looking at something within the kibbutz or elsewhere, beyond its borders, but his/her position on the cover also directs our gaze into the pages of the journal, carrying with it the suggestion of a double position. The child's gaze evokes the apostrophic turn toward and away from the national frame, a turn that *Ho!* was enacting in its first issue, and also asking its readers to perform, as part of a collaborative revision of a particular perspective on Israeli reality, and nostalgia for this reality, that the photograph represents.<sup>70</sup>

This is a position that *Ho!* has revisited in subsequent covers, notably in issue #8, which reproduced a photograph of passengers on the MS *St. Louis*, a German ocean liner that set sail for Havana, Cuba in 1939 with 937 passengers, most of them Jewish refugees. In this image, two smiling passengers look out of an open window, anticipating an arrival that will not take place. *Ho!*'s cover also advertised the inclusion of a middle section titled "The Pain of Two Homelands," a line from one of Goldberg's most famous poems, thereby calling attention not only to the ways in which this traumatic past continues to shape Israeli identity in the present, but also to the ways in which Hebrew poets, from Goldberg's generation to the present day, have insisted on unsettling these relations.<sup>71</sup> The tenth issue of *Ho!*, which appeared in 2014, displayed on its cover a black-and-white photograph of a U.S. naval officer playing his bugle into a megaphone. Taken at a U.S. training camp towards the end of World War I, this turn is an ironic nod to *Ho!*'s first issue and its turning away from the Anglo-American modernist model. With this photograph, *Ho!* declares the apostrophic turn as a continued "wake-up call" to Israeli culture.<sup>72</sup>

In *Poetics*, Aristotle draws a critical distinction between history and poetry: "the one says what has happened, the other the kind of thing that would happen."<sup>73</sup> This claim continues to illuminate the central role of poetry and its translation in *Ho!*'s revision of modern Hebrew literature's "diaspora-to-nation" teleology, a revision that has taken place in the very composition of Hebrew poems and translations

# הזו!

כתב עת לספרות / גיליון 1, ינואר 2005



# הו!

כתב עת לספרות / גיליון 10 / מאי 2014 / אייר תשע"ד



במרכז הגיליון:

מעשה תיקון — סופרים כותבים מחדש יצירות אהובות

וגם: קובי מידן • יובל שמעוני • דרור משעני • שמעון אדף • מתן חרמוני • סיון בסקין  
• אנה הרמן • משה סקאל • נורית גרץ • דרור בורשטיין • אלון חילו • דורי מנור

that encourage new (literary) relations across time, place, and language. Because poetry is not constrained to address what has happened, it becomes a site where history is continuously rewritten and even improvised, thereby implicating the very question of what constitutes the contemporary. This question is central to *Ho!* #12 (2016), dedicated entirely to (original and translated) poetry, the genre that provoked much of the polemic around their debut issue. Though poets frequently undertake a critical reimagining of the past through innovation and experimentation, *Ho!*'s poetics of neo-formalism and translation also contends that the poetic forms and idioms of the past can be—even should be—reactivated and revised in order to propose new beginnings and points of departure for Hebrew literature. *Ho!*'s emphasis on return via neoformalism and translation addresses various watershed moments in modern Hebrew literary history—from diaspora to nation, from classicism to free verse—but also creates its own generative fissures and possibilities. Combining the neoformalist turn with the retranslation of classic literary texts has allowed *Ho!* to redescribe the early twentieth century history of modern Hebrew literature, and in so doing advance a global and transnational Israeli contemporary literature in the present that it had imagined.

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## NOTES

- 1 Marina Tsvetaeva, "The Poet and Time," in *Art in the Light of Conscience: Eight Essays on Poetry*, translated by Angela Livingstone (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1992), 101; Joyelle McSweeney, *The Necropastoral: Poetry, Media, Occults* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015), 153.
- 2 This trend has received greater attention in recent years. See Beth Kissileff, "Israel Has an Amazing Literary Diaspora," *The Tower Magazine* 33 (January 2015), <http://www.thetower.org/article/israel-has-an-amazing-literary-diaspora>. Kissileff's profile focuses exclusively on Hebrew authors, but it is worth noting the number of Israeli authors, for whom Hebrew is a native language, who have elected to write in other languages, notably English (e.g., Oz Shelach, Shani Boianjiu, Gilad Elbom). See Melissa Weininger "Hebrew in English: The New Transnational Hebrew Literature," *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish*

*Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 15–35. All links provided in this article are active as of July 4, 2017.

- 3 In a recent special issue of *Shofar* dedicated to twenty-first century Israeli literature, Rachel S. Harris refers to this generation of writers as “global citizens” invested in practices of cultural translation that allow them “to create a literature that is both of Israel and, simultaneously, engaged with the world beyond.” Rachel S. Harris, “Israeli Literature in the 21st Century/ The Transcultural Generation: An Introduction,” *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 4.
- 4 David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2003), 36.
- 5 The year 2005 proved to be a pivotal year for Israeli literature, particularly in the field of poetry. The debut of a number of literary journals, notably *Ho!*, *Ma’ayan*, *Mita’am* and *Urbania*, each with distinct aesthetic and political objectives, reenergized debates on the place and status of poetry in contemporary Israeli culture. Although technically the journal *Daka* does not belong in this list—it did not appear in print until 2007—the founding editors Roni Hirsch, Boaz Yaniv, and Eran Tzelgov had begun to organize in 2005. I address the political and aesthetic platform of *Ma’ayan* in my article on the Vietnamese Israeli poet Vaan Nguyen. See Adriana X. Jacobs, “Where You Are From: The Poetry of Vaan Nguyen,” *Shofar* 33, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 83–110.
- 6 Uri Hollander, “Ha-reaktsionariyut ha-mahapkhani shel kitvei ha-‘et ‘Ho!’ ve-Deḥak,” *Haaretz* (August 9, 2013), [www.haaretz.co.il/literature/study/1.2090502](http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/study/1.2090502).
- 7 In addition to his translations of Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Valéry, among others, Manor (b. 1971) has published two collections of poetry, *Mi’ut* (2001) and *Bariton* (2005), as well as *Emts’a ha-basar: Shirim 1991–2011* (2011), which includes the 2001 operatic libretto *Alfa ve-omega*, coauthored with the poet and translator Anna Herman. His own poetry has won numerous accolades, most recently the 2015 Yehuda Amichai Prize for Hebrew Poetry.
- 8 Since its inception, *Ho!* has included works in Hebrew by writers living outside of Israel, notably the poet Robert Whitehill-Bashan, a Texas native, and the Israeli-born novelist Maya Arad, both of whom now reside in California. Whitehill-Bashan has published four books of poetry, including the most recent collection *Steps be-ḥorim sheḥorim*, which was edited by Manor (Ha-kibbutz ha-meuhad, 2014). Arad has published several novels, a collection of short stories,

- and coauthored, with Reviel Netz, the essay collection *Mekom ha-ta'am* (Tel Aviv: Aḥuzat bayit, 2008).
- 9 Allison Schachter reclaims an understanding of diaspora as transnational through a reading of the texts of Eastern European Hebrew and Yiddish culture “outside of the binary of exile and home.” See Schachter, *Diasporic Modernisms: Hebrew and Yiddish Literature in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 17.
  - 10 Damrosch, 17.
  - 11 Dory Manor, “‘Al Ho!,” *Ho!* 1 (January 2005): 9–16. All translations from the Hebrew are mine unless otherwise noted.
  - 12 According to the rhetorician and classical philologist Heinrich Lausberg, “apostrophe is ‘turning away’ from the normal audience and the addressing of another, second audience, surprisingly chosen by the speaker. . . . Possible second audiences for apostrophe are: the opponent in court; absent persons, living or dead, things (fatherland, laws, wounds, etc.)” Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, translated by Matthew T. Bliss, Annemiek Jansen, and David E. Orton (Leiden: Brill, 1998 [1960]), 338.
  - 13 Manor concedes, “Hebrew poetry written in free verse and a ‘thin’ idiom that approximates spoken language was a noteworthy component of the poetry that we studied in school.” Manor, “‘Al Ho!,” 9.
  - 14 Annie Brisset, “The Search for a Native Language: Translation and Cultural Identity,” translated by Rosalind Gill and Roger Gannon, in *The Translation Studies Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Lawrence Venuti (London and New York: Routledge, 2004 [2000]), 346. In her study of translations from French into Québécois French, Brisset refers to retranslation as a form of “repatriation.” See Lawrence Venuti, “Retranslations: The Creation of Value,” *Bucknell Review* 47, no. 1 (2004): 25–38.
  - 15 I have borrowed the term *mutual reciprocity* from the fields of sociology, psychology, and economics where it refers to relationships and transactions where the expectation of a return (of a favor or investment, for example) is continuously fulfilled by each side. See Lydia Liu, “The Question of Meaning-Value in the Political Economy of the Sign,” in Lydia Liu, ed., *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), 13–41.

- 16 My use of the term *neoformalism* does not imply a connection to New Formalism, the late twentieth-century turn to rhyme and meter in U.S. poetry. In the first issue of *Ho!* there was a notable absence of English-language literature in translation, though it would have made obvious sense to include works by the New Formalists. Manor makes it clear in his introduction that the journal's emphasis would be on translating from languages that are not as accessible to the Israeli public as English. That being said, the *Ho!* poets framed their interest in form as part of a revisionary poetics, from which one can draw productive comparisons between the respective receptions of Israeli neoformalism and New Formalism. See Marjorie Levinson, "What Is New Formalism?" *PMLA* 122, no. 2 (March 2007): 558–569; and Ira Sadoff, "Neo-Formalism: A Dangerous Nostalgia," *American Poetry Review* 19, no. 1 (January/February 1990): 7–13.
- 17 Zach's essay first appeared in *Haaretz* on July 29, 1966 and has been republished and anthologized repeatedly over the years. See Natan Zach, *Ha-shira she-me'ever le-milim: Teoria u-bikoret 1954–1973* (Jerusalem: Ha-kibbutz ha-meuhad, 2011), 165–171. For a critical summary of Zach's essay in English, see Michael Gluzman, *The Politics of Canonicity: Lines of Resistance in Modernist Hebrew Poetry* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2003), 137–138.
- 18 Chana Kronfeld, "Beyond Thematicism in the Historiography of Post-1948 Political Poetry," *Jewish Social Studies* 18, no. 3, History and Responsibility: Hebrew Literature Facing 1948 (Spring/Summer 2012): 181.
- 19 In an essay on Amichai, Benjamin Harshav observes, "Amichai introduced, or reinvented, the medieval quatrain . . . thus making a statement of a revised connection to the Hebrew poetic tradition." Harshav's recollections also highlight how Amichai's resistance to the very constraints of the quatrain's "tight form" proved productive and sparked innovations that were only possible while working within its "tight form." Benjamin Harshav, "On the Beginnings of Israeli Poetry and Yehuda Amichai's Quatrains," *The Polyphony of Jewish Culture* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007), 181.
- 20 *Ev* ran for three issues (issue 3 was numbered 4) and also included Ori Pekelman and Gal Kober among its founders. Future *Ho!* contributors Anna Herman and Shimon Adaf were also affiliated with the journal (Herman published her first poems there). In 1996, Manor and Pekelman left Israel to pursue studies in Paris.
- 21 Natan Zach, "Ve-'al parashot mayim ve-shikhshukh reglayim," *Haaretz* (November 21, 2001), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/misc/1.750455>.

- 22 Arad's reading of Vikram Seth's 1986 *The Golden Gate* inspired the composition of *Makom aher ve-'ir zara*, a novel on late twentieth-century Israeli identity and immigration. Seth's novel about academic life in the San Francisco Bay Area is an exemplar of New Formalism, consisting entirely of Pushkin sonnets, a variation developed by the nineteenth-century Russian poet Aleksandr Pushkin for his classic narrative poem *Yevgeny Onegin*. In her writing of the novel, Arad adopted the Pushkin sonnet (also arranging the text in "cantos") and also drew intertextual relations to Avraham Shlonsky's highly lauded 1937 Hebrew translation of *Onegin*. Maya Arad, *Makom aher ve-'ir zara* (Tel Aviv: Xargol Books, 2003).
- 23 Robert Whitehill, "Harbe she-kadai laḥgog 'alav," *Haaretz*, (March 1, 2015), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1506327>; Maya Arad, "Bein hanaka le-ḥaruz ve-mishkal," *Haaretz* (February 23, 2005), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1504546>
- 24 Arad, *ibid.*
- 25 See Dvora Bregman, "The Emergence of the Hebrew Sonnet," translated by Ann Brener, *Prooftexts* 11, no. 3 (September 1991): 231–239. For a discussion of prosody and its status in the Israeli context, see Vered Shemtov, *Miktsavim mishtanim* (Bar Ilan: Bar Ilan Press, 2012) and Miryam Segal, *A New Sound in Hebrew Poetry: Poetics, Politics, Accent* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
- 26 Paul Valéry, *Collected Works of Paul Valéry, Vol. 14: Analects*, translated by Stuart Gilbert (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1970), 113. See also Suzanne Nash, *Paul Valéry's Album des Vers Anciens: Past Transfigured* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993). A portrait of Valéry graced the cover of *Ho!*'s second issue.
- 27 Anna Herman, "Kol shir niftaḥ ke-pets'a medamdem. Ve-he-ḥaruz hu ha-geled," *Haaretz*, Culture and Literature Supplement (February 16, 2001), 13.
- 28 This is also Reviel Netz's argument in his reading of Hanoach Levin's poetry, which Netz opens with a stunning prosodic analysis of a news dispatch announcing Yitzhak Rabin's 1994 murder. Reviel Netz, "'Al dor she-bizbez et meshorerav," *Ho!* 3 (February 2006): 172–191.
- 29 Cf. Shachar Pinsker, *Literary Passports: The Making of Modernist Hebrew Fiction in Europe* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2010); Schachter, *Diasporic Modernisms*.
- 30 Periphery refers here to Israel's socioeconomic margins as well to geographic peripheries, that is, writing coming out of and reaching cities beyond the centers

of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. In the Israeli context, geography and ethnicity are closely related—in the 1950s, Jewish immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East were often settled in *ma'abarot*, transit camps, outside of Israel's urban centers. I have taken the phrase “exuberant multilingualism” from Harshav, who uses this term in relation to pre-Statehood Hebrew writing (Harshav, *The Polyphony of Jewish Culture*, 24). Lital Levy's *Poetic Trespass: Writing Between Hebrew and Arabic in Israel/Palestine* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2014) examines relations between Palestinian and Mizrahi writing. See also Adia Mendelson-Maoz, *Multiculturalism in Israel: Literary Perspectives* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 2014).

- 31 A point of contrast would be the agenda of *Ma'ayan*, which rejected the metaphoric and literal “wall of separation” that distanced Israeli literary culture from its Middle Eastern neighbors. Roy “Chicky” Arad, “Hakdama,” *Ma'ayan* 3 (Winter 2007): 6.
- 32 Damrosch, 22.
- 33 Jonathan Culler, “Apostrophe,” in *The Pursuit of Signs* (London: Routledge, 2001 [1981]), 168.
- 34 Maya Arad, “Another Voice: Letters on the Art of Translation,” *Sh'ma: A Journal of Jewish Responsibility* (December 2010), 13.
- 35 Dory Manor, “Al Ho!,” 14.
- 36 Jahan Ramazani, “A Transnational Poetics,” *American Literary History* (2006): 354.
- 37 Dori Manor, “Al Ho! 2,” *Ho!* 2 (June 2005): 11.
- 38 Almog Behar, “Al Ha-kivoun ve-Ho!: Betokh ha-isre'eluyot u-miḥuts la,” *Teoria u-vikoret* 35 (Fall 2009), 264.
- 39 Michael Gluzman, “Hitrapkut nostalgit 'al tsurot 'avar lo to'il la-sifrut ha-'ivrit,” *Haaretz* (August 8, 2005), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1038309>.
- 40 Jenna Hanson, “Labor of Love,” *Tablet* (February 25, 2009), <http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/1043/labor-of-love>.
- 41 The translators of these texts, in order, were Yosef Ḥayim Brenner, Meir Wieseltier, Rachamim Nof, and Yael Ranan. Wieseltier, who coedited the journal with Menakhem Perry, divided his full translation of Woolf's *To the Lighthouse* between the first two issues. Brenner's translation of the opening monologue of the collected Tevye stories, “Ha-zekhiya ha-gedola” (in Yiddish, “Dos Groyse Gevins” [The Big Win]), was not published in his lifetime and only appeared in print for the first time in this issue.

- 42 Barbara Johnson, "Apostrophe, Animation, and Abortion," *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (Spring, 1986): 30.
- 43 Rachel L. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism Beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press), 11. See also Harris, "The Transcultural Generation."
- 44 The expression *yordei yam* traces back to biblical literature, where it is found notably in Ps. 107: 23–24, "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters / These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep" (KJV).
- 45 For an extensive history of Jewish seafaring, see Raphael Patai, *The Children of Noah: Jewish Seafaring in Ancient Times* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998). See also Ken Frieden, *Travels in Translation: Sea Tales at the Source of Jewish Fiction* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 2016).
- 46 Gluzman, "Hitrapkut nostalgit."
- 47 Sidra Ezrahi, *Booking Passage: Exile and Homecoming in the Modern Jewish Imagination* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 14.
- 48 The poem consists of four stanzas, with each stanza composed of two ABAB rhyming quatrains (a form that my translation does not follow).
- 49 The full text of the poem is available online: [http://benyehuda.org/tchernichowsky/hoy\\_artsi\\_moladeti.html](http://benyehuda.org/tchernichowsky/hoy_artsi_moladeti.html).
- 50 Yona Wallach, "Ho yam, shamayim," *Tat hakara niftachat kmo menifa* (Tel Aviv: Ha-kibbutz ha-meuhad, 1992), 48. The English translation is by Linda Stern Zisquit. See Yona Wallach, *Let the Words: Selected Poems*, translated by Linda Stern Zisquit (Riverdale-on-Hudson: The Sheep Meadow Press, 2006), 24.
- 51 Lilach Lachman, "Yona Wallach, 'Ho Seas, Skies,'" in *The Modern Hebrew Poem Itself*, eds. Stanley Burnshaw, et al (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2003), 276.
- 52 "Baḥen et 'atsmekh/a: Ha-im at/ata Leah Goldberg?," *Ho!*, 1 (January 2005): 78–86, 164–167. The questionnaire was inspired by a feature in the French newspaper *Libération*, which quizzed readers on their knowledge of Victor Hugo on the bicentennial of his birth. Edouard Launet and Mathieu Lindon, "Êtes-vous Victor Hugo?," *Libération*, (January 31, 2002), [http://www.liberation.fr/livres/2002/01/31/etes-vous-victor-hugo\\_392261](http://www.liberation.fr/livres/2002/01/31/etes-vous-victor-hugo_392261).
- 53 Manor, "Al Ho!," 13. Born in 1911 in Kovno, Lithuania, Goldberg's first poetry collection *Taba'ot 'ashan* was already in print by the time she emigrated in 1935 to Palestine, where she joined the *moderna*, a group of poets whose works were

- closely affiliated with Western European and Russian poetry and translation of the fin-de-siècle and early twentieth century.
- 54 Leah Goldberg, "Tel Aviv, 1935," in *Im ha-layla ha-ze* [With This Night] (Tel Aviv: Sifriat po'alim, 1964 [1961]), 8. All English citations of the poem are from T. Carmi's translation. Leah Goldberg, "Tel Aviv, 1935," translated by T. Carmi, in *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse* (New York: Penguin, 1981), 553–554.
- 55 David Marcus, "The Mission of the Raven (Gen. 8:7)," *JANES* 29 (2002): 71–80.
- 56 Ibid. See also Michael Gluzman, "Modernism and Exile: A View from the Margins," in *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism*, edited by David Biale, Michael Galchinsky, and Susannah Heschel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 246–247.
- 57 Culler, 170.
- 58 Leah Goldberg, "Kakh ve-lo kakh," in *Dira le-haskir* (Bnei Barak: Sifriyat po'alim, 2011 [1972]), n.p.
- 59 S. Y. Agnon also rewrites this scene in his 1934 novella *Bi-levav yamim* (In the Heart of the Seas), where he combines the myth of the Sirens with the talmudic legend of 400 Jewish children who leapt into the sea rather than be returned to Rome following the siege of Jerusalem (*Bavli Gittin* 57b). Agnon, *Bi-levav yamim* (Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1965).
- 60 Homer, *The Odyssey*, translated by Robert Fagles (New York: Viking/Penguin, 1996), 465.
- 61 Ariel Hirschfeld, "Narkis ke-dahlil," *Haaretz* (February 16, 2005), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1503050>. *Dahlil* may also refer to a "straw man" argument.
- 62 Hirschfeld cites sonnets by Ravikovitch, Amichai and T. Carmi as evidence of the continued use of form in the "post-Alterman era." See Hirschfeld, *ibid*.
- 63 Ibid.
- 64 Roland Barthes, *Roland Barthes*, translated by Richard Howard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 115.
- 65 Roland Barthes, *A Lover's Discourse: Fragments*, translated by Richard Howard (London: Penguin Books, 1990). Originally published in 1977 as *Fragments d'un discours amoureux* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil). Aviva Barak's Hebrew translation, *Siaḥ ahava*, appeared in 1981 (Schocken Publishers, Jerusalem).
- 66 Juli Carson uses the expression "disruptive appeal" in a short explication on this fragment. See Carson, "On Critics, Sublimation, and the Drive: The Photographic

- Paradoxes of the Subject,” in *Art: Sublimation or Symptom*, ed. Parveen Adams (London: Karnac Books, 2003), 86. Svetlana Boym also includes this fragment in *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Basic Books, 2001), 319.
- 67 Kerstin Mey, *Art and Obscenity* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co., 2007), 6.
- 68 Manor, “A1 *Ho!* 2,” 13.
- 69 Dory Manor, “Golda Meir shel bikoret ha-sifrut ha-‘ivrit,” *Haaretz* (February 23, 2005), <http://www.haaretz.co.il/literature/1.1504256>.
- 70 Kibbutz Na’an, founded in 1930, is located near Rehovot, a city south of Tel Aviv.
- 71 Leah Goldberg, “Oren,” *Sbirim*, vol. 2 (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat po’alim, 1998), 143. The *Lexicon of Modern Hebrew Literature*, an online database, provides a full list of *Ho!*’s issues, which includes table of contents and images of the covers, <http://library.osu.edu/projects/hebrew-lexicon/99995073.php>
- 72 “Getting em up,” U.S. Naval Training Camp, Seattle, Washington. Webster & Stevens, c. 1917-1918, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/usnationalarchives/5505933145>.
- 73 Aristotle, *Poetics*, translated by Malcolm Heath (London: Penguin Books, 1996), 16.