לקט

יִידישע שטודיעס הײַנט

Jiddistik heute

Yiddish Studies Today

d|u|p

Jiddistik Edition & Forschung Yiddish Editions & Research יִידיש אויסגאַבעס אוּן פֿאָרשונג

Der vorliegende Sammelband לקט eröffnet eine neue Reihe wissenschaftlicher Studien zur Jiddistik sowie philologischer Editionen und Studienausgaben jiddischer Literatur. Jiddisch, Englisch und Deutsch stehen als Publikationssprachen gleichberechtigt nebeneinander.

Leket erscheint anlässlich des XV. Symposiums für Jiddische Studien in Deutschland, ein im Jahre 1998 von Erika Timm und Marion Aptroot als für das in Deutschland noch junge Fach Jiddistik und dessen interdisziplinären Umfeld ins Leben gerufenes Forum. Die im Band versammelten 32 Essays zur jiddischen Literatur-, Sprach- und Kulturwissenschaft von Autoren aus Europa, den USA, Kanada und Israel vermitteln ein Bild von der Lebendigkeit und Vielfalt jiddistischer Forschung heute.

ISBN 978-3-943460-09-4

d|u|p düsseldorf university press

יִידיש & אויסגאַבעס און פֿאָרשונג

Jiddistik Edition & Forschung

Yiddish Editions & Research

Herausgegeben von Marion Aptroot, Efrat Gal-Ed,
Roland Gruschka und Simon Neuberg

Band 1

לקט & ייִדישע שטודיעס הײַנט

Jiddistik heute

Yiddish Studies Today

Herausgegeben von
Marion Aptroot, Efrat Gal-Ed,
Roland Gruschka und Simon Neuberg

d|u|p

Yidish: oysgabes un forshung
Jiddistik: Edition & Forschung
Yiddish: Editions & Research

Herausgegeben von Marion Aptroot, Efrat Gal-Ed,
Roland Gruschka und Simon Neuberg

Band 1

Leket: yidishe shtudyes haynt
Leket: Jiddistik heute
Leket: Yiddish Studies Today

Bibliografische Information Der Deutschen Nationalbibliothek
Die Deutsche Nationalbibliothek verzeichnet diese Publikation in der Deutschen Nationalbibliografie; detaillierte bibliografische Daten sind im Internet über http://dnb.d-nb.de abrufbar.

Typografie, Satz, Umschlag: Efrat Gal-Ed
Druck und Bindung: Druckerei C. H. Beck, Nördlingen
Hauptschriften: Brill, Hadassah EF
Papier: 100 g/m² Geese-Spezial-Offset

ISBN 978-3-943460-09-4 ISSN 2194-8879
URN urn:nbn:de:hbz:061-20120814-125211-1
Printed in Germany

Jeffrey A. Grossman

The Invention of Love?

Or How Moyshe Leyb Halpern Read Heinrich Heine

Introduction: Star-Crossed Lovers – Heinrich Heine and Moyshe Leyb Halpern

In 1918, the publisher *Farlag Yidish* produced an eight-volume edition of די ווערק פֿון הײַנריך הײַנע אין אַכט בענד,[1] translated by a list of Yiddish writers that included Y. L. Perets, H. N. Bialik, D. Frishman, D. Edelshtat, Avrom Reyzen, Reuven Ayzland, Y. Y. Shvarts, Y. Rolnik, Mani Leyb, Moyshe Leyb Halpern, and other lesser-known writers – that is, a list numbering some of the most important Yiddish writers of the time. Although two worked primarily in Hebrew (Bialik, Frishman), the list also includes the most avant-garde of the three 'classical' writers (Peretz), a Sweatshop Poet (Edelshtat), and especially a range of writers associated with the American-based movement די יונגע ("The Young Ones" or "Young Generation"). Indeed, the scope of this project, together with the involvement of such writers, makes the Heine edition into a veritable *event* in Yiddish literature, one that clearly attests to his importance – especially, though not solely, in the American context. Yet it also prompts the question of how one is to account, more generally, for Heine's presence in Yiddish literature – a question that invites various responses – in terms, for instance, of how Heine was translated, of book publishing, production, and distribution, of audience and reception, of literary influence. Within the space of this essay, I seek to delimit the question by focusing on one poet for whom Heine played a central role and who translated various of his works: Moyshe Leyb Halpern (1886–1932). Specifically, this essay argues that Halpern's own reading and translation of Heine led to a creative appropriation that constitutes a key moment in his own development as a writer. In particular, this analysis argues that that relationship, somewhat unexpectedly, plays a key role in a poetic shift that, as Chana Kronfeld has shown, Halpern initiated.[2] Halpern moved from the initial poetic in-

For their helpful comments on earlier versions of this essay, I would like to thank David Roskies, Jeremy Dauber, and Walter Grünzweig.

1 Heine 1918.
2 Kronfeld 1996: 165–184.

novations of די יונגע – who, in their attempt to broaden the forms of Yiddish poetry, introduced a stronger sense of individual subjectivity and pushed the Yiddish language to new levels of emotional depth and complexity – to a new level of irony and self-reflectivity, and to a new conception of poetry's relationship to the world. This new conception found its strongest expression in the poets associated with the movement and journal known as אין זיך (literally, 'Within Oneself') and the circle of poets often referred to as אינזיכיסטן or "Introspectivists," but Halpern initiated the shift. Halpern's own centrality in modern Yiddish poetry means, in turn, that the complexly positioned figure of Heinrich Heine – cosmopolitan, Jewish apostate (but publicly identified as a Jew), exile in France, provocateur, Saint Simonian celebrator of the flesh and its liberation, political critic, consort of Lasalle, Marx and Engels – also ultimately played a central role in modern Yiddish literature.

To be sure, Halpern is represented in די ווערק פֿון הײַנריך הײַנע with only one translation, his version of *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*.[3] But he also helped pave the way for this edition with the series of translations he published (under the pseudonym Hel-Pen) in the New York-based satirical journal דער גרויסער קונדעס ('The Big Stick' or 'The Big Prankster') in 1913, including, besides *Deutschland*, selections from *Buch der Lieder*, the *Neue Gedichte*, *Atta Troll*, "Das Sklavenschiff" and "Der Apollogott."[4] Indeed, די ווערק פֿון הײַנריך הײַנע needs to be seen not as the endpoint of Heine translation in Yiddish, but as a pinnacle within a continuum: this continuum includes, e. g., Bialik's translation of *Prinzessin Sabbat*, reprinted in this collection, but first published in Russia in 1907, as part of a protest against a law that would require Jews to close their businesses on Sundays;[5] at least two earlier versions of Heine's anti-religious poem "Disputazion," the third of his *Hebräische Melodien* (1851), which, in satirizing this medieval institution, set in this case in Spain, targets both rabbi and monk, and ends with the declaration that "alle beide stinken";[6] a selection of Heine's works translated by one "Leon" in New York in 1909; Zalman Reyzen's translation of *Die*

3 Heine 1918 (VIII.2): 1–106; Reuven Ayzland translated much of the prose, including *Der Rabbi von Bacherach* and *Die Reisbilder*, as well as the epic poem *Atta Troll*, while Avrom Reyzen, Zishe Landoy, Mani Leyb, Liliput, and Naftali Gros translated much of the lyric poetry.

4 Heine 1913a: 5 (5): 7; 1913b: 5 (12): 7; 1913c: 5 (14): 7; 1913d; 1913e: 5 (20): 7; 1913f: 5 (21): 7, 5 (22): 7, 5 (23): 7, 5 (24): 7, 5 (25): 7, 5 (26): 7, 5 (27): 7, 5 (29): 7, 5 (30): 7, 5 (31): 7, 5 (32): 7, 5 (33): 7, 5 (34): 7, 5 (35): 7; 1913g: 5 (43): 9, 5 (44): 7; 1913h: 5 (45): 7; 1913i: 5 (46): 7, 5 (47): 7; 1913j: 5 (48): 7, 5 (49): 7; 1913k: 5 (49): 7.

5 Shmeruk 1988: 379–389.

6 Heine 1973–1997 (III.2): 172 (hereafter abbreviated to DHA); Sol Liptzin discusses Shimen Frug's 'softening' of the dispute in his version of the poem; Liptzin 1992: 69f.

Harzreise (Warsaw, 1911); B. Shimin's version of *Der Rabbi von Bacherach* (New York, 1913); a one-volume edition (160 pages) calling itself Heine's געזאַמלטע שריפֿטן (1915); collections of the lyric poetry translated by S. J. Imber (Vienna, 1920) and Ezra Korman (Kiev, 1929); and a 1936 translation of *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*, published in Moscow.[7]

All of this raises the question of what drove the enthusiasm for Heine, an enthusiasm often cited but only rarely explored in any detail.[8] The obvious answer is that Heine was internationally the mostly highly regarded and visible European writer of Jewish extraction and hence acquired eo ipso the status of literary model.[9] Indeed, the introduction to the 1918 Heine edition would seem to confirm this view when its author, Socialist-Zionist Nahman Syrkin, argues that despite his baptism Heine "is at the root of his soul Jewish, exclusively Jewish."[10] This claim, to be sure, runs up against Heine's own writing and actions – his immersion in German and European culture and society, his complex relationship to Jews and Judaism, as well as his conflicted set of affiliations – personal, ideological, and otherwise.[11] Yet, this claim also shows, those seeking to promote Heine in Yiddish as model Jewish writer had little trouble dispensing with such inconvenient details as Heine's apostasy or conflicting cultural affiliations. Still, whatever purposes it may have served – ideological, rehabilitatory, and so on – Syrkin's account ultimately remains unsatisfactory. It does so because it fails to explain specifically what Yiddish writers as *writers* responded to in Heine's work; what, for instance, about Heine mattered for them in terms of poetics and cultural repertoire – of language, form, meter, style, use of metaphor and irony, or motifs and cultural references.

By focusing on the specific case of Moyshe Leyb Halpern, I hope to begin a mapping of this response. To be sure, as the 1918 edition suggests, others responded in significant ways to Heine, however provisionally.[12]

7 This list draws in part on the bibliography compiled by Amy Blau in her dissertation, "Afterlives: Translations of German Weltliteratur into Yiddish"; Blau 2005: 294f.

8 Detailed treatments include: Shmeruk 1988; Liptzin 1992; Levinson 2008: 121–130; Pareigis 2008, focusing specifically on the translation of Heine's *Hebräische Meolodien* in the 1918 Yiddish edition; Gruschka 2011. On Heine and Halpern, see: Steinberg 1930: 205f; Greenberg 1942: 17; Hellerstein 1980: 625–627; Wisse 1988: 76, 84.

9 Liptzin 1992: 67.

10 Syrkin 1918 (I): 8, „הײַנט איז אין דעם שורש פֿון זײַן נשמה ייִדיש, אויסשליסלעך ייִדיש".

11 There is a minor industry focused on the question of Heine and Judaism/Jewish culture. One can begin to gain a sense of the debates if one consults the following: Rosenthal 1973; Robertson 1988; Gelber 1992; Holub 2002; Briegleb 2005.

12 Besides Perets and Edelstadt, whose poem מײַן צוואָה ("My Last Will and Testament") recast Heine's paean to Napoleon as liberator, "Die Grenadiere," as an international working-class protest song, Sol Liptzin notes, for instance, Sh. Frug and Sweatshop Poet Joseph Bovshover; from די יונגע he cites only Moyshe Nadir, who, Liptzin claims, learned from Heine "'Weltschmerz,' sweet melancholy, and sentimental love for all mankind," as well as

Yet Halpern represents an especially important case, both because of his peculiar relationship to Heine and because of his unique position in Yiddish literature. Halpern's response went beyond a question of mere influence or emulation, and seems to have consisted in a personal, even uncanny affinity. In יונג אַמעריקע (1917), his critical essays on writers associated with די יונגע, Noah Steinberg stresses that Halpern, who knew Heine by heart and "quoted him at every opportunity," learned much about poetry (perhaps too much, in Steinberg's view) from Heine.[13] Eliezer Greenberg further suggests how this affiliation operated at the affective level, suggesting that Halpern (and Morris Rosenfeld) had Heine "in their blood" (אין זייער בלוט), something expressed in their "biting tones and hot temperaments" (בײַסיקייט און היציקן טעמפּעראַמענט). Later critics, like Ruth Wisse and Kathryn Hellerstein, similarly suggest Heine's importance for Halpern.[14] Additionally, as noted above – Halpern's sometime association with די יונגע notwithstanding – he occupies a transitional position in modern Yiddish poetry: something that makes Halpern's attachment to Heine, likewise a transitional figure in nineteenth-century German literature, all the more significant. It suggests that one key to tracing Heine's impact on Yiddish consists of tracing his impact on Halpern. Or, in asking: What did Moyshe Leyb Halpern learn from Heine?

In the following, I will seek to show that Halpern's relationship to Heine operates on two levels – he exerted on Halpern a personal pull (the uncanny affinity) and he served for Halpern as a model to respond to and indeed to appropriate from productively. It is almost as if something about Heine beyond the printed word might inform and shape Halpern's writing and relationship to poetry, and that 'something' also finds expression elsewhere in Halpern's life. To make this case, however, we must first briefly consider the figure and poetry of Heinrich Heine.

Excursus on H. Heine

Until three decades ago, Heinrich Heine – who was born Harry and who always signed his name to his works as H. Heine – was one of the most controversial figures in German literature, a status he has sometimes occupied for many Jewish readers as well. It was a status that Heine himself at times seems, to have intentionally cultivated. This controver-

the "sobering irony" needed to subvert the sentimentality; Liptzin 1992: 75.

13 Steinberg 1930: 205.

14 Greenberg 1942: 17; Hellerstein 1980: 625–627; Wisse 1988: 76, 84.

sial status derived from several factors, but if one were to try to define the source of it, one might begin with Heine's complex relationship to both power and writing. In a recent three-volume documentation of Heine reception, for instance, the editors note that if Heine is internationally known mainly as a poet, responses to him in Germany and Austria always revolved around "allgemeine literarische, kultur- und gesellschaftspolitische Fragen," and that even literary debates – about romanticism and realism, for instance – are "nicht selten bereits zu Lebzeiten politisiert, Heines Schreibweise mit seinen Verhältnissen zum Französischen und zum Jüdischen erklärt und identifiziert," with the result that "Nationalismus und Antisemitismus" become "Kernzonen der Heine Kritik."[15] From the outset, for instance, Heine expressed sympathy in his poetry and prose for the common people, even as he antagonized both German nationalists and the Prussian state with his biting satire. That satire found its perhaps most famous expression in his narrative poem, *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* (1844), in which the speaker, like Heine, returns to Germany for a visit after many years abroad, and reflects on conditions there as he travels through its cities and towns. Eventually, he arrives in Hamburg – where Heine himself had once lived and, as a young man, failed in business – and encounters the figure of Hammonia, a mix of lady of the night and prophetess, who offers to provide the speaker with a view of Germany's future, to be glimpsed in her chamber pot. Refusing to share this vision with his readers, the speaker does go on to describe emphatically its putrid smell. While representing Heine's most sustained satire of German nationalism, *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* was by no means the only one; nor was German nationalism the only object of Heine's satire – indeed, he also targeted the middle classes, poetic movements, the objects of his own desire, and even the emotional states he would evoke in his own poetry. On several occasions, Heine also managed to overshoot the mark – doing it so drastically that even his adherents found it difficult to defend him, as, for instance, when he attacked for his homosexuality the poet August von Platen, who had disparaged Heine with an anti-Semitic remark.[16]

The scandals notwithstanding, Heine's early, partly fictionalized travel narratives, *Die Reisebilder* (1826–1831) and, with its second 1837 edition, the *Buch der Lieder* (1827), made him immensely popular in Germany and abroad. While often striving to achieve a 'folk tone,' Heine's poetry also appealed to a largely middle- and upper-class read-

15 Goltschnigg and Steinecke 2006 (1): 6.

16 For two different accounts of this scandal, see Hermand 1993: 51–63 and Mayer 1977: 207–223; on the logic of such attacks by Heine, see Holub 1981.

ing public, his satires of such classes notwithstanding.[17] Poem 50 of the *Lyrisches Intermezzo* cycle ("Sie saßen und tranken am Theetisch"), for instance, depicts a desiccated upper-crust salon culture in which everyone speaks effusively of love, while all passion is suppressed for the sake of good form and the adornments of wealth and refinement.[18]

Many of the details of Heine's life are now well known.[19] Beyond his baptism in 1825 at age twenty-seven, in the hope of attaining a professorship – a civil service position at that time barred to Jews – Heine's move to Paris in 1831, following the July Revolution of 1830, was a signal event. In Paris in the 1830s, he turned increasingly to prose – journalism and essays that sought to mediate between France and Germany. Having failed to secure an income by other means, Heine became in this context one of the first German writers to earn his living from writing, an income supplemented by support he ultimately received from his Uncle Salomon, a self-made millionaire, with whom he had a complex, but important, relationship. Known for his radical politics, Heine also upset progressive colleagues when he challenged received views or satirized a figure like Ludwig Börne in *Ludwig Börne: Eine Denkschrift* (1840), whose ascetic view of politics Heine attacked, even while implicating Börne in a ménage à trois with Börne's friend Jeanette Wohl and her husband. In that same work, Heine distinguished between pleasure-seeking, sensuously oriented Hellenes (like himself) and austere, ascetic Nazarenes (like Börne), a distinction opposing traditional monotheism, but which Heine grasped primarily in conceptual terms (there could be Hellene Jews or Christians, Nazarene atheists).[20]

In 1848, before the revolution, Heine was struck by a mysterious paralyzing illness that would soon confine him to what he called his "mattress grave" for the last eight years of his life. Although in the 1840s Heine had published his collection of lyric poetry, *Neue Gedichte*, and the satirical epic poems *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen* and *Atta Troll*, his poetry after 1848 acquired a new quality – published during his lifetime in the volume *Romanzero* (1851), containing the three *Hebräische Melodien*, and in *Gedichte 1853 und 1854* (1854), and posthumously. While some of the late poetry, which often dwells on death and, later, physical decay, has repelled some critics, others find it to be among his strongest work.[21] In his *Geständnisse* (1854), Heine declared his belief in God and rejection of atheism, claims that upset some readers and con-

17 Klusen 1973: 43–60.
18 DHA I.1: 183f.
19 See the biographies by Hauschild and Werner (1997) in German, and by Sammons (1979) in English.
20 DHA XI: 17–19, 31f.
21 Kruse 2002: 315–341.

fused others, since he seems to have held pantheistic beliefs earlier and because he ascribed his return to religion to his reading of the Bible, though he had long held it to be important. Heine's religious turn has prompted some to view it as a return to Judaism; it seems just as likely that, whatever his beliefs in a personal God, Heine continued to reject organized religion.[22]

A significant point in Heine's poetic development came with his declaration of the "end of the period of art" ("das Ende der Kunstperiode"), a term he applied to Weimar Classicism and German Romanticism, which, by adhering to ideals of aesthetic harmony or, in the case of Romanticism, withdrawing into the Middle Ages, stood in contradiction to the present from which they isolated themselves.[23] Along similar lines, Heine declared himself both the last of the Romantic writers and the onset of something new, a point that, beyond showing Heine's capacity for immodesty, also suggests a view of poetry's embeddedness in problems of the everyday and of power, however complex the connection may be. Heine thus often took up the imagery and motifs of the Romantics – for example, the interest in love as an uplifting experience, the fascination with irony, with exotic imagery, medieval knights and maidens, and with folk poetry – only to undermine the Romantics' poetic strategies and attitudes. In this way, Heine set out both to renew German poetry and to challenge Romantic poetics and ideologies. One can glimpse this practice in his famous "Loreley" poem, "Ich weiß nicht, was soll es bedeuten":[24]

Ich weiß nicht, was soll es bedeuten,	I do not know what it means that
Daß ich so traurig bin;	I am so sadly inclined;
Ein Mährchen aus alten Zeiten,	There is an old tale and its scenes that
Das kommt mir nicht aus dem Sinn.	Will not depart from my mind.
Die Luft ist kühl und es dunkelt,	The air is cold and darkling,
Und ruhig fließt der Rhein;	And peaceful flows the Rhine;
Der Gipfel des Berges funkelt	The mountain top is sparkling,
Im Abendsonnenschein.	The setting sunbeams shine.
Die schönste Jungfrau sitzet	The fairest maid is reclining
Dort oben wunderbar,	In wondrous beauty there;
Ihr gold'nes Geschmeide blitzet,	Her golden jewels are shining,
Sie kämmt ihr goldenes Haar.	She combs her golden hair.

22 See, e.g., Sammons 1979: 305–310.
23 DHA XII.1: 47.
24 DHA I.1: 209 (Heine 1982a: 76f).

Sie kämmt es mit goldenem Kamme, Und singt ein Lied dabei; Das hat eine wundersame, Gewaltige Melodei.	With a golden comb she is combing, And sings a song so free, It casts a spell on the gloaming, A magical melody.
Den Schiffer im kleinen Schiffe Ergreift es mit wildem Weh; Er schaut nicht die Felsenriffe, Er schaut nur hinauf in die Höh.'	The boatman listens, and o'er him Wild-aching passions roll; He sees but the maiden before him, He sees not reef or shoal.
Ich glaube, die Wellen verschlingen Am Ende Schiffer und Kahn; Und das hat mit ihrem Singen Die Lore-Ley gethan.	I think, at last the wave swallows The boat and boatman's cry; And this is the fate that follows The song of the Lorelei.

The poem contains all the elements of a typical German Romantic poem – the use of folktale, the rocky cliffs along the Rhine possessed by a spirit, the longing of the lover, the Rhine itself – but it combines them in such a way as to result in complete disaster for the boatman, driven mad by erotic desire, and to suggest as well the speaker's own troubled sense at the scene he has placed before us.[25] While these features, together with its musicality, gained for the "Loreley" its status as popular folk song, other poems, to be discussed later, point even more to Heine's modernity, his marking the advent of something new and beyond the Romantic movement.

Halpern and Heine: An Uncanny Affinity

In 1915, nearly a century after Heine declared the end of the Kunstperiode, Moyshe Leyb Halpern sought to defend the new poetry of די יונגע with a critique of the older Sweatshop Poet Morris Rosenfeld (1862–1923). Responding to both Rosenfeld's בוך פֿון ליבע (1914) and to other critics' responses to that volume, Halpern agreed that Morris Rosenfeld's recent attempts to write love poetry had failed; he disagreed with other critics about the reasons.[26] Where they wondered what had become of the "old" Morris Rosenfeld, worrying that he had "broken down" or "been destroyed" (קאַליע געוואָרן), Halpern maintained that he was alive and well. Rather, he argued, the love poems failed because Morris Rosenfeld's métier was the protest poem, and while he had

25 Altenhofer 1982: 22.
26 Halpern 1915: 100–105. The title of Rosenfeld's volume seems calculated to evoke Heine's *Buch der Lieder*, see Rosenfeld 1914.

long mastered the versified form of political protest and hammered out poems like a blacksmith, he lacked the receptive capacities, sensitivity to language, and emotional complexity of a poet like Heine, a point Halpern reinforces by citing the opening lines of "Die Loreley."[27] Rather than recover his old self, Rosenfeld would truly need to destroy – or overcome – that self if he wanted to write good love poetry. Beyond the Heine reference, Halpern supports his criticism by comparing Rosenfeld's love poems to those of such poets as Mani Leyb, Zishe Landau and Joseph Rolnik, thus suggesting his effort to define a poetics for די יונגע, one that emphasized the qualities Rosenfeld lacked. Additionally, the metaphors of breakdown, self-destruction and self-overcoming signal in quasi-Nietzschean terms the desire for a poetry that will project a new sense of subjectivity. They signal Halpern's desire for an expanded repertoire of tropes, motifs, and poetic strategies that would in turn expand the capacities of the Yiddish language itself.

Harsh as it was, Halpern's criticism here was nonetheless far tamer than his earlier attack on Rosenfeld – one that in its excess, if not in its specific content, evokes Heine's attacks on opponents like August von Platen and Ludwig Börne. Responding to a satirical jibe that Rosenfeld directed at the poets of די יונגע, Halpern likened Rosenfeld to a tin clown in the Wurstelprater, an amusement park in Vienna. The clown, in Ruth Wisse's account of this barb, "would roll on the ground and squeal like a pig when you fed it a coin and pushed the 'pig' button."[28] At a later date, "the button has turned rusty, and though the clown still rolls on the ground when you put in your penny, he can no longer squeal."[29] In other respects, Halpern's persona also seems to recall Heine – for example, his reputed provocations of friends and colleagues, his struggles with finding gainful employment, his resentment at having to ask others for money, especially when he felt it due him as a writer, and the criticism of his poetry for its "crude language."[30] Like many Yiddish writers, and Heine himself, Halpern also parodied religious orthodoxy, a point indicated, for instance, by his translation of *Deutschland, ein Wintermärchen*. When, for instance, in the poem's thirteenth chapter, the poet-persona comes across the image of Jesus nailed to the cross, he declares:[31]

27 Halpern 1915: 103.
28 Wisse 1988: 91f.
29 Ibid.: 91.
30 Ibid.: 75, 81f, 98f, 104.
31 DHA IV: 118.

Sie haben dir übel mitgespielt,
Die Herren vom hohen Rathe.
Wer hieß dich auch reden so rücksichtlos
Von der Kirche und vom Staate.

Halpern rewrites the strophe thus:[32]

עס האָבן דיר אויפֿגעשפּילט ליידיש די לייט
וואָס האָבן פֿאַרנומען דעם „אויבן“:
נו, טאַקע, וואָס האַסטו פֿאַרדאַמט אַזוי פֿריַי
די איידעלע היטער פֿון גלויבן...?

[They] played mischief with you respectably,
the people
Who occupied the "top place"
Now, really, why did you damn so freely
The noble protectors of faith ...?

– hence allowing the criticism to be directed at religious Jews.[33] Yet whatever criticism or even contempt he directed at the Jewish world, Halpern, like Heine, vigorously opposed anti-Semitism, just as they both subjected to criticism not just Jewish tradition, but also lapsed Jews.[34] Additionally, Halpern, like Heine, had the capacity to vacillate between political gravity and sensual lightness; after penning a poem on a worker's strike in Montreal, he soon wrote again about the same place, but dwelt instead on sexual exploits there.[35]

Such instances from Halpern's critical writing and biography would indeed seem to suggest what I have called an uncanny affinity, conscious or unconscious, with Heine, one that manifested itself in various ways. To be sure, such an affinity would have little relevance here if it did not also bear on Halpern's writing itself. In exploring that question, one might begin by turning to Halpern's first volume of poetry, אין ניו־יאָרק.

Halpern's Innovations Reconsidered

Halpern's publication of אין ניו־יאָרק in 1919, one year after the Heine edition, constitutes in itself a veritable event in Yiddish literature, a point suggested by Seth Wolitz's penetrating analysis of the text.[36] Taken to-

32 Heine 1918 (VIII): 48.
33 DHA IV: 118; Heine 1918 (VIII): 48.
34 Wisse 1988: 78f, 88.
35 Ibid.: 89f.
36 Wolitz cites, e.g., literary critic A. Tabachnik, who called אין ניו־יאָרק an "epoch-making" book, and poet Itsik Manger, who described it as "one of the great books of poems in modern poetry whatsoever" (איינס פֿון די גרויסע ביכער פֿון דער מאָדערנער פּאָעזיע בכלל); Wolitz 1977–1978: 56.

gether, Wolitz argues, the poems of אין ניו־יאָרק present a dark world view, one in which the poetic voice "wanders … endlessly … between walls of stone and iron," among circling streets peopled by "human wrecks surrounded by flora and fauna."[37] New York City becomes in this view a "labyrinthine wasteland, ironically called the Golden Land," a world of "alienation and deformation" from which there is no escape.[38] Yet this initial view is spatial and static; Halpern, as Wolitz goes on to show, took great care when collecting his poems to arrange them in five sections or cycles, which, as such, offer a response to this initial view "on the temporal level."[39] Their arrangement thus allows Halpern to offer an alternative "programmatic expression," in which *In Nyu-york* becomes an epic journey that launches a protest – however tragic – against the predicament of the wanderer and his universe, one that culminates in the apocalyptic vision of the concluding fifth section, the long narrative poem אַ נאַכט.[40]

Whatever other influences and creative impulses Halpern's poetry displays – Chana Kronfeld emphasizes expressionistic ones, while Abraham Novershtern locates אַ נאַכט within the context of modern apocalyptic Yiddish writing (e.g. of Bialik, Y. L. Perets and Perets Markish) – the importance of *In Nyu-york*'s arrangement as an aesthetic construct charting the journey of a poet persona recalls in significant ways Heine's poetic practice.[41] It evokes, for instance, writing strategies found in Heine's *Buch der Lieder* (1827), perhaps most overtly in the cycles *Lyrisches Intermezzo* and *Die Heimkehr* – though the arrangement of the poems plays in important role in the later collections – *Neue Gedichte* (1844), *Romanzero* (1851), and the *Gedichte 1853 und 1854* (1854) – as well.[42]

37 Wolitz 1977–1978: 62.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Wolitz 1977–1978: 64f.
41 Kronfeld 1996: 33, 173; Novershtern 1993: 124.
42 To be sure, one might point to other similarities: the depiction of disillusioned love in the בלאָנד און בלוי (Blonde and Blue) cycle of *In Nyu-york*; the sense of an indifferent nature in Heine's Nordsee cycles as reiterated in Halpern, though now set against the urban space of New York City; even the dark apocalyptic vision of "*A nakht*," which for all its expressionist imagery suffused with death and destruction, also recalls aspects of Heine, the late poetry – as in the "Lazarus" sub-cycles of both *Romanzero* and the *Gedichte 1853 und 1854*, or in poems like "Schlachtfeld bei Hastings" and "Vitzliputzli," among others – with its own abundance of ghostly figures, death imagery and destructive moments, not to mention the general presence of ghostly knights in much of Heine – who perhaps provided the model for the messianic white knight of אַ נאַכט – all of which is not to suggest that Heine constitutes Halpern's sole source or inspiration.

This "aesthetics of arrangement" is one whose importance for Heine the late Norbert Altenhofer, among others, has lucidly analyzed.[43] Its source, Altenhofer contends, resided for Heine in two conflicting desires: first, to document his own poetic development, and, second, to respond to the urging of friends (so Heine claimed) that he give in his collection a "psychological-chronological portrait of the author" – an act that for Heine brought the danger of lapsing into crude biographism, a charge that Friedrich Schiller had notably laid against a popular collection of poems by G. A. Bürger (1747–1794).[44] Heine's "aesthetics of arrangement" provides a response to this conflict, allowing him to undertake a self-reflective "literary historical" situating "of his own production."[45] Perhaps more to the point is how this aesthetics expressed itself in the *Buch der Lieder*, Heine's internationally most influential collection, and how it finds parallels in *In Nyu-york*. On the one hand, Heine shapes the poems of *Buch der Lieder* into cycles that themselves contain narrative trajectories – Wolitz's central point about *In Nyu-york*; on the other hand, Heine also introduces ironic ruptures that allow for reflection and retrospection on the poems, together with a reworking of the motifs – both serving to historicize his literary production. Thus, for instance, to the *Lyrisches Intermezzo* Heine appended a prologue that, in depicting a knight who succumbs to a revivifying love fantasy, ultimately exposes that fantasy for the illusion it is. Thus exposed, it becomes a reflection on literary conceits prevalent, for example, among the German Romantics, and something to which Heine's own early poetry was prone. The prologue additionally sets up a frame for the *Lyrisches Intermezzo*, more generally, which charts the poet persona's movement from the opening hopefulness of "Im wunderschönen Monat Mai" across a series of embittering encounters, and which concludes with a poem that retrospectively reinterprets the whole project – aesthetic and psychological – of writing such poetry, a project that can now be laid to rest:[46]

Die alten, bösen Lieder,	The old songs filled with anger,
Die Träume schlimm und arg,	The bad dreams filled with woe,
Die laßt uns jetzt begraben,	Let's bury them now – get hold of
Holt einen großen Sarg.	A mighty coffin, ho!
…	…

43 See Altenhofer 1982; also Prawer 1960: 46–53; Perraudin 1989: 51–60.
44 Altenhofer 1982: 20.
45 Ibid.: 21.
46 DHA I.1: 201f (Heine 1982a: 75).

Wißt Ihr warum der Sarg wohl	Do you know why it's so heavy,
So groß und schwer mag seyn?	So great and long and wide?
Ich legt' auch meine Liebe	I put my love and sorrow
Und meinen Schmerzen hinein.	And all my pain inside.

Although in a different vocabulary, Wolitz's argument about Halpern similarly points to the importance of an aesthetics of arrangement, one in which Halpern's "*programmatic* expression" follows a "sequential flow of time," serving as a "poetic organizing principle." As such, it "increases the power of the repeated central metaphors weaving them into the general fabric," so that "[what] appears static in one poem [...] is but the preparation for the coming peripeteia in the next."[47] The term peripeteia, deriving from the Greek for "sudden turning," suggests, in turn, a writing practice central to Heine's aesthetics of arrangement with its repeated ironic ruptures, and which manifests itself throughout *In Nyu-york* as well. One need only think of the motifs in the first cycle, אונדזער גאָרטן (Our Garden), of "gold," the "golden land," and "toiling" (in poems like צווישן קוימענרויכן [Between Smoking Chimneys],[48] קנעכט־ טיש בלוט [Servile Blood], "Watch Your Step!," אין גאָלדענעם לאַנד [In the Golden Land], up to the long, concluding poem "Pan Jablowski"), or of "birds" and "flight" (as both physical act and escape), that similarly recur there: hence, one can follow the "bird" of the opening title poem of that section, which flies off and פֿאַרגעסט זײַנע קינדערלעך אין נעסט (forgets its birdlings in the nest), to the various reworkings of these motifs[49] in "*Tsvishn koymenroykhn*" (/ מיר, אַז דו וועסט פֿליגל געבן, / וועל איך ווי געבונדען אין געהאַקטע ווונדן / זיצן אין אַ שטײַג פֿון אײַזן),[50] "*Ot-azoy-o* ..." (That's Life; אַ ווינט, וואָס טראָגט אַ שטיק פּאַפּיר אַרויף / פֿון קענדלעך מיסט, וואָס שטייען אויפֿן הויף [A wind lifting a paper scrap/ By trash cans in the yard out back]), to "*Der gasnpoyker*" (זינגט דער פֿויגל פֿריַי און פֿריילעך, / ציטערט אויף זײַן טראָן דער מלך, / ציטערן איז ניט כדאַי, / זינג איך, ווי דער פֿויגל, פֿריַי [Freely, happily the bird sings./ Trembling on their thrones sit kings./ Trembling isn't worth a thing/ I sing, free as a bird]),[51] to the poet-speaker of – זאָג איך צו מיר (Talking to Myself) dreaming of escape into a natural world beyond the city, or the ironic דער ערשטער פֿרילינג־טאָג which recasts earlier references in the cycle:[52]

47 Wolitz 1977–1978: 63; cf Perraudin (1989: 60), who makes a similar point about the subcycle of Heine's "Fischer" poems in *Die Heimkehr*.

48 Translations of אין ניו־יאָרק from Hellerstein 1980.

49 Halpern 1954: 14, 16, 17, 35, 19, 21.

50 "Give wings to me, and I'll stay/ Gagged and bound/ In an iron cage,/ Nursing my wounds" (Ibid.: 25).

51 Hellerstein 1980: 65; translation modified.

52 Halpern 1954: 22. Translation from Hellerstein 1980: 38.

נו, וועט ער שוין, במחילה, מוזן שרײַבן
נאָך אַ פֿרילינגליד
פֿאַר אונדזער וווּנדערלעכער וועלט,
וואָס גאַרט אַזוי צו הערן פֿון אַ בלום וואָס בליט
און פֿון אַ געלן פֿייגעלע וואָס טרעלט און טרעלט
און טרעלט נאָך אַ ביסל.

So sorry – he will need to write
One more spring song
For this our marvelous world
Craving to hear about a flower blooming,
About a yellow bird that trills and trills
And trills a little more.

Yet *In Nyu-york* recalls Heine in more specific ways, as suggested, for instance, by Halpern's poem אַ מאָדנע מחשבֿה ("A Strange Thought"), which bears more than thematic resemblance to a poem like Heine's *Lyrical Intermezzo* 51, "Vergiftet sind meine Lieder" ("Envenomed are my songs"):[53]

Vergiftet sind meine Lieder; –
Wie könnt es anders sein?
Du hast mir ja Gift gegossen
Ins blühende Leben hinein.

Vergiftet sind meine Lieder; –
Wie könnt es anders sein?
Ich trage im Herzen viel Schlangen,
Und dich, Geliebte mein.

Envenomed are my songs,
How could it be otherwise, tell?
Since you trickled poison
Into my life's clear well.

Envenomed are my songs,
How could it be otherwise, tell?
My heart holds many serpents,
And you, my love, as well.

אַ מאָדנע מחשבֿה

אַ מאָדנע מחשבֿה: איך קוק אויף דער פּען
און קוק אויף מײַן האַנט, ווי זי שרײַבט, און מיר דאַכט,
אַז איך בין געשטאָרבן אין הײַנטיקער נאַכט.

געשטאָרבן אָט־דאָ בײַ דער גויע אין הויז,
און מער ניט־די פּען איז געבליבן פֿון מיר,
אַ פּען און אַ ליד אויף אַ שטיקל פּאַפּיר.

דאָס ליד איז פֿיליײַכט נישט דערענדיקט געווען,
ווו איז עס? עס ליגט אויף דער שוועל פֿאַרן הויז,
עס איז מיטן ווינט דורכן פֿענצטער אַרויס.

און מאָרגן – קען זײַן, דו וועסט קומען צו גיין
און טרעטן וועסטו אויף מײַן ליד מיט דײַן פֿוס,
און וואַרטן פֿון פֿענצטער זאָל קומען מײַן גרוס.

A strange thought: I look at my pen
And it seems to me, as I watch my hand write,
That I died last night.

Died right here, in the house with the landlady
And only this pen is left of me,
A pen and a poem-scrap.

The poem was not finished, perhaps,
And it lies on the front steps
Where the wind carried it.

And maybe you'll come by tomorrow
And with your foot will step on the poem.
And wait for my greeting to come from
the window.

53 DHA I.1: 185 (Heine 1995: 25). Halpern 1954: 123. Translation modified, based on Hellerstein 1980: 280.

און בייז ווערן וועסטו און שילטן פֿילייַכט,	And you'll get angry and maybe you'll swear
און לאָזן מיר וועסטו אַ צעטל אין טיר,	And leave me a note on the door
אַז דו וועסט שוין קיין מאָל ניט קומען צו מיר.	Say you'll never come to me again.

In both cases, the poems address themselves to the subject of disillusioned love as it relates to the writing of poetry, and present instances of the object of the poet's love going beyond the act of rejection to that of destroying the poetry itself. Such images contain multiple levels of irony, as destruction of an illusion, or of exposing an illusion to be indeed nothing other than that, as in the *Lyrisches Intermezzo* prologue. On one level, the irony here consists of the fact that the speaker maintains the illusion that in somehow reaching poetically toward the desired love object, his poems might have some positive effect, an illusion that is exposed as such when it turns out that it is she who will affect his poetry – by poisoning or treading on it, even stamping it out. At another level, however, both poems treat the traditional notion of the poetic muse ironically – subverting the notion that the love of this feminized form inspires the male poet to compose his lyrics – even while they recuperate the muse in a kind of negative image of herself: rather than her love inspiring the poet to write, it is her contempt that "inspires" his pen.[54] The Halpern–Heine intertextuality suggested here could be extended further – additional examples, for instance, would show Halpern's emulation of Heine's trochaic meter, which helps Halpern to achieve an idiosyncratic musicality not unlike Heine's – as in such poems as פֿרוי און דו אַ פֿרעמדנס or אַלבום־פֿראַזן, both to be found in the volume *In Nyu-york*. Or one could cite Halpern's free-verse poem מאַ־דאַם –, which bears multiple intertextual relations to Heine's work, and ultimately expression of debt to Heine's *Nordsee* (or North Sea) poems, especially to Heine's poem "*Seegespenst*" ("Sea Apparition"), although the anonymous addressee – "*Madame*" – recalls what many consider to be Heine's most innovative prose work, the partly fictionalized, partly autobiographical travel narrative *Ideen: Das Buch Le Grand* (1827).[55]

It is, however, to two other poems by Heine and Halpern that we must turn if we want to understand the depth of Halpern's poetic response to Heine. The first is Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo* 37 ("Philister in Sonntagsröcklein"):[56]

54 That such depictions of a feminine object of love invite feminist criticisms of both Heine and Halpern goes without saying.

55 For a translation, see *Ideas – Book Le Grand*, in Heine 1982b: 174–228.

56 DHA I.1: 169. See the translation (modified) by Hal Draper in Heine 1982a: 63f.

Philister in Sonntagsröcklein
Spazieren durch Wald und Flur;
Sie jauchzen, sie hüpfen wie Böcklein,
Begrüßen die schöne Natur.

Betrachten mit blinzelnden Augen,
Wie alles romantisch blüht,
Mit langen Ohren saugen
Sie ein der Spatzen Lied.

Ich aber verhänge die Fenster
Des Zimmers mit schwarzem Tuch;
Es machen mir meine Gespenster
Sogar einen Tagesbesuch

Die alte Liebe erscheinet,
Sie stieg aus dem Totenreich.
Sie setzt sich zu mir und weinet,
Und macht das Herz mir weich.

Burghers in Sunday clothes strolling
Through meadow and wood and lane,
Like frisky young goats caracoling,
Salute nature's beauties again.

Their bleary owl-eyes blink in
The romantically blooming spring;
They cock long ears to drink in
The song the sparrows sing.

But I – I am draping and glooming
My windows with black like a pall
The ghosts of the past are looming
To pay me a daylight call.

From the realm of the dead where's
she's sleeping
My old love shining appears;
She sits by my side and, weeping,
She melts my heart in tears.

The first two strophes of the poem introduce a Romantic motif, adopting the perspective of the artist alienated from the world of philistine burghers, evoking romantic imagery of forest, flora and sparrow song, all "painted," as it were, under the radiant light suggested by the "blinzelnden Augen" and blossoming world. While the misunderstood artist commands the language and vision to generate this imagery of an idyllic setting, the irony of the poem enters from the outset in terms of the satirical light the speakers casts on the setting – the image of the philistine burghers sprightly hopping about like little goats and lacking the speaker's profound emotional sensitivity.[57]

Yet beginning with the third strophe the poem adopts another perspective, one that self-reflectively turns the observing speaker into the object of his own observation. Oscillating between the subject and object of the poem, the speaker now casts his gaze upon himself, as he consciously adopts the position of the sensitive poet of authentic feeling alienated from the philistine burghers. His gesture of "draping" the windows in black cloth and exaggeratedly defiant use of the words "ich aber" ("but I – I"), however, point to his own emotional posturing,

57 Cf. Prawer's (1960: 37, 44) apposite comments on *Die Heimkehr* 20 as a poem depicting "the dilemma of a post-Romantic poet who has lost even the naiveté of suffering," and about Heine's "tenderness" toward the philistines in holiday mood.

his desire to stage a mournful emotional state while cultivating an aura of death – in spite of and perhaps also to spite – the burghers happily frolicking in the sunshine. The final evocation of the "alte Liebe" climbing out of the realm of the dead, recalling again a classical motif – one thinks of Eurydice, whom Orpheus must retrieve from the realm of the dead – reinforces the literariness, the staging, of the speaker's emotional state.

Even more explicitly than in his "Loreley" poem, Heine seeks here to invoke and adopt the language, imagery, and motifs of German Romanticism, even as he moves radically beyond it into a modern literary discourse and sensibility – one that ironizes the speaker's impressionistic style, his own ostensibly special "receptive powers" to the natural world. Rather than one who merely experiences and records that world, the speaker becomes an active producer of it, one who generates its imagery and the "reality" of his emotional experience from within his own mind and language. Moreover, he reflects critically – at one remove, as it were – on the purposes, which are both artistic and social, for which he generates that world.

Although set in the context of a New York beach (presumably Coney Island), Halpern's "Memento Mori" proceeds along similar lines:[58]

און אַז משה־לייב, דער פּאָעט, וועט דערציילן,	And if Moyshe-Leyb, Poet, recounted how
אַז ער האָט דעם טויט אויף די כוואַליעס געזען,	He's glimpsed Death in the breaking waves, the way
אַזוי ווי מען זעט זיך אַליין אין אַ שפּיגל,	You catch that sight of yourself in the mirror
און דאָס אין דער פֿרי גאָר, אַזוי אַרום צען –	At about 10 a.m. on some actual day,
צי וועט מען דאָס גלייבן משה־לייבן?	Who would be able to believe Moyshe-Leybl?
און אַז משה־לייב האָט דעם טויט פֿון דער ווייַטן	And if Moyshe-Leyb greeted Death from afar,
באַגריסט מיט אַ האַנט און געפֿרעגט ווי עס גייט?	With a wave of his hand, asking, "Things all right?
און דווקא בעת ס׳האָבן מענטשן פֿיל טויזנט	At the moment when many a thousand people
אין וואַסער זיך ווילד מיט דעם לעבן געפֿרייט –	Lived there in the water, wild with delight,
צי וועט מען דאָס גלייבן משה־לייבן?	Who would be able to believe Moyshe-Leybl?
און אַז משה־לייב וועט מיט טרערן זיך שווערן,	And if Moyshe-Leyb were to swear
אַז ס׳האָט צו דעם טויט אים געצויגן אַזוי,	That he was drawn to Death in the way
אַזוי ווי עס ציט אַ פֿאַרבענקטן אין אָוונט	An exiled lover is to the casement
צום פֿענצטער פֿון זיַינס אַ פֿאַרהייליקטער פֿרוי –	Of his worshipped one, at the end of the day,
צי וועט מען דאָס גלייבן משה־לייבן?	Who would be able to believe Moyshe-Leybl?

58 See the translation by John Hollander (Halpern 1987: 174).

און אַז משה־לייב וועט דעם טויט פֿאַר זיי מאָלן	And if Moyshe-Leyb were to paint them Death
ניט גרוי און ניט פֿינצטער, גאָר פֿאַרבן־רייַך שיין,	Not gray, dark, but colored-drenched, as it shone
אַזוי ווי ער האָט אַרום צען זיך באַוויזן	At around 10 a.m. there, distantly,
דאָרט וויַיט צווישן הימל און כוואַליעס אַליין – –	Between the sky and the breakers, alone.
צי וועט מען דאָס גלייבן משה־לייבן?	Who would be able to believe Moyshe-Leybl?

The similarities between the two poems is something one need hardly rehearse. The self-reflectivity whereby the speaker functions as both subject of the observation and observed object – here, the poet Moyshe-Leyb – amidst the waves; the preoccupation with death and indeed attraction to it as a lover to a worshiped woman; the poet's desire to remove himself from the people caught up in mundane pleasures – the multitudes wildly frolicking about in the water; and the poet's incessant asking about the credibility of the experience itself – all recall aspects of Heine's "Philister in Sonntagsröcklein."

There is, though, an important difference, signaled by the two poems' different structures and trajectories. Whereas Heine's "Philister" begins with the image of the philistines in the park and then redirects focus onto the solitary speaker staging the encounter with death, not least as a means of undermining the idealized image of artist versus philistine, "Memento Mori" stages from the outset the allegorical encounter with Death. It thus also situates the ensuing encounter with the everyday – the מענטשן פֿיל טויזנט / אין וואַסער זיך ווילד מיט דעם לעבן געפֿרייט – *within* this allegorical framework, hence underscoring from the outset the text as a staged alternative world and foregrounding its status as poetic construct. The difference from Heine's "Philister" is one of degree, not of quality or essence – since both depict the poet-persona's break with the world and overt staging of the death encounter – but it does suggest that Halpern stands more firmly within the aesthetics of *the modern* in contrast to Heine, who stands at its threshold and who, indeed, helps initiate it. One might make a similar point about the focus in אַ מאָדנע מחשבֿה (A Strange Thought) on "*the pen*," a form of reference absent from "Vergiftet sind meine Lieder," but that amounts to a laying bare of the apparatus (or device) of text production, something that recalls, for instance, Russian formalist aesthetics, among other modern movements.

What, though, was the nature of Halpern's modernity, and how, if at all, did Heine figure in it? Chana Kronfeld proposes a response in her incisive treatment of Halpern's innovations in Yiddish poetry, where she underscores Halpern's modernity, in particular.[59] Her analysis relies

59 Kronfeld 1996: 165–184.

הימל. זונפֿאַרגאַנג אויף ביימער,	Sky. Sunset on trees,
און ווינט און פֿחד מיט טרויער באַצירט,	and wind and dread decked out with grief,
און דאָס יינגל אין מיר דעם מענטש דעם גרויען	and the little boy in me to the man the gray one
האָרכט צו זען די האַנט וואָס פֿירט	listens to see the hand that leads
די זון, זאָל זיך לייגן שטאַרבן.	the sun, to lie down and die.
און דער קינסטלער אין מיר קוקט אויף זײַנע פֿאַרבן	And the artist in me looks at his paints
וואָס זענען גאָלדיק און בלוי און רויט – –	which are golden and blue and red –
און זײַן לעבן ווייניט ווי דער אייביקער טויט	and his life weeps like the eternal death
וואָס איז שיין און ליכטיק אין אָוונטשײַן,	that is beautiful and bright in the evening shine
ווי אַ קינד ווען די מאַמע וויגט עס אײַן.	like a child when his mother rocks it to sleep.
זאָל זיך בויגן מײַן קאָפּ דער גרויער –	Let my gray head bend down –
זאָל זיך בויגן מײַן קאָפּ דער גרויער.	let my gray head bend down.

considerably on a discussion of the first half of the late poem by Halpern, זונפֿאַרגאַנג אויף ביימער ("Sunset on Trees"):[60]

For Kronfeld, "*Zunfargang oyf beymer*," like the apocalyptic narrative poem "*A nakht*," reveals the distinctions among די יונגע, i. e. between the "ironic faction" of Halpern (and Nadir), the "poetics of quietude" of a Mani Leyb and his adherents, and the "sober faction," with Leyvik as its foremost proponent.[61] Kronfeld shows, moreover, that though the Introspectivist poets Yankev Glatshteyn, Aaron Glantz-Leyeles, and Nokhem B. Minkov criticized Halpern, a poem like "*Zunfargang oyf beymer*" reveals that Halpern had already begun to introduce poetic practices that the Introspectivists themselves would take up in their poetry. The poem, Kronfeld notes, begins by painting a stock impressionist image – or, as she calls it, "one of the most conventional scenes of poetic and artistic impression: 'sunset on trees'" – which the speaker initially freezes as a static image.[62] Impressionism, in this context, refers to a presumably modernist poetic technique that views the artist's mind as that of a passive observer, who, as a detached spectator, receives the images of the world as sensory impression recorded on his or her retina, so that the poetic consciousness does not mediate through interpretation. Its activity consists only of organizing those impressions into a sensible image.[63] Yet Kronfeld goes on to argue that the rhetorical structure of the second line of "*Zunfargang oyf beymer*" begins to call into question this impressionist structure. The expression of "dread and grief" in the second line could, for instance, still be viewed as impressionist, since it voices an "impersonal objectification of a *Stimmung* [or mood]."[64] But

60 Halpern 1934 (II): 130f. Translated by Chana Kronfeld (1996: 182).
61 Kronfeld 1996: 174.
62 Ibid.: 181.
63 Ibid.: 178f.
64 Ibid.: 182.

she adds, in an argument that I cite here at length, both because of its incisiveness and its centrality to my point:[65]

> the equivalence of emotional and meteorological entities in the zeugma "and wind and dread … with grief," especially the near-oxymoronic personification of *batsirt* ("decked out," "adorned") when combined with "grief" or "sadness" (*troyer*), begins to call into question the possibility of being a detached spectator of a natural scene. In the third line the poem turns inward to a self-conscious contemplation of the lyrical "I" and with it to a total rejection of impressionism. Abandoning an impressionist rendition of a sunset, Halpern makes the possibility of such an artistic rendering a topic of his introspection. Through this thematization of poetic technique and artistic affiliation, the mind of the dramatized observer rather than being a passive, reflective medium becomes the only measure of reality.

In building up to this point, Kronfeld stresses the model for Halpern of German Expressionism and its propensity to cast the work as an alternative world or reality, and indeed, Halpern's play with syntax and his repertoire of imagery here do suggest Expressionism. Yet her discussion also helps explain what Halpern does adopt from Heine, even as he transforms it for his own purposes. Significantly, Kronfeld goes on to note the increasing intricacy of the interplay between visual perspective and poetic point of view in this poem, something aided by the complex syntax, the shift of focus onto the little boy inside the speaker who listens to the aging adult listening, but whom, as "an outer, objectified self," the boy fails to recognize as his own self.[66] That aging persona had come to the sunset with a ready-made symbolic reading of aging and death that the boy still lacks. In other words, the "I" of the poem does not just passively receive the image of the sunset, but rather, as the poem itself suggests, actively constructs it.

In this regard, Kronfeld argues that "*Zunfargang oyf beymer*," by introducing Expressionist modes of writing, such as this use of irony and the complex syntax, ultimately amounts to an "ironic critique of impressionism as veiled romanticism."[67] As with "Memento Mori," though now enlisting a more overt Expressionist style and more overtly reflecting on the creative process, Halpern projects his poem as an alternative reality, or rather suggests how the painter and poet (and, indeed, the human mind more generally) shaped the world it imagines itself to be merely perceiving or registering. Yet as the discussion of Heine's *Lyrisches Intermezzo* 50 ("Philister") suggests, this is a form of irony

65 Kronfeld 1996: 182.
66 Cf. Ibid.: 183.
67 Ibid.

that Heine himself had already come to and that Halpern had already responded to earlier in *In Nyu-york*.[68]

In other words, whatever else Halpern adopted from Expressionism – the more fundamental insight and practice of ironizing the received image and received tradition, an insight and practice central to his innovations in Yiddish poetry and one that, Chana Kronfeld shows, helped make the transition to the Introspectivism – this insight is something, I am arguing, that Halpern came to through his reading of Heine – of works, beyond "Philister in Sonntagsröcklein," like "Vergiftet sind meine Lieder," "Seegespenst," and such prose works as *Ideen: Das Buch Le Grand*. In light of the centrality that Halpern's innovations meant for the development of Yiddish poetry, it might then open up new perspectives on Yiddish poetry and Yiddish culture to give more attention to the role that a German Jewish apostate named Harry/Heinrich Heine played in this development as well.

Bibliography

Altenhofer, Norbert, 1982: "Ästhetik des Arrangements: Zu Heines Buch der Lieder." In: Text und Kritik 18/19: 16–32.

Blau, Amy, 2005: "Afterlives: Translations of German Weltliteratur into Yiddish." Ph.D. diss. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

Briegleb, Klaus, 2005 [1997]: *Heinrich Heine, jüdischer Schriftsteller in der Moderne: Bei den Wassern Babels*. Wiesbaden: Marix.

Gelber, Mark H., ed., 1992: *The Jewish Reception of Heinrich Heine*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Goltschnigg, Dietmar and Steinecke, Hartmut, eds., 2006–2011: *Heine und die Nachwelt. Geschichte seiner Wirkung in den deutschsprachigen Ländern. Texte und Kontexte, Analysen und Kommentare*. 3 vols. Berlin: Erich Schmidt.

Greenberg [Grinberg], Eliezer, 1942: *Moyshe Leyb Halpern in ram fun zayn dor*. New York: Moyshe Leyb Halpern arbeter ring brentsh.

Gruschka, Roland, 2011: "'Ss' harz in benken gejt mir ojß': Heinesche Motive im Werk des jiddischen Dichters Oscher Schwarzman." In: *Heine-Jahrbuch* 50: 108–128.

Halpern, Moyshe Leyb, 1915: "Der alter un der nayer Moris Rozenfeld." In: *Literatur un lebn* 3: 100–112.

68 Chana Kronfeld does acknowledge such tendencies in Halpern's earlier work (Kronfeld 1996: 173f).

– 1934: *Moyshe Leyb Halpern*. 2 vols. New York: Moyshe Leyb Halpern Komitet.
– [1919] 1954: *In Nyu-york*. New York: Farlag Matones.
– 1987: "Memento Mori." Trans. John Hollander. In: Irving Howe, Ruth R. Wisse, and Khone Shmeruk, eds., *The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse*. New York: Viking Penguin, 174.
Hauschild, Jan-Christoph and Michael Werner, 1997: "Der Zweck des Lebens ist das Leben selbst": *Heinrich Heine – Eine Biographie*. Cologne: Kiepenheuer & Witsch.
Heine, Heinrich, 1913a: "Tsurik in der heym." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (5): 7.
– 1913b: "Dos hohe lid." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5.12: 7.
– 1913c: "Yolanta un Mariye." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (14): 7.
– 1913d: "Tsvey riter." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (19): 7.
– 1913e: "Lider." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (20): 7.
– 1913f: Daytshland. Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (21): 7; 5 (22): 7; 5 (23): 7; 5 (24): 7; 5 (25): 7; 5 (26): 7; 5 (27): 7; 5 (29): 7; 5 (30): 7; 5 (31): 7; 5 (32): 7; 5 (33): 7; 5 (34): 7; 5 (35): 7.
– 1913g: "Dos shklafnshif." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (43): 9; 5 (44): 7.
– 1913h: "Untergehert." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (45): 7.
– 1913i: "Der Apollo-got." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (46): 7; 5 (47): 7.
– 1913j: Atta Troll. Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (48): 7; 5 (49): 7.
– 1913k: "Lider." Trans. Hel-pen [Moyshe Leyb Halpern]. In: *Der groyser kundes* 5 (49): 7.
– 1918: *Di verk fun Haynrikh Hayne in akht bend mit a biografye fun E. Kalisher* [*Kalischer*] *un a forvort fun dr. N. Syrkin*. Trans. Reuven Ayzland, Chaim Nakhmen Bialik, Zishe Landoy, Moyshe Leyb Halpern et al. New York: Farlag Yiddish.
– 1973–1997: *Historisch-kritische Gesamtausgabe der Werke*, ed. Manfred Windfuhr, 16 vols. Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe.
– 1982a: *The Complete Poems of Heinrich Heine: A Modern English Version*. Trans. Hal Draper. Cambridge, MA: Suhrkamp/Insel Publishers Boston.

– 1982b: *Poetry and Prose*, ed. Jost Hermand and Robert C. Holub. New York: Continuum.
– 1995: *Songs of Love and Grief*. A Bilingual Anthology Translated in the Verse Form of the Originals. Trans. Walter W. Arndt. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.
Hellerstein, Kathryn Ann, 1980: "Moyshe Leyb Halpern's *In New York*: A Modern Yiddish Verse Narrative." Ph.D. diss. Stanford University.
Hermand, Jost, 1993: *Mehr als ein Liberaler: Über Heinrich Heine*. 2nd expanded edition. Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang.
Holub, Robert C., 1981: "Heine's Sexual Assaults: Towards a Theory of the Total Polemic." In: *Monatshefte* 73 (4): 415–428.
– 2002: "Troubled Apostate: Heine's Conversion and Its Consequences." In: Roger Cook, ed., *A Companion to the Works of Heinrich Heine*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 229–250.
Klusen, Ernst, 1973: "Heinrich Heine und der Volkston." In: *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 69: 43–60.
Kronfeld, Chana, 1996: *On the Margins of Modernism: Decentering Literary Dynamics*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Kruse, Joseph, 2002: "Late Thoughts: Reconsiderations from the 'Matratzengruft.'" In: Roger Cook, ed., *A Companion to the Works of Heinrich Heine*. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 315–341.
Levinson, Julian, 2008: *Exiles On Main Street: Jewish American Writers and American Literary Culture*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Liptzin, Sol, 1992: "Heine and the Yiddish Poets." In: Mark H. Gelber, ed., *The Jewish Reception of Heinrich Heine*. Tübingen: Niemeyer, 67–75.
Mayer, Hans, 1977: *Außenseiter*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.
Novershtern, Avrom, 1993: "Tsvishn morgnzun un akhres-hayomim: tsu der apokaliptisher tematik in der yidisher literatur." In: *Di goldene keyt* 135: 111–135.
Pareigis, Christina, 2008: "Mein westöstlicher dunkler Spleen: Zwischen zwei Sprachen: Heines Hebräische Melodien auf Jiddisch." In: Ulrich Wergin, Karol Sauerland, eds., with the assistance of Daniel Eschkötter, *Bilder des Ostens in der deutschen Literatur*. Würzburg : Königshausen & Neumann, 93–106.
Perraudin, Michael, 1989: *Heinrich Heine: Poetry in Context – A Study of Buch der Lieder*. Oxford: Berg.
Prawer, S. S., 1960: *Buch der Lieder*. London: Edward Arnold.
Robertson, Ritchie, 1988: *Heine*. London: Halban.
Rosenfeld, Morris, 1914: *Dos bukh fun libe*. New York: M. Gurevitsh.

ROSENTHAL, Ludwig, 1973: *Heinrich Heine als Jude*. [Frankfurt am Main]: Ullstein.

SAMMONS, Jeffrey, 1979: *Heinrich Heine: A Modern Biography*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

SHMERUK, Chone, 1988: "'Prinzessin Sabbat' by H. Heine in a Yiddish Translation by H. N. Bialik." In: Ada RAPOPORT-ALBERT and Steven J. ZIPPERSTEIN, eds., *Jewish History: Essays in Honour of Chimen Abramsky*, London: Halban, 379–389.

STEINBERG [Shteynberg], Noah, [1917] 1930: *Yung Amerike*. New York: Farlag Lebn.

SYRKIN, N[ahman], 1918: "Haynrikh Hayne, der tragisher yidisher dikhter." In: *Heine* 1918 (1): 7–44.

WISSE, Ruth R., 1988: *A Little Love in Big Manhattan*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

WOLITZ, Seth L., 1977–1978: "Structuring the World View in Halpern's *In New York*." *Studies in American Jewish Literature* 3 (2); joint issue with *Yiddish* 3 (1): 56–67.