

# ENCYCLOPAEDIA JUDAICA

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## VOLUME 4 BLU-COF

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**MACMILLAN REFERENCE USA**

*An imprint of Thomson Gale, a part of The Thomson Corporation*

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ENCYCLOPAEDIA JUDAICA, Second Edition

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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Encyclopaedia Judaica / Fred Skolnik, editor-in-chief ; Michael Berenbaum, executive editor. -- 2nd ed.
v. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
Contents: v.1. Aa-Alp.
ISBN 0-02-865928-7 (set hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865929-5 (vol. 1 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865930-9 (vol. 2 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865931-7 (vol. 3 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865932-5 (vol. 4 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865933-3 (vol. 5 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865934-1 (vol. 6 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865935-X (vol. 7 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865936-8 (vol. 8 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865937-6 (vol. 9 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865938-4 (vol. 10 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865939-2 (vol. 11 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865940-6 (vol. 12 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865941-4 (vol. 13 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865942-2 (vol. 14 hardcover : alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865943-0 (vol. 15: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865944-9 (vol. 16: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865945-7 (vol. 17: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865946-5 (vol. 18: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865947-3 (vol. 19: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865948-1 (vol. 20: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865949-X (vol. 21: alk. paper) -- ISBN 0-02-865950-3 (vol. 22: alk. paper)
1. Jews -- Encyclopedias. I. Skolnik, Fred. II. Berenbaum, Michael, 1945-
D5102.8.E496 2007
909'.04924 -- dc22

2006020426

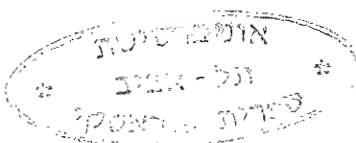
ISBN-13:

- 978-0-02-865928-2 (set)
978-0-02-865929-9 (vol. 1)
978-0-02-865930-5 (vol. 2)
978-0-02-865931-2 (vol. 3)
978-0-02-865932-9 (vol. 4)
978-0-02-865933-6 (vol. 5)
978-0-02-865934-3 (vol. 6)
978-0-02-865935-0 (vol. 7)
978-0-02-865936-7 (vol. 8)
978-0-02-865937-4 (vol. 9)
978-0-02-865938-1 (vol. 10)
978-0-02-865939-8 (vol. 11)
978-0-02-865940-4 (vol. 12)
978-0-02-865941-1 (vol. 13)
978-0-02-865942-8 (vol. 14)
978-0-02-865943-5 (vol. 15)
978-0-02-865944-2 (vol. 16)
978-0-02-865945-9 (vol. 17)
978-0-02-865946-6 (vol. 18)
978-0-02-865947-3 (vol. 19)
978-0-02-865948-0 (vol. 20)
978-0-02-865949-7 (vol. 21)
978-0-02-865950-3 (vol. 22)

This title is also available as an e-book
ISBN-10: 0-02-866097-8
ISBN-13: 978-0-02-866097-4

Contact your Thomson Gale representative for ordering information.
Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



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## INTRODUCTION

The term children's literature in this article is applied to different types of literary works. Up to the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century it refers to literature whose style and treatment of content is also suitable for a young readership (age group 4–14 approx.); in the modern period it denotes works written specifically for children and compositions by children whose subject matter and theme do not necessarily fall into the adolescent category, for example, some of the Holocaust literature by children.

## CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN HEBREW

While until modern times very little literature was written for children, there is no doubt that some of the biblical and post-biblical Hebrew literature was widely read by the young and was part of the curriculum in Jewish education. It was only with the rise of interest in children's education – the development of pedagogical methodology and child psychology – that a real children's literature began to be composed.

### Early Period

**BIBLICAL PERIOD (UNTIL 200 B.C.E.).** In early times, the first literary writings composed for children might have been proverbs and the young probably learned by heart short maxims designed to teach them moral norms and proper behavior. Many of the proverbs were later written down and incorporated into early Hebrew literature: "Hear, my son, the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the teaching of thy mother" (Prov. 1:8). Undoubtedly, the Hebrew child was also an avid listener to the recitations of itinerant poets and storytellers, or to the legends and parables narrated by the elders and prophets sitting at the town gates. Biblical tales had a profound influence on the development of children's literature in general and Hebrew literature for children in particular.

**MISHNAIC-TALMUDIC PERIOD.** During the mishnaic-talmu-

dic period the scope of education was enlarged and schools were established. Children learned to read the tales of the Bible: "How does a man learn Torah? First by reading the scroll and then the book" (Deut. R. 8:3). Isaac Baer \*Levinsohn, in his *Te'udah be-Yisrael*, infers from this passage that in those days the teachers had small scrolls containing stories and parables which they used in the education of the children. Legends and folktales, which had also gained popularity, were taught and the sages praised the "masters of the legend, who draw man's heart like water" (Hag. 14a). The many legends and parables scattered throughout the Talmud and the Midrash, with their charm and simplicity, attracted children in every generation. The numerous collections and versions in which these have appeared bear witness to this phenomenon.

**MEDIEVAL PERIOD.** From the beginning of the Diaspora to the Haskalah, Jewish education was almost exclusively religious. The standard books at home or at school were the Bible, the Talmud, the Midrashim, and prayer books. From time to time, however, writers and scholars composed popular literary works which captivated young readers. Among these were Isaac ibn \*Sahula's *Mashal ha-Kadmoni*, a 13<sup>th</sup>-century work written in rhymed prose (\**maqama*), comprising parables, stories, and tales (Soncino, 1480); \*Berechiah b. Natronai ha-Nakdan's *Mishlei Shu'alim*, written in France in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and containing revised and translated versions of animal fables (Mantua, 1557); and Jacob ibn Ḥabib's *Ein Ya'akov*, a collection of legends from the Talmud (Salonika, 1516), of which special versions for the particular needs of children were published.

Despite conservative teaching methods, many textbooks were published from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, including books on grammar, on the Hebrew language, on letter-writing, and on ethical conduct. They were not specifically for children and rarely contained material that had literary value. *Petaḥ Sefat Ever li-Yladim*, by Abraham \*Cohen (Vienna, 1745), was an exception; it includes parables and short legends. Side by side with this written literature, there existed an oral children's tradition: stories told by inspired teachers, mothers, and grandmothers, and the lullabies they sang. Some of these were eventually printed.

[Uriel Ofek]

### Modern Period

The history of European Jewish-Hebrew and Hebrew literature, which dates back to 1779, as well as the history of Erez-Israeli and Israeli Hebrew children's literature, is the history of an ideologically oriented attempt to build a new literary system and simultaneously generate the field of its consumers and producers. It is a history characterized by strong ideological inclinations as well as delayed developments, until Israeli children's literature was structured similarly to the European systems which it sought to emulate from its outset.

The peculiar circumstances of its development in the course of its more than 200-year history involve the special status of the Hebrew language as the language of high culture

rather than the native language of its readership, as well as the multiterritorial existence of Hebrew culture, a situation which ended only when the center of Hebrew culture was categorically transferred to Erez Israel in the mid-1920s.

EUROPE. Books for Jewish children or passages addressing children in texts or manuscripts for adults were written in Europe for as long as Jewish communities were in existence. In fact, one of the first acts of a Jewish community in the process of establishing its communal life was the creation of an educational system for children.

Every community facing the challenge of children's education responded to it, *inter alia*, by the production of texts for children. These texts endeavored to offer practical roads to the kind of socialization and identity the community wished to construct. Every community and every social group offered different solutions to these two issues: the issue of identity and the issue of socialization.

References to Jewish children as consumers of various Hebrew texts are to be found from the Middle Ages onward in various Jewish texts. From the 12<sup>th</sup> century, certain texts, taken mostly from the broader domain of Jewish literature – the Bible, the Talmud, commentaries on the Talmud, and prayer books – were used for educating the young. Several scholars believe that some passages were included in the *Haggadah* explicitly for the use of children. In the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, there were increasing efforts to write texts specifically for children, mostly in the form of catechisms. However, these became a socially recognized phenomenon only towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the emergence and crystallization of the modern concept of childhood; as in the case with European children's literatures such a concept was a precondition for the development of Jewish-Hebrew children's literature. Nevertheless, Jewish-Hebrew children's literature required in addition a substantial modification of the basic views of Jewish society, in particular those concerning children's education and attitudes towards the non-Jewish world, in order to make possible the development of a distinct and autonomous system of children's books. Only when such a change occurred at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century within the framework of the \*Haskalah (Jewish Enlightenment) movement in Germany was there culturally room for books for Jewish children in the modern sense.

The Haskalah movement believed that in order to shape a new mode of Jewish life and to change the Jewish world view into a modern and enlightened one, a total reform in the Jewish educational system must take place, basing the curriculum on a rational and non-religious foundation. The curriculum of its new network of schools proposed such a change and ultimately created a demand for new and different books. This was marked in 1779 by the publication of David Friedlaender's *Lesebuch fuer juedische Kinder* (Berlin 1779, edited with the help of Moses Mendelssohn), for the use of the Juedische Freischule zu Berlin's students. Its publication signified a turning point in the history of books for

Jewish children, primarily because it was the first to declare itself as a *Lesebuch* (reader) in the modern sense of the notion, and secondly, because it gave expression to the social and cultural maskilic project in which books for children played an important role in distributing maskilic tenets and ideologies. The *Lesebuch* represented a unique attempt to translate the ideology of the Haskalah movement into practical terms, and reflected a unique effort to create a symbiosis between the German and the Jewish cultures, where the similarities between the two cultures were emphasized and points of appropriation were searched for. These two principles were beyond the need to publish maskilic books for children which would be distinctly different from the books published in the framework of the traditional former system, naturally unequipped to meet Haskalah demands. As a result, dozens of non-religious books were published during the Haskalah in the German-speaking world.

At first the books were written in Hebrew and German or in a bilingual format. Hebrew was used mainly in grammars and *Lesebuicher*, and to a lesser extent in literary translations and the few original works. Some of the books were bilingual – a side-by-side presentation of Hebrew and German. Towards the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century writing in German became more and more predominant with the exception of grammar books, which continued to be published in Hebrew.

The maskilic texts could not be based on the traditional models of the Hebrew book and the new system had to find models upon which its repertoire could be constructed. In light of the close relations between the Haskalah and the German Enlightenment, books of the German Enlightenment were an ideal, if not the most desirable, model for imitation. As a result, dozens of books were written and published, all modeled on the German repertoire of books for children. The new system of books for Jewish children endeavored to follow German children's literature both in its stages of development and in the nature of its repertoire. However, in agreement with its internal ideological needs, it adapted itself to an earlier stage of development of German children's literature and not to that current at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup>.

The concrete ways in which Haskalah used the German system was determined by its interpretation of the evolution of the children's literature of the German Enlightenment and of its repertoire. This process involved the translation of concepts and ideas which was not necessarily in accordance with the ways German children's literature viewed itself. Furthermore, once Jewish-Hebrew children's literature had created a certain image of German children's literature, this image was sustained for a long time without really taking heed of the changes and developments taking place within German literature itself. Jewish-Hebrew children's literature was characterized by the monolithic nature of its texts, and even in later stages of its development Jewish writers adhered to a limited number of textual models and seldom deviated from this fixed repertoire. It was almost as though at a given point

in time certain models, texts, and processes of development in the evolution of German children's literature were joined to form a circle, which later became the sole frame of reference for the system of books for Jewish children for almost an entire century. This frame of reference consisted mainly of the translation of German Enlightenment texts, or the production of a small number of original Hebrew texts based on the German. Translated texts were in fact privileged to the extent that, to the best of our knowledge, all books for children published by the Haskalah in Germany were either official translations, pseudo-translations, or original texts based on existing German models.

The eligibility of texts for translation was determined by the extent to which they reflected the ideological inclinations of the Haskalah. Consequently, German texts were translated if they were written by German Enlightenment writers, and or if they explicitly conveyed Haskalah values.

These principles of selection resulted in an abundance of moralistic poems, fables, instructive texts, and geography books, and the total exclusion of fictional narratives, such as short stories and novels, until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Most popular were biblical stories in accordance with the preference for Jewish themes *Avtalion Biblische Historien*, German and Hebrew fables (by Berachiah ha-Nakdan, Magnus Gottfried Lichtwer, Christian Gellert, Albrecht von Haller, and Friedrich von Hagedorn, or of ancient writers like Aesop), para-scientific texts which were characterized by an attempt to introduce new scientific ideas (Baruch Linda's *Reshit Limudim*, parts 1 and 2, Berlin, Dessau, 1788, which was based on the German *Naturgeschichte fuer Kinder*, by Georg Christian Raff), or Isaac Satanow's *Mishlei Asaf* in three parts (Berlin, 1789, 1792, 1793), and *Meggilat Hasidim* (Berlin, 1802), as well as instructive texts (predominantly translations of Campe: *Robinson der Juengere* (Breslau, 1824; Warsaw, 1849; Przemysl, 1872 [5672]; *Die Entdeckung von Amerika*, (Altona, 1807 [5567]; 1810 cannot be traced; Vilna, 1823 [5583]; Breslau, 1824 [5584]; Lemberg, 1846; *Merkwürdige Reisebeschreibungen* (Lemberg, 1818 [5578]; Yafo, 1912 [5672]; *Theophron* (Odessa, 1863); and *Sittenbuecher fuer Kinder aus gesitteten Staenden* (Breslau, 1819; Prague, 1831; Odessa, 1866; Warsaw, 1882)).

These texts continued to be present on the Jewish scene long after the cultural center had been transferred to Eastern Europe. Thus, the books for children transcended geographical boundaries and the boundaries between the centers of Hebrew-Jewish culture in Europe. Books for children also transcended the boundaries of the addressee, and texts written for children addressed adults almost until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. More often than not, the same texts were published for adults as well as for children. Literary material which was first published by various Jewish periodicals was later recycled in the form of readers for children. These readers frequently served as reading material for adult Jews, especially of who had no formal education, paving their way into a modern world. Para-scientific books were read by adults, indeed, sometimes primarily by adults. In fact, it may be assumed that the label "a

book for children" was occasionally used more as a cover than as an indication of a "real" addressee. It could function as a cover because the children's system, owing to its peripheral position in culture, stood less chance of being closely scrutinized and was therefore often a convenient vehicle for the introduction of new and hitherto prohibited texts and models.

With the transfer of the center of Hebrew culture to Eastern Europe (mostly to Poland and Russia) and especially in the framework of the *Hibbat Zion* and *Ha-Teḥiyah* movements, the Hebrew language regained its dominance in texts for children. It is in those years that the basis of Hebrew children's literature was established and for the first time it formed a system distinct from other systems of Hebrew culture. It was shaped as a system different from other systems of books for Jewish children which continued to exist in Europe until World War II (in Yiddish or in the local languages: German, Russian, and Polish).

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Hebrew children's literature in Europe underwent a change, which stemmed primarily from the establishment of an educational system in Hebrew intended to promote the national revival. Societies and organizations were founded in Europe with the aim of disseminating the Zionist idea, national education, and the Hebrew language through educational institutions. The aim of the *Safah Berurah* (Clear Language) and *Hovevei Sefat Ever* (Lovers of Hebrew) societies was to transform Hebrew from a literary language into a spoken language by founding Hebrew schools in which Hebrew was spoken and by the publication of children's books. One of its outcomes was the establishment of the \*Moriah publishing house. Founded in Odessa in January 1902 by Yehoshua Ḥana \*Rawnitzki, Shin \*Ben-Zion (Simḥah Alter Gutmann), and Ḥayyim Naḥman \*Bialik, Moriah was active primarily in publishing basic books, textbooks, and readers for schools. Its first project was the publication of five volumes of Bible stories (1902 and thereafter), which was very successful. In the first year of publication, the first volume was printed in five editions. Its second large project was a compilation of Hebrew legends (*aggadot*) adapted for youth, in six volumes, because Bialik believed that legend was at the time the only original literature for children in Hebrew. From 1910, Moriah also began publishing literature for young readers in a series called "the Moriah library for youth," which included original books written mainly by writers for adults, among them \*Shalom Aleichem, Mendele Mokher Seforim (Sholem Yankev \*Abramovitsh); Sholem \*Asch, Aaron A. \*Kabak, Shin Ben-Zion, M. \*Berdycewski, Eliyahu Miednik, and Meir Siko (Meir \*Smilansky). In parallel, Rawnitzki and Bialik published translated literature printed by the Turgeman publishing house, which was founded in 1911 in the framework of *Achinoar* books and issued translations of classic children's books such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (Hebrew title *Me'ora'ot Tom*), *Pictures from the Life of Youth in America* (1910, translated by Israel Ḥayyim Tawiw), *Don Quixote* (1911, translated by Bialik), *Spartacus* (1911, translated by Jabotinsky), *A Thousand and One Nights* (1912, translated by David Yellin),

*Grimm's Fairy Tales* (1919, translated by David Frischmann), and others. After the revolution in Russia, the publishing house discontinued its operations.

The most active publishing house for children in Eastern Europe was Tushiyah, headed by Ben-Avigdor. In the course of three years, from 1895, Tushiyah issued about 300 booklets in its Library for Youth in the form of two series: "for children" and "for young adults." Most of these were adaptations of classics by Grimm, Hugo, Gustafsson, Pushkin, Tolstoy, D'Amicis, and Thomas Mayne Reid. A small number were original works, such as *Ba-Ir u-va-Ya'ar* by Judah Steinberg, *Kol Aggadot Yisrael* by Israel Benjamin Levner, and *Le-Ma'an Aḥai ha-Ketanim* by Aharon Liboshitski

On the whole, translated literature continued to play an important role in the development of Jewish-Hebrew children's literature in Eastern Europe. Since contacts with the surrounding and neighboring cultures were strongly endorsed by the men of letters, Jewish-Hebrew children's literature tended to translate extensively as well as to use translated texts as models for original writing of Hebrew texts. For instance, Judah Steinberg, the author of the fables in *Ba-Ir u-va-Ya'ar* (1896, Odessa), which enjoyed much popularity and a wide readership, was called "the Hebrew Andersen," comparing him to a respected foreign example.

At the outset, the publication of Hebrew books for Jewish children in Europe in the 19<sup>th</sup> century gained great momentum. It was the first time in the history of modern Jewish-Hebrew children's literature that books for children were methodically published, out of a desire to build a complete system with a rich repertoire. Nearly all the big Hebrew publishing houses in Europe were involved in publishing Hebrew children's literature as well as newspapers and periodicals for children in Hebrew. Their motivation was both ideological and economic. A relatively large group of authors began writing for children. Some of them wrote primarily for children or only for children. A few were particularly prolific: Judah \*Steinberg, Aaron \*Liboshitzki, Solomon Berman, Judah Leib \*Levin, Israel Ḥayyim \*Tawiw, Noah Pines, Itzhak Berkman (\*Katznelson), and Israel Benjamin \*Levner, the last writing more than 25 books, some of which became bestsellers.

The flourishing publishing activity early in the century ended in a crisis. The number of publishing houses engaged in publishing children's books was greater than the demand of the market, and some of the publishers had to slow down or totally discontinue their activity. Some attempts were made in Warsaw to found publishing houses for children's books, such as Barkai and Ophir, but they did not succeed.

In 1911, Ben-Avigdor attempted to cope with the crisis by establishing a federation of publishing houses called Central, which also included Shrebrek, Progress, and Ha-Shahar. Central later merged with the Sifrut publishing house. After World War I, the publishing house recovered and remained in operation as a publisher of readers and books for children and young adults almost until World War II.

The establishment of the \*Tarbut educational system in 1922, which operated in the interwar period in Poland, Romania, the Baltic states, and Russia in 200 elementary schools and kindergartens, secondary schools, and teachers' seminaries, created the need for the continuation of the existence of Hebrew children's literature in Europe, even after the center of Hebrew literature in Europe had declined. For a short period, Tarbut was successful because of the awakening of national consciousness. Hebrew became a spoken language in hundreds of schools, and an attempt was made to maintain the publication of Hebrew books at any cost, as well as to establish new publishing houses to replace those that had closed down or curtailed their activity during the war. Most of these publishing houses, like Senunit (1919); the Temarim illustrated library (1920); Bibliotheka Universalit (1919–20), and Sifriyat ha-Ḥinukh he-Ḥadash (1928) were supported by various educational institutions but received their major support from Tarbut. As long as a Hebrew school system existed in Europe, there was a justification for maintaining literature in Hebrew for Jewish children, and books in Hebrew continued to come out almost until the outbreak of World War II.

Nevertheless, despite the comprehensive educational project of Tarbut, Hebrew children's literature was still written in most cases for children whose mother tongue was not Hebrew. Even the overwhelming success of Avraham \*Mapu's *Ahavat Zion* (1853, Vilna) which continued to be a best seller among young and old until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, could not change the fact that it never became a "native literature." This resulted in a gap between the insufficient demand, on the one hand, and the superfluous supply, on the other, which made the system unstable and fragile and caused recurrent economic crises.

Writers for children in Eastern Europe continued to regard Hebrew children's literature as an educational tool and consequently wrote texts with a didactic orientation. At this stage, Hebrew children's literature still tolerated only one criterion for the rejection or acceptance of texts for children: the extent of their conformity to didactic and/or ideological tenets. As a result of the circumstances of its existence, Hebrew children's literature in Europe maintained its superficial existence and was unable to release itself from the ideological frameworks which determined its character. The ideological hegemony resulted in the system's remaining incomplete for a considerable period, lacking some of the sub-systems existing in other European children's literatures at the time. In fact, Hebrew children's literature managed to liberate itself from the exclusive hegemony of ideology only much later in Erez Israel and mainly after the foundation of the state of Israel, where Hebrew children's literature as a "native literature" developed into a heterogeneous and diversified system.

EREZ ISRAEL AND THE STATE OF ISRAEL. The case of Hebrew children's literature in Erez Israel was completely different. Already in the late 1880s, several decades before the establishment of a system of adult literature, children's literature

began to develop in Erez Israel. This means that the first literary system that developed in Erez Israel was that of books for children, though it was stabilized only after the literary center had definitely been transferred to Erez Israel, i.e., in the mid-1920s.

The first texts for children were educational texts – readers and textbooks, such as Eliezer \*Ben-Yehuda's geography book *1813 le-Ḥurban Mikdashenu*, 5643 (1883), David \*Yellin and Ben-Yehuda's first reader for children, *Mikra le-Yaldei benei Yisrael*, 5647 (1887), which included about 20 revised talmudic legends and parables of the sages in simple Hebrew; Yehudah Grasovski, Ḥayyim Zifrin, and David Yudelevitch's *Bet ha-Sefer li-Venei Yisrael*, 5651 (1891); Ben-Yehuda's *Kizzur Divrei ha-Yamim li-Venei Yisrael*, 5652 (1892), and Mordekhai Lubman's *Sihot bi-Yediote ha-Teva*, 5652 (1892). Later they were followed by some literary texts for leisure which included stories, poems, fables, legends, and moral tales, such as Grazovski and Arye Horovitz's series *Sehiyat ha-Ḥemdah le-Yaldei Benei Yisrael* (eight translated booklets), 5652 (1892), and Grazovski, Zifrin and Yudelevitch's *Sha'ashuim Yom Yom*, 5652 (1892).

But when the system of Hebrew education adopted the method of teaching "Hebrew in Hebrew" the scraps could not satisfy the appetite of a lion. Once this method was adopted, the Hebrew language was much more powerfully disseminated, as the schools became the major agents of its distribution. In the process of the creation of Hebrew as the language of the culture of the Yishuv, children were viewed as a vehicle for distributing the new Hebrew culture and their teachers as the main soldiers in an army participating in this war. Ben-Yehuda, as well as major political figures such as Menahem \*Ussishkin and Ze'ev \*Jabotinsky spoke explicitly about the decisive role of the children and their educators in this national project of creating a new secular Hebrew culture.

Teaching in Hebrew in a Hebrew environment created for the first time in the history of Hebrew children's literature a genuine readership. This readership generated an urgent and immediate need for adequate texts for children in all the fields of child culture. Fulfilling the demand was not an easy task. The relation between demand and supply was just the opposite of the one prevalent in Europe. Memoirs of teachers relate time and again how difficult it was to find in Erez Israel adequate books for children. In fact, until the 1920s, the publishing center of Hebrew children's literature was still in Europe and the needs of the system in Palestine were largely filled through books published in Europe. Furthermore, books by writers who had already settled in Erez Israel at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> were published mainly in Warsaw, Odessa, and to some extent Cracow, even if they were first published in Jerusalem. For example, Ze'ev Jawitz's book *Tal Yaldut* intended for the children of Palestine, was published in Vilna in 1897 and was also distributed for the use of Hebrew schools in Eastern Europe. *Kizzur Divrei ha-Yamim li-Venei Yisrael be-Shivtam al Admatam* (Jerusalem, 1892) by Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, was also published in Vilna in 1906.

Yehuda Grazovski's reader, *Bet Sefer Ivri* (Jerusalem, 1895–97), was published in Warsaw in 1912. Ze'ev Jawitz's *Divrei ha-Yamim* (Jerusalem, 1890) was published in an expanded edition in Warsaw in 1893. Yehudah Grazovski's *Ḥanukkah* was published in Odessa (1892) and then in Warsaw (1920) as well as his *Mi-Sippurei Anderson* (Odessa, 1893); Hemdah \*Ben-Yehuda's *Me-Hayyei ha-Yeladim be-Erez Yisrael* was published in Warsaw (1899), as well as her *Bimei ha-Bazzir* (Cracow, 1906). Kadish Leib (Yehudah) \*Silman's *Ha-Ḥashmonayim ha-Ketanim* was published in Warsaw (1911).

However, already in the early 1920s books written and published in Europe were rejected as being inadequate for children growing up in Erez Israel. European Hebrew children's literature, whose circumstances of development were drastically different from those of Erez Israel, could not serve anymore as a reservoir of models and texts. Unlike the case of Hebrew literature for adults, where the transfer to Erez Israel implied continuity in terms of the repertoire of the system, Hebrew children's literature, facing new needs, had to orient its development to new and different grounds.

During the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the creation of a children's culture in Erez Israel demanded the construction from scratch of *all* its components, ranging from children's songs to fairy tales, stories, novels, and non-fiction prose, from schoolbooks to Hanukkah, Tu Bi-Shevat, and Passover poems as well as to the ceremonies in schools and kindergartens. The scarcity of schoolbooks overshadowed any other deficiencies of the child culture and consequently the needs and demands of the educational system enjoyed first priority.

The Kohelet publishing house, established by the Teachers Union in Erez Israel in 5665 (1905), played a major role in this undertaking. Kohelet concentrated at first on supplementing the most urgent needs of the educational system and thus published very few literary texts for leisure. It published schoolbooks, a geographical lexicon, and a zoology book and after World War I began issuing literary texts in the series *Ozar ha-Talmid*. Given however, the necessity to create a child culture from scratch, schoolbooks also included original poems and stories and served as reading material for leisure.

During World War I hardly any books for children were published, except for few that were issued in the framework of the project of the \*Palestine Office of the Zionist Organization. The Palestine Office created a committee at the beginning of the war to produce a comprehensive program for the translation of masterpieces of world literature, among which several children's books were included. Two other minor projects were responsible for the publication of several booklets: *Ha-Mashtelah*, which was established in Jerusalem in 1915 and issued five booklets and *Sifriyah Ketanah li-Yeladim*, which was established in Jaffa in 1916 and issued 55 booklets.

Most of the schoolbooks published between 1905 and 1923 were written by a new group of teachers, among whom the three teachers of the Girls' School in Jaffa were the most prominent: Mordekhai Ezrahi (Krishevsky), Yosef Azaryahu



(Ozarkovski), and Yehi'el Yehi'eli (Jochelchik). Along with purely educational considerations, the activities of the group were also – and perhaps mainly – guided by national considerations and the desire to create a new type of Jew. To this end, they attempted to compile a repertoire for everyday behavior and renovated ceremonies to replace the traditional religious ceremonies. In this framework they published several schoolbooks and readers, partially written by them and partially taken from other sources. One of their readers – *Sifrenu* (1919–21) – became especially widespread. The *Sifrenu* series was widely acclaimed, published in approximately 20 editions, and used by most of the Hebrew schools throughout the country; \*as late as 1935 a revised version entitled *Karmenu* was still being published.

These texts endeavored to present an “autochthonic Hebrew child” by the use of several devices, among which the most conspicuous were representation of the “native” way of speaking (through the introduction of many dialogues) and repeated descriptions of various local settings in Erez Israel. The texts offered clear-cut opposition between the child of Erez Israel and that of the Diaspora, emphasizing the outdoor life of a child in Erez Israel as compared with the indoor settings of the child of the Diaspora. The Hebrew child was presented as free, even naughty, self-confident and attached to the Land of Israel, engaged in new activities such as excursions to places linked to the ancient history of “the people of Israel” and singing the “songs of Zion.” The textual plots usually consisted of a juxtaposition of events of ancient (biblical) history and current events in Erez Israel.

In the 1930s the addressee of Hebrew children's literature was already a child for whom Hebrew was a native language, and very often his only language. Hebrew children's literature was no longer seen in the 1930s as a means of disseminating the Hebrew language, but it was still regarded as a means of disseminating national values and cultivating national yearnings as well as promoting ideological tenets. The leadership of the Yishuv coopted Hebrew children's literature as a major vehicle for educating the young and molding their character. Most writers for children were teachers and educators who, with the exception of Levin Kipnis, were politically defined and continued writing along the same lines as their predecessors. Most prominent among them were Eliezer Smoly, Zevi Livneh (Lieberman), and Bracha Habas.

The framework of writing for children was indoctrinarian, as can be seen, for example, in the works of Bracha Habas. One of the most prominent figures in the field of children's literature-- an editor and author at the \*Histadrut's Youth Center, which had been founded by Berl \*Katznelson--and publishing regularly as a journalist for *Davar* and *Davar li-Yeladim*, Bracha Habas presented in her texts the narrative of an evolving nation, in which the Jewish community was fighting for its life and homeland. It was characterized by an attempt to present an ideal of the Hebrew individual consisting of his perfect conduct and his authentic language. The books also constructed national heroes and offered descriptions of the

landscape of Erez Israel, as well as encouraging *aliyah* (immigration to Erez Israel). In terms of their values these writings promoted the agenda of the Zionist mainstream: self-sacrifice for the sake of the state in-the-making, national pride, love of the soil, agriculture work, and life in a collective.

This was true even for non-recruited literature, such as Yemimah \*Tshernowitch-Avidar's *Shemona be-Ikevoth Ehad* and Nahum Gutman's *Ha-Hofesh ha-Gadol, o Ta'alumot ha-Argazim*. It was even true for lullabies, such as *Shir Eres* by Emmanuel Harussi, which reads: “The granary of Tel Yosef is set on fire/ smoke also comes out of Bet Alpha/ but you should not cry anymore/ lay down, nap and sleep”

However, not all writers were required to comply with ideological demands, certainly not the most prestigious writers for adults such as Hayyim Nahman Bialik, Saul \*Tchernichowsky, Zalman \*Shneour, Jacob \*Fichmann, and Devorah \*Baron, who regarded their writing for children as a national task, an indispensable component of the creation of the new nation.

The involvement of prestigious writers for adults in the writing for children continued to characterize Hebrew children's literature in the 1930s and 1940s, though they did not necessarily regard their writing for children as serving ideological aims. The texts of prominent modernistic poets such as Abraham \*Shlonsky, Nathan \*Alterman, and Lea \*Goldberg later became classics of Hebrew children's literature. At the same time a specific group of professional writers for children began to emerge. This process of differentiation, whose first buds can be traced back to the late 1930s, was fully manifested in the 1950s with writers such as Yemimah Tshernowitch-Avidar, Yaakov \*Churgin, Anda \*Amir-Pinkerfeld, Miriam \*Yalan-Stekelis, Fania \*Bergstein, and Aharon Ze'ev.

One of the means of filling out the system as quickly as possible and approximating the conditions of European culture was by translation, which was reinforced by the wish to prove that all the child's educational and cultural needs could indeed be supplied in Hebrew. This made the translation of the so-called children's classics a priority. In light of the almost monolithic character of the original texts, the variety of the repertoire was achieved through translation. Already before World War I several translations of books for children had been published: Jules Verne's *Seviv ha-Arez bi-Shemonim Yom (Around the World in 80 Days)*, translated by Ben-Yehuda, 5661 (1901)) and Karl Gutzkow's *Uriel Akosta*, translated by the teachers of the girls' school in Jaffa, Jerusalem, 1906). Later on some publishers began specializing in translated literature for children. Most prominent among them was Omanut, which published translated literature almost exclusively (in 1932, for example, Omanut published 30 translated books and one original). Until 1944, when it was closed down, Omanut published almost 500 translated books from among the best known classics, mostly translations from German and Russian. In the 1940s and 1950s Am Oved and Sifriyat ha-Po'alim concentrated on publishing translated literature. The books published by Sifriyat ha-Po'alim gave expression to its world

view. Most of them were translated from the Russian and were deeply immersed in Soviet culture. The Shaḥrut series of Am Oved, on the other hand, concentrated on translations of classics such as *Yotam Ha-Kasam* and *Ziknei Bet ha-Sefer be-Vilbay*, or books with Jewish themes, such as George Eliot's. In fact, several publishers adopted the criterion of Jewish themes as determining their editorial selection. For instance, in the framework of the Dorot series of the Yizrael publishing house were published the 12 volumes of *Zikhronot le-Vet David* as well as adaptations of Meir Lehmann, Ludwig Philippson, George Eliot, and Benjamin d'Israeli.

During the 1940s the narratives characterizing texts for children were in several respects a continuation of the previous ones: Hebrew children's literature continued to be an engaged literature, subjugated to ideological tenets. Erez Israel was still presented as the antithesis of the Diaspora. The characterization of the protagonists remained the same: assertive children, independent, lovers of nature, and native speakers of Hebrew. Special place was given to historical heroes of the near or ancient past, like Judah Maccabee, Joseph Trumpeldor, and Alexander Zeid, who shared similar traits: courageous, motivated by their love for their country, working its soil, honest and moral, and prepared to give their lives in defense of its people and its land. The archetypal protagonist was involved in events in which enemies were endangering the land and people of Israel and injuring their national pride. Defending the people and the land, the protagonists restore their dignity and often die heroic deaths.

Much place continued to be given to the descriptions of Erez Israeli holidays and festivals which replaced the traditional ceremonies of the Diaspora. Also similar was the preference of the agricultural settlement to the city and the lengthy descriptions of the landscape and of the nature.

In terms of their location, the stories were almost always set in a kibbutz or moshav. Even when the protagonist lived in the city, the story was to take place in an agricultural settlement. The message of the titles was more often than not of an ideological nature (Smoly's *Ha-Na'ar Amiz ha-Lev* ("The Brave-Hearted Boy"), Halperin's *Yaldei ha-Sadeh* ("Children of the Field")). The child protagonist is prepared to take chances, even risking his own life, but his relations with the adult world are fairly harmonious, with adults and children often replacing each other.

Despite the harmonious relations, the presentation of the family began to change in the 1940s. The parents were not represented anymore as the center of the child's life, nor as a source of authority. The child was represented as primarily attached to the Land of Israel and to nature, not to his parents. In many texts the children left home at an early age to fulfill pioneering missions and join a group (which thus replaces their family). Another change concerned the decline of the universal socialist ideology whose place was taken by the national ideology.

The most decisive change in the narrative of the 1940s resulted, however, from the need to relate to the Holocaust as

well as to the preparations for the proclamation of the State of Israel. Three narratives were consequently developed: the narrative of the ties to European Jewry in times of affliction (and afterwards the narrative of the Holocaust), the "military" narrative, and the narrative of the lessons that should be drawn from the Holocaust.

The negation of the Diaspora typical of children's literature of the 1930s was replaced by the story of European Jewry in distress. It was marked by concern for and identification with their plight. Other stories dealt with the immigration of refugee children, describing their difficult exodus when leaving the dreadful conditions of Europe. Here the narrative of survival immigration replaced the previous narrative of ideological immigration in a clear attempt to change the readers' attitude towards survival immigration. From the end of 1942 the story of children from Erez Israel rallying to help Jewish children in the Diaspora evolved (for example, Yemimah Tshernowitch-Avidar and Mira Lobe's *Shenei Re'im Yazu la-Derekh* (1950)), as well as of stories told by a grandfather to his grandson in Erez Israel, in which he nostalgically describes his childhood in the Diaspora. The stories depicted the sense of a shared fate, and even alluded to the helplessness of the Yishuv and its inability to provide real assistance to Diaspora Jews in distress. The literature for very young children generally kept silent about the events in Europe, though sometimes it incorporated two levels of reading: the text for the very young was accompanied by a tragic level addressing the adult reading the texts to children.

In fact, the children's literature of the 1940s was the first to provide a means for telling a story of the Holocaust that was not being told in any other discourse. From this standpoint children's literature told a unique Holocaust story, colored by a sense of remorse about the negation of the Diaspora, dominant in the literary and educational discourse prior to World War II.

Alongside the Holocaust narrative there evolved in the early years of World War II the "military" narrative which told the story of youths (sometimes children) in Erez Israel fighting the enemy in defense of the homeland. At its peak, particularly during the years of the anti-British struggle, it described children as daring and irreplaceable fighters. At first the war was a central theme in literature for very young children and was absent in the literature for older children. Latter most of the "military" literature addressed older children. The archetypal story was that of a close-knit group of children described as a quasi-"military" unit, who, instead of using their skill as detectives to solve a mystery (as was often the case with young detectives of Western literature), fought against an enemy threatening to conquer their country. They also described the fighting ability of the young Hebrew collective as representing an unparalleled "military" force. Several stories began to point directly to the British as the enemy of the Zionist endeavor. The Arabs of Palestine were also marked as the national enemy, against whom war was inevitable. The portrayal of an enemy who was present "here and now" turned

the "military" narrative into a recruitment story. For the first time in the history of Hebrew children's literature, a present-day conflict was depicted in which children would play a unique and central role.

Translated literature continued to be published. Owing to the strong link with the Soviet Union and Russian culture, most of the texts were translated from Russian or by the use of Russian literature as a mediating system. Some were appropriated by the Hebrew system almost as original. This was the case of *Ha-Mefuzar mi-Kefar Azar* (1943) translated by Lea Goldberg, or Kornei Chukovsky's *Limpopo* (1943) and *Barmlai* (1946) translated by Natan Alterman.

Writing original popular children's literature, such as detective stories, was still tabooed in the 1940s, unless they were immersed in an ideology, which praised the military abilities of the younger generation. Two typical examples are Yemimah Tshernowitch-Avidar's best seller *Shemona be-Ikevoth Ehad* (1945) which told the story of a group of eight kibbutz children who managed to capture a dangerous German spy during World War II and Nahum Gutman's *Ha-Hofesh ha-Gadol, o Ta'alumat ha-Argazim* (1946), which told the story of two youths who endanger their lives while trying to save an important shipment needed by the Jewish Yishuv under Turkish rule.

Towards the end of the World War II there evolved the narrative of the "national lesson" which combined the Holocaust and the "military" narratives into a new narrative – that of revolt and revenge of Jewish Diaspora children. This new narrative had its roots in the Warsaw ghetto revolt (April 1943) which left a mark on the narrative of the Yishuv. This narrative, often accompanied by chilling descriptions of violence, coupled the Holocaust to the heroic fighting of the few against the many. Its stories described children from "there" avenging family members who had been murdered; it also emphasized the generational aspect of the revenge and the ethos of an underground war waged by youngsters. The story of integrating the child-survivor into the society of children in the Yishuv began to take shape. Its protagonist was an orphaned child-refugee who arrives in Erez Israel. Physically and mentally broken, he is integrated into a group of children within a short period of time, and forgets his traumatic past. The "correct" mode of absorption illustrated by this narrative took on the character of a "cure." The child was often adopted by a family or a Hebrew collective and his adoption was accompanied by a systematic effort to erase the memory of the horrors of the Holocaust. The survivor's successful integration was depicted as a happy ending. The large number of texts that presented such modes of integration indicates that very many writers were party to an effort to assist in the absorption process. It was only in the 1970s that the memory of the survivors was called upon and no longer required to be suppressed.

During the 1950s the Holocaust narrative was weakening whereas the "military" combined with the "national lesson" became dominant, especially in popular children's literature which gradually and cautiously was gaining some legitimacy,

but still drew much fire. When Yigal \*Mossinsohn began publishing in 1949 *Hasambah* – the first series of original popular literature – he was vehemently attacked for corrupting the souls of the children of Israel, and this despite the ideological underpinning of the series. The *Hasambah* series, first published by the children's magazine *Mishmar li-Yeladim*, told the story of a group of children who participated in many adventures and was deeply rooted in the Zionist narrative and values.

Hence, from the mid-1950s, Hebrew children's literature was no longer exclusively the product of an ideological motivating force. More emphasis was then put on the aesthetic and psychological features of the texts for children. Aspects of life which were previously ignored were gradually introduced in the 1960s. Themes which had been taboo were now placed on the literary stage: divorce, death, sex, protagonists of social groups previously ignored (such as women or young girls), urban life, various ethnic groups. The change can be discerned not only in terms of theme but in the poetics of the texts as well, driven by the wish to introduce the child's point of view. In several texts the authoritative point of view of a narrator was replaced by the child's point of view or by the introduction of more than one point of view.

Since the 1950s, with an acceleration of the process in the 1960s, children's literature has undergone a process of autonomization and normalization. From a literature bearing the ideological burden of the Zionist project, regarding itself as one of its major agents, it became similar to Western children's literature. This was evident in both the professionalization of children's literature – a clear distinction was made between literature for adults and literature for children – and the specialization of several publishing houses in children's literature. Almost all large publishing houses were involved in publishing for children and most of them appointed editors specifically for children's literature. The economic basis of children's literature became much more solid, several books for children became bestsellers, and several writers for children made their living from writing (Devorah Omer, Galila Ron-Feder) even before this was the case with writers for adults (\*Oz, \*Grossman). The professional differentiation coordinated with gender differentiation – most of the professional writers for children were women. At the same time almost all known writers for adults (with the exception of Yehoshua \*Kenaz) wrote at least one book for children, though only Grossman and \*Shalev did it systematically.

The status of the writer for children was enhanced by the award in 1978 of the highly prestigious Israel Prize to three authors in recognition of their life's work in children's literature (Nahum Gutman, Anda Amir, and Levin Kipnis).

The standard of visual presentation of books for children progressed enormously and a new generation of illustrators for children became an integral part of the scene. Age differentiation became more and more distinct: books for infants, books for toddlers, books for preschoolers, books for the first grades, books for youth.

Since the 1970s, Hebrew children's literature has experienced a tremendous boom. Publishing policy, even of the publishing houses of the labor parties, was now placed on a commercial basis in its broadest sense. That is to say, books were chosen for publication either because they were believed to be valuable, or saleable, or both.

The system of children's literature has managed to become a complete system consisting both of popular and high literature. The number of published books and the number of copies sold has increased considerably. No fewer than 480 children's books were published in 1976, of which 194 were new titles and 286 were reprints. The number of books published more than doubled between 1965/6 and 1979/80, and almost tripled in the 20 years between 1965/6 and 1986.

Year	No. of children's books	No. of total books	%
1965–66	145	2,230	6.5%
1970–71	173	3,353	5.1%
1975–76	480	3,522	13.5%
1979–80	366	4,892	7.4%
1980–81	219	4,387	4.9%
1986–87	304	5,300	5.7%
1992	244	4,608	5.2%
1996	210	4,909	4.2%

The Central Bureau of Statistics does not have data for books published after 1996. However, according to the data of the Jewish National and University Library (which is not necessarily in accordance with the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics), they received 463 children books in 1996 (7.7%), 518 in 1997 (7.8%), 450 in 1998 (7.2%), and 474 in 1999 (8%). Since then the percentage of children's books has declined: 370 in 2001 (5.3%), 317 in 2002 (4.5%), 346 in 2003 (4.1%), and 426 in 2004 (5.5%).

The ultra-Orthodox world did not remain indifferent to the boom in Hebrew children's literature. Probably in an effort to compete with it, ultra-Orthodox writers, especially women writers, began writing in mass for children; among them most prominent is Yokheved Sachs. To a lesser extent was the effort to write books for the children of the settlers in the occupied territories (for instance Emunah Elon), probably in an attempt to promote a different value system from the one prevalent in Hebrew children's literature since the 1970s.

Poetry for children was allotted considerable space and new writers began writing poetry for children, introducing new models which emphasized the child's point of view and its individual character (Adulah, Datyah Ben-Dor, Hagit Benzman, Shlomit Cohen-Assif, Edna Kremer, Haya Shenhav and Miric Senir). Yehudah Atlas's *Ve-ha-Yeled ha-Zeh hu Ani* (1977) served as a model for the presentation of the child as a specific unique individual rather than a stereotyped "zabar." In addition, the writing of lyric poetry for children developed (Tirzah Atar and Nurit Zarchi), satirical poetry (Efrayim Sidon), philosophical poetry (Mikhal Senunit), or ironical poetry (Meir

Shalev). Writing of prose for the very young also increased: some of it was based on a realistic model (Nira Harel, Miriam Roth), others on a didactic model (Alona Frankel), fantasy (Haya Shenhav), or prose challenging the family role model (Meir Shalev and Etgar Keret).

The range of topics covered by children's literature expanded greatly both as a result of the "normalization" of the system and because of its nexus with European and American children's literatures, which were undergoing a similar process. Instead of the earlier, almost exclusive focus on realistic fiction about the history of the Jewish people and the history and the life of the people of Israel the door was opened to themes from the private sphere which had previously been shunned, such as first love, friendship, parent-child relations, children's adventures, death in war, death of family members, divorce, and family crisis in general. Even when describing the group or the community the books concentrated on the child's point of view, his fears and his wishes. For instance, Raya Harnik's, *Ahi Ahi* (1993), Uri Orlev's *Hayat ha-Hoshekh* (1967) and Ya'akov Shavit's *Nimrod Kelev Zayid* (1987) deal with a child's response to the death of a father or brother. Other writers depict conflicts between the individual and society, notably Nurit Zarchi's *Yaldat Huz* (1978), Ofrah Gelbart-Avni's *Kirot she-lo Ro'im* (1992), Roni Givati's *Mishalot Horef* (1993), Yisrael Lerman's *Ha-Yeled mi-Gedat ha-Nahal* (1992), and Yona Tepper's *David Hezi Hezi* (1990).

Some of the prose writing for older children continued to be realistic fiction about the history and life of the Yishuv in the pre-State period, and the history of the Jewish people. Merkaz Shazar and Yad Ben-Zvi, usually not involved in publishing for children, initiated the publication of historical novels, presumably due to the success of several historical novels as major agents in the construction of past images, notably Devorah Omer's *Ha-Bekhor le-Vet Avi* (1967) and *Sarah, Gibborat Nili* (1969). Among the prominent authors to publish such works were Dorit Orgad (*Ha-Hatufim li-Zeva ha-Zar*, 1986), Devorah Omer (*Pitom be-Emza ha-Hayyim*, 1984, and *Ahavat Itamar*, 2001), and Esther Streit-Wurzel (*Ha-Berihah*, 1969). These novels did not introduce the critical historical narrative which became popular in both historiographical and prose writing for adults. Except for Daniella Carmi, there was no attempt to shed light on the "other," nor to write critically about the Zionist project. On the other hand, unlike previous historical novels written during the pre-State period (like Smoly's), writers did not hesitate to explore the shortcomings of their protagonists and did not endeavor to imbue the child with national values of heroism.

The model of the Zionist adventure narrative of popular literature was replaced by an adventure model based on the child's world. Especially popular were books by Semadar Shir and the series *finji* by Galila Ron-Feder. Like any other popular literature the stories are based on a certain repetitive pattern. They are highly respected in terms of their characters, their role division, the world described, and the development of the plot.

The narrative of the Holocaust changed and was not limited to the survivor generation but to the second generation as well. The books relate the dreadful events of the Holocaust combined with stories of survival. The narrative is of a documentary nature or between realism and fantasy, for instance, Uri Orlev's, *Ha-I bi-Rehov ha-Zipporim* (*The Island on Bird Street*, 1981), winner of the Andersen Prize; Tamar Bergman's *Ha-Yeled mi-Sham* (1983); Ami Gedalia's *Ha-Ed ha-Aharon* (1989); Ruth Ilan-Porath's *Kurt Ahi* (1983); Rivka Keren's *Kayiz Azuv, Kayiz Me'ushar* (1986); Irena Liebman's *Sus Ez u-Shemo Zariz* (1988); and Ruth Almog's *Ha-Massa Sheli im Aleks* (1999).

The fields of picture books and books for the very young have changed significantly in terms of the design and graphics of books. A new generation of artists followed Nahum Gutman and Aryeh Navon, who illustrated several books for children. Most prominent among them were Orah Eyal, Ora Eitan, Alona Frankel, Hilah Havkin, Avner Katz, Danny Kerman, Ruth Modan, and Ruth Tsarefati.

Translations and re-translations of children's classics (most of them dating back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries) continued to predominate. The most important of these appeared in the framework of the *Kitri* series by the Keter publishing house, which published new translations of, among others, Joanna Spyri's *Heidi*, George Sand's *La Petite Fadette*, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Edmondo de Amicis's *Cuore*, Waldemar Bonsels's *Die Biene Maja und Ihre Abenteuer*, Jules Verne's *Michel Strogoff*, Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Wpustyni i w puszczy* ("In Desert and Wilderness"), Mark Twain's *The Prince and The Pauper*, Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables*, R.L. Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, Charles Kingsley's *The Water-Babies*, Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, Alexander Dumas's *La Tulipe Noir*, Alphonse Daudet's *Tartarin Sur Les Alpes*, and L.M. Montgomery's *The Foundling*. The *Marganit* series by the Zemora publishing house specialized in translations of American and European classics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as several of Roald Dahl's books (*Matilda* and *Danny the Champion of the World*), Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House on the Prairie*, Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty*, Joel Chandler Harris' *Uncle Remus*, Eleanor H. Porter's *Pollyanna*, Edith Nesbit's *The Railway Children*, Ferenc Molnar's *A Palutcai Fiuk*, Robert Lawson's *Rabbit Hill*, and Louise Fitzhugh's *Harriet the Spy*.

In addition, popular and successful children's literature, published mainly in the United States and England, began to be regularly translated into Hebrew, often within months following publication of the original. In addition to the *Harry Potter* series, works of well known writers such as Eric Hill (the English *Spot* series) or the *Olivia* books by the American Ian Falconer have also been translated almost immediately after they appeared.

Hebrew children's literature has undergone tremendous changes over the last 200 years. Starting as a literature with virtually no natural reading public, it has acquired a large and stable reading public. Although it was believed to serve

as a tool for other purposes, it managed to liberate itself from ideological and didactic constraints, and to emerge as a full and "normal" system, having a "normal" reading public and functioning on the same basis as any other national literature in the West.

[Zohar Shavit (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)]

IN THE UNITED STATES. Besides Israel and Europe, the United States is the other large Jewish center, where a substantial children's Hebrew literature developed. A function of the different aspects of the U.S. Jewish educational system at various times, it also depended on writers of children's Hebrew literature who had emigrated from Europe. The first U.S. readers were copies or imitations of children's books that had been put out in Europe; for example, *Reshit Limmudim le-Yaldei Benei Avraham*, by A.R. Levy (1895). By the turn of the century a considerable number of Hebrew readers, adapted to the U.S. Hebrew educational environment, were published. They were written in an easy style and had a limited vocabulary. Most prominent in this field was the educator Z. Scharfstein, founder of the New York educational publishing house Shilo, which printed dozens of Hebrew textbooks and readers.

Children's literature in the United States developed sporadically because it mainly depended on emigrant European authors (the most noted works of that period are Abraham Luria's *Ahavah Nisgavah – Hizzayon li-Venei ha-Ne'urim* (1892), and Ezekiel Levitt's *Ha-Nerot Hallelu* (1903). After 1916, however, it grew into a serious literary activity. The regular flow of publications has primarily been due to the activities of such public institutions as bureaus of Jewish education and the \*Histadrut Ivrit. Public bodies, such as the Association of Hebrew Teachers, various bureaus for Jewish education, and the Jewish Education Committee, also published booklets for children in a very easy style. Among these were the following series: *Ma'asiyyot le-Tinokot* (15 numbers); *Orot* and *Mikra Oneg* (1930?, about 20 numbers), edited by Z. Scharfstein; *Sifriyyah le-Var-bei-Rav* and *Sippurim li-Yladim* (1954), by Akiva Ben-Ezra; *Ha-Ivri ha-Katan* (1938–45) published in Chicago and *Sippurim Yafim* (1932–38), by H.A. \*Friedland (Cleveland, 100 numbers). The Lador Publishing House, established by the Jewish Board of Education in New York printed children's books, including adapted modern and classical works, biographies, and essays on religion and on society. Hebrew children's literature in the United States is only produced occasionally.

[Uriel Ofek]

#### CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN YIDDISH

Yiddish literature for children had its beginnings in the folklore that sprang up among the people and for the most part was not especially oriented toward the young. Up to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, children's literature was in general orally transmitted in the home: folksongs, lullabies, stories based on the Bible and Talmud, and stories translated into Yiddish. Relatively few Yiddish children's books existed; among them were *Spanishe Haydn oder Tsigayners* ("Spanish Heathens or