

translations of non-European literary works—Kalidasa’s *Sakuntala*, *1001 Nights*, the unnamed Chinese novel mentioned by Goethe in Eckermann’s *Gespräche mit Goethe*—whose arrival in Europe triggers a special interest in and a curiosity about aesthetic affinities between available literatures from non-European spaces. These translations, and many others, were often discussed and reviewed in *Literarisches Conversationsblatt* (later *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*), a literary magazine that is one of the major sources of Goßens’ ideas. World literature, and the imagination of a translational cultural community (“Vorstellung einer transnationalen Kulturgemeinschaft,” 26–30) consequently appear as largely intra-European phenomena. Furthermore, Goßens hints at connections among print culture, libraries, and world literature in his discussion of an expansion of a “Bücherreich” (89–92), but then abandons this thought, especially in the section on the proliferation of world literary anthologies and histories. Finally, Goßens does not adequately explain how he arrives at the clear demarcation of *Weltliteratur* as a “political” concept until 1848 and a “purely literary and aesthetic” object of study after 1848. While it is beyond the scope of this review to engage with this periodization in detail, suffice it to say that from Goethe’s evaluation of the unnamed Chinese novel, his inclusion of a “Vorspiel” in *Faust* inspired by the opening act of *Sakuntala*, through Johannes Scherr’s claim for a particular German propensity for world literature in the Introduction to *Bildersaal der Weltliteratur*, all the way to Georg Brandes’ first reflections on uneven trajectories of circulation of translated literature, there is ample evidence that an instrument of aesthetic consumption also becomes instrumental to a political vision. Heine recognizes it through his idea of *Welthülfsliteratur* (1831); Marx and Engels finally nail it in their statement in the *Communist Manifesto* (1848). Goßens’ determined attempt to include all voices from the 19th century, rather than a focused study of select positions, renders the discussion of certain crucial positions uneven, and compromises the quality of engagement with the sources.

My critique notwithstanding, Goßens has made an excellent contribution to the expansion of our knowledge on world literature. My comments are intended to testify to the significance of Goßens’ contribution to the field of German literary studies of the 19th century, and world literary studies.

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Heinrich Heine und die Diaspora. Der Zeitschriftsteller im kulturellen Raum der jüdischen Minderheit.

Von Lydia Fritzlar. Berlin und Boston: de Gruyter, 2013. xii + 296 Seiten. €99,95

Many efforts have been made to find a formula that would explain and perhaps unify Heine’s elusive and shifting relationship to his Jewishness. Lydia Fritzlar makes an ambitious attempt to find a constant in Heine’s awareness of his location in the Diaspora, now no longer a punishment ordained by God to be endured in isolation and ritualized introversion until the Messiah comes and the Jews are returned to Zion, but a secular, socio-politically explicable condition of the oppression of a minority by a majority society. The Diaspora comes to be seen historically, not religiously. Heine is a participant in and a particularly acute observer of the epochal turn from a religious

to a secular mentality. Marginality generates consciousness on the threshold of modernity. Fritzlar goes at length into the traditional memory of the Diaspora, beginning with the biblical account. The Babylonian exile defines the consciousness of Diaspora. Despite the introversion through ritual and Torah study and sense of otherness in alien surroundings, the Jews perpetually interacted with the environment, beginning with the Hellenistic Greeks and continuing, sometimes with violence, through the Middle Ages. But in the eighteenth century the status of the Torah was weakened by the Jewish enlightenment. The problem, as is well known, was how to give up separateness without dissolving Jewishness. In Fritzlar's account Heine documents this dissociation into a disparate, self-alienated existence.

She begins with *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*, which gives up on the optimism of the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden*. The poles are the tradition of the Rabbi and the cynicism of the renegade Abarbanel. Jewish separation is not theologically grounded but the result of persecution, and it leads to degeneration, fear, and boorishness. Heine's poem about the longing of the fir tree in the north for the palm in the south indicates the isolation of the acculturated Jew. The account of the Passover Seder does not include God's blessings, implying that the Jews made the Exodus themselves and must rely on themselves for further progress. Fritzlar then turns to the rehabilitation of Shylock in *Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen*, where Heine derives antisemitism from the deprivations of the common people and explains Jewish finance as a protection against it. Shylock is associated with repressive Nazarenism. The critique of Jessica is an attack on assimilation, and Heine humanizes Shylock by adding a line not in Shakespeare: "Jessica, mein Kind!" The signs of insanity Heine claims to have found in the Yom Kippur ceremony in Venice are ascribed to Börne as well, the result of pursuing Jewish instead of universal human emancipation, leading to the degeneration of the Jew in exile. Fritzlar finds an increasing sense of futility about Heine's situation as a writer in the Diaspora: "[D]ie Überlegenheit des Kosmopoliten ist im Verlauf der *Denkschrift* mit Blick auf die Zukunft des Dichtertums in Resignation umgeschlagen" (255), illustrated by the fate of Jehuda ben Halevy and the original Schlemihl, in whom Jew and poet are equated. Thus the dichotomy of Jew and poet, asserted by the dominant majority, is overcome, and Jewish literature replaces religious tradition.

As usual, a complex and detailed argument has been selectively abridged here. It is very attentive to textual details, often eloquent, and in places ingenious. The interpretations of *Almansor*, *Börne*, and *Jehuda ben Halevy* are subtle. Fritzlar indicates a deeper and more continuous preoccupation with Jewishness than others have seen. However, there are problems here, some of which seem to me fundamental. One of them is the now persistent inflation of Heine as an incomparable socio-cultural and literary-historical innovator, superior to all others in insight and prophecy, and immune from criticism. Heine certainly experienced antisemitism, but its magnitude is exaggerated. The teasing of his schoolmates that he reports does not indicate an unrelievedly hostile environment; some of the friendships he made in school continued into later years. Nor is his failure to find positions in the academy or the civil service an indication of antisemitic discrimination; he was not qualified for any of these positions; rather than pursuing them seriously he seemed to be looking for a sinecure that would leave him time for his writing. One of his Jewish relatives was

eventually appointed to the position he claimed to seek in Hamburg, while an academic position was obtained by his Jewish friend Gans. *Der Rabbi von Bacherach* is praised as having introduced the theme of the Diaspora to German literature. There is no mention, for example, of Berthold Auerbach's Jewish novels, which appeared before or simultaneously with *Der Rabbi von Bacherach*.

Fritzlar also exaggerates the dominance of antisemitism in Heine's reception from Gutzkow to Adorno as a "Front" (203) formed against him. Heine was one of the most successful German writers of his time and would have been a bestseller if it had not been for the censorship. Fritzlar sees his temporal, historicizing thought as inspired by his association with the *Verein für Cultur und Wissenschaft der Juden*, but does not apprehend that Heine was far out of his depth in Jewish learning in the *Verein*. Her denial that Heine made mistakes in Jewish matters is just tendentious refusal of perception; his errors are significant measures of his relationship to tradition. Sometimes I simply do not understand the claims, such as that Heine was "einer der engagiertesten Vertreter des Emanzipationspostulats" (107). Heine stubbornly refused any common cause with the program of Jewish emancipation and regarded its leaders with hostility. He subsumed Jewish emancipation under a general emancipation of humanity from spiritualism or Nazarenism to sensualism or Hellenism, a program that had no connection to political reality and estranged him from his natural allies, including the Jews. Fritzlar disposes of the Jewish activists, among them Börne, as national liberals; as such, like all opponents of Heine, they have no rights. This is not the place to discuss whether Heine's campaign against nationalism was wise, but the affirmation of it seems to be an imposition on the conditions of that time of preoccupations of our own. Fritzlar does touch on Nazarenism and Hellenism but displaces the issue by associating the former with intolerance and the latter with cosmopolitanism. She suggests that Heine was opposed to assimilation, citing his criticism of the French Jewish deputies for remaining passive during the Damascus pogrom, but she does not mention that he was mistaken about this and apologized. She ascribes priority to Heine's employment of Kean's portrayal of Shylock, but that performance was at least twenty years old and was highlighted by Hazlitt, in whom Heine was much interested and who probably influenced the account in *Shakespeares Mädchen und Frauen*.

The book is a substantial contribution to the ongoing discourse about Heine's Jewishness, but it very much needs to be supplemented with a more critical spirit. The bibliography contains a number of works translated from English but relatively few foreign-language sources. Among them are Israel Tabak's *Judaic Lore in Heine* (1948), without comment on its excesses, and *Heine's Jewish Comedy* of S.S. Prawer (1983), whose first name is misspelled. Overall, errors are relatively few; Fritzlar remains through her reference notes in close contact with a large body of secondary literature, not all of which, however, has been judiciously selected. In one place she objects to Renate Grundmann's conclusion that Heine's sense of himself as a German poet was more important than his Jewish consciousness. I am afraid I am on the other side of this argument; I believe that Heine's deepest commitment was to his identity as a German poet.