

1-12-81

Dear David, we hope and trust you returned home safely and well, though I guess you must have been quite tired. But you did something which was worth getting tired for and from. We did not have a chance to do more yesterday morning than to say goodbye to you at Adas Israel. Hence I want to tell you in this way how delighted and impressed both Eva and I were with your lecture Sunday morning --and speaking for myself alone, with all three lectures. I seem to remember that you had to me something to the effect that you were still working on the Sunday lecture because it was a new one. Well, it came out beautifully in every respect. Kol hakovod.

Secondly, I have been able to start reading Proof texts. As you know, stylistic, structural, and general linguistic questions are somewhat alien to both of us. Our central interests lie elsewhere, hence also our training and primary reading. But even as a bloody uninitiate, I find much of what I have been able to read so far very absorbing. Above all, of course, the publication looks very good, is beautifully written and <sup>carefully</sup> edited. So, here is another yeyasher kochacha or: to be "correct": kohanna.)

Just one brief comment, regarding the reference to Albeck's Zunz quotation in your article. (Incidentally, I studied Talmud under Albeck during my semester in Berlin). You may want to have (and use?) the original title of Zunz's volume in German: Die gottesdienstlichen Vorträge der Juden. In English, best rendered as The Liturgical Addresses of the Jews (though how lies is of course also correct). Some people actually insist it should be "The Sermons of the Jews." And the background motivation for Zunz's preparation of this volume may justify this insistence. I am sure you know why he wrote it -- his hidden agenda was to prove to the Prussian government that the introduction and use of German sermons in the Jewish service was not a forbidden innovation (unantworn in violation of Jewish "tradition") and departure from traditional Jewish practice, but that sermons had always been delivered in the vernacular of a given country throughout Jewish history. The orthodox antagonists of the Reform movement had denounced the Reformers for "introducing" German sermons. Hence Zunz set out to prove that their accusation (and claim that the use of the vernacular was contrary to Jewish law) was unjustifiable. Jews invoking the government against another segment of the Jewish community; Zunz won, his case, as you know.

An interesting thing is that he may actually have been quite right with his claim that German (not all Askenazic Jews!) Jews spoke regular German for some time - namely the German of the earlier centuries not yet influenced by the population changes and cultural mixtures resulting from the migrations toward the East and later back toward the West from the crusades on. It would be tempting to follow this true once again, if I had the time. Just for the fun of it through

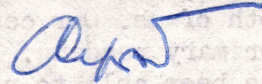
Lastly, I am enclosing a reprint of one of my more recent essays because I thought one or the other aspect might be of interest to you, especially in

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the opening paragraphs. I am enclosing it because your Sunday lecture confirmed and strengthened what I have long felt but could not always substantiate adequately in terms of "East European literature -- the incredible difference, for obvious and clear reasons -- between the Yekkes and East European Jews in terms of their responses to their experiences and fate. There is some but very little and not really very significant literature -- belletristic, novels, stories, poetry in German reflecting Jewish life in Germany, in contrast to "scholarly" writings. They were simply utterly different worlds, with different languages meant both literally and symbolically and spiritually.

Please keep in touch. It was lovely having you here. And our warmest good wishes to you for the solution or resolution of all the questions and decisions you will ~~have to~~ continue to have to face in the coming months.

Cordially,



Eva is substantially better. She went teaching today, semester begin.