Reading Poet and Author Aharon Luboszicki’s Oeuvre and its National Elements in Cultural Context

**Abstract**

This article surveys national elements in the literary work of the Hebrew author, poet, editor and translator Aharon Loboszicki who was born in 1847 and died in 1942 in the Warsaw Ghetto. Scrutiny of his Hebrew songs and stories yields a better understand of his pedagogical and poetic wordview: on the one hand he wrote in a clear and vivacious Biblical Hebrew, while on the other hand he worked to deepen his young readers’ national identities by connecting them to the Land of Israel and Jewish national heroes throughout history. Loboszicki was active in every different aspect of Hebrew culture in Warsaw; after the Second World War, his literary work was republished in Israel.

**Key Words**

Hebrew Literature in Poland, Aharon Luboszicki, Warsaw Ghetto

**A. Luboszicki: Biography and Bio-Bibliography**

Aharon Loboszicki, who also wrote under the penname A. Ben-Dov, was born in 1874 in the city of Rhozhinoy in the Grodno district of Belarus.[[1]](#footnote-1) He wrote textbooks, poetry and essays; edited a journal; adapted classics of world literature into Hebrew.[[2]](#footnote-2) He also published an autobiographical work intended for adults and translated a play for adult audiences, but most of his energy, vigor, and talent were directed towards the composition of original works for young children and teenagers. He wrote in Hebrew throughout his life and everything that he published was in Hebrew.

Loboszicki made a significant contribution to Hebrew children’s literature written in the Diaspora, and several of his works found their way to young readers’ hearts in the Land of Israel even years after his death in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942.

Uriel Ofek, early Hebrew children’s literature’s most important historiographer, points to the important role played by Loboszicki in the history of Zionist literature for children. He argues that while Hayyim Nachman Bialik (1873-1934) and the other Rebirth period poets wrote national poetry for adults, Loboszicki was the first to write in a similar vein for children. This made his work an important first swallow heralding his generation’s composition of Hebrew children’s literature.[[3]](#footnote-3)

This article aims to present Loboszicki’s contribution to Hebrew children’s and youth culture in Poland. Even though he was tragically killed in the Warsaw Ghetto, he bequeathed an extensive high-quality Hebrew literary legacy to readers. His literary work was widely admired and parts of it found their way into Hebrew readers published outside of Poland. His poems were once well-known in Israel. Some of his works have been reprinted there; others are publicly available on websites dedicated to early Hebrew culture’s preservation.[[4]](#footnote-4) Within the framework of my broader discussion, I will devote special attention to national elements in his literary work, both his poetry and his prose. I will also discuss his literary work’s meaning within its different cultural contexts.

**B. Loboszicki’s National Poetry**

Poetry considered to reflect the national spirit, national identity, and/or the beliefs and principles of a specific national culture is commonly referred to as national poetry. Proponents of Romanticism, an artistic movement closely tied to nationalism’s development in Europe, first began using the term in the eighteenth century. National poetry’s defining characteristics are its composition in the national language and its ability to connect a specific group to a specific language and territory.[[5]](#footnote-5) What made Jewish national poetry distinctive was its composition in Hebrew, the national language, and its reflection of Zionist values. It strove to connect the diasporic Jewish people to the national land, the Land of Israel, a territory the Jewish people had not asserted sovereignty over for two thousand years. Taking this into consideration, efforts were made to teach readers Jewish history and lead them to identify more closely with the Jewish people. In fact, Zionist culture’s construction as the culture of a modern Jewish movement dedicated to national liberation was due in large part to Modern Hebrew literature.[[6]](#footnote-6)

One must read Loboszicki’s poem “To Zion and Its Wanderers” in this context. It was first published in the *Land of Israel Almanac 5665* and it is an elegy to the recently deceased father of Modern Zionism Theodore Herzl. In 1904, a pamphlet containing sheet music for musical performance of the elegy was published in Warsaw.[[7]](#footnote-7) This poem is a classic nationalist elegy that turns the dead national leader into a mythical hero struggling on his people’s behalf. Herzl is compared to a lion guarding its territory and a radiant sun whose light has been extinguished; after his death, the nation is left like an orphan or a bereaved mother:

To Zion and its wanderers

Like a widow in her youth

And like a bereaved mother who has lost

The last of her children.

To Benjamin, the nation’s Nazarite,

He pounced upon traitors like a wolf upon its prey

He raised Israel’s standard

And he poured blood into the frozen body.

To this heart, the heart of a lion,

That was full of love, strength, and song,

And would sacrifice all for the wandering nation,

With its great desire to find it pasture.

Wail, Zion, your sun has set!

Your second Bar-Kokhba is forever dead,

A third destruction has befallen you in Edlach

Oh, abandoned mother, you have been razed.

The poem “Alas Cradling Homeland” voices an intimate, almost erotic, connection to the Land of Israel’s soil. The speakers vow not to abandon it and to defend it onto death. This poem stresses an imagined connection to the national homeland’s soil that its young readers could not have tangibly attained.

Alas cradling homeland,

You are a lovely land.

Like the apple of our eye, we will forever guard you!

You are the breath of our noses,

The spark of our hope,

And, in our national body, the blood.

Like the apple of our eye,

With blood and weapon

We will protect you from enemies, we will defend you.

We will choose death,

Trouble will we all choose

And never will we give you over to a capricious foe.

We will wage war,

Our blood will we shed,

And tightly to the standard shall we hold.

Death’s bullets

Will be considered like nothing.

Only the dead man will relinquish the flag.

**3. Loboszicki’s National Prose**

One of Loboszicki’s central contributions to Hebrew children’s culture was his adaptation of the important Hebrew composition *The Book of Jasher*. His adaptation was entitled *The Book of Jasher, a Collection of Bible Stories and Legends Adapted for Youth and the Folk*.

Barkai Publishers, which belonged to the Jewish publishers’ corporation “Central,” put out the book in 1923. Publication of an illustrated edition of the book with black and white illustrations constituted part of a plan to make this text, which was originally twenty chapters long, suitable to the unique reading audience that was consuming Hebrew books produced within the children’s literary system. Indeed, the children’s literary world that blossomed and thrived in Warsaw between the two world wars was destroyed, but, after the second world war, the book was republished without textual changes and long functioned as part of the library of Israeli children’s and youth literature.[[8]](#footnote-8)

Giovanni Caleoni printed the first edition of *The Book of Jasher* at the Bragadin Publishing House in Venice in 1625. Subsequently, the book was republished in tens of editions, in translation to various Jewish languages, in modern editions, and even a critical edition.[[9]](#footnote-9) It constitutes one of the most popular extent premodern Hebrew prose works.

*The Book of Jasher* is an historiographical text that provides a chronologically ordered history of the Jewish people from the creation of the world up until the Land of Israel’s conquest and Joshua’s death. The composition’s failure to remain wholly loyal to the Biblical account of events makes it unique. It integrates additional narrative traditions that describe characters and events that go unmentioned in the Bible from Genesis to Joshua. The narrative development of the main plot and the secondary plots, which offer charming digressions from the heart of the national narrative to its margins, turns the text into an all-encompassing epic whose proportions evoke the modern novel, except that the role of main character is occupied by either the people or the God of Israel.

Modern scholars of Hebrew prose view *The Book of Jasher* as one of the most important compositions of its time. Emanuel Bin-Gurion categorizes it as a composition that unifies Midrashic and Biblical styles, while Yosef Dan considers *The Book of Jasher* to be the best medieval narrative prose work written in the genre of retold Biblical tales.[[10]](#footnote-10) In due course, when he composed a critical edition of *The Book of Jasher*, Dan offered a more detailed justification for this claim.[[11]](#footnote-11) Eli Yassif has asserted that the narrative expansion of *The Book of Jasher* served as a way to preserve oral folk traditions that were widespread when it was composed, while Dan Ben Amos points to *The Book of Jasher* as an example of an original work that benefited from publication in the Print Age.[[12]](#footnote-12) Even though its date of composition remains a mystery, the text fits in well with the sixteenth century trend of reworking and retelling Biblical stories in prose.[[13]](#footnote-13)

For many years, scholars of Hebrew prose have debated the date of *The Book of Jasher*’s composition. There are those who believe that it clearly was composed at a time when Hebrew books were being printed. Publishing it to earn money, its author composed it to create the broadest possible appeal and attain the widest possible audience. Thus, the early seventeenth century narrative traditions that fill the book reflect their time and testify to the approach to narrative fiction then popular. Yosef Dan is a proponent of this approach.[[14]](#footnote-14) In contrast, there are those who see *The Book of Jasher* as an ancient work. Indeed, it was only published in the seventeenth century, but its roots go far back in time. For this reason, it is extremely important. It preserves Hebrew narrative traditions that date back well into antiquity. Leopold Zunz and more recently Meir Bar-Ilan have asserted that the work was composed long before it was ever printed.[[15]](#footnote-15) It should be noted that this view has few proponents.

Either the author, the printer, the publisher or the editor wrote the following on the title page of the first Venetian edition of *The Book of Jasher*: “*The Book of Jasher* is a book containing stories and Midrashim of our Rabbis of blessed memory about the Five Books of Moses, Joshua, and Judges written in a clear and pleasing Hebrew that leads people to an understanding of God and his benevolence.” This authorial declaration provides basic parameters for the content of the book—narrative material from the Hebrew Bible drawn from Genesis to Joshua seasoned with Midrashim that touch upon these narratives and written in a Hebrew referred to by the author as “pure language.” Furthermore, this statement’s author claims that the composition’s heart-capturing stories are meant to strengthen the reader’s faith in God.

It is as if Loboszicki’s literary adaptation merged ex nihilo. It stands out from the rest of his corpus. I have chosen to expand my discussion of it here, because it gives us a chance to get a better sense of Loboszicki as a Hebrew educator.

In his introduction to his adaptation, Loboszicki writes:

“When adapting *The Book of Jasher* and preparing it for youth to read, I concentrated my energies on removing garments that had worn thin over time, washing it off, and presenting it to Jewish youth in new attire.”

In other words, he was conscious of the composition’s antiquity, but he believed that it could be modified to suit young contemporary readers. He did this by removing materials or transforming their character so that they would become something new that contained the old within it.

He also writes:

“The literary-aesthetic description makes clear why it was unnecessary for me to provide some kind of introduction to *The Book of Jasher* or a justification for why Jewish children need such a national book. Its usefulness is self-evident and does not need to be proven: For hundreds of years and over the course of many generations, it stood out as a folk work extraordinaire and was the most popular educational book for both young and old. I do not doubt for a second that in the new form I have given it it will capture the place it deserves in our children’s literature. I have a special reason for occupying the attention of readers young and old in this introduction—a desire to independently examine *The Book of Jasher.*”

As he explains here, there were two reasons why Loboszicki viewed *The Book of Jasher* as worthy of translation: It was a folk work popular among generations of readers and its educational tone made it suitable literature for children’s bookshelves.

Subsequently, Loboszicki describes his editorial work and the reasoning behind it:

“In addition to corrections and general improvements that I made in my adaptation, I would like to mention three special changes and additions that I felt compelled to make in the presentation of the stories: 1) I added the Aggadic Midrash about Abraham and the foreigner to the story about his welcoming of the guests. 2) In the story of Balak and Balaam, whose presentation in the work proved seriously inadequate, …[[16]](#footnote-16) 3) In the story about Moses’ final moments, I introduced a rabbinic Aggadah. It allowed me to paint a more complete picture that aided my effort to conclude this heartwarming book. I removed the cardboard descriptions of Joshua’s life and the beginning of the period of the Judges completely, because they do not add anything to the book. In contrast, I did not remove the story about Joseph and Zuleikha, because there is something truly tragic about these pangs of love and I am certain that I will not damage the sense of modesty of Jewish youth, who are familiar with the story from its prose presentation in the Pentateuch, in any way. Consequently, in this sense, *The Book of Jasher* will be the most poetic and the most accurate interpretation of the Torah’s stories.”

In this paragraph that concludes the long and detailed introduction, Loboszicki presents an intuitive taxonomy of the types and degrees of adaptation that he employed in his work.

The following is a detailed taxonomy presented in Loboszicki’s own words:

“Corrections and general improvements” refer to first degree adaptations. Loboszicki does not provide details about these. It appears that he is referring to language and style and we will relate to these when we present close readings of selected stories.

“Special changes” implies second degree adaptation, and it denotes additions from the Midrash that touch upon the Biblical story being depicted. Indeed, these additions do not appear in the original version of *The Book of Jasher*, but they constitute part of the narrative reservoir of Hebrew culture pertaining to the specific story. Consequently, the are not completely foreign to it.

“Omissions” indicates third degree adaptations. These certainly reduce the scope of the original composition, but they do not alter its character. In Loboszicki’s opinion, he only removed parts of the story that “fail to add anything to the book.”

“Additions” suggests fourth degree adaptation. Introduction of episodes found neither in the Biblical story nor in the original version of *The Book of Jasher* significantly alter how the plot unfolds and are liable to affect how the story is understood. Therefore, it is the highest degree and most extreme form of adaptation.

These changes have been made in order to provide a “more poetic” and “more accurate” interpretation than the one offered by the prosaic Pentateuchal tales that children were familiar with anyway, and this is the reason that Loboszicki chose not to even censor Joseph and Zuleikha’s love story. Awareness of this helps us comprehend Loboszicki’s most important editorial principle and deduce a more general principle about how adult literature is adapted for children: Loboszicki does not intentionally censor a story that one could claim damages his readers’ modesty, because he does not see anything in the story that impinges upon the quality of the book or its ability to educate. In other words, poetic principles, rather than ethical ones, motivate Loboszicki’s adaptive process.

While the original version of *The Book of Jasher* contains twenty-one chapters, *The Book of Jasher for Youth* contains thirty chapters. Since children’s books typically feature shorter chapters, one recognizes that Loboszicki split the chapters into much shorter units to produce a text half the length of the original.

It is not clear how Aharon Loboszicki, a modest Varsovian educator, attained a copy of the Venice edition of *The Book of Jasher*. In any case, his introduction to *The Book of Jasher for Youth* provides no explanation. Indeed, the Venetian edition of *The Book of* Jasher continued to be reprinted in Polish publishing houses throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet the book was more closely associated with the world of Halakhic Judaism , where it maintained a place of honor on the bookshelf, than the secular national world.[[17]](#footnote-17) The fact that the format of the Venetian edition, appropriate for an adult audience, continues to be employed by Israel publishers of religious literature when they reprint *The Book of Jasher* testifies to this.[[18]](#footnote-18)

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that Loboszicki’s adaptation of this important composition resurrected it for his secular national audience. Not only did he make consumers of Hebrew culture aware of it, he presented it as a valuable part of Modern Hebrew literature. Furthermore, Loboszicki correctly identified *The Book of Jasher*’s potential to captivate members of his young Hebrew reading audience; his instincts did not betray him. Following the adaptation’s initial printing in Warsaw and Loboszicki’s subsequent death during the Holocaust, the Yizrael Publishing House, an Israeli publishing house established by the Polish Jewish publisher Shlomo Sreberk after his immigration to Palestine in 1933, republished it in Israel.[[19]](#footnote-19) There were at least three additional unmodified reprintings of the book published in 1951, 1954, and 1964—something that testifies to the vibrancy of Loboszicki’s language and the modern design of the book’s illustrations.

*The Book of Jasher for Youth* is an important example of a Hebrew work for children that was republished in Israel after earlier publication in Poland, something that actually proves highly rare.[[20]](#footnote-20) It is as yet unknown who actually rediscovered itand how an Israeli press became interested in it and determined that it had economic and ethical potential. Nonetheless, the fact that an Israeli press took a chance on *The Book of Jasher for Youth* hints at its appeal, something further confirmed by the positive reception Diasporic and Israeli children gave it. Unfortunately, while *The Book of Jasher for Youth* became a poetic yahrzeit candle recalling Loboszicki, who acted virtuously on behalf of the young Hebrew generation in Poland and was tragically killed in the Warsaw Ghetto in his prime, it is doubtful that native-born Israeli children who enjoyed Loboszicki’s adaptation in the State of Israel had any idea of what had become of its author.

In retrospect, Loboszicki gave an air of youthfulness to the aged *Book of Jasher*

and earned it a position of honor within the emergent literary system that was playing a critical role in the establishment of an individual and national subject. In many ways one could say that when the Varsovian Hebrew educator sought out a source of inspiration for his readers/students and found it, as usual, in the storied Hebrew tradition, he chose to reawaken the hoaried *Book of Jasher* from a four-hundred-year slumber. In addition, highlighting of the national narrative through concentration upon the Patriarchs and placement of emphasis upon the stories’ geographical elements and the Land of Israel’s role as an object of the Jewish people’s desire helped make the work relevant to children and youth through into the fifties.

**4. Loboszicki’s Lullabies**

The Even Shoshan dictionary defines a *shir eres* [lullaby] as a song with a calm and pleasing melody that mothers sing to their children to calm them and put them to sleep.[[21]](#footnote-21) Indeed, lullabies are most frequently used to put children to sleep. By relieving the stress that children feel, the children become pacified and fall asleep. The evening hour when mothers attempt to put their toddlers to sleep marks the lullaby as a song that enables the children to bid farewell to the day and the stormy events that they experienced over the course of the day.[[22]](#footnote-22) Since the act of bidding farewell to the day brings the archetypal and universal fear of negation and death to life and leads them to reverberate in children’s minds, the lullaby, as a ceremonial ritual, serves as a type of transition ceremony whose very existence relieves the stress these fears cause. Examination of all the elements of this ceremony shows that diverse practices meeting different childhood needs are used to produce the desired state of calm. The lullaby is built around words and a tune that promote rocking and caress. Together they produce a transition ceremony for both children and mothers who wishes to put them to sleep. Expression of their own troubles and fear helps mothers calm down too. This ceremony integrates the sensory experience of the individuals involved, both those looking to put somebody to sleep and those looking to go to sleep. The sense of vision that takes note of the lengthening shadows, together with the quietly sung tune and the feeling of rocking and caress that accompany it make it easier for children to relinquish their mothers’ breast and give in to desired rest.[[23]](#footnote-23) In light of this, it is understandable why Herzeliyah Raz refers to lullabies as “Lap Songs”: they integrate the tune and the words with the emotional state extent in the space singing figured and listening children occupy. Therefore, she asserts that those looking to research this special literary genre need to be well-versed in three disciplines: music, literature, and psychology.[[24]](#footnote-24)

The lullaby genre is an ancient one and thanks to its musical and rhythmic performance it constitutes part of folk culture that is orally transmitted from generation to generation. There is evidence of Sumerian and Akkadian lullabies from the twenty-first century B.C. E.. Known as “Incantations for Calming Babies,” they were used for putting children to sleep. These songs were created by anonymous poets and transmitted orally from generation to generation. They took on various forms. Sometimes they were a series of meaningless syllables possessing an effective sound, sometimes they told an amusing legend, and sometimes they even contained threats. Whatever their construction, their goal was to put babies to sleep.[[25]](#footnote-25) Unlike songs of other genres that are transmitted and performed in changing circumstances, functional lullabies have always been sung in fixed conditions: a ritual performed at a set time at the end of the day, when an uncertain future hangs in the air, and whose participants are an adult and a child. In the process of the lullaby’s development as a Jewish folk genre, lullabies created in the Diaspora served as the foundation for songs that were produced in the Land of Israel from the early twentieth century onwards.

The following lullaby composed by Loboszicki possesses nationalist sentiment. It talks about the history of the nation; it starts with a description of its glorious past and concludes with present day hopes of returning to this glorious past. In the poem, the departure from the Land of Israel, after which the nation wanders and suffers from persecution, is described as a punishment for abandoning God’s law. The poem concludes with the idea that a day will come when the nation will be brought together and miraculously returned to the place from whence it was banished. The structural narrative of the poem proceeds from existence in the Garden of Eden to sin, expulsion, suffering, and salvation’s ultimate attainment.

Lie, fall asleep, my darling son

Listen to my song;

Once upon a time, far from here,

In days of old, there was a city.

Your ancient fathers

Lived there once;

Then they lived a happy life,

Then they were a nation.

A nation with a land beneath is feet

Flowing with milk and honey;

A nation where very infrequently

A poor man was found.

Yet from an abundance of kindness

They left God’s law;

And upon the sun of their success

Arose dark clouds.

And when God became incensed with them

He expelled them from the city…

Lie, fall asleep, my darling son

Listen to my song.

In the magnificent Temples

Foreign people settled;

Your ancestors wandered

Given into the enemy’s hands.

Hundreds of years they have wandered

They are here and they are there;

Yet they hope that one day

They will again become a nation.

Indeed, God promised them

On the day of his anger,

A day will come and all of them would return

To live again as a mighty nation.

That a day would come—and from their midst would arise

A man like a roaring lion

Who would call out and then one and all

Would gather quickly to him.

Soon the lion’s roar will be heard:

“He who belongs to the nation, come to me!”

Then everybody will scream

The Messiah lives!

Soon they will fly as quick as lightening

Across the sea

To that beautiful city,

From which they had been expelled.

And, in accordance with God’s will, come

They will, one and all, to the city…

Now lie down and sleep, darling son,

Listen to my song…

**5. Conclusion**

As previously stated, Loboszicki was tragically killed in the Warsaw Ghetto. This article gives us an opportunity to recall the names of additional authors of Hebrew children’s poetry who were killed during the Second World War. Today these poets are almost completely unknown to Hebrew readers and most of their works have either been lost or can only be accessed in rare and difficult to find printings.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Pessach Kaplan (born in 1870 in the shtetl Stawiski in the Łomża region) was tragically killed in the Białystok Ghetto in 1943. He translated European literature into Hebrew and also wrote original Hebrew stories. During the Holocaust, he composed songs that were sung in the ghettoes.

Menachem Mendel Horowitz (born in 1881 in the shtetl Lubavitch in the Russian governate of Mohilev) was murdered in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. He moved to Warsaw in 1906. There he worked as proofreader, wrote poems and stories for children, and edited the children’s newspapers *Shahar* [Dawn] and *Ben Shahar* [Dawn Child].

Raphael Gutman (born in 1883 in the Polish shtetl Sokoły ) died in the Białystok Ghetto in 1943 at his own hand. He was the principal of a Jewish children’s school in Warsaw and he was involved with the training of Jewish school teachers. He authored Hebrew readers and adapted Rabbinic stories for children.

Yakir Warshavsky (born in 1885 in the Polish city Mlawa) was tragically killed in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942. He wrote a series of books for children and he continued to write for them even after being confined to the ghetto.

Yehudah Warshaviak (born in 1903 in the Polish city Kalisz) was murdered in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1942. He edited the Hebrew children’s newspapers *Hed ha-Noar* [Youth Echo], *Iton katan* [Small Newspaper], and *Itoni* [My newspaper]. He also authored pamphlets for children.

All of these authors operated within the dynamic and diverse Hebrew literary system for children that continued to operate within the ghettoes.

In this context, it is important to point out that Ofek praises Loboszicki’s literary work highly, because it was trailblazing. On the hand Loboszicki lacked a literary father who he could emulate, while on the other hand he became a literary exemplar for writers like Zalman Shneour and Yaakov Rimon who followed in his footsteps. Yet contemporary critics like David Frischmann and Y. L. Peretz displayed an antagonistic attitude towards him, likely due to their reservations about his involvement in public affairs.[[27]](#footnote-27) With the perspective time gives, however, Frischmann and Peretz’s reservations point to how productive and extensive the Hebrew literary republic in Poland was, especially Warsaw.

To convey the scope of Hebrew book publishing in Poland, I will briefly discuss the Tushiyah publishing house founded by Abraham Leib Shalkovich, who employed the Hebrew nom de plume Ben Avigdor. The publishing house operated in Warsaw between 1896 and 1911, and, after 1911, it merged with three other small presses, ha-Shachar, Progres, and Sreberk, to form the Central Publishing House-the press that published Loboszicki’s works.[[28]](#footnote-28) The Central Publishing House published hundreds of Hebrew books and pamphlets. In 1921, Shlomo Sreberk acquired it. He continued to operate it in Warsaw until Hitler’s rise to power in 1933. That year he immigrated to Palestine and continued to publish books under the same imprint, as well as under the imprint of the Yizrael Publishing House he founded in Palestine.[[29]](#footnote-29)

The extensive Hebrew literary activity in Warsaw directed towards the needs of children that Loboszicki participated in hints at how the young reading audience to whom this publishing activity was directed was rapidly expanding. It teaches about how Hebrew was becoming more malleable and was being used to address increasing numbers of subjects and themes. It also teaches us about the extent to which the Hebrew publishing industry was tolerated by the authorities. After the Second World War, the center for Hebrew children’s literature moved to the Land of Israel. As has been noted, Loboszicki’s works were republished in Israel through the initiative of the Yizrael Publishing House, a later Tel Aviv-based incarnation of the Central Publishing House which had first published his works in Warsaw.

1. This article employs Polish orthography to write Loboszicki’s name. One can also follow Russian orthography and write it Luboshitzky. For further biographical information about Loboszicki, see Uriel Ofek, *Young World: Encyclopedia of Children's Literature* (Ramat-Gan: Masada, 1970), 380-381 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a representative textbook, see Aharon Loboszicki, *Game and Matching Poems* (Warsaw: Hinukh, 1905) [Hebrew]; for representative poetry, see Aharon Loboszicki, *Poetry and Song … For Youth* (Warsaw: Tushiyah, 1903) [Hebrew]. Loboszicki edited the Hebrew youth newspaper *Kokhav* [Star], published between 1923 and 1928, and the Hebrew children’s newspaper *Ben kokhav* [Star Child], published in 1924 and 1925. Recently the National Library of Israel scanned issues of *Ben kokhav* and made them publicly available through its website: <<http://jpress.org.il/Olive/APA/Yeladim/?action=tab&tab=browse&pub=YBC#panel=browse> >. For more on East European Hebrew newspapers for children and youth, see Adina Bar-El, *Under the Little Green Trees: Yiddish and Hebrew Children's Periodicals in Poland 1918-1939* (Jerusalem: Dov Sadan, 2006) [Hebrew]. For a representative essay collection, see Aharon Loboszicki, *Graphology and its Value in Child Development: A Pedagogical-Psychological Study* (Lodz: The First Boy’s Gymnasium Pedagogical Council, 1931) [Hebrew]. Aharon Loboszicki, *The Young Wanderer by Edmondo De Amicis* (Piotrków: Tushiyah, 1898) [Hebrew] is an adaptation of De Amicis’ story “From the Apennines to the Andes” from his book *The Heart.* For Loboszicki’s autobiographical writing, see Aharon Loboszicki, *From the Bitterness of Life* (Piotrków: Tushiyah, 1900) [Hebrew]. For the translated play, see Simone Arnaud, *War and Love: An Historic Drama of the Hasmonean Period*, trans. Aharon Loboszicki (Warsaw: Tushiyah, 1898) [Hebrew]. For a discussion of Loboszicki’s educational activities, see Zeev Gries, “Hebrew, Speak and Read Hebrew: Pioneers of Hebrew Children’s Literature Between the World Wars,” *Et-mol* 246 (2014): 16-19. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Uriel Ofek, “For My Little Brothers: The Twentieth Anniversary of Aharon Loboszicki’s Death,” *Moznayim* 17, no. 1 (1962), 61-63. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The two most prominent examples of such websites are the Israeli version of Project Gutenberg, Project Ben-Yehuda <https://benyehuda.org>, and the Zemereshet Project devoted to the preservation of early Hebrew songs <https://www.zemereshet.co.il>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1991), 4-7. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Hannan Hever, *The Narrative and the Nation: Critical Readings in the Canon of Hebrew Fiction* (Tel-Aviv: Resling, 2007), 9-11 [Hebrew]; Benjamin Harshav, *Language in Times of Revolution: The Modern Jewish Revolution and the Renaissance of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem: Carmel, 2008), 48-54 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Zemereshet (website), accessed November 16, 2020, <https://www.zemereshet.co.il/song.asp?id=14107/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Zohar Shavit, “The Roots Gradually Shrunk: On the Decline of the European Hebrew Literary Centers and the Emergence of the Palestinian Center,” *Ha-Sifrut* 32 (1983), 45-50 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. On the first translations of *The Book of Jasher* into Yiddish, see Chava Turniansky, “The First Translations of *The Book of Jasher* into Yiddish,” *Tarbiz* 54, no. 4 (1985), 567-620 [Hebrew]. It should also be noted that both the National Library of Israel catalog, as well as the catalog *Hebrew Bibliography Project: Bibliography of the Hebrew Book 1460-1960*, document the existence of Yiddish translations of *The Book of Jasher* that were published in East European publishing housed up until the mid-twentieth century. Among the modern editions of the texts is Lazarus Goldschmidt, *The Book of Jasher* (Berlin: Binyamin Herts, 1923) [Hebrew]; for a critical edition, see Yosef Dan, *The Book of Jasher* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1986) [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See the introduction to the 1938 edition in Emanuel Bin-Gurion, *Of Israelite Origin* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1966) [Hebrew]; Yosef Dan, *The Medieval Hebrew Story* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974). 137 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Yosef Dan, *The Book of Jasher,* 7-35 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: Its History, Genres and Meaning* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1994), 64 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Dan Ben Amos, *Jewish Folk Literature* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2006), 70 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Yosef Dan, *The Book of Jasher,* 11 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Yom Tov Lipman Zunz, *Jewish Sermons and Their Historical Development* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 1947), 74 & 334 (footnote 70) [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In the original, this sentence is fragmentary; it is likely that the remainder of the sentence was omitted due to ineffective proofreading. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. For example, the 1801 edition published in Lemberg at Judith Rosanes’ publishing house was based on the Venetian print edition. About thirty subsequent nineteenth century Polish editions were also based on the Venetian edition. Early twentieth century Polish editions that follow the Venetian edition include the 1910 edition published in Lublin at the printing house of Nehamah Hershenhorn, Shelomoh Shimon Shtraizberger, and Menahem Mendel Shnaidmeser, as well as other editions published up until 1930. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. For example, see the Alter-Bergman edition published in Tel Aviv. It was first published in 1955 and continued to be republished until at least the 1980s. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Motti Neiger, *Publishers as Cultural Mediators: A Cultural History of One Hundred Years of Hebrew Publishing in Israel 1910-2010* (Jerusalem: MN, 2010), 90 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Another prominent example of a popular book for children and youth that was initially published in Poland, found republication with an Israeli press after the Second World War, and even continues to be printed and sold up until today is *The Legends of Israel* by Israel Binyamin Levner. Born in 1862, Levner died in the Russian city of Lugansk in 1916. *The Legends of Israel* was first published in 1888 in Piotrków; since 1956, it has been regularly republished. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Avraham Even Shoshan, “*Shir Eres*” in *New Dictionary* (Jerusalem:Kiryat Sefer, 1969), Vol. 4. 1681 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Miri Baruch, *Issues and Genres of Children’s Songs* (Tel Aviv: Ministry of Defense, 1985), 15-31 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Lilach Lachman, “Songs and Cradles,” *Hadarim* 15 (2004): 83-97 [Hebrew}. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Herzeliyah Raz, “Lullabies, Bibliotherapy, and Me,” *Massad: An Anthology Devoted to Matters of Literature and Its Study* 3(2005): 27-33. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Shin Shifra and Yaakov Klein, *In Those Distant Days: An Anthology of Ancient Near Eastern Poetry* (Tel Aviv: Am Oved, 1996), 604-662 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For biobibliographical information about these authors, see Ofek, *Young World* [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. See Ofek, *Young World*, 63 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Judah David Eisenstein, *Treasure of Israel Encyclopedia* (New York: Pardes, 1945), vol. 10., 245 [Hebrew]. Also see, Zeev Gries, *The Hebrew Book: An Outline of its History* (Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik, 2015), 189-216 [Hebrew]. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. See Motti Neiger, *Publishers as Cultural Mediators*, 89-106. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)