

In view of the texts under study, I suggest that the circumcision of pagan slaves in Hellenistic times was not a religious duty but a social norm by which slaves adopted their Jewish masters' way of life.

Between Redemption and Welcoming the Stranger:
The Route of *Les bergères de Madian* into the Literature of the Haskalah

by Zohar Shavit (pp. 529–562)

In 1843, David Samostz, a Maskil from Breslau, completed his translation into Hebrew of Stéphanie Félicité de Genlis' *Les bergères de Madian, ou la jeunesse de Moïse*, which he titled *Ro'ot Midyan o yaldut Moshe*. Samostz's work, apparently an indirect translation from the original French via German, was part of a major translation project by the Haskalah movement that played an important role in constructing the movement's literary repertoire – and in furthering its objective, *inter alia*, to introducing new models of behavior and rules of conduct in Jewish society. In this article, I ask why Maskilim preferred to translate biblical stories from German instead of rewriting them on the basis of Jewish sources, and examine how this approach enabled them to enrich the repertoire of the newly emerging literary system as well as to import into the Jewish system the privileged status of biblical stories in German literature.

The article further analyzes the historical context in which Samostz produced his translation and the covert and overt considerations that underlay the project. Among these considerations were the status of the source texts in German literature and the extent to which these texts could be linked to the agenda of the Haskalah movement and to Jewish themes or Jewish figures. In addition, several considerations featured uniquely in the translation of de Genlis' book: the author's connections with the Berlin community of Maskilim and Maskilot, her strong association with François Guillaume Coëssen, the leader of the 'Grey House' cult, and – most importantly – her stance on the appropriate attitude toward refugees and foreigners in France in the wake of the Revolution. The article examines Samostz's interpretation of the political and ideological messages in de Genlis's text as indications of a willingness in non-Jewish society to absorb Jews while allowing them to maintain their Jewish identity. Finally, I assess the role this understanding played in Samostz's decision to translate an otherwise rather marginal text in de Genlis's oeuvre.