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The Cultural Heretic

Gustav Landauer as a Radical Writer

Introduction

Gustav Landauer (1870 – 1919), known as a Jewish-German anarchist, was not only a political critic, activist and, as he put it, an "anti-politician," but also a philosopher and a person entangled in the cultural scene in Germany. Landauer was more than just a radical anarchist, *ergo* a political figure, as this chapter will argue. His philosophical approach led him to a specific type of writing, his love of literature and theatre produced a certain kind of cultural critique, and his complex understanding of identity made him a unique person. In his time, it was not only Landauer who felt the need for self-assurance and was looking into the concept of identity, but also his contemporaries in Europe and around the world.[1]

In his novella *Arnold Himmelheber*, published in 1903, Landauer discusses the question of Jewish "identity".[2] In his novella, Landauer presents various "concepts of identity" and positions himself towards them; this gives an insight into Landauer's ideas about "Jewish identities" as well as his radical approaches, questions of self-perception, and the relationship between individual and society. I aim to identify Landauer's idea of "identity" and to distinguish it from other "identity concepts" in his time. Moreover, I am interested in Landauer as a radical writer; hence, I ask what kind of radical answer he gives to the question of modern "identity".

For this purpose, I need to explain what "radical" and "modernity" mean in this context. As John Murray Cuddihy argued, following Talcott Parsons, "modernity" is understood in this article as a process of differentiation, which is also an effect of secularization and capitalism. The differentiation, therefore, produced new situations for people who were living in the countries where this process took place: "It splits ownership from control (Berle and Means); it sep-

1 Philipp Blom, *Der taumelnde Kontinent: Europa 1900 – 1914 (The Reeling Continent: Europe 1900 – 1914)* (Munich: dtv, 2015), 12 – 13.

2 In this chapter I will use the terms "identity", "self-perception" and "self-identification" synonymously. For a critique of the "identity-concept" see Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity'," *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1 – 47.

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arates church from state (the Catholic trauma), ethnicity from religion (the Jewish trauma); it produces the 'separated' or liberal state, a limited state that knows its 'place', differentiated from society."[3]

In the case of the Jewish "trauma," it raises the question of who we are. Who is a Jew and what does being Jewish mean if not being religiously observant?[4] A lot of Jews and non-Jews alike have tried in the following years to answer this question; it is still up for lively debate among Jews as well as non-Jews around the world.

Gustav Landauer approaches this question in his novella *Arnold Himmelheber*. He does this in a manner that I describe as radical. Etymologically, radical stems from the Latin word *radix*, which means "root" and in a wider sense "basis, ground, cause, origin". To use the common medical metaphor, Landauer does not want to discuss "symptoms" of the problem or question, but rather wants to combat the cause of the disease or, in our case, to give an answer concerning the causes of the posed question of modern "identity". That means, in short, Landauer uses everything he can to approach the question of Jewish "identity"; this includes the use in his story of murder, incest, and violence. This rather literal understanding of "radicalism" – i.e. getting to the root of a problem or question to resolve or answer it – provides me with a tool broad enough to scrutinize Landauer's novella.[5]

Moreover, I will analyze *Arnold Himmelheber* from this radical perspective, which enables me to read the non-conformism and taboo-breaking within Landauer's novella as part of his radical program in his search for answers. By breaking the chains of bourgeois morality, he can approach the concepts thoroughly and try to identify the self-conceptions of Jews without limitations in his thinking, for better or for worse.

I will briefly present Landauer's vita with a cultural impetus and then introduce the novella and some interpretations made by researchers in the past. Subsequently, I approach the novella through its main protagonists and neglected issues in the research; I will thereby be able to identify Landauer's perspective on identity in his time and according to his personal standpoint.

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3 John Murray Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Lévi-Strauss, and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 10.

4 On this issue there is a whole field of research; for an introduction see, for example, Michael A. Meyer, *Jewish Identity in the Modern World* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1990).

5 Here I utilize a rather simple but useful definition of radicalism. For an intensive discussion of this concept see the introduction to this volume.

A Cultural Intellectual in Historical Perspective

Gustav Landauer was born on April 7 1870, and lived with his family in Karlsruhe at the time of the so-called *Reichseinigung* (the German unification process, which came to an end in 1871). They belonged, as a bourgeois, rather assimilated Jewish family, to the middle class.[6] Thus, they were not only able to allow Gustav, the third son of the family, to pass his *Abitur* at the *Gymnasium* but also to study from 1888 onwards. Even as a teenager, he was interested in literature and music, which led him to his studies of philology, while also attending philosophical, economic, and literary studies seminars. Landauer began his studies in Heidelberg (1888 – 1889) and moved to Berlin (1889 – 1890; 1891 – 1892) as well as Strasbourg (1890 – 1891).[7] He did not finish his studies. Especially after the end of the *Sozialistengesetze* (Socialist Laws) (1878 – 1890), Landauer became increasingly politicized and engaged in the Social Democratic movement, as a lot of writers did at this time.[8] Landauer's friend Fritz Mauthner (1849 – 1923) introduced him to the literary circle of *Friedrichshagen*, which had a massive impact on the German cultural scene. Landauer belonged to the anarchistic circle there, whose members were influential, as anarchism was an interesting subject for most avant-garde writers.[9] Landauer was part of this intellectual circle, the *Naturalisten*, who tried to combine political activities within the social democrats with being literary intellectuals. They were part of the left-wing party opposition within the *Social Democratic Party of Germany* (SPD), which understood itself to be anarchistic. Therefore, they were excluded from the party convention in Erfurt in October 1891, which had a twofold outcome: first, the excluded founded the *Verein unabhängiger Sozialisten* (Association of Independent Socialists) in February 1892. Landauer joined them that year and positioned himself openly as an

6 Rolf Kauffeldt and Michael Matzigkeit, *Zeit und Geist: Kulturkritische Schriften 1890 – 1919 (Time and Spirit: Cultural Critic Writings 1890 – 1919)* (Munich: Boer, 1997), 345.

7 "Gustav Landauer Papers Nr. 7," n.d., ARCH00780, International Institute for Social History, Amsterdam.

8 Jens Malte Fischer, *Fin de Siècle. Kommentar zu einer Epoche (Fin de Siècle. Commentary on an Epoche)* (Munich: Winkler Verlag, 1978), 43.

9 Gertrude Cepl-Kaufmann, "Gustav Landauer Im Friedrichshagener Jahrzehnt und die Rezeption seines Gemeinschaftsideals nach dem I. Weltkrieg (Gustav Landauer in the Friedrichshagener Centenary and the Reception of His Community Ideas after the First World War)," in *Gustav Landauer Im Gespräch (Gustav Landauer in conversation)*, ed. Hanna Delf and Gert Mattenklott, Conditio Judaica 18 (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 1997), 235 – 236.

anarchist.[10] The second major outcome was that the intellectuals pulled out of the *Freie Volksbühne* (Free Peoples Theatre), a joint venture of the *Naturalisten* and the Social Democrats. They founded the *Neue Freie Volksbühne* (New Free Peoples Theatre) in October 1892, among them Gustav Landauer as well as well-known intellectuals such as Wilhelm Bölsche (1861–1939), Paul (1864–1945) and Bernhard Kampffmeyer (1867–1942), Fritz Mauthner and Bruno Wille (1860–1928). Landauer was part of the art committee (*künstlerische Leitung)*, a position he held until 1917, even after the re-unification of the two theatres in 1913.[11]

His first novel, *Der Todesprediger* (*The Preacher of Death*), was published in 1893, and Landauer then began his work on the next novella, which was later published as *Arnold Himmelheber.*[12] During this time (1892) he corresponded with his early love Clara Tannhauser (1872–1935), who came from rural, more traditional Jewry, as did Ida Wolf (1871–1942), his girlfriend before Clara Tannhauser. In 1898 Landauer tried to employ Emile Zola's (1840–1902) tactic for a hairdresser, who had been convicted of murder but whom Landauer thought innocent. As he accused the investigating commissioner of counterfeiting evidence to obtain a resumption of the trial, Landauer was indicted. Landauer's witness, Moritz von Egidy (1847–1898), died before his testimony and Landauer was sentenced to several months' imprisonment, which he served from the end of 1899 to the beginning of 1900.[13]

During his incarceration, Landauer translated speeches by Meister Eckhart and copy-edited the first volume of his friend Fritz Mauthner's *Zur Kritik der Sprache.*[14] He also corresponded with Hedwig Lachmann (1865–1919), his later wife, whom he had met at the beginning of 1899.[15] After his imprisonment, in 1900, Landauer became involved in the *Neue Gemeinschaft* (New Community),

10 Barabra Eckle, "Die Berliner Jahre von 1892–1901 (The Berlin Years 1892–1901)," in *Gustav Landauer (1870–1919). Von der Kaiserstraße nach Stadelheim*, ed. Literarische Gesellschaft Karlsruhe (Eggingen: Edition Isele, 1994), 24.

11 Ibid., 26.

12 Gustav Landauer, "Der Todesprediger (The Preacher of Death)," in *Wortartist: Roman, Novelle, Drama, Satire, Gedicht, Übersetzung*, ed. Siegbert Wolf and Ausgewählte Schriften, vol. 8 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2014), 31–144; Gustav Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber: Eine Novelle (Arnold Himmelheber: A Novella)*, ed. Philippe Despoix (Berlin: Philo, 2000).

13 Gustav Landauer, "Der Dichter als Ankläger (The Poet as Accuser)," in *Internationalismus*, ed. Siegbert Wolf, Ausgewählte Schriften, vol. 1 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2008), 62–68; Kauffeldt and Matzigkeit, *Zeit und Geist*, 349.

14 Fritz Mauthner, *Sprache und Psychologie (Language and Psychology)*, *Beiträge zu Einer Kritik der Sprache* (Contributions to a Critique of Language), vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1901).

15 Kauffeldt and Matzigkeit, *Zeit und Geist*, 349–50.

a settlement project which grew out of the Friedrichshagen community, where he met Erich Mühsam (1878–1934) and Martin Buber (1878–1965), who both became good friends with Landauer, while Buber even became his literary executor.[16] Gustav Landauer left the *Neue Gemeinschaft* in 1901 and travelled with his future wife Hedwig Lachmann to England, where they lived and worked for almost a year.[17]

After returning to Germany in 1902 and, eventually, divorcing his first wife, Gustav Landauer and Hedwig Lachmann, who came from a traditional Jewish cantor family, married in May 1903.[18] In the same year, Landauer also published two books: firstly, the volume *Macht und Mächte (Power and Powers)*, which contained the novella *Arnold Himmelheber*; secondly, *Skepsis und Mystik: Versuche im Anschluss an Mauthners Sprachkritik* (*Skepticism and Mysticism: Attempts Following Mauthner's Critique of Language*).[19]

From this point on, Landauer's life began to rise intellectually. Besides his friendship with Martin Buber and his confrontation with Constantin Brunner and his philosophy, in 1907 he published, in a series edited by Buber, his *Geschichtsphilosophie* (philosophy of history), *Die Revolution*.[20] Therein Landauer drew up his philosophies of both history and revolution theory alike. Both determine his understanding of history as well as his political activities, which should lead to revolution. The basic principle of his philosophy is discontinuity. The past is continually updated according to the need and context of the act of speaking about history, and also through its speaker. History is, thus, subject to our will and our intentions: "We only know of the past what is our past; we understand of what has been only what concerns us today; we understand what has been only in the way we are; we understand it as our way."[21] The past and the future are to be understood as one, that is, the past is always shaped anew depending

16 Tilman Leder, *Die Politik eines 'Antipolitikers': Eine politische Biographie Gustav Landauers (The Politics of an 'Anti-Politician': A Political Biography of Gustav Landauer)*, Ausgewählte Schriften 10 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2014), 352.

17 Kauffeldt and Matzigkeit, *Zeit und Geist*, 350; Leder, *Antipolitiker*, 1: 357–64.

18 Leder, *Antipolitker*, 1: 369.

19 Gustav Landauer, *Macht und Mächte (Power and Powers)* (Berlin: E. Fleischel & Co., 1903); Gustav Landauer, "Skepsis und Mystik: Versuche im Anschluss an Mauthners Sprachkritik (Skepticism and Mysticism: Attempts Following Mauthners' Critique of Language)," in *Skepsis und Mystik: Versuche im Anschluss an Mauthners Sprachkritik*, ed. Siegbert Wolf, Ausgewählte Schriften 7 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2011), 39–128.

20 Gustav Landauer, *Die Revolution (The Revolution)*, ed. Siegbert Wolf (Münster: Unrast, 2003).

21 Ibid., 43 (translation mine): "Wir wissen von der Vergangenheit nur unsere Vergangenheit; wir verstehen von dem Gewesenen nur, was uns heute etwas angeht; wir verstehen das Gewesene nur so, wie wir sind; wir verstehen es als unseres Weg."

on the use of the past, which is subject to the intentions of the present. This changes the past, and it will become the future: "In other words, the past is not something finished, but something that is becoming. For us there is only way [i.e. process, SK], only future; the past is also future that is evolving with our moving on, that changes, that has been different."[22]

It turns out that Landauer positioned himself against the idea of progress in his time and, therefore, against a linear understanding of history, since this suggests a continuity that does not exist.[23] In his ideas, the postmodern concepts of construction and performativity resonate, but his counterproposal of the "foreign and neighboring history" is an expression of Eurocentric thinking. This suggestion, in turn, is to be understood as an expression of the connection of one's own people with others.[24]

In 1908 Landauer founded, in an attempt to realize his socialist ideas, the *Sozialistischen Bund* (Socialist Federation). Early members included Erich Mühsam as well as Martin Buber.[25] After lectures and translations in 1911, Landauer's political *Aufruf zum Sozialismus* (*Call to Socialism*) appeared,[26] in which he outlined his socialism: his starting point is the individual who must be convinced that the revolutionization of social relations is necessary. Only then could people join together in voluntary confederations and lead a socialist life.[27] Landauer relies on the peaceful change of human thought, since a violent revolution does not promise success. If people behave differently to each other, it is possible to dissolve the state, since Landauer understands the state as a social relationship between people.[28] Socialism is also a pattern of behavior which can be practiced, and is not only held together by Landauer's diffuse idea of *Geist* (spirit).[29]

22 Ibid. (translation mine): "Anders ausgedrückt heißt das, dass die Vergangenheit nicht etwas Fertiges ist, sondern etwas Werdendes. Es gibt für uns nur Weg, nur Zukunft; auch die Vergangenheit ist Zukunft, die mit unserem Weiterschreiten wird, sich verändert, anders gewesen ist."
23 Ibid., 45.
24 Ibid., 46–50.
25 Tilman Leder, *Die Politik eines 'Antipolitikers': Eine politische Biographie Gustav Landauers (The Politics of an 'Anti-Politician': A Political Biography of Gustav Landauer)*, Ausgewählte Schriften 2: 10 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2014), 421–433; 458–477.
26 Gustav Landauer, *Aufruf zum Sozialismus: Ein Vortrag (Call to Socialism: A Presentation)*, Ausgewählte Schriften 11 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2015).
27 Wolf Kalz, *Gustav Landauer: Ein deutscher Anarchist (Gustav Landauer: A German Anarchist)* (Bad Buchau: Federsee-Verlag, 2009), 176.
28 Ibid., 177–78.
29 Ibid., 178.

He aims at a federal system of voluntary associations, which he describes as a society of societies.[30]

While Europe was approaching the First World War, Landauer tried to issue warnings about the implications of a Great War. To prevent the imminent world war, Landauer engaged in the *Forte-Kreis* (Forte Circle), a circle of European intellectuals who wanted to set an example of international cooperation.[31] The circle, however, collapsed even before it was officially constituted, because of the First World War.[32]

At the request of Kurt Eisner (1867–1919), Landauer participated in the November Revolution in Bavaria as, among other things, a member of the *Revolutionary Workers' Council*.[33] Eisner's USPD (Minority-SPD) lost the elections conclusively in early 1919. On the way to Parliament on February 21, where Kurt Eisner was heading to step down as prime minister, he was assassinated by Anton Graf von Arco auf Valley (1897–1945). Gustav Landauer gave his obituary in Munich. The revolution, however, had not yet come to an end. Thus, Landauer was there when the first anarchist Soviet Republic was proclaimed on April 7 1919, in which he was to assume the office of Minister of Culture.[34] Only six days later, a communist *coup d'état* led to the establishment of a communist Soviet Republic. Landauer withdrew and lived with the widow of Kurt Eisner.[35] In the course of the conquest of Munich by counter-revolutionary government groups, Landauer was arrested on May 1 1919, and only one day later was brutally murdered by soldiers in Stadelheim prison.[36]

To sum up Landauer's life in a few pages and embed it into the historical context of the time proves to be difficult, in particular due to the diverse activities of Landauer. Therefore, this contextualization has been confined to the core data and ideas from Landauer's life and work as well as the rough historical developments of his time needed to better understand this chapter. The German Empire, which he had fought so hard against, finally perished. However, it took Landauer with it.

30 Landauer, *Aufruf zum Sozialismus*, 79.

31 Christine Holste, *Der Forte-Kreis (1910–1915): Rekonstruktion eines utopischen Versuchs (The Forte-Circle (1910–1915): Reconstruction of an Utopian Attempt)* (Stuttgart: M & P, 1992).

32 Kauffeldt and Matzigkeit, *Zeit Und Geist*, 352, as well as Holste, *Der Forte-Kreis (1910–1915)*.

33 Leder, *Die Politik Eines 'Antipolitikers'* 2: 751–846.

34 Ibid., 2:819–24.

35 Ibid., 2:833–34.

36 Ibid., 2:840–46.

The Novella *Lebenskunst/Arnold Himmelheber*

In his novella *Arnold Himmelheber*, Gustav Landauer does not describe his own Jewish identity, instead showing his perspective on various identities, placing a strong focus on Jewish identity and exploring it. The novella is interesting as it offers an insight into Landauer's early thinking on this subject and the question of modernity manifested in the "identity question."

In research, Landauer's novella has been seldom noticed. Norbert Altenhofer only mentions it with one sentence,[37] while Thomas Regehly at least devotes a part of his article to it.[38] There is, however, an article on the novella by Lorenz Jäger from 1997,[39] as well as an epilogue written by Philippe Despoix in the 2000 revised edition of *Arnold Himmelheber.*[40] Despoix's epilogue was republished in 2015, translated into English and only linguistically adapted, in an anthology by Paul Mendes-Flohr.[41] The most recent and, to date, most extensive study of Landauer's novella is presented in Corinna Kaiser's chapter on *Arnold Himmelheber* in her book *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller* (*Gustav Landauer as Writer*).[42]

Reflections on the time of origin and the first publication can be found in Lorenz Jäger[43] and Philippe Despoix.[44] The time of origin is briefly mentioned

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37 Norbert Altenhofer, "Tradition als Revolution. Gustav Landauers Geworden-Werdendes" Judentum," in *Jews and Germans from 1860 to 1933: The Problematic Symbiosis*, ed. David Bronsen (Heidelberg, 1979), 175–76.

38 Thomas Regehly, "'Stürmische Bekenntnisse.' Gustav Landauers literarische Arbeiten ('Tempestuous Confessions.' Gustav Landauers Literary Work)," in *Gustav Landauer im Gespräch (Gustav Landauer in conversation)*, ed. Hanna Delf and Gert Mattenklott (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1997), 18–20.

39 Lorenz Jäger, "Der Herr des Lebens und der Anarchie. Zu Landauers Novelle 'Arnold Himmelheber' (The Master of Life and Anarchy. On Landauers Novella 'Arnold Himmelheber')," in *Gustav Landauer im Gespräch (Gustav Landauer in conversation)*, ed. Hanna Delf and Gert Mattenklott (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1997), 1–10.

40 Philippe Despoix, "Konstruktion des Deutsch-Jüdischen. Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller," in *Arnold Himmelheber: eine Novelle*, ed. Philippe Despoix (Berlin: Philo, 2000), 109–24.

41 Philippe Despoix, "Toward a German-Jewish Construct: Landauer's Arnold Himmelheber," in *Gustav Landauer: Anarchist and Jew*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Anya Mali (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 121–31.

42 Corinna R. Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller: Sprache, Schweigen, Musik (Gustav Landauer as Writer: Language, Silence, Music)*, Conditio Judaica 81 (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2014).

43 Jäger, "Herr des Lebens," 1–2.

44 Despoix, "Konstruktion des Deutsch-Jüdischen," 110; Despoix, "Toward a German-Jewish Construct: Landauer's Arnold Himmelheber," 122.

in Altenhofer.[45] Corinna Kaiser not only corrects inaccuracies by the authors mentioned above but also criticizes Despoix in particular for dating the novel within Landauer's work around 1903, since this perspective neglects the years of origin between 1893 and 1895.[46]

Kaiser shows that Landauer wrote the novella or its predecessor *Lebenskunst* (*Art of Living*) during a prison term between November 1893 and September 1894; however, he could not finish it until summer 1895. Moreover, the novella was later published in a total of twenty episodes by *Der Sozialist* from October 1896 to June 1897.[47] For its publication in his volume *Macht und Mächte* (*Power and Powers*), Landauer worked on his novella, probably also in the light of the criticism of his late second wife, Hedwig Lachmann.[48] Kaiser presents the first detailed comparison of the two versions,[49] writing that in addition to minor changes, Landauer gives, on the one hand, a relativization of the incestuous relationship between Arnold Himmelheber and Lysa, as well as, on the other hand, justifications for the murder of Wolf Tilsiter, such as rape and violence in the marriage.[50] In 1903, the novella *Arnold Himmelheber* was published as part of the volume *Macht und Mächte* by publisher Egon Fleischel.[51]

In order to help the reader follow the interpretations and discussion in this article, I will provide a short summary of the novella. The text is divided into six chapters. The first two are declared to function as a prologue (*Vorspiel*) and the sixth as an epilogue (*Nachspiel*); accordingly, chapters three, four, and five can be called the main part. The individual chapters differ in their styles of writing according to the genre they are representing. Thus, the first and especially the second chapter have a very high proportion of direct speech, so that one can regard them as a drama. The third chapter, on the other hand, is very prosaic and is replaced in the fourth chapter by the form of an epistolary novel. "[I]dyllic love, [and] a phantasmagoric epilogue",[52] as Despoix puts it, follow in chapters five and six.

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45 Altenhofer, "Tradition als Revolution," 175–76.

46 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer Als Schriftsteller*, 204–9. Despoix, however, mentions the history of the novella in a chapter of an earlier book; see Philippe Despoix, *Ethiken der Entzauberung: zum Verhältnis von ästhetischer, ethischer und politischer Sphäre am Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts (Ethics of Disenchantment: the Relationship between the esthetic, ethical and political Spheres at the Beginning of the 20th Century)* (Bodenheim: Philo, 1998).

47 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 208–9.

48 Ibid., 207.

49 Ibid., 362–77.

50 Ibid., 211.

51 Landauer, *Macht und Mächte (Power and Powers)*.

52 Despoix, "Konstruktion des Deutsch-Jüdischen," 111.

In the first chapter, Ludwig Prinz returns home – after having passed his medical examination – to his "father" Arnold Himmelheber and his half-sister Suse, whom the father and then also Ludwig call Lysa. At the beginning of their reunion, Lysa makes him promise that he is not in love with her and imposes a ban on the love between the half-siblings. Both Arnold and Lysa Himmelheber are surprised by Ludwig's return but are happy about it.

The second chapter opens with the beginning of spring in the same year. Already retired, Arnold Himmelheber is treating a Jew from a nearby village, Schöneck, which is a two-hour walk away. Himmelheber inquires about old patients and learns about the son of a patient who has been married for eight years and has a very beautiful wife but no children. Later in the course of the chapter, Himmelheber and Ludwig have a conversation in which Ludwig talks about himself being unhappy. Himmelheber speaks a mystically encouraging speech and encourages him to enjoy his life. In the subtext, this does not rule out adultery, so at the end of the chapter, he presents him with a fake prescription: "Rec. / Youth, light-heartedness (much). / Force. / Thirst, Beauty / Aqu. vitae distillate. In the morning and evening a spoon full. / Dr. Himmelheber."[53]

This scene ends the prologue, and the third chapter, the first of the main part, tells the story of Judith Tilsiter. The village of Schöneck and its Jewish population are described with harsh words and anti-Semitic clichés. Judith lives in this place with her husband, the cattle trader Wolf Tilsiter, under whom she suffers a lot. Both belong to the Jewish population. She also remembers her childhood and, above all, her encounter with the Christian boy Ludwig Prinz, the goose shepherd and village idiot. At the end of the chapter, Judith argues with her husband and, eventually, replies to an anonymous advertisement in the newspaper, which reads as follows: "Looking for a woman. Letters poste restante / cipher 1–2–3 -Free."[54] After reading this advertisement, she dreams of her past with the goose shepherd and then decides to write.

The ensuing fourth chapter documents the correspondence between Judith and Ludwig; this is done, as the title of the chapter suggests, "in letters of new-fashioned people"[55] and thus adopts the form of an epistolary novel. In these letters, Ludwig and Judith become acquainted, though under their pseudonyms of Ludwig and Ida. In their letters, both approach each other and discover

53 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 38 (translation mine): "Rec. / Jugend, Leichtsinn (viel). / Kraft. / Durst, Schönheit / Aqu. vitae destillat. / Morgens und abends ein Löffel voll. / Dr. Himmelheber".

54 Ibid., 52 (translation mine): "Eine Frau / wird gesucht. Briefe postlagernd / Chiffre 1–2–3 -Frei."

55 Ibid., 55.

similarities. Judith feels her thoughts and ideas have been understood – for the first time in her life. In the penultimate letter, Ludwig finally tells his story and reveals his full name. He describes in detail the meeting and the time spent with Judith. In the following letter, "Ida" writes very briefly and arranges a meeting in the forest. She is assured that it is her old love.

On the day of the scheduled meeting, the fifth chapter begins. At the beginning, a storm rages, which descends in the course of the chapter and then blows over at the end. Ludwig and Judith meet in the forest, where it is raining and is already stormy. Since Judith already knows about Ludwig's identity, she reveals herself to him quickly. The love of the two rekindles again immediately; they look for protection against the weather during the storm in a cave and, eventually, shelter there, after having sex. They decide to come together again, despite Judith's marriage, and that they will elope, if there is no other option. With the mutual promises made to each other, the two separate to return to their homes. Herewith the last chapter of the main part ends.

The sixth chapter, marked as an epilogue, is the climax and end point of the novel. It starts with Ludwig and Judith meeting again for the first time after their encounter in the woods. Judith waits with Lysa in the garden of Arnold Himmelheber. Wolf Tilsiter, Judith's husband, is having surgery, as he was pushed out of bed by Judith when he tried to rape her. Wolf dies during the surgery, as is described later, during the chloroforming by Arnold Himmelheber. He confesses to murder by signaling that the death of Wolf was intentional. Judith is pregnant – not by her husband, however, but by Ludwig. Still at her husband's deathbed, she asks her lover whether he is her own – Prinz affirms this, and Himmelheber marries the two.

At the end of the book, Himmelheber, Lysa, Judith, and Ludwig undress. They sit in the garden and drink wine, seamlessly following the previous action. Himmelheber (murder) and Judith (adultery) confess their sins. Lysa also expresses her relationship with her father (incest). After her confession, she is not well and eventually breaks down. That night Lysa dies, and in the morning there are two corpses in Himmelheber's home.[56]

Interpretations

Three attempts have been made so far to interpret the novella of Landauer as a whole. "Revolution" is the leitmotif of Lorenz Jäger's article. At the beginning,

56 Ibid., 105.

Jäger analyses the relationship between Ludwig Prinz and Judith Tilsiter, especially since both still think about each other and neither have forgotten the other. Afterwards, Jäger focuses briefly on the motif of nudity and then introduces the revolutionary motif.[57] On the one hand, Jäger shows a parallel between the nude motif and ideas on paradise through Sigmund Freud's theory of dream interpretation.[58] On the other hand, he presents Himmelheber as an impulse of life and revolution. At the center of it stands his voice, on which Jäger writes that "Landauer could not think of a revolution other than as the work of a voice which has no boundaries."[59] The novella, for Jäger, is a metaphor of a possible revolution because Landauer's book on the French Revolution is similar in its dramaturgical structure to the Himmelheber novella.[60] At the end of his analysis, Jäger comes to another subject: the language of the character Lysa. Her voice and her articulation are presented as a medicine, with which Lysa's singing and rhyming is justified in the novel.[61] In Jäger's analysis of the novella *Arnold Himmelheber*, the themes of anti-Semitism and Judaism do not play a role.

In his epilogue, which he later republished as an article, Philippe Despoix interprets Landauer's text under the premise of placing Landauer as a writer in the foreground, which was unusual.[62] His perspective on the text is one of a to be found "German-Jewishness". Despoix tries to put Landauer's novella into the context of a work-historical context and embeds it with his oeuvre into a whole Jewish generation:

> Yet *Arnold Himmelheber* is also a truly significant work, albeit for reasons which lie beyond purely aesthetic considerations. It represents a search for a genre that experiments with a blending of translation, literary prose and philosophical reflection. This singular quest links Landauer not only with his close friends Mauthner and Buber, but also with a whole generation of German-Jewish intellectuals. But the utopia of a "lawless life," the fantasy pursued in *Himmelheber*, also refers to a relationship between German and Jewish culture, which is distinctive of Landauer's work in general.[63]

57 Jäger, "Herr des Lebens."
58 Ibid., 3.
59 Ibid., 5 (translation mine): "Landauer [...] sich die Revolution nicht anders denken [konnte] denn als das Werk einer Stimme, vor der keine Grenzen mehr Bestand haben.".
60 Ibid., 7–8.
61 Ibid., 9–10.
62 Despoix, "Toward a German-Jewish Construct: Landauer's Arnold Himmelheber," 121.
63 Ibid., 122–123.

In addition to this context, Despoix also breaks down the genre mix of the novella and reveals that more than "the experiment with literary form, it is the choice of subject matter which makes this work unique."[64] He then highlights a profanization of Jewish and Christian religion within the novel by, on the one hand, the desecration of the name of God by its classification as a contingency and, on the other, by Landauer reversing the words of Jesus, that he and the father are one, and, in Lysa's case, that she and the mother would be one. For Despoix, these are expressions of "Landauer's *Kulturkampf* against monotheism."[65] Despoix justifies blasphemy by saying that Ludwig and Judith must be innocent in order to be able to commit themselves to a new existence.[66] Thus, it is possible for Landauer to present Wolf Tilsiter as religious and bourgeois, and Ludwig and Judith as new men. The nakedness at the end of the novella justifies and completes the ritual of the transition.[67] After this first analysis and interpretation, Despoix introduces Hedwig Lachmann's rejection of the novella and the dispute between Landauer and his late second wife. Considerations of other friends, such as Fritz Mauthner, are also presented. Landauer's naked, incestuous end of the story, in particular, offended them. It broke several taboos of its time.[68] Despoix also addressed the representation of Jews in the novella: "The strong rejection of conventional Jewish life is brought to bear exclusively on the figure of the merchant Tilsiter. Here, Landauer plays an ambiguous way with the anti-Jewish clichés of the time. Certainly no trace of his critique is to be found in the figure of Judith, who is also Jewish."[69]

Referring to the death scene of Wolf Tilsiter, Despoix describes an affirmation of his Jewish origin:

> And just when she learns of her husband's death, the midsummer's night procession and the singing of the words "Be glad, daughter of Zion," can be heard in the background. As if hallucinating, she then perceives the words "rejoice, Jerusalem." Himmelheber's words, which had been profanatory up to this point, have suddenly reversed their meaning. A joyful affirmation of life as well as of its Jewish origins is articulated here.[70]

64 Ibid., 123.
65 Ibid., 124.
66 Ibid., 125.
67 Ibid., 125.
68 Ibid., 125–26.
69 Ibid., 127.
70 Ibid., 127.

Since Ludwig is described as of "German Christian"[71] origin by Despoix, he concludes that the "prerequisite for the construction of a new human generation, then, has a definite German-Jewish connection."[72] Constellations characterized as incestuous relationships are doomed by Landauer; "there is only one feasible future constellation, namely one in which there is a pairing of feminine-Jewish and the masculine-Christian elements, and in which, both the Jewish and Christian religions are dispensed with."[73] Himmelheber is characterized as a Faustian figure, and this is also his position in the novella. The end, Despoix argues, is more an affirmation of life as it turns towards apocalyptic-messianic expectations:

> Landauer seems to have been aware of the dangerous flip-side of anomism. But he was too Nietzschean to let his depiction of the transgression of the law take on a messianic, or even apocalyptic dimension – as was the case with Dostoevsky. In Landauer, there is a positive attitude with regard to life that surpasses the pure negation of the law. The ending of *Arnold Himmelheber* is mystical in the sense that it presents *not* some collective eschatology, but rather an ecstatic, Dionysian eros as the agent of life and death.[74]

With the help of the Freudian dream interpretation, Despoix shows that Landauer turns against the motif of the classical father figure by letting Himmelheber's relationship with his daughter be incestuous and directing his violence outwards.[75] However, he poses a crucial question: how does Landauer's aesthetic utopia change after his reception of Buber's Chassidic writings? Despoix writes: "There was certainly a shift in emphasis, as Landauer now began to articulate a positive stance toward Jewish culture – without this changing in any fundamental way his view of a necessary bipolar, German-Jewish alliance."[76] Despoix thus embeds the novella in Landauer's later life, without any conclusions being drawn from the novella itself. Hence, Despoix speaks of the fact that Landauer finds in Buber's writings the counter-image of Himmelheber, and that, for Landauer, a thinking understood as "feminine" is essential for the renewal of Jewish "identity"[77]:

71 Ibid., 127.
72 Ibid., 127.
73 Ibid., 127.
74 Ibid., 127–28.
75 Ibid., 128.
76 Ibid., 129.
77 Ibid., 130.

> In positing his aesthetic utopia of a crossing of elements from the Jewish and German cultural traditions – and this was one of the reasons he distanced himself from any metaphorics of purity – Landauer took up a most singular position between Mauthner on the one hand, and Buber on the other. Landauer showed no desire to repress Jewish culture [...] Yet Judaism could not become the basic core of his identity, as it had for Buber. This also explains why Landauer distanced himself from a cultural Zionism, which might become too strongly tied to the "ground" (*Boden*).[78]

His interpretation is severely questioned by Corinna Kaiser. In particular, she argues against the fact that Judith is drawn without anti-Semitic stereotypes and instead points to the stereotype of the '"beautiful Jewess'."[79]

Kaiser concentrates on Lysa's singing and, in particular, on its claimed power to heal,[80] as well as the interdependencies between Lysa's singing and the characters of Himmelheber and Prinz.[81] Kaiser rejects the German-Jewish connection and Despoix's positive perspective on the novella:

> The language barrier between the '"beautiful Jewess'" Judith, who remains unredeemed in spite of all the education, Wagnerian concerts, and books, and the illiterate German Ludwig, who had so effortlessly succeeded within only eight years in what the emancipation of Jews in Europe had not in more than a hundred years, that is to become part of the European cultural and linguistic community with every fiber, no longer being subject to restrictions of access and discrimination, raises justified doubts as to whether sustainable means, according to Despoix, "a constellation in which the female-Jewish and the male-German pair, simultaneously dismiss the Jewish as well as the Christian religion."[82]

Hence, Kaiser moves on to analyze and interpret the character of Judith. With the name "Judith", Landauer refers to the Jewish tradition in the form of the popular apocryphal book *Judith*. Although Landauer's Judith and her husband are described as Jewish and married synagogically, they are not credited with any religiosity.

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78 Ibid.

79 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 226.

80 Ibid., 218.

81 Ibid., 218–19.

82 Ibid., 226 (translation mine): "Die Sprachbarriere zwischen der schönen Jüdin Judith, die trotz aller Bildung, WagnerKonzerte und Bücher unerlöst bleibt, und dem illiteraten Deutschen Ludwig, dem so scheinbar mühelos in nur acht Jahren das gelang, was die Emanzipation der Juden in Europa in hundert Jahren nicht erreicht hatte, nämlich mit jeder Faser Teil der europäischen Kultur- und Sprachgemeinschaft zu werden und keinen Zugangsbeschränkungen und Diskriminierungen mehr zu unterliegen, wirft berechtigte Zweifel auf, ob als zukunftsfähig nur, wie Despoix meint, eine Konstellation [erscheint], in der sich weiblich-Jüdisches und männlich-Deutsches paare und zugleich die jüdische wie die christliche Religion verabschiedet werden."

Kaiser sees the pseudonym "Ida", which Judith uses in the letters, on the one hand as a distancing from herself as Judith and, on the other hand, with reference to an earlier chapter of her book, as a biographical reference to Landauer's early love Ida Wolf.[83] In contrast to her ancient model, Landauer's Judith did not save her people, but only wanted to save her own life. However, this Judith, in contrast to her ancient namesake, persists with an attitude of waiting, awaiting a savior who appears in the form of Ludwig Prinz and Arnold Himmelheber.[84] With regard to, among other things, the creation of a kind of new religion by Himmelheber, including Judith's "conversion", Kaiser classifies the novella as a typical conversion novel and as a beautiful Jewess text.[85] Here, however, no one converts to Christianity, but to Himmelheber's new religion.[86]

Kaiser, then, shows how Jews are portrayed in Landauer's novella and stresses at the beginning of the section that Landauer only serves anti-Semitic stereotypes.[87] Kaiser highlights this assumption with the description of the village of Schöneck, which is peppered with anti-Semitic stereotypes:[88]

> The use of anti-Semitic stereotypes and comparisons, which do not show any distancing but rather culminate in its elimination, is disturbing in this novel by Landauer, and Despoix's reference to a statement made by Landauer in 1913 in which he argued against baptism for Jews [...] is ahistorical, as he skips almost twenty years. Rather, two of Landauer's perceptions of Judaism intersect: his politically motivated critique of capitalism, for which he uses the anti-Semitic stereotype of the "trading Jew", and his confession to Judaism, which he seeks to detach from this criticism.[89]

The scene at the end of the novella, in which Lysa hears the song of the *Johannisumzug* and in her own ears the song *Tochter Zion* (Daughter Zion), is regarded

83 Ibid., 226 – 27.
84 Ibid., 228.
85 Ibid., 230.
86 Ibid., 230.
87 Ibid., 231.
88 Ibid., 232 – 33.
89 Ibid., 235 (translation mine): "Der Gebrauch antisemitischer Stereotype und Vergleiche, die keinerlei Distanzierung erkennen lassen, sondern in der Elimination gipfeln, verstört in dieser Novelle Landauers, und Despoix' Verweis auf eine Aussage Landauers von 1913, in der er sich gegen Judentaufen aussprach [...] ist a-historisch, da er fast zwanzig Jahre überspringt. Vielmehr treffen hier zwei Wahrnehmungen Landauers vom Judentum zusammen: seine politisch motivierte Kapitalismuskritik, für die er sich des antisemitischen Stereotyps des Börsenjudentums bedient, und sein eigenes Bekenntnis zum Judentum, das er von dieser Kritik abzuspalten sucht."

by Kaiser as the second central intermediate event of the novella.[90] The sources of the Daughter Zion song, such as the books of the prophets Zephaniah and Zechariah, are important to Kaiser's interpretation. Judith recognizes at this point "what Himmelheber had just accomplished, namely, the clearing-up of her enemy, her Jewish husband Wolf Tilsiter. Through this reference Arnold Himmelheber is, thus, called the Messiah."[91] Himmelheber is conceived as the Messiah of his new religion, which is celebrated in the final scene – naked in the garden:

> Several linguistic crises and forms of language skepticism, but also testimonies of faith in a power of language, combine in Landauer's *Lebenskunst / Arnold Himmelheber* with anti-Semitic stereotypes, represented by the "eternal Jew", Wolf Tilsiter and his wife, the "beautiful Jewess", Judith Tilsiter, born Schammes, and are also a textual as well as a structural feature of the novella.[92]

Finally, Kaiser notes that Landauer's use of anti-Semitic stereotypes reveals not only his reception of Nietzsche and Wagner but also an insecurity of the Jewish self and its position in society. Moreover, she rejects the positive interpretations of the novella by Despoix, as well as Altenhofer's assertion that there is no Jewish issue in Landauer's novella.[93]

Despite her focus on intermediality, Kaiser contributes a great deal to the deciphering and interpretation of *Arnold Himmelheber*. In particular, her distinctions from the interpretation of Despoix are not only insightful but also helpful for the subsequent interpretation of this work.

Arnold Himmelheber: An Alternative Approach

Both Despoix and Kaiser have strong and sometimes even contradictory points in their interpretations, but I think a synthesis of both approaches is possible and necessary, because, despite the anti-Semitic stereotypes, a positive attitude

90 Ibid., 235–36.

91 Ibid., 238 (translation mine): "[...] was Himmelheber soeben vollbracht hatte, nämlich das Hinwegräumen ihres Feindes, ihres jüdischen Ehemannes Wolf Tilsiter. Arnold Himmelheber wird also mittels des Verweises zum Messiah ausgerufen."

92 Ibid., 242 (translation mine): "Mehrere Sprachkrisen und Formen der Sprachbezweiflung, zugleich aber auch Zeugnisse des Glaubens an eine Sprachmacht, treffen in Landauers Lebenskunst/Arnold Himmelheber mit antisemitischen Stereotypen, repräsentiert durch den Ewigen Juden Wolf Tilsiter und seine Frau, die Schöne Jüdin Judith Tilsiter, geborene Schammes, zusammen und sind inhaltliches wie strukturelles Kennzeichen der Novelle."

93 Ibid., 245.

towards Jewish "identity" can be seen in Landauer's text. However, it is not the traditional religious way of life of rural Jewry. In addition, some details need to be elaborated, mainly because of their actuality and usability. Kaiser's study is used as the main reference. Moreover, I will point to Landauer's radicalism which can also be seen in this novella.

The starting point of my interpretation is the assumption that Landauer is looking in his text for a possible "identity" or "self-identification" for a modern Jew. Here, following the text of Despoix, Landauer was "on the search for a genre whose field of experimentation included both the transmission, the literary prose, and the philosophical reflection"[94] with a whole generation of German-Jewish intellectuals, such as, among others, Martin Buber and Fritz Mauthner.[95]

My approach is to scrutinize the characters and to use them as tools for my analysis of the novella. Five relevant characters play a major role in Landauer's novella. Arnold Himmelheber is the eponymous and main character of the novella. At the time of the story, he is sixty-two years old, strongly built, with a grey beard.[96] Ludwig Prinz describes him as a man with "a healthy redness around his cheekbones and with a brightening eye under his forehead".[97] This positive image is rounded off by a beautiful bass voice.[98] Although Himmelheber is referred to as Satan and as in league with the devil, which is mentioned in the research literature several times,[99] Prinz calls him a role model who "inhales life through all his pores and exhales happiness".[100] In addition, he uses his medical abilities at the service of people who apparently do not want to go to any other doctor; hence, he helps a Jew from the countryside who has come to him, even though he is already retired. Himmelheber also does not take any payment; he even inquired after a former patient.[101] Therefore, he appears to have a duty-minded and solidary character. It must, however, not be withheld that after his patient left, Himmelheber denounces all rural Jews as pigs.[102] There is no apparent reason for it, and no explanation is given; it is also the only direct verbal insinuation of Jews by Himmelheber. In the research literature there is a neglect-

94 Despoix, "Konstruktion des Deutsch-Jüdischen," 111.
95 Ibid., 111.
96 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 20, 27, 72.
97 Ibid., 72 (translation mine): "[...] eine[r] gesunde[n] Röte um die Backenknochen und mit Glanzaugen unter der Stirn [...]".
98 Ibid., 19.
99 Ibid., 21, 36.
100 Ibid., 58 (translation mine): "[...] durch alle Poren Leben saugt und Glück ausatmet [...]".
101 Ibid., 25–26.
102 Ibid., 126.

ed passage of the novella, which is described shortly before the visit of his patient: "[Himmelheber] lay one afternoon in his rocking chair in the study [...] smoking and slowly thinking while reading a thick book. His body was wrapped in a dressing-gown, his head was covered by a round cap of light-green velvet, and his feet by light slippers of gritty, very thin sheepskin."[103] It becomes clear that Himmelheber himself is Jewish. In my opinion, he is wearing a *Kippah* and the "thick book" that he is reading from could easily be a *Tanakh*. It is a small detail but, in my opinion, a decisive one, as it would contradict Corinna Kaiser's assertion that Himmelheber is not Jewish.[104] Hence, it is not a non-Jew who kills the Jew Tilsiter, but rather a different, *new* Jew who does. Himmelheber is conceived by Kaiser as the Messiah of a new religion, in which the old Jew is extinguished and a new one emerges, away from Jewish tradition.[105] However, the fact that Himmelheber is himself a Jewish character shows that this new religion does not have to split off from its Jewish part or to discard it altogether. Himmelheber is rather the embodiment of a new Jewishness, a notion that Landauer later develops. Here, too, it must be pointed out that in the novella Christianity is portrayed as a community in Landauer's sense of the word, as expressed in his political writings until 1908; that means Christianity was the embodiment of a spirit between humans and, in a way, as a spiritual community. However, it is essential that the Jewish motif did not develop with Landauer's reading of Buber, but is already clearly present in the character of Arnold Himmelheber. It is important to ask what Himmelheber's function in the novella is. Certainly, his name – Himmel-heber, meaning "heaven-lifter," shows us that he is a mediator not only between the old and the new, but also between Ludwig Prinz and Judith Tilsiter. Moreover, he is the bearer of an idea for a new society. Likewise, he is the mediator between Judith and her husband Wolf – by killing the latter, he thereby completes his mediation between Ludwig and Judith.

Lysa or Suse is hardly described physically. At the end of the novel, one can read that she is "delicate and slender."[106] Moreover, the reader learns at the beginning of the novella about the intimate relationship between Lysa and her father Arnold, which is already hinted to be an incestuous relationship,[107] but Lysa

103 Ibid., 24 (translation mine): "[Himmelheber] lag eines Nachmittags in seinem Schaukelstuhl im Studierzimmer [...] rauchend und langsam-nachdenklich in einem dicken Buche lesend. Um den Leib hatte er einen Schlafrock, auf dem Kopfe ein rundes Käppchen aus hellgrünem Samt und an den Füßen leichte Pantoffeln aus grellrotem, sehr dünnem Schafleder."

104 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 233.

105 Ibid., 238.

106 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 90 (translation mine): "zart und schlank".

107 Ibid., 23 – 24.

does not want to make it public.[108] Eventually, one only learns that Lysa suffers from a disease that is said to be related to the heart.[109] Moreover, she seems to be extremely devoted to her father, towards whom she cannot take any opposition and who she always wants to please. For example, when Ludwig ate all the cake, Lysa brings him cigars as a substitute.[110] Since she is a half-orphan and little is known about her, Lysa appears unhistorical, unlike Ludwig and Judith. Kaiser has written extensively on her singing and its function in the novella in her PhD thesis.[111] Here, I would like to point out that Lysa could also represent the character of a *femme fragile*, as Walter Fähnders explains: she is shown as aesthetically pleasing, pale and very delicate – qualities we find in the description of Lysa. However, her character could also be understood as a *femme enfant,* which is also constructed as being directed to the sexual seduction of men.[112]

Ludwig Prinz is a twenty-six-year-old doctor, who has just passed his final medical exam examination, unusually fast.[113] Physically, Ludwig is scarcely described; he carries a pince-nez and appears to be an averagely trained young man.[114] In addition to Judith and Wolf Tilsiter, Prinz openly talks about his religion. Born as a Christian in the countryside, whose parents died and relatives had no interest in him, he grows up in nature with a shepherd and becomes the goose-shepherd of a village.[115] The almost negligible physical description of Ludwig is opposed to the elaborate presentation of his inner world. Thus, he talks with Arnold Himmelheber about his love affair and confesses that he wants a fulfilling relationship. It turns out that Judith, the early love of Prinz, is the standard that all other women have to stand up against.[116] It is more interesting, however, that Landauer describes how Prinz, after the love of his youth left him, wanted to commit suicide. It was suddenly important to him to leave something, a letter, to Judith, that he was not able to write. He hence set out for the city, where he was picked up by Himmelheber and, eventually, trained. Through the lessons, Prinz lost the desire to die.[117] He was saved by Himmelheber, who gave him a different life: Prinz refers to it in a letter to Judith as a "second

108 Ibid., 27.
109 Ibid., 14.
110 Ibid., 27.
111 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 129–216.
112 Walter Fähnders, *Avantgarde und Moderne 1890–1933 (Avant-Garde and Modernity 1890–1933)* (Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2010), 112.
113 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 14, 21.
114 Ibid., 77.
115 Ibid., 67–68.
116 Ibid., 31–32.
117 Ibid., 71–72.

birth", which changed him fundamentally. He was born "once as a living being, as a part of wild nature, and later as a human being, as a member of the great community of culture."[118] Nevertheless, Prinz feels excluded from Christianity, his apparent culture of origin: "Outside in the old world, there are communities; these church bells – I can no longer enjoy their sounds aesthetically since I have painfully realized that they mean something – for an infinite crowd of people who belong together, who understand each other. We, however, are excluded."[119]

Although Ludwig entered the European cultural world,[120] he is excluded. Ludwig speaks in the form of a collective "we", but as a more or less secular person; this "we" neither means Jewish nor Christian. This is especially because they hear church bells and give a certain meaning to it. Perhaps he already feels connected to a new world, a different community, which, however, does not exist yet. In my opinion, it is a premonition of the new connection with Judith and an evolving new community. Landauer will later develop this idea of a new community:[121] he will call it "a becoming nation"[122] and "grown-becoming".[123] However, the "new" does not appear to be realizable on its own, which is why Prinz needs a female counterpart, Judith, who also considers him to be her savior.[124]

Judith Tilsiter is described as a young woman whose beauty is unusual and who is getting more beautiful every year.[125] She is not described in detail; the reader only learns in the last chapter that she is "rich and full".[126] She has been married to Wolf Tilsiter for eight years and lives in a village inhabited by Christians and Jews.[127] To get out of her village, Breitenau, in which she feels

118 Ibid., 66 (translation mine): "[...] einmal als lebendiges Wesen, als ein Stück wilde Natur, und später noch als Mensch, als Mitglied der großen Gemeinschaft der Kultur.".

119 Ibid., 59 (translation mine): "Draußen in der alten Welt, da gibt es Gemeinschaften; diese Kirchenglocken – ich kann ihre Klänge auch nicht mehr ästhetisch genießen, seit es mir schmerzvoll zum Bewußtsein gekommen, daß sie etwas bedeuten – für eine unendliche Menschenschar, die zusammengehören, die einander verstehen. Wir aber sind ausgeschlossen."

120 Ibid., 73.

121 Gustav Landauer, "Durch Absonderung zur Gemeinschaft (Through Isolation to Community)," in *Skepsis und Mystik: Versuche im Anschluss an Mauthners Sprachkritik*, ed. Siegbert Wolf, Ausgewählte Schriften 7 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2011), 131–47.

122 Gustav Landauer, "Sind das Ketzergedanken? (Are These Heretical Thoughts?)," in *Philosophie und Judentum*, Ausgewählte Schriften 5 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2012), 365 (translation mine): "eine werdende Nation".

123 Ibid., 368 (translation mine): "Geworden-werdendes".

124 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 76.

125 Ibid., 41.

126 Ibid., 90 (translation mine): "üppig und voll".

127 Ibid., 25, 39.

constricted, she finally marries Wolf and lives with him in the town of Schöneck, which, however, equals hers.[128] In addition, she has the urge to be different from her surroundings.[129]

Her honeymoon leads Judith to the capital, where she comes into contact with culture, especially with art and the music of Richard Wagner (1813–1883). After her return, she begins to read the books she received for her wedding. However, she hides her *Bildung* (education) from her husband.[130] Here, we see an alienation of Judith from her husband, but also from her former self. Without realizing it, she also enters the European cultural world. Judith is not depicted as particularly Jewish. She neither seems to do any particular housework in this regard, nor are her external characteristics attributed to a Jewish stereotype (regarding the motif of the beautiful Jewess, see below). It could also be argued that Landauer possibly played with the motif of a *femme fatale,* which was in quite common use at this time.[131] In a letter to Ludwig, she even appears rather arrogant: "But I will not; I do not believe in any hidden providence; not even blind coincidence."[132] As honest as she is here, she does not make any illusions about the circumstances from which she would like to break out again.[133] It is unusual that she gives herself a pseudonym when she writes her letters to Prinz. Corinna Kaiser referred to the name of Landauer's young love Ida Wolf,[134] who, in my opinion, became Judith and Wolf Tilsiter, because the pseudonym of Judith and the first name of her husband merge in the name, Ida Wolf. It is remarkable, however, that his relationship with Ida Wolf ended in 1891 and his work on the novella began two years later.[135] Thus, an image of rural Jewry, which Landauer evokes in his novel, seems for him to be closely connected with Ida Wolf.

The character of Wolf Tilsiter is depicted negatively in the novella. Wolf has been married to Judith for eight years, but they do not have children yet.[136] He is presented as Jewish and has, as Kaiser shows, a classic Jewish name for his time.[137] Wolf works as a cattle trader in the village of Schöneck and is rather

128 Ibid., 41–42.
129 Ibid., 42.
130 Ibid., 47–49.
131 Walter Fähnders, *Avantgarde und Moderne*, 111.
132 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 56.
133 Ibid., 56.
134 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 227.
135 Ibid., 105–6.
136 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 25.
137 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 240, footnote 157.

practically-minded, since he also uses his honeymoon to do some trade deals.[138] At the beginning, Wolf behaves differently towards Judith, as she had a positive impression of him. However, she was soon disappointed. Starting with the wedding night, Wolf is described increasingly negatively, first as "raw, silly, presumptuous, without any momentum, greedy and low",[139] then even as a "raw animal, no, worse than [an] animal, [...] [a] degenerate human being."[140] These descriptions of Wolf have rightly been characterized as anti-Semitic stereotypes in all research literature. Thus, Wolf apparently has the task, on the one hand, to be the flip side of Judith, and, on the other hand, to represent an old and uncultivated world as well as rural Jewry. In addition, he serves in the story as a justification for adultery, in particular through his violent nature, which ultimately also relativizes his murder.[141]

Kaiser not only shows that Wolf receives anti-Semitic attributions, but that his wife Judith is depicted as the reverse, representing a different, opposite stereotype. Since it is not necessary to repeat what can be read in the study of Kaiser, an attempt is made to interpret the depictions differently.[142] Despoix's solution is that a new form emerges from the combination of "the feminine-Jewish and the masculine-Christian".[143] According to Kaiser, Judith, despite her *Bildung*, still does not belong to the European cultural and linguistic community without discrimination.[144] I agree with her in this specific critique of Despoix, but the *Bildung* motif appears to be more complex and different in this novella than Kaiser's presentation suggests. Landauer seems to indicate something with the connection between Judith and Ludwig. When the two meet on the "devil's pulpit", they sleep together in the falcon cave, while also described is how they flooded "the dams of culture".[145] At the turn of the century, in around 1900, the *Lebensreformbewegung* (life-reform movement) demanded and practiced new ways of living, including free love. In literature this movement was reflected in sexual motifs, especially provocative ones. Authors wrote, for example, on incest or vi-

138 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 47–48.

139 Ibid., 47 (translation mine): "roh, albern, anmaßend, ohne jeen Schwung, geldgierig und niedrig."

140 Ibid., 82 (translation mine): "mit einem rohen Tier, nein, schlimmer als [ein] Tier [...] [als ein]entartete[r] Mensch."

141 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 211.

142 Ibid., 226–35.

143 Despoix, "Konstruktion des Deutsch-Jüdischen," 118.

144 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 226.

145 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 83 (translation mine): "über die Dämme der Kultur".

olence with a sexual background.[146] Here, we also find characteristics of Landauer's novella.

Before and during their meeting in the forest, there is a thunderstorm, which depicts the whole scene as a natural force. When the two want to leave again, the sun shines shortly before sunset. The completion of their intercourse, and the new life arising therefrom, will be revealed later. The thunderstorm passes, the social convention was broken and lost its significance, and as the weather clears, the new, shared life of Judith and Ludwig begins.[147] It is not only Judith and Ludwig who are the solution to a seemingly cultural or ethnic difference, but also their common child. On the one hand, it is clear that women play an important part in this story and development; it remains, therefore, to question if there are resemblances to the well-known conception of Johann Jakob Bachofen (1815–1887) concerning matriarchy and the position of women in society.[148] However, with Landauer's solution presented in the novella, we already witness what Landauer later explicitly suggests for combating anti-Semitism: sexual love (*Geschlechtsliebe*), ergo, mixed-marriages, which he presented in his essay "In Sachen Judentum" (On the Matter of Judaism) in 1901.[149] Landauer's position, however, has already been indicated in his novella.

Nevertheless, the criticism of Despoix, as mentioned above, persists, since the new community that Judith and Ludwig seek is represented by their child and by themselves. Their child, however, only surpasses the stereotypical attributions to Jews. At this point it could be argued that Landauer was aware of the negative stereotype of the beautiful Jewess and dissolves it with the child, but clear references to the intention of Landauer are missing here. Despite these objections, the analysis of Corinna Kaiser is impressive and should be supplemented with the arguments presented.

A neglected topic is the motif of *Bildung*, which is also a leitmotif of German-Jewish history.[150] Judith and Ludwig were rather late to cultural education, while

146 Walter Fähnders, *Avantgarde und Moderne*, 113.

147 On the usage of landscape and weather in literary texts, see Elizabeth George, *Wort für Wort: oder Die Kunst, ein gutes Buch zu schreiben (Word by Word: or The Art of Writing a Good Book)* (Munich: Goldmann, 2004), 49–61.

148 Johann Jakob Bachofen and Hans-Jürgen Heinrichs, *Das Mutterrecht: eine Untersuchung über die Gynaikokratie der alten Welt nach ihrer religiösen und rechtlichen Natur (The Right of Mothers: an Investigation on Gynaikokraitie on the old World according to its Religious and Juridical Nature)* (re-print) (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2003).

149 Gustav Landauer, "In Sachen: Judentum (In Matters of Judaism)," in *Philosophie und Judentum*, Ausgewählte Schriften 5 (Lich/Hessen: Verlag Edition AV, 2012), 341–45.

150 See for example George L. Mosse, *German Jews beyond Judaism* (Bloomington, Cincinnati: Indiana University Press, Hebrew Union College Press, 1985).

Wolf Tilsiter was not confronted by it at all. Lysa studies with her father, but her education is not discussed further. Himmelheber appears as a mediator of education and as the one who apparently had to deal with education all his life. For Ludwig and Judith, however, their education is like a new birth. Both are portrayed as "close to nature". Ludwig learns to write, and within eight years he develops from an illiterate goose shepherd to a trained physician. This is also an expression of what non-formal education can achieve in contrast to obligatory formal schooling. Judith comes into contact with modern culture through her journey to the capital, and after her return, she educates herself auto-didactically through reading. In contrast to Kaiser, who recognizes a failure of the emancipation of the Jews in the rapid rise of Ludwig, since Judith remains unredeemed,[151] it seems rather as if *Bildung* creates the precondition that both redeem themselves together, since even Ludwig does not feel a part of society[152] and when they meet again in the woods, they say: "We have both become two new human beings."[153] Education, eventually, rescues Ludwig, and Judith can escape from her marriage into *Bildung*.

It should be noted that Landauer did not develop his own theory of self-perception in this novella. For Landauer, education was the entrance ticket into society, especially for Jews. Moreover, the fact that he so intensely criticized the normative variant of Judaism (the normative variant of Christianity is also not excluded here) shows Landauer to be at the center of the discourse on identity and modernity of his time. With regard to the different "identity offers," that were self-concepts which answered the modern "Jewish question," Landauer was not interested in any of them. He presented different approaches to Jewish self-perception, and preferred neither the national-liberal nor the assimilationist nor the Zionist self-conception.[154]

Although the eponymous Arnold Himmelheber is an important character, Ludwig and Judith are the protagonists of the novella, because the story is told exclusively from their perspective, and thus they are at its core. Hence, Himmelheber is a mediator, but not too exaggerated in his role and function, for Ludwig and Judith, and even their common child, seem to signify the future of a modern community, if not of a modern Jewish "identity."

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151 Kaiser, *Gustav Landauer als Schriftsteller*, 226.

152 Landauer, *Arnold Himmelheber*, 59.

153 Ibid., 81 (translation mine): "Wir sind beide zwei neue Menschen geworden."

154 There is vast literature on these issues; for an introduction see Steven M. Lowenstein et al., eds., *Deutsch-jüdische Geschichte in der Neuzeit (German-Jewish History in modern Times)*, 3: Umstrittene Integration 1871–1918 (München: Verlag C.H. Beck, 1997).

In his novella, Landauer especially juxtaposes rural and urban Jewry; he prefers the latter, because it appears to be more cultivated and, above all, more progressive. However, the coming together of Jews and Christians in Germany is determined by anti-Semitic discourses, as is having children appear to Landauer as liberation in the sense of overcoming prejudices as well as the "old religions." However, Landauer's radical approach to paradigms of Jewish self-perception is a concept of a kind of new religion, with nature as the common ground rather than Jewish tradition, although it is introduced by a secular Jewess and a secular Christian. This connection is also mediated and initiated by a Jew, Arnold Himmelheber, who, however, expresses revulsion towards his fellow believers; however, this rejection does not represent Landauer's standpoint.

Conclusion: Gustav Landauer as Radical Writer

By scrutinizing the novella and taking into account the research literature, I think *Arnold Himmelheber* should clearly be seen as a testimony of Landauer's search for Jewish self-identification. Despite the anti-Semitic stereotypes he reproduces,[155] it is an examination of Landauer's idea of rural as well as urban Jewry and a new form of community. Thereby, as I emphasized, the neglected point is that Arnold Himmelheber himself is Jewish.

The novella indicates some of Landauer's later positions, which is also a clue that he is on the lookout, and that the interpretations of both Kaiser and Despoix are justified. However, Landauer later develops a different individual concept of Jewish "identity" in his *Sind das Ketzergedanken?*[156] The novella indicates that Landauer approached the fundamental question of modernity quite early in his oeuvre and presented his thought process in the form of a fictional text. He does so in a rather radical style: he uses exaggerations such as anti-Semitic stereotypes to delegitimize rural Jewry as well as taboos to free himself of the stiff and narrow moral corset of his time. The outcome of this process is the idea of a new community, which he also calls religion, which overcomes and radically rejects the "old" religious and national affiliations and notions as well as the racialized attributes which came into being at the turn of the century.

The above mentioned differentiation as a core of the process of modernity is reflected in Landauer's novella as well. He deals with the question of whether

155 At this point, it is not quite clear if he does this consciously or not.

156 Gustav Landauer, "Sind das Ketzergedanken? (Are These Heretical Thoughts?)," in *Vom Judentum: Ein Sammelband*, ed. Verein jüdischer Hochschüler Bar Kochba in Prag (Leipzig: Kurt Wolff Verlag, 1913), 250 – 57.

Jewish self-perception should be based on religion or a non-religious concept of the "self". Landauer sides with the non-religious approach by delegitimizing rural (orthodox) Jewry as well as urban (reformed) Jewry and presenting his concept of a new community. He is, consequently, not so interested in the question of who is a Jew but rather in how to deal with the differentiation of Jews and non-Jews alike. Hence, he approaches this topic radically by pursuing the basis of the "identity-question" of modernity, rejecting the traditional communities of his time and presenting his idea of a new community. This community radically breaks with the "old world" by creating new humans who are not only physically renewed, but also stand on new moral ground. That would mean a new mankind arises and, consequently, the question of "modern identities" would be obsolete.

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