

Cultural Study, Doxa, Dictionaries: The Case of Jewish Identity

Georges-Elia Sarfati

French, Tel Aviv

Abstract This essay is a contribution to the theory as well as to the critical analysis of doxa. Analyzing French dictionaries of the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries, it shows how they organize, transform, and develop dominant representations of Jewish identity. It thus studies doxa across historical, cultural, and ideological issues in discourse and more specifically discourse endowed with a legitimizing power and a pedagogical vocation. One of the objectives of this study is to show that the neutrality of dictionary is only apparent: self-evidence is a cultural construction that escapes the subjects' awareness. The analysis as a whole is based on a fundamental distinction between the (dominant) exogenous and (dominated) endogenous perspectives.

1. Locating the Problem

This essay seeks to identify, through a specific case study, those discursive mechanisms by means of which dictionaries both legitimate and reproduce one or more doxa. My goal is to disclose the major cultural commonplaces that govern the representation of Jewish identity over a period of ten centuries, viewed relative to breaks that arise as much from “the evolution of language” as from historical changes.

The aim is not just to contribute to the delineation of the discursive modes that exhibit prejudice, covering its most foreseeable variants (stereotypes, received ideas) in the name of a supposed critical position. It also includes mobilizing the postulates of criticism—in particular, those bear-

ing on the analysis and history of discourse and texts—in order to apply the experience derived from them to cultural and pedagogical reflection.

In this regard, scrutiny of the discursive representations of Jewish identity is largely a substitute for a paradigmatic study that can provide if not a model then at least a stimulus for a more systematic characterization of the status of nonnative or alien groups in this type of work. This will enable us to contribute to the development of a critique that will satisfy the methodological requirements of discourse analysis and history as well as to sketch out an extension of these disciplines to a topic whose anthropological and cultural implications have so far been underexplored.

The great diversity of “cultural studies,” as well as the topical nature of this field, have unquestionably been influenced by the major historical changes of the second half of the twentieth century. Underlying the rise of this discipline are two sets of forces, which are still operative: the development of Western-type societies toward multicultural models and concomitantly the recognition of minorities. It is a fact that wars of decolonization played a large role in the emergence of new forms of awareness and also, ultimately, in a movement that insists on the value of differences. It is also a fact that, at its best, this twofold shift has led to a philosophical challenge to ethnocentrism as well as to a reevaluation of the concept of civilization.

2. Methodological and Theoretical Framework

2.1. *The Critique of Philosophical Models*

Dictionaries relate to two discursive approaches. Traditionally, particularly in the school world, these works fill the role of teaching aids or additional sources for class exercises or language acquisition, but at the same time they may also be described as historical documents. For the analyst, this dual status is not an either/or choice but a given, the two aspects being complementary, not to say correlative.

With dictionaries viewed as historical documents, the reading that will be applied to them will take account of their inclusion in a cultural configuration by virtue of a number of their entries. This is the setting in which they are addressed here. However, the theoretical framework for studying these entries must be specified. Right from the outset we exclude the naive, that is, directly empirical, perspective. The proposed analysis issues from a linguistic theory of doxa, and some of its postulates must first be made explicit and surveyed, before I indicate how they fit in here with the examination of what dictionaries contain.

This theory of doxa constitutes an attempt to establish a critical perspective within the language sciences. In other words, what is involved is

conceptualizing a discursive theory of ideologies in linguistics as well as in discourse analysis and subsequently developing (theoretical) means for deconstructing specific ideologies. What epistemological reasons can be advanced to justify such an undertaking? Both the theory and the criticism of ideologies largely derive from the philosophical tradition. The very principle goes back to Karl Marx's *German Ideology*. But this approach—with markedly different postulates, particularly linked to Martin Heidegger's metaphysics—is taken up not only in Jacques Derrida's deconstruction, but also in Michel Foucault's theory of micropowers.

Specific to philosophical criticism is the fact that its radical viewpoint does not involve any particular theorizing about discourse/power relations within a general framework that includes all forms of discourse. Marxist thought articulates a concept of ideology that fundamentally ignores the discursive parameter: Marx characterizes an ideology as the aggregate of representations (both mystified and mystifying) that dominate a social group. In the contemporary conceptual field the critique of theoretical humanism (which Heidegger undertakes in his *Letter on Humanism*) gives rise to interpretations that, from our viewpoint, fail to provide a discursive understanding of ideological representations. Louis Althusser's neo-Marxism, in *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus*, intuitively senses ideology's discursive dimension. Through the notion of "interpellation" ("ideology interpellates the individual as subject"), there gradually arises the understanding that the effect of ideological norms is connected in some way with how discourse produced in a social group exercises a hold over the subject.

Again, the theory of discursive practices developed by Foucault (who studied under Althusser) limits the analysis of the knowledge/power relationship to examining constituent configurations (in the legal-scientific domain hospitals, prisons, social sciences, sexuality). The theory of the social archive that is attached to this enterprise (*The Archeology of Knowledge*) rules out the possibility of relating the effect of the discourses examined to the doxa underlying them. "Archeology is not doxography," as Foucault points out.

Undoubtedly, right from the outset, Derrida's deconstruction would appear to be a critique of language (*Of Grammatology*). But it is also—and primarily—a questioning of the basic divisions that organize conceptual thought (philosophical discourse, philosophical-linguistic discourse, etc.). Derrida's polemic against John Searle concerning the status of language, and more specifically of literature, is characteristic of a critique of language that specialized in challenging the categories of rationality. Finally, in an approach that owes much to critical philosophy, Pierre Bourdieu's soci-

ology develops a concept of “habitus,” whose use still leaves implicit the taking account of discourse. Bourdieu’s only contribution to sociolinguistics (*Ce que parler veut dire*) does not bring anything fundamentally new to the understanding of knowledge/power relations since J. L. Austin’s speech act theory.

2.2. *For a Pragmatics of Norms*

The theory I propose is more modest, its point of departure different, and its range far more general. Considering ideology in a linguistic perspective involves a shift in its problematics.

My thinking here links up with recent developments in pragmatics, especially with the work of the French linguist Oswald Ducrot. He tries to integrate pragmatics with the linguistics that has arisen from Ferdinand de Saussure’s structuralist interpretation. In the most recent phase of his research, after having long studied the argumentative aspect of utterances in ordinary language, Ducrot focuses on the conditions of utterance. In a way reminiscent of some of the rhetorical questioning that has come down from Aristotle, his “integrated pragmatics” makes an issue of the function of *topoi* (commonplaces). According to Ducrot, a sequence of utterances (of the type: “It’s lovely weather, let’s go for a walk”) obeys a certain logic because it is based on an implicit principle that is shared by the speakers (in this case, the principle that lovely weather is an argument in favor of going for a walk). This brings up to date, within contemporary pragmatics, that part of ancient rhetoric (known as *inventio*) that seeks and organizes arguments. For Aristotle, as for all theorists of the art of oratory (including Chaïm Perelman’s new rhetoric), an orator’s speech will be effective in proportion to its use of the audience’s beliefs.

This outlook is of interest to us in that it makes possible a theoretical framework for both the description and the understanding of the normative structures of speech. Where we do not follow Ducrot is over the nature of his subject as well as the status of theory. “Integrated pragmatics” always chooses to analyze the argumentative behavior of isolated utterances in context; it is characterized by minimalism on the level of principle. On the other hand, the theory of *topoi* considers only certain sequences of utterances possessing obvious argumentative value. Lastly, it is limited to a description of utterances without at any point envisaging a systematizing of such useful insights. In our view, the resurgence of rhetorical questioning calls for a linguistic theory of *doxa* (opinion) that is at one and the same time general, descriptive, and critical.

To address the feature of generality first. The problem of *doxa* as disseminated by Plato (Book IV of the *Republic*) decisively gives rise to philosophical

discourse. With Socrates, philosophy appears as thought cut off from opinion. But Aristotle's thought recognizes in opinion an effective component to be incorporated as one of the sources of shared rationality (side by side with empirical and mathematical knowledge). True, certain recent approaches (notably the work of Roland Barthes) would renew the Platonic deprecation of doxa. In my opinion, however, a theory of doxa must first and foremost propose a neutral definition of this concept. And I accordingly define a *doxa* as the ensemble of norms (beliefs, values, motifs) invested in discourse.

Now for descriptiveness. Setting up a theory requires a number of conceptual distinctions that will enable a successful analysis of discourse. Following Sarfati (2000, 2002a, and 2002b), we distinguish between two perspectives in the study of doxa: one historical and diachronic, or doxogenesis, and the other synchronic and functional, or doxopraxy. But the analysis of a doxa results from the establishment of an evidentiary corpus characterized as doxography. Subsequently, characterizing a doxic position constitutes a doxology. The methodical study of doxa defines the object of doxanalysis. Finally, we use the term doxeme for the aggregate of semantic elements that specifically characterize the content of doxa.¹

As to the critical aspect, it does not in itself count as a necessity of the theory, but as one of its possibilities. Here we must define the social use or uses that can be made of a discursive theory of doxa, taking into account the researcher's leanings or political sympathies. If theory guarantees that the field of study is objectivized, the choice of the object to be analyzed indicates the researcher's presuppositions and concerns.

As far as I know, no similar research has been carried out in the language sciences. We have indicated above the possible interferences between research of this type and other, strictly philosophical models. In the North American context, it appears that Searle's most recent thinking (1995) tends to question the background of practices from a related perspective. However, I have found in this important author no specific references to doxa in the sense defined here. The theoretical perspective thus identified amounts, moreover, to a reevaluation of the tasks of pragmatics. Defined by W. C. Morris (1938) as the study of how subjects use signs, pragmatics (I would suggest) rather studies norms that lead subjects to use signs.

2.3. Dictionaries and Doxa

A last remark will clarify the link made here between the principles of the discursive theory of doxa and the analysis of lexicographical discourse. In

1. This listing outlines the operational concepts of the discursive theory of doxa. For the sake of readability, however, the analyses below do not use these concepts, or not explicitly.

many respects dictionaries are models of the culture of an era: models not just of strictly linguistic uses (whose etymological, historical, syntactic, semantic, lexical, and literary information provides more or less precise representations), but also of aspects of belief (axiological representations, historical, scientific, moral concepts, etc.) conveyed by subjects during this same period.

In this sense, dictionaries carry an array of representations. However, are these ideologies? Not necessarily. Although an ideology can be spontaneous (which is often the case, since its effectiveness depends on the unawareness of the subject who is the first person to be vulnerable to it), it normally presents itself as an articulated, coherent, well-structured whole. An ideology has no “remnant.” I prefer to speak of doxa: a doxa is a construction of discourse, linear but not necessarily coherent. On the other hand, it does not necessarily obey a will: frequently it is an offshoot, the crystallized and possibly attenuated expression of a higher-level thought system from which it has been detached. (This may be a philosophy reduced to its commonplaces, or a doctrine reduced to its stereotypes, as well as the heterogeneous result of two initially distinct philosophical or doctrinal conceptions.)

A doxa may be the result of an expression, whether intentional or not. I will not here advance any hypotheses about the “conscious” or “unconscious” nature of the representations contained in lexicographical discourse or in any other type of discourse.

However, it must be pointed out that the idea of lexicographical tradition has two meanings. Dictionary composition obeys a very limited intertextual network: it is also, normally, associated with a linguistic policy (itself the expression of a more general policy) that implements a precise program: a State-level policy (such as the harmonization and mass diffusion of a national language²), or the politics of a group, whether in keeping with³ or hostile to⁴ the authorities.

In the light of the factors mentioned, it should now be clear that dictionaries strongly lend themselves in various ways to this kind of undertaking.

2. This was the case in France from the seventeenth century onward. The French Academy was established by royal order in order to monitor the codification of the court’s linguistic usage, which thereby became the standard of both written and spoken “good practice.”

3. This applied to the Jesuits: the different editions of the *Dictionnaire de Trévoux* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries reflect royalists’ options and subsequently those of ones sympathetic to the ancien régime.

4. The campaign of the Philosophers culminated in the *Encyclopaedia* of Denis Diderot and Jean le Rond d’Alembert, a generation before the French Revolution, with the authors claiming that the various articles convey reformist and radical ideas.

3. The Problem of Subject Matter

3.1. *The Dictionary vis-à-vis General Discourse Criteria*

The approach outlined above extends the realm of discourse and text analysis to dictionaries, making lexicographical discourse analysis (LDA) a field in its own right. Let us briefly define this field:

1. A clear-cut distinction must be made between LDA and metalexigraphy,⁵ which is generally authorized to modify the technical organization of dictionaries. What we are doing, instead, is performing a content analysis in order to bring to light the ideology underlying this type of corpus.
2. On the other hand, the three major criteria of general discourse analysis (DA) must be affirmed here. They are (a) the position of any discourse, (b) its intertextual characteristics, and (c) the nature of its physical medium (print, magnetic, IT, etc.).

A careful study of different kinds of dictionaries results in conclusive findings. For each tends to bear out the appropriate overall approach in terms of these three major features of discourse. Thus, irrespective of their registers (monolingual, bilingual, encyclopedic, analogical, etc.), dictionaries form part of a discourse community whose dynamic relates to the way that they are produced, circulated, and received: these parameters define the position criterion (a). Again, in applying a firm principle of repetition among entries, they all, whether synchronically or diachronically, constitute part of an important network of intertextual relations: hence criterion (b) obtains as well. Lastly, and this has become particularly salient since the last decade of the twentieth century, the range of physical media (from printed to on-line information) puts the dictionary on an equal footing with other types of discourse: hence criterion (c), which is also known as “inscription.”

As to how the analysis should be carried out, one last point must be made. Discourse means all the historical, sociological, and cultural conditions of producing utterances. And text designates the empirical objects that result from one or more discursive configurations. In the present case, the notion of lexicographical discourse simply designates all those textual series that can be analyzed in dictionaries and have the same subject matter, or thematics, as their common denominator (specifically the theme of Jewish identity).

5. Metalexigraphy primarily involves the technical activity of restructuring existing dictionaries, so that it partially overlaps with lexicography, the activity of producing new dictionaries.

3.2. The Entry "Jew" in Language Dictionaries: Constructing the Corpus

Analyzing a particular thematic in the lexicographic field requires a methodology adequate to both its object and the reading constraints inherent in the economy of dictionaries. It is vital to make an initial distinction between first-rank and second-rank units (Sarfati 1999).

The former correspond to the ensemble of terms under constant analysis (in this case, the word *Jew* with its immediate semantic field); while the latter, which vary over time, correspond to the ensemble of background data (Searle 1999) that significantly indicate the characteristic notions of a historical cross section as well as its changes. This second series, necessarily variable given the history of mentalities, also includes the key terms of an episteme that in each case defines the "backdrop," namely the variable data concerning both the perception and the representation of the identity studied.

In particular, this implies taking forms of power into account but also examining the relations between the background units and the semantic field of the word *Jew* as they evolve over the long term.

4. Starting Point

For a better grasp of the issues at stake in the analysis, we need to make sure that we have a tangible starting point, with our research being based on specific examples. Accordingly, preference will be given to using two contrasting lexicographical definitions. Let us begin by considering the entry for *Jew* offered by *Le Robert méthodique de la langue française*:

Jew/Jewess . . . 1. Name given since the Exile (4th century B.C.) to the descendants of Abraham (see Hebrew, Israelite). Monotheistic Semitic people who lived in Palestine. See Juda-, Judeo.

Person descended from this people, *German, Polish Jew*. Persecutions suffered by the *Jews* (see Antisemitism, Pogrom). 2. (Adj.) Relating to the community of Jews. *The Jewish people, or Chosen People. Jewish Quarter*. See Ghetto. *Jewish religion*. See Judaism. Jewish priest. See Rabbi.⁶

Next, a definition from the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (the entry *Jew*), which notably makes constant reference to the biblical Book of Esther in characterizing Jewish identity:

6. *The Methodical Robert Dictionary* (1985) places particular stress on lexical relationships and proposes canonical definitions of each term. I want to stress the fact that Jewish identity corresponds to a mainly theological and religious characterization. The historical defining elements locate this identity relative to the history of anti-Semitism, following general historiography (Sarfati 1989).

The term *Jew* designated in this period a religious, political, and national entity, without differentiation between these categories.

Of these two definitions, the first may be called an exogenous definition, insofar as it reflects an institutional utterance that thematizes Jewish identity from a viewpoint external to its modes of formation and its extremely diverse spectrum of developments. The second definition may be called endogenous, insofar as it issues from the viewpoint of the group whose representation is studied here. Comparing these two definitions enables us first to identify a marked contrast between these two types of utterance: at the same period, each assumes a distinct background, irreducible to that of its mate.

The form of thematizing the other in absentia, within the exogenous definition of Jewish existence, could also be called *utterance by imputation*: the whole of the discursive dynamic characterizes the other by projecting onto its semiotic representation perspectives that exhibit an indirect, not to say incomplete (partial or partisan), understanding of the referent, whether individual or collective.

The use of the antithetical exogenous/endogenous categories, borrowed from both anthropology and intercultural psychology, proves productive where the issue to be addressed is the molding and semiotization of points of view in spontaneous representations, those conveyed spontaneously by dialectal and sociolectal schemata. In this respect contrasting these two definitions serves to problematize, radically and fruitfully, the impression of self-evidence given by all doxa. This impression of self-evidence results from the unilateral development of endogenous discursive logic. In other words, only by distancing ourselves, through a contrastive approach, can we meticulously historicize its contents afresh, thanks to the disclosure of the mechanisms underlying the initial drive.

5. The Periodization of the Entry *Jew*

Jewish identity gives rise to constant semiotization, which varies along with the historical backdrops. To identify and analyze these variations, I would start by distinguishing between two series of units: first-rank units (which basically correspond to the semantic field of the word *Jew*) and second-rank units (corresponding to the notional and semantic context of the former in each period). In the long term, therefore, Jewish identity presents a form that constantly stands for difference. However, this is not a form that represents radical otherness. It is always relative to historical contextualizations that affect its use as well as its linguistic characterizations.

In broad terms Figure 1 presents the dialectalization of Jewish identity as

Adapted difference	Up to 12th century ("Yehudi" / "Jew")	Morphological adaptation
Relegated difference	12th–16th centuries	Formation of archetypes
Contested difference	17th century	Kingdom/Juifverie
Debated difference	18th century	Historical writings
Integrated difference	18th–19th centuries	Emancipation
Persecuted difference	19th–20th centuries	Anti-Semitism
Renascent difference	20th century (second half)	Relocation

Figure 1 Jewish identity as a form of dialectical difference.

a form of difference, one variously thematized. To each of the entries there corresponds a major historical break (specifically derived from general historiography), while a third rubric translates these fundamental events into the problematics of Jewish identity. So this system of correspondences makes explicit how the historicization of Jewish identity can be interpreted as a complex discourse event whose variations depend directly on the contact between groups and representations.

To clarify this figure further, let me now indicate as precisely as possible the links that can and must be established among these different levels of analysis. The three columns provide an extremely synthetic summary of how French-language dictionaries represent Jewish identity between the Middle Ages and modern times.

The left-hand column shows from what perspective Jewish identity is viewed in each period as a specific form of identity relative to the dominant linguistic and cultural context. The middle column specifies the historical periods within which this differentiation materializes. The right-hand column marks the linguistic and cultural tendencies that govern in each instance the understanding of Jewish identity from the dominant point of view.

How, then, should these different data be not only interpreted but also interrelated? Overall, the figure offers a panoramic view of how Jewish identity evolved in terms of its semiotic and historical representations in the French language. This semiotization is first attested by dictionaries of Old French. The data collected show that the Hebrew term *yehudi* underwent complex transposition and transcription through very distinct linguistic and cultural prisms: from the Greek *youdaios* to the Latin *judeus* and the developing European languages (English: *Jew*, German: *Juden*, Francien dialect: *Juef*, etc.). In this process of adaptation, the signifier of Hebrew

and Aramaic origin made a twofold shift to the morphology of the developing French language. Philologically, this morphological adaptation may be considered to have produced a relatively stable signifier by the twelfth century. Semantically, the sign “juef/juis/juif” (all graphical variants, since the language was not yet rigidly codified) was defined by, if not perceived from, the Christian theological point of view. However, at this initial stage Jewish identity was generally looked on as a form of difference that underwent gradual adaptation, measured by the formal integration of its distinctive verbal sign.

Next came the period of four hundred years extending from the twelfth to the late sixteenth centuries and corresponding to the shift from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. This period was crucial to the establishment of a canonical representation of Jewish identity from the non-Jewish perspective. Both Europe and European culture were at the time dominated by the discourse of the Church.

In the medieval period, Christian theological polemics against Judaism peaked. Judaism and the Jews were grasped in terms of religious discourse: Judaism was branded as the rival of the Catholic Church, symbolizing the obstinate refusal of the evangelical message; Jews were identified as members of a “deicidal people.” Four main archetypal representations of the Jews emerged. At one and the same time, the Jews were viewed as “usurers,” “killers of God,” “wandering,” and “infidels.” This fourfold judgment would survive more or less explicitly throughout the ancien régime lexicography, and even later, in a number of dictionaries of Christian theology. The Renaissance period exhibited a different but markedly ambivalent approach with a double conception of Jewish identity. Owing to the rediscovery of classical sources and culture, Judaism as a cultural expression of ancient Hebraism gained much in status. It became the object of scholarly infatuation, curiosity, and admiration (for example, François Rabelais recommended studying Latin, Greek, and Hebrew in equal parts). However, at the same time flesh-and-blood Jews were subjected to the most withering disdain. The medieval characterizations continued to be applied to them unabated. Even reformist thinkers, such as Pierre Bayle, scarcely viewed them with greater favor. In this sense Jewish identity was invariably perceived as a “relegated” entity, one consigned outside the framework of positive normativeness.

In the classical or baroque age, which historians normally assimilate to “grand century” (i.e., the reign of Louis XIV), a new structuring contrast emerged. At best, the Jews were viewed as constituting a people with a religious vocation. The terms *Chosen People* or *God’s Chosen People* often recur in dictionaries of this period. However, it must be noted that the lexicogra-

phical discourse of the classical age denies the Jews any historical consistency. At the very most they were acknowledged to be individual bearers of a dated message, witnesses to the truth of Christianity. France, at that time the “elder daughter of the Church,” was experiencing an initial characterization of *Frenchman*. Defined as a *Frenchman* was any of the king’s subjects who were born on the soil of France, professed the Catholic faith, and spoke the “françoise” language. By this criterion the Jews defined the possibility of this identity the negative way. More radically still, a careful examination of collective nouns reveals that the French seventeenth century was distinguished, in linguistic usages, by a very marked opposition of *royaume* (kingdom or realm) and *juifverie* (Jewry, the equivalent of the Italian *ghetto*). It is in this other sense that Jewish identity is then looked on as a “contested,” that is, excluded, “difference,” or as an entity whose exclusion is one of the conditions for the dominant norm of identity to cohere.

The eighteenth century in part renovated the problematics of Jewish identity. It was in this century that the supporters of an absolute monarchy (in particular the lexicographer Jesuits of Trévoux) confronted the supporters of reforming or overthrowing the monarchy (the Enlightenment Philosophers). Against this background of major economic and cultural changes (as the British constitutional monarchy gained a number of admirers among the French intelligentsia), dictionaries were privileged vectors of the philosophical and political dispute. The two sides, adherents and opponents of the theocratic order, espoused two radically different writings of history. The Jesuits defended the Catholic values of the absolute monarchy, their view being one of a theology of history justifying the royal order, while the Philosophers defended the idea of progress and the universality of ethical norms. A new model of rationality was being forged. This is the context in which the Jewish condition crystallized the expectations of both camps.

For the Jesuits, the Jews continued to be witnesses to the truth of Christianity: they must be kept apart from the kingdom, confined to certain specific (most often, humiliating) practices that distinguish them from the other French subjects. They have no role to play in the history, but in the theology of salvation. For the Philosophers, the Jews embody all the injustices of the royal order and despotism: their condition is that of a subjected humankind, whose defense must be undertaken. The analyses of Louis de Jaucourt (*Encyclopédie*, article: “Juifs”) are indisputably among the earliest great texts of modern historiography. De Jaucourt depicts the conditions in which Jewish communities lived in the provinces of the kingdom of France, describing their activities and giving their numbers. He portrays them as the eternal “victims of the arbitrary whims of princes,” pleads for their dig-

nity as human beings, and calls for their emancipation. Such views would be repeated and refined by revolutionary agents such as Abbé Grégoire or the Count of Clermont Tonnerre. At that time, then, the Jewish condition was the focus of the most bitter struggles. It is in this sense that during this period Jewish identity may be said to have been a “debated difference.”

On the basis of what had been achieved by the French Revolution, the nineteenth century introduced new categories. Jews of France were gradually admitted to the ranks of full citizens. The removal of the mark of infamy that had until recently been attached to their name was reflected in new linguistic usages. Bonaparte summoned a “Great Sanhedrin,” thereby securing the loyalty of the country’s Jewish communities. Judaism became part of the new national space, side by side with the other religions: Catholicism, Protestantism. Institutions were set up to guarantee that Judaism would survive and be maintained (establishment of the Consistoire on the model of the Catholic and Reformed Consistories). This historic moment thus corresponds to the civil and political emancipation of the Jews. One might reasonably believe that the Emancipation desired by the Philosophers had encountered the theories of Jewish Enlightenment, or *Haskalah*, especially those of Moses Mendelssohn.

Littre’s Dictionary of the French Language introduces a new term: linguistic usage substitutes *Israélite* for *Juif* now considered pejorative. This reflects the special circumstances of the French situation regarding the search for a peaceful solution to the problematic Jewish condition. However, it is significant that the redefinition of the Jews’ political status went hand in hand with confirmation of their perceived identity in terms of religion (more than ever, Judaism was defined as a religion that had emerged from Mosaic monotheism).

In this context, Jewish identity figures as an “integrated difference,” insofar as the process of the Emancipation makes it possible to accommodate members of this scattered people within a modern nation, after they have prevailed over their fate and the discriminations they suffered under the ancien régime.

This long and extremely varied period between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries manifests new splits and new issues. The emancipation proclaimed since the French Revolution did not entirely overcome the hostility toward the Jews: far from it. This hostility regrouped in a new form, however. To this day, the Dreyfus affair symbolizes the non-Jewish world’s fundamental ambivalence toward Jews and Judaism. The various dictionaries waver when it comes to providing a straightforward characterization of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who is sometimes defined as a “Jewish officer in the French Army,” sometimes as a “French officer of Israelite

origin.” Not until the 1960s did French dictionaries explicitly pronounce Dreyfus innocent (Sarfati 1997c). At the time, throughout the “affair,” significant lexicographers took sides, behaving like militants or newspaper columnists. This shows that dictionaries are very much active participants in current historical events and the political and ideological debates of their society.

However, the period extending from the nineteenth to the twentieth century is also marked by the emergence of political anti-Semitism, even beyond the Dreyfus affair. French dictionaries reflect this new state of affairs in providing a fairly accurate reflection of the new ideological consensus. This is the time when fascism was victorious in Italy, Nazism in Germany, and so on. With historical hindsight, it can be seen that dictionaries do not at all observe any principle of neutrality: they openly take sides, either for or against the totalitarian regimes. Generally speaking though, lexicographical discourse objectively justifies *anti-Semitism*, defined from the beginning of the twentieth century as “combating Semitic influence.” Today we might be taken aback by such a literal definition. In this precise sense, Jewish identity is constructed as a “persecuted difference.”

The lexicography of the second half of the twentieth century distances itself from the compliant attitude of the earlier decades. Dictionaries express their rejection of Nazism and, generally, of the different forms of totalitarianism. French linguistic usage becomes more diverse, acknowledging the emergence of a new semantic field, with terms such as *judéité*, *judaité*, and *judaïcité* entering the lexis to designate Jewishness. The coining of these neologisms shows in terms of language and discourse how post-war thinking, with Jean-Paul Sartre (*Réflexions sur la question juive*) and Albert Memmi (*Portrait d'un juif*), focused primarily on a reexamination of the issue of identity. This proliferation of French words for Jewishness also indicates how secular thinking increasingly comes to dominate the spirit of the times: among progressive thinkers, there is no longer any idea of restricting Jewish identity to a strictly religious definition. Still, in the fundamental definitions, the entry *Jew* always refers to a member of the Jewish people who has remained faithful to Mosaic law, and the generic heading for the entry *Judaism* is “religion.” This persistence of the theological determination shows that the definitional frameworks set in the medieval period, then confirmed in the time between the ancien régime and the postrevolutionary period, had mapped out a quasi-ontological characterization of Jewish identity as an unchangeable “essence.” So much so that any subsequent discussion had to take account of this somehow unchangeable marker.

But what is new in the lexicographical discourse of the second half of the twentieth century is, above all, the repeated description of the Zionist phe-

nomenon. The language dictionaries manifest recent historical changes, while encyclopedic dictionaries in part compete with the discourse of the media, as year after year they record the development of the Israel-Arab conflict.

It is worth noting here that the reference to Zionism goes back to the very beginning of the twentieth century. The various editions of the *Grand Larousse Encyclopédique* were the first to describe, if not to provide political commentary on, this change. It was not long before the other dictionaries followed suit.

The examination of Zionism is presented initially as going beyond a consideration of the problem of nationality (1848). The dictionaries regularly appeal to the terms of the nationality principle. They define “the right to self-determination” as well as “the right of nations to self-determination” (le droit des peuples à disposer d’eux-mêmes), both standard phrases in United Nations discourse (particularly from the 1970s onward, with reference to the “Palestinian problem”). For nineteenth-century dictionaries, whose discourse reflected the trends in contemporary politico-legal discourse, the terms *people* or *nation* could be applied to a human group if—and only if—it met two criteria: being gathered together in the same territory and speaking the same language. In the case of Zionism, there resulted tremendous ambiguity over attitudes and definitions alike. Insofar as the concept “Jewish people” primarily designated a theological entity (the equivalent of the biblical expression “the Chosen People”), and insofar as the Jews were recognizable only by their religious affiliation (according to the canonical definition operative from the very beginnings of the Exile), the dominant discourse would not grant them the status of a people, far less a national entity. It might reasonably be thought that this semantic and historical background informed—and has continued to inform down to our days—the problematic perception of Zionism in the surrounding doxa. The same definitional features have been ascribed to this word for the last hundred years. In fact, *Zionism* is defined as a “political and religious national movement.” In itself, there is nothing shocking about this definition, except that it is based on the intrinsic distinction between the political and the religious, given the theological overdetermination that, since the Middle Ages, has burdened the understanding of Jewish identity. In this bipolarity (politics/religion) one may undoubtedly find a trace of the division that characterizes the non-Jewish environment. But all in all, twentieth-century lexicography must be given credit for generally acknowledging the situation in which Jewish identity has been “redeployed.” The pluralization of its developments (Diaspora-based, grown national with Zionism) is such as to make it a “renascent difference.”

In broad outline, then, these are the structures and implications of the facts contained in this Figure 1.

6. Frameworks of Topics

We also need to characterize more precisely the links between the categorizing and recategorizing mechanisms of Jewish identity. A second schema (Figure 2) will help clarify the terms of this vast semiotic process. In a sense, this second figure makes it possible to spell out the dynamic links that permanently govern — always according to long-term historiographic (and diachronic) criteria — the exogenous perception of Jewish identity in its relationships with the most topic-based breaks in the history of exilic Jewry (the various semiotic forms of the initial loss of territoriality).

This second schema also traces a complex process that can be deduced from these successive categorizations. By this I mean the history of identity forms in the various stages of a process of category-based alienation, that is, the history of the gradual introjection of the exogenous point of view by the groups concerned and accordingly perceived. At the same time, the basic events in Jewish history, in its contacts with the various places that admitted or welcomed Jews, opened up another possibility for those concerned: to surmount this state of specular alienation, by means of a categorial opening-up process, one associated with constant critical scrutiny of available terminological categories. This involves both a historical inquiry into the genesis of this alienation and a discursive reflection on the effects and the semiotic nature of this marking.

This figure also offers a synoptic view of how Jewish identity is perceived by the lexicographical corpus. Compared with the previous figure, which primarily characterizes the image of the Jews in the context of French history, the scope of this second figure is more general. It in turn requires a number of clarifications.

The first column on the left identifies the historical periods as sharply delimited by dictionaries. As can be seen, this division corresponds on the whole to the criteria of current (particularly academic) historiography. For each historical period, the second column records the type of identity-based contentual features assumed by Jewish existence as history developed (particularly in Western Europe). For each term, the two other columns then characterize the prevailing type of judeophobia as a function of the dominant ideological and historical issues.

The periods of antiquity and the Middle Ages are thus characterized from the linguistic viewpoint by the “naturalization” of Jewish identity-based existence. In the context of the Christian theological polemic against

Historical Periods	Forms of Identity	Territorial Exile	Forms of Judeophobia
Antiquity/ Middle Ages	Naturalization	Endogenous/ exogenous	Theological anti-Judaism
Middle Ages/ Renaissance	Clericalization	Theological polemic	
Political revolution	Denominalization	“Jew”/“Israelite” tension	Political anti-Semitism
Industrial Revolution	Nationality principle	Emergence of Zionism	
Twentieth century	Dissemination of forms of awareness	Diaspora identities/ National identities	Anti-Judaism/ anti-Semitism/ anti-Zionism

Figure 2 Links between the categorizing and recategorizing mechanisms of Jewish identity.

Judaism, it becomes a “self-evident” fact that Judaism is first and foremost a “religion.” It is the exogenous (non-Jewish) point of view that imposes this self-representation on the Jews for a long time.

The period from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance tends to emphasize the initial historical representation of Judaism. In particular, it is due to the persistence of the theological polemic that imposes on Judaism what is conventionally called a “clerical reduction”: reduced to the communal way of life, the Jewish lifestyle is governed on a long-term basis by the traditions, rules, and customs characteristic of the ancient Jewish nation. But in the context of the Exile, the perception of the Jews is such as to confine them within the contested space of the synagogue. The development of theological anti-Judaism, as the first historically attested form of judeophobia, corresponds to these two first major periods.

The period marked by the end of the ancien régime and political revolution (eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) is characterized by a heightening of the religious conception of Judaism. In the case of France, usage confirms this representation by attributing to the Jews the denominational status of *Israélites*. The period of the Industrial Revolution, which came about soon after (nineteenth century), was marked on the international political level by the advancement of the nationality principle. This is the context in which different national aspirations emerged simultaneously, followed a little later by the claims of political Zionism. During this same period, the European nations, although they had been won over by republican ideas, developed

a new form of judeophobia. The Jewish element of the respective societies was suspected of corrupting social ties and nascent national identity: in France, the symptom of political anti-Semitism was the Dreyfus affair.

Taken on its own, the twentieth century is distinguished in terms of discourse facts by its extremely diverse representations of Jewish identity. A new understanding of that identity is reflected by the proliferation of forms of awareness following the collapse of the Third Reich. Jewish existence is diversified both on a factual level and in terms of the ensuing discursive representations, both in the Diaspora and, with Israel's national renaissance, from the Diaspora. At this stage in the analysis, it becomes clear that, in accordance with the contents of doxa operative from the beginning of the 1950s onward, dictionaries reflect in their discourse the domination of persistent theological anti-Judaism (this having become a definitional norm of Diaspora Judaism) but also of an anti-Zionism that arose at practically the same time as the state of Israel (and was exacerbated by a number of implicit semantic equations, particularly in France, between the memory of resistance to Nazism and support for the Palestinian cause in a Third World perspective). It is significant that the three forms of judeophobia (theological anti-Judaism, political anti-Semitism, and anti-Zionism) culminate in the modern and contemporary era in the dissemination of the theses contained in the propaganda literature designed for this purpose.

7. The Entry *Jew* in Analogical Dictionaries

The corpus of analogical dictionaries makes an excellent archive for evaluating major notional lines of development. It must be remembered that, in its historical mode of construction, this type of dictionary directly echoes the philosophical ideology of which it is an application, indeed a didactic expression. In fact, the principle involves postulating the possibility of explaining "ideas by words and words by ideas." In an initial sense, analogy-based lexicography is a direct consequence of the theory of ideas developed by Destutt de Tracy and the School of the *Idéologues*, the heirs of the eighteenth-century encyclopedists.

The influence of the philosophy of Etienne Bonnot de Condillac, a reader of John Locke, whose thinking he introduced to France, worked to legitimate the sensation-based view of the formation of ideas. For the critics of Cartesian innatism, ideas evolve through contact with experiences: simple ideas/simple experiences, complex ideas/complex experiences.

Understood in this way, the sensation-based paradigm assumes the primacy of perception in the development of the symbolic function and, therefore, in the advent of language. In other words, for the English and French

members of this school, the very possibility of semiotization is structured around the historical conjunction of sensibility and experience — a conjunction held to be the source of meaning.

Within English lexicography, *Roget's Thesaurus* played a major role in the development of the philosophy of contemporary language. It attests the first application of a technique for describing and teaching languages according to the *idéologue* principle. In the area of French lexicography, the first person to compile an analogical dictionary was J.-B. Boissière with his *Dictionnaire analogique de la langue française* (1862). From the epistemological viewpoint, it must be emphasized that Boissière uses the principle and concept of analogy to interpret the genetic theory of ideas, which was central to sensationist philosophy and anthropology alike. The point must also be made that the political (especially Marxist) reinterpretation of the concept of ideology can result in an altogether different reading of analogical dictionaries.

The technical constraints of this type of work have benefited from the positive transformations that have taken place in the language sciences and especially in the theory of categorization in lexical semantics. The *Thesaurus de la langue française* (1991) bears witness to the contribution that linguistic studies have made to lexicography generally. In the intervening years, the organizing postulate appears to have remained the same as in Boissière's days, since the declared goal of this lexicographic practice is invariably to provide a description of "ideas by words and words by ideas." The analogical type of dictionary teaches us as much about the organization of a linguistic item's associative fields as about the discursive structuring of the ideological representations that typify the mind-sets or symbolic arrangements of the dominant doxa of an era.

This is not the place to present and analyze in detail the analogical articles put forward by Boissière and, just over a century later, by the Larousse publishing house. With a few differences, both offer the same clerical and liturgical representation of Jewish identity, thereby endorsing on the level of deep-seated semantic and cultural representations the exogenous concept of Jewish existence. However, by way of illustration we will quote Maquet's classification (1936). Since Boissière's seminal work, and antedating before that of the Larousse publishing house, it is the most notable project of the analogical variety. Regarding the discursive analysis of identity, this type of approach is of twofold interest. First of all, it amounts to a reconstruction of all associative relationships (both notional and linguistic) likely to yield a near-exhaustive definition of Jewish identity. Second, this reconstruction has the advantage of clarifying the mechanisms of the notional fields where the lexical associations bound up with the word

Jew (taken as the headword of this field) deploy themselves. Here standardization of identity uses methods borrowed from the latest findings of the language sciences.

Maquet's work thus organizes each analogical area in accordance with the principle of an ideological classification.

JEW

People.—Palestine. Judea. Holy Land. Promised Land.—Hebrew (noun), Hebrew (adj.), to hebraicize.—Israel, Israelite.—Jerusalem. Jerusalemite.—Zionism, Zionist.—Semite, semitic. Antisemitism.—People of God.—The tribes. Galilean. Samaritan.—Pharisee, Pharisaism. The Exodus.—Ashkenazi (Central European) Jews. Sephardi (Mediterranean) Jews.

Religion.—Temple. High Priest. Levite.—Synagogue. Rabbi, rabbinism, rabbinical. Rabbi (title). Cohen (priest). Mohel (circumciser).—Ephod (stole). Pectoral. Phylactery (sacred inscription). Taleb (veil).—Holy of Holies. Tables of the Law. Ark of the Covenant. Proprietary.—The Bible. Torah. Talmud, Talmudic, Talmudist.—Moses. Mosaic Law. Mosaism.—Israelite Consistoire.

Customs.—Festival of Passover. Festival of Tabernacles or Sukkot. Feast of Lots or Purim. Festival of Unleavened Bread. Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement). Festival of New Year or Rosh Hashana. Jewry, ghetto.—Circumcision, circumcized.—Sabbath. Sabbatarian. Sabbatical year (every 7 years).—Sanhedrin (court). Scholet [*sic*] (ritual slaughter).—Hebrew, Hebraism.

A ternary classification is required to model the analogical field of the word *Jew*. We are here far removed from Boissière's original typology based on alphabetical order. Maquet's typology introduces a dynamic dimension. This presentation weaves together the networks of correspondences, which in principle are adequate to historically motivated notional aggregates. This typology defines a three-dimensional analogical field: (a) general historical representations ("people"); (b) representation of a people's spirituality ("religion"); (c) representations of its liturgical temporality ("customs").

This categorization imposes a number of reading constraints on the user. The choice of classifiers (people—religion—customs) reflects a traditional way of responding to Jewish identity that discloses how the successive historical backdrops are structured. In each of the subdivisions, logical elements can be identified that govern the centuries-long understanding of Jewish identity, strongly dominated by a theological outlook and conception.

Over a period of slightly more than a century (1862–1991), the analogical type of modeling does indeed confirm that the exogenous representation of Jewish existence in the Western sphere verges on a clerical determination thereof. The causes underlying this determination must be sought

in several centuries of *ancien régime* dominated by the Christian polemic against Judaism. In this perspective it becomes easier to understand the far more complex problems of the Jewish condition since the end of the Second World War. All the semiotic trends that make up the doxa on this issue go to identify the Zionist enterprise as peculiar, atypical, paratopical, or misplaced. How can one actually consider the historical condition of a people whose members' only common denominator is a religious affiliation, more or less upheld? How can this people claim to form a modern nation? Such are the questions that arise in an entirely exogenous perspective, accustomed to viewing the fact of Jewish identity in Christian terms.

8. For a Discursive Historiography: The Issues

As already indicated, the type of analysis applied in this study arises from a discursive theory of doxa that seeks to define and work out, within the framework of the language sciences, the conditions governing the possibility of a critical discourse. In conclusion, a number of comments must be made on the development of this theory as well as its application to specific corpora (including dictionaries, based on an analysis of their subject matter or thematics).

The encounter with the doxic dimension of discourse raises three types of issues. The first is deontological in nature. The use of dictionaries rests on a notion—frequently implicit—of the process of consulting them. The assumption is that users possess good enough communication skills to re-contextualize the information conveyed by dictionaries. To some extent, the development of a critical viewpoint is impeded by the ideas subjects have of the dictionary's social function, on the one hand, and of what language is, on the other. Here the doxa consists in imagining dictionaries as legitimate forms of discourse, the locations par excellence of the authorized word. In this view, dictionaries state the truth of meaning, just as jurisprudence states the truth of the law. Moreover, according to an equally widespread idea, language should be an "instrument of representation." In the case of dictionaries and the contents transmitted by them, the critical viewpoint runs against this second doxa. If lexicography tells the truth of discourse, and hence of history turned into discourse, it follows that dictionaries constitute faithful and stable "images" of "reality." In response, pedagogic specialists and pragmatists alike must dispel the two kinds of determinations involved: showing, on the one hand, that the images or representations conveyed by dictionaries have been constructed and, on the other hand, arousing an awareness of the fact that, far from being sheer instruments of representation, words, as Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953) points out, are acts. The reason

for this specular conception of language, however, also lies in the dependence of dictionaries on the philosophical-linguistic tradition that resulted from the *Grammaire de Port Royal* (1660). For the classical philosophy of language, words are mirrors of the world. On the dictionary level, this concept of “parts of speech” determines the linguistic doxa widely disseminated by pedagogics and textbooks (Sarfati 1995).

For the dictionary user, the practical question, and concomitantly the pragmatic problem for the teacher and the analyst, is how to activate the required specific competence. This is a vital necessity, considering the diversity of identity profiles involved (not only among student groups, but also within the content that they study and that forms the object of pedagogical work). The teacher must encourage critical reflection among learners and in such a collective effort, which to some extent determines the individuation of competences and judgment, must educate minds to both identify and challenge prejudice (Sarfati 1998). In view of the dialectical confrontation of imaginations, the teacher’s involvement may be compared to that of an analyst who listens carefully to what is said by the subject under analysis: the teacher must maneuver within the space of “renewal,” while the learner maneuvers within the space of “reformulation.”

This brings us to a theoretical issue. In the pedagogical context, the sociopolitical problematics of xenophilia and xenophobia must be considered from an entirely different viewpoint from that which all individuals are likely to encounter in historical experience, precisely because that context involves having to name or to provide the field with a name for oneself and others. The classroom setting is both a laboratory of meaning and the free-association locus that is immediately objectivized by participant interpretation. Achieving the critical recognition of otherness is without doubt the most important use of analyzing the (necessarily evaluative) cultural and intercultural implications behind the semiotic economy of idioms. For access to them is determined by intellectual expectations or deep-seated backdrops, often subliminal.

The lexicographic issues are shown here as starters of controversies, since they convey more than an aggregate of semantic data. More precisely, through the lexical series examined here, it is plain that the terms invested in most of the ideological, political, or cultural debates tap a multitude of preconstructed, profoundly stratified representations. These representations are distant echoes of earlier historical situations, long gone but profoundly semiotized. So, for a logical response to the question asked previously to be formulated with care—in accordance with relevant verification procedures—it demands a good knowledge of history and of the history of discourse. In turn, this implies that all this raw material, present at the start

of the analysis, must itself be thought over in a historical perspective before it is made the object of analysis.

9. Conclusion

The use in education of “word games” and “life forms,” in Wittgenstein’s sense, does not necessarily neutralize the ideological issues conveyed by them. It is, however, a fact that, in these contexts of use, these issues often occupy a subordinate place subject to a form of thinking that regularly discounts linguistic policies and hence the cultural policies they embody. As a result in many cases no consideration is paid to these contents. This leads to a paradox insofar as it is true that the criterion of relevance, defined as an indispensable criterion, cannot leave an entire sector of the didactic structure unanalyzed. This proves to be even more important when it is a question of clearly delineating the expectations of an area specifically designed to train teachers and researchers in intercultural study. When it comes to representations of identities, thinking about dictionaries is still very far from having overcome the ethnocentrism characteristic of a culture that is used to harking back again and again to the figure of the Same.

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