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Tel-Aviv 26 June 2006

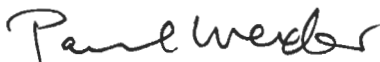
**To Joshua Fishman—on the occasion of your 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

Others will surely speak of your varied contributions to the sociology of language, to Yiddish and Jewish language studies. However, it seems to me that there is one aspect of your professional activity which may not be so obvious and which deserves mention here.

There are probably upwards of two dozen Judaized languages past and present. Unlike Creole studies, the field of Jewish languages has had a relatively modest impact on general linguistic discourse and theory, though the Jewish languages are typologically of great interest. There are at least four major reasons for this state of affairs: The field of Jewish languages has (a) few practitioners, (b) no journals in widely known languages exclusively devoted to this field of study, and (c) all Jewish languages are obsolescent in our day with the exception of Modern Hebrew and possibly Yiddish. (d) Finally, the field of Jewish languages is often a tool for particular political agendas. For example, preoccupation of the Jews with Modern Hebrew—the only Jewish language spoken by a sizeable population of non-Jews as a second language—historically has, unfortunately, often had the effect of denigrating and marginalizing the study of Yiddish. In addition, the extreme nationalistically-charged atmosphere in contemporary Israel makes it difficult to discuss the likelihood that Modern Hebrew basically has no links with Old Semitic Hebrew other than in its lexicon and that it should be classified as an unusual dialect of Yiddish with a bizarre only partially genuine Semitic lexicon.

I would like to take this occasion first to express all best wishes to you, the *bal-yoyvl*, and then to commend you for repeatedly providing scholars over the years with venues (such as the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* and the *Contributions to the Sociology of Jewish languages* which you edited) in which to publish their views on all sorts of Jewish language topics with complete freedom of expression, no matter how controversial their views may have been.

Let me end with the traditional greeting *shkoyekh*—especially for your contributions to the field of Jewish linguistics.



**Prof. Paul Wexler, Dept. of Linguistics, Tel-Aviv University, Tel-Aviv, ISRAEL 69978**