

Centenary of the Journal *Daimon* in an Austrian Perspective

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Jacob Levy Moreno was an important editor for expressionistic literature at the end of World War I in Vienna. The journal *Daimon* was meant to help overcome the struggles of world war and revolutions and find a way to a new democracy. After 100 years, we look into who contributed to the journal, who were the publishers, and what followed after.

KEYWORDS: *Daimon*; Jacob Levy Moreno in Austria; expressionism in literature; encounter.

Jakob Moreno Levy (later known as J. L. Moreno) wanted to continue the series “Invitation to an Encounter,” and so he edited the journal *Daimon* in the year 1918 (Figure 1). The title came from Socrates’ *daimonion*, a specific kind of dialogue and dialectic (Wieser & Wildhaber, 2011). It is a source of inspiration and guidance, an inner voice or spirit that warned him when he was about to do something foolish (A. Blatner, personal communication, January 12, 2010). Emil Alphons Rheinhardt helped Moreno Levy and gave the journal its address at Billrothstraße 39 and then later at Felix-Mottl-Straße 12 in the noble 19th district of Vienna.

Moreno Levy earned his living as a medical doctor in a camp for displaced persons at Mitterndorf an der Fischa and as a doctor for vaccination in Kottlingbrunn (Wieser & Wildhaber, 2007). Both villages are near the south of Vienna. It was difficult at the end of World War I to even pay for good enough paper to print *Daimon* on. In 1918, the publishers were the brothers Suschitzky at Favoritenstrasse 57 in the 10th district of Vienna. One issue had the price of 3.5 kronen or 2.2 marks at the bookshop. Monthly issues were planned, but only quarterly could be realized. Between issues, some pamphlets also appeared. The

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Figure 1. *Daimon* Prolog (Issue 1), 1918.

language used was German, although the dying empire had included many languages. Foreign-language articles were mostly translated.

It was the time of expressionism in literature, and Moreno Levy became important through his early writings and as an editor, working in lyric, drama, narrative, essay, and a kind of ethical and aesthetic regeneration. Even in the original language, German, it is not easy to understand, because it is hymnal, emotional, and ecstatic (Wallas, 2000). Moreno Levy challenged Jewish metaphysics with a kind of messianic and theological approach about encounter, dialogue, solidarity, and humankind. It is about I-god, the ego plague, and myth, and has some connotation with the prophet Jesus. There is also a section called “Die Zeit im *Daimon*” (The time in *Daimon*) with discussion of art exhibitions (Wallas, 1995), book reviews, and philosophical-political questions which attempted to overcome the social and national borders and crises after the split of the empire and some revolutions. This was a connection to activism. Moreno Levy envisioned that after writing and publishing were complete, the reader and



Figure 2. Cafe Museum in Vienna.

author should meet in person. Partly the author is seen as god, that is, the creator of everything he published in *Daimon*:

- Prolog (Issue 1): Einladung zu einer Begegnung. Die Gottheit als Autor. Bericht über den Sinn [Invitation to an Encounter. The Godhead as Author. Report on the Meaning; drama], pp. 3–21.
- Issue 2: Ich [I; poem], p. 110.
Das Vollendete Schweigen [Silence Fulfilled; poem], pp. 110–111.
Anfangsgründe der Kritik [Starting Place for Criticism; note], pp. 117–118
(Fortsetzung: Einladung zu einer Begegnung. Die Gottheit als Autor. Bericht [Continuation: Invitation to an Encounter. The Godhead as Author. Report]).
- Issue 3: Bericht aus fünf Zeiten [A Report from Five Periods; short prose and poem], pp. 140–143.
Die Zeit im Daimon. Antwort des Herausgebers. Das Recht der Toten (Zum Evangelium des Apollonios) [The Time in *Daimon*. Response of the Editor. The Right of the Dead (The Gospel of Apollo); comment and note], pp. 161–162.
- Issue 4: Einladung zu einer Begegnung [Invitation to an encounter; poem], pp. 206–207.
Das Testament des Schweigens [Testament of Silence; poem], p. 207.

Besides Moreno Levy and Rheinhardt, other writers included Franz Blei, Oskar Březina, Max Brod, Paul Claudel, Yvan Goll, Albert Paris Gütersloh, Eugen Hoeflich (Wallas, 1999), Francis Jammes, Paul Kornfeld, Georg Kulka, Robert Müller, Friedrich Schnack, Jakob Wassermann, Ernst Weiß, Franz Werfel, and Alfred Wolfenstein. They were poets, writers, and artists, with one exception male.



Figure 3. Cafe Herrenhof in Vienna.

Moreno Levy preferred to meet with them at Cafe Museum and Cafe Herrenhof (Figures 2 and 3).

One key person was Rheinhardt, who also studied medicine. To him, young people were important to renewing the bohemian society and literature of Vienna. During World War I and his military service, he was forced to promote the war and censor telegrams. Later he thought poets should save the world. The revolution in Austria failed, and he began to translate, edit, and paint. He became more impressionistic and wrote novels in a kind of new realism. During the time of national socialism he became part of the resistance in France, but he was tortured and had to work as a doctor in the Dachau concentration camp and died of “typhoid” (Wallas, 1997).

There were times when Martin Buber wrote that he did not know of Moreno Levy and his encounter idea, but later he had to admit that he was wrong. A letter from Moreno Levy to Buber in 1918 (Figure 4) proved that they had a lot of common plans. Buber’s contribution in *Daimon* was printed in 1919. Moreno Levy promised to pay 100 kronen as an honorarium.

The publishers Suschitzky had to escape from the Nazis in 1938, and the company was liquidated. In 1969 the publisher Kraus produced a reprint in Nendeln (in Liechtenstein). It also includes the issues of the journal *Der Neue Daimon* (*The New Daimon*) published by Genossenschaftsverlag in 1919.

In honor of Moreno’s role, Dr. Wolfgang Kraus from the Austrian Society for Literature personally transferred Moreno’s urn to an honorary grave in Vienna

DAIMON

HERAUSGEBER:
JAK. MORENO LEVY

EINE MONATSSCHRIFT

REDAKTEUR:
E. A. RHEINHARDT

VERLAG UND VERSANDSTELLE: DAIMON-SCHRIFTEN
BRÜDER SUSCHITZKY, X. FAVORITENSTRASSE NO. 57
TELEPHON 59.317 • POSTSPARKASSEN-KONTO 168.967

E. A. WIEN, 26. IX. 1918

An Herrn Dr. Martin Buber *Herrn Buber*

Ih. danke für die eingesandten „Geschichten“, die schon gesetzt worden, deren Korrekturbogen Ihnen rechtzeitig vorliegen werden (das Honorar von 100 K wird nächstens eingesandt: es müsse zuvor gegen Mark umgetauscht werden).

Das Manuscript des H. Wiener vom vor Ihrem brief. liden Hinweis bereits, retourniert, da für die in Vorbereitung begriffenen Hefte des künftigen Jahres für es keine Aussicht besteht, Aufnahme zu finden.

Ja auch mir die Arbeit gefiel, kann ^{eventuell} die Dichtung mit anderen neuen, gelegentlich erscheinen? Ich werde Ihnen in diesem Brief schreiben.

Bezüglich des Jahrbuches erwähne ich, dass mir die Zugliederung einer Allgemeinen religiösen Korrespondenz sehr wichtig erscheint, vorläufig wäre ich froh - zunächst für den „Daimon“ - einen plaudernden Bericht zu stellen (oder mehrere) über alle unerwarteten ^{relig.} Ereignisse innerhalb des christen- und judentums der Gegenwart, wie andere nach der bestehenden Religionsgemeinschaften zu erhalten.

Für unverlangt eingesendete Manuskripte wird keine Bürgschaft übernommen!
Ohne Rückporto keine Rücksendung!

Figure 4. Letter to Martin Buber (with permission of Zerka Toeman Moreno).

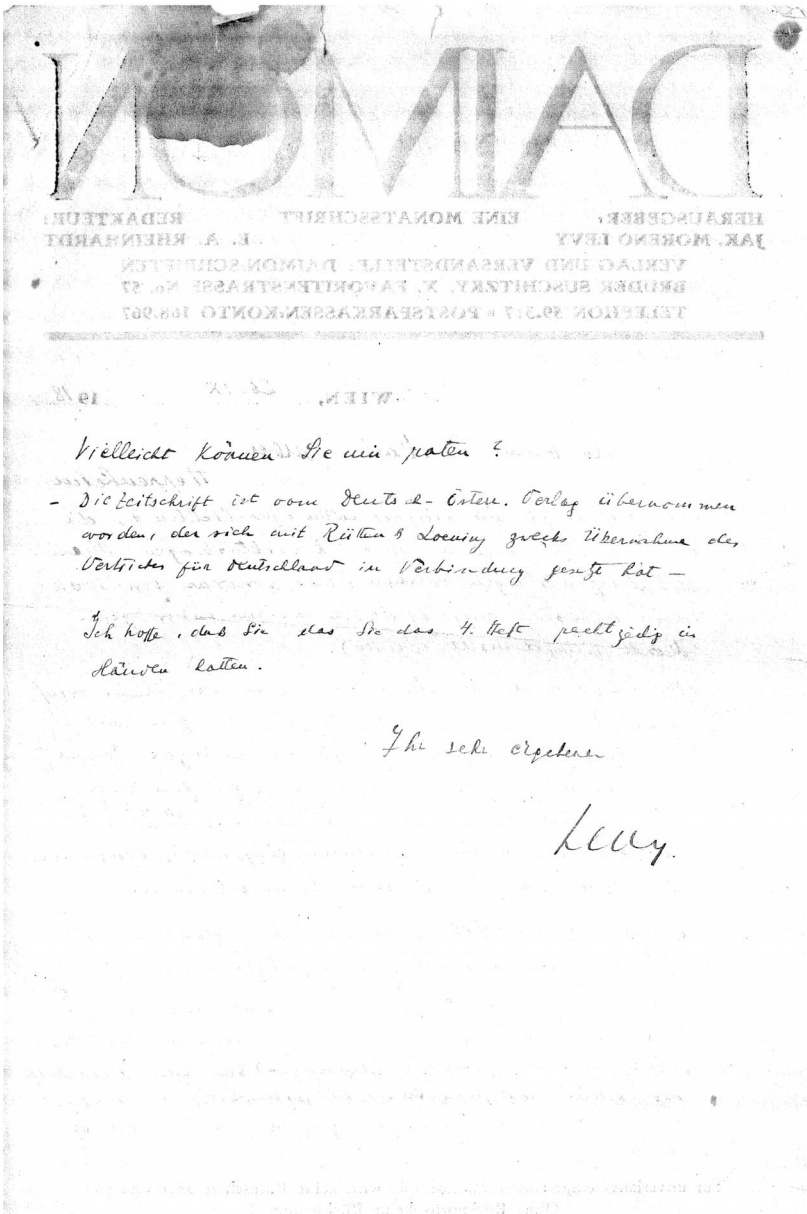


Figure 4. Continued.

in 1993. He thought that it was Moreno's wish to be buried there, and Moreno's widow, Zerka, agreed. The grave has now been there for 25 years.

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