

The German-Hebrew Dialogue in the Multilingual Era

International Workshop at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Presented by the Mandel Scholion Center for Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities
and Jewish Studies with support from the Franz Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center for
German-Jewish Literature and Cultural History

Thursday, June 18, 2015
Room 520, Mandel Building, Mt. Scopus

Abstract

2015 marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Israel and Germany. In the five decades since an agreement between the two countries was signed, the relationship of German and Israeli cultures has evolved from one of mutual estrangement to one of mutual fascination. Government-financed academic exchange programs, intellectual and artistic collaborations, and increased mobility of Germans and Israelis have redefined this fraught relationship in various ways. An important outgrowth of this dynamic exchange is the emerging field of German-Hebrew studies. Moving beyond concepts of rupture, trauma and collective memory that previously dominated German-Jewish studies, new scholarship focuses increasingly on comparative concepts such as migration, bilingualism, and translation, which shed light on the influence of German language and culture on Israeli identity and on the status of Hebrew and the State of Israel in the German imagination.

The growing interest in German-Hebrew exchange is at least in part a response to a moment of linguistic crisis brought on by globalization and migration. Today, both Germany and Israel are forced to reevaluate the utopian concept of a national “speech community” as a discrete, homogeneous, and self-enclosed entity. Germany struggles to absorb the voices of migrant writers such as Emine Sevgi Özdamar and Yoko Tawada, while Israeli writers call for recognition of suppressed “indigenous” languages, such as Arabic in the poetry of Almog Behar and German and Yiddish in the fiction of Yoel Hoffman. Both countries have entered the era of what Yasemin Yildiz has termed “post-monolingualism,” or multilingual practices that disrupt normative monolingual national paradigms. The purpose of this workshop is to highlight scholarly approaches that challenge the temporal, physical, and linguistic boundaries typically ascribed to the study of both German-Jewish and Hebrew literatures.

*Organized by Dr. Rachel Seelig, Mandel Postdoctoral Fellow, The Mandel Scholion
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Schedule

9:00 Opening Remarks, Prof. Daniel Schwartz and Dr. Rachel Seelig, The Mandel Scholion Interdisciplinary Research Center in the Humanities and Jewish Studies

9:15-11:15 Session I: Silence, Lament, and the Space between Languages

Moderator: Dr. Ofer Ashkenazi, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Dr. Lina Barouch, Tel Aviv University
Paul Celan's Polyglossia and the Poetics of Passage and Exile

Prof. Galili Shahar, Tel Aviv University
איכה/Ach: קול ויגון בין עברית לגרמנית

Dr. Ruth Ginsburg, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
'אני כותב שירה דו לשונית/ בעברית ובשתיקה': עברית בין ערבית לגרמנית

11:15 Break

11:45-13:45 Session II: Bilingualism and the German-Jewish Library

Moderator: Prof. Vivian Liska, University of Antwerp and the Hebrew University

Dr. Stefanie Mahrer, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
German-Jewish Literary Culture beyond National Borders: The Schocken Publishing Houses in Berlin, Tel Aviv, and New York

Dr. Na'ama Rokem, The University of Chicago
Scanning the Bilingual Archive: Prosody and Language Mixture in Ludwig Strauss and Dan Pagis

Dr. Rachel Seelig, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Language Brokers: Bilingualism and Self-Translation in the Poetry of Ludwig Strauss and Tuvia Ruebner

13:45 Lunch Break

15:30-17:30 Session III: The Hebrew and Israeli Presence in Germany

Moderator: Prof. Yfaat Weiss, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Dr. Shachar Pinsker, The University of Michigan
A Hebrew Table at Café Monopol? The Place of Hebrew in Early 20th-Century Berlin

Dr. Yael Almog, Zentrum für Literatur- und Kulturforschung Berlin
The 'Return' to Berlin of Mizrahi Israeli Authors

Prof. Amir Eshel, Stanford University
'In the Image': Dani Karavan's Artwork in Germany"

17:30 Closing Remarks, Prof. Yfaat Weiss, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem