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The Betrayal of the Mother Tongue in the Works of Hoffman, Zach, Amichai and Pagis

Nili Rachel Scharf Gold

The majority of literary works written in Hebrew, both before and after the move to the Land of Israel, were written after a long series of departures from mother tongues. It was a kind of betrayal of the mother committed, for the most part, by male writers, especially under the influence of Zionist ideology. Literary critics, like most of the writers themselves, viewed writing in Hebrew as an expression of a national revival, a return to the Jewish people's ancient heritage, as well as to normalcy.

The purpose of this study is to retrieve the sunken remains of a forgotten mother tongue hidden in the sea bed of Israeli works of Hebrew literature. My assumption is that literary works written in the author's second language hide or repress echoes from the linguistic past of their creators. Bringing these lost sounds to the surface and acknowledging their existence, leads to a more complete reading of Hebrew literature and to an unveiling of the various voices hidden in the heart of its central narrative.

I was drawn to those writers whose linguistic origins were German, like Aharon Appelfeld, Yoel Hoffmann, Nathan Zach, Yehuda Amichai, Dan Pagis, Tuvia Ruebner and others. There are, however, great differences between the writers in the degree to which they reveal the footprints of German; in the poetic strategies they employ to camouflage it; the benefits they drew from writing in Hebrew; and in their degree of awareness of the entire issue. My goal is to identify and analyze the indirect methods used consciously or unconsciously by Hebrew writers to either recall or repress their verbal past. Reading the works of authors, who do not write in their mother tongues, presents a challenge for the scholar: to see Israeli literature as a multi-lingual and multi-voiced landscape. If we listen to the sounds beneath the surface, we will understand the "other" who is etched within us and identify other kinds of "self" that are hidden within Israeli literature.

"The Death of Saul": One Text, Two Interpreters (Tchernichovsky and Zach)

Reuven Shoham

The narrative of King Saul, concluding with his death at Gilboa, is one of the archetypal "master narratives" that have shaped the Jewish national identity through the generations. Although it resurfaced in the historical play *Reign of Saul* by Yosef Ha-efrati of the Haskalah era, it was Berdycewski and mainly Tchernichovsky (in his ballads

about Saul) of the “renaissance era” (*shirat hatehiya*), who transformed the story of the life and death of the first Israelite king into a personal and national story of heroism, a shaper of identity in the “Zionist master narrative”, and the antithesis of the narrative of the Jewish victim, who meets a martyr’s death. In the Hebrew poetry of the “statehood generation” (*dor hamedina*) – and specifically in the works of Amichai and, above all, Nathan Zach – this heroic narrative is put through a subversive test.

Zach’s poems about Saul should be viewed as an attempt to subvert the biblical story and the heroic nationalization that Tchernichovsky imposed on it. Zach’s “Saul poems”, and especially his early opus “Death of Saul” (published in his inaugural collection, *Early Poems – shirim rishonim*), reveal the ideological crisis that Israeli society underwent after the War of Independence. His “Saul” is one of the first characters in modern Hebrew poetry who does not subscribe to the doctrine of “holy time”, which requires the individual to forsake his life on a mythical chessboard at times of national crisis that manifest themselves in crucial events such as wars. Zach refuses, or finds it difficult, to allow the first king to cooperate with the mythical Zionist time that Tchernichovsky, via the national master narratives that he wove into his poetry, did so much to shape in the first half of the twentieth century.

Performing the City of Slaughter

Na’ama Rokem

This article presents an analysis of H.N. Bialik’s famous narrative poem, “In the City of Slaughter” and proposes that, in writing it, Bialik worked through the tension between poetry as performed speech and prose as language that is severed from a given context and must make up for it within discourse. Using Bialik’s later essays as her point of departure, the author situates the poet’s thinking about prose in relation to his peers (such as Mendele and Ahad Ha-Am) but also points out its relation to other texts, such as Hegel’s *Lectures on Aesthetics* and Lukacs’s *Theory of the Novel*. Her reading of the poem makes extensive reference to the published drafts for a report on the Kishinev Pogrom of 1903 prepared by Bialik before he wrote the famous poem.

Playing Memory – Playing With Memory:

The Revival of Hanoch Levin's *You and I and the Next War* 1968 - 2004: An Actor's Auto-Analysis of an Intra- and Transcultural Transposition

Gad Kaynar

The article analyzes the 2004 revival of Israel's prominent playwright, the late Hanoch Levin's first performed work: *You and I and the Next War*. This Juvenalian satirical *Kabarett* – according to Kurt Tucholsky's definition of adversarial political cabaret striving to change society rather than merely to entertain it – was first performed in 1968 as a militant protest against the intoxicated euphoria displayed by a victorious Israeli society in the aftermath of the Six Day War. Thirty-six years later – with at least three “next wars” and two *Intifadas* occurring in between due to the arrogance of those who did not heed Levin's warning – the same cast of actors is being enthusiastically commended for their epic, subdued and introspective concept of the same text, as a “deeply exciting and painfully relevant theatre”.

The main concern, therefore, of the article relates to the question of the intra- and transcultural transposition of a profoundly contextualized theatrical text. The article explores the differences between the performative languages, as well as semiotic and rhetorical codes of the two productions. The revival succeeds in shocking and – sometimes – even still enraging, while seemingly subverting this aim by deliberately invoking the mitigating nostalgic strain and the text's mythical value. Thus the meta-theatrical discourse of the 2004 *Kabarett* proves that both the evil referents attacked by the Ur- production and the aesthetic devices used to combat them have not only survived, but have been appropriated and ritualized by an obtuse society as a symptom of their “normativization” and of the sanctification of an initially agnostic text. The decaying physique of the actors and their “stultified”, alienating body-language while they ironically and *ironically re-present* Levin's inimical maxims in the new, restrained version – thus “challenging the processes of representation itself” in Marvin Carlson words -- embody the aging, deterioration, cynicism and indifference of contemporary, immoral combat and terror weary Israeli society.

The novel, methodological strategy employed here might be defined as an auto-reflexive analysis, since the author is a member of both the 1968 original and the 2004 revival cast. By means of “subjective self-objectification” he investigates what might be gained by assuming the dual and apparently contradictory positions of actor and spectator.

Representations of Translators in Popular Fiction: 30 Years of Translation Studies as Reflected in Fiction

Nitsa Ben-Ari

The “Fictional Turn” in translation studies has acknowledged the fact that translators/interpreters have been moved from behind the curtain to center stage. Whether this is a result of post-structural or post-colonial research, the fact remains that translators/interpreters now figure as protagonists in film, theatre and especially popular literature. Does this “promotion” reflect a change of status? How are translators portrayed? How is their *habitus* portrayed? What function do they serve? Has there been a change in their portrayal/function in the last thirty years? Does the change reflect changes in theories developing Translation Studies? For instance, what are the different approach/es to the “hybrid” in this period? Has the “death of the author” theory and the promotion of translators/interpreters to the status of “authors” changed their self-image? This essay is an attempt at answering these questions, diachronically and synchronically, with the help of various literary texts from the 1970’s and onwards. It does not infer a direct correlation between Fiction using translators/interpreters as protagonists and various developments in Translation Studies. It does, however, see the correlation as a result of a transfer of ideas that seep through the cultural atmosphere.

Retorical Sincerity as a Key to the Problem of Miracle Representation in Literature

Roman Katsman

The article discusses the problem of miracle representation in literature as a rhetorical issue, and for this purpose focuses on a special type of rhetoric – the rhetoric of sincerity (a concept known today both in world research, as in the works of Ernst van Alphen and Mieke Bal, and in Israeli research, such as in Menachem Brinker’s book on Brenner *Ad ha-simta ha-tverianit*). Sincerity is presented as an act of speech, a narrative function and the breaking of a taboo, and is finally defined as an exposure of the realization of personality. Therefore, sincerity reveals its proximity to myth, and myth is perceived as the most sincere form of speech. After distinctions are made between sincerity of expression and exposure, and between strong and weak sincerity, the conclusion is reached that strong, expressive sincerity is the only possible way to put into words the impossible language of miracles.

Placing Identities: Legendary Landscapes and Foundation Tales in Haim Beer's *The Pure Element of Time*

Dina Stein

The Pure Element of Time is an autobiographical novel, which is comprised of an especially complex network of *chronotopoi*. The inherently dual relationship, characteristic of any autobiography, between the “epic situation” and the narrated events, implies the very basic underlying problematics of its time/space components (i.e. of the “here” vs. “then”). In turn, the autobiographical novel is expected to provide a plot that would link the temporal and spatial elements, in effect explaining the identity of the narrating persona. Within that, it is a *figure*, a metaphor of kind, which explains the transformation of that persona from some initial state to its final status (here: as a writer, informed by an aesthetic and ideological view). Following that, I suggest viewing the genre of the foundation legend – specifically those narratives about the narrator’s forefathers of the *Yishuv ha-Yashan* – as the novel’s *figure*; viewed as a *mise en abyme*. These foundation legends can be read as a metaphor of the foundation story of the narrator. As a synecdoche of the novel as a whole, they encapsulate the time/space tension that is expressed in its entirety. The foundation legends, in the typical manner of the novel as whole, are constantly and explicitly reflected upon. The historiographical assumptions that underlie their plot are presented, on the one hand, in all their poetic glory; and, on the other hand, are cast in critical doubt. The historiography that is embedded in the foundation legends thus serves as an arena in which questions of authenticity, continuation and a linear trajectory leading up to a contemporary coherent identity are debated. These questions are fundamentally linked to the Zionist foundation legend – and historiography – in which the association of the subject to its place, i.e., the land of Israel, plays a key role.

When Honi the Circle Maker meets Icarus*: Periphery and Center in Y.H. Brenner's *In Winter* and Shimon Adaf's novel *The Buried Heart*.

Yigal Schwartz

Shimon Adaf, one of Israel’s most outstanding and prominent young artists, has established in his writing a fascinating poetic strategy that I call “self-creation of the center from within the periphery”. The essence of this strategy, which is shared by other artists from the geo-socio-cultural periphery of Israel, is a seemingly voluntary gathering at the cultural margins into which they were forced in a move of demonstrative cultural insularity and out of which they break into the “cultural center,” the most highly regarded cultural scene, from which they had been excluded.

* Based upon a lecture given at the NAPH Conference at Stern College, Yeshiva University, New York, 8 July, 2010.

This poetic approach is reminiscent, in its aims and its literary strategies, of the poetic approach of Y.H. Brenner, especially in the openness of his novellas and novels. However, there is also a noticeable difference between the two concerning their different attitudes towards the “ghosts” of the holy Hebrew tongue, which is supposedly dead. Brenner expelled, or at least attempted to expel, the ghosts from the Hebrew language. Adaf, by contrast, tries to bring them back.

“Ya Biladi, Aidati”: Woman and Homeland in the Work of Sami Michael

Batya Shimony

This essay offers an interpretation of the metaphor of Woman as Homeland (and vice versa) in three of Sami Michael’s novels: *All Men are Equal but Some are More* (1974), *Water kissing Water* (2001) and *Aida* (2008). The appearance of this metaphor in Michael’s work represents the struggle of the Mizrahi immigrant protagonist to be both part of the Israeli Meta-Narrative and parted from it. The expressions of this metaphor in Michael’s novels are dual and built around the tension between a symbolic-colonialist paradigm on the one hand, and a concrete-substantive one on the other. This tension is maintained throughout all three novels with the alternating predominance of one paradigm or the other. The alternation is influenced by the passing of time and by the change in attitude towards the “Other” in Israeli culture and society.

Arab Jewish Writers and Mizrahi Literature: A New Literary Geography

Lital Levy

Although Hebrew literary criticism has begun redressing the exclusion of Hebrew and minority writers from the Modern Hebrew canon, the literary geography of Modern Hebrew remains largely unquestioned. Modern Hebrew literature is still viewed as the progeny of European *maskilim*, while the concurrent creations by non-Ashkenazi Jews of *belles lettres* in Hebrew and other languages have been overlooked. This exclusion of the intellectual and literary history of Asian and African Jewries has important ramifications for our understanding of Jewish cultural modernity, of the origins of Modern Hebrew literature, and of contemporary Israeli literature written by Mizrahi and Sephardi writers.

In this essay I call for a new approach to Hebrew literary historiography on two fronts. Firstly, I advocate exploring the relationship between Ashkenazim, Sephardim and Arab-Jews in the multilingual corpus of Jewish literature written from the nineteenth century onwards. Secondly, I propose investigating the full range of cultural influences that resonate in Mizrahi literature coming out of Israel.

This essay focuses primarily on the first of these two questions: the revision of Hebrew literary historiography. I begin by reviewing how Hebrew literary historiography has approached the question of Mizrahi literature. I then suggest a revision of the historiographical narrative, commencing with a “global”, multilingual model of *haskala* that emphasizes reciprocal channels of cultural circulation and transmission between and among Europe, Asia, and Africa. By way of example, I sketch the contours of modern Arab-Jewish cultural production beginning in the nineteenth century, lingering on the overlapping participation of Jewish intellectuals in the *haskala* and the *nahda* (modern Arabic “renaissance”). The next section examines a defining moment in modern Hebrew-Arabic interculturality in the twentieth century, in 1920’s Baghdad. I conclude the essay with a consideration of the myriad cultural influences shaping the work of the two leading Israeli writers from Iraq, Shimon Ballas and Sami Michael.

Between the Covenants – “Yesh” Literature and “Ein” Literature in “Love in the Telephone” by Shulamit Hareven

Lea Aini

This essay attempts to offer an unconventional interpretation of Shulamit Hareven’s “Love in the Telephone” – a polar, deceptive and multi-garbed story. It is exceptional among Hareven’s writings and, as a consequence, has been given relatively little attention. This work analyzes the story from the perspective of the concept of Popular Literature (“Yesh”) as opposed to Counter Literature (“Ein”) against the background of “playing literature”. One element is that the story also has an unusual metaphysical dimension, despite the fact that Hareven herself opposed any kind of interpretation of literature. A further element will resolve the lack of congruence between Hareven’s belief about the nature of good literature – that is expressed in most of her work and especially in her essays – and the exegesis of the story. Finally, this essay will interpret “Love in the Telephone”, based upon the characteristics of playing Literature, and will show the connection between this story and other works belonging to this genre, pointing to the uniqueness of the story in question.

Towards Hybrid Poetics: Post-colonial Arab Literature and Arab Modernism

Saddik M. Gohar

Translated by Oran Moked, edited by Nid’a Huri and followed by an epilogue by Sasson Somekh.

List of Contributors

Leah Aini is an author. She was born in Tel-Aviv in 1962. Her unique writing has been praised by many leading Israeli authors and critics. Aini has published 17 books: 9 fiction prose books, 6 children's books and 2 poetry books. Among her books: *Summer's Heroes* (1991), *Sand Tide* (1992), *Someone Must Be Here* (1995), *Oleanders* (1997), *Ashtoret* (1999), *Sdom'el* (2001), *Giant, Queen, And The Master of Games* (2004), *Rose of Lebanon* (2009), *Susit* (2012). *Rose of Lebanon*, an autobiographical novel, won the 2010 Bialik prize for literature. The novel was also shortlisted as one of the finalists for the 2010 Sapir Prize. In 1993, Aini won the writing scholarship granted by the Tel-Aviv Fund. In 1988, she won both Bar-Ilan University's Wertheim Prize, and Haifa University's Adler Prize, for her first poetry book, *Dyokan* (Portrait). Leah Aini twice won the Prime Minister's Prize for Literature (1994, 2004). In 2004, the members of the prize committee wrote: "Leah Aini is today the leading writer of her generation". In 2006, Aini's play, *Mi Alma*, won the Bernstein Prize for a First Play.

Prof. Nitsa Ben-Ari is Chair of Diploma Studies for Translation & Revision at the School of Cultural Studies, Tel Aviv University. Her major research interest lies in translation and ideology: manipulation, subversion and censorship. Her 1997 book *Romance with the Past* (Niemeyer) dealt with the role of the 19th century German-Jewish historical novel in the emergence of a "New Hebrew" and a new national Hebrew literature. Her 2006 book *Suppression of the Erotic in Modern Hebrew Literature* (Ottawa University Press) dealt with issues of Puritan censorship and self-censorship. Ben-Ari is also an editor and a translator. She worked as chief editor at Zmora-Bitan-Dvir Publishing House. She translated 27 books from English, French, Italian and German (Goethe's *Faust*, *Hermann und Dorothea*, Schiller's *Räubers* and others). She is Chair of the Israeli Institute for the Translation of World Masterpieces.

Prof. Saddik M. Gohar is a researcher and certified translator and interpreter. His MA and PhD in English Literature and Critical Theory were from Indiana University (USA). His areas of interest are in the fields of comparative literature, Middle Eastern studies, feminist literature, minority literatures, trauma theory and cinema studies. He has published in major western journals and contributed more than 15 chapters to critical books published by leading publishing houses in the West. Among his recently published works are: *Singers in the Wasteland : Voices of Protest in Modern Poetry*, *Transcultural Conflicts and Dialogues: Relocating the Middle East in American and Arabic Literatures*, *Cities of Darkness and Fear : Integrating Western Discourses in Arabic City Literature*, *Narratives of Hegemony and Marginalization: Deconstructing Grand Narratives of Hegemony and Marginalization in Arabic and American Literature*, *Journey in the Middle East : The Discourses of Violence and Racism in American and Arabic Literature*.

Dr. Nili Rachel Scharf Gold is associate professor of Modern Hebrew Literature at the University of Pennsylvania, where she has taught since 2000. She spent the previous decade teaching at Columbia University. Born in Haifa, Israel, she was educated at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and in the US. Gold has published extensively on Israeli and Hebrew Literature in American, Israeli and European journals. Her pioneering work on the issue of mother tongue in literature, published in English in 2001, introduced a new discourse to Hebrew Literature scholarship. In 2008, Gold published a critical biography of the poet Yehuda Amichai, *Yehuda Amichai: The Making of Israel's National Poet* (UPNE). Her first book, *Not like a Cypress: Transformations of Images and Structures in the Poetry of Yehuda Amichai* (Schocken, 1994), was published in Hebrew and awarded the Best First Book Prize in Hebrew Literature by the Israeli Ministry of Science and Culture. She is currently writing a book about Haifa.

Dr. Roman Katsman, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Literature of the Jewish People at Bar-Ilan University, specializes in Modern Hebrew and Russian literature, and in literary theory and poetics. He is the author of: *The Time of Cruel Miracles: Mythopoesis in Dostoevsky and Agnon* (2002), *Poetics of Becoming: Dynamic Processes of Mythopoesis in Modern and Postmodern Hebrew and Slavic Literature* (2005), *At the Other End of Gesture: Anthropological Poetics of Gesture in Modern Hebrew Literature* (2008). His latest book in Hebrew, 'A Little Prophecy': *Sincerity and Rhetoric in the Works of S. Y. Agnon ('Ir u-Mlo'a)*, is to be published by Bar-Ilan University Press.

Prof. Gad Kaynar is Chair of the Theatre Arts Department at Tel Aviv University. His research is in the fields of Israeli, German and Scandinavian theatre and drama, dramaturgy and performance analysis, and he is the author of numerous articles on topics in these fields. He is a guest Professor at The Institut für Theaterwissenschaft in Munich. His most recent book is an historiographic study on *The Cameri Theatre of Tel-Aviv* (2008). His books *The Reality Convention in Hebrew Theatre* and *Recent German Dramaturgy* are due to appear in 2012. Kaynar is the editor and co-editor of many anthologies, including ones about *Sturm und Drang*, Bertolt Brecht, Michel de Ghelderode and George Tabori, as well as a forthcoming anthology, *Revisited 'Classical' Israeli Drama* (together with Dr. Zahava Caspi). He is the editor of the quarterly *Teatron* and Former dramaturg (1982–2005) of major Israeli repertory companies. Kaynar is the Secretary General of the Israeli Centre of the I.T.I. and the Chairman of the Israeli Society for Promoting Theatre Research. He is also a stage, film and TV actor, director, poet and drama translator. For his Ibsen translations and research, he was awarded the title of "Knight First Class of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit" by King Harold V of Norway.

Dr. Lital Levy is Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at Princeton University, where she teaches Modern Hebrew and Arabic literature, comparative literature, and literary

theory. Her research focuses on historic and contemporary zones of contact between the two languages. She has published studies on the intellectual and literary history of Arab Jews in the late 19th century Arab East (Iraq, Greater Syria and Egypt), particularly dealing with their participation in the modern Arabic and Hebrew renaissance movements, modern Hebrew literary history and contemporary literature and culture in Israel/Palestine. Her publications have appeared in journals including *Teorya u-vikoret*, *Prooftexts*, *Jewish Quarterly Review*, *Comparative Literature Studies*, and *Arab Studies Journal*. She is currently completing two book projects: one on Arab-Jewish writers from 1863-1933, and the other on the poetics and politics of language, and especially the role of Arabic in the Hebrew literary imagination in Israel/Palestine from the early 20th century to the present.

Sami Michael was born in Iraq in 1926. When he was in high-school during World War II, he was a human rights activist, calling for democracy in Iraq. As a result of his activities, an arrest warrant was issued against him in 1948, and he had to flee to Iran, where he spent a year before coming to Israel in 1949. In Israel he was a member of the *Al-Ittihad*, the daily newspaper of the Communist Party. In 1955, he left the Communist Party and worked for 25 years as a hydrologist. After he graduated the departments of psychology and Arabic literature at Haifa University, Michael started to write in Hebrew rather than Arabic. His works include novels, novellas, plays, books for youth and non-fiction, including: *Refuge*, *A Trumpet in the Wadi*, *Victoria*, *Water Kissing Water*, *Nabila*, *Aida* and *The Flight of the Swans*. His books were translated into many languages and are studied in universities and schools in Israel and overseas. Michael has won numerous awards including: the ACUM Prize, the Andersen Award, the Brenner Prize, the Italy Tolerance Award, the President's Award and the Emet Prize. Four universities have awarded Michael Honorary doctorates: The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Tel-Aviv University and Haifa University. Since 2011, Michael has been the president of The Association for Civil Rights in Israel.

Dr. Na'ama Rokem is Assistant Professor in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. Her book, *Prosaic Conditions: Heinrich Heine and the Spaces of Zionist Literature*, is about to be published by Northwestern University Press. She has published articles on W.G. Sebald, Franz Kafka, Yehuda Amichai and Paul Celan in journals including *Prooftexts* and *Germanic Review*.

Prof. Yigal Schwartz is the director of "Heksherim", The Research Center for Jewish and Israeli Culture, and head of the Publishing Program at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU). He is the co-editor (with Zisi Stavi) of the *Academic Lexicon of Israeli Authors*, and has served as head of the departments of Hebrew Literature at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and BGU. Prof. Schwartz has published seven books of research and dozens of articles that have been translated into eight languages. He initiated and edited *Masa Critit* (Critical Mass), a series of research books, and served as co-editor of the research

series *Musag*. He edited the academic journal *Mikan* and co-edited the *BGU Review* and the literary journal *Efes Shtayim*. He has also edited some two hundred books – research works, prose, poetry, and drama – mainly in the framework of his position as senior editor at Keter Publishing House and at the Kinneret Zmora Bitan Publishing House.

Dr. Batya Shimony is a lecturer in the Department of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and at Achva College. Her book, *On the Threshold of Redemption - The Story of the Ma'abara, First and Second Generation* (2008), deals with the absorption of the Mizrahi immigrants in the 1950's as represented in the literature of the first generation. Her current research deals with the representation of the Holocaust in Mizrahi literature. Her essay "The Struggle to be Seen – The Holocaust of Greek Jews in Israeli Cultural and Literary Discourse" is soon to be published in *Iyunim Betkumat Israel* (a journal, Hebrew).

Prof. (Emeritus) Reuven Shoham, a member of Kibbutz Yif'at, was awarded his Ph.D. by Tel Aviv University and is incumbent Professor of Hebrew Literature in the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of Haifa and Oranim College of Education. He has published six books and dozens of articles on research into modern Hebrew poetry. Among his books are *Voice and Image in Modern Hebrew Literature* (Hebrew), *The Hard Way - Readings in the Poetry of: M.Y. Levenson; N.H. Imber; H.N. Bialik; S. Tchernihovsky and A. Shlonsky* (Hebrew), *The Vision and the Voices: Close Reading in A. Kovner's Poem Parting from the South* (Hebrew), *Burning Bush of Flesh and Blood: Poetics and Rhetoric in the Modernist and Archetypal Poetry of Uri Zvi Greenberg* (Hebrew), *Poetry and Prophecy: The Image of the Poet as a 'Prophet', A Hero and an Artist in Modern Hebrew Poetry and Haim Goury: Poetic, Thematic and Rhetoric Research in his Poetry* (Hebrew). A book dealing with the poetry of Natan Zach is about to be published.

Prof. Sasson Somekh is Professor Emeritus of Arabic Literature at Tel Aviv University. Born in Baghdad, Iraq, he received his doctorate from the University of Oxford. Among his books are *The Changing Rhythm: A Study of the Novels of Naguib Mahfouz* (1973), *The Language in the Fiction of Yusuf Idris* (1984), *Genre and Language in Modern Arabic Literature* (1991), and *Half A Day: Naguib Mahfouz and His Literary Works* (2011). Professor Somekh is a recipient of the 2005 Israel Prize and of the 2008 EMT Award.

Prof. Dina Stein teaches Rabbinic Literature and Folklore in the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at Haifa University. She has published articles on folk-genres and on the hermeneutical and cultural aspects of Aggadic and Midrashic literature. Her book *Maxim, Magic, Myth: A Folkloristic Perspective of Pirke deRabbi Eliezer* was published by Magnes Press (2004, Hebrew). *Textual Mirrors: Reflexivity and the Rabbinic-Midrashic Self* is about to be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press, Divinations Series.

