



Yod

Revue des études hébraïques et juives

23 | 2021

Le Voyage de l'hébreu à travers le temps et la société

The Uncanny Meeting Point of Languages: Hebrew in G. Shofman and David Vogel's Vienna

L'inquiétante étrangeté de la rencontre des langues : l'hébreu dans la Vienne de G. Shofman et David Vogel

האלביתי במפגש השפות: השפה העברית בווינה של ג. שופמן ודוד פוגל

Dekel Shay Schory



Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/yod/4889>

DOI: 10.4000/yod.4889

ISSN: 2261-0200

Publisher

INALCO

Printed version

Date of publication: 6 May 2021

Number of pages: 169-184

ISBN: 978-2-85831-380-8

ISSN: 0338-9316

Electronic reference

Dekel Shay Schory, "The Uncanny Meeting Point of Languages: Hebrew in G. Shofman and David Vogel's Vienna", *Yod* [Online], 23 | 2021, Online since 14 April 2021, connection on 08 July 2021. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/yod/4889> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/yod.4889>

This text was automatically generated on 8 July 2021.



Yod est mis à disposition selon les termes de la Licence Creative Commons Attribution - Pas d'Utilisation Commerciale 4.0 International.

The Uncanny Meeting Point of Languages: Hebrew in G. Shofman and David Vogel's Vienna

L'inquiétante étrangeté de la rencontre des langues : l'hébreu dans la Vienne de G. Shofman et David Vogel

האלביתני במפגש השפות: השפה העברית בווינה של ג. שופמן ודוד פוגל

Dekel Shay Schory

Introduction¹

- 1 For a long time, the *Galut* (diaspora) of the Hebrew people meant not just the lack of a territory but also life in a multilingual situation. Almost inevitably, Hebrew literature at the beginning of the 20th century contained traces of those other languages. In a multilingual situation, writing literature in one language, encoded all the other languages and all the gaps, all the places that the chosen language couldn't reach. The diverse usage of languages in the Hebrew text was not (just) driven from a forced lingual situation but also held great poetic values.
- 2 The Hebrew writers David Vogel (1891, Satnov – 1944, Auschwitz) and Gershon Shofman (1880, Orsha – 1972, Haifa) were always considered as “Germans” in the Hebrew literary sphere. It was a result both of their choice to stay in Europe rather than come to Israel, and also due to poetic characteristics in their prose. They published mainly in Hebrew but their Hebrew has significant traces of other languages: lexical, syntactical, cultural etc. from languages as Russian, German, Yiddish, Polish, English, French, and it even include several dialects of those languages. Even though this was very common among writers of their time, the poetic meaning of that combination need to be examined.
- 3 Reading Shofman and Vogel's Hebrew prose texts, written in Europe at the beginning of the 20th century, is not a fluent read today. We can think of four gaps that will

demonstrate the distance between the writing and the reading. The first are the (1) periodical gaps: the text mentions names, events and situations that were perhaps clear to readers at the time of publication, but will not be understood without context today. The second are the (2) spatial gaps: the text describes a space that the reader does not know, and so, if it contains poetic values, they will not be understood. The most “visual” gaps are the lingual and mainly, the (3) lexical gaps: when the writer uses words that are in a different language than the text itself, it creates a gap. If he is aware of this gap, he will add a translation in the text or in its margins, but if he leaves the foreign word there, it can either mean that he thinks readers will understand it, or that he wants it to be left unsolved.

- 4 The most interesting gaps are what I want to define here as (4) the *unheimlich* gaps. Freud talked about the *unheimlich*, the uncanny feeling, as the moment when the known and the unknown, the domestic and the foreign are mixed, since the German word *Heim* is in simple-home:²

If this is indeed the secret nature of the uncanny, we can understand why the usage of speech has extended *das Heimlich* into its opposite *das Unheimlich*, for this uncanny is in realty nothing new or foreign, but something familiar and old-established in the mind that has been estranged only by the process of repression.³

- 5 Freud's term became a center concept in the cultural sphere. The duality of the concept, the elusive nature of the particular German word, the connections that Freud and his successors made between it to anxiety, primitivism and myths, can only partly explain its appeal.
- 6 The *unheimlich* gaps are all the places in the text, in which we sense something strange regarding the language of the text: when there is a gap between the character and its language, or when the narrator offers his thoughts regarding the metalingual situation in the text.
- 7 While the first three gaps place the current reader in an inferior position with respect to the reader of the time, I believe that the last gap can be seen more clearly from a distance, offering the current reader an unusual advantage, since the distance from the spoken and written language of the text makes him more aware of some of the linguistic aspects.
- 8 The first purpose of this paper is to “hear” the languages of the texts, the revealed languages and the evident languages. Moreover, the paper will demonstrate the presence of the four gaps between writing and reading, in one short story by Gershon Shofman, and in a novel written by David Vogel. In particular, to show what impact the languages of the text have on past and current readers, and the way the authors express their attitude regarding the Hebrew language.

Gershon Shofman

- 9 Gershon Shofman, arrived in Vienna from Lvov in 1913, and spent the First World War period as a foreign citizen, a poor *Ostjuden* at the heart of the metropolis. He first thought Vienna was just a first stop on his journey, but he stayed there until 1920. After his marriage to Anne Flank, they moved close to her family, at Steirmark. Shofman fled to Israel only at 1938, with his wife and their two children.⁴

- 10 Shofman wrote and published many short stories during the war in the periodical] מיקלט [Miklat] published in New York and in the ephemeral journal גבולות [Gvulot] which he edited with Zvi Dizendrok at Vienna. The descriptive nature of these stories focuses on the human surroundings of the beaten city. They almost never enabled the voices of the city to be heard.⁵ A few non-Hebrew words are present in these stories, and most of them have referential use, rather than a poetic or meta-poetic meaning. A short time after the war, Shofman published in the periodical התקופה [Ha-Tkufa].⁶ Despite the various publication platforms, his readership was more or less the same in all places, and rather close to his own biography—Jewish immigrants from East Europe “on the move,” even if they have settled, all around the world.
- 11 Despite the proximity in the place of occurrence and publication dates, the stories from *Ha-Tkufa* are distinguished from the rest of the Vienna stories, they are significantly longer and one can notice the distant perspective from the events of time. The men in the stories are young, hungry and rootless. Not only they enable a more thorough perspective regarding the war and a more detailed gaze towards special and ideological aspects of the city, but they enable a detailed representation of sounds, of the multilingual Vienna: one might hear the voices of the people and their varied languages, and it is used to characterize the participants, their relations, and for poetic and symbolic needs.
- 12 The Hebrew is the foundation of the stories but they also reflect the German of the surrounding sphere, the French, English and Latin that are considered as the languages of the “culture” or the universal languages and the Russian and Yiddish, the languages of the deserted home. The German language is represented as the sounds of the streets, as the language of the masses (and almost never at private talks).⁷ Furthermore, the most common usage of German language in the texts appears in representations of street names and central areas in Vienna that are mentioned in transcript, not translation or translated in brackets. The intensive use of sound and names, deepens the sense of the Viennese sphere, for example in the story הקיסר [The Kaiser]:
- לפני ימים אחדים [...] עברה לתומה דרך חצר ה"בורג", והנה המון-עם נדחק אל החלונות, מנפנף בידיו וצווח. "הוך, הוך!" (יחי המלך!)
 Few days ago [...] she naïvely passed through the "Burg" courtyard. There, the mob was pushing, waving and screaming “Hoch, Hoch!” (Hail the Kaiser)⁸
- 13 And so, the young man wanders in the Franz-Joseph-Kai and yearning for the young girls that work as prostitutes in Praterstrasse and Stephanplatz (ישלום מלחמה), and travel on Brigittabrucke (הדמים קול).¹⁰
- 14 All these examples and many more, demonstrate not only the Viennese scenery, but they also contribute to the linguistic level—the (Hebrew) language of the story is spotted in foreign words that need to be deciphered.

In time of crisis

- 15 The story ובמצוק במצור¹¹ describes the members of a “small Russian group” in Vienna, before and after the war, clearly demonstrating the four gaps between the time it was written and the current reader. It opens with this paragraph:

מעולם לא היה העשן בבתי הקפה רב כל כך, כמו בימים החדשים הכבדים הללו. האנשים ינקו את הסיגריות בכל כוחם, כאילו התכוונו להתחבא בעשנם. אבל סוכני המשטרה מסומרי השפם הציצו לכאן דרך החלונות, ועיניהם החדות, הדרסניות, פילשו את הערפלים. הם חיפשו את המשתמטים מחובתם לצבא וגם את הזרים, האויבים.¹²

The smoke at the coffee houses was never as thick, as in those new and heavy days. The men smoked their cigarettes with all their strength, as if trying to hide in their smoke. But the police officers, with their pointed mustaches, peaked through the windows, and their sharp, raptor eyes divided the mist. They were looking for the deserters from army duties, and also the strangers, the enemies.

- 16 The dramatic opening does not give the reader a full exposition, it has a few (1) periodical gaps that will be understood mainly from the time of publication and the writer's biography. Without the extra literary knowledge, it is hard to understand what are "those heavy new days," what police force it refers to, and from which army one escapes and who is the enemy of the same army.
- 17 A more intriguing periodical gap is the fact that it was perceived as a "key story." In Nurit Govrin's words, "it seems like anyone who is familiar with the atmosphere of the Jewish writers and artists in Vienna of the First World War, would easily identify some of the characters of this story."¹³ Among others, the poor Hebrew writer David Gol was identified as David Vogel, and the Israeli writer Shlomo Pik as the writer and critic Ya'akov Rabinowitz. While Vogel's identification was accepted "as is," Rabinowitz's figure caused a scandal. In response to an angry letter he received, Shofman wrote that he wishes for this gap and its poetic values:

I pictured the abstract reader, the one that will live in thousands of years, and wouldn't be interested in this person or the other, but rather enjoy the story itself.

14

- 18 The first (2) spatial reference, that confirms that the story takes place in Vienna, is not mentioned at the exposition of the story (since it seems so clear), but emerges when one of the group members is sent to Steinhoff, a mental institute outside Vienna. We can also find references to a few specific streets and places in the city, for example:

אל תוך לילות הקיץ נפלה: אל תוך לילות הקיץ ברחוב-קרנאטן וּבְגֵבְנָן. הבהיק
האספלט הכהה והחלק [...] ומכנסיית סטיפן האיר האורלוגין הענקי.¹⁵

She [Mandu's sister—D.S] fell into the summer nights, into the summer nights of Kärntnerstrasse and the Graben. The dark and slippery asphalt shined [...] and the huge clock shed light from the Stephansdom.

- 19 Reading the two versions of the story (1922, 1960), we can see a (3) linguistic principal. Some words that Shofman probably did not know existed in Hebrew were replaced with new Hebrew words: he replaced the word פוליציה with the word משטרה [police], the word שפיין with מרגל [spy], and בית הקהווה with בית הקפה [coffee house]. All three examples are somewhat of transcripts of common non-Hebrew words.
- 20 However, a few non-Hebrew words remained in the text, and Shofman insisted they remain so.¹⁶ These words are the examples to the lexical gaps mentioned. Here are two examples: some members of the group eat at the פולקסקיכה. The German word *volkskiche* means a "soup kitchen" and describes an institute in the city. After winning the war, the British and Italians arrive with the ולוטה in their pockets. The meaning of that Latin word, *valuta*, is their foreign currency. We can also find the foreign word *primarios* (the senior doctor), *cavalier* (an arrogant man) etc. all written in Hebrew transcript without a translation. It seems Shofman has kept only the foreign words that held a local and temporal appeal, the words that connected the story to the interwar period in Vienna.
- 21 These three gaps are a result of the reality described in the story, and we can find parallels in many stories from that period. It is (4) the *unheimlich* gaps that contain the meta-linguistic values of the story.

- 22 Benjamin Harshav defined the multilingual situation of the European Jewish society at the beginning of the 20th century as “inter-subjective multi-language,” a situation in which a few languages exist between a group of members.¹⁷ This description fits the group in the story: they came from Poland (Mando and Ester), Vilna (the Yiddish writer Meir Zilper), Hungary (the old Prof. Shmuel Zacks), Galicia (Dr. Veldschnap) and Israel (Shlomo Pick). We can assume that each of them knew more than one language—Russian, Polish, Yiddish, German, Hebrew or others. The narrator does not specify the languages spoken at the group gatherings or in private talks, but it seems like they all understand each other and do not need any translation. Interestingly, all the foreign words in the story (*volkskuche*, *valuta*, etc.) are the narrator’s words, not the characters.
- 23 The only language that the narrator represents, twice, is the language of the young Hebrew writer David Gol. Before the war, he was indifferent to his situation:
- כך עלתה לה, לחבורה הרוסית הקטנה, חבורת אומנים וסופרים לשתחרר בדרך-נס.
רק אחד מהם, המשורר הצעיר דוד גול, דחה כל השתדלות בשבילו, ואמר, כהרגלו,
עברית: "לי לא אכפת. ישלחוני נא לשם. לאכול יתנו לי?"¹⁸
- In miraculous way, the small Russian group, a group of artists and writes, managed to get away from captive. Only one of them, the young poet David Gol, rejected any effort of helping him and said, as always, in Hebrew: “I don’t care. They can send me there. Will they give me food?”
- 24 His question and its tone are perceived as rhetorical, as saying “some food will probably be given there” (and keep in mind that he is struggling for food every day in the streets of the city). He repeats his own saying after the war, stressing the surprise and his naive expectation:
- השלום הביא אתו פנים חדשות מכל עברים. [...] דוד גול שב ומספר נוראות. בדוחק,
באשפה ופעמים בלי גג התגלגלו שם כל שלוש השנים. "לאכול יתנו לי?" והנה לא
ינתנו!¹⁹
- The peace brought new faces from all around. [...] David Gol came back and he tells horrors. Three years he was scattered in density, in filth, sometimes without a roof. “Will they give me food?” Well, they did not!
- 25 No other spoken language is represented even though many languages are spoken, and no other Hebrew speaker speaks Hebrew in the story, not even Shlomo Pick the Hebrew writer from the land of Israel, and not the young Zionist pioneers on their way to Israel. While other Hebrew speakers were wandering across the globe, David Gol was in Europe and stayed in Europe, and throughout many difficulties, insisted on using his language.
- 26 The purpose of this emphasis is a statement regarding the place of Hebrew as a legitimate language among other European or Jewish-European languages. The decision of the narrator to give the power of speech only to one character, and to emphasize the one spoken language that allegedly does not need to be pointed out since it’s the language of the text itself, is what provokes the *unheimlich* feeling.
- 27 This statement will be repeated in other stories Shofman wrote during the next twenty years while living in a small Austrian village, as the only Hebrew speaker in the area. In his stories, one can see the urge to give presence to Hebrew in the German surroundings, while inserting non-Hebrew words into the Hebrew text.

David Vogel—*Married Life*

- 28 David Vogel arrived to Vienna from Vilnius in 1912. During the First World War years, just like David Gol in Shofman's story, he was arrested in Vienna as a foreign citizen and sent to a detention camp. After the war ended, he married in Vienna, and wandered to Paris, Palestina, Berlin, and Paris again, with his wife and daughter. In 1944 he was arrested by the Gestapo and murdered in Auschwitz. The novel "חיים נישואים] *Married Life*] was published by the Israeli Publication house Mitzpe in 1929-1930.
- 29 The (1) periodical gaps are not as present as in the Shofman story, since it describes the happening of a particular group of people that is not affected by the events of time and place. This fact is what gives the novel its timeless nature. The main plot is the relationship between the young Jewish writer Rodolf Gordville and the Viennese baroness Thea von Takow. Their relationship lasts approximately a year and a half, but there is no indication for a specific time-frame.
- 30 The spatial (2) and the lexical gaps (3) are combined in this novel. The narrator describes Gordville's walks in the city in detail, and by that creates a clear feeling of redundancy. Every house has an address, every train has a line number, every route of any walk or a run—and there are a lot of them—can be tracked on a map. And so, even though the text is written in Hebrew, the map, and its German component, feels like a foreign object in the text, almost forcing the reader to read it with a map, like reading with a dictionary when reading in a new language thereby offering interesting poetic meanings.²⁰

גורדוויל שם פניו לעבר טבור העיר. [...] בלי חופזה, בהפסקות תכופות, שירך דרכו לאורך רחוב ויהרינג נסוך-החג [...] הגיע לשוטנטור ופרש ימינה, אל רחוב הרינג, בלי מטרה מסוימת.²¹

Gurdweill began walking toward the city center. [...] without hurrying, pausing frequently, he strolled down Währinger Strasse, which was steeped in a holiday atmosphere [...] reached the Schottentor, and turned right into the Ring, without any definite destination in mind.²²

- 31 The (4) *unheimlich* gap in this novel is the lacking representation of the multilingual city. Here we have a large, tangible gap—while all characters speak German, the novel is in Hebrew,²³ and yet, the novel ignores this gap, and by ignoring it, only makes it more notable. The novel's Hebrew mimics German dialects and the German manner of speaking, the best example being the pronominal address terms that do not exist in Hebrew. We can see one example of the narrator's awareness of this gap when Gordville and Thea first meet. At first, they use the *Sie* form, the common and respectful way to approach a stranger in German. After the conversation becomes intimate and personal, they turn to the *du* form, second-person:

לבסוף התאושש גורדוויל:
הגברת אינה מבקרת תכופות בבית-קפה זה, הלא כן? [...]
לא. נכנסה באקראי לכאן. אגב אורחה.

In the end Gurdweill pulled himself together and said:

"The Fräulein don't come here often, isn't it?"

"No. She just happened to be passing."²⁴

התדעי, גברתי - אמר והביט ישר אל פניה - פעמים אתה מתוודע אל אדם ואתה מרגיש מיד, שכבר יש בינך ובינו מין יחס קבוע...

You know, Fräulein, he said, looking directly into her face, it sometimes happens that you meet someone and you immediately feel a connection to him.

יש לבדוק אם אינך סהרורי - אמרה הברונית והצטחקה משום מה קולנית. (23-25)
Who knows, perhaps you're a lunatic, said the Baroness, and for some reason she laughed loudly.²⁵

- 32 And so, we are placed in a multilingual city, where the narrator is highly sensitive to the small details of the German, but he does not represent any other language. In three places only, the narrator allows non-German words to be heard: Thea is described as superb in French and a German popular song is mentioned.²⁶ In both cases the use of the foreign words instead of the Hebrew words seems to hold no other meaning other than the referential. Since the amount is so little (unlike in Shofman prose, as shown before), it has no overall meaning either. But, the only Hebrew word in the novel seems to be rather important.
- 33 The *unheimlich* here comes from the feeling that it's allegedly a German novel, but it's written in Hebrew. Goreville and Thea marry at Vienna's main synagogue, and the Hebrew word heard in that situation is at the same time strange and known, new and old, for Goreville and to the Hebrew reader as well:

אחר הקריא הרב: "הרי", והמתין שגורדוויל יחזור אחריו מילה במילה, אבל הלה זכר פתאום מישנת ילדותו וקרא את כל הפסוק לבדו בהכרת נצחונו, אגב שימו את הטבעת על אצבעה של תיאה. הרב נעץ רגע בגורדוויל עיני רוצח אמיתי, כאילו קיפח את פרנסתו. דומה היה הרב באותו רגע למי שאימץ כל אוניו להגביה שק כבד, והשק נמצא לפתע מלא נוצה, והמגביה איבד על ידי כך שיווי המשקל שלו ונפל לאחוריו. אבל גורדוויל היתה דעתו נוחה משום מה ממפלתו של הרב, הוא חיך רגע ונזכר תוך כדי כך, שצריך להעמיד פנים של כובד ראש, ופסק.²⁷

The rabbi read "Behold thou", and waited for Gurdweill to repeat the word after him one by one, but the latter suddenly remembered his childhood lessons and read the whole sentence triumphantly by himself, slipping the ring on Thea's finger as he did so. The rabbi glared murderously at Gurdweill as if he had deprived him of his rightful due, looking like someone who has exerted all his strength to lift a heavy sack, only to discover suddenly that it was full of feathers, causing him to lose his balance and fall over backward. Gurdweill, who was for some reason gratified by the rabbi's discomfiture, smiled broadly for a moment. Then he remembered that he was supposed to be wearing a solemn expression and quickly suppressed his smile.²⁸

- 34 This segment offers a great *unheimlich* representation: Gordweill's Hebrew is hidden but can be pulled from its repressed state, when its formally needed or in a defying manner against the rabbi or the Hebrew readers, as saying "I know Hebrew, I just preferred not to."

Conclusion

Thus *heimlich* is a word the meaning of which develops towards an ambivalence, until it finally coincides with its opposite, *unheimlich*. *Unheimlich* is in some way or other a sub-species of *heimlich*.²⁹

- 35 In nowadays Israel, the Hebrew, spoken and written, exists in any sphere and level. However, in the years of the revival of the language and literature, almost nothing was natural, organic. The four gaps presented here, demonstrate the distance between the multilingual reality to the monolingual nature of the literary text, but the latter, the *unheimlich* gap holds the most intriguing meaning: it represents the position of the writer regarding his own written language, and that position, was for Shofman, Vogel, and most of the writers of their time ambivalent, their desired home and simultaneously, a foreign one.

- 36 In a story Shofman published in 1933, האחד [The One]³⁰ the narrator describes the way the Nazism spirit and the swastikas have taken over the Steirmark suburb. The narrator pictures the life of his small Jewish family that feels that they have less and less allies every day. "The One" is a new neighbor that comes to live with his family on the floor above the narrator's home. The new strange neighbor is terrifying in a period that is already stressed:

31הלנו אם לצרינו? תחת גגנו, לפחות, אל נא יהיה אויב!

Is he on our side or against us? Under our roof, at least let's hope he is not an enemy!

- 37 After a few days, the narrator finds out that the neighbor resists the National-Socialistic party, but he is a criminal, known to local police as a thief. When his nature is revealed, the narrator says:

32המצב. ואנו? תחילה היה לנו לא ניחא קצת, "אונהיימליך" בלעז, אבל לאט לאט התרגלנו אל

What did we think of that situation? At first, it was a little bit uncomfortable, "unheimlich" in the foreign language, but slowly we got used to the situation.

- 38 The family home, the writer's home, is the known and safe place. A foreign man comes to the upper floor, a man with a secret that is in the same time an ideological partner and a slandered criminal. He is threatening but also gives some security to the narrator's family with his power and their partnership against all others. The invasion of the *unheimlich* into the family home is the most intimidating experience, but Shofman resolves that sensation when he unites with affection the two families into one house ("our small house, with his two floors") and one day when the girls of the families are late to come home, the unity between the two men is deepened:

החשיכה בפינה נידחת זו גוברת מרגע לרגע; ברם בן-לווייתני, ידיד הלילות, עיניו האירו כעיני הזאב, והן הן שהפיגו את החרדה ועודדו את הרוח. האחד.

The darkness in this distant place is getting darker and darker; but my companion, the friend of the nights, his eyes were bright as the eyes of a wolf, and thanks to them the anxiety faded and the spirit was lifted. THE ONE.

- 39 Did the Hebrew become familiar with the languages that surrounded it? Did the Hebrew literature become comfortable with the writers that wrote about a Jewish-Hebrew life outside the borders of the land of Israel? The *unheimlich*, the uncanny combination of known and strange, at home and homelessness feelings, seems to also describe accurately the relation between the written text and the current reader, and thus sheds a new light on the text itself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

FREUD Sigmund, 1919, *The Uncanny*, English trans: Alix Strachey, <https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf>.

GOVRIN Nurit, 1982, שופמן של ג. שופמן, חיי ויצירתו של ג. שופמן, [From Horizon to Horizon: The Life and Work of G. Shofman], 2 vols., Tel Aviv University and Yahdava, Tel Aviv.

HARSHAV Benjamin, 1993, *Language in Time of Revolution*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 248 p.

SCHWARTZ Yigal, 2014, המרכז נגד המזרח: האשכנזים: המרכז נגד המזרח [The Ashkenazim: Center vs. East], Dvir & Bar-Ilan University Press, Or Yehuda.

SHOFMAN Gershon, 1960, כל כתבי ג. שופמן [The Collected Works of G. Shofman], Dvir & Am Oved, Tel Aviv.

SCHORY Dekel Shay, 2011, "To Breath in Different World", *G. Shofman: Linguistic Aspects of his Poetic Work*, MA thesis, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Be'er-Sheva, pp. 34-45 [in Hebrew].

SCHORY Dekel Shay, 2019, *To Live and Write in a Linguistic Exile: Jewish Writers in the German-Speaking Sphere and their Linguistic Choices (1930-1900)*, PhD thesis, Be'er-Sheva, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev [in Hebrew].

VOGEL David, חיי נישואים [Married Life], 1986, Tel Aviv, HaKibbutz HaMeuchad; English translation: Dalia Bilu, The Toby Press, New Milford, CT, 1988.

WIRTH-NESHER Hana, 1996, *City Codes: Reading the Modern Urban Novel*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 260 p.

NOTES

1. I wish to thank Prof. Yigal Schwartz. This article is based on a chapter of my PhD thesis, written under his supervision.
2. First publication in German: 1919. English translation by Alix Strachey. Here quoted from <https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/freud1.pdf>. Freud's discussion in the meaning of the phrase in German and other languages is wide and detailed. See the first part of the article.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.
4. For detailed biographical aspects of Shofman life, see GOVRIN, 1982.
5. Schwartz has claimed that two main styles was dominant in the Hebrew literature at the beginning of the 20th century. Shofman is a part of the "eye literature" that was common in the center of Europe, characterized with a private and universal nature, from the perspective of a distanced eye witness to the events. See: SCHWARTZ, 2014.
6. *Ha-Tkufa* was a periodical published by Stybel from 1918 to 1950. It was published mainly in Tel Aviv, but it also had issues published in Warsaw, Berlin, New York and Moscow. Shofman published in *Ha-Tkufa* 25 stories. The first was *At last* in 1919 (vol. 4), and then from 1920 to 1925 (vols. 10-20) a story by Shofman appeared almost in every issue.
7. Wirth-Nesher has defined four aspects the writer uses to describe the city—the "nature," the built, the human and the verbal environment, and "each of these environments can be perceived and represented by all of the senses as the action on the novel unfolds." See: WIRTH-NESHER, 1996, p. 14.
8. The story הקיסר [The Kaiser] was published in *Ha-Tkufa*, vol. 11, 1921, pp. 50-54; *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, Dvir & Am Oved, vol. 2, Tel Aviv, 1960, pp. 99-105, here p. 99. All the translation to Shofman stories are my own. And note: in the original Hebrew, the narrator uses the word בורג [burg] and not טירה [castel]: transcript and

not translation, hence preferring the sound of the place, rather the accuracy of the text or its language.

9. *War and Peace*, published on 1921 in *Ha-Tkufa*.

10. *The voice of Blood*, published on 1922 in *Ha-Tkufa*.

11. The story במצור ובמצוק [In time of crisis] was published in *Ha-Tkufa*, vol. 16, 1922, pp. 101-109; *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, op. cit., pp. 125-137.

12. *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, p. 125.

13. GOVRIN, 1982, pp. 345-358.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 353.

15. *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, p. 133.

16. Regarding the patterns of changing some foreign words and insisting on the presence of others, see GOVRIN, 1982, p. 103; SCHORY, 2011, pp. 34-45.

17. HARSHAV, 1993.

18. *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, p. 125.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

20. Regarding Vienna as a key to Vogel's prose, including a comparison between the poetic use of the urban scenery, see SCHORY, 2019.

21. The Hebrew quotes are from ח"י נישואים (Menachem Peri, ed.), HaKibbutz HaMeuchad, 1986, p. 169.

22. All English translation of *Married life*: Dalia Bilu, The Toby Press, New Milford, CT, 1988, p. 251.

23. This position of the novel was described by SHAKED and others: "The novel can be read as an Austrian-Viennese Roman that (happened to be) written in Hebrew.", SHAKED, 1986, pp. 335-344, here p. 336 [in Hebrew—my translation].

24. p. 26. The translation does not reflect the usage of Vogel's Hebrew in the German grammar and the pronominal address that I found crucial to the understanding of their relationship. The original translation was "you don't come here often, I think?"; "no, I just happened to be passing." The translator obviously preferred the "right" translation into English, but lacks the way the Hebrew mimics the German language of the novel. In the two following sentences, the original Hebrew is in second person (*du*, אתה).

25. pp. 23-25.

26. *Superbe*, p. 40 [English translation, p. 53]; *Wo hast denn dießne schönen...*, p. 231 [English translation, p. 345]

27. p. 72.

28. In English translation, see p. 104. The translator's choice here was to translate the Hebrew word הרי to the non-specific to the marriage ceremony. "Behold thou" is perhaps a more fluent read in English, but as stated here, it lacks important part of the meanings.

29. FREUD, 1919, p. 4.

30. [The One] מוזנאים *Moznayim*, vol. 1, issue 2, 1933, pp. 11-13. See also *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, vol. 2, pp. 323-326. The English translation here is my own.

31. *The Collected Works of G. Shofman*, p. 324.

32. *Ibid.* p. 326.

ABSTRACTS

G. Shofman and David Vogel wrote beautiful literature from the multilingual Vienna in the interwar period. Seemingly, they wrote monolingual Hebrew texts, but this Hebrew encodes all the other languages, and all the gaps, all the places that the chosen language cannot reach. The diverse usage of languages in the Hebrew texts was not (just) a result of a forced lingual situation but also held great poetic values.

Reading Shofman and Vogel's Hebrew prose texts today is not a fluent read, because of gaps that affect the reading: (1) periodical gaps are when the text mentions names, events and situations that were clear to readers at the time of publication, but will not be understood today without context. The second are the (2) spatial gaps: the text describes a space that the reader does not know, and so, if it contains poetic values, they will not be understood. The (3) lingual gaps that can be syntactical but mainly lexical. The most interesting gaps are (4) the *unheimlich* gaps, the uncanny feeling when the known and the unknown, the safe and the threatening meet in order to create the meta-lingual meaning of the text, and change its poetic values.

This paper demonstrates the presence of these four gaps in one short story by G. Shofman (*In time of crisis*), and in a novel written by David Vogel (*Married life*). In particular, to show what impact does the language(s) of the text have on past and current readers, and the way the authors express their attitude regarding the Hebrew language.

G. Shofman et David Vogel ont composé de très belles œuvres dans la Vienne plurilingue de l'entre-deux-guerres. Apparemment, ils n'ont écrit qu'en hébreu, mais cet hébreu comporte en lui les autres langues de cet espace, ce qui crée dans les textes des écarts considérables qui résultent de tous les lieux que la langue choisie ne peut atteindre. L'usage varié d'autres langues dans les textes en hébreu n'est pas (seulement) la conséquence d'une situation linguistique imposée, mais il a aussi une valeur poétique.

La lecture contemporaine de ces textes n'est donc pas simple car pour le lecteur d'aujourd'hui il peut être difficile de combler ces écarts, qu'il s'agisse de ceux en lien avec l'époque concernée, comme certains noms ou événements ; qu'il s'agisse des écarts géographiques nécessitant la connaissance des lieux afin d'en saisir la valeur poétique ; qu'il s'agisse des écarts linguistiques – syntaxiques ou lexicaux – incompréhensibles en l'absence de traduction. Cependant, les plus significatifs sont les écarts *unheimlich* lorsque, comme l'a décrit Freud, se rejoignent l'étrange et le familier afin de créer la strate métalinguistique du texte dont elle pourrait modifier totalement la signification.

Cet article examine les effets de ces écarts dans une nouvelle de Schofman et dans un roman de Vogel.

ג. שופמן ודוד פוגל כתבו ספרות נפלאה מווינה הרב-לשונית בתקופה שבין שתי מלחמות העולם. לכאורה, הם כתבו עברית בלבד אך העברית הזו מכילה בתוכה גם את השפות האחרות של המרחב באופן שמותיר בטקסט פערים, כל אותם מקומות אליהם השפה האחת לא יכולה להגיע. השימוש המגוון בשפות האחרות בטקסטים לא נבע רק ממצב לשוני כפוי אלא הוא גם נושא משמעויות פואטיות.

הקריאה בטקסטים הללו בעברית היום היא לא קריאה רציפה ופשוטה, משום שקיימים פערים שהקוראת העכשווית יכולה להתקשות להשלים: (1) פערים הקשורים בתקופה, כמו שמות, אירועים או מצבים שיכולים להיות מפוענחים רק מתוך הקשר של הבנת התקופה המתוארת, (2) פערים מרחביים שיתבטאו באזכור מקומות ומפות שעל הקוראת להכיר כדי לפענח על מנת להבין את המשמעויות הפואטיות שלהם, (3) ופערים לשוניים, כמו מבנים תחביריים, אך בעיקר פערים לקסיקליים, כלומר ביטויים או משפטים בלשונית זרות המשובצים בטקסט ושללא תרגום לא יוכלו להיות מובנים, וודאי לא במלואם. הפער המשמעותי ביותר הוא (4) הפער האלביתי, תחושת המאיום הנוצרת במפגש בין הזר למוכר, כפי שתיאר זאת פרויד. המקומות בהם בולט הפער הזה הם המקומות שבהם מתגלה הרובד המטא-לשוני של הטקסט, מה שיכול לשנות לחלוטין את משמעויותיו הפואטיות. המאמר מדגים את ארבעת פערי הקריאה הללו בסיפור קצר של שופמן (נישואים), ומבקש להצביע על האופן שבו דווקא הקריאה ובמצוק) וברומן של פוגל (חיי במצור) העכשווית יכולה להדגיש היבטים פואטיים נסתרים.

INDEX

Mots-clés: G. Shofman, David Vogel, littérature hébraïque à Vienne, entre-deux-guerres à Vienne, plurilinguisme, unheimlich

ג. שופמן, דוד פוגל, ספרות עברית בווינה, וינה בין שתי מלחמות העולם, רב לשונית, **מילות מפתח:**

האלביתי

Keywords: G. Shofman, David Vogel, Hebrew literature in Vienna, interwar period in Vienna, multilingualism, unheimlich

AUTHOR

DEKEL SHAY SCHORY

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev