

Stephen Lubell

## **Bilingualism**

### **in the Hebrew text**

This article is an attempt to discuss bilingualism in the Hebrew text from a variety of viewpoints, both historical and practical. The unique characteristics of Hebrew, its language and writing system are discussed in relation to a long historical tradition of bilingual texts, such as the Aramaic translations of the early Christian era, 16th century Polyglot Bibles and Passover Haggadahs. Present-day strategies, both from the outlook of typesetting and translation, are explored and the "invisible" effects of Hebrew lexical and syntactic patterns on English speakers are analyzed. The author puts forward the idea that there is a kind of blocking or switching mechanism at work which allows the monolingual Hebrew reader to block out the foreign element embedded within the Hebrew text.

This article is concerned with the problems of bilingualism in Hebrew texts—partly from the viewpoint of a practicing book designer and typographer, and partly from a more detached linguistic perspective. The nature of bilingual Hebrew texts, as compared to English/French texts, is complicated by several factors not least of which is a “retrograde” (right-to-left) writing system. For this reason, I should like to divide the discussion into two parts: “visible” and “invisible” bilingual texts. My use of the term bilingual will be quite broad in its definition, as I shall deal with examples in which two or more distinct languages appear, as well as examples in which the text is in one language only, yet in which the influence of a second language is clearly present from the vocabulary and syntax. Before examining the specific problems, I will first give a brief summary of the development of the Hebrew language and its complexities. Contemporary Israeli Hebrew is composed of three overlapping layers:<sup>1</sup>

- The basic grammar and vocabulary of classical Hebrew, which includes the writings of the Old Testament, the Mishna and the various editions of the Talmud;
- The non-Hebrew languages (such as Arabic, French, English, German, Polish or Russian) from the diverse parental backgrounds of native Hebrew speakers;
- The new forms created by native speakers, often without reference to classical Hebrew vocabulary or syntax.

### **Classical Hebrew**

The first element—classical or Biblical Hebrew—which may be said to have lasted up to the destruction of the first Temple in 586 BC, was characterized by a paucity of lexical terms. This is particularly evident in relation to adverbs, adjectives and abstract nouns, as in the derivation of the

word *Kavod* (honor) from the verbal root *kaved* meaning “was heavy.”<sup>2</sup> In addition, the verbal structure was certainly oriented towards the prophetic mode, for as George Steiner has commented:

*It has long been established that the Indo-European Germanic framework of threefold temporality—past, present and future—has no counterpart in Semitic conventions of tense. The Hebrew verb views action as incomplete or perfected. Even archaic Greek has definite and subtly discriminatory verb forms with which to express the linear flow of time from past to future. No such mode developed in Hebrew. In Indo-European tongues the future is preponderantly thought to lie before us, while in Hebrew future events are always expressed as coming after us.*<sup>3</sup>

The critic and writer Edmund Wilson discussed this unique verbal structure of ancient Hebrew and commented that

*the Jews even more than the Russians lacked our Western conception of the present moment—a feature that, it seems, marks a very advanced state in the history of language development. . .*

He gives as an example Jehovah’s words to Moses, “I am what I am” and added:

*Both verbs are in the imperfect, so, if we followed our rule of thumb, it would give us ‘I shall be what I shall be’—which again would be incorrect, since what the author of Exodus means to say is that God’s existence has never ceased, that it is still going on and will never end.*<sup>4</sup>

I personally have noted this phenomenon in modern Hebrew when I have heard people leaving work for the day call out “*Ani halachti*” or, literally, “I went.” A colloquial English rendering would be “I’m just going now,” but the implication of the Hebrew phrase is that the

person is stepping outside the present temporal time frame. Modern Hebrew also habitually uses the future tense for the imperative mode, whereas the imperative structure is used for purely positive commands. Thus *don't go* in Hebrew is *al ti'lech* (literally, "you will not go"), whereas the imperative form *lech* ("go") is used more rarely. The future mode is commonly used in Hebrew in situations which would only take the present tense as in the English clausal construction "I'll leave when she arrives," which is transformed into Hebrew as "I'll leave when she will arrive," and this Hebrew pattern often comes through in native English speakers exposed to Hebrew speech patterns.

It is clear that classical Hebrew was employed as a language of everyday communication, and not merely as a way of expressing eternal religious precepts and truths. Even so, William Chomsky described classical Hebrew as "solemn, noble, and majestic. . . succinct, but rich in imagery and picturesqueness."<sup>5</sup> The Hebrew spoken in the post-exile period, i.e., following the destruction of the first Temple and after the return of the exiles from Babylon, showed a "greater simplicity and uniformity of style, largely due to Aramaic influences."<sup>6</sup>

Aramaic was at that period the official language of the western provinces of the Persian Empire and the noted Semitist G. A. Driver has observed that "for several centuries the Jews must have been bilingual, still understanding Hebrew, but speaking Aramaic."<sup>7</sup> It is significant that the Aramaic script began to be adopted during this period in place of the previous paleo-Hebrew script and it is this writing system which is basically still in use. By the time of Christ, Aramaic versions of the scriptures—called *Targumim* (literally "translations")—were becoming necessary. Meanwhile Hebrew, without dying out, gradually became a *Lashon Hakhamim* or a language of scholars.

## Mishnaic Hebrew

Mishnaic Hebrew, named after the Mishna (the compilation of religious and quasi-secular laws of the 2nd century AD), was quite distinct from classical Hebrew. It was characterized by a confusion of the guttural consonants which classical Hebrew had hitherto kept quite distinct; a growing influence of foreign words from Aramaic, Greek, Latin and even Persian; and a greatly enriched vocabulary.

Additionally, the supply of verbal forms increased with a more subtle verbal structure, and more forms for imperfect or progressive action. As opposed to the usual three letter verbal roots of classical Hebrew, four or five letter verbal roots became more common. Driver commented that

*Hebrew, with its archaic stiffness, lost its austere beauty and stately dignity, acquiring simplicity and flexibility and adapting itself better to modern needs.*<sup>8</sup>

Here it is worth remembering that a basic characteristic of Hebrew—and other Semitic languages—is its consonantal structure, in which “each Hebrew word makes a shell into which a varying content of vowel sounds may be poured.”<sup>9</sup> This goes some way to explain why the Hebrew alphabet and writing system are so appropriate to the spoken language. The reader knows instinctively which meaning is intended by means of context and basic orthographic rules, if indeed a doubt exists. The vowel points (*Nikkud* in Hebrew) which are usually placed below the letters are thus retained mostly for names and words of foreign origin, biblical texts, poetry and children’s books. Otherwise, contemporary setting is set without vowel points.

The Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds, as well as further compilations of Biblical commentaries and laws, were compiled by the 5th century AD and the vowel points added in the 9th century. It is important to note that both the Mishna and the Talmud were usually written without vowel points and with very few punctuation marks. During

these two millennia, we pass from an increasingly sterile medieval Hebrew, to the more classical Hebrew of the Haskalah or Enlightenment (1784-1881), and finally to the revival of Hebrew as a spoken language. This was due mainly to the rise of the Zionist Movement, which realized the need for a single unifying national language to bring together the disparate elements of the Jewish diaspora. For better or worse, a decision was made to use Hebrew in as classical a form as possible and written in Hebrew characters. The creation of a modern Hebrew was very much a matter of personal will-power, as exemplified by Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, who almost single-handedly fought for the use of Hebrew against the competing claims of Yiddish, German and Russian.

### **Modern Hebrew**

This brief historical digression returns us to contemporary or modern Hebrew. The 1961 census in Israel divided the population into three main linguistic groups. Group A consisted of Arabic speakers; Group B consisted of speakers whose primary language was neither Hebrew nor Arabic, but who use Hebrew as a means of communicating outside their mother tongue or whose Hebrew showed the traces of a second language; and Group C consisted of native Hebrew speakers. Thus, out of a total population in 1961 of some 2,200,000, roughly ten percent belonged to Group A, nearly seventy percent to Group B, and some twenty percent to Group C.<sup>10</sup> This reflects very clearly the demographic situation in the post-war years.

I have not been able to find comparable statistics for more recent years, but it is clear the figures would be quite different now. The 1983 census showed a population of over four million and recorded that nearly eighty-four percent of the population read a daily newspaper in Hebrew only; roughly eleven percent read a newspaper in a language other than Hebrew; and just over five percent read

both in Hebrew and another language. Of those who read at least one book a month, nearly seventy percent read in Hebrew only; sixteen percent in another language only; and just over fourteen percent in Hebrew and another language.<sup>11</sup>

Thus the percentage of monolingual Hebrew speakers—now in their second or third generation—has risen dramatically and likewise their influence on professional life, on the media and on the language generally. Israel today is no longer the polyglot society of the 1950s but a much more homogeneous society linguistically in which the mother tongues of the past have to be learned again as foreign languages. The recent influx of Russian and Amharic speakers, whose members now form separate linguistic sub-cultures, has added new elements of bilingualism, but this has not radically altered the dominant position of Hebrew. The Russian immigrants bring with them a highly literate and print-oriented tradition, whereas the Ethiopian *Falashas* come from a predominantly oral culture. Thus, one sees much evidence of bilingual Hebrew/Russian texts and signage but very little in the way of similar Hebrew/Amharic texts.

Modern Hebrew is used today for the widest possible range of expression, from literary to scientific, with a large vocabulary in the new scientific and computer technologies. Exposure to the international communications media has perforce brought in many new foreign words and influences. However, in spite of predictions to the contrary, Hebrew seems to have “stood its ground” and kept to the basic Semitic syntax and structure. The actual writing system remains the more conservative element in the equation. As previously mentioned, the writing and reading direction is from right to left and Hebrew is generally written without the vowel points. There are two orthographic systems in common use—*Ktiv Haser* (partial spelling) and *Ktiv Maleh* (full spelling), which uses the *Matres Lectionis* (literally, “mothers of reading” or the

במקרים מסויימים אפשר למצוא את המכפלה של רב-איברים בדרך קצרה יותר.  
לדוגמא, אם נכפול את  $(a+b)(a-b)$  לפי כללי הכפל של רב-איברים נקבל:

$$(a+b)(a-b) = a^2 - ab + ba - b^2 = \underline{\underline{a^2 - b^2}}$$

אם במקום  $a$  ו- $b$  נקח ביטויים אלגבריים כלשהם, נקבל באופן דומה לני"ל:  
 $(5x^2y+2c)(5x^2y-2c) = (5x^2y)^2 - (2c)^2$

figure 1

**An example from an Israeli secondary school algebra textbook, showing different directions of Hebrew text and Arabic numerals.**

letters *aleph*, *vav*, *heh* and *yud*) to avoid ambiguous spellings. This is equivalent to the difference between the words “red” and “read” in English. The consonantal structure of Hebrew and its dearth of redundancies<sup>12</sup> (repeatable or predictable elements), and the resulting ambiguities do not seem to lead to reduced readability or comprehension on the part of the Hebrew reader. The experienced Hebrew reader appears able to decipher the correct meaning from the context, in spite of the absence of vowels. The basic rules of Hebrew orthography, once learnt and absorbed into the cognitive mechanism, seem sufficient to allow for quite rapid recognition. It should be noted here that modern Hebrew also uses the system of Arabic numerals for most numeration and all mathematical operations, thus giving the Hebrew reader a familiarity with both writing directions (*figure 1*).

This highly monolingual culture—bred of a fairly rigid theory of melting pot monoculturalism—contrasts paradoxically with an equally strong bilingual or even multilingual strain in Jewish history. These elements are more often than not invisible to the uninitiated, but they are nonetheless important. The historical scattering of the Jews in many lands created the need for a functional bilingualism, in which Hebrew remained the language of religion and tradition, whereas the vernacular of the land served as the mother tongue. In the Old Testament itself,

certain portions (the Books of Daniel and Ezra) were written in Aramaic, and the Mishna itself (2nd century AD) was written “. . . in racy Aramaic alternating with Hebrew.”<sup>13</sup> There is an episode in the Old Testament (2 Kings xviii, 26-27), in which Eliakim says to Rab-Shakeh:

*“Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the Syrian language (Aramaic), for we understand it, and talk not with us in the Jew’s language (Hebrew) in the ears of the people that are on the wall.”*

And this was already in the 7th century BC. I have already mentioned the Aramaic *Targumim* of the early Christian era and it is clear that Aramaic was the language of Jesus and the Apostles.<sup>14</sup> The Hellenistic age in Palestine, beginning in the 4th century BC, brought about a marked influence of Greek lexical terms, which continued up to the Roman conquest of 63 BC. Several books of the Apocrypha are only known to us from the Greek version, as the Hebrew originals did not survive. A well-known example is the first century Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria, who wrote solely in Greek.<sup>15</sup>

A multilingual heritage thus came to be part and parcel of the Jewish tradition. An interest in the Ur-text in the sixteenth century produced such monuments to printing and scholarship as the Complutensian Polyglot Bible of Arnald Guillen de Brocar of 1514-1517 or the Plantin Polyglot Bible of 1569-1572, in which there are six versions on each page (Hebrew, Aramaic, three Latin translations and one Greek)<sup>16</sup> (*figures 2 and 3*). The Hebrew Passover Haggadah text, another major liturgical text, has probably appeared with most of the major languages of the world (*figure 4*).

Thus there are in Hebrew liturgy quite early and important examples of bilingual texts. Traditionally, the form taken by these texts is a very dense typographic page. At the center one finds the original Hebrew text, surrounded by commentaries in either Aramaic or

Hebrew. In most texts of the Babylonian Talmud, the inner gloss usually follows the commentary of Rashi and is written in a special script called “Rashi” (so-named after the celebrated eleventh century Biblical commentator) and is still used to distinguish text from gloss. The outer gloss contains the comments of the medieval Tosaphists (commentators), and footnotes at the bottom of the page give the relative references to Maimonides’ code in Mishnaic Hebrew. Rashi or Maimonides often

23	ספר בראשית ח	GENESIS. Translat. B. Hierony.
<p>וּמַחַת כָּל הַיָּמִים אֲשֶׁר עָלַּ פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה כְּאֹדֶם  עַד בְּהֵמָּה עַד רִמְשׁוֹתָי וְעַד הַשְּׂמַיִם וּמִכּוּר כֶּן הָאָרֶץ  וַיִּשְׂאָר אֲדָמָה וְאִשׁוֹר מִתְּכָה: <sup>1</sup> וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם  עַל הָאָרֶץ חֲמִשִּׁים מֵאָרֶת יוֹם:  ח <sup>2</sup> וַיּוֹכֵר אֱלֹהִים אֶת נַח אֶת כָּל הַחַיָּה הַחַיָּה  כָּל הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בְּתֵכָה וַיִּגְבְּרוּ אֱלֹהִים חֲמֵל  הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׂבוּ הַמַּיִם: <sup>3</sup> וַיִּחַסְדוּ מַעֲיֵנֵת הַהַיּוֹם וַיִּגְבְּרוּ  הַשְּׂמַיִם וַיִּבְלֵא הַנֶּשֶׁם כֶּן הַשְּׂמַיִם: <sup>4</sup> וַיִּשְׂבוּ הַמַּיִם  מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ הַלְּיָד נִשְׁבוּ וַחֲסֵרוּ הַיָּמִים מִקִּצְהָ וַחֲמִשִּׁים  וּמֵאָת יוֹם: <sup>5</sup> וַתִּגַּח הַתְּבַהּ בְּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׂבִיעִי בִּשְׁבִיעֵהָ  עֶשְׂרֵים לְחֹדֶשׁ עַל הַר אֲרָרָט: <sup>6</sup> וַהַיּוֹם הַזֶּה הַלְּיָד  וַחֲסֵרוּ עַד הַרְדֵּשׁ הַעֲשׂוּיָי בְּעֶשְׂרֵי בֹאחֵר לְחֹדֶשׁ נִרְאָה  רֵאשִׁי חֲמִירָם: <sup>7</sup> וַיְהִי מִקֵּץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וַיִּפְתַּח נֹחַ  אֶת הַלֶּחֶם הַתְּבַהּ אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה: <sup>8</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַעֶרְב  וַיֵּצֵא יֵשׁוּעָה וְשׁוֹב עַד יִכְשַׁת הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה כִּמְתָה לְרֹאשֵׁי הַקָּלוֹ הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל  פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: <sup>9</sup> וְלֹא כִּמְתָה הַיּוֹנָה כִּמְתָה לִפְנֵי נִגְלָה  וַחֲשָׁב אֵלֵינוּ אֵלֵינוּ לְהַרְבֵּה כִּי טָיִם עַל פְּנֵי כָּל הָאָרֶץ  וַיִּשְׁלַח יְהוָה וַיִּקְחָהּ וַיָּבֵא אֶתָּה אֵלֵינוּ אֶל הַתְּבַהּ:  וַיְהִי עוֹד שְׁבַע יָמִים אֲרָרָט וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה  כֶּן הַתְּבַהּ: <sup>10</sup> וַהַבֵּא אֵלֵינוּ הַיּוֹנָה לֵעַת עֶרֶב וַחֲמִירָם  עָלָה: <sup>11</sup> וַיִּרְוֶה טֶבֶח בְּפִירָה וַיִּרְוֶה כִּי קָלוֹ הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל  הָאָרֶץ: <sup>12</sup> וַיְהִי עוֹד שְׁבַע יָמִים אֲרָרָט וַיִּשְׁלַח  אֶת הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא יָסְפָה שׁוֹב אֵלֵינוּ עוֹד: <sup>13</sup> וַיְהִי בֹאחֵת  וַחֲשֵׁי מֵאָרֶת שְׁנָרָה בְּרֵאשִׁוֹן מֵאָחֵר לְחֹדֶשׁ חֲמִירָם  הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ וַחֲסֵרוּ נַח אֶת כִּמְתָה הַתְּבַהּ וַיִּרְאָה  וַהַיּוֹם חֲמִירָם פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: <sup>14</sup> וַתְּבַדֵּשׁ הַשְּׂמַיִם בִּשְׁבִיעֵהָ  וַעֲשִׂיָם יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאָרֶץ:  וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֵל נֹחַ אַחֲרָיִם:  וַיֵּצֵא כֶּן הַתְּבַהּ אֶתָּה וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה:</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> Et delcui omnem substantiam que erat super terram, ab hominibus que ad pecus, tam reptile, quam volucres celi: &amp; delctez sunt de terra. Remanist autem solus Noe, &amp; qui cum eo erant in arca. <sup>2</sup> Obtinueruntque aquae terram centum quinquaginta diebus. CAP. VII. <sup>3</sup> Recordatus autem Deus Noe, cunctorumque animantium, &amp; omnium iumentorum que erant cum eo in arca: adduxit spiritum super terram, &amp; imminute sunt aque: <sup>4</sup> Et clausi sunt fontes abyssi, &amp; cataractae cessaverunt: &amp; prohibitee sunt pluvie de celo. <sup>5</sup> Reversaeque sunt aque de terra, cuntes &amp; redeuntes: &amp; coeperunt minui post centum quinquaginta dies. <sup>6</sup> Et clausi sunt fontes abyssi, &amp; cataractae cessaverunt, vicefimose primo die mensis super montes Armeniae. <sup>7</sup> At vero aque ibant &amp; decreverat usque ad decimum mensem. Decimo enim mense, prima die mensis, apparuerunt cacumina montium. <sup>8</sup> Cumque transisset quadraginta dies, aperiens Noe fenestram arcae quam fecerat. <sup>9</sup> Dimisit corvum, qui egrediebatur &amp; revertebatur, donec sic fieret: arcae super terram. <sup>10</sup> Emisit quoque columbam post eum, &amp; vidit eam iam cessantem super faciem terrae. <sup>11</sup> Quae cum non invenisset ubi requiesceret pes eius, reversa est ad eum in arcam. Aque enim erant super venter fani terram. Extenditque manum suam, &amp; apprehensam intulit in arca. <sup>12</sup> Expectatis autem ultra septem diebus avis, rursum dimisit columbam ex arca. <sup>13</sup> At illa venit ad eum velper, portans ramum oliuae viridibus foliis in ore suo. Inleceit ergo Noe quae cessavit super terram. <sup>14</sup> Expectantibus, nilulominus septē alios dies, &amp; emisit colubā, quae non est reversa ultra ad eum. <sup>15</sup> Igitur sexcentisimo primo anno, primo mense, prima die mensis, imminutee sunt aquae super terram. Et aperiens Noe tectum arcae, aperit, viditque quod exsiccata esset superficies cles terrae. <sup>16</sup> Mense secundo, septimo &amp; vicefimose die mensis, arefacta est terra. <sup>17</sup> Locutus est autem Deus ad Noe, dicens: <sup>18</sup> Egredere de arca tu, &amp; vxor tua, filij tui, &amp; vxores filiorū tuorū tecū.</p>	
הַרְדֵּשׁ וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה		
<p><sup>1</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַעֶרְב וַיֵּצֵא יֵשׁוּעָה וְשׁוֹב עַד יִכְשַׁת הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>2</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה כִּמְתָה לְרֹאשֵׁי הַקָּלוֹ הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>3</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא יָסְפָה שׁוֹב אֵלֵינוּ עוֹד:  <sup>4</sup> וַיְהִי בֹאחֵת וַחֲשֵׁי מֵאָרֶת שְׁנָרָה בְּרֵאשִׁוֹן מֵאָחֵר לְחֹדֶשׁ חֲמִירָם  <sup>5</sup> הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ וַחֲסֵרוּ נַח אֶת כִּמְתָה הַתְּבַהּ וַיִּרְאָה  וַהַיּוֹם חֲמִירָם פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה:  <sup>6</sup> וַתְּבַדֵּשׁ הַשְּׂמַיִם בִּשְׁבִיעֵהָ  וַעֲשִׂיָם יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאָרֶץ:  וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֵל נֹחַ אַחֲרָיִם:  וַיֵּצֵא כֶּן הַתְּבַהּ אֶתָּה וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה:</p>	<p><sup>1</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַעֶרְב וַיֵּצֵא יֵשׁוּעָה וְשׁוֹב עַד יִכְשַׁת הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>2</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה כִּמְתָה לְרֹאשֵׁי הַקָּלוֹ הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>3</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא יָסְפָה שׁוֹב אֵלֵינוּ עוֹד:  <sup>4</sup> וַיְהִי בֹאחֵת וַחֲשֵׁי מֵאָרֶת שְׁנָרָה בְּרֵאשִׁוֹן מֵאָחֵר לְחֹדֶשׁ חֲמִירָם  <sup>5</sup> הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ וַחֲסֵרוּ נַח אֶת כִּמְתָה הַתְּבַהּ וַיִּרְאָה  וַהַיּוֹם חֲמִירָם פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה:  <sup>6</sup> וַתְּבַדֵּשׁ הַשְּׂמַיִם בִּשְׁבִיעֵהָ  וַעֲשִׂיָם יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאָרֶץ:  וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֵל נֹחַ אַחֲרָיִם:  וַיֵּצֵא כֶּן הַתְּבַהּ אֶתָּה וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה:</p>	
<p>הַרְדֵּשׁ וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה  <sup>1</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַעֶרְב וַיֵּצֵא יֵשׁוּעָה וְשׁוֹב עַד יִכְשַׁת הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>2</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה כִּמְתָה לְרֹאשֵׁי הַקָּלוֹ הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ:  <sup>3</sup> וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת הַיּוֹנָה וְלֹא יָסְפָה שׁוֹב אֵלֵינוּ עוֹד:  <sup>4</sup> וַיְהִי בֹאחֵת וַחֲשֵׁי מֵאָרֶת שְׁנָרָה בְּרֵאשִׁוֹן מֵאָחֵר לְחֹדֶשׁ חֲמִירָם  <sup>5</sup> הַיָּמִים מִכֵּל הָאָרֶץ וַחֲסֵרוּ נַח אֶת כִּמְתָה הַתְּבַהּ וַיִּרְאָה  וַהַיּוֹם חֲמִירָם פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה:  <sup>6</sup> וַתְּבַדֵּשׁ הַשְּׂמַיִם בִּשְׁבִיעֵהָ  וַעֲשִׂיָם יוֹם לְחֹדֶשׁ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל הָאָרֶץ:  וַיְדַבֵּר אֱלֹהִים אֵל נֹחַ אַחֲרָיִם:  וַיֵּצֵא כֶּן הַתְּבַהּ אֶתָּה וְאִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְגִשְׁרֵי כִבְדֵךְ וְאִתָּה:</p>		

figure 2

A page from the Italian Polyglot Bible of 1569-72, showing the Hebrew, Latin and Aramaic versions.



A page from the Complutensian Polyglot Bible of 1514-1517, showing an even richer mixture of translations, including interlinear Greek and Latin. Note the Hebrew "footnotes" to the left of the main Hebrew text.

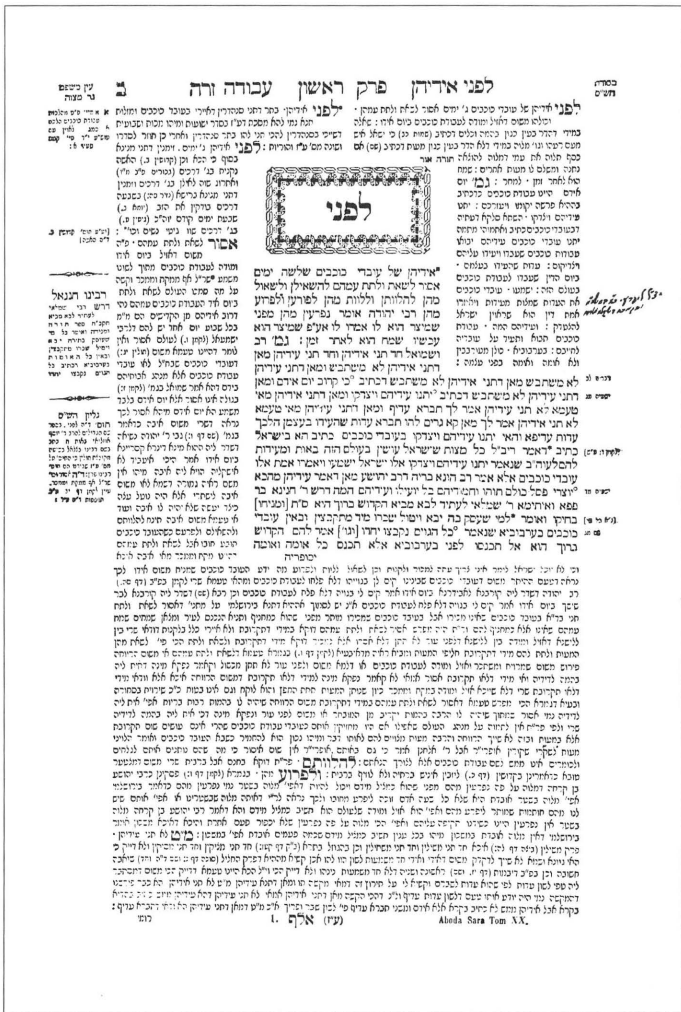
wrote in Arabic in Hebrew letters, while earlier commentaries are more often in Aramaic. Here, of course, we are dealing with a variant of a Semitic language and script, but it is nevertheless a bilingual text in which visual elements played a strong part (figures 5 and 6).

A more recent development was the Deutsch-Rabbinisch script, which flourished mainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and was used for non-Hebrew glosses or commentaries. The language is pure German, written in Hebrew letters, just as Yiddish (a Jewish language with a strong Germanic basis) is still written. This script is no longer in use (figure 7). Yet this was not a unique example, and the vernacular, whether German, Arabic or Spanish, was often written in Hebrew



figure 4

**A page from the Passover Haggadah from the Berthold typefoundry specimen of 1924 showing pointed or vowelled Hebrew text in Frank-Rühl typeface at the right, Aramaic in Rashi typeface interspersed between the Hebrew and commentaries in Deutsch-Rabbinisch typeface at the left.**

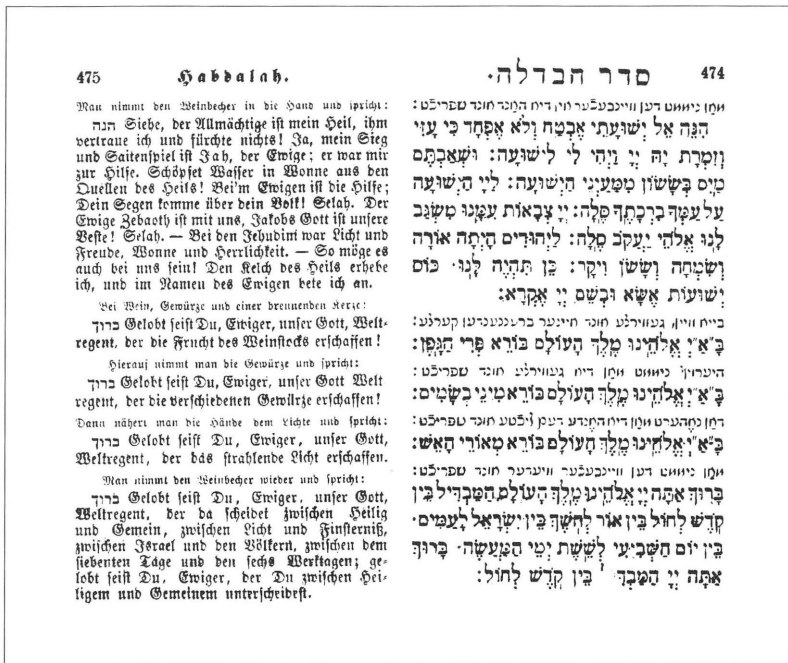


**A typical page from the Babylonian Talmud, showing the main Hebrew in the center, and the Aramaic and other commentaries surrounding.**

figure 5

characters. It is curious to note that the earliest printed Arabic texts in Egypt in the seventeenth century were set in Hebrew characters, due to the lack of Arabic fonts.<sup>17</sup> An equally interesting example of a bilingual text is that attributed to the seventeenth-century Hungarian printer/scholar Miklós Kis, who printed a Hebrew/Latin





**A page from a Hebrew-German prayerbook, printed in 1898 in Germany. Note the Deutsch-Rabbinisch typeface used for the German glosses.**

figure 7

editor and/or the typesetter. Some typesetters will set foreign words or phrases entirely in caps. This ignores, however, the customary differentiation between caps and lower case in standard Latin setting. The practice among better typesetters is to set the foreign words in lower case in a slightly smaller size, so as to avoid the problem of an over-emphasized and less legible foreign text (figure 9). I suspect that the practice of using all caps comes from careless editing and unfamiliarity with English rules of style. A new generation of compositors, with no knowledge of the finer points of hot-metal setting, has not helped matters. Similarly, I find that many typesetters resist the use of hyphenation because they do not want to spend the time to solve the problems of correct word breaks—either in Hebrew or Latin setting!

There is a certain logic in the assumption that capital letters align better visually with the surrounding Hebrew text, but this ignores a basic rule of legibility in Latin type faces—i.e., that caps are more difficult to read than lower case. It also overlooks the subtleties of difference between the meaning of initials, abbreviations and proper names. It should be noted that Hebrew is a notoriously square letter and has very few ascenders and descenders. Thus it may be that the Hebrew reader is more used to this type of visual

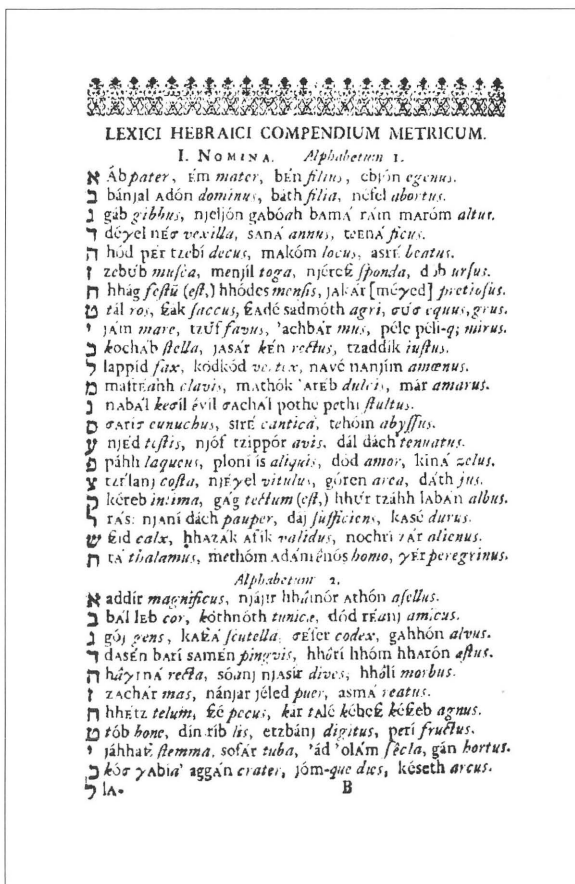


figure 8

**A page from a Hebrew/Latin lexicon printed by Miklós Kis in 1698.**

style. Research has shown that the recognition factors in Latin characters are found on the upper half of the form, whereas the opposite is true for Hebrew.<sup>18</sup> These considerations may exert an influence in the way respective readers block out the foreign language within a particular text.

The main problem, however, is the different direction of Hebrew. Here the question often is where to start the foreign setting; where to break it if so required and where to end it if there are turnover lines. The practice amongst better publishers seems to be as follows:

- Words or expressions of less than a line are set immediately to the left of the Hebrew text, with the terminal punctuation to the left of the Latin text;
- Foreign expressions or sentences which are longer than the measure are ranged left to the line in which they begin and then left again in subsequent lines.

***An example of recent bilingual setting showing the “foreign” setting in caps and another example of “foreign” setting in lowercase.***

טיטאניום דו-חמצני (TiO<sub>2</sub>). חומר זה מתבלט בין הפיגמנטים הלבנים במערך הגבוה של שבירת קרני אור (refractive index). האיפיון המעניין של חומר זה הוא באפשרות של ויסות מדויק של גודל החלקיקים לצורך הפקה החזו-אור מרבי. טיטאניום דו-חמצני משמש כחומר ציפוי להגדלת אטימות-אור (opacity) וכאמור - מאופיין גם בבוהר של הציפוי, אך חשיבותה של התכונה הראשונה הינה רבה יותר. TiO<sub>2</sub> נמכר לתעשייה בשתי צורות: אנאטאז (anatase) ו-רוטיל (rutile). לשתיים אלה נעודת גם מודיפיקציות שונות בהתאם למטרות הספציפיות שבייצור הנייר המצופה. בארה"ב טיטאניום דו-חמצני תופס מקום שלישי בסך - ממשקל הפיגמנטים לייצור נייר ואת המקום השני מבחינת הערך הכספי של חומר זה. רוטיל מנביר את אטימות-אור במידה גדולה יותר מ-אנאטאז וכן את מידת הבוהר (brightness) של הנייר המצופה. משתמשים בו בעיקר להענקת אטימות-אור לציפוי ניירות קלי-משקל. מסיבה זו ניתן להשתמש בו בכמות קטנה יותר ובדרך זאת, להשיג הולת כל הציפוי ביטרה זה.

המודעות הציבורית לבעיות איכות הסביבה, מניעת זיהום, מיון ומיחזור אריות (פסולת מוצקה).  
3. מגמות ושינויים בתהליכי יצור אריות ואריות מוצרים כתוצאה משינויים טכנולוגיים.  
בין היתר השתתפו: מר ג'ראלד ק. טאונסנדר, נשיא ה"ו (W.P.O). THE WORLD PACKAGING ORGANISATION יו"ר ועדות: אריות, מדיניות והכנן - מבן התקנים הבריטי BSI. מנהל בפרדציה האירופאית לאריות EPF מנהל פיתוח שווקים יוחסי ציבור באירופה של "LAWSON MARDON GROUP". יו"ר הועדה המייעצת התערוכה "PAKEX 92".  
מר לואיג'י רוסיץ, מנהל מחלקת מוצרי מון של המינהל לנושאים תעשייתיים ולשוק הפנימי בקהיליה האירופית, חבר ב: COMMUNITIES (E.C) COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN.

figure 9

The final line of the foreign quote is ranged right as in Hebrew with, again, the terminal punctuation to the left. A good example of the visual complexity of this system can be seen in the notes to the Hebrew translation of *The Protestant Ethic* by Max Weber. Note the complications which arise when two successive foreign references appear as a continuation of one reference. Nevertheless, the Hebrew reader seems to become adept at switching directions within the text (figure 10).

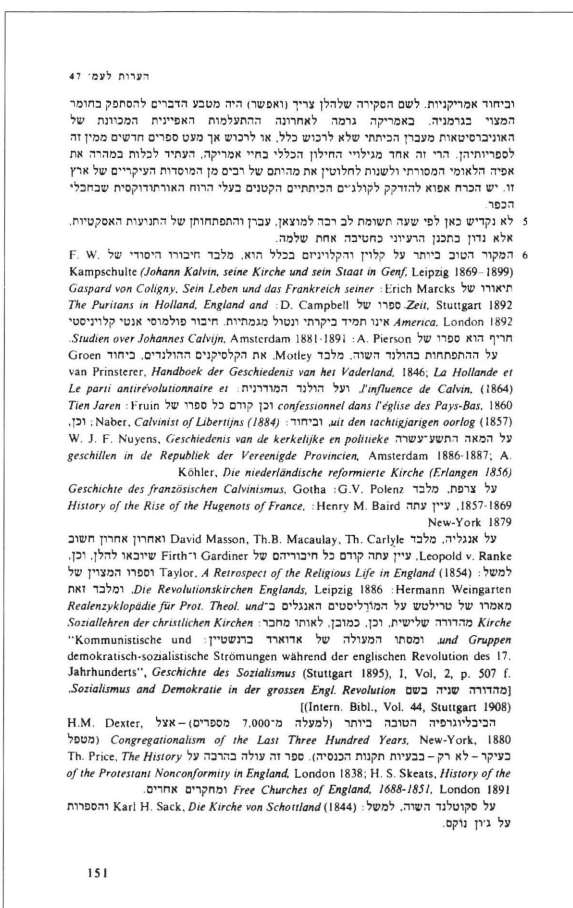


figure 10

**A page from the Hebrew version of Max Weber's Protestant Ethic. Note the varieties of directions and punctuation.**

ביבליוגרפיה לתעזת	
רשימת הקיצורים של כתבי־העת	
BA	Biblical Archeologist
BASOR	Bulletin of the American School of Oriental Research
BBB. NS	Biblioteca Bio-Bibliografica della Terra Santa. (Girolamo Golubovich, edit.). Nuova Serie
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
PEFQ	Palestine Exploration Fund Quartely
PFQ	Palestine Exploration Quarterly
PJB	Palästina Jahrbuch
RB	Revue Biblique
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina Vereins
קיצור השם בהערות	
Abel, F.M.: <i>Le Littoral Palestinien et ses ports, Revue Biblique</i> , Paris 1914, pp 556-590	אבל: החוף אבל
Abel, F.M.: <i>Geographie de la Palestine</i> , Paris 1967, II	אבל: גיאוגרפיה
Abel, F.M.: <i>Histoire de la Palestine</i> , Paris 1952	אבל: ההגנה מקומית
Abit. Mordachai: Local Leadership and early Reforms in Palestine, 1800-1834, in <i>Studies on Palestine During the Ottoman Period</i> , (M.Ma'oz, edit.), Jerusalem 1975, pp 284-310	אבית: מחקר
Abulafia, David: Crocs and Crusaders: San Gimignano, Pisa, and the Kingdom of Jerusalem, in <i>Outremer</i> (Kedar, Mayer, Smail, editors), Jerusalem 1982, pp 227-243	אבולפיה
Abu Shama: <i>Book of the two Gardens</i> , R.H.C.O.R. IV, V.	אבו שמא
Aime, Vingirmer: <i>Soltan Pachá</i> (Colonel Séve), Paris 1886	איים: סולימאן
(1851) Aiton, John: <i>The Lands of the Messiah, Mahomet and the Pope, as visited in 1851</i> , London 1852	אייטון
(1807) Ali Bey el Abbasi: <i>Voyages... en Afrique et en Asie Pendant les Années 1803-1807</i> , Paris 1814, 3 vols	עלי ביי
(1840) Allioli, Dr. Franz: <i>Syrien im Jahre 1840</i> , Wien 1842	אליאולי
Albright, W.F.: <i>From the Stone Age to Christianity</i> , Baltimore 1940	אלברייט: מחקפת האבן
Albright, W.F.: <i>The Amarna Letters from Palestine, Syria and Phoenicia</i> , Cambridge 1966	אלברייט: מכתבי עמורה
(1587) Alcott, Giovanni Francesco: <i>Del Viaggio di Terra Santa</i> , Novara 1596	אלקוט
(1840) Alderson, Lieut. Col. R.C.: Notes on Acre and some of the Coastal Defences of Syria, <i>Papers of the R.E. CP. VI</i> , 1843	אלדרסון
Alesio, Fra Giambattista di S.: <i>Compendio Istoriclo dello Stati Antico e Moderno del Carmelo</i> , Torino 1780	אלסיו
Ali, Albrecht: <i>Grundfragen der Geschichte Volkes Israel</i> , München 1970	אליט: שאלות יסוד
Ali, Albrecht: Galliläische Probleme, <i>Palästina Jahrbuch</i> XXIII, 1937, pp 52-88	אליט: בעיות גליליות
Aly El Herewy, Aboul Hassan: <i>Description des Lieux Saints</i> (Charles Scheler, edit.), Genes 1881	עלי חסן אל הרעזי אדמה
Amadi, Francesco: <i>Chroniques de Amadi et de Stramboldi</i> (Louis Mas Laetri, edit.), Paris 1891	אמאדי
Ambroise: <i>L'Histoire de la Guerre Sainte</i> , (G. Paris, edit.), Paris 1897	אמברואז
Amiran, D.H.: A Revised Earthquake Catalogue of Palestine, <i>IEJ</i> I, 4, Jerusalem 1950/1, pp 223-246	עמירן: רעזי אדמה
(1850) Anderson, John: <i>Wanderings in the Land of Israel</i> , Glasgow 1853	אנדרסון
(1700) Angeli, Bartolomeo: <i>Viaggio di Terra Santa</i> , Venezia 1738	אנג'לי
(1395) Anglure, Seigneur de: <i>Le Saint Voyage de Jérusalem</i> , (Bonnardot et Lougnon, editors), Paris 1878	אנג'ורי
Anonymous: <i>Book of Knowledge by a Spanish Franciscan</i> , (Sir Clements Markham, edit.), Hakluyt Society, London 1912	אנונימו: ספר ידע אנונימו
Anonymous: A certain Englishman, in Eugene Hoard: <i>Western Pilgrims</i> , Jerusalem 1970	אנונימו: אנגלי
(1427) Anonymous 1427: Incipit Libellus Descriptionis Terrae Sanctae et peregrinationum ipsius, <i>Le Missioni Francescane in Palestina</i> , Firenze 1894, 1895	אנונימו, מ"מ 1427

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**A page from a recent historical work with the foreign references given in full. The Hebrew "catchphrase" is to the right.**

figure 11

This is an extreme case, and there are other tactics to make life easier for the reader. Some authors designate the foreign text by a Hebrew catchword or abbreviation and this is used within the text as reference, with a full listing in the foreign bibliography (figure 11).

Alternatively, for less scholarly works with only occasional foreign words, the expression or word is often translated into Hebrew, with the original placed as a footnote at the bottom of the page, or alternatively the foreign phrase is glossed in Hebrew at the bottom of the page (figure 12).

Yet another instance of the effect of retrograde directionality is the mixture of Arabic numerals within a Hebrew text. All Arabic numerals are read from left to

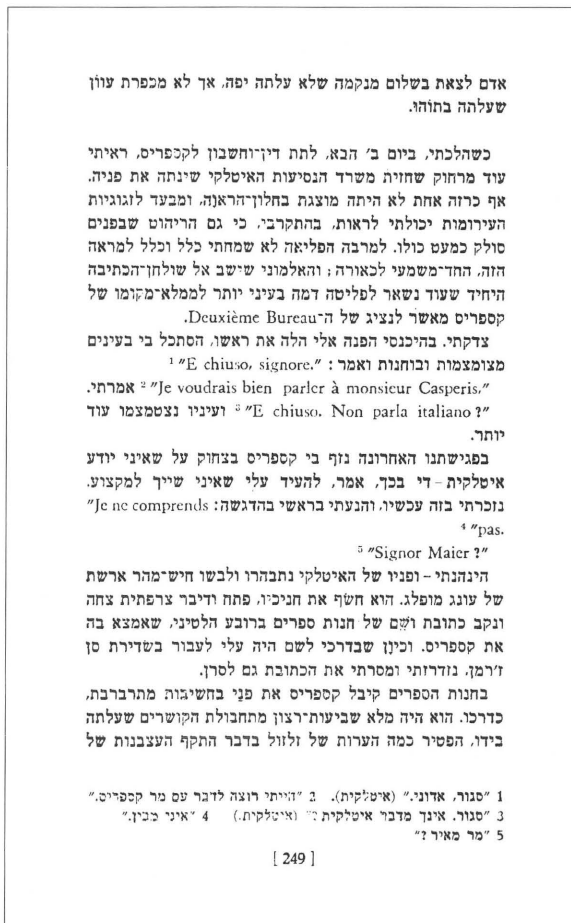
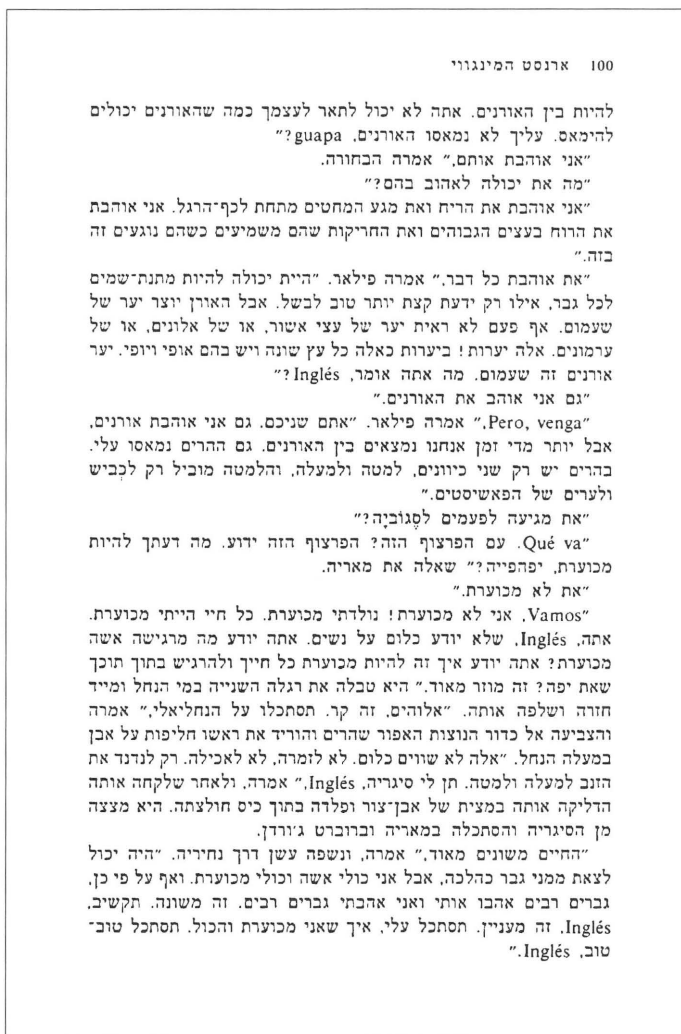


figure 12

**An example of recent bilingual setting showing the "foreign" setting in lowercase and glossed in Hebrew at the bottom of the page.**



**A page from the Hebrew translation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, showing clearly the Spanish substratum of the text.**

figure 13

right, yet the problem of order arises when there are two consecutive numbers, such as 1920-1930 or 100-200. The Hebrew Academy of Language has decreed that the numbering should read from lower to higher, from right to left (1930-1920 or 200-100), as this follows more naturally the direction of speaking in Hebrew.<sup>19</sup> Yet the problem is

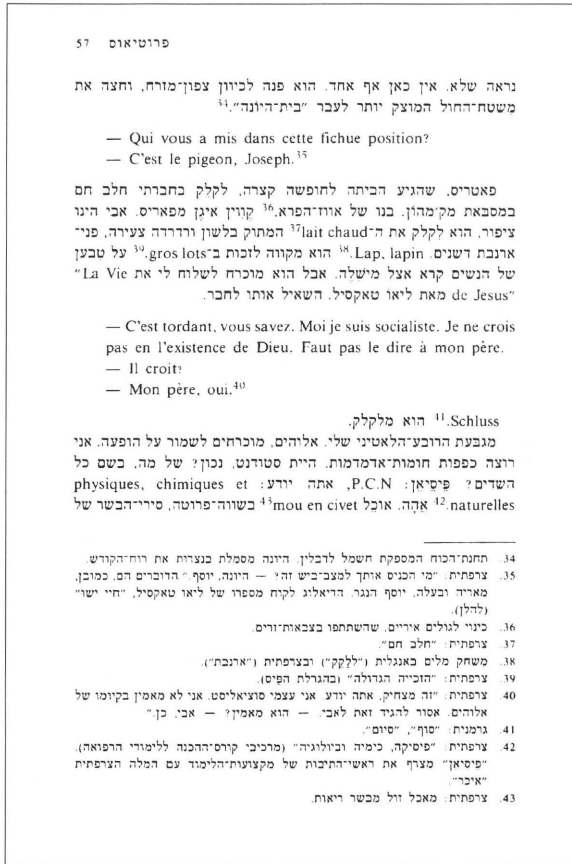


figure 14

**A page from a recent Hebrew translation of *Ulysses*, by James Joyce. Note the use of French and German in the original version with explanatory footnotes in Hebrew.**

very often followed, with great inconsistency and resulting confusion to the reader.

Gideon Toury, himself a translator, has written on the use of bilingual texts in Hebrew translations. He distinguishes two basic situations:

- The transfer of the foreign element to the target translation, either in its original form or in transliterated form;
- The translation of the foreign element into the target language.<sup>20</sup>



**From a recent advertisement in a Hebrew newspaper. The vowel points supplement the Latin letters “AEG” and give the Hebrew reader the correct pronunciation. Also the same idea used for a Japanese name transliterated into Hebrew with vowel points.**

figure 15

He writes that “these elements may often be omitted altogether from the target translation.” Such situations might depend on the

*scope of the foreign elements: the longer they are, the stronger the tendency to transfer them into the target translation (e.g., Hebrew).*

Foreign phrases from rare, exotic languages, he adds, tend to be translated into Hebrew, whereas European languages are divided into two groups. So-called “privileged” languages such as English, French or German tend to be transferred in their original form, whereas “discriminated” (less privileged) languages such as Portuguese, Spanish or Dutch might be either transferred or translated. Additionally, there is the degree to which “their foreignness is emphasized in the original text.”<sup>21</sup> The more it is emphasized in the original, the more the tendency to retain the foreign word in the Hebrew. A good example of this is Toury’s translation of Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in which he retains a Spanish substratum as an element of the text (figure 13). A more recent example is the Hebrew translation of Joyce’s *Ulysses*, in which many foreign words and expressions have necessarily been used in order to retain the various layers of meaning and punning inherent in the Joycean original (figure 14). More often than not the foreign word is retained for reasons of

impact or effect, as was the recent case when the American Secretary of State was rumored to have said “F\*\*k Israel.” The words in English were printed together with the Hebrew text in a headline in a daily newspaper. There also appears to be a tendency to mix Latin and Hebrew systems in order to clarify pronunciation of difficult names, as in the two examples of AEG (a German electrical manufacturer) and Sakyu (a Japanese firm). The Hebrew vowel points have been added below the Latin letters (*figure 15*).

stubble	768
<p><b>2</b> <i>stubb something (out)</i> to put out a cigarette etc by pressing it against something hard: <i>stubb out a cigar.</i>  <b>לכבות (במעיקה)</b>  <b>stubble</b> <i>nu</i> short pieces of something stiff, e.g. wheat, a beard.  <b>שלקי; וימי זקן</b>  <b>stub-born</b> <i>adj</i> 1 (usually derogatory) (of a person) having a strong, determined will: <i>as stubborn as a mule</i> (= very stubborn)  <b>עקשן</b>  <b>2</b> difficult to deal with: <i>a stubborn disease; stubborn soil.</i>  <b>עקשני</b>  <b>stub-born-ly</b> <i>adv</i>  <b>עקשנות</b>  <b>stub-born-ness</b> <i>nu</i>  <b>עקשנות</b>  <b>stub-by</b> <i>adj</i> (<b>stubbier, stubbiest</b>) short and thick: <i>stubby fingers.</i>  <b>קצר ועבה</b>  <b>stuck</b> <i>past tense, past participle</i> of <i>stick</i><sup>2</sup>.  <b>קצר ועבה</b>  <b>stuck-up</b> <i>adj</i> (<i>informal; derogatory</i>) conceited; too proud.  <b>יהיר; סנוב</b>  <b>stud</b><sup>1</sup> <i>nc</i> a number of horses kept by one owner for a special purpose (especially for breeding or racing).  <b>סוסי הרקעה</b>  <i>'stud-farm</i> <i>nc</i> a place where horses are bred.  <b>חנות סוסי הרקעה</b>  <b>stud</b><sup>2</sup> <i>nc</i> 1 a small device (two pieces joined together) put through holes in a shirt etc to fasten a collar (<i>collar-stud</i>) etc.  <b>מחזור</b>  <b>2</b> a device used on roads to separate lanes (and reflecting light from headlamps at night).  <b>מסמר זוהר (בכביש)</b>  <b>stud</b><sup>3</sup> <i>vt</i> (<b>studded</b>) (usually <i>past participle</i>) to have (something) set in or scattered on the surface: <i>a crown studded with jewels; a sea studded with islands.</i>  <b>לשבע; (משובע; זרע)</b>  <b>stu-dent</b> <i>nc</i> a person who is studying or training: <i>medical students; foreign students studying English in London.</i>  <b>סטודנט; תלמיד</b>  <b>stu-dio</b> <i>nc</i> (<i>plural studios</i>) 1 a workroom of a painter, sculptor, photographer etc.  <b>סטודיו</b>  <b>2</b> a place where films are made.  <b>אולפן</b>  <b>3</b> a room from which radio or TV programmes are broadcast or in which recordings are made.  <b>אולפן</b>  <b>stu-dio couch</b> <i>nc</i> a couch that can be used as a bed.  <b>ספה מיטה</b>  <b>stu-di-ous</b> <i>adj</i> 1 (<i>formal</i>) enjoying and wanting to study.  <b>שקדן</b>  <b>2</b> (<i>formal</i>) very careful: <i>with studious politeness.</i>  <b>מדוקדק; מכון</b>  <b>stu-di-ous-ly</b> <i>adv</i>  <b>בשקדנות; בהקפדה; במכון</b>  <b>study</b><sup>1</sup> <i>n</i> (<i>plural studies</i>) 1 <i>nu</i> the act of studying: <i>be fond of study.</i>  <b>לימוד; חקר</b>  <b>2</b> <i>nc</i> a room used for studying.  <b>חדר עבודה</b>  <b>3</b> <i>nc</i> (often <i>plural</i>) work related to a particular subject or topic: <i>social studies.</i>  <b>לימודים; מדעים</b></p>	<p>4 <i>vt</i> to read and (try to) remember  <i>study one's part for a play.</i>  <b>stuff</b><sup>1</sup> <i>nu</i> 1 (<i>informal</i>) material of which made or which may be used for some-  <i>stuff will you use to fill the cushions?</i>  <b>2</b> (<i>figurative</i>) type: <i>He is not the stuff made of.</i>  <b>3</b> (<i>informal</i>) a substance or collection  <i>leave my stuff? (= my personal things)</i>  <i>this stuff beer?</i>  <b>4</b> (<i>slang</i>) <i>do one's stuff</i> to show what  of  <i>know one's stuff</i> to be expert in what  know.  <b>stuff</b><sup>2</sup> <i>vt</i> 1 to fill (something) w  substance) into, something: <i>stuff featu  stuff oneself with food; a head stuffed</i>  <b>2</b> to put chopped up and specially f  into (a chicken etc) before cooking i  <b>3</b> to fill the body of (a dead animal) w  give it the original shape: <i>a stuffed b  stuffing</i> <i>nu</i> (a) material used for stu  (b) food used for stuffing chickens etc  <b>stuff-y</b> <i>adj</i> (<b>stuffer, stuffiest</b>) 1 to  having fresh air.  <b>2</b> (<i>informal; derogatory</i>) (of a p  shocked or offended; too formal.  <b>מדי</b>  <b>3</b> (<i>derogatory</i>) (of language etc) d  <i>stuffy book.</i>  <b>stuff-ily</b> <i>adv</i>  <b>בהקפדה יחירה</b>  <b>stuffi-ness</b> <i>nu</i>  <b>מסומנות; שמנות</b>  <b>stul-ti-ty</b> <i>vt</i> (<i>past tense, past partici  (formal)</i>) to make (effort etc) useless;  <i>to reach agreement.</i>  <b>לה; לזנון</b>  <b>stumble</b><sup>1</sup> <i>nc</i> an act or instance of st  <b>stumble</b><sup>2</sup> <i>vi</i> 1 to hit the foot against  (almost) fall: <i>stumble over the root  child stumbled and fell.</i>  <i>stumble across/on something</i> (<i>figu  something by accident.</i>  <b>2</b> to speak with pauses and mistakes  over his words.  <b>'stumbling-block</b> <i>nc</i> something  difficulties or prevents progress.  <b>stump</b><sup>1</sup> <i>nc</i> 1 a part of a tree remaining  when the trunk has fallen or has been</p>

figure 16

**A page section from a recent English/English/ Hebrew semi-bilingual learners' dictionary. The Hebrew gloss is intended to supplement the English definition and examples.**

The mixture of Hebrew and foreign words is most evident in bilingual and multilingual dictionaries or glossaries. Here, there are no special features, except for the obvious problem of directionality. A recent innovation in dictionary design was the use of a Hebrew gloss to supplement a basic English monolingual learners' dictionary (figure 16). The idea was to make the Hebrew less attractive than the English explanations and examples, but I understand that most Israeli users skip this part and use the dictionary as a straightforward bilingual dictionary.

### **“Invisible” Bilingual Texts**

The discussion thus far has dealt with more or less visible examples of the bilingual text in Hebrew. The tendency of the early Zionist leaders was to create a pure form of spoken Hebrew, in which one would have no need for recourse to borrowed foreign words. The virtual impossibility of this goal is shown by the statement of the Hebrew writer and Zionist leader Yehoshua Sirkin, who complained in 1918 that “our language is being desecrated with foreign expressions.”<sup>22</sup> Sirkin attacked in particular such importations as *uffiziali* (“official”), *ortografia* (“orthography”) and *illustrazia* (“illustration”), which have long since been supplanted by words based on Hebrew roots. The early linguistic pioneer Ben-Yehuda went so far as to exclude all foreign words from his dictionary and writings—even those Greek and Latin words which are employed to a considerable extent in Talmudic literature.<sup>23</sup>

The tendency appears to be for foreign words to be used more or less in their original form, and then gradually adapted or altered into a Hebrew form. An example of this is the typographic term for “indent” in typesetting. Due to the influence of German printing technology, the German term *Absatz* is often used today, but the Hebrew terms *Muchmass* or *Kenisia* (both from the root KNS meaning to

enter) are gaining ground. Similar terms can be found in many areas of professional life. A rather peculiar example current in popular speech is the expression “*Ze lo fair!*” (meaning “that isn’t fair or right!”). Another writer notes that an increase in the influence of foreign languages on Hebrew is to be expected,

*especially that of English because of close ties with American culture. The influence will manifest itself not*

three years. Near many residential centers, we have seen a mushrooming of carpentry service shops, lumber sales sheds, and saw mills. It is now no problem to find a carpenter to cut you shelves or work surfaces from colored faced plywood – a joy to all amateur carpenters.

This was a wonder house of masonite, chip board, thick and thin plywood, and all types of fittings. If you wanted to make a cupboard with shelves, you would make a drawing, go there, and return home with cut lumber and everything necessary to keep the family busy – an adventure from which you emerged with an original piece of furniture, exactly meeting your needs, and styled to your taste. And much cheaper than getting a carpenter to make it. But the main thing was the satisfaction of doing it yourself.

*Is there any chemistry left between the Israeli government and the Bush administration?*

I can’t tell you whether there is any chemistry left, how much there was originally, how much there is now. When it comes to human relations you have to look at both sides. I can tell that the Israeli side is more than eager to achieve good relations with the US president and administration; and the prime minister keeps on declaring it. Now, if the Americans don’t want it – it can’t be. Whether they want it, I don’t know. Maybe they are pursuing a policy rather than a position to undo chemistry.

*Various recent examples of Hebrew-influenced English taken from The Jerusalem Post newspaper.*

figure 17

*only in the borrowing of words, but also in the borrowing of meanings and an imitation of the linear method of word formation.*<sup>24</sup>

This is confirmed by the view of a respected Israeli Academic, Zvi Yavetz, who recently complained on television that one no longer heard proper Hebrew spoken by younger academics, only highly anglicized Hebrew or English-influenced professional jargon.<sup>25</sup> Invisible bilingual texts will undoubtedly continue to be found—for the non-Hebrew reader that is. Officially the *Akademia le Lashon Ha'Ivrit* (The Academy of Hebrew Language) exists to set out the rules and invent new words, but the pressure from the street will probably prove greater and, in the end, irresistible. This may well mirror the situation in other countries—e.g., France—where similar official bodies exist for the control and development of language.

One interesting aspect of these invisible bilingual texts is the influence of Hebrew syntax and vocabulary on native English speakers exposed to Hebrew speech patterns. It might be posited that the more different the second language, the less it impinges on the primary or mother tongue. Yet this does not seem to be the case in regard to Hebrew. It should be emphasized that these examples of lexical or syntactic interference are often perfectly correct English. Yet nevertheless they seem overly verbose, contorted in meaning or simply poorly written. This phenomenon has been investigated by Miriam Schlesinger, and she groups these interferences under three categories<sup>26</sup> (*figure 17*).

In the first category of lexical interferences, one sees examples of excess verbiage resulting from the literal translation of a Hebrew phrase. A random example from the English section of the Tel Aviv telephone directory is “the *Na'amat* Working and Volunteer Women's Movement,” an anglicized form of *N'amat Tnu'at Nashim Ovdot veMitnadvot*.” This is perfectly good



figure 18

**A recent advertisement from an Israeli newspaper. The word “Art Director” has the added Hebrew feminine ending “-it” to make it clear that applications from either sex are sought.**

Hebrew (which often has a ruthless linearity to its syntax), but it lacks the suppleness of English. The word “movement” is misused here. A better equivalent would be “The N’amat Association for Working Women.” Here it ought to be emphasized that there are many Hebrew words for which there is no easy English equivalent. The omnipresent *Histadrut* (meaning literally “organization”), can be translated as the General Labor Federation, or the equally large *Hevrat Ovdim* (meaning Worker’s society or company) might be metamorphosed as Worker’s co-operative society. As a final example, one often sees the initials “MK” in the English-language *Jerusalem Post*. The meaning is Member of Knesset (Parliament), whereas the more usual English form would be “MP.”

Another type of lexical interference arises from the use of false cognates. The words *sympati*, *aktuali*, *tremp*, *punstcher*, *pikkanti*, *large*, *basis* and *chemia* have quite different meanings in contemporary Hebrew. *Punstcher*, for instance, means “a cock-up” or “muddle,” and is derived from the English word puncture, whereas the word *large* means expansive or generous in Hebrew. Many native-English speakers use these and other terms in the Hebrew sense within their English speech. An interesting contemporary example of this transposition is an adver-

tisement from a classified column in a Hebrew language newspaper, in which the Hebrew feminine suffix “-it” has been added to the English word (*figure 18*).

More directly, many Anglophones will interlard their speech—no doubt quite unconsciously—with such pure Hebrew expressions as *beseder* (“okay”), *yafeh* (“nice”), *nachon* (“correct”) or *dafka* (“exactly”). Additionally, there are many buzzwords which Hebrew tends to overuse and would not be used as frequently in English, such as “phenomena,” “framework,” or “focus.” These words function in Hebrew as a means of grouping together similar philosophic ideas or goals, but they are not commonly so used in English. A final instance of lexical interference is the use of catch-all words which imitate Hebrew usage, but misuse the colloquial English meaning. A good instance of this is the word “veteran,” which is used as a direct translation of the Hebrew word *vatik*, meaning loosely “old-timer” or “experienced.” The following phrase from a recent historical work is a good example: “They did not belong to the veteran Zadokite family. . .” Possibly the phonetic similarity of *vatik* and “veteran” encourages the replacement of the words.

It is often difficult to detect these lexical interferences due to style and the distinct differences between spoken and written speech.<sup>27</sup> It is well documented that written language tends to use longer words and, in the case of English, often Latin as opposed to Anglo-Saxon words. Jack Goody states that the written register tends to

*preferential usage of elaborate syntactical and semantic structures, especially nominal constructions (noun groups, noun phrases, nominalizations, relative clauses, etc.) and complex verb structures.*<sup>28</sup>

Thus what is often lexical interference of Hebrew lexical or syntactical structures may be masked by these and other features of written language. This is especially true in professional literature, where a specialist jargon is often used.

Other areas of interference can be seen on the syntactical level. A common Hebrew sentence construction, often translated into English, begins with an adverbial clause, followed by the actual verb and finally the object—as in the following example, which also has elements of lexical interference:

*During the economic hard times of World War One, the partnership between the urban and rural workers led to the establishment of Hamashbir—a co-operative organization supplying food to its members without profiteering by middlemen.*

While the quote is in acceptable English, it appears wooden and unnatural—a sure sign of Hebrew lexical and syntactical interference.

Miriam Schlesinger also points out at least five other types of common invisible interference:

- The excessive use of descriptive metaphors such as “to bear fruit,” “to gnaw” or “to erode,” or their nominal derivatives. One ought to add here that Hebrew was in earlier forms a highly collocative language, meaning that it used a large number of mainly Biblical expressions or descriptive elements. This had its roots in classical Hebrew with its paucity of adjectives and adverbs, so that metaphors and expressions came to be used instead. This aspect appears to be changing with the growth of new words. Gideon Touro notes that

*no wonder that Hebrew translation made abundant use of such phrases just as in any other written employment of the Hebrew language.*<sup>29</sup>

- The overuse of nouns, whereas the normal English use would be a verbal clause. The following extract is an example. Note also the use of metaphors such as in “gnawing.”

*Evil spirits are rampant in our society, splitting the people and gnawing at Jewish and human values. That “market place of opinions,” which is the mark of democracy, has become an arena of senseless hatred: instead of serious discussion and listening to each other.*

- The excessive use of prepositional phrases, which are often direct translations of the Hebrew “Smichut” contraction construction. A common example of this use in Hebrew is the word for school which means literally “house (of the) book,” (*Beit Sefer*), but in which “of the” has been dropped. The following sentence shows the effect of such structures.

*The determination of the fact of the establishment of the State had the effect of clarifying that the new state would regard itself as being entitled to require everybody or person to obey the regulations of its instructions.*

- Excessive use of quotations marks and hyphenated words, which results from the lack of caps and italics in Hebrew.
- The overuse of adverbial phrases (“in a . . . way”), since Hebrew is lacking in adverbs and adjectives. As an example, the single English word *imperfectly*, comes out in Hebrew as *be-ofen lo-mushlam*, (literally, “in a manner not finished”), or *alphabetically* would be *al-pi ha’alefbet* (literally, “according to the alphabet”).

What is interesting in all these examples of lexical and syntactic interference is the degree to which the patterns of one language influence another. The fact that we find elements of foreign text in Hebrew does not tell us a great deal about the actual state of bilinguality of any given population, since the reasons for mixture of languages can be quite complex. Yet it is beyond question that there is a long tradition of bilingualism in Jewish life. William Chomsky

described the historical supremacy of Hebrew thought patterns in the Jewish diaspora, and thus the lexical interferences I have discussed might well be a continuation of a long tradition. According to Chomsky:

*One can readily quote a host of expressions and idioms which, though composed of words in the vernacular, encase, in fact, Hebraic thought patterns. It would seem that, as long as the Jews were rooted in their traditional patterns of life, they were sensitive to the inadequacy of the vernacular in expressing and conveying the emotionally-charged meaning of certain Hebrew words. They therefore persisted either in retaining the original words and expressions, or in investing the Hebrew mental pattern or idiom with the garb of the vernacular.*<sup>30</sup>

A confirmation of this observation can be found in Irving Howe's history of the late nineteenth-century Jewish immigration to the United States. He writes:

*At least since the Diaspora, the Jews have been multilingual, as price or reward of galut (exile), reflecting their uncomfortable condition through the simultaneous use and then merging of alien and native languages. Even more significant is what Max Weinreich has called "internal bilingualism". . . the development in the Ashkenazic Jewish community of two living languages, one that was immediate (Yiddish) and the second mediated (Hebrew).*<sup>31</sup>

In a further discussion of the American Jewish novelists, Howe emphasizes the effect of Yiddish on many contemporary writers, which has a curious parallel to the effect of contemporary Hebrew on English speakers. In relation to Saul Bellow's work, he writes:

*Bellow's style draws upon Yiddish, not so much through borrowed diction as through underlying intonation and rhythm. The jabbing interchange of ironies, the intimate vulgarities, the blend of sardonic and senti-*

*mental which characterizes Yiddish speech, all are lassoed into Bellow's English: so that what emerges is not an exploitation of folk memory but a vibrant linguistic transmutation.*<sup>32</sup>

As a further demonstration of this tendency, it is interesting to note Hana Wirth-Nesher's afterword to *Call it Sleep* by Philip Roth. She maintains that:

*As early as 1918, the Yiddish literary critic Baal Makhshoves argued that the mark of Jewish literature is its bilingualism. Although he was taking this position within the cultural context of the Czernowitz conference and the antagonism between Hebrew and Yiddish, he made claims for the status of Jewish literature from biblical times to the present. In every text that is part of the Jewish tradition, Baal Makhshoves wrote, there existed explicitly or implicitly another language, whether it be Chaldean in the Book of Daniel, Aramaic in the Pentateuch and the prayer book, Arabic in medieval Jewish philosophical writings, and, in his own day, Yiddish.*<sup>33</sup>

Thus it seems fairly clear that invisible bilingualism in the text is not a new phenomenon in contemporary Hebrew, but has quite a long precedent in Jewish culture. The interesting question is the degree to which the rise of modern Hebrew has changed this picture.

In spite of a fairly monolingual society today, it can be said that the general Israeli population—be it Jewish, Muslim or Christian—receives a healthy exposure to other languages and writing systems. As an example, one may note the bilingual road and traffic signs in Hebrew and English; checkbooks and banking documents again in Hebrew and English; coinage, postage, pharmaceutical and food labelling in two if not more languages. The official language policy is bilingual (Hebrew and Arabic), but in practice Hebrew and English dominate.

**威尼斯式夜晚音樂活動  
市民有疑問可電話洽詢**

【本報芝加哥訊】芝加哥市長戴利表示，在八月十日的晚上開始，請大家到格蘭公園 (Grant Park) 參加慶祝「威尼斯式的夜晚」活動，當日從八時到九時三十分安排幾十艘船在密西根湖中表演。

戴利說，這個活動主要是慶祝密西根湖為芝加哥所帶來的利益，他希望大眾都能在當晚參加可愛的夏日晚間的活動。

這個一九九〇年「威尼斯式的夜晚」(Sky Night / Venetian Night)，贊助單位有聯美航空公司、AT & T 電話公司、百事可樂公司、WGN-AM Radio 公司及芝加哥捷運局。

在八月十一日星期六的晚上八點，在格蘭公園中也有許多活動，活動的名稱是「夜晚天空上的月亮與星星」(The Night, The Moon, The Stars and The Sky)。這是一個以音樂為主的活動，有許多名歌唱家，其中包括有 John Williams 的星際大戰 (Star Wars) 的音樂。

如有市民對這個活動有疑問者，可打電話詢問 (三一二) 七四四三三三〇。

figure 19a

*Example of bilingual texts taken from recent Japanese (figure 19b) and Chinese (figure 19a) newspapers. Note that the text is read vertically from left to right and the "foreign" texts are turned 90 degrees.*

### Blocking out the foreign text

From my experience in publishing in Israel, I would argue that many highly-literate Hebrew speakers—with extensive exposure to Western literature and culture—are often totally oblivious to basic errors in foreign texts. How can one explain this? One possibility is a mental switching mechanism which blocks out the foreign text. The same mechanism may be at work when, as a native English speaker, I block out the Hebrew part of a text or road sign. Various researchers have noted the existence of such switching mechanisms which “automatically shut out one



**アメリカ  
体験報告**

**海外旅行でこんなに通じました!!**

「サンフランシスコでお店に入って、Do you give discounts?とやったら、11ドルのライターが9ドルに(千葉県・学生)」

「入国審査の順番を待つ間に、これまではドキドキしていたのに、アメリカをやってからはのんびり……すいぶん自信ができました(大阪府・会社員)」

「カイロへ向かう飛行機の中で、隣の人が寒がっていたので、May I have a blanket? (スチュワーデスさんとすつかり仲よし)(千葉県・OL)」

「ハワイのカウアイ島は日本語が通じにくいところ。そこで、アメリカでおぼえた通りにレストランの予約をしたら大成功でした(岐阜県・会社員)」

「スペインでも英語で十分用が足せるのでビックリ。ロエベでは気に入ったバッグを選ぶことができました(大分県・公務員)」

「アメリカへの留学3カ月前に始めましたが、いざ行ってみると会話もスムーズにいき効果は抜群。わずか3カ月の練習がこんなに有効とは思いませんでした(在セントルイス・医師)」

「NYでアメリカ人のお宅に招待されるチャンスがありました。アメリカのおおかげで安心して挨拶でき、おしゃべりを楽しむことができました(宮城県・主婦)」

figure 19b

linguistic system, when the other is in operation.”<sup>34</sup> The question here is whether this mechanism functions differently in perfectly balanced bilinguals as opposed to monolinguals who have only a slight knowledge of other languages.

The notorious idiosyncracies and difficulties of English spelling may explain this phenomenon to some extent. I cannot help but feel, however, that the different writing system of Hebrew and the different cognitive constraints imposed by a partially non-vowelled language have their effect on Hebrew speakers. The interplay between the spoken and written layers of language is

perhaps more dynamic than we might think. Similar questions might be asked of Chinese speakers, who not only have to learn some one thousand different characters in order to read basic texts, but also have to contend with a vertical direction (*figures 19a* and *19b*). It is clear that the human brain can cope reasonably efficiently with situations in which severe constraints to legibility and readability are imposed.<sup>35</sup>

Various theories have been offered to explain the cognitive structure of bilinguals or multilinguals. Paddilla and Liebman (1975) maintain that the differentiation between the two systems is established at very early age and that the bilingual child is able to keep the two phonological systems apart as these develop.<sup>36</sup> Vaid and Lambert (1979) also posit a "different cerebral organization for each of the bilingual's languages"<sup>37</sup> and they suggest that "the anatomical bases for the two languages only partially overlap."<sup>38</sup> Ben Ze'ev, who studied Hebrew bilinguals specifically (1977), states that

*it would seem that the bilingual child develops a strategy for analyzing the linguistic input which enables him to overcome the potential interference arising from a bilingual environment.*<sup>39</sup>

George Steiner proposes a very graphic image of the bilingual brain, which is worth quoting in full:

*If, on the other hand, my three languages (French, English and German) are equally native and primary, what manifold space contains their co-existence? . . . A vertical structure suggests an alignment of strata throughout. . . Does one imagine them as a continuum on some kind of Moebius strip, intersecting itself yet preserving the integrity and distinctive mappings of its surface? Or ought one, rather, to picture the dynamic foldings and interpenetrations of geological strata in terrain that has evolved under multiple stress? Do the languages I speak, after they*

*diverge to separate identity from a common centre and upward thrust, combine and recombine in an interleaved set, each idiom being, as it were, in horizontal contact with the others, yet remaining itself continuous and unbroken?*<sup>40</sup>

The research conducted to date on bilaterality in Hebrew and English speakers does not appear to indicate a major difference in brain structure. Barton, Goodglass and Shai (1965) concluded that

*significantly more Hebrew words, as well as English words, are correctly perceived when they appear in the right rather than the left visual field,*<sup>41</sup>

thus supporting the left hemisphere theory of language dominance. Orbach (1967) examined both male and female, and left and right-handed speakers in tests of differential recognition of both Hebrew and English words.<sup>42</sup> He concluded that

*the effect of directional scanning is shown by the difference between English and Hebrew words in differential recognition. All subjects, male and female, right and left handed, identified English words significantly better on the right side of fixation. For Hebrew words, the recognition differential was far less marked and, for some groups, was even in the opposite direction favoring words on the left side of fixation.*

He also remarked that

*. . . the Hebrew does get a certain amount of practice in reading from left to right and that Arabic numerals are used (in place of the left reading Hebrew “numerals”).*

Children in Israel are taught to work exclusively with Arabic numerals in all mathematical subjects, and as previously mentioned, numbers and dates are read in a left to right orientation. Music, as well, is read from left to right,



*the psychological and cognitive processes involved in reading Hebrew in principle are not different to the processes involved in other languages or at least in different writing systems.*<sup>43</sup>

Hamers and Blanc in their recent work on bilingualism also express the view that

*differences in modes of writing must affect semantic organization, as for example the difference between a phonetic and an ideographic script, in order for these differences to impinge on brain functioning. More surface differences, like the opposite directionality of two phonetic scripts, do not seem to lead to different processing strategies.*<sup>44</sup>

What conclusion can one draw from all these observations? It is clear that lexical and syntactic interference does exist in both directions—from English to Hebrew and vice versa. Are these interferences due to a different writing system and different laterality or to a different cognitive structure? I do not have information at hand to say whether similar interferences exist to equal degrees in other cases of language contact. It would be worth analyzing the writings of Kafka from this point of view. Kafka wrote exclusively in German yet lived most of his life in the mainly Czech-speaking environment of Prague, and spoke and wrote Czech almost fluently.<sup>45</sup> Might it be possible to detect Czech lexical and syntactical elements in his German? George Steiner has argued that

*Kafka wrote German as if it were all bone, as if none of the enveloping texture of colloquialism, of historical and regional overtone, had been allowed him.*

and there may well be a case for arguing a kind of “internal bilingualism” in Kafka’s case.

I feel that there is some unique element at work in the case of Hebrew. It is a profitable area for investigation

into the nature of bilingual texts, given the distinctive characteristics of the spoken language and the writing system. The transition from the rich historical tradition of Jewish bilingualism to the present dominant Israeli monolingualism is in itself a phenomenon worth exploring. Needless to say, the interaction of several languages in the relatively small geographical area of Israel and the need to link up with the world “global village” will continue to stretch the constraints of a revived classical language in light of the requirements of a modern, technological society.

### Notes

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<sup>3</sup> Steiner, George. 1975. *After Babel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 157 (original quote from Thorlief Boman).

<sup>4</sup> Wilson, Edmund. 1978. *Israel and the Dead Sea Scrolls*. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 35-6.

<sup>5</sup> Chomsky. *Hebrew, the Eternal Language*, 46.

<sup>6</sup> Driver, Hebrew, 282.

<sup>7</sup> Driver, Hebrew, 282.

<sup>8</sup> Driver, Hebrew, 283.

<sup>9</sup> Wilson. *Israel and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 9.

<sup>10</sup> Tene, Israeli Hebrew, 49.

<sup>11</sup> *The Statistical Abstract of Israel*. 1990. Jerusalem: The Central Bureau of Statistics, 41.

<sup>12</sup> Sampson, Geoffrey. 1985. *Writing Systems*. London: Hutchinson, 75-98.

<sup>13</sup> Roth, Cecil. 1948. *Short History of the Jewish People*. London: East and West Library, 127.

<sup>14</sup> Driver, Hebrew, 282.

<sup>15</sup> Roth, Short History, 88-89.

<sup>16</sup> Blumenthal, Joseph. 1973. *The Art of the Printed Book*. New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, 19, 34.

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- 39 Hamers, 52.
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