

**Beata Tarnowska**

*Bein polanit le'ivrit.*  
On the Polish-Hebrew literary  
bilingualism in Israel  
(reconnaissance)

**Keywords:** bilingualism, the bilingual Polish-Hebrew writers, Polish literature in Israel

The phenomenon of the Polish literary environment in Israel was created by immigrants who came to Eretz Israel from the interwar years to the March *Aliyah*, and even later [see: Famulska-Ciesielska, Żurek]. Both writers leaving Poland with some achievements, as well as those who only started their literary work after many years in Israel, repeatedly faced the dilemma of what language to create - in Polish, which in the case of assimilated Jews or those who strongly identified themselves with Jewish identity, but who did not know any of the Jewish languages, was their first language, or in Hebrew, which was often only known in the New Country<sup>1</sup>?

At the time of Israeli statehood, Hebrew was the third official language of Palestine alongside Arabic and English, and since 1948 the official language of the State of Israel [*Medinat Israel*, see: Krauze, Zieliński, *passim*]<sup>2</sup>. On the

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<sup>1</sup> Bilingwizm, which has always occupied a special place in the history of the Jewish nation, contributed to the creation of multilingual literature, created not only in Yiddish, Hebrew or Ladino, but also in the languages of the countries of settlement. As the Jewish writer and critic Shmuel Niger noted, for Jews one language has never been a sufficient medium [see: Niger, p. 51-57].

<sup>2</sup> A critic of Yiddish and Hebrew literature, Bal-Machszowes (born in 1958), pointed to multilingualism as an immanent feature of literature created by Jews. Izydor Eliazew, 1873-1924). According to Bal-Machshowes, the Jewish writer not only “breathes and lives

other hand, the Polish language, although already in the times preceding the establishment of Israel was recognized as an attribute of the elite<sup>3</sup>, as one of the languages of the diaspora, officially could not compete with Hebrew in terms of prestige and importance. While all diasporical languages, especially Yiddish [see: Rayfield, pp. 19-21], was initially perceived as a symbol of submission and an obstacle to the consolidation of Israeli society in the spirit of Zionist values, the resurrected Hebrew<sup>4</sup> was treated not only as a symbol of state independence, freedom and community building, but also as a sign of “return to the country of the forefathers” and the basis for a consciously created “positive identity” of<sup>5</sup> Israel. After fifty years of state existence, as the authors of the *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education* note in 1998, the language war was won and the goal of the hegemony of the Hebrew language - achieved [see also: Geller, p. 86-87; Y. Chaver, p. 76-83]. At the same time, although Hebrew for future generations of Israelis has become not only the everyday language of school and public life, but also the language spoken at home, nevertheless

[...] the dream of the early Zionists of a monolingual Hebrew-speaking Israel has not become a reality.

[...] the swidspread use of other languages notably Yiddish and Russian (as community languages) and English (as a second language for public and official use) means that bilingualism is a reality of life in Israel [Baker, Prys Jones, p. 202-203].

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The phenomenon of Polish literature created in Israel [see among others: Löw 2001, p. 81-92; Zacharska, p. 224-238; S.J. Żurek, p. 219-233; T. Cieślak, p. 164-185; Dąbrowski, Molisak; Famulska-Ciesielska] is inextricably linked with the issue of Polish-Hebrew bilingualism, and to a lesser extent also bilingualism based on the use of the Polish language and Yiddish (or these

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[...] between two languages”, but also “the spirit of Hebrew remains a mixture of spirits of dozens of other [non-Jewish - B.T.] languages” [Bal-Machshowes, p. 147]. See also: Szymaniak, p. 144-145; Adamczyk-Garbowska, *passim*.

<sup>3</sup> Israel Bartal notes that even before the State of Israel was established “not English (official), but Polish was the language of intelligentsia”. While adding that “Poland was a rocky land,” Bartal probably suggests the pejorative associations that this language might have evoked in part of Israeli society [Friedrich, Bartal].

<sup>4</sup> The creator of modern Hebrew was the Lithuanian-born Jewish linguist Eliezer Ben Jehuda (1858-1922) [see: Kowalczyk, p. 45-58; Koestler, Chap: *The Rebirth of the Hebrew Language*; Bartal, p. 141-150; H. Blanc, p. 397-409].

<sup>5</sup> The term of Małgorzata Melchior. See: Melchior 1990, p. 189; Melchior 2004, p. 20 *passim*.

three languages) or even Polish-English<sup>6</sup>bilingualism for literary purposes. Of the approximately one hundred and thirty writers who, since the 1950s, had been working in the Polish literary community in Israel, much of it remained solely with Polish as the language of their own literary work. Especially those writers whose output was formed in Poland were not able to give up their already formed tool of creative work, even if they noticed the need to appear in the mainstream of Hebrew Israeli literature. The Polish language, “incompatible” with Israeli realities and often treated as foreign in the local society, from the very beginning condemned its authors to marginalism - non-Hebrew creativity was “badly perceived and not supported” [Jabłońska 2004, p. 121]. The interest in the Israeli market and the need to seek the attention of Israeli critics were expressed by such Polish writers as: “The Israeli writers are the only ones who have been able to make use of the Israeli market: Leo Lipski<sup>7</sup>, Stanisław Wygodzki [see: Löw 1995, p. 72-77] or Ida Fink, who was the first non-Hebrew writer in Israel to receive the Israel Prize for Literature in 2008. Ida Fink’s book debut - a collection of stories *Pisat zman [Skrawek czasu]* from 1975 - written in Polish and translated into Hebrew by Nachman Ben Amiego, was not published in the original language until 1987. A Fink, who came to Israel without any knowledge of the Hebrew language, with a few Polish stories nowhere to be printed, stayed with the Polish language for “natural necessity” because her Hebrew was not enough to take up literary<sup>8</sup>work. The translation remained for Fink, as for Lipski and Wygodzki, the only way to reach the Hebrew-speaking audience.

The majority of immigrants who came from Poland and were interested in literary activity created or later began to create in Polish, at the same time using Hebrew and sometimes Yiddish<sup>9</sup>to practice non-fictional prose (Józef, i.e. Joseph Bau, Roman Frister, Natan Gross, Felicja alias Felicia Karay, Aleksander Klugman, Józef or Josef Kornblum, Jan Kot), as well as such poetic

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<sup>6</sup> Eugenia Prokop-Janiec, analyzing the phenomenon of Polish-Jewish literature of the interwar years, mentions cases of writers using three languages [see: Prokop-Janiec, p. 303-306, 316-317].

<sup>7</sup> In a letter to Jerzy Giedroyc dated 19.09.1970, Lipski wrote: “Publishing my stories here [in Hebrew] will have the good side for me that it will establish some kind of my “social status” here. Quote for: Kossewska 2015, p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> The writer only knew, as she repeatedly mentioned in interviews, a colloquial form of Hebrew. See: Bielas, Fink; Shoemaker, Fink; Sobolewska, Fink; Lewińska, p. 56.

<sup>9</sup> Among the Polish-Israeli writers who used Polish and Yiddish were, among others, the following: “The Polish and Israeli writers”, “The Polish and Yiddish writers”. Lipa Fischer (1905-?), who published in Tel Aviv a collection of Polish poems and two volumes of fictionalised memoirs in Yiddish, and Rachela Auerbach (1901?-1976), author of books written in Yiddish about the Holocaust, as well as Polish poems published in pre-war press [See: Famulska-Ciesielska, Żurek, p. 54-55; 23-24 The writer with the richest achievements in both languages was Kalman Segal (1917-1980) [see: Ruta].

species as *fraszka* (Józef Bau, Zeew Fleischer), and for translation<sup>10</sup> purposes. According to the classification proposed by Edward Balcerzan, such a division of creative possibilities between both languages means two varieties of literary bilingualism situated lower in the scale of bilingualism: incomplete creative bilingualism and functional bilingualism. In Balcerzan's opinion, the first of the distinguished varieties refers to a situation where the writer creates in two languages, "but there are clear differences between the degree of difficulty he has overcome in L1 and that in L2". In other words, the acquired language produces texts that are not artistic literature intended by the author or genres that are considered to be easier in terms of language. Functional whistleblowing, which occurred when "the author wrote in L1, but in addition to his original work he also practiced literary translations that evoke the context of L2" [Balcerzan, p. 12], consisted in reserving the second language - in this case Hebrew - for translation work.

Few Israeli writers of Polish descent have for a long time created literary works of Polish origin that are considered to be the most difficult in terms of language, i.e. poetry and fictional prose, and at the same time equal in terms of value in both languages - according to Balcerzan's classification, this is the highest bilingual creative bilingualism, including author's translations. Different variants are possible for multilingual creative possibilities to manifest themselves through an asymmetrical and time-shifting distribution of creative efforts between the two languages. Sometimes, after the first attempts to write in Polish, the "Hebrew stage" appeared in the works of Polish-Israeli authors, after which the return to Polish was already final, and the use of Hebrew was limited to translation or self-translation (Renata Jabłońska, Irit Amiel). Self translation became a path to writing directly in Polish (example of Miriam Akavia and Irit Amiel) [see: Kraskowska, p. 45 *passim*], although, as in the case of Halina Birenbaum, it could only be an episodic attempt to create in an acquired language. Another variant of the creative path of the Polish-Israeli writers was the change of the language of art to Hebrew; in this case, after the first practice in Polish there was a permanent rootedness in the Hebrew region (Anda Amir-Pinkerfeld, Uri Orlev, Jaakow Besser, Dan Calka)<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Well-known translators of Polish literature into Hebrew are, among others, the following Cwi Arad (1909-1994), Józef Lichtenbaum (1895-1968), Benjamin Tenebaum-Tene (1914-1999), Sza-lom Lindenbaum (born 1926), Joram Bronowski (1948-2001); Szoszana Raczynska (1921-2007); Dawid Weinfeld (b. 1937) or Rafi Weichert (b. 1964). See: Famul-ska-Ciesielska, Żurek, appropriate extinguishers.

<sup>11</sup> New Hebrew literature includes the work of the poet Avot Yeshurun (1904-1992), who spent his childhood in Krasnystaw and left for Palestine at the age of 21. Although Yeshurun created only in Hebrew, he often woven words and phrases into poems in Yiddish, Polish, Russian or Arabic. As he said in an interview, "I listen with two ears, and each era hears a different language. One ear hears Hebrew, the other Yiddish. [...] Yiddish is my

The choice of the language of works by Israeli writers of Polish descent seems to be only to a small extent determined by the knowledge of Hebrew in the period preceding the migration to Israel. While some Jews from Poland (Natan Gross<sup>12</sup>, Roman Frister, Irena Bronner, Arie Brauner, Shoshana Raczynska or Lea Shinar<sup>13</sup>) knew to some extent Hebrew from Jewish schools, others, including mainly representatives of the younger generation, attended only public Polish schools and usually did not speak any of the Jewish languages (Miriam Akavia, Ida Fink, Jerzy Herman, Ida Henefeld-Ron, Maria Lewińska, Renata Jabłońska, Uri Orlev. As the Israeli-Polish Yiddishist, born in Warsaw Chone Shmeruk, notes in the interwar years “the educational system in Poland brought about an ever-increasing number of Jews whose main language was Polish” [Shmeruk 1989, p. 296]<sup>14</sup>.

Those immigrants, who acquired their Hebrew speaking and writing skills only in their new homeland, most often stayed with their Polish home country as literary material (the exception is Uri Orleva's work), retaining Hebrew for non-baltic genres, literary translation or self-translation. According to Jadwiga Maurer, “every Polish Jew [...] has different excuses why he did not break with Polishness. Why does it continue [...] in Polish mythology” [Maurer, p. 28]. The rootedness in the Polish language, despite the sense of loyalty to the new homeland, was an important element indicating biculturalism and double identification: becoming an Israeli did not have to - as Ryszard Löw observes - mean an automatic rooting out of Jewish Polishness:

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mother tongue. And I've written that Hebrew is my mother tongue” [Cole, p. 107]. Uri Cvi Grinberg (1896-1981), who wrote in Yiddish and in Hebrew, was also associated with Poland (Lviv and Warsaw). See: Friday, pp. 171-195.

<sup>12</sup> Natan Gross (1919-2005), director, writer and translator, from the perspective of many years described his “brought from Poland” Hebrew as “school”, “poor” and “not suitable for printing”. After studying mountaineering in Jerusalem, however, with time he started to edit the film monthly “Oman ve'Technai be'Kolnoa”, where he published his Hebrew-written articles and columns. See: Gross 2006, p. 239, 154.

<sup>13</sup> Lea Szinar (Rela Weinfeld; 1924-2014), the elder sister of Miriam Akavia (1927-2015), recalls: “When I was still in Poland, I already knew the Hebrew alphabet, especially prayers. My father wanted me to be able to pray. And it was the old Hebrew one that had been warped for centuries. I heard modern Hebrew in the theatre when an Israeli group came to Krakow. He pleased me, I started to learn before the war, but [...] it was only when I sailed to Haifa in 1948 that I learned the language well” [Lisowski, Shinar, p. 149].

<sup>14</sup> According to Shmeruk, although in 1931 nearly 80 percent of religious Jews considered Yiddish as their mother tongue, and only about 12 percent declared Polish, and about 8 percent Hebrew, the majority of Jewish students attended free public institutions, where Polish was the language of instruction and a compulsory language of speech [see: “We can see, however, that the majority of Jewish students attended free public institutions, where Polish was the language of instruction and a compulsory language of speech”: Shmeruk 1989, p. 285-296].

Leaving Poland did not mean the beginning of the emigration journey, but the end of the diaspora's journey; reaching the homeland by choice and adopting the Hebrew language in force there. Hebrew assimilated [...] became for many [...] also the language of literary expression. However, not for all [Löw 2001, p. 85].

Elżbieta Kossewska, writing about the need for contact with the Polish press and book, characteristic especially for immigrants of the Gomułka *aliyah*, draws attention to the fact that the need to write was triggered by the immigration, which caused a remoteness, inseparable from the sense of loss and longing for the place of childhood, as well as anxiety and insecurity in the face of the challenges of the new reality. For many immigrants, the Polish language became “a mental anchor, expressing in it the shock they experienced when they found themselves in a new country, its terrifying climate, previously unknown human, social and cultural structures” [Sawin, p. 107]. They read and wrote in Polish even at the cost of staying on the margins of the Israeli society, in which “one could only be heard in Hebrew” [Kossewska 2009, p. 123-124].

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The motives for which writers abandon their mother tongue to create in an acquired language can be varied. The choice of the language of creativity may be determined equally by factors related to the emotional and extra-artistic sphere: from the fascination with a specific culture and the internal need to have a new poetic instrument, not yet burdened with unimportant associations, to those conditioned by external circumstances (such as dislocation) and resulting from specific political and ideological choices. Apart from the ideological and cultural context, an important motive is usually the presence or lack of readers in a given language and a possible desire to broaden the audience [see: Tarnowska 2004, p. 97-109; cf. Beajour, p. 39]. However, recitals of the decision

most often fall within the sphere of [...] the most subjective experiences and experiences, about which only the subject himself can say something really meaningful, but which does not always have to be objectively true; such information will often refer to the personality of the author rather than explain the essence of the phenomenon we are interested in. The real mechanism remains hidden; trying to penetrate the principle of its operation, we are always dependent on speculations and hypotheses [Kraskowska, p. 40].

In the case of Polish-Israeli writers living in the element of the Hebrew language, the process of displacing the language of childhood by the acquired language became natural, so there was also a temptation to appear for a He-

brew-speaking audience. The choice of Hebrew, which was a connotative sense of belonging to “the language of the nation and the language of one’s own children” [Lenar, Akavia], was also an expression of an emotional connection with the new homeland. As Miriam Akavia recalls:

There were lofty moments. There was a rebirth. There was a sense of belonging that I couldn’t give up anymore. The sight of free, cheerful children speaking Hebrew, singing Hebrew songs moved me to tears [Obirek, Akavia, p. 3].

Similarly, Akavia’s sister, the author of Hebrew novels Lea Shinar, although she spoke of her strong ties with the Polish language, described her own Hebrew as “ideology” and “another, equally great love” [Lisowski, Shinar, p. 149].

When for most writers Polish was the first language (L1), writing in an acquired language, which was not only the second (L2), but sometimes even the third (L3) or fourth (L4), could mean a desire to break away from the family environment. The reborn Hebrewism was therefore becoming a tool for changing one’s own cultural identity [see: Prokop-Janiec, p. 363-372] and the instrument of separation from everything that evoked associations with the painful past. In the post-war years, the desire for this transformation was exacerbated by the Hebrew pressure:

The Holocaust survivors, before they arrived in Eretz Israel/Israel, studied Hebrew in camps in Germany, and also underwent Zionist indoctrination, which included the rejection of the language of their country of origin and closer ties to Hebrew. In this case, political integration accelerated the linguistic adaptation [...] the Holocaust survivors wanted to get rid of the stigma of the diaspora and the Holocaust as soon as possible, deny the past and merge into a new, strong, Jewish society in Eretz Israel/Israel. The theme of the Holocaust was used to cross out the life of assimilated Jews in the diaspora - it was unacceptable to extend its effects in the form of using the language of the country of origin to the Jewish communities in Eretz Israel. In Yishuv, all manifestations of the links between Jews and their former language and culture were very badly received by Kossewska 2015, p. 69].

The process of acquiring a new cultural identity, as described by Kossewska, has become a part of the majority of Polish immigrants. Miriam Akavia recalls: “Immediately after the war we were required to forget about their ro-

ots, real names and Yiddish. Return to former Israel and Hebrew” [Grzelczak, Akavia, p. 26]<sup>15</sup>. Irit Amiel also expressed the conviction that the Hebrew region should have been “given strength” [Kozioł, Akavia, p. 94-95]:

No one spoke Polish in Israel. We came here and wanted our children to be born in Hebrew. We had such a decision. [...] I wanted to be a ‘Saberka’. I wanted to speak Hebrew like everyone else. No accent [Grzela, Amiel]

Hebrew pressure causing that “it was a shame to speak Polish or Yiddish”<sup>16</sup>, and partly also the stigmatization of the Polish language as associated with anti-Semitism, apart from social and political conditions, became the reason that “children did not want to talk to their parents in Polish” [Kossewska 2009, p. 124]. The desire to “give testimony” and be understood by one’s loved ones became, apart from the feeling of loosening ties with the old country and the lack of readers in the Polish language, an important motive for undertaking creative work in Hebrew:

I was supposed to write in Polish,” recalls Irit Amiel, “For whom? Why? I could not speak Hebrew. Then I gave up thinking about writing. After all, Poland was two and a half years away from Israel. And then there was an iron curtain [Grzela, Amiel]

Some of the writers also complained about the growing uncertainty in the use of Polish language. The poet and translator Jael Shalitt, who had been writing for a long time in Polish for a drawer since she arrived in Israel in 1950, says: “Writing in Polish is a tormenting uncertainty, a chase for the escaping shape of the word, and finally the fear that one day the language will stop feeling” [Leociak, p. 71]. Miriam Akavia was also unsure of her Polish language, for whom Hebrew, just like for Irit Amiel, was the language of her new family: husband, children and grandchildren, and Renata Jabłońska<sup>17</sup>, the author of the 1999 volume of poetry *Eier zehr* [*Foreign City*], translated the

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<sup>15</sup> According to Akavia, Hebrewisation of names was not so much a result of the internal needs of immigrants as of state pressure. Akavia, although in Hebrew, took her name and surname shortly after arriving in Israel, for a long time she used her old surname. See: Olszewska, p. 212.

<sup>16</sup> Amiel recalls: “posters hung in buses: “Hebrew, speak Hebrew”. When you spoke another language with someone, people paid attention. It was terror” [Grzela, Amiel]. Agata Tuszyńska notes down: When I came here,” recalls Jadzia, a survivor on the Aryan side, “one was not allowed to speak Polish, everyone ran after you and shouted out the crayfish ivrit.... (only in Hebrew)” [Tuszyńska, p. 17].

<sup>17</sup> Renata Jabłońska, born in 1935 in Łódź and brought up in the circle of Polish culture, came to Israel in 1957. She made her prose debut in the American, Polish magazine „Literatura” (Hollywood). She published her first book - a volume of short stories *Kikar*

Hebrew stage of her work in the following way: “I was afraid to start writing poems in Polish; it was a fear that I would “not match” the richness of Polish poetry”. Apart from the fear of “facing” the highest achievements of Polish poetry, her fascination with reading contributed significantly to the creation of Jabłońska’s Hebrew poems:

I have read Hebrew poets - Rachela, Lea Goldberg, Alterman, Amichai.... This certainly influenced me (e.g. Rachel’s simplicity and sensitivity, Lei Goldberg’s beautiful language and Amichai’s wisdom), but I did not consciously refer to anyone. [...] I was under the influence of Hebrew poetry at the time and these poems really “came by themselves”.<sup>18</sup>

While confessional poems from the first volume of Jabłońska’s poems touched mainly on the problem of difficult acclimatization in Israel<sup>19</sup>, both Akavia and Amiel wrote in Hebrew about their Polish childhood and about their wartime experiences. The memory of traumatic experiences, suppressed both because of the imperative not to talk about the Holocaust<sup>20</sup>, which was common until the beginning of the 1960s, and because of the fear of “touching the words of this subject” [Szewc, Fink, p. 4], started to demand externalization with time. In Hebrew, the first works by Miriam Akavia were written for whom writing was a form of autotherapy [see: Grzela, p. 17]: a way to “get rid of the burden of translation [...] of all this” to children “who were not told about war experiences” [Poskuta-Włodek, Akavia; cf. Akavia 2010, Rutkowska]. Akavia’s debut autobiographical novel [see: Akavia, Lenar] *Ne’urim ba-shalekhet* was published in 1975 in Tel Aviv, and in 1989 it was published in Plessner’s Polish translation of Moshe as *The Autumn of Youth* (second edition of Jerusalem 2000). Subsequent Polish editions of this book, in 1996 and 2010, were already self-translated<sup>21</sup>. Akavia’s novel published for the first

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*ha'melech Albert [King Albert's Square]*, translated by several translators - in 1993. After a Hebrew episode, she published several volumes of poetry and prose in Polish, both in Poland and in Israel.

<sup>18</sup> Both quotations from Renata Jabłońska’s letter to the author of this article, dated 26.12.2015.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. for example the line *ba'kluv [in a cage]*: sometimes I am closed / in a transparent cage / I see the world outside / I can't touch it / people see me / my character my clothes / but they can't see the transparent / cage. [The original see: Jablonska 1999, p. 3]

<sup>20</sup> Until the trial of Adolf Eichmann, the subject of the Holocaust was excluded from public discourse in Israel. See: Tarnowska 2006, p 173-193.

<sup>21</sup> Auto-translation, based on a book *ha-Mehir* 1978, there were also short stories included in the volume *Cena / Price* (1992). Some of these short stories were published in the volume *Urojenia / Delusions* (2000). The following prose works remained in Hebrew *ha-Derekh ha-aheret Other way*] (1992), [see: Gross 1993]; *Yurek ye-Anyah Jurek and Ania*] (1975, 2000); *Be-artso shel Yanush Korts' Korts In Janusz Korczak's country*] (2006); *Bayit*

time in 1984, similarly *Feeds sheliMy vineyard*], which tells the story of the writer's family and her "beautiful childhood in Krakow", was published six years later in an author's translation. This is what Akavia said about this novel:

I wrote [it - B.T.] all the time, dozens of times, but only in myself; I do not know in what language, maybe even in Polish, although the first language in which this book was published was Hebrew. [Obirek, Akavia]

The stories collected in *My Returns* (2005) have already been written in Polish. Although Akavia's work was described in Poland as Hebrew [Wojdowski], according to Henryk Grynberg, the writings of the author *Karmi sheli* "is a return from an escape - to a beautiful family home, saved in memory. [...] Akavia belongs to the Polish literature of the Shoah. Neither Israel nor the Hebrew language saved her from this" [Grynberg, pp. 47-48].

The Polish literature of the Shoah also includes the work of Irit Amiel (owned by Irit Amiel). Irena Librowicz, born in 1931 [see: Famulska-Ciesielska, Żurek, p. 18-19], taken up first in Hebrew to express experiences about which the author was unable to speak [see: Wasita, Amiel, p. 278]<sup>22</sup>. An impulse to create the first volume of poetry Amiel *Mivhan be-Sho'ah* (1994) was the poet's granddaughter's request for help in preparing for the school examination:

One day Noa, my granddaughter, came to me [...] and said the whole laugh: "Safta, or grandmother, I am supposed to write a work about the Holocaust, and you were there. Will you help me? So I helped her. Then I wrote these works with all of them. I thought about myself: "I am the one Noa said: you were there. It was then that I wrote *the Holocaust Examination* [Grzela, Amiel] in Hebrew.<sup>23</sup>

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*Bonim Be-Ahava Dom zbudowany się z mi-łością*] (2001). On the other hand *Harpatka ba-otboth: ve-'od harpatka 'ot* [Bus and other adventures] (1986) and *Galiyah u-Miklosh: Nituk yehasim Galia and Miklosz. Breaking Relations*] (1982), have Polish versions: *Bus adventure* (1995) and *Galia and Miklosz* (1992).

<sup>22</sup> Similarly to the history of "Israeli Polish literature" there is the bilingual work of Józef Bau (1920-2002), the author of four Hebrew books: collections of humour, essays and memoirs. As Ryszard Löw writes, "He did not depart from the Polish [Bau - B.T.], but everything he wrote in Hebrew remains very Polish, very Polish-Jewish. A kind of humour, allusiveness, metaphors and a sense of verbal expression grew out of the culture of the Polish language. These features of Bau's writing certainly played a significant role in his inability to join the Hebrew writing cycle" [Löw 2002/2003, p. 319-320].

<sup>23</sup> Irit Amiel talked to Maria Lewińska about acquiring a new language: "When I came to Israel at the turn of 1947-1948, the Liberation War broke out. I wanted to write a diary, but why? And suddenly I understood that I was left without language. A man without a tongue is a cripple. This is the fate of an immigrant. It was necessary and quick to learn a new language - Hebrew. A language with a completely different cut, rhythm and music. The tongue, which at that time sounded aggressive, dry and hard as orders in the ears, and tasted like gravel in the mouth" [Lewińska, p. 58-59].

A collection of poems, which in the 1990s had three Tel Aviv editions (1994; (1995). 1998), almost simultaneously appeared in his own translation as *the Examination from the Holocaust* (1994; (1998). As Amiel explained,

I decided not to write in Polish until I learned Hebrew very well. I wrote my first poems in Hebrew. Interestingly, writing in Hebrew opened me up to Polish. She returned because she was in the brain [Grzela, Amiel].

Subsequent volumes of poetry: *I didn't manage...* (1998), *To breathe deeply* (2002) and collections of short stories: *Osmaleni* (1999) and *Double Landscape* (2008) were originally created in the Polish language. Both were nominated for the most important Polish literary award Nike. Tom *Osmaleni* was translated by the author into Hebrew (*Tseruvim*, Jerusalem 2002), as if to satisfy her conviction that “nothing is completely finished until it exists in both languages, Polish and Hebrew” [Amiel 2014, p. 216].

The return to Polish - after many years of not using this language on a daily basis - can be translated not only for psychological reasons (“I like Polish, because I was born in this language. He connects me with my childhood, with my parents” [Grzela, Amiel]<sup>24</sup>), but also with artistic (“I like the way in which words can be created. You add “no” and you are already “insatiable” [Grzela, Amiel]). Irit Amiel, writing about the problem of presenting the Holocaust in a literary work, argued:

There is something in the Holocaust that does not go well with other languages. It was happening in Poland. When you say “action”, people know what you are talking about. And when you start writing in English, there is no action anymore, there is only “action” and nobody understands. My books are translated into other languages, but they do not have the same echoes as in Poland. The tongue is a huge force [Grzela, Amiel].

The network of associations that Hebrew - the language of the Bible and Eretz Israel - implied associations unrelated to Europe, did not correspond to the experiences of the diaspora and connoted by the culture of the country of residence. Miriam Akavia noticed that

it was not easy to change from Polish to Hebrew, and to write in Hebrew about the Polish climate, Polish nature, Polish seasons, Polish cities and villages, mountain

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<sup>24</sup> Amiel, in whose house the Polish language was used before the war, speaks: “I have been in love with the Polish language since childhood. I know many Polish poems by heart, as well as Polish church and patriotic songs. Now, in Israel, I still buy Polish newspapers and read Polish books, and Polish culture is still close to my heart’ [Wasita, Amiel, p. 278].

rivers and dense forests, the smells of mushrooms after rain and the smells of elderberry... [SEC award, p. 387].

The Polish language was the most appropriate medium in which the memories of childhood arcades and experiences connected with the war and the Holocaust could be expressed in the most appropriate way. However, Akavia is not sure what became the most important stimulus for her to return to her native language as a tool for creative work:

One day I found myself in the Union of Cracovians in Tel Aviv. I have met many Polish writers and writers from Cracow: Natan Gross, Dr. Reuwen Wolf - maybe under their influence I started to return to the Polish language. Or maybe, when after many years as an employee of the Israeli embassy in Stockholm I visited Cracow, or maybe because Polish literature was the literature of my youthful years, it is a narrow but strong base on which, if not my outlook on the world, the way of thinking was shaped [Lewińska, p. 63].

Moreover, Hebrew was not a fully-formed language adapted to the changing reality. The Israeli writer Aharon Megged, born in 1920 in Włocławek, wrote about the generation of builders of Israel, including the *Jishuwa-born* Sabers or “New Jews”/Israeli who, unlike the Jews of the diaspora, were national heroes [see: Almog]:

we, also those born here, for whom Hebrew is the mother tongue and the only language they know - we feel that for us this speech is “unnatural”, that it is not yet “self-evident”, that we need roots deeper than one generation, a relationship stronger than that between mother and son, to grow into it.

Hebrew, less “emotional” than, for example, Yiddish, according to Megged, also connoted other social attitudes:

If it is true that a nation shapes its language, to some extent it is also true that a language shapes its nation. [...] Hebrew is less open, people confess less, complain less and complain. There is simply a lack of appropriate words [Megged, p. 19-20; cf. Shmeruk 2011, p. 22-33].

This lack of words caused at the same time “awareness of literary possibilities, which are nowhere in the world” and created the temptation for the writer not yet to fully coagulate the language, which “is still being created, every day”, to be freely shaped: “You can come up with words, combine them, add them. It is possible to draw on the treasury of words of emigrants from Eastern Europe. [...] It is possible to create words which will immediately enter the general circulation” [Tuszyńska, p. 18].

For writers from Poland writing in Hebrew, the lack of “childhood language”, apart from insufficient knowledge of the biblical language, was an ailment that caused a feeling of language shortage<sup>25</sup>. As Jerzy Lisowski writes,

the most important thing is that every language has a long training, the whole area of its culture - beliefs, legends, legends, proverbs, lullabies and rhymes, student, peasant and thieving dialects, etc. - everything that gets saturated unconsciously and that later ferments in the imagination. Well, you can be bilingual, but you cannot have double childhood and double youth, those batteries of emotions that sometimes charge you for the whole life [Lisowski, p. 175].

Renata Jabłońska, as one of the reasons for staying with the Polish language as the language of literary creation, considered this sense of linguistic “incompleteness”, which makes Hebrew words, especially those related to the sphere of feelings, sound foreign<sup>26</sup> to her. However, the division of functions that both languages perform in her everyday life is as follows:

when I think about the past, parents, school or friends, or about my favourite landscapes, it always happens in Polish, completely unconsciously. However, when it comes to everyday matters, especially those concerning the local reality, I think in Hebrew [Jabłońska 2001, p. 26].

Despite the initial conviction that Hebrew was more suitable for the role of a poetic medium than Polish, Renata Jabłońska suddenly felt that she “did not want to write in Hebrew at all, but in Polish” [Tarnowska, Jabłońska, p. 51].

The impulse to publish in Polish was certainly the interest of critics, which appeared in Poland in the 1990s. The restoration of Polish-Israeli diplomatic relations in 1990, after twenty-three years, enabled Israeli writers to participate fully in Polish literary life [see: Szaynok, p. 15-30]<sup>27</sup>. Even those writers of

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<sup>25</sup> Uri Orlev said: “The Polish language soaked into me when I was very young. These are things you never forget - certain feelings, words, visuality of these words in Polish. And in Hebrew it changes, sometimes there are no such words” [Ziemann, p. 12-13].

<sup>26</sup> From Renata Jabłońska’s letter to the author of this article, dated 13.12.2015.

<sup>27</sup> A large part of Polish-Israeli literary production, especially in the years 1967-1990, went to Polish émigré publishers in London and Paris. After 2000, the majority of Polish-Israeli authors’ books are published in Poland. See: Tarnowska 2014, p. 27-41.

Polish origin who write exclusively in Hebrew<sup>28</sup> or translate their works and publish them in two language versions for two circles of recipients<sup>29</sup> reach the Polish market.

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Although for assimilated Jews born in Poland, Polish was the language of home and immediate family, shaping the sensitivity and perception of the world, in the Hebrew-speaking environment inevitably the process of displacing and replacing the language of childhood with the acquired<sup>30</sup> language had to take place. The poet Anda Amir-Pinkerfeld (Anna Pinkerfeldó-na; 1902-1981), author of a volume of poems entitled *Songs of Life*, published in 1921 in Lviv. Born to an assimilated Jewish family, in her youth she joined the Zionist organization “Ha’shomer ha’tsair” and in 1924 she left for Palestine permanently. Influenced by the poet Uri Cvi Grinberg, she began to write poems in Hebrew. In her new homeland she made her debut in 1928 in the magazine “Dawar”, and published her first volume of Hebrew poetry *Yamim dovevim* [*Whispering Days*] a year later [see: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, p. 848-849]. In addition to poetry, she also created literature for children, for which she was awarded the Israel Prize in 1978.

The Kalisz-born poet and translator Jaakow Besser (1934-2006), who made his debut with Polish poems in a local newspaper in Legnica after the war, also did not return to Polish as a tool of original literature [see: Besser; Famulska-Ciesielska, Żurek, p. 35-36], as well as a prose writer, author of books for children and translator Uri Orlev (Jerzy Henryk Orłowski), author

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<sup>28</sup> The poet Anat Zagórska-Springmann (b. 1947), who translates her own works into Polish only in Hebrew (see: Zagórska-Springmann 2005/2006, p. 25-27; Zagórska-Springmann 2008, p. 122-123); as well as Jonatan Barkai (born 1937), theatre actor and director, translator of contemporary Polish poetry into Hebrew. In recent years, the Lublin-based Versailles publishing house has published the following volumes of Barkai’s poems translated by Viola Wein: *Pastoral atmosphere of cemeteries* (2011); *A murderous image* (2013) and the volume *Lost Metropolis* (2014) evoking the image of contemporary Tel Aviv.

<sup>29</sup> The auto-translated books include Natan Gross’s books *Who are you, Mr. Grymek*, 1991 (oryg: *Mi atah, Adon Grimek?*, 1986), Uri Jerzy Hup-perta *Podróż do źródeł pamięci*, 2004 (oryg: *Mah zokher ha-yeled What a Child Remembers* ], 1999), Józef Bau’s *Time of Desecration*, 1990 (oryg: *Shenot tirtsaḥ. Lei Shinar Michal, daughter of Szula*, 1995 (oryg: *Michal, bat Shaul*, 1989).

<sup>30</sup> Bilingvists generally prefer one language and also experience periods when one language starts to dominate the other. If this process continues in one direction, the language may initially become the first functionally foreign language [see: Miodunka, p. 274; cf. Cieszynska; Błasiak-Tytuła, p. 57-70].

of over thirty books in Hebrew. Orłowski, born in 1931 in Warsaw and brought up in Polish culture, admitted that “there was no other language in [his - B.T.] home” [Ziemann, p. 19]:

We lived in Żoliborz. I recited at school: “Who are you? A small Pole”. Before going to sleep, I talked: “Aniele, my watchman. Every Sunday I went with the housekeeper to the church. I had no idea that I was Jewish. This is how my family was assimilated [Smoleński, Orlev; cf. Orlev 2012; Abramow-Newerly]

Hiding during the war on the “Aryan” side, as well as during his later stay in the Bergen-Belsen camp, Orłowski wrote poems in Polish<sup>31</sup>:

I wrote my first poems when we were hiding on the “Aryan” side in Warsaw. These poems have already stayed there. When the area of the [Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp] decreased, as did other children, I returned to creating poetry. The first version I wrote on a board, which I detached from my mattress. It was only when I was fully satisfied with the poem that I rewrote it for the book [Polin.pl].

After emigrating to Palestine after the war, he settled in one of the kibbutzes in Lower Galilee - there he learned to speak Hebrew and took his Hebrew name<sup>32</sup>. Despite the feeling that “Poland betrayed him during the war” and abandoning Poland as a tool of creative work, Orlev remained - as he said in interviews with the Polish Radio - a “Polish patriot”: “To this day, when I see the Polish flag, a cap, a horn or an eagle with a crown, I still feel moved. Even if I wanted to, I could not change it” [i.e. 2014]. The choice of Hebrew as the language of art did not invalidate the cultural identity connoted by the language of childhood, nor the linguistic associations rooted in the writer’s subconscious: both languages, influencing each other, created in his mind a kind of “inter-language”<sup>33</sup>. The writer recalls his work with the translator of his novel for children and young people as follows *Ha-I bi-Rehov ha-tsiporim Wyspa na ulicy Ptasiej*], from 1981, Ludwik Jerzy Kern:

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<sup>31</sup> <sup>n</sup> In 2005, the author translated these poems into Hebrew. The bilingual Polish-Hebrew edition, together with photocopies of some pages of his notebook, was published in Jerusalem [see: Orłowski=Orlev]. These poems were also translated from Hebrew into Italian [see: Orlev 2012b].

<sup>32</sup> Uri Orlev made his debut in 1956 with a novel *Hayale-Hayale Lead soldiers*]. In 1976 he began writing books for children and young people, scripts for radio and television broadcasts and translating Polish literature into Hebrew. He is the author of more than thirty books that have been translated into 38 languages and has won many literary awards. See: Orlev 2000, p. 76-78.

<sup>33</sup> The term *Idy Chicken*. See: *Chicken*, p. 186.

He read his translation to me, and I checked it in the Hebrew original. On the third day I told him: “Jurek, you read this Polish original to me, and I check it in the Hebrew translation. The meanings of many words that I wrote in Hebrew had in my memory the roots and associations of Polish words [mc/jp 2014].

Similar was the creative path of Dan Calka (in an English transcription of Tsalka), born in Warsaw as Mieczysław Całka (1936-2005), one of the most eminent Israeli writers. Calka survived the war in Siberia and Kazakhstan, and after the war he grew up in Wrocław, where he studied philosophy and literature at the university there. He arrived in Israel in 1957, at the age of twenty-two. After his literary debut, which was the publication of four short prose works in the Polish left-wing magazine “Od Nowa” [Całka 1959], he cut himself off from the Polish language and from 1967 he published only in Hebrew [see: Ithl.org.il, (2012)]. He is the author of about twenty books, both prose and poetic, of which only the short story *Ba'dereh le'Halab [On the Way to Aleppo]* was translated into Polish [Całka 2009]. One of Dan Calka's later books, the autobiography of *Sefer ha'alef-bet [Alphabet]*, constructed from slogans arranged in alphabetical order, was modelled on Czesław Miłosz's *Abecadle*. Recalling such bilingual and bicultural writers from Poland as Calka, a politician and columnist Shevah Weiss noticed that even if they wrote in Hebrew about Israel and Israeli society, they always brought “our European-ness, our Polishness” [Weiss] into Israeli literature.

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Bilingwizm, which is a relative phenomenon - not only individual and gradual, but also dynamic, i.e. changing in time - is difficult to classify. In the case of literary billing, it is possible to change the language of creativity from ideological to artistic, as well as various variants of the creative path. Even in a situation of full bilingualism<sup>34</sup>, when both languages become equal centres of the writer's identity, literary creation is generally unequal - one of the languages (usually the first) dominates.

The majority of writers of immigrants from Poland or immigrants who became writers in their new homeland have remained permanently connected with the tradition of Polish literature. This applies both to authors writing only in Polish, as well as bilingual writers who, after years of growing into a new language and attempts to create literature in it, returned to the first language, which was Polish. This return did not, of course, mean a complete abandonment of Hebrew, but only a new repartition of the tasks and functions of both languages. Interterritorial billing, which, according to the Nigerian researcher

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<sup>34</sup> The term *Idy Kurcz*, which means a fully developed language and communication competence in both languages, both spoken and written. See: Chicken, p. 176.

Ekundayo Simpson, means the domination of the native language as a tool of creative work [Simpson 1978, p. 5], was not exceeded also by those writers who practiced literary genres in both languages that were considered easier in terms of language.

However, an example of extraterritorial bilingualism, meaning a permanent change in the language of creation, is the literary output of those immigrants for whom the Polish language, for various reasons, turned out to be an insufficient creative tool. Works by writers such as Anda Amir-Pinkerfeld, Uri Orlev and Dan Tsalka form an integral part of the mainstream Hebrew-language Israeli literature.

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