

ABSTRACTS

A HIDDEN STRING IN BIALIK'S POETRY – USING SEMANTIC FIELDS AND SEMANTIC FRAMES AS INTERPRETATIVE TOOLS

Ouzi Rotem

The fourteenth chapter of Bialik's story "Aftergrowth" (*"Safi'ach"*) ends with the following description: "Hush! In my very ear – and maybe within it – a hidden string is stretched, humming on and on with a still small voice, smaller than small, a fine thread." The string (*nimah*), which is humming on the narrator's ear, carries him from the actual world to another, imaginary world: that of his early childhood. What is this string? Why is it humming? How does it transport the narrator to other worlds?

"Aftergrowth" provides only partial answers to these questions. For more complete answers one should look at Bialik's poetry, where the string reappears in poems as "Tidings" (*"Be'sorah"*), "After My Death" (*"Acharei Moti"*) and "Word" (*"Dvar"*). The contexts where the string is usually found in such works point at the "string" as a key word in Bialik's ars poetica lexicon. The purpose of this paper is to trace the characteristics of that string in Bialik's work, thereby shedding light on Bialik's view of poetry. The principle tool used here is linguistic – that is, my research focuses on the lingual aspects of the works and makes use of current linguistic theories. Two linguistic models in particular are used: semantic fields and semantic frames.

SYNESTHETIC METAPHORS IN H. N. BIALIK'S POETIC LANGUAGE

Tali Bleicher

There is little research on H. N. Bialik's language and its contribution to the enrichment of Modern Hebrew, both in poetry and in general. My research deals with synesthetic metaphors in Bialik's poetry. The word synesthesia derives from Greek: syn (union) and aisthesis (perception). It is a rare physiological phenomenon in which an individual perceives one sensory stimulation using another, different sense. My research, however, does not deal with the physiological aspects of synesthesia, but rather with synesthetic metaphors – metaphors in which the target and source domains are associated with different sensory modalities. I deal with the synesthetic metaphor's poetic effect and examine the variety of synesthetic metaphors in Bialik's poetry, which includes over a hundred synesthetic phrases. For each such metaphor, I show how it corresponds to the poem's character, meaning, and emotional affect, and how it arranges the written poem.

The paper offers several interpretative criteria for treating synesthetic metaphors as an interpretative tool: a) as a poetic device for stating degrees of clarity and intensification in perceiving the world, and b) as a means for focusing attention on missing elements, and distinguishing the common and collocated from the innovative and fresh elements in poetic language.

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THE INFLUENCE OF BIALIK'S REVOLUTIONARY "TONGUE OF
MIRRORS" ON THE POETIC LANGUAGE OF Z. SHNEOUR AND
J. FICHMAN

Ruti Lior

Bialik's poetry was a unique phenomenon in his generation both in comparison with his predecessors, including the great Yehuda Leib Gordon, and his followers, whom he encouraged and supported. He revolutionized the generation's concept of poetry by showing the inner potential of all Hebrew layers to become means of expressing individual, as well as national, predicaments and deep sentiments. Together with his vast knowledge of Biblical literature, his fresh look on nature, childhood, mystery, the Jewish people's troubled history and heritage, he paved the way for his successors. They followed him by using old expressions, especially nominal compounds and constructs for expressing individual original states of enthusiasm and despair. In this paper, I trace Bialik's influence on the poetry of two well-known poets of the Odessa circle close to Bialik: Z. Shneour and J. Fichman. I describe two sorts of influence: direct borrowing and echoing. For example, Bialik describes the departing setting sun as kissing the "wing of the day" (1985 "*Ba'arov Hayom*"). Shneour (1905 "*Im Layla*") borrows the very same metaphor but plants it in a different typical gloomy context: Satan watches "human sins" and "the feeble broken wing of the day." Bialik describes his enthusiasm with the morning splendor in "*Zohar*" (1901) as his soul being caught in a "web of light." Fichman, as Shneour before him, plants the metaphor in a different mood and setting. By adding the adjective "wondering" and mentioning the forsaken heart, the expression becomes quite unique and has a different, almost opposite tone: "As evening approaches/... all the treasures of the forsaken heart/will again be caught in the web of a wondering light" (1926 "*Erev*").

TWO CHILDHOOD REMINISCENCES: "BAGOREN" BY
TSCHERNICHOVSKY AND "ZOHAR" BY BIALIK

Orit Boger

This paper presents a semantic field analysis of two childhood poems of two eminent poets in the era of rising modern Hebrew literature: H. N. Bialik and S. Tschernichovsky. There are many similarities between "*Zohar*" (1902) and "*Bagoren*" (1921): both describe a summer scene in early childhood. Both are told by the experiencing child who is the hero of the scene. Critics (Sadan Klausner) have noticed that both poems are quite long and have an idyllic nature, and in both the voice of an older poet is heard as he remembers a scene from his past. However, the findings of the suggested semantic field analysis of both poems reveal quite an opposite picture. The two poets seem to have experienced a very different childhood, and more importantly, their attitude towards their childhoods is quite polarized.

"*Zohar*" depicts a playful, vivid, and adventurous child, as opposed to the child in "*Bagoren*" who is reserved, hesitant, critical, and quite lifeless. Surprisingly, these two pictures contradict the common view of the biographical childhood of the two poets and their public images. These

images, the outlines of which are presented in this paper, have been shared equally by many of the two poets' contemporaries, as well as by following generations. The comparison between these two poems sheds new light on the common public image of the poets and calls for further examination. One should be careful in drawing conclusions from only two poems from the rich and complex poetic corpus of these two poets, yet the suggested method of semantic field analysis is shown to be fruitful, and carries a promise to shed new light on commonly accepted views.

SEMANTIC FIELDS OF CHILDHOOD LANDSCAPES: "FOUR GLASSES" FROM BIALIK TO GOLDBERG

Dana Freibach-Heifetz

This paper examines childhood's traces in the poetic world of Lea Goldberg, by applying the theory of semantic fields on several of Goldberg's poems which describe her childhood. Goldberg herself interpreted Bialik's metaphor of "four glasses" in "*Safi'ach*" as four observations on the poet's childhood, and argued that there is a direct relationship between the distance from this childhood and the artistic freedom to vividly write about it. Considering this interpretation as Goldberg's own artistic credo, the paper examines her childhood's poetic descriptions in two periods – one in 1938-1940 (the sequential poems "From My Old Home" – "*Mibeyti Hayashan*" and "Childhood" – "*Yaldut*"), the other in 1959 (parts B & C of the sequence "Completion" – "*Siyum*"). A typology of the semantic fields of these poems discloses the manner in which childhood landscapes are created in those poems, as well as the intricate relations between them. Furthermore, this analysis reveals that the model of "four glasses" – as Goldberg interpreted it – does not apply to her own "childhood poetry".

Doing so, the paper adds another layer to the theory of semantic fields as a hermeneutic-poetic tool, following the writings of Tamar Sovran; inter alia, it wishes to demonstrate the way in which a typology of semantic fields in a poetic language can be a fruitful tool for analyzing poetic worlds.

BLOSSOM AND WITHERING – A SEMANTIC-POETIC ANALYSIS OF "SUMMER POEMS" BY H. N. BIALIK

Tamar Sovran

The paper examines one of the early and less familiar of Bialik's poems written in 1896 close to his wedding and his leaving Odessa for working in the secluded woods of Korostishev. The poem is a long letter of complaint about the steady rain that ruins the beautiful spring flowers, although it carries the blessing of fruits and affluence. The poetic-semantic view suggested here aims to show how linguistics, mainly semantic tools, contribute to the interpretation and evaluation of a poetic work. Four stages are proposed in this paper: a) The poem's inter-textual aspects

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alluding to Biblical contexts of disaster and harm; b) The web of semantic fields in the poem which weave together blossom and withering, and ties them to erotic hidden elements and to feelings of despair and disappointment; c) The use of repetitive verbal constructions and symbols in the poet's other works to detect traits of his idiosyncratic poetic lexicon. Finally, the paper shows how these three stages can be tied to d) the poet's biographical personal predicament and his state of mind at the time of composing this piece. The main purpose of the paper is to build a bridge between cognitive semantics and poetic interpretation focusing on metaphors and semantic fields.