What Is Heard in the Mountains: Paul Celan's *Gespräch im Gebirg* in the Light of its Hebrew Translation

Ce qu'on entend dans les montagnes : Gespräch im Gebirg *de Paul Celan à la lumière de sa traduction en hébreu*

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1   Originally written in German, *Conversation in the Mountains* [*Gespräch im Gebirg*], one of Paul Celan's very few prose texts that were published during his lifetime, was conceived in August 1959. At that point, Celan, the 39-year-old Jewish Romanian poet and translator, had already published four poetry collections. Born in Czernovitz to a family of a Jewish descent, Celan grew up speaking several languages, including German, his mother tongue, Romanian, Russian, and French. In 1942, during the Second World War, Celan was sent to a forced-labor camp, and his parents were murdered. After the war he moved to Vienna before settling in Paris in 1948.

2   This peculiar short prose text reveals a personal biography inseparable from a collective history. Celan combines the public and the private experience in his enigmatic story describing a Jew named Klein who leaves his home and walks to the mountains. On the way he meets another Jew named Gross, his cousin, and they begin to converse. At this stage the external third-person perspective turns into a strange dialogue between a second-person "you" [*Du*] and a first-person "I" [*Ich*], which eventually ends up in a first-person monologue. Very little happens in this story, at least in terms of action. The two characters do not even manage to reach the top of the mountain. What does happen seems to belong to the realm of language—and, no less important, to how this language is heard. What then is heard in the mountains?

The Sound of a Testimony

3   Sound is not only an essential element of poetry in general, but particularly of any poetic text that reflects a historical reality and has testimonial qualities. In *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, Shoshana Felman discusses the sound of Celan's poetry when explaining his later rejection of his early poem "Death Fugue" [*Todesfuge*]. According to Felman, this:

> Later poetry rejects, within the language, not its music and its singing—which continue to define the essence of poetic language for Celan—but a certain predetermined kind of recognizably *melodious* musicality. In Celan's own words, "the verse henceforth distrusts the beautiful … insists on having its 'musicality' placed in a region where it no longer has anything in common with that 'melodious sound', which more or less undisturbed sounded side by side with the greatest horror. The concern of this language is, in all the unalterable multivalence of the expression *precision*, it doesn't transfigure, doesn't poeticize, it names and places."[1]

4   Felman shows how Celan does not rejects the musicality as such, but rather the melodious, harmonious sound associated with a false aestheticization of the devastating event. Instead of the transfiguration and poetization of the traumatic experience, Celan insists on a precise language that "names" and "places," as the only way to bear a true witness to the horror and the loss.

5   Gorgio Agamben also relates to the sound of Celan's poetry in exploring the issue of testimony when quoting Primo Levi: "If his is a message, it is lost in the 'background noise.' It is not communicable; it is not a language, or at the most it is a dark and maimed language, precisely that of someone who is about to die and is alone, as we will all be at the moment of death."[2] Pointing to Levi's reference to a word spoken in Auschwitz by a three-year-old boy, whom no one could understand, Agamben suggests:

> Perhaps this was the secret word that Levi discerned in the "background noise" of Celan's poetry. And yet in Auschwitz, Levi nevertheless attempted to listen to that to which no one has borne witness, to gather the secret word: *mass-klo, matisklo.* Perhaps every word, every writing is born, in this sense, as testimony. This is why what is borne witness to cannot already be language or writing […]. It is necessary to reflect on the nature of that to which no one has borne witness, on this non-language.[3]

6   As demonstrated by both scholars, what is at stake here is not only the meaning of what is said, but also how what "cannot already be language or writing" is said, and—no less important—heard. This question is highly relevant for *Conversation in the Mountains*, which does not simply represent the literary characters by "telling" of their encounter on the way to the mountains. Rather Celan reverberates with the characters' voices, while "showing" what they sound like by letting them speak.[4] Moreover, Celan's story does not report on the encounter between the two Jews. He enables them to "speak for themselves," that is, to appear through the sounds of their conversation which reverberate with the poetic language.[5] In *Conversation in the Mountains*, both modes (telling and showing; depiction and reverberating) are associated with visual and acoustic distortions, which are conveyed through blind spots and jabbering sounds.

7   In what follows, I intend to examine the question of what one hears in the mountains by exploring the translation of the original German-written text into Hebrew. I would like to suggest that the decisions taken by the Hebrew translator, Shimon Sandbank,

invite the reader to reconsider the relationships between the ethical and the poetical characteristics of Celan's work in general and of this story in particular.

A Missed Encounter in the Mountains

8   *Conversation in the Mountains* was written as a response to a missed encounter between Paul Celan and the German-Jewish philosopher Theodor W. Adorno in Sils-Maria (Engadin) in the Swiss Alps. The meeting was arranged by Celan's friend, the literary scholar Peter Szondi. Having returned earlier to France, Celan transformed the conversation, which never took place, into a poetic text.[6] The fictitious dialogue in the mountains thus alludes to a possible dialogue between Celan, the poet and Holocaust survivor, and Adorno, who was famous for his 1949 statement that "to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric."[7] Adorno's concern about oppressive mechanisms that influenced the state of art, as well as the relationship between the aesthetic and the ethical, encouraged him to radically question the limits of representing the catastrophe of the Second World War and the Shoah as demonstrated in his essay *Prisms: Cultural Criticism and the Society*, among others.[8]

9   The poems Celan wrote until his death in 1970 are usually regarded as his response to Adorno's dictum. However, reading Celan's 1959 story in light of the speech he gave a year later while being awarded the Büchner Prize, reveals something more. In the prize speech entitled *Meridian* Celan articulated a poetic principle that responds to Adorno's challenge. While preparing this speech in Paris, Celan quoted a few sentences from Adorno's essay in his notes, as well as mentioning the story *Conversation in the Mountains*.[9] What is the connection between these texts and how does it relate to the issue of translation? An initial answer is found in Lenz, the main character from Georg Büchner's 1835 uncompleted novella of the same name that recurs in both of Celan's texts. Büchner, for his part, sends his literary character on walks through the mountains, and he, Lenz, wished that he could walk on his head: "On the 20th of January Lenz wandered through the mountains [...] only it sometimes troubled him that he could not walk on his head."[10]

10 Much has already been said about this inverted figure inspired by the Romanticist poet Jacob Reinhold Lenz.[11] In Celan's *Meridian* this inversion reveals a counter-movement, a bypath in the language, which is audible.[12] This is, the "Breathturn" (Atemwende), embodied in the sounds through which the I may encounter the Other: "Are these paths only by-paths, bypaths from thou to thou? Yet at the same time, among how many other paths, they're also paths on which language gets a voice, they are encounters, paths of a voice to a perceiving Thou."[13] Understanding this (counter) movement as a work of memory that endlessly seeks to reach out and testify to the Other, an embodiment of the stranger, the foreign, whose message, according to Levi, "is lost in the 'background noise'," reveals a deep ethical responsibility.[14] Moreover, inscribed through sounds that resist the "melodious musicality," these paths recur in *Conversation in the Mountains*. The story's first paragraph begins with the Jew and ends with Lenz, and in between are the sounds:

> One evening when the sun, and not only that, had gone down, then there went walking, stepping out his cottage went the Jew, the Jew and son of a Jew, and with him went his name, unspeakable, went and came, came shuffling along, made himself heard, came with his stick, [...] do you hear me, you hear me, I'm the one, I, I and the one that you hear, that you think you hear, I and the other one [...] so then

> he went and came, came down this road that's beautiful, that's incomparable, went walking like Lenz through the mountains, he, whom they let live down below where he belongs, in the lowland, he, the Jew, came and he came.[15]

11   Before long it transpires that the Jew not only walks through the mountains like Büchner's Lenz, but he embodies a deficiency as well. According to this reading, Lenz's "disordered step" is analogous to a "disordered language," a deviated and deformed jargon—the Judendeutsch—produced by the "crooked-nose" (Krummnasig) Jew.

12   In his notes to the *Meridian* Celan associated this deficiency with the very essence of poetry when he writes: "Reverence for the crooked-nose creature—that is a way to the poem."[16] Whether this claim was Celan's answer to Adorno's statement about the impossibility of post-Auschwitz poetry or not, Celan seems to associate this meta-poetic thought with his characters' walk through the mountains. Thus, the secret about the crooked-nose creature that was buried in the 1959 story, is partially exposed in the prize speech written just a few months later. At the same time, however, Celan was haunted by this secret. In his letter to Rudolf Hirsch, the editor of the *Neue Rundschau*, Celan sarcastically referred to the critic Günter Blöcker, whose review of Celan's 1959 poem collection, *Language Mesh* [Sprachgitter], was published in the *Tagesspiegel* on 11 of October. The reviewer's observation that Celan's freedom *vis-à-vis* the German language "may lie in his ancestry" was regarded by the poet as an anti-Semitic remark: "This is the prose piece I wrote when coming back from Swiss […] Blöcker's essay—it could also be Goebbels's—shows that this is true. Also the Judendeutsch that can be seen in the title is correct."[17]

13   Judendeutsch—that jabbering language of the big Jew and the small Jew in Celan's painfully humoristic allegory, as Amir Eshel puts it, was mentioned once again by Celan; this time in a letter to Hermann Kasack, who noted Celan had been awarded the prestigious Büchner Prize. Finally, it was also mentioned in Celan's dedication to Adorno from May 1959 while sending the latter his poetic response to their missed encounter: "Here is the short prose text following my visit to Sils that I told you about in Frankfurt […] this is already in the title, Judendeutsch, something produced by the crooked nose."[18] In listening to Celan, it looks as if the conversation which did not take place in the Swiss mountains eventually found its way, or rather bypath, to the poetic text. The question is what kind of a conversation is this that Celan endows with the sounds of the Judendeutsch?

The Other Language, the Language of the Other

14   As Miriam Sieber shows, the term *Judendeutsch* was no longer in use when Celan mentions it in his letters. Obviously he meant Yiddish, the language spoken by the Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, which was associated with pejorative features.[19] The exclusion of the Jews on a linguistic basis is demonstrated, for example, in the pejorative term *mauschel* (speaking like Moishe/Moses) or *mauscheldeutsch* used by non-Jews.[20] In this light, Marc-Oliver Schuster (2002, pp. 31-32), Siebers (2003, pp. 22-23), or Eshel (2004, pp. 66, 74), have shown how by using the Judendeutsch in *Conversation in the Mountains*, while associating it with a desired language, Celan actually rewrites the anti-Semitic discourse and turns it against itself. He thus turns what is regarded in anti-Semitic discourse as fault and deficiency (the "distorted" language of

the German Jews) into a most valuable thing. This is demonstrated in his notes to the Meridian:

> The poem becomes the Jew of literature. The poet is the Jew of literature… one can Jewify [Verjuden]… I consider Jewification [Verjudung] recommendable… Crooked-nosedness reforms the soul. Jewification, that seems to me to be a way of understanding poetry… Verjuden: it is becoming the other, becoming the other and his standing-secret [Zum-anderen-und-dessen-Geheimnis-stehen]… Love of human beings is something other than philanthropy…[21]

15   Celan's juxtaposition of Lenz and the Jew at the beginning of *Conversation in the Mountains* alludes to their resemblance. Stéphane Mosès (1987, p. 48), for instance, points to the analogy between the two characters by stressing the Jew's "bowlegged" (krummbeinig) walk, using his stick, which is reflected in the unstable rhythm of the story's language. Like Lenz's strange, digressed walk that endows him with a precious point of view, so the Jew's language opens up the way to the poem, which seeks to encounter the Other. Celan thus learns from Büchner, whom he "encounters" through the poetic text, about an "inverted step," which reveals possibilities of an ethical act. According to this reading, the way to the poem, "reverence for the secret of the crooked-nose creature"—is also the way to know oneself, while encountering its foreign other.

16   In *Conversation in the Mountains* this becoming of the other concerns not only an "I," but also a collective "we" as a synecdoche of the Jews. Mosès claimed that this is what may be revealed up in the mountains, at the end of the road throughout the antinomies of the language: story and discourse, present and absent, here and there, now and back then.[22] Without going into detail about the poetical, ethical, metaphysical and even political implications embedded in the foreign elements of Celan's originally German-written story, what is central to our discussion, however, is how this foreign element is transformed into Hebrew. Thinking of Celan's call for Jewification, we may ask: How does *verjuden* sound in Hebrew? Moreover, by using the term Judendeutsch (literally: Jews' German) instead of Yiddish, Celan calls attention to a Jewish print inscribed in the German. What then happens to this print when translated into Hebrew?

17   The question of the foreignness becomes central for translators, certainly those associated with German Romanticism. In his celebrated 1813 essay Friedrich Schleiermacher distinguished two methods of translation: "The translator either (I) disturbs the writer as little as possible and moves the reader in his direction, or (II) disturbs the reader as little as possible and moves the writer in his direction."[23] Whereas the first group associated with the French who were inclined to domesticate the foreign language in order to make it accessible to their readers, the second group associated with the Germans preferred to foreignize their (translating) language while maintaining the strangeness of the translated language.[24] In light of the emerging national identity and its formation through the encounter with the stranger, Schleiermacher's question becomes crucial: "How should the translator go about transmitting this feeling of foreignness to his readers, to whom he is presenting a translation in their mother tongue?"[25]

18   This Romantic notion of the "foreign" recurs in the twentieth century, for example: Referring to his Bible translation with Martin Buber, Franz Rosenzweig (1984, p. 83) claimed that not the domestication, namely the German-making [*einzudeutschen*] of the foreign language, but rather the estrangement [*umzufremden*] of the translating

language through its encounter with the translated language conveys the essence of the translation. Claiming that "the transfer can never be total," Walter Benjamin concludes how "the element that does not lend itself to translation [...] instead of resembling the meaning of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language."[26]

19   Sandbank, the translator of Celan's text into Hebrew is very much aware of this tradition. In his essay "The Impossible Task of the Translator: Variation on Walter Benjamin," he claims, for instance, that for Benjamin translation is less about the relationship between writer and reader and much more if not only about the complementary relationship between texts with regard to a pure mythic language.[27] Quoting Benjamin on the transparency of the translating text that "allows the pure language to shine upon the original all the more fully,"[28] Sandbank concludes: Benjamin's discussion which seems most abstract, does touch upon the translator's most secret—and concrete—wish: to move beyond the translated and the translating languages towards a pure meaning, or music, which begins where the words end.[29] Whether this translator is only Benjamin, or every translator as such, including Sandbank himself, it seems that the latter approves of this method, at least when he writes about translating Celan, the topic of his following essay in the volume.[30] But precisely what form does the "foreign" take, and how does it reveal itself in the original text and the translation of *Conversation in the Mountains*?

20   The use of foreign words has been mentioned by many scholars of Celan's work.[31] In most cases, the foreign word, an unintegrated and unassimilated sound stands for the "outsider," the Other. In this light, Sidra DeKoven Ezrahi teases out the implications of Adorno's image of barbarism.[32] She shows how "the stranger's babblings, whose sound was for ancient Greeks the paradigm of the speechless other, or the Wandering Jew's mutterings indecipherable to Western ears, become the poet's post-Auschwitz speech and an ongoing reproach to silence."[33] Moreover, in the case of translation, she mentions how:

> [...] translators and theorists have grappled with the untranslatability of many of the foreign phrases in Celan's verse, unique even within this polyphonic poetry, the Hebrew letters and words from a scriptural or liturgical vocabulary—Ziv, Hachnissini, Kumi ori, Kaddish, Ashrei, Yizkor, Tekiah—remain as salient, as resonant, and as unassimilated in his poetry as his poems are in German culture. The Hebrew words persist unexamined, maintaining the status of a document, a relic, a ritual—or an irretrievable memory.[34]

21   This is hardly the case of *Conversation in the Mountains*. In discussing this story, Mosès distinguishes between few strategies of Celan's stylistic use of the Judendeutsch, such as: Yiddish idioms and morphologic deviation (*Häusel*), inappropriate verb location (*wenn der Jud begegnet einem zweiten*), and other syntactic replacements (*bin ich, weisst du*), elisions (*ich bin's, du weisst's*), wrong forms (*ist's*), repetitions (*und und und*), etc.[35] Surprisingly enough, the use of the foreign words par excellence is not central in the original German text. Celan's "Jewification" of the German, namely the foreign traces he engraves in this language, are rather diverse. More surprising, however, is realizing that in the Hebrew translation the foreign word is exactly what stands out.

From German to Hebrew and Beyond

22   In his epilogue to the Hebrew collection, Zandbank explained the difficulty of translating Celan's hermetic work in general into Hebrew, and *Conversation in the Mountains* in particular. In order to transfer the Yiddish syntax Celan uses in the German, which cannot be translated into Hebrew, Sandbank introduced Yiddish words that do not appear in the original text.[36] This is strongly demonstrated when the dialogue begins between the two Jews, whom the external narrator describes as "the babblers!", and "let them talk…":

> A good ways you've come, you've come all the way here…
> So I have. I've come like you.
> Don't I know it.
> You know it. You know and you see: Up here the earth has folded over, it's folded once and twice and three times, and opened up in the middle, and in the middle there's some water, and the water is green, and the green is white, and the white comes from up farther, comes from the glaciers, now you could say but you shouldn't, that that's the kind of speech that counts here, the green with the white in it, a language not for you and not for me […]
> I know, I know. Yes I've come a long way, I've come like you.
> I know.
> You know and still ask me: So you've come anyway, you've come here – why, and what for?[37]

> *Bist gekommen von weit, bist gekommen hierher…*
> *Bin ich. Bin ich gekommen wie du.*
> *Weiß ich.*
> *Weißt du. Weißt du und siehst: Es hat sich die Erde gefaltet hier oben, hat sich gefaltet einmal und zweimal und dreimal, und hat sich aufgetan in der Mitte, und in der Mitte steht ein Wasser, und das Wasser ist grün, und das Grüne ist weiß, und das Weiße kommt von noch weiter oben, kommt von den Gletschern, man könnte, aber man solls nicht, sagen, das ist die Sprache, die hier gilt, das Grüne mit dem Weißen drin, eine Sprache, nicht für dich und nicht für mich.*[38]

> ביסט געקומען פון ווייט, עד הלום באת...
> באתי. כמוך באתי.
> וייס איך.
> וייסט דו. אתה יודע ורואה: האדמה התקפלה, שם למעלה התקפלה פעם ופעמיים ושלוש פעמים, ונפערה במרכזה, ובמרכז עומדים מים, והמים ירוקים, והירוק לבן, והלבן בא מעוד למעלה מזה, מן הקרחונים הוא בא, אפשר היה לומר – אבל לא צריך לומר – שזוהי כאן השפה, הירוק עם הלבן שבתוכו, שפה שאינה לא בשבילך ולא בשבילי [...]
> מבין, מבין. מרחוק באתי. כמוך באתי.
> וייס איך.
> וייסט דו. ואתה רוצה לשאול אותי: ובכל-זאת באת, בכל-זאת באת עד הלום – על מה ולמה?[39]

23   This dialogue anticipates a poetic depiction of revelation, that is, a vision of cosmic inversion: "earth had folded over" and reveals a language, which is, however, "not for you and not for me."[40] Alluding to Mosès, DeKoven Ezrahi mentions how the walk on the mountains, which begins as a search for a true dialogue, becomes a kind of internal dialogue "of a single voice divided," as the voice in the mountain echoes back upon itself, and the search for otherness issues a nostalgic gesture: "an encounter with an other who has not come."[41] Moreover, the voice of the other who has not yet come bears witness to the Other, who will no longer come. Celan does not tell his readers what this language—a true dialogue—sounds like. His text, however, seems to speak for itself, that is to show what cannot be told and reported by resonating with the

difference, the trace. Through word repetitions reflecting on acts of hearing and non-hearing, saying and the unsayable, the deviated, unstable rhythm that amplified with the Jew's bowlegged walk, shifts the reader's attention from the word's significance to their sound:

> Who should it talk to, cousin? It doesn't talk, it speaks, and whoever speaks, cousin, talks to no one, he speaks because no one hears him [...] You hear, says he—I know, cousin, I know… You hear, he says, I'm there. I'm there, I'm here, I've come [...] Says he, says he… You hear, he says… And HearestThou, of course HearestThou, he says nothing, he doesn't answer.[42]

24   The aspect of the sound is crucial here, of course. Is this the sound of a "background noise" that echoes with Celan's language as conceived by Primo Levi, hence the language of someone who is left alone? Or is this language that does not talk but speak, precondition the emergence of an ethical community of remembrance.[43] The testimonial potential of this language lies exactly in its traces, namely its undetermined oscillation between the talking and the speaking of an enigmatic, illegible "it," which speaks to no one who hears. That is an infinite movement between "I" and "you," "us, who went walking and came on each other… the Jews who came here, like Lenz… you the babbler, and me, the babbler, we with our sticks, we with our names, unspeakable, we with our shadow, our own alien."[44]

25   In the Hebrew translation, this internal dialogue of the voice in the mountain that echoes back against itself, is manifested not so much in the deformed, "bowlegged" syntax, created by morphologic deviations or elisions, but mostly through the use of Yiddish words, such as:

ביסט געקומען פון ווייט, וייס איך, ווייסט דו.[45]

26   Such is the case of the naming too: the German "der Jud und sohn eines Juden" is translated into Hebrew as: ייד ובן בנם של יידן [46]. In this sense, the foreignness of the Judendeutsch embedded in the original text—the Jewification of the German—reveals itself as Yiddish in the Hebrew translation.

A Concluding Remark

27   As demonstrated here, translating Celan's German text into Hebrew confronts the translator with a multilayered challenge: first, the issue of transformation from one language to the other, as shown by various discussions regarding different methods of translation; second, the challenge in translating a text that poetically and ethically inquires into the concept of the foreign, which is inherently related to the question of audibility; third, the translation of jargon, the Judendeutsch Celan mentioned in the context of his story, which refers to Yiddish—in itself a combination (at least to some extent) of both German and Hebrew.

28   This article shows that whereas the German original text hardly inserts Yiddish words as such, but creates the linguistic "deficiency" through disordered syntax, the Hebrew translation creates the deviation and stuttering impression through the use of a foreign vocabulary. No doubt Sandbank was aware of this distinction. Still, as he reveals in his afterword to the Hebrew translation, his (final) choice was Yiddish, and by so doing the translation might determine what is still undetermined in the original text: how does this "trace"—the Jewish print in the German—sound?

29 On the other hand, if we recall the translator's "secret wish" according to Sandbank's quote of Benjamin, this choice is probably the closest to music, which is beyond words, at least for readers who cannot understand the foreign language. Whether, however, this solution fully accounts for Celan's poetic and ethical evocation of "becoming the other, becoming-the-other and his standing-secret," may require further investigation.

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NOTES

1. Felman, 1992, p. 35; italics in the original.

2. Agamben, 1999, p. 37.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 38, italics in the original.

4. The telling *vs.* showing is discussed, for instance, in Booth, 1983, pp. 144-154. This distinction usually captures two different modes of presenting events in a narrative: in the showing mode, the narrative evokes in readers the impression that they are shown the events of the story or that they somehow witness them, while in the telling mode, the narrative evokes in readers the impression that they are told about the events.

5. On the shift from representation to reverberation or inscription, see Felman (1992, p. XIII): "It is rather and more challengingly so as to attempt to see in an altogether different and exploratory light—how issues of biography and history are neither simply represented nor simply reflected, but are reinscribed, translated, radically rethought and fundamentally worked over by the text." Compare with Peter Szondi, who reads Celan's poem "Engführung" not as a representation of reality or a depiction of the event, but rather as acceeing reality by becoming the event itself: "Indem in seiner Mitte selbst die Entgegensetzung sich vollzieht [...] enthühllt das Gedicht sich als eines, das das Vorangehen selbst ist, statt es zum Thema einer Beschreibung oder Repräsentation zu machen" (1972, p. 364).

6. On the missed encounter between Adorno and Celan, see Felstiner, 1995, pp. 139-145; Janz 1976, p. 115; with regard to *Conversation in the Mountains* see Heber-Schärer, 1994, pp. 9-12; Bollack, 2000, pp. 208-209; Bohm, 2004, pp. 99-100.

7. Adorno, 1981, p. 34.

8. For Adorno's critical discussion of the cultural industry and the limits of aesthetic representation see for example Jay, 1984, pp. 111-160; Lang, 2000, among others, examines the implications of Adorno's discourse in the post-Holocaust era.

9. For texts by Adorno with which Celan was familiar when writing his 1959 story, see Janz, 1976, p. 105. A thorough exploration of Celan's notes to his Büchner Speech is found in Eshel, 2004.

10. Büchner, 1986, p. 139.

11. On Celan's Lenz-Figure and his adaptation of the Büchner novella see Hamacher, 1985, pp. 276-311; see also Bohm, 2004, pp. 99-102, who explores the allusions to Büchner, Nietzsche, Kafka and Buber in Celan's story.

12. Compare with Szondi (1972, pp. 357-358), who explored the musical components and the audibility (Hörbarkeit) of Celan's poetry.

13. Celan, 2001, p. 412.

14. Celan, 2001, p. 408 distinguishes: "I think a hope of poems has always been to speak in just this way in the cause of the strange—no, I can't use this word anymore—in just this way to speak in the cause of an Other."

15. Celan, 2001, p. 397.

16. Quoted in Eshel, 2004, p. 57.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

19. Sieber, 2003, pp. 18-22.

20. Sander Gilman (1986, pp. 220-243) discussed the question of the Jewish language, the language of the Jews, and its use in stereotypic context of what he regards as Jewish self-hatred.

21. Quoted in Eshel, 2004, pp. 68, 70.

22. Mosès, 1987, pp. 56-57.

23. Robinson, 2002, p. 229.

24. On the German tradition of translation see Venuti, 2001, pp. 241-242; Zoran, 2006 provides an insightful perspective on the German translation regarding the foreign aspect by exploring Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's translational decisions.

25. Schleiermacher, 2002, p. 246.

26. Benjamin, 1968, pp. 75, 78.

27. Sandbank, 2017, p. 51.

28. *Ibid.,* pp. 52-53.

29. *Ibid.,* p. 60.

30. *Ibid.,* pp. 61-78.

31. See Szondi, 1972; Janz, 1976; Mosès, 1987; Felstiner, 1995; DeKoven Ezrahi, 2000; Derrida, 2005; Sieber, 2000; Eshel, 2004, to name only a few.

32. On the concept of "Barbarism" compare with Agamben (1999, pp. 37-38), who discusses the notion of testimony, also with regard to Paul Celan's poetry.

33. DeKoven Ezrahi, 2000, p. 143.

34. *Ibid.,* p. 152.

35. Colin, 1987, pp. 48-49.

36. Sandbank, 1994, pp. 169-170.

37. Celan, 2001, p. 398.

38. Celan, 1983, p. 170.

39. Celan, 1994, p. 143.

40. Celan, 2001, p. 398.

41. DeKoven Ezrahi, 2000, p. 151.

42. Celan, 2001, pp. 398-399.

43. Mosès, 1987; Sandbank, 1994.

44. Celan, 2001, p. 400.

45. Celan, 1994, p. 143.

46. *Ibid.,* p. 142.

ABSTRACTS

This article focusses on Paul Celan's *Gespräch im Gebirg* [Conversation in the Mountains] in the light of its Hebrew translation. Written in 1959, this short prose text is regarded as Celan's response to Theodor W. Adorno's statement that "writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric." As various scholars have pointed out, the question of sound is central to this response: How to bear

witness to that which can no longer be heard? This question becomes even more crucial when dealing with issues of translation. In his epilogue to the Hebrew collection, Shimon Sandbank, the Hebrew translator, explains the difficulty of translating Celan's hermetic work into Hebrew in general, and this prose text in particular. For example, in order to transfer the Yiddish syntax that Celan uses in the German, which cannot be translated into Hebrew, Sandbank introduced Yiddish words that do not appear in the original text. With regard to these dilemmas, I would ask: What does one hear when listening to Celan in Hebrew, and what happens to the language of the Other, the other language, in the transformation from German into Hebrew? This article suggests that the decisions taken by the Hebrew translator invite the reader to reconsider the relationships between the ethical and the poetical characteristics of Celan's work.

Cet article porte sur *Gespräch im Gebirg* [Entretien dans la montagne] de Paul Celan à la lumière de sa traduction en hébreu. Écrit en 1959, ce court texte en prose est considéré comme la réponse de Celan à l'affirmation de Theodor W. Adorno selon laquelle « écrire un poème après Auschwitz est barbare ». Ainsi que l'ont fait remarquer différents critiques, la question de la sonorité est centrale dans cette réponse. Comment témoigner de ce qu'on ne peut plus entendre ? Cette question est encore plus délicate quand il s'agit d'une traduction. Shimon Sandbank insiste sur la difficulté de rendre en hébreu l'œuvre hermétique de Celan en général et ce texte en particulier. C'est ainsi, par exemple, qu'il a choisi d'introduire dans sa traduction des mots en yiddish – qui n'apparaissent pas dans le texte original – afin de transposer la syntaxe yiddish – intraduisible en hébreu – qu'utilise Celan dans son texte en allemand. Je voudrais donc poser la question suivante : qu'entend-on lorsqu'on écoute Celan en hébreu et qu'advient-il de la langue de l'Autre, de l'autre langue, lors du passage de l'allemand à l'hébreu ? Cet article suggère que les choix opérés par le traducteur hébraïque invitent le lecteur à reconsidérer les liens entre l'éthique et le poétique dans l'œuvre de Celan.

מאמר זה עוסק ב"שיחה בהרים" [Gespräch im Gebirg] מאת פאול צלאן בהקשר לשאלת התרגום לעברית. מדובר בטקסט בפרוזה שנכתב בשנת 1959 המשיב, בין היתר, לאמירה של אדורנו, כי "כתיבת שירה אחרי אושוויץ היא מעשה ברברי". ואכן, מבקרים שונים הצביעו על מרכזיות היסוד הקולי או הצלילי שבו; שהרי כיצד ניתן לשמר את זכרם של אלה שקולם נדם? איך להדהד את מה שלא נשמע עוד? שאלה זו מחריפה לנוכח אתגר התרגום. על כך העיד שמעון זנדבנק, האחראי לרבים מתרגומי צלאן לעברית, כאשר הדגיש את הקשיים שמערים צלאן על מתרגמיו, הן ביחס למכלול יצירתו, והן ביחס ל"שיחה בהרים". לדוגמא, הבחירה לשלב מלים ביידיש בטקסט היעד (עברית), שאינן מופיעות בטקסט המקור (גרמנית), על מנת לתרגם את התחביר של היידיש המופיע במקור. ארצה לשאול, אפוא, מה שומעים כאשר מאזינים לטקסט של צלאן בעברית ומה קורה לשפה האחרת, שפתו של אחר, במעבר מגרמנית לעברית? מכאן אבקש להראות כי הכרעות המתרגם לעברית מזמינות את הקורא לבחינה מחודשת של הזיקה בין הפואטי לאתי ביצירתו של צלאן.

INDEX

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