The Russian Jewish Diaspora and European Culture, 1917–1937

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CONTENTS

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 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

MARGINALIA OF THE HEBREW RENAISSANCE: THE ENRICHMENT OF LITERARY HEBREW THROUGH CALQUES OF RUSSIAN PHRASES IN THE WORKS OF ELISHEVA AND LEAH GOLDBERG

Zoya Kopelman

The revival of Hebrew in the last quarter of the nineteenth and in the first quarter of the twentieth century can be imagined in the form of two principal processes: the creation of new words according to existing morphological models and the ascription of new meanings to words which were taken from classical Hebrew texts, i.e. from the Tanakh, the Mishnah, from medieval philosophy and from scientific literature. A classic example of the first case is the paradigm of nouns indicating illnesses (e.g. under the influence of European languages, the translation of influenza as 'shapaʿat', where the Hebrew root 'shafaʿ' has the meaning 'to pour').[1] A classic example for the second case is the adaptation of the word 'ḥashmal' (Ez. 1:4) which was taken from the mystic vision of God's carriage and which has received the meaning 'electricity' in modern Hebrew. It is well known that the first option particularly inspired Eliezer Ben-Yehudah, whereas Ḥ.N. Bialik acted as his opponent and favoured the second option. The adherents of Ben-Yehudah could be called innovators and the adherents of Bialik archaists. The archaists needed, as it seems, the bolder imagination.

Both Russian language and literature played a considerable role in the formation of Hebrew literature and of modern Hebrew. As the Israeli structuralist Itamar Even-Zohar wrote,

> when nineteenth-century Hebrew writers made use of Russian verbal conventions, they also necessarily adopted large portions of the Russian models […]. Thus, the adoption of principles of characterization, scene construction and personal interaction coincided with the adoption of formal elements, either in their original form or via domestication procedures. In other words, together with the tools of description […]

[1] Hebrew uses the same letter for the sounds *p* and *f*.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

> the principles of description were accepted, i.e. those principles which determine what can be recognized as a legitimate model of the world.[2]

I will try to show that this process continued until well into the twentieth century. As material I chose the works of two female Hebrew writers with a Russian cultural background—Elisheva and Leah Goldberg. The choice is motivated by the similarity between their biographies and their literary œuvres.

Elisheva (Bykhovskaia, her maiden name was Elizaveta Ivanovna Zhirkova, 1888–1949; gentile), born in Moscow, and Leah Goldberg (1911–1970), born in Kovno, both wrote Hebrew verse and Hebrew prose. Their talents were unequal but their literary inclinations were similar: both admired Alexander Blok and loved Anna Akhmatova, and tried to imitate the latter in their early works. Elisheva was the first, as it seems, to write a longer essay on Akhmatova in Hebrew; Goldberg dedicated an article to Akhmatova some years later.[3] Both also wrote on Alexander Blok,[4] trying to understand the secret of his magic influence on their souls. Each of them wrote a novel which is centred around the *intelligentsiia*, including the Jewish *intelligentsiia*. As the settings of their novels they chose the largest European city of a fateful period: in Elisheva's novel *Alleys* (*Simta'ot*, 1929) it is Moscow at the end of the NEP period, in Leah Goldberg's *Losses* (*'Avedot*, written in the late 1930s and published from archival materials in 2010) it is the Berlin of 1932 and 1933. It should be noted, in addition, that Leah Goldberg was also a scholar of literature and from 1952 professor of Russian Literature at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Her first critical note was a review of the second book of Hebrew verse by Elisheva with the title *Ḥaruzim* (*Verses* as well as *Prayer Beads*, 1928). As a literary critic, Elisheva published in journals and gave surveys of the new Hebrew writers and dedicated some of her essays to Russian writers.

The aim of the present article is to show how calques of Russian metaphors and of paradigmatic literary images have served Elisheva

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[2] Itamar Even-Zohar, 'The Role of Russian and Yiddish in the Making of Modern Hebrew', *Poetics Today*, vol. 11. no 1 (spring 1990), 119.

[3] Elisheva, 'Anna Akhmatova', in *Ktuvim*, 21, pp. 2–3, 22, pp. 2–3 (Jan. 14 and 21, 1927); Leah Goldberg, 'Al Anna Akhmatova', in *Al ha-Mishmar*, Oct. 11, 1961 (also in Leah Goldberg, *Mi-dor u-me-'ever* (Tel-Aviv: Sifriyat Po'alim, 1977), pp. 259–266.

[4] Elisheva, *Meshorer ve-'adam* (Tel-Aviv: Tomer, 1929); Leah Goldberg, 'Aleksander Blok ve-ha-shirah ha-rusit ha-ḥadashah', in *Mi-dor u-me-'ever*, op. cit., pp. 242–259.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

and Goldberg as a means to enrich the imagery of Hebrew prose and poetry. As Russian books influenced the thought and cultural concepts of both writers even during the later years of their lives and formed a considerable part of their reading, it is no surprise that they felt the poverty of Hebrew linguistic imagery on the one hand, and, on the other, the abundance of the same imagery in Russian literature. This awareness made them enrich the Hebrew of their own works with calques of Russian phrases, poetic lines and images.

In her novel *Losses*, Leah Goldberg refers twice to the dependence of her literary work upon her own reading. In the first case, she explains the choice of unusual metaphors to describe the hair of her heroine, a metaphor which becomes a leitmotiv throughout the whole novel. Antonia is introduced as 'A girl with copper hair—it was heavy copper, like the helmet on the head of a soldier, like the glimmering bowl which crowned the head of Don Quixote.'[5] The reference to Cervantes aims at neutralizing, it would seem, the strange epithet 'copper bowl' ('gigit ha-neḥoshet'). The second example is a metapoetical commentary on the description of the landscape: 'It was the morning and a boat was swimming in it, just like in an old Japanese poem.'[6] Goldberg stresses, as it were, that literary images move from one literature to another, and that this inevitable transplantation enriches—if it is successful—the receiving literature.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in Elisheva's novel *Alleys*: Liudmila Vibin and Valentin Kravtsov, a worker of the Narkompros, call the main hero, the Jew Daniel Roiter, 'Peter Shlemil', referring to Adelbert von Chamisso's novel: 'It is the same with you: you are wandering between us, as if you are looking for something but you do not find yourself a place'.[7] The narrator also compares the decadent Vitkovskii and the poetess Vibin to Pierrot and Columbine in Alexander Blok's *Little Fairground Booth* (*Balaganchik*).[8]

I will now turn to the examples, which I have divided into several groups. The first group presents calques of lingual metaphors and phraseology. Here, a combination of words which has become banal in Russian regains its original vividness in Hebrew. The process of translation achieves the 'defamiliarization' ('ostranenie') which Viktor

[5] Leah Goldberg, *'Avedot* (Tel Aviv: Sifriyat po'alim, 2010), p. 16.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 38.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 61, cf. also p. 278.
[8] *Ibid.*, p. 66.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

Shklovskii described in 1919. The phenomenon can be widely observed and includes some curious cases. The biblical word 'ḥermesh' designates a scythe, which became—under the influence of the context—in the Russian synodic translation a sickle ('kak poiavitsia serp na zhatve'; Gen. 16:9); it inspired Bialik to create the calque 'the sickle of the moon' ('ḥermesh ha-yareaḥ,' 'Mondsichel' in German).[9] The poet certainly knew that 'ḥermesh' in European iconography is an attribute of Death, it means a tool with a long handle, a scythe, but, it would seem, the euphony of the new expression was stronger than the literal sense of the tanakhic word. Elisheva took up this tradition and created her own image: 'a golden sickle on the silver field—rose the spring moon' ('ḥermesh zahav bi-sde ha-kesef—ʿalah yereaḥ ha-ʾaviv').[10]

Another, more fruitful, innovation by Bialik was the transfer of verbs from the semantic field 'pouring' onto the substance of light, i.e. the calque of lingual metaphors which already existed in Russian. Among Bialik's poetical metaphors are verb forms which are borrowed from the Bible and preserve the memory of their literal use referring to liquids, especially to water. In the psalms we read (I give a literal translation): 'I entered the depth of the waters and the maelstrom drowned me' ('baʾti be-maʾamaḳei mayim ve-shibolet shtafatni' (Ps. 68:3); Bialik writes: 'the light drowned me' ('shtafatni ha-ʾorah'). This poem, *The Morning Sprites* (*Tsafririm*)—the first of the poems written in Odessa in the summer of 1900—explains to the reader the turn to a new context: 'in the liquid light that emanated, flowing on my back' ('be-ʾorah nozelet ha-shofaʿat, shofaʿat ʿal-gabi'). Bialik paints the morning sunlight and nature in a positive tone, unlike religious tradition and educational literature;[11] the satanic devils ('tsafririm') of dawn ('tsfira') thus turned into lovely, playful spirits. Bialik sees their play in everything that sparkles and reflects the light and he calls upon them: 'Make me clean, wash me…'

Bialik develops the theme of magical creatures of light in the poem *Zohar* (translated by Vladimir Jabotinsky into Russian as *Zori* in February 1901); the title is identical with the title of the most important work

[9] Ḥ.N. Bialik, 'Megilat ha-ʾEsh', in Idem, *Shirim* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1990), vol. 2, p. 233.

[10] Elisheva, *Shirim* (Tel Aviv: ʿAdi, 1945), p. 103.

[11] On this particularity of the tradition he wrote in some detail in the poem *Ha-Masmid* (1893–1895); cf. Ḥ.N. Bialik, *Selected Poems*, translated by Maurice Samuel (New York: The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1972).

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

of Jewish mysticism. On creatures of light (which Jabotinsky translated as 'maliutki-luchi solnechnogo sveta', i.e. 'little rays of sunlight') the poet says: 'They passed by, swimming in sunlight on their way to the water and to the field.' The poem continues and expands the new use of the 'liquid verbs' and their derivatives in the description of light. Modern Hebrew, whose speakers had, to a great extent, a Russian linguistic background, adapted Bialik's innovations; the repeated use of these innovations made them soon lose their metaphorical tone, as is the case in Russian.

It is no surprise that Elisheva and Leah Goldberg use widely expressions which can be counted as calques from the Russian. The examples in Elisheva's novel *Alleys* are innumerable; the three following examples can be found within a few pages: 'flows of light broke out ('zirmei ha-ʾor partsu ha-ḥutsah'),[12] 'the lamp shed[13] a white light' ('ha-menorah yatsḳah ʾor lavan'),[14] 'a garden, that was drowned in sunrays' ('gan shetuf ḳarnei-shemesh').[15] More examples can be found in Elisheva's poems: 'the light of the rays / drowned everything' ('ʾor ḳarnayim / shataf ha-kol').[16] In the last two examples, Elisheva uses the same verb 'shataf', which in the psalm refers to water and which Bialik had used, for the first time, in reference to rays of light.

Calques of Lingual Metaphors and Phraseology

1. 'The seagull with white wings'—the Russian epithet 'belokrylaia' becomes in Elisheva's poem a poetic image: 'bat-sheḥafim tseḥorat-knafaim.'[17] Here the Russian compound adjective is replaced by two words, but the hyphen stresses their close connection.

2. The Russian phraseological cliché 'fear creeps into the soul'[18] suggested to Elisheva the metaphor 'the fears which [...] crept towards

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[12] Elisheva, *Simtaʾot* (Tel Aviv: Hadar, 1977), p. 35.

[13] From the word 'yatsaḳ' in Hebrew are created also the technical expressions 'the moulding of metals' and the word 'cast' ('mutsaḳ').

[14] Elisheva, *Simtaʾot*, p. 36.

[15] Elisheva, *Simtaʾot*, p. 69.

[16] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 40.

[17] Elisheva, *Yalḳuṭ Shirim* (Tel Aviv: Yahdav, 1970), p. 92.

[18] Cf. S.N. Bulgakov's article *Intelligentsiia i religiia* (1908): 'strakh zhizni, smeshannyi so strakhom smerti, zapolzaet v dushu'; S.N. Bulgakov, *Dva Grada: Issledovanie o prirode obshchestvennykh idealov* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo khristianskogo gumanitarnogo instituta, 1997), vol. 1, p. 259.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

her from the darkness of the corners' ('ha-balahot ha-ʿatidot…lizeḥol ʿeleiha mi-ḥeshkat ha-pinot').[19]

3. The cliché 'the free wind' ('vol'nyi veter') is calqued by Elisheva many times and in many ways: a) 'ha-ruaḥ ha-ḥofshi,'[20] where she uses the noun 'wind,' like many other Hebrew writers with a Russian background, as a masculine whereas the norm demands the feminine; b) in a construction called in Hebrew 'smiḥut' (construct state): 'the wind of freedom over the waters' ('ruaḥ ḥofesh ʿal pnei ha-mayim').[21]

4. The Russian cliché 'mysli tesniatsia' ('the thoughts crowd') seems to be no more than just over one century old. The second edition of Dal''s dictionary (1880–1882) does not contain the reflexive form of the verb 'tesnit'', but in Vissarion Belinsky's article *A View on the Russian Literature of 1847* (*Vzgliad na russkuiu literaturu 1847 goda*) we read: 'This moving novel, after the reading of which sad and important thoughts crowd into the mind' ('povest' trogatel'naia, po prochtenii kotoroi v golovu nevol'no tesniatsia mysli grustnye i vazhnye').[22] Elisheva calqued the expression (possibly changing the grammatical usage of the verb in terms of governing the noun which follows, to the one which is used today: she uses the prepositional 'v golove' instead of the accusative 'v golovu', though the difference is not visible in Hebrew): 'his thoughts which crowded tightly in his head and contradicted each other' ('maḥshevotav ha-nidḥaḳot be-roʾsho ve-ha-sotrot zo ʾet zo').[23] In modern Hebrew, the verb 'nidḥak' gained the meaning 'to suppress' and is used in psychology; therefore the modern reader who is not familiar with the Russian phrase will misunderstand Elisheva's sentence or not understand it at all.[24]

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[19] Elisheva, *Simta'ot*, p. 64.
[20] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 21.
[21] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 19.
[22] V.G. Belinskii, *Sobranie sochinenii v deviati tomakh*, vol. 8 (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1940), p. 401.
[23] Elisheva, *Simta'ot*, p. 100.
[24] The incomprehensibility of some calqued images is confirmed by an interesting annotation by the Israeli professor Hillel Barzel, a very learned scholar born in Tsfat in 1925. Barzel comments on the phrase 'simtaʿ ʾarvit,' which in Elisheva's poem means 'evening lane', but in classical Hebrew needs to be read as 'Arabic lane', as follows: 'She has in mind a lane with an Eastern view, where Chinese and Armenians live and which has a particular atmosphere' (*Simta'ot*, p. 41). Having spent the first 30 years of my life close to the Armianskii pereulok in Moscow, I can bear witness that there is nothing oriental in the place. And there were, it seems, no Chinese inhabitants in Moscow in the 1920s.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

5. Leah Goldberg uses the idiom 'the little sun-hare' ('solnechnyi zaichik'), i.e. 'a reflection of a sunbeam' and writes: 'the small she-sun-hare who was lying on the threshold was trodden by her broad boot' ('ʾarnevet ha-shemesh ha-ḳtanah, ha-naḥah al saf ha-delet, nidresah be-naʾalah ha-reḥavah').[25] This seems to be an unlucky calque because even with a rich imagination it is difficult to understand the meaning of the Hebrew phrase without knowing the Russian idiom.

6. Leah Goldberg introduced the idiom 'the stamp of poverty' ('pechat' bednosti'): 'the stamp of poverty which sticks forever' ('ḥotemet ha-ʿoni she-loʾ timaḥeḳ le-ʿolam').[26] Here it is not only the idiom which is calqued but also the related verb 'to wipe off what is written' ('stirat' napisannoe').

7. Goldberg uses the epithet 'angular' more than once for the description of thin teenage girls; this suggests that it was used in her family where Leah was called 'uglovataia' ('angular'). In Russian, the epithet contains a hint of the contours of a not yet formed stature (of a figure not rounded or smooth enough with sharp angles sticking out), as well as to a slight clumsiness. Goldberg creates the adjective 'mezuẏat' from the noun 'zaẏit' ('angle') and writes: 'Kron tried to imagine this tall person with the child on his angular hands ('be-zeroʾot mezuẏatot')[27] and her sharp, angular elbows' ('marpeḳeiha ha-ḥadim, ha-mezuẏatim').[28]

8. Goldberg calques the epithet 'restrained' ('sderzhannyi') referring to a human character and transforms it into the hardly understandable 'ha-ʾish ha-ʾotser,' meaning 'a restrained person'.[29] The word 'ʾotser' in Hebrew means 'to stop a movement'. The Russian verb is used in the expressions 'to restrain the horses' ('priderzhat' konei'), 'he did not hold the sledge and it slid' ('ne uderzhal sani, i oni pokatilis''), as well as in the phrase 'restrain your emotions' ('sderzhivai svoi emotsii'). In these expressions, the semantics of 'to stop a movement' is used in a direct and in a metaphorical sense (in the realm of emotions). If we try to understand the meaning of the Hebrew word from the Russian root 'derzhat'', the logic of Goldberg's expression becomes clear. It seems, though, that Hebrew did not adapt her calque 'to stop = to restrain'.

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[25] Leah Goldberg, *ʾAvedot*, p. 30.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 20.
[27] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[28] *Ibid.*, p. 82.
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

9. Goldberg transforms the expression 'a cloudless morning' ('bezoblachnoe utro') into the expression 'a morning of no clouds' ('boḳer lo ʿavot ʾaḥad')[30] which sounds somewhat awkward and is difficult to understand. This is one example for the difficulties which appear in connection with the lack of Hebrew equivalents for Russian words with the negative prefixes 'ne-' (as 'un-' in English) or 'bez-' (as '-less' in English). The morphological unity therefore has to be abandoned: 'neponiatnyi' becomes in Hebrew 'not possible for understanding' ('loʾ nitan le-havana'), 'bezoblachnoe,' becomes 'without clouds' ('leloʾ ʿananim' or 'leloʾ ʿavot').

10. Goldberg calques the idiom 'bez piati minut' ('without five minutes') which means 'almost' and writes: 'He is almost a hero' ('bli ḥamishah regaʿim gibor').[31]

11. The geo-political terms in Goldberg's novel sound Russian: 'Near and Far East' ('ha-mizraḥ ha-ḳarov ve-ha-raḥoḳ'),[32] whereas in normative Hebrew the Western term 'the Middle East' is used ('ha-mizraḥ ha-tiḥon').

Calques of Paradigmatic Poetic Images

By paradigmatic poetic images I mean not fragments from Russian verse but such images which are a part of the speech of any Russian speaker since his school days, and also fragments of songs and romances (I refer here to the education in a Russian secondary school at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth centuries).

1. Alexander Pushkin: 'Liubliu ia pyshnoe prirody uviadan'e, / v bagrets i zoloto odetye lesa'[33] ('I like the lavish withering of nature, / The gold and scarlet raiment of the woods') from the poem *Autumn* (*Osen'*, 1833). In one of Elisheva's stories we read: 'the groves in the surroundings of the city, in the extravagance of their best autumn dress, embroidered with gold and scarlet' ('ha-ḥurshot she-misaviv la-ʿir, kulan be-meitav malbushan ha-staṿi, meruḳam zahav ve-shani').[34]

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[30] *Ibid*., p. 85.
[31] *Ibid*., p. 80.
[32] *Ibid*., p. 158.
[33] A.S. Pushkin, *Izbrannye sochineniia v dvukh tomakh* (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1968), vol. 1, p. 166.
[34] Elisheva, Ha-Salshelet, *Ha-Doʾar* (New York, 1928), no 20, 313.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

2. Alexander Pushkin's 'Moroznoi pyl'iu serebritsia / Ego bobrovyi vorotnik'[35] ('his fur collar looks silver under the frost powder'—*Eugene Onegin* I, 16), and the romance *Kalitka* (to words by A.N. Budishchev 1867–1916): 'And the silver rime of the bird cherries' ('I cheremukh serebrianyi inei…') have found an echo in one of Elisheva's stories: 'The alley of the boulevard, shining silver in a cover of frost' ('sderat ha-bulvar ha-makhṣifah be-ʿaṭifat ha-kfor').[36]

3. Alexander Pushkin's *Winter Road* (*Zimniaia doroga*, 1826): 'The moon makes its way / through the wavy fogs' ('Skvoz' volnistye tumany / Probiraetsia luna').[37] Elisheva writes: 'between the waves of the fogs where the sun has set' ('Bein galei ʿarfilim, / sham ha-shemesh shaḳʿa').[38]

4. In Alexander Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* (*Mednyi vsadnik*, 1833) we read: 'I love the motionless air and the frost of your cruel winter' ('Liubliu zimy tvoei zhestokoi / Nedvizhnyi vozdukh i moroz').[39] Elisheva writes: 'The sun rises to the zenith, / and burns the motionless air' ('Taʿaleh ha-shemesh la-rom, / yelhaṭ ha-aẏir lelo'-ziz').[40] This example refers to the poem *My Beloved*, where the cruel winter frost turns into a cruel sweaty noon but this summer Hebrew image is integrated into a context overwhelmed by the feeling of love, just as the winter lines addressing St Petersburg in Pushkin's poem.

5. In Mikhail Lermontov's *I Walk out Alone on to the Road* (*Vykhozhu odin ia na dorogu*, 1841) we find the lines: 'I want to forget myself and everything and to fall asleep! / But not with this cold sleep of the grave…' ('Ia b khotel zabyt'sya i zasnut'! / No ne tem kholodnym snom mogily…').[41] Elisheva writes: 'to forget myself by means of other things' ('lehishtakeaḥ be-dvarim aḥerim');[42] she uses the same verb (the reflexive form of 'zabyt'', 'to forget') with the same case (the instrumental).

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[35] Pushkin, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 11.
[36] Elisheva, 'Malka le-ʿivrim', in *Malkat ha-ʿivrim* (Haifa: Sifron, 1930), p. 8.
[37] Pushkin, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 108.
[38] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 20; Pushkin's poem also contains the following lines: '[the moon] on the melancholy clearings / pouring melancholy light', an additional example of the liquidity of light in Russian.
[39] Pushkin, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 453.
[40] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 30.
[41] M.Iu. Lermontov, *Sobranie sochinenii v cheryrekh tomakh* (Moscow and Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1958), vol. 1, p. 543.
[42] Elisheva, *Simta'ot*, p. 64.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

6. Alexander Blok writes: 'And the bottomless blue eyes' ('I ochi sinie bezdonnye,' *Neznakomka*, 1906),[43] where the epithet 'bottomless' has the same root as the word 'abyss' ('bezdna'), the etymology of which is connected with the word 'dno' ('bottom'): an abyss is something with no bottom. The connection between both words has become a part of the poetic memory through Lomonosov's expression from *A Morning Meditation on God's Greatness* (*Utrennee razmyshlenie o Bozhiem velichestve*…, 1743): 'the abyss has opened, full of stars, / the stars have no number, the abyss no bottom' ('Otkrylas' bezdna, zvezd polna; / Zvezdam net scheta, bezdne—dna').[44] The Hebrew word 'teḥom' ('abyss'), though, does not have anything in common with 'bottom'. The Hebrew Bible uses it for the state which precedes the act of Creation: 'and darkness was over the face of the deep' (Gen. 1:2), and the commentaries explain as 'an abyss filled with water'. Elisheva borrows from Blok and uses 'teḥom' as an epithet for eyes: 'Like a sign of sorrow in the abyss of eyes' ('Ke-ʾot ha-tsaʿar bi-teḥom ʿeinayim').[45]

7. Mikhail Lermontov's *Demon* (1941) contains the line: 'And on his high forehead / nothing was mirrored' ('I na chele ego vysokom / ne otrazilos' nichego')[46]. Leah Goldberg writes: 'And even in the depth of the pupils nothing was mirrored' ('ʿulam ʾafilu be-ʿomeḳ ʾishuneiha loʾ hishtaḳef davar').[47] Goldberg preserved the word order of the original phrase which describes the reaction of Lily, the novel's hero, to important news, just as in Lermontov's poem it describes the Demon's reaction to the sight of the work of Creation. The height of the Demon's forehead equates to the depth of Lily's pupils.

8. Alexander Pushkin writes in *Eugene Onegin*: '[Pelageia Nikolaevna still has] the same friend, Monsieur Finemouche, / and the same Pomeranian and the same husband' ('Vse tot zhe drug mos'e Finmush, / I tot zhe shpits i tot zhe muzh').[48] Goldberg uses the same syntactic construction and inserts it into direct speech, as it had been used in a dialogue of Onegin's predecessor, Alexander Chatskii (in Alexander Griboedov's *Woe From Wit*).[49] Her hero, Elḥanan Kron, revisits his

[43] Aleksandr Blok, *Stikhotvoreniia* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1955), p. 257.
[44] V.M. Lomonosov, *Stikhotvoreniia* (Moscow: Sovetskaia Rossiia, 1981), p. 35.
[45] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 96.
[46] Lermontov, op. cit. tom 2, p. 506.
[47] Goldberg, *ʾAvedot*, p. 167.
[48] Pushkin, op. cit., tom 2, p. 135.
[49] 'Nu chto vash batiushka? Vse / angliiskogo kloba / Starinnyi, vernyi chlen do groba? […] A tetushka? vse devushkoi, Minervoi?'—A.S. Griboedov, *Gore ot uma* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964), p. 20.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

friends after a certain period of time and says: 'And you have, as I see, still the same landscape and the same song' ('ʾoto ha-nof ve-ʾoto ha-zemer').[50] Both Griboedov and Pushkin aimed to show the invariability and the stagnation of society life; the very same idea made Goldberg use the construction—even though she is speaking about the German cultural elite which ignored the changes that began to appear in Germany in 1932.

The Creation of New Images within the Frame of a Paradigm of the Poetic Russian Language

In her book *The Language of Images* (*Iazyk obrazov*) N.V. Pavlovich has collected common phrases for metaphorical categories used in Russian prose and poetry. She calls these categories 'paradigms of images'. I have used them and complemented them with the corresponding images which have been created by Elisheva and Goldberg in Hebrew.

1. The identification of time and water.[51]
   Elisheva: 'The evening like a stream of water in a quiet spring' ('Ha-ʿerev ke-zerem ha-mayim / be-maʿayan menuḥot').[52]
2. From the paradigm 'tissue → element':[53]
   Elisheva: 'The blanket of blue fog' ('Keṣut ʿedim keḥalḥalim').[54]
3. From the paradigm 'water → element':
   Elisheva: 'The silver cobweb floats in the air' ('Ḳurei kesef tsafim ba-ʾavir').[55] Here, the metaphor puts the air in relation to the element of water.
   Elisheva: 'Wisps of clouds swim in the heights' ('Be-marom shaṭim gizrei ʿananim').[56] The metaphor 'clouds fly' in Hebrew is still today an extremely poetic expression. This example illustrates the combination of paradigms (2) and (3) because the word 'wisps' implies the representation of clouds as tissue.

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[50] Goldberg, *ʾAvedot*, p. 72.
[51] N.V. Pavlovich, *Iazyk obrazov: Paradigmy obrazov v russkom poėticheskom iazyke* (Moscow: Azbukovnik, 2004), p. 43.
[52] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 34.
[53] For these and the following paradigms cf. Pavlovich, *Iazyk*, p. 413.
[54] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 33.
[55] *Ibid.*, p. 53.
[56] *Ibid.*, p. 46.

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4. From the paradigm 'sound → element':
   Elisheva: 'Carry me far away / on the waves of song' ('Tisaʿeni la-merḥaḳ / ʿAl galei ha-shirah').[57]
   Goldberg: 'The melody of the light of streetlamps' ('Manginat ʾorot ha-panaṣim').[58]

Calques on the Boundary between Phraseologism and Poetic Image

1. The metaphors 'the dawn blazes' ('polykhaet zaria'), 'the sunset burns' ('gorit zakat')[59] on the one hand, and, on the other, a line of Alexander Blok's poem *The Butterfly Orchid* (*Nochnaia fialka*, 1906)[60]—'there reddened the stripe of dawn' ('tam krasnela poloska zari')—are combined in a poem by Elisheva: 'a stripe of dawn burns in the twilight' ('Retsuʿat shaḥar boʿeret be-dimdumim').[61] It is remarkable that the poet used the word 'retsuʿa' ('stripe'), which today describes a belt for trousers as well as a 'v-belt' and which is used in the phrase 'the Gaza strip.'

2. The metaphor 'leaden clouds'

The linguistic metaphor 'leaden clouds' and Anna Akhmatova's image 'the grey-eyed king' ('seroglazyi korol''', in the poem of the same name of 1911)[62] merged into the opening metaphor of Elisheva's poem 'Leaden Eyes': 'The object of my love had leaden eyes—a heavy dark cloud above the day of my youth' ('Einei-ʿoferet hayu li-veḥir ʾahavati/ ʿanan kaved ve-ʾafel ʿal yom-neʿurai').[63] Here the combination of the words 'eyes' and 'lead' through a *smiḥut* construction stresses the similarity to Akhmatova's compound adjective 'seroglazyi'. This metaphorical image is further developed as a lyrical theme: 'Sometimes they ask me: why is autumn dear to you / with its leaden sky and the

[57] *Ibid*., p. 33.
[58] Leah Goldberg, *Muḳdam u-meʾuḥar* (Tel-Aviv: Sifriyat Poʿalim, [1961]), p. 9.
[59] Elisheva calques them as well, e.g.: 'in front of me the sunset burns' ('lefanai shekia boʿeret'), *Shirim*, p. 40.
[60] Blok, op. cit, p. 162 cf. Lermontov: 'Zakat gorit ognistoi polosoiu' (*Smert'*, 1830; Lermontov, op. cit., tom 1, p. 179) and Anton Chekhov: 'Blednaia, sovsem uzhe potukhavshaia poloska zari' (*Strakhi*, 1886), in A.P. Chekhov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii i pisem v 30-ti tomakh* (Moscow: Nauka, 1974–1982), tom 5, p. 187.
[61] Elisheva, *Ḥaruzim* (Tel Aviv: Tomer, 1928), p. 23.
[62] A.A. Akhmatova, *Beg vremeni* (Moscow and Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1965), p. 37.
[63] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 27.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

sorrow of its winds? / And they do not know, do not know, that the voice of the wind is the voice of my beloved. / A clouded welkin, for me, is always his eyes.'

3. The idiom 'time flies' has been unfolded in Lermontov's poem *The Captive Knight* (*Plennyi rytsar'*, 1840). Lermontov represents the hero with knightly accoutrements and time is transformed into a loyal horse that flies under the rider.

> Time is my horse that stays always my own,
> A helmet's mask-visor—the grate on a hole,
> The walls are my armor that's made of the stone,
> My permanent shield is the door's iron fold.
> Time! I desire to speed your hooves' rattle!
> My stony armor is heavy to rise on![64]

> Быстрое время—мой конь неизменный,
> Шлема забрало—решетка бойницы,
> Каменный панцирь—высокие стены,
> Щит мой—чугунные двери темницы.
> Мчись же быстрее, летучее время!
> Душно под новой бронею мне стало![65]

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the medieval Hebrew word *maʿuf* gained the new meaning 'flight', usually referring to the flight of a bird. Bialik, for example, wrote: 'They raise their eyes and follow the flight of the last of the stork caravans' ('Yisʾu ʿeinam ha-nohah ʾaḥrei meʿuf ha-ʾaḥrona / be-shayarot ha-ḥasidot')[66]. At the same time, the phrase 'from the bird's flight' ('mi-meʿuf ha-tsipor') appeared which is equivalent to the Russian phrase 's vysoty ptich'ego poleta' ('from the height of a bird's flight'). The same literal meaning of the word 'flight' can be found in one of Goldberg's early poems: 'From the flight of rings of smoke' ('mi-meʿuf tabʿot ha-ʿashan').[67] In contemporary Hebrew, the metaphorical element of the phrase 'time flies' is lost, but little more than hundred years ago the phrase was perceived as a poetic image. When Elisheva writes 'The flight of the hours is light' ('kal maʿof ha-shaʿot'),[68] she combines the epithet 'light'

[64] English translation by Evgenii Bonver, http://www.poetryloverspage.com/poets/lermontov/captive_knight.html.
[65] Lermontov, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 487.
[66] Ḥ.N. Bialiḳ, 'Ha-ḳayits goyeʿa', in Idem, *Shirim* (Tel Aviv: Dvir, 1990), vol. 2, p. 236.
[67] Goldberg, *Muḳdam u-meʾuḥar*, p. 7.
[68] Elisheva, *Shirim*, p. 98.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

which has a long tradition in Hebrew[69] with the relatively recent word 'flight' and creates her poetic image. It is possible that, at the time when the poem was written, i.e. in 1928, the novelty of the phrase 'flight of hours' was increased by the relative novelty of airplanes and the romanticism of flight. As far as I can see, this image, logical as it is, has not been included into Hebrew and remained a poetic finding.

4. In Vladimir Dal''s dictionary the adjective 'devstvennyi' ('virgin') is explained as follows: 'complete, clean, untainted'.[70] In Ozhegov's dictionary the word gains an additional metaphorical meaning: 'untouched, uncultivated'; he gives the example 'devstvennaia pochva'.[71] A calque of this phrase was used by Abraham Shlonsky for the translation of the title of Sholokhov's novel *Virgin Soil Upturned* (*Podniataia Tselina*): 'Ḳarḳaʿ beṭulah'.

In Goldberg's poem, which is dedicated to an autumnal mood and begins with the words 'These days have a smell of foul fruit,' we find the line: 'And the pencil is drawn to the virgin paper / to write a poem on oblivion' ('Ve-ʿel beṭulei-neyar nimshakh ha-ʿiparon / likhtov tefilat shikheḥah . . .').[72] The semantic unity of the poetic image 'beṭulei-neyar' (literaly: 'the virginity of the paper') is created by the combination of two nouns which are connected by a hyphen. The above-quoted Hebrew lines seem to have been created as an amalgam of the widely used Russian expression 'devstvenno chistyi list bumagi' and Pushkin's words on poetic inspiration in the famous poem *Autumn* (*Osen'*): 'And the thoughts in my head are excited in courage, / and light rhymes come to meet them, / and my fingers ask for the pen, the pen for paper, / a minute, and verses flow freely' ('I mysli v golove volnuiutsia v otvage, / I rifmy legkie navstrechu im begut, / I pal'tsy prosiatsia k peru, pero k bumage, / Minuta—i stikhi svobodno potekut').[73]

These examples do not exhaust the possibilities of the texts mentioned above. Nevertheless, they clearly show that an interesting cultural phenomenon appeared in Hebrew prose and poetry of the 1920s and

[69] Cf. 'Flight shall perish from the swift' (Am. 2:15), 'the race is not to the swift' (Eccl. 9:11) as well as in many other, later texts, e.g. in the Talmud.

[70] Vladimir Dal', *Tolkovyi slovar' v chetyrekh tomakh* (Moscow: Gosgiz slovarei, 1956), vol. 1, p. 508.

[71] S. I. Ozhegov, *Slovar' russkogo iazyka* (Moscow: Russkii iazyk, 1956), p. 139.

[72] Goldberg, *Muḳdam u-meʾuḥar*, p. 15.

[73] Pushkin, op. cit., vol. 1, p. 167.

 ISBN 978 90 04 22714 9

1930s. This happened within a certain circle of authors who wrote, as Leah Goldberg said, 'in Hebrew, and not in the holy tongue'.[74] This opposition was inherited from the times of the Haskala. For Leah Goldberg, the Hebrew language was not the language of divine revelation but one of the human languages and as such subject to the rules of grammar and to historical development. The lack of a substantial knowledge of the classical Hebrew sources stimulated Elisheva's and Goldberg's linguistic creativity. Both poets felt sharply the lack of imagery in the reborn Hebrew language; their cultural consciousness, though, was drawn towards a poetization of their medium, in prose as well as in poetry. As they did not master the treasures of the traditional Hebrew education, they aimed—and it is difficult to decide whether this happened consciously—to enrich their works with images which were adapted from spoken or written Russian. Elisheva was extremely successful whereas many of Leah Goldberg's calques remained incomprehensible or are perceived as awkward. This might be the reason—besides the decline of her adolescent enthusiasm for Russian symbolism and the symbolist poetry of Abraham Shlonsky—why, in the 1940s, Leah Goldberg began to create her own poetic and thoroughly individual language of poetic images; in this period, the Russian subtext becomes increasingly rare.

On the basis of the examples from Elisheva's and Goldberg's works, we can conclude that the Hebrew of their poetry and prose became something like a textual diaspora for Russian poetic images.[75] This state of diaspora caused Russian idioms and paradigmatic poetic lines to be dressed in a Hebrew gown. In many cases not only did they survive in an antiquated Hebrew style but also received a new life. The inhabitants of Erets Israel began to use them in written and oral speech, especially those who were familiar with Russian and therefore sensitive to the coincidence of images. Though it is difficult today to point out the first appearance of many Hebrew calques and images

[74] Goldberg, *ʾAvedot*, p. 130.

[75] A similar phenomenon occurred during the Middle Ages when the Hebrew poets of the so-called Mauritanian school adapted canonical metaphors from Arabic verse, and, translating them into Hebrew, introduced them into their poems which were not meant for prayer. Cf. Ieguda Galevi [Yehuda Halevi], *Pesni Siona*, translated by Sh. Krol, afterword by Zoya Kopelman (Moscow: Ladomir, 2011).

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there can be no doubt about the relevance of the phenomenon for the development of modern Hebrew.

[translated by Jörg Schulte]

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