

Zukunftsphilologie

Conference

19 June 2013

Freie Universität Berlin, Seminarzentrum, Raum L115, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin

20 – 21 June 2013

Forum Transregionale Studien, c/o Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin,
Villa Jaffé, Wallotstr. 10, 14193 Berlin

Semitic Philology within European Intellectual History: Constructions of Race, Religion and Language in Scholarly Practice

Convener

Islam Dayeh (Zukunftsphilologie/Freie Universität Berlin)

Ya'ar Hever (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow 2012-2013)

Elizabeth Eva Johnston (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow 2012-2013)

Markus Messling (Universität Potsdam)

Description

The scientific field of Semitic philology developed out of European Christian Bible studies, taking its name from the son of Noah, Shem (Sem). The term Semitic first appears in the 18th century as a designation for a family of cognate languages including Hebrew, Aramaic and Arabic, as well as for the peoples who spoke them. The conceptual leap from language to people informs ways race and religion were thought and perceived over the nineteenth century. Such essentializations have played, and continue to play, a decisive role in European and world history.

This symposium is inspired by Maurice Olender's book from 1989 *Les langues du Paradis* (*The Languages of Paradise*, 1992), which describes the emergence and development of a discourse dividing humanity into Aryans (or Indo-Europeans) and Semites. Gil Anidjar engages Olender's work in his *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature* (2008), interrogating the ways Jews and Arabs, once equally "Semites," became a race and a religion, respectively, as the "Aryans" disappeared from discourse.

"Semitic Philology within European Intellectual History" aims to rethink the category "Semitic" and its discursive dynamics. Questions to be explored include: What from 18th-century Bible Studies is maintained and transformed in and through the field of Semitic philology? In what ways have peoples identified as "Semites" come to view themselves as Semitic, and towards what ends? How are Orientalist discourse, Semitic philology, and Antisemitism entangled? What is the contemporary relevance of the term "Semitic"?

Zukunftsphilologie

Ein Programm am Forum Transregionale Studien e.V. | c/o Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin | Wallotstraße 19 | 14193 Berlin
T +49 (0)30 8 90 01-256 | F +49 (0)30 8 90 01-200 | zukunftsphilologie@trafo-berlin.de | www.zukunftsphilologie.de

Schedule

Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Venue: Freie Universität Berlin, „Rostlaube“, Seminarzentrum, Raum L115, Habelschwerdter Allee 45, 14195 Berlin

- 18.15 **Maurice Olender** (EHESS, Paris)
 La Fabrique des origines: philologies européennes entre sciences et religions
 The Fabrication of Origins. European Philology Between Science and Religion
Welcome by Joachim Küpper (Dahlem Humanities Center/Freie Universität Berlin)
Introduction by Markus Messling (Universität Potsdam)

Thursday, June 20, 2013

Main Venue: Forum Transregionale Studien, c/o Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin, Villa Jaffé, Wallotstr. 10, 14193 Berlin

- 10.00 – 10.15 **Introduction**
 Islam Dayeh (Zukunftsphilologie/Freie Universität Berlin)
- 10.15 – 11.00 Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn (CNRS, Paris)
 Reflections on Institutional Categories and the Location of "Semitic" Studies
- 11.00 – 11:45 Avi Lifschitz
 (University College London/Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin 2012-2013)
 J. D. Michaelis among the Semites: From the Ancient Israelites to Modern Jews
- 11.45 – 12.00 **Coffee Break**
- 12.00 – 12.45 Tuška Beneš (The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg)
 Race, Religion, and the Shared Descent of Semitic and Indo-European in the Sacred Histories of Christian Bunsen (1791-1866)
- 12.45 – 13.30 Netanel Anor
 (TOPOI Excellence Cluster, Freie Universität Berlin & Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
 Joseph Halévy and the Sumerian Problem: On Race, Language and Culture in 19th- Century Ancient Near East Studies
- 13.30 – 14.45 **Lunch**
- 14.45 – 15.30 Ya'ar Hever (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow 2012-2013)
 Modern Hebrew: The Uncanny Story of the Life and Death of an Undead Language
- 15.30 – 16.15 Yair Adiel (Hebrew University)
 On the Linguistic and Political (Im-)Possibilities of Language Classification Following Sayed Kashua's *Arab Labor*

Friday, June 21, 2013

- 10.00 – 10.45 Elizabeth Eva Johnston (Zukunftsphilologie Fellow 2012-2013)
On Distinctions and Similarities across Oriental and Semitic Studies, and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*
- 10.45 – 11.30 Tomoko Masuzawa (University of Michigan)
Good Semites: A Fulcrum of Comparative Religion That Never Was
- 11.30 – 11.45 Coffee Break
- 11.45 – 12.30 Céline Trautmann-Waller (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III)
Resisting against the Philological Invention of the Desert: Ignác Goldziher's *Mythology among the Hebrews* between the Essence of Tradition and the Invention of Nations
- 12.30 – 13.15 Tal Hever-Chybowski (Paris/Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)
The Semitic Component in Yiddish and its Ideological Role in 20th-Century Yiddish Philology
- 13.15 – 14.30 Lunch
- 14.30 – 15.15 Lena Salaymeh (Berkeley School of Law)
What is a "Semitic" Legal Tradition?
- 15.15 – 16.00 Islam Dayeh (Zukunftsphilologie/Freie Universität Berlin)
İsrail Wolfensohn, Taha Hussain and the Introduction of Semitic Philology in Cairo
- 16.00 – 16.15 Coffee Break
- 16.15 – 17.00 Daniel Boyarin (UC Berkeley/Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin 2012-2013)
"The Martyrs of Caesarea": New York, 1944
- 17:00-17:30 Concluding Discussion

Abstracts and short biographies

Yair Adiel

(Hebrew University, Jerusalem)

On the Linguistic and Political (Im)Possibilities of Language Classification Following Sayed Kashua's *Arab Labor*

Sayed Kashua, a prominent novelist, screenwriter and journalist, has become a central figure in the Israeli public sphere in recent years. This lecture examines Kashua's hyper-critical treatment of both linguistic and political accounts of the young Palestinian generation in Israel – often referred to as 'The Stand-Tall Generation' (Rabinowitz and Abu Baker 2002) – as reflected in his popular television series *Arab Labor*. This treatment will be examined via an investigation and a critique of two main interpretations of the phenomenon of Arabic-Hebrew code-switching – a well known and documented phenomenon in Israeli Palestinian speech. The problem of the very possibility of language classification brings to mind the Derridean metalinguistic critique, which besides its methodological importance in the midst of the philological inquiry, should prove valuable also for the analysis of Kashua's inspiring thinking of the notions of Orientalism, of criticality, of the role of the intellectual, and of the possibility of political change and forgiveness.

Yair Adiel is a PhD candidate in the Department of Hebrew Literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and the editorial secretary of *Peamim – Studies of Jewish Communities in the East* at the Ben-Zvi Institute, Jerusalem. His work integrates post-structural and postcolonial theory with linguistics and sociolinguistic methodologies. His PhD thesis explores the role of critiques on metalanguage and metalinguistic approaches in literary works in the establishment of political and cultural positions. His Article "Political Grammar: The Name Palestine as Discussed at the Academy of the Hebrew Language" was published in the *Journal of Language and Politics* (2010). His Article "On Language and the Possibility of Change: Sayed Kashua and 'The Stand-Tall Generation'" is to be published in *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*.

Netanel Anor

(TOPOI Excellence Cluster, Freie Universität Berlin and Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Joseph Halévy and the Sumerian Problem:**On Race, Language and Culture in 19th-Century Ancient Near East Studies**

When cuneiform was deciphered in the first half of the nineteenth century, it became clear that in Mesopotamia two distinct languages were written in this script: Akkadian and Sumerian. The Akkadian language was easier to decipher because of its resemblance to Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic. On the other hand, parallels between Sumerian and other known languages at the time could not be established. Further research showed that the older tablets were in Sumerian, and that the cuneiform writing system was originally developed for that language. These findings initiated a harsh debate during the 1870s regarding whether or not Sumerian was ever a spoken language, or only a priests' code. Essentialist approaches intertwining race, language, religion and culture played an important role in this polemic. This paper will focus on the figure of Joseph Halévy, who was the first to suggest that Sumerian was not a spoken language. His positions reflect his 'philo-Semitic' approach, which nevertheless share many of his anti-Semitic opponents' assumptions.

Netanel Anor is a PhD candidate at the Freie Universität Berlin within the TOPOI research program. He has studied History and Assyriology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he earned his MA in Assyriology in 2010. His current research focuses on Babylonian Divination written in cuneiform script.

Tuška Beneš

(The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg)

Race, Religion, and the Shared Descent of Semitic and Indo-European in the Sacred Histories of Christian Bunsen (1791-1866)

The desire to uphold the biblical doctrine of monogenesis encouraged some early nineteenth-century German Orientalists to bridge the divide then emerging between Semitic and Indo-European language families. This paper explores how the search for such linguistic bridges shaped the category of “Semitic” in the 1830s and 1840s. It also charts how changes in the perceived relationship between the Semitic and Indo-European language families influenced biblical criticism, especially through the revision of the comparative chronologies by which the revelation imparted to the ancient Hebrews was set in relation to the divine wisdom of early eastern peoples. The focus will be on ancient Egyptian, a language whose membership in the Semitic or Indo-European language family was still debated as late as 1860. Heinrich Ewald, Theodor Benfey, and Christian Bunsen believed ancient Egyptian had preserved evidence of Hebrew’s and Sanskrit’s shared descent from a common ancestor. Egyptian’s presumed antiquity threatened, furthermore, to dislodge both the Hebrews and the ancient Indians as the supposed first recipients of divine wisdom. Bunsen’s *Aegyptens Stelle in der Weltgeschichte* (1844-57) radically revised the comparative chronologies of the Jewish historian Josephus based on the pharaonic lists of the Egyptian priest Manetho, thus severely undercutting the historical reliability of the Old Testament. The linguistic genealogies through which Bunsen affirmed monogenesis ultimately reinforced the lesser significance Hebrew antiquity began to assume in other histories of revelation which presented “Semites” and “Aryans” as distinct categories.

Tuška Beneš is Diamond Term Distinguished Associate Professor of History at The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, VA (USA). She received her BA from Wellesley College in 1993 and her PhD from the University of Washington-Seattle in 2001. Beneš specializes in the cultural and intellectual history of nineteenth-century Germany and modern Europe. Her research interests include the history of linguistic thought, nationalism, ethnology and racial theory, and Europe's relations with the wider world. Beneš recently published *In Babel's Shadow: Language, Philology, and the Nation in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (2008) in the series *Kritik* at Wayne State University Press. Her current project explores how theological questions arising from Old Testament exegesis influenced other forms of German scholarship, including geography, Egyptology, linguistics, and geology, in the first half of the nineteenth century. The particular focus of this research is the debated significance ancient pagan peoples of the east had in the unfolding of revelation.

Daniel Boyarin

(University of California, Berkeley/
Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin 2012/2013)
“The Martyrs of Caesarea”: New York, 1944

In this paper, I will perform a contextual reading of my teacher, the great Talmudist Saul Lieberman's classic article "the Martyrs of Caesarea," in which I hope to show how a particular alliance between two refugees from the Nazis, Prof. Lieberman himself and the Belgian Bollandist father Henri Gregoire, led to a remarkable reading of Palestinian rabbinic history. Philology is never context free nor value free (in the best sense of values!).

Daniel Boyarin, Taubman Professor of Talmudic Culture and Rhetoric, UC Berkeley, where he teaches in the departments of Near Eastern Studies, Rhetoric and the program in Jewish Studies. Daniel Boyarin has written extensively on talmudic and midrashic studies, and his work has focused on cultural studies in Rabbinic Judaism, including issues of gender and sexuality as well as research on the Jews as a colonized people. His most recent research interests center primarily around questions of the relationship of Judaism and Christianity in late antiquity. Daniel Boyarin is currently a Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin 2012/13, where he is working on a manuscript with the title “A Traveling Homeland: the Babylonian Talmud as the Foundation of the Diaspora”.

Islam Dayeh

(Zukunftsphilologie/Freie Universität Berlin)

Israel Wolfensohn, Taha Hussain and the Introduction of Semitic Philology in Cairo

In 1922, the Jerusalem-born Israel Wolfensohn (1899-1980) arrived in Cairo to study Arabic philology at the newly established University of Cairo, from which he would earn his doctorate under the tutelage of the famous Egyptian Arabic literary scholar Taha Hussain (1889-1973). Commonly known in Hebrew as Israel ben-Zeev and in Arabic as Isrā'īl Abu Dhu'ayb, Wolfensohn was from a family of so-called ‘Lithuanian Jews’, *misnagdim* (followers of the Gaon of Vilna), which immigrated to Palestine in 1809 from Belarusian Škłoŭ and settled in Safed. His interest in Arabic developed after the First World War and led him to enroll in the Dār al-Mu'allimīn (Teachers' College) in Jerusalem, under the directorship of the pedagogue and anti-Zionist Khalīl Ṭawṭaḥ (1887-1955). There he would study with leading Palestinian intellectuals such as Aḥmad Samīḥ al-Khālīdī (1896-1951) and Muḥammad Is'āf al-Nashāshībī (1885-1948), as well as the Iraqi poet Ma'rūf al-Rašāfī (1875-1945). From there he would pursue the career path of many Palestinian students at the time: a doctorate from Cairo, where his knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish literature and his passion for Arabic gained him wide recognition among the Cairene literati. Having completed his studies, he moved to Germany and Austria, where he would specialize in Semitic studies and write a dissertation on Ka'b al-Aḥbār (an early Jewish Rabbi who converted to Islam), and then return to the University of Cairo to teach Semitic philology from 1933 to 1940. Focusing on the early career of Israel Wolfensohn in Palestine, Cairo and Germany, this paper will examine the relevance and function of the category ‘semitic’ in four of Wolfensohn's historical and philological works: *The History of the Jews in Arab Lands* (in Arabic, 1927), *A History of Semitic Languages* (in Arabic, 1929), *Ka'b al Ahbar und seine Stellung im Hadit und in der islamischen Legendenliteratur* (1933) and *Mūsā b. Maymūn* (in Arabic, 1936) between his misnagdic background, his German philological training and the Cairene intellectual circles of the 1920s and 30s.

Islam Dayeh co-directs the research program Zukunftsphilologie. He studied at the University of Jordan (BA in Islamic studies), University of Leiden (MA in Religious Studies), University of Oxford (MSt in Jewish Studies) and completed his PhD dissertation in Arabic Philology at Freie Universität Berlin. He is currently completing two monographs. The first is a study of the intellectual cosmos of the Cairene-Damascene exegete, philologist, geometrician, logician and historian Burhān al-Dīn al-Biqā'ī (1406-1480). The second is a study of the impact of the messianic movement of Sabbatai Zewi on the Jews of Yemen. The study is based on a critical edition of several manuscripts documenting exchanges between Yemeni Muslim jurists over the legal status of contemporaneous Jews in the wake of the Sabbatian messianic disturbances in Yemen (17th - 19th century).

Ya'ar Hever

(Zukunftsphilologie Fellow 2012-2013 at the Forum Transregionale Studien)

Modern Hebrew: The Uncanny Story of the Life and Death of an Undead Language

The Hebrew Language makes up an important part of the founding myths of the Zionist national revival. The widely accepted narrative according to which the state language of Israel is an ancient language that was miraculously revived was contested by revisionist linguists who claimed, each in his turn, that modern Hebrew is not a continuation of ancient Hebrew and has in fact a completely different character: occidental, creole, Slavic, hybrid, and so on. Nevertheless, the story of the death of Hebrew, crucial for the narrative of revival, remains mostly unchallenged.

Did Hebrew really die out? Can a dead language come back to life? What exactly is the difference between a dead and a living language? What purpose does the story of this death serve? How is it related to the theme of death that is so prevalent in the modern Jewish discourse since the 19th century? What is the psychological background that makes the history of a language into an uncanny horror story?

Ya'ar Hever received his BA (2005), MA (2007) and PhD (2012) in Linguistics from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He studied structural linguistics and all branches of the Semitic languages, focusing on the Ethiopian Semitic languages. His MA thesis and PhD dissertation analyze various aspects of the syntax of Chaha, an Ethiopian Semitic language that belongs to the Gurage language cluster, using as a corpus the first texts printed in this language (dating from 1933 onward), which include translations of Christian texts as well as original literary works (most notably by Gäbrä-Iyäsus Hailä-Mariam). As a fellow of Zukunftsphilologie in Berlin, he is pursuing a metadiscursive analysis and evaluation of the philological construct of the "Semitic" and the "Semite" from its origin in linguistics, as it is used for the classification of languages into families, to its development in other fields of knowledge as a politically loaded term. The linguistic debate over the Semitic character of Modern Hebrew will serve as a case study of the elusive and intricate meaning of this term in philological practice and outside of it.

Tal Hever-Chybowski

(Paris/Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

The Semitic Component in Yiddish and its Ideological Role in 20th-Century Yiddish Philology

The paper will discuss the ideological role the Semitic component in Yiddish (the other two main components being Germanic and Slavic) played in Yiddish philology in the first half of the 20th century. Four texts by Yiddish philologists will be in the center of examination: I. H. Tavioy's "The

Hebrew Elements of the Jargon” (1904, Hebrew); B. Borochov’s “The Tasks of Yiddish Philology” (1913, Yiddish); N. Shtif’s “The Social Differentiation of Yiddish: Hebrew Elements in the Language” (1929, Yiddish); and M. Weinreich’s “What would Yiddish have been without Hebrew?” (1931, Yiddish).

Blurring the boundaries between descriptive and ideologically engaged prescriptive linguistics, these philologists often put the Semitic component in Yiddish to the service of their ideological visions of Jewish linguistic, national and ethnic identity (Yiddishism, Hebraism, Bundism, Zionism, Soviet Socialism, etc.). These philologists, the paper will show, not only attributed various religious, national, psychological and class values to the Semitic component in Yiddish, but also debated its very ontological status and made prescriptive suggestions regarding its future.

Tal Hever-Chybowski is a Ph.D. candidate at the Department of History at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. He holds a B.A. in History from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and an M.A. in History from Humboldt-Universität. He translated into Hebrew Edward Said's *Representations of the Intellectual* (1993), Mikhal Dekel's *The Universal Jew: Masculinity, Modernity, and the Zionist Moment* (2011), and is currently translating a forthcoming book on diaspora by Daniel Boyarin. He is founder and editor of the diasporic-Hebrew journal *Mikan Ve'eylakh* in Berlin. His research topics include diasporism, Jewish history, Hebrew, Yiddish, draft evasion, conceptual history and the modern reception of antiquity.

Elizabeth Eva Johnston

(Zukunftspilologie Fellow 2012-2013 at the Forum Transregionale Studien)

On Distinctions and Similarities across Oriental and Semitic Studies, and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*

This paper focuses on the beginnings of the academic field of *Wissenschaft des Judentums* (Science of Judaism), in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. It examines the impact of Oriental and Semitic studies on the *Wissenschaft's* formation and formulations, especially as articulated by its earliest theorist Leopold Zunz. Oriental and Semitic studies and the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, as modern academic fields, are shaped by what can be called secularizing elements in eighteenth-century Western European thought and culture and both connect, albeit differently, to matters of Jewish emancipation and assimilation in Prussia in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth centuries. This presentation will focus on *Wissenschaft* critiques of biblical studies from the preceding centuries, as well as its incorporation and adaptation of modern Orientalist methods in how it shapes and advocates for the philological program it proposes.

Elizabeth Eva Johnston received her BA in Religious Studies from Pomona College and her PhD in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies from Columbia University. Her doctoral dissertation “Reading Science in Early Writings of Leopold Zunz and Rifā‘a Rāfi‘ al-Ṭaḥṭāwī” is a comparative literary project on the beginnings of the *Wissenschaft des Judentums* and the *Nahda* in the nineteenth century. As a Zukunftspilologie Fellow, she is further developing her research on the *Wissenschaft des Judentums*, in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Avi Lifschitz

(University College London/
Fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin 2012/2013)

J. D. Michaelis among the Semites: From the Ancient Israelites to Modern Jews

As part and parcel of his historicizing project, Johann David Michaelis (1717-1791) insisted on dissociating ancient Hebrew poetry from modern Jews. The Göttingen Orientalist identified biblical poetry much more closely with the inhabitants of Arabia Felix than with European Jews. Not only did Michaelis consider the Jews, in his works on language, a lamentable example of cultural degeneration; in the 1780s he famously opposed the proposals for Jewish emancipation in Prussia.

This paper concentrates on Michaelis's distinction between ancient Israelites and modern Jews, refracted as it was through his work on contemporary Arab nomads. Despite Michaelis's own stance in the 1780s, I would suggest that his historicization of the Israelites was double-edged and could actually be employed in the service of a Jewish cultural revival. For Michaelis, the Old Testament exemplified a universal civilizing process, whereas Enlightenment thinkers of a more secular bent insisted on a much stricter dichotomy between Jewish and gentile history.

Avi Lifschitz is Lecturer in European History at University College London (UCL), and currently Fellow at the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin. He is the author of *Language and Enlightenment: The Berlin Debates of the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford University Press, 2012), and co-editor of *Epicurus in the Enlightenment* (Voltaire Foundation, 2009).

Tomoko Masuzawa

(University of Michigan)

Good Semites: a Fulcrum of Comparative Religion That Never Was

In the preface to *Religion of the Semites* (1889), William Robertson Smith declared that the seventeenth-century Cambridge Hebraist John Spencer's treatise on the ritual laws of the Hebrews (*De Legibus Hebraeorum*) "laid the foundations for the science of Comparative Religion," even if, he went on to say, this ground-breaking work was not immediately followed up. There is little doubt that Smith saw his own endeavor—in concert with Ewald, Nöldeke, Kuenen, Wellhausen, and other Semitists of his time—as a resumption of this scholarly path indicated two centuries earlier. This belated resumption was made timely by virtue of numerous archaeological discoveries and other scientific advancements, which in turn were facilitated by the dramatically altered geopolitical relation between European powers and the Near East. Yet, in today's view of the history of the Religionswissenschaft—or comparative religion writ large—Semitic philology does not appear to be its main avenue but rather an arcane parallel course, if not to say one of the dimly lit side streets, venerable and respectable a neighborhood though it may be. In this paper, I aim to consider what else intervened and came to serve as the foundations of the study of religion as it is practiced today and, possibly, why. With a glance at Smith's own work, I hope to offer a few suggestions as to what a science of comparative religion might look like if it followed his lead, if Semitic philology à la Smith were more centrally situated in its scholarly constitution.

Tomoko Masuzawa is Professor of History and Comparative Literature at the University of Michigan. Her primary research area is the history of modern European discourses on religion, with a special interest in academic and secular discourses. Her principal publications include *In Search of Dreamtime: the Quest for the Origin of Religion* (1993) and *The Invention of World*

Religions: Or How European Universalism Was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism (2005), both published by the University of Chicago Press. Her current book projects include two monographs, tentatively entitled *Making of the Academic Secular: University Movements in the Nineteenth Century* and *Promise of the Secular: William Robertson Smith and the Constitution of Biblical Studies*, respectively, and an edited volume, *Translating Religion: New Discourse on Religion and the Making of Modern Japan*. Her most recent article, "Bible as Literature?: Note on a Litigious Ferment of the Concept," will appear in *Comparative Literature* (fall 2013).

Markus Messling teaches Romance Philology at the University of Potsdam and is head of the Research Group "Philology and Racism in the 19th Century", funded by an Emmy Noether Excellence Award from the German Research Foundation (DFG). He studied Romance and German Philology and Comparative Literature at the Freie Universität Berlin and at the University Jean Moulin – Lyon III. In 2007 he completed his doctorate in Romance Philology at the Freie Universität Berlin. His main research interests are French and Italian Literature, the epistemology of European philology, literary theory, theories of writing and the historical anthropology of language. He is the editor of the revised new German translation of Maurice Olender's *The Languages of Paradise* and the co-editor of *Wort Macht Stamm: Rassismus und Determinismus in der Philologie* (2013). Markus Messling is a member of the Zukunftsphilologie Working Group.

Maurice Olender
(EHESS, Paris)

La Fabrique des origines: philologies européennes entre sciences et religions |

The Fabrication of Origins. European Philology Between Science and Religion [Keynote Lecture]

The ancient appropriation of Hebrew by the Church Fathers was followed, in 19th-century Europe, by an erudite readiness to construct new forms of discourse based on Sanskrit, in order to suggest new Aryan origins to the Western Tradition. In a world governed by Romanticist visions and driven by colonial aspirations, between a Christianity weakened by the Enlightenment and the propagation of a scientific secularism, certain learned fables of an Indian origin succeeded in replacing the Hebrew ones as a figure of heritage. In this fabrication of origins, the new "Aryan Bible" called for a new language of Paradise: Sanskrit.

The methodologies of "comparative philology," long serving as a synonym for "language sciences," could bear the mark of raciological knowledge that had, often until the 1940s, guided both the Humanities and the natural sciences.

Maurice Olender is Professor of history at the École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS) in Paris, with a formation in archaeology and philology. He has lectured at different European and U.S. American universities (Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Harvard, Columbia), in Israel and at the Chinese Academy for Social Sciences in Beijing. Since 1981 he has been the chief editor of the journal *Le Genre humain*; in 1985 he founded the series *Textes du XX^{ème} siècle* ('texts of the 20th century') with Hachette; in 1989 he launched the series *La librairie du XXI^{ème} siècle* ('library of the 21st century') with the Seuil publishing house. His historical and anthropological research is concerned with figures of thought and discourses regarding sexual, religious, linguistic and ethnic origins in mythological and scientific systems of knowledge since Antiquity.

Olender's publications include (selection): *Les Langues du Paradis*, with an introduction by Jean-Pierre Vernant (Points essais), Paris: Seuil 2002, awarded by the *Académie française*, and

translated into several languages (German: *Die Sprachen des Paradieses*, revised edition, edited with an introduction by Markus Messling, Berlin: Kadmos 2013; English: *The languages of paradise*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP 1992); *Race sans histoire* (Points Essais), Paris: Seuil 2009, awarded the Prix Roger Caillois for essay writing, published simultaneously as *Race and Erudition* with Harvard UP; *Matériau du rêve*, IMEC 2010 (Le Lieu de l'archive).

Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn

(CNRS, Paris)

Reflections on Institutional Categories and the Location of “Semitic” Studies

The division of knowledge into academic disciplines is, of course, a highly institutional matter. The creation of disciplines is largely reliant on the politics of knowledge and the financial assistance of the government; it also depends on the interplay of the other already existing disciplines. But disciplines and their delimitations are also the expression of the state of knowledge and its evolution. Variations in the definition and extent of a discipline in the course of time, as well as from a location to another, are significant indicators of epistemological evolutions and debates. Semitic philology is no exception to this statement. If it has a long tradition in European scholarship, its boundaries have changed in the course of time, as a result of various factors – the progress achieved in the comparison and classification of languages, the knowledge Europeans progressively acquired of Assyrian languages, and the secularization of the study of Semitic languages, etc. This paper explores some of these fluctuations drawing on two main examples: the institutional situation of Semitic studies in 19th century France on the one hand, and the variation of the category “Semitic” at the different sessions of the International Congress of the Orientalists in the 19th century on the other hand.

Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn is a tenured Researcher at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique in Paris, in the research unit “Pays germaniques : transferts culturels”. After she graduated in German studies (Sorbonne and Ecole normale supérieure) and Modern Indology (Ecole des langues orientales) she completed her PhD on the history of Indology and comparative linguistics in Germany (Université Aix-Marseille I, 2005). Her areas of specialization include the history of the human sciences, especially the history of Oriental philology. The ethnographical and anthropological aspect inherent to the philological work is a major focus of her research. She currently works on the history of the comparative method in the human sciences, connected with the development of Oriental studies. In a more contemporary perspective, she also analyzes the reconfiguration of the comparative paradigm in the context of postcolonial studies. Her publications include *L'archive des origines. Sanskrit, philologie, anthropologie dans l'Allemagne du XIXe siècle* (Paris, Cerf 2008) and *Itinéraires orientalistes entre France et Allemagne* (Revue germanique internationale 6/2008). Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn is a member of the Zukunftsphilologie working group.

Lena Salaymeh

(Berkeley School of Law)

What is a “Semitic” Legal Tradition?

Unlike “Aryan” legal traditions, “Semitic” legal traditions are limited by their rigidity and anti-democratic nature. In other words, a “Semitic” legal tradition is religious and an “Aryan” legal tradition is secular. This paper will argue that the invention of “Semites” in nineteenth-century European scholarship lingers in contemporary constructions of “religious” legal systems.

Specifically, contemporary scholars construct a bipolarity between “secular” and “religious” legal systems that parallels how European scholars invented “Semites” as oppositional figures to “Aryans.” The first part of the presentation will explore a variety of philological texts to demarcate how nineteenth-century European scholars understood Semitic law. The second part will explore how successive generations of Western scholars perpetuated the Semitic myth by searching for Islamic law’s “origins” and “influences” in Islam’s Semitic father, Jewish law. The third part will demonstrate that the invention of Semites and their subsequent characterization as “borrowers” combine in contemporary legal and political discourses that reify Islamic law as shari’ah and Jewish law as halakha. Contemporary discussions and assumptions about “religious” legal systems are as racially entangled and colonially motivated as the nineteenth-century European invention of “Semites.”

Lena Salaymeh is Robbins Postdoctoral Fellow in Islamic Law at UC Berkeley's School of Law. She earned her PhD in Legal and Middle Eastern History from UC Berkeley and her J.D. from Harvard Law School. Lena Salaymeh’s publications include “Early Islamic legal-historical precedents: prisoners of war” in *Law and History Review* 26, no. 3 (2008): 521-544, as well as several co-authored book sections about Islamic legal history in Lapidus, Ira M.: *Islamic Societies to the Nineteenth Century: A Global History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Her forthcoming publications include “Every law tells a story: orthodox divorce in Jewish and Islamic legal histories” in the UC Irvine Law Review (2013) and “Commodifying Islamic law in the U.S. legal academy” in the *Journal of Legal Education* (2004; <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2214394>). She was formerly a visiting professor of law at the University of Houston.

Céline Trautmann-Waller

(Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris III)

Resisting against the Philological Invention of the Desert: Ignác Goldziher’s *Mythology among the Hebrews* between the Essence of Tradition and the Invention of Nations

It has been known for quite a long time that Goldziher’s *Mythology among the Hebrews* published in 1876 and his upsurge against Ernest Renan’s vision of Semitism are a fine example of an intellectual strategy opposing a historical paradigm against a racial one (Maurice Olender 1989). What has not been analyzed yet but becomes apparent if one looks at the different stages in the creation of this book, is that it results from a very complex personal and intellectual situation. If Goldziher began to work on it in 1873 while still in Budapest and Vienna, he continued it during his “Islamic, oriental year” (Sept. 1873 – Apr. 1874) as he called it himself. This book results not only from his former scholarly studies, allowing him to reconstruct Hebrew mythology from Arabic sources, but also from his reflections on the philosophy of religion, his identification with the “Orientals” and a combination of support to Arabic nationalism and rebellion against Eurocentric modernization. Thus a strange relation of reciprocity emerges between his interpretation of the Old Testament as transformation of a mythological material, linked to natural environment and social conditions, into a heroic national narrative, and his support to the emerging Arabic nationalism against European imperialism.

This contribution will analyze first the philological and historical heritage (Herder, Schlözer and Eichhorn among others) which lead to the vision of monotheism as emerging from the desert and the tension between naturalism and culturalism, which is linked to it. If the historization of the Bible was made possible through the identification of the ancient Hebrews with the contemporary Bedouin as known through travelogues (for example those of Johan Gottfried Wetzstein, who was Goldziher’s teacher in Berlin), and led to a “philological invention of the desert” - as the locus of Semitism - Goldziher seems, in spite of his sympathy for the Arabs, to

show an ambivalent relation to this amalgam, remaining faithful to a line of philology which began with F.A. Wolf and his “deconstruction” of Homer.

It will then try to show how Goldziher’s main aim, as his friend C.H. Becker put it, was to understand the “essence of tradition” and how his studies tend to show that the origin of the latter is not to be sought in any kind of revelation but in critique, which at the same time - as a process of differentiation, invention and adaptation - constitutes the origin of the emergence of different people. *Mythology among the Hebrews* is perhaps one of his works where he came closest to this purpose, showing how much invention of tradition is part of tradition, replacing more and more revelation by adaptation. The last part will ask for the consequences this perspective had for Goldziher’s vision of himself as a Hungarian Jew in the nineteenth century.

Céline Trautmann-Waller, born 1966, studied in Paris at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. She wrote her dissertation on Leopold Zunz and the science of Judaism (*Philologie allemande et tradition juive. Le parcours intellectuel de Leopold Zunz*, Paris, 1998). Her next book, derived from her habilitation thesis, was about Heymann Steinthal and German Völkerpsychologie (*Aux origines d’une science allemande de la culture. Linguistique et psychologie des peuples chez Heymann Steinthal*, Paris, 2006). Since 2005 she is Professor of German Studies at the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle–Paris 3 and since 2008 Director of the Centre d’études et de recherches sur l’espace germanophone (CEREG) at the same university.

Her main research areas are the history of German anthropology (*Quand Berlin pensait les peuples. Anthropologie, ethnologie, psychologie 1850-1890* (ed.), Paris, 2004 ; *L’anthropologie allemande entre philosophie et science(s), des Lumières aux années 1930* (ed. with Olivier Agard), Paris, 2009) ; the history of oriental studies (*Itinéraires orientalistes entre France et Allemagne* (ed. with Pascale Rabault-Feuerhahn), Paris, 2008; *Ignác Goldziher : un autre orientalisme* (ed.), Paris, 2011) ; formalistic aesthetics and art history in Central Europe (*Formalismes esthétiques et héritage herbartien : Vienne, Prague, Moscou* (ed. with Carole Maigné), Hildesheim/Zürich/New York, 2009; *L’Ecole viennoise d’histoire de l’art* (ed.), AUSTRIACA 72 / 2011) ; transnational history of structuralism (*Pëtr Bogatyrev et les débuts du Cercle de Prague. Recherches ethnographiques et théâtrales* (ed. with Serguei Tchougounnikov), Paris, 2012).

(Stand: 6.06.2013)

The research program **ZUKUNFTSPHILOGIE** supports research in marginalized and undocumented textual practices and literary cultures with the aim of integrating texts and scholarly traditions from Asia, Africa, and the Middle East as well as from Europe itself, by way of a critical recuperation of the practice of philology. The program takes as its point of departure the increasingly growing concern with the global significance of philology and its potential to challenge exclusivist notions of the self and the canon. **ZUKUNFTSPHILOGIE** is based at the Freie Universität Berlin and is a research program at the Forum Transregionale Studien. It is supported by funds from the Land Berlin. For further information, please visit: www.zukunftsphilologie.de

The **Dahlem Humanities Centre (DHC)** builds on the most complete range of disciplines in the humanities to be found in all of Germany. In order to focus this wealth of departments and activities, it provides an overarching, interdisciplinary research framework for inquiries into the forms, principles, and effects of cultural dynamics in a globalizing world. For further information about the DHC and its programs, please visit: www.fu-berlin.de/en/sites/dhc/index.html

The **Forum Transregionale Studien** is a Berlin-based research platform designed to promote research that connects systematic and region-specific questions in a perspective that addresses entanglements and interactions beyond national, cultural or regional frames. The Forum works in tandem with already existing institutions and networks engaged in transregional studies and is supported by an association of directors of universities, research institutes and networks mainly based in Berlin. The Forum Transregionale Studien is funded by the Land of Berlin and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

For more information, please visit: www.forum-transregionale-studien.de

Forum
Transregionale
Studien

Freie Universität  Berlin

FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL
GRADUIERTENSCHULE
für literaturwissenschaftliche Studien