

Zukunftsphilologie: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Practice
Lecture-cum-Seminar

Thursday, 18 Nov 2010, 16.00 – 19.00

Freie Universität Berlin, Raum JK 24/122d, Habelschwerdter Allee 45

Daniel Boyarin (Berkeley)

Arabic Logic and the Study of the Talmud in 15th century Spain

The general participation of Iberian Jewry in the scholastic culture of the High Middle Ages is very well known. Less well known is the continuing influence the Aristotelian tradition had on Spanish and Sephardic Jewish intellectual life in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, including its most particularly Jewish of activities, the interpretation of the Talmud. In this period, there appears a new theory and practice of Talmudic hermeneutic, which is called *iyyun*, “speculation”: Talmudic interpretation as an application of the Aristotelian theory of language.

From the point of view of the history of Jewish culture, one of the most salient aspects of *iyyun* is the integration it brings to Jewish culture in two ways, vertically in that it integrates the different branches of intellectual life among Jews in this culture and horizontally in that it integrates Jewish textual practice with the literary culture of the other elements of contemporary society. After discussing evidence for this thesis in the first part of the lecture, I will have something to say about its implications for our general modeling of Jewish cultural history.

Two of the most important methodological works of the school of *iyyun* are *Darkhe hattalmud* by the father of the method, R. Yitzhaq Kanpanton (d. 1493) [Canpanton, Isaac ben Jacob and Shemu’el al Valensi. *Darkhe Ha-Talmud*. Ed. Y. Sh. Langeh. Yerushalayim: Y. Sh. Langeh, 1980.], the last great spiritual leader of Spanish Jewry before the Expulsion and *Kelale Shmuel*, by R. Shmuel Ibn Sid (d. 1520) one of his main disciples. Studying these works carefully enables us to discern different scholastic “influences” at work in them, suggesting that the Iberian pattern of interaction between Jewish sages and scholastic philosophy continued up until the Expulsion and even beyond into the sixteenth century. In today’s lecture and seminar, we will study some examples through which we can see a future philology that is not a national philology and in which cultural interaction replaces a model of influence.

Daniel Boyarin, Taubman Professor of Talmudic Culture and Rhetoric, UC Berkeley, received his Ph. D. in 1975 from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He has been an NEH Fellow, a Guggenheim Fellow, a Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem, and holder of the Berlin Prize at the American Academy.

Prof. 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 current research interests center primarily around questions of the relationship of Judaism and Christianity in late antiquity.

His books include *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (1990), *Carnal Israel: Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture* (1993), *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (1994), and *Unheroic Conduct: The Rise of Heterosexuality and the Invention of the Jewish Man* (1997). All published by the University of California Press.

Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism appeared at Stanford University Press in 1999. *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* has been published by University of Pennsylvania Press in 2004 (winner of the AAR award for best book on religion in the area of historical studies in 2006) and, most recently, *Socrates and the Fat Rabbis* in 2009 by the University of Chicago Press.

He is currently working on a book entitled, *The Jewish Gospels: The Judaism of Mark and John*, to be published by the New Press.

Lecture-cum-Seminar

The Lecture-cum-Seminar series is a central element of the scholarly program of the Zukunftsphilologie project. It is conceived as a working seminar of 3 to 5 hours. The lecture (ca. 45-60 minutes) is meant to introduce the audience to the research problem and provide the general analytical and theoretical framework for the topic. This is followed by a practical seminar, wherein the speaker demonstrates his or her case by reference to texts in the original language and in English translation. It is hoped that this Lecture-cum-Seminar series, a combination of theory and a direct engagement with texts, will enable scholars to examine the comparative aspect of the problematic without neglect of the local and singular nature of the texts examined.

Zukunftsphilologie: Revisiting the Canons of Textual Scholarship

The project **Zukunftsphilologie** endeavours to promote and emphasize primary textual scholarship beyond the classical humanistic canon. In an age of advanced communication, intellectual specialization, and unprecedented migration of knowledge and people, the discipline of philology assumes new relevance. Zukunftsphilologie aspires to support research in neglected varieties of philology with the explicit aim to integrate texts and scholarly traditions from Asia, Africa, the Middle East as well as from Europe itself.

Zukunftsphilologie refers to the polemic between the classicist Ulrich von Wilamowitz and Friedrich Nietzsche around the method and meaning of classical studies. As a project it sees itself

as part of a growing trend towards a more global intellectual history. It is inspired in particular by the work of Edward Said and Sheldon Pollock.

In order to promote historically-conscious philology, Zukunftsphilologie will foster research in the following areas: genealogies and transformations of philological practice, philology's place in the system of knowledge (e.g. its relation to science, theology and jurisprudence), and philology and the university. Furthermore, Zukunftsphilologie aims to support critical reviews of historical and philological practice. In revisiting important "philological wars", the goal is not to merely evaluate the argumentative worth of these debates, but to reflect on the wider cultural and political context in which these "philological wars" emerged and how they have shaped our knowledge of the past.

The project Zukunftsphilologie is co-directed by Angelika Neuwirth and Islam Dayeh (both Freie Universität Berlin) and is associated with and located at the Friedrich Schlegel Graduate School for Literary Studies at Freie Universität Berlin. Zukunftsphilologie is a project at the Forum Transregionale Studien.

Forum Transregionale Studien

The **Forum Transregionale Studien** is a new research platform of the Land of Berlin 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 the directors and heads of universities, research institutes and networks mainly based in Berlin. It started its activities in 2010 by identifying and supporting three transregional research projects based in Berlin research institutions in the different fields of Law, Philology, and Urban Sociology. The Forum Transregionale Studien is funded by the Senate of Berlin.

For more information please see:

www.forum-transregionale-studien.de

<http://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/friedrichschlegel/promotionsprogramm/kooperationen/Zukunftsphilologie/index.html>

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