

Untying the Mother Tongue On Language, Affect, and the Unconscious

The conference intends to re-think affective and cognitive attachments to language by deconstructing their metaphysical and colonialist presuppositions. If traditional constructions of a monolingual speaker, a pure “mother tongue” reveal the ideology of the European nation-state, then today’s celebration of multilingual competencies simply reflects the rise of global capitalism and its demand for transnational labor markets. French poststructuralist thought has problematized the notion of a “mother tongue” by dividing it into two discrete elements—the “maternal” and the “linguistic”—and by exposing their ideological presuppositions. Can something be salvaged of the notion of a mother tongue? What are the remains, traces, or vestiges of a language no longer directly tied to the mother yet resounding with a maternal echo and at the same time manifesting itself as a primary idiom with respect to its affective and aesthetic dimensions? This “residual notion” of a mother tongue supposes that language is indeed a basic human need (like food, shelter, or clothing), since it provides an indispensable access to a symbolic dimension shaping affectivity and knowledge.

ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry
Christinenstr. 18/19, Haus 8
D-10119 Berlin
Tel: +49 30 473 72 91 10
www.ici-berlin.org
U-Bhf Senefelder Platz (U2)

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BERLIN INSTITUTE FOR CULTURAL INQUIRY

International Conference – 11-12 May 2016, In English

Untying the Mother Tongue

On Language, Affect, and the Unconscious

Organized by Federico Dal Bo and Antonio Castore

Programme

WEDNESDAY, 11 MAY 2016

9:00	Morning coffee	15:00	Anastasia Telaak Mother Tongue, Father's Moses and "the Errant Verbal Matter." Translations of the Other's Language(s) in Alejandra Pizarnik's Writing of Trauma and Exile	19:00-19:30	Coffee break	PANEL V	MOTHER TONGUE AND LITERATURE
9:30-9:45	Introduction			19:30	Keynote Daniel Boyarin Philological Investigations: The Concept of Cultural Translation in American Religious Studies	14:00	Stefano Evangelista Oscar Wilde's Salomé: The Daughter of Too Many Fathers
	PANEL I					14:30	Jeffrey Champlin "I know you can cant". Slips of the Mother Tongue in F. Moten's B Jenkins
9:45	Michael Eng Philosophy's Mother Envy. Has There Yet Been a Deconstruction of the "Mother Tongue"?		PANEL III				
			HEBREW: MOTHER OF ALL LANGUAGES				
10:15	Deborah Achtenberg But You Don't Get Used to Anything: Derrida on the Preciousness of the Singular	15:30	Michael T. Miller The Original Language and the Seventy Languages in Jewish Tradition	9:00	Morning coffee	15:00-15:30	Coffee break
10:45	Jakob Norberg The Mother Tongue at School: Jacob Grimm	16:00	Reuven Kiperwasser Mother Tongue/Mother Land in Rabbinic Rhetoric	9:30	Juliane Prade-Weiss Scarspeak. For a Traumatic Notion of the Mother Tongue	15:30	Ramsey McGlazer The Manse of Mothers: Joyce, Reproduction, and the Past as Penum
11:15-11:45	Coffee break	16:30	Cedric Cohen-Skalli The Multilingualism of Isaac Abravanel: The Space of Hebrew within Christian Iberian Society	10:00	Rivka Warshawsky Afflicted by Lalangue: or, Mutism in the First Hebrew-Speaking Infant	16:00	Nimrod Reitman On the Stuttering of Language: Ingeborg Bachmann's Inconsolable Silence
11:45	Micha Brumlik Does an (Ethnic) People Need a Mother Language? Considerations About Fichte and Weisgerber			10:30	Mathias Verger Nostalgia and the Demythologisation of the Mother Tongue	16:30	Antonio Castore "Die erfundene Wahrnehmung" or the Pantomime of Words: On Herta Müller's Theoretical Writings
12:15	Uli Linke Speaking in Tongues. Language and Belonging in Europe	17:00-17:30	Coffee break	11:00-11:30	Coffee break	17:00-17:30	Closing Remarks
12:45	Zsuzsa Baross Mother Tongue at the Limit	17:30	Zohar Weiman-Kelman Dream of a Common Mame-Loshn. Yiddish Beyond the Mother Tongue	11:30	Monica Monolachi Avatars of Mother Tongue, with Samples of Romanian Poetry	17:30-18:00	Coffee break
13:15-14:30	Lunch break	18:00	Elad Lapidot The Infantile Native Speaker. Her Construction and Prohibition in the Event of the XX Century Hebrew	12:00	Anne Isabelle Francois Estranging the Mother Tongue	18:00	Keynote Hélène Cixous I say Allemagne
	PANEL II						
	IN TRANSLATION						
14:30	Eran Shuali Holy Tongue or Mother Tongue: The Choice of Language in Translations of the New Testament	18:30	Federico Dal Bo "My Mother Tongue is a Foreign Language:" On Edmond Jabès' Writing in Exile	12:30-14:00	Lunch break		

THURSDAY, 12 MAY 2016