This talk will explore the applicability of different theories in the field of translation studies to the study of Hebrew and Yiddish literatures. Although the "Jew" as a figure holds a central place in these theories, there seems to be difficulty in applying them to an actual work of art in a living Jewish language. This talk intends to explore this difficulty through the study of a minor yet dramatic scène de famille: in 1901 the national Hebrew poet H. N. Bialik translated and published several chapters from Fishke der Krumen, the Yiddish masterpiece by Sh. Y. Abramovitsh, the “grandfather” of Hebrew and Yiddish literature. Abramovitsh took over the project in 1906 and published his own translation. He published most of Bialik’s work as his own, albeit with significant revisions. Professor Elhanan will argue that Bialik’s rendering and Abramovitsh’s revisions of it offer fascinating insights into the dynamics of Hebrew and Yiddish language politics, as well as a much needed critical evaluation of current translation theory, its limitations and its claims on the ethical and political significance of translation.

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