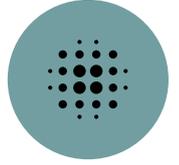


ONE BIOGRAPHY, MULTIPLE PLACES: THE LIFE AND WORK OF SHMUEL HUGO BERGMANN BETWEEN PRAGUE AND JERUSALEM (1883–1975)



PANEL 1

Bergmann in Prague



JAN FINGERLAND

Bergmann's Prague Years 1883-1919: A Man beyond Categories of his Era

The aim of the paper is to enrich the picture of Shmuel Hugo Bergman by putting his personality into the context of his environment, and at the same time to stress what made him different already as a young man.

There are two areas of study I would like to address.

First of all, his family background. He was Jewish, born in Prague, yet in a family of countryside Jews, religious, bi-lingual, lower middle class. I would like to base this part on his own recollections, recollections of his contemporaries, as well as on the documents stored in the National archives in Prague.

And secondly, Bergmann was a man of his age – again, with a very complex identity. He was a Jewish intellectual of his time, philosopher, a religious thinker, a practical man, and a "real" Zionist who was willing to transfer his activities to Palestine. In many ways, he was a good representative of a Central European Jewish intellectual of his age. However, in many other aspects, he was trying to find his own path from his very youth. Some of his early experiences influenced his later activities in the British Mandate of Palestine and in Israel. What was typical, and what was unique in his case?

The overall finding is that Bergmann was from the very beginning a personality who – based on his moral as well as philosophical convictions – was ready to stay outside of categories of his time.



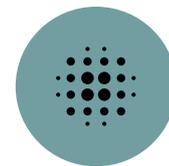
JULIUS H. SCHOEPS

Hugo Bergmann, Theodor Lessing and the "Prague Circle"

In the orbit of the "Prague Circle" which was mainly dominated by writers and intellectuals like Franz Kafka, Max Brod, Felix Weltsch and Oskar Baum, also characters like Robert Weltsch, Hans Kohn and *Hugo Bergmann* found inspiration, approval and encouragement to enter the path of Jewish modernization, admiring especially the ideas of philosophical thinkers like Martin Buber. Astonishing different ways of life appeared later on, while some of the Prague protagonists remained closely connected either as friends or just as congenials.

One of the awesome peripheral figures of the Circle was the philosopher and cultural critic *Theodor Lessing*, a self-proclaimed unconventional thinker and admirer of Arthur Schopenhauer, later also considered an "enlightened Nietzschean".

ONE BIOGRAPHY, MULTIPLE PLACES: THE LIFE AND WORK OF SHMUEL HUGO BERGMANN BETWEEN PRAGUE AND JERUSALEM (1883–1975)



PANEL 1

Bergmann in Prague

In a certain way, Hugo Bergmann represented the direct opposite of Theodor Lessing. He himself was not only an avowed Kantian and follower of Bernhard Bolzano but also someone who sympathized with the teachings of Rudolf Steiner (the admiration of Steiner was shared by others in the Prague Circle, too.) But even if Bergmann and Lessing had divergent views regarding Rudolf Steiner, it's worth to discuss similarities in thinking and mentality. And there were also political-ideological similarities between Lessing and Bergmann. Both considered themselves to be cultural Zionists in the tradition of Buber and were committed to securing peace and justice in the world. There is no evidence of whether Lessing met Bergmann personally, also not in Palestine. But if so, they would have almost certainly discussed the chances of Brith Shalom initiative and the future of Arab-Jewish co-existence. My presentation will outline specific intersections in the thought world of two great thinkers, one finally realizing some of his visions in Palestine/Israel, the other tragically deceased by a long-time prepared Nazi assassination.



ŠTĚPÁN BALÍK

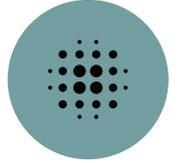


MARIE BRUNOVÁ



JIŘÍ HOLÝ

ONE BIOGRAPHY, MULTIPLE PLACES: THE LIFE AND WORK OF SHMUEL HUGO BERGMANN BETWEEN PRAGUE AND JERUSALEM (1883–1975)



PANEL 1

Bergmann in Prague



HANA NICHTBURGEROVÁ



OLGA ZITOVÁ

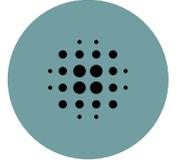
Hugo Bergmann about the Yiddish, and Yiddish Research in the Czech Republic

In 1904 and 1914 Hugo Bergmann published two articles dealing with the Yiddish language: *Einiges über das Jiddische* (“Jargon”) [Something about Yiddish /Jargon/] and *Unsere Stellung zum Jiddischen* [Our Attitude to the Yiddish]. Unlike other researchers (for instance Jindřich Kohn), he paid considerable attention to this language and he learned Yiddish himself. It was a period when Prague's young Jewish intellectuals (Jiří Mordechai Langer, Franz Kafka) were taking an increased interest in Eastern Jewish culture.

After more than a century, prospects for Yiddish Studies in the Czech Republic are not very promising. The study of Yiddish writing in the Czech lands in the early modern period is still marginal. Yiddish literature was written and published in the Czech lands for three centuries. In their publications the eminent scholars Chone Shmeruk and Jerold C. Frakes included works created in Czech territory in the canon of texts of Yiddish literature. Nevertheless, currently, Yiddish and Yiddish literature are taught only in Olomouc (Western Yiddish, Marie Krappmann) and in Prague (Eastern Yiddish, Petr Jan Vinš), both within the frame of Jewish Studies. It is desirable to expand this research and these teaching centres, as to establish Yiddish Studies as a field of study. This should be able to be done with the cooperation of experts from abroad, mainly from Poland and Germany, and with the involvement of the existing disciplines: Czech and Slavic Studies, German Studies, as well as Hebrew Studies.

It also means a certain return to Hugo Bergmann's concepts, inspired by the multicultural reality of Prague. His idea of Zionism was based on Jewish roots, nevertheless, at the same time, it was opened to German and Czech cultures.

ONE BIOGRAPHY, MULTIPLE PLACES: THE LIFE AND WORK OF SHMUEL HUGO BERGMANN BETWEEN PRAGUE AND JERUSALEM (1883–1975)



PANEL 1

Bergmann in Prague



ANNA-DOROTHEA LUDEWIG

“The lifeline”: Max Brod and Hugo Bergmann

Hugo Bergmann and Max Brod came from the same German-speaking Jewish milieu in Prague; they did not attend the same Gymnasium but met already during their school years and again later at Charles University. Although Bergmann was only a few months older, Brod remembered and in a way idealized him as a teacher and mentor. Particularly in his memoirs “Streitbares Leben” (“Disputatious Life”) Brod describes Bergmann as the one who opened his eyes and showed him the way to Zionism: “Das rettende Seil warf mir Hugo Bergmann zu.” (“Hugo Bergmann threw me the lifeline.”) Certainly, the mentioned autobiography was published in 1960, at this time Brod had been living in Palestine/Israel for more than 20 years – he was forced to leave Prague in 1939, together with his closest friend Felix Weltsch, who was also a friend of Hugo Bergmann’s, he literally escaped the Nazis at the last minute. But contrary to Bergmann Max Brod never planned to leave his hometown, he was more a “Salon-Zionist”, interested in the idea of a diasporic but self-conscious Judaism. In Palestine, he maybe changed not his mind, but he invented a new narrative: exile became aliya and the arrival in Tel Aviv an implementation of a “Lebensprogramm” (life program). Hugo Bergmann was of great importance not only to that newly adapted (self-)concept since he helped Brod (and Weltsch) to establish themselves in the new environment. Against this background, the lecture will examine the revival of the old Prague networks and Hugo Bergmann’s role within these communities in general and for Max Brod in particular.