



Textual  
Understanding  
and Historical  
Experience  
**A Conference  
on Peter Szondi**

**Sunday-Monday,  
March 10-11,  
2013**

**The Hebrew University  
of Jerusalem,  
Mount Scopus,  
Rabin Building, Room 2001**

 The Franz Rosenzweig Minerva  
Research Center for German-Jewish  
Literature and Cultural History

  
האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Freie Universität  Berlin

  
**Simon Dubnow Institute**  
for Jewish History and Culture at Leipzig University

  
**Fritz Thyssen Stiftung**  
für Wissenschaftsförderung

The epistemic focus of the international conference is the nexus between historical experience and philological understanding in the work of the eminent literary scholar Peter Szondi (1929 Budapest – 1971 Berlin). The discipline of Comparative Literature in Germany developed owing to Szondi's studies, his policy of guest invitations and his engagement in university politics during his time as a chair of Comparative Literature at Freie Universität Berlin. In 1968, Szondi spent the spring semester as Visiting Professor at the Hebrew University Jerusalem at the invitation of Gershom Scholem, who wanted him to accept a chair for Comparative Literature there, an offer that Szondi declined two years later. 45 years after Szondi's semester at the Hebrew University, this conference will present key aspects of Szondi's thinking and discuss the historical implications of his critical hermeneutics.

## Program

Sunday, March 10, 2013

15:00 Greetings

**Reuven Amitai** (Dean, Faculty of the Humanities, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Yoav Rinon** (Head of the School of Literatures, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

Opening Remarks

**Yfaat Weiss** (Franz Rosenzweig Minerva Research Center, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Susanne Zepp** (Freie Universität Berlin/Simon Dubnow Institute Leipzig)

15:30 Historical Contiguities

**Chair: Richard I. Cohen** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Michael K. Silber** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

*Sunshine* – Hungarian Jews in a Fugue State

**Denis Thouard** (CNRS Paris/Centre Marc Bloch Berlin)

Form and History. From Lukács to Szondi

17:00 Coffee Break

17:30 Grounded Theory

**Chair: Cyril Aslanov** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Joachim Küpper** (Freie Universität Berlin)

My Encounter with Peter Szondi. Remarks on *Theory of the Modern Drama (1880–1950)*

**Christoph König** (University of Osnabrück)

*Philological Understanding* – Ethics, Method and Style in Peter Szondi's Essays

19:00 Conference Reception

Monday, March 11, 2013

10:00 Close Readings

**Chair: Birgit Erdle** (DAAD Walter Benjamin Chair, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Galili Shahar** (Tel Aviv University)

*Eden*. How Szondi Read Celan's Poem

**Daniel Weidner** (Center for Literary and Cultural Research Berlin)

Reading the Wound: Szondi's *Essay on the Tragic* and Walter Benjamin

11:30 Coffee Break

12:00 Close Readings

**Anne Fleig** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Towards a Sociology of Literature: Szondi's *Theory of Bourgeois Tragedy*

12:45 Lunch Break

14:30 Literary Affinities

**Chair: Ruth Fine** (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem)

**Dieter Burdorf** (University of Leipzig)

*What is different is good*. Peter Szondi's Lectures and Essays on Hölderlin

**Claudia Oik** (Freie Universität Berlin)

Peter Szondi and English Drama: From Shakespeare to Beckett

16:00 Coffee Break

16:30 Inner Geographies

**Chair: Jörg Deventer** (Simon Dubnow Institute Leipzig)

**Susanne Zepp** (Freie Universität Berlin/Simon Dubnow Institute Leipzig)

Reading Mallarmé in Jerusalem. Peter Szondi and French Literature

**Thomas Sparr** (Suhrkamp Verlag Berlin)

Peter Szondi in Jerusalem

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