

Prof. Yigal Schwartz: Short Bio

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Yigal Schwartz is a professor emeritus in the Department of Hebrew Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and heads the Heksherim Institute for the Study of Jewish and Israeli Literature and Culture. Born in Ramat Gan, he studied at the Herzliya Gymnasium and Blich High School. During his year of national service, he mentored teenagers involved in youth gangs in Netivot. In the IDF, he served in the infantry and armored corps. He studied at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, where, in 1989, he completed a direct track to a doctorate in Hebrew literature with distinction under the supervision of Prof. Gershon Shaked. In 1982, he joined the teaching staff there. In 1998, he was appointed head of the department. In 2000, invited by Avishay Braverman, he moved, together with a group of lecturers and research students, to the Department of Literature at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (BGU) and transformed it into the largest and most prominent Hebrew literature department. Schwartz has been a research fellow and visiting professor at Harvard University, the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, the University of Oxford, the University of Cambridge, Doshisha University in Kyoto, and various institutions in other countries. From 2019 to 2022, he held the S. Y. Agnon Chair in Contemporary Hebrew Literature, established by German Associates of BGU.

Schwartz's research interests include the historiography of Modern Hebrew literature; Hebrew literature and the Holocaust; literature and mythology; reception studies and poetics; and folklore and ethnology. He has published 20 academic books and some 150 articles, essays, and reviews in 11 languages.

A leading literary editor in Israel, Schwartz has edited almost 350 books, many by the country's most prominent authors. Schwartz has supervised 60 research students in Israel and abroad. The Heksherim Institute, which he heads, is the largest and most active of its kind in the world. He has led long-term research projects, including the Heksherim Lexicon of Israeli Authors, in which 168 authors from Israel and abroad participated. He maintains contact with dozens of leading researchers and institutions worldwide.

Schwartz has received numerous research grants and awards for excellence: the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture Award, the Charles Wolfson Award, a Skirball Foundation grant, the Yigal Alon Fellowship, the Prof. Jacob Allerhand Award of the Hebrew Language Academy, grants from the Caesarea Foundation and the National Science Foundation, the Ministry of Education Prize for an outstanding research book, the University President's Prize for Exceptional Scientific Achievements, the S. Yizhar Prize for Literary Research, and others.