

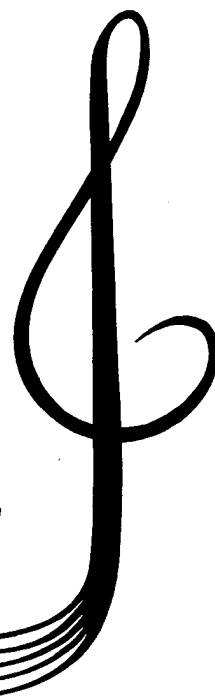
THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

anthology
of yiddish
folksongs

SINAI LEICHTER

VOLUME SEVEN

THE ITZIK MANGER VOLUME



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Sinai Leichter

INTRODUCTION

Itzik Manger (1901-1969)

Originally from Kolomiya, Galicia, the family of Itzik Manger migrated to Tchernovitz, Bukovina, where Itzik was born in 1901, and eventually settled in Jassy, Rumania. Jassy had a large Jewish population and was considered to be an important modern Jewish cultural center.

In 1929 young Itzik moved to Warsaw where he stayed till 1939, absorbing the atmosphere of the Jewish masses and their ways of making a living by engaging in every imaginable trade and craft. Their Yiddish folk-culture, language, their folklore and their bittersweet sense of humor fascinated Itzik. He continued to acquaint himself with Western literature and culture and spoke fluent Yiddish, Polish, German and French. Later he learned English. However, his style of writing remained essentially the Yiddish of the ordinary people as they spoke it in the shops, markets, houses of prayer and in bars.

Manger believed that the essence of Yiddish literature was poetry. Yiddish prose served only as the background. His own father was not only a master tailor, but also a poet. As Antoni Slonimski said: "In Warsaw every Jewish tailor is a poet, every watchmaker a philosopher and every baker a troubadour."

Manger's poetry

To Itzik Manger, poetry was the supreme form of literature. He had no use for the so-called scholars and researchers of poetry. To Manger, poetry was the direct and most sublime means of communication between the poet, a person endowed with feeling and intuition, and the intelligent, sensitive reader.

The poet was divinely endowed with "antennas," able to pick up delicate meaning often deliberately ambiguous, or intentionally obscure, dreamlike visions – and to transmit them to the reader.

Itzik Manger's C.V. and Calendarium

by Sinai Leichter, with Alexander Spiegelblatt

1901

Itzik Manger was born on May 28, 1901, in the city of Tchernowitz, Bukovina, which was then under the rule of Austro-Hungary. Tchernowitz was an "island" of German culture which young Manger absorbed in full. His father was Hillel Manger, a master tailor. His paternal grandfather was Abraham, a cart driver, who was proud of his profession, claiming that a "Balagole" was superior to any craftsman.

Manger's mother, Chava Wilner, came from Kolomiya, Galicia. His maternal grandfather was Itzik Broder.

1914

Itzik moves to YJassy, Rumania, and a short while afterwards he was joined by his parents, his brother Nathan (NUte) and his sister Sheyndl.

1918

Manger begins writing in Yiddish, which he loved more than any other language he knew.

1921

His first poem "Portrait of a Girl" appears in print, in the local periodical "Culture". His first book "Stars on the Roof" appears in Bucharest. Manger moves to Warsaw, Poland, where he stays for some 10 years, until the outbreak of World War II.

1929-1939

His ten years in Poland were the most productive and the happiest years in his life. Here he publishes the periodical "Counted Words."

Here is a list of books he published in Warsaw:

1933 Lanterns in the Wind

1935 Chumesh Poems

1936 Megilla Poems

DOS KLEYNE Tsigaynerl
THE LITTLE GYPSY

דאס קליינע ציגיינערל
הצועני הקטן

Text: Itzik Manger איציק מאנגער

Music: Herts Rubin הרץ רובין

Moderato A D B \flat A7 Dm

Kh'bin a tsi-gay-ne-rl a kley-ner, O-ber vi ir zet, a shey-ner.

B \flat A E A7

Bor-ves, hun-ge-rik un frey-lekh, Leb ikh mir vi a ben mey-lekh

D7 Gm A7 B \flat

kh'veis nit vu ikh bin ge - boy-m, Mayn ma-me t'mikh in step far - loy-m.

Gm Dm E rit. A

Mayn ta - tn hot men oyf-ge - han-gen, Ven er iz gan-ve-nen ge - gan-gen.

a tempo Dm Gm Dm A Dm Gm F D7

Ekh, du fi - dl, fi - de-le du mayn. Shpil mayn tro-yer tsu zey in harts a - rayn.

Gm Dm A B \flat Gm A Dm A Dm

Ekh, du kha-ver mayn, Ver veyst vi du a-ley-n, Azey-bik, ey-bik royt iz blut un vayn.

Kh'bin a tsigaynerl a kleyner.
 Ober, vi ir zet, a sheyner.
 Borves, hungerik un freylekh,
 Leb ikh mir vi a ben-meylekh.
 Kh'veys nit vu ikh bin geboyrn,
 Mayn mame t'mikh in step farloyrn,
 Mayn tatn hot men oyfgehangen,
 Ven er iz ganvenen gegangen.

Refrain:

Ekh, du fidl, fidele du mayn,
 Shpil mayn troyer tsu zey in harts arayn.
 Ekh, du khaver mayn,
 Ver veyst vi du aleyn,
 Az eybik, eybik, royt iz
 Blut un vayn.

Fun tatn geyarshnt hob ikh dem fidl,
 Shpil ikh oyf ir "didl, didl,"
 In mayn fidl kent ir hern
 Mayn mames tsar, mayn shvesters ttern,
 In mayn fidl ligt gefangen
 Vi m'hot mayn tatn oyfgehongen.
 Ven tsum toyt m'hot im getribn,
 Iz di fidl mir geblibn.

Dos lid fun roydefn un yogn,
 Dos lid fun nekhtikn, nisht togn,
 Kh'bin a tsigaynerl a kleyner,
 Kh'zing vi s'zingt nisht keyner, keyner,
 Vos far a lid s'vet aykh gefeln,
 Kent ir zikh bay mir bashteln,
 Batsoln darft ir bloyz a drayer,
 S'kost mayn veytik aykh nisht tayer.

Refrain: Ekh, du fidl, fidele du mayn...

כ'בין א ציגינערל א קליינער.
 אָבער, ווי איר זעט, א שיינער.
 באַרוועס, הונגעריק און פֿריילעך,
 לעב איך מיר ווי אַ בן-מלך.
 כ'ווייס ניט וווּ איך בין געבוירן,
 מיין מאַמע ט'מיך אין סטעפּ פֿאַרלוירן,
 מיין טאַטן האָט מען אויפֿגעהאַנגען,
 ווען ער איז גנבֿענען געגאַנגען.

רעפֿריין :

עך, דו פֿידל, פֿידעלע דו מיין,
 שפּיל מיין טרויער צו זיי אין האַרץ אַרײַן,
 עך, דו חבֿר מיין,
 ווער ווייסט ווי דו אַליין,
 אַז אייביק, אייביק, רויט איז
 בלוט און וויין.

פֿון טאַטן געירשנט האָב איך דעם פֿידל,
 שפּיל איך אויף איר "דידל, דידל,"
 אין מיין פֿידל קענט איר הערן
 מיין מאַמעס צער, מיין שוועסטערס טרערן,
 אין מיין פֿידל ליגט געפֿאַנגען
 ווי מ'האַט מיין טאַטן אויפֿגעהאַנגען.
 ווען צום טויט מ'האַט אים געטריבן,
 איז די פֿידל מיר געבליבן.

דאָס ליד פֿון רודפֿן און יאַגן,
 דאָס ליד פֿון נעכטיקן, נישט טאַגן,
 כ'בין אַ ציגינערל אַ קליינער,
 כ'זינג ווי ס'זינגט נישט קיינער, קיינער,
 וואָס פֿאַר אַ ליד ס'וועט אייך געפֿעלן,
 קענט איר זיך בײַ מיר באַשטעלן,
 באַצאַלן דאַרפֿט איר בלויז אַ דרייער,
 ס'קאָסט מיין ווייטיק אייך נישט טײַער.

רעפֿריין : עך, דו פֿידל, פֿידעלע דו מיין...