

FROM ANCIENT ISRAEL TO MODERN JUDAISM

INTELLECT IN QUEST OF UNDERSTANDING

Essays in Honor of Marvin Fox

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## In Search of "Authentic" Anglo-Jewish Poetry: The Debate over A. M. Klein's *Poems* (1944)<sup>1</sup>

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Marvin Fox once observed that "no Jewish education can ignore...the challenges to Jewish morality posed by contemporary society." His own interest in Jewish philosophy, I suspect, has been stimulated in part by precisely this effort. The study of Jewish philosophy is critically important, he believes, because "more than any other Jewish intellectual enterprise [it] has always arisen as a response to intellectual challenges posed by the cultures and civilizations in which the Jewish people found themselves."<sup>2</sup>

The paper that follows, while outside the realm of Jewish philosophy, focuses on a contemporary example of this age-old confrontation. Specifically, it deals with the debate over a volume of poems written by Canada's foremost Jewish poet, A. M. Klein (1909-1972), and published by the Jewish Publication Society of America in 1944. Correspondence surrounding this volume, repositied in the JPS archives, sheds new light on North American Jewish cultural life in the 1940s and raises two questions that, following Fox's lead, I consider to be of central importance: First, given the challenges posed by the

<sup>1</sup>An earlier version of this paper was read before the Association for Jewish Studies Conference in 1984. I am grateful to Dr. Usher Caplan for his comments on that version.

<sup>2</sup>Marvin Fox, "Translating Jewish Thought into Curriculum: Moral Philosophy in Jewish Education," in Seymour Fox and Geraldine Rosenfield (eds.), *From the Scholar to the Classroom* (New York, 1977), pp. 59, 81.

surrounding culture, what standards should English language Jewish poetry seek to uphold – what qualities, in other words, identify a poem as being *authentically* Jewish? Second, and more broadly, what kind of editorial controls should a Jewish publisher, faced with these challenges, seek to exercise – what should it agree to print and what should it reject?<sup>3</sup>

## I

Before proceeding to these questions, some background is required. A. M. Klein was born in Ratno, Volhynia (a fact that was later concealed<sup>4</sup>) in 1909, and shortly thereafter his parents immigrated to Canada. He obtained a traditional Jewish education, attended Baron Byng High School and McGill University, became active in the Young Judaea Zionist youth organization, studied law at the Université de Montréal, opened in 1934 a law office with his friend Max Garmaise, and a year later, on his twenty-sixth birthday, married his high school sweetheart, Bessie Kozlov. By then he was already a recognized poet. He had published poetry dealing with secular and Jewish themes as early as 1927, saw his poems published in the prestigious magazine *Poetry* in 1928, and soon became a regular contributor to the *Menorah Journal*, *Opinion*, as well as other secular and Jewish periodicals in Canada and the United States. By the age of 23 he had already written over 150 poems, and had been the subject of an article in the *Canadian Forum*. As a young writer, he was a leading member of what Leon Edel calls the "Montreal Group,"<sup>5</sup> a miniature Canadian Bloomsbury consisting of young, alert, politically engaged, and rebellious cultural figures.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup>On the history of the Jewish Publication Society and its changing publication standards, see Jonathan D Sarna, *JPS: The Americanization of Jewish Culture* (Philadelphia, 1989).

<sup>4</sup>Usher Caplan *Like One That Dreamed: A Portrait of A. M. Klein* (Toronto, 1982), p. 17.

<sup>5</sup>Leon Edel, "Marginal Keri and Textual *Chetiv*: The Mystic Novel of A. M. Klein," in Seymour Mayne (ed.) *The A. M. Klein Symposium* (Ottawa, 1975), pp. 19-20; idem, "The Montreal Group," in Edgar A. Collard, *The McGill You Knew* (Don Mills, Ontario, 1975), pp. 112-122.

<sup>6</sup>Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, is the basic biography, and I have followed it closely; see also Elijah E. Palnick, "A. M. Klein: A Biographical Study" (Unpublished M. H. L. Thesis, Hebrew Union College, 1959); Mayne (ed.) *The A. M. Klein Symposium*; Adam G. Fuerstenberg, "The Poet and the Tycoon: The Relationship Between A. M. Klein and Samuel Bronfman," *The Journal of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society* 5 (October 1981), pp. 49-69; "A. M. Klein's Montreal," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 19:2 (Summer 1984) [special

On September 16, 1931 Klein submitted a volume entitled "Greeting On This Day" to the Jewish Publication Society in Philadelphia. The Society's then resident poet and poetry critic, Solomon Solis-Cohen, aged 74, read the manuscript, and reported that there was "a good deal of first rate material there," and "a whole lot which is very bad." He felt that "the book could not be published without somebody reading each verse, and suggesting to the author that he omit certain things or make a selection from them." Stockbroker Oscar Loeb, who also read the manuscript, was far more enthusiastic. He called Klein a "sage and poet in one" and predicted that he "might easily climb to greatness." Other readers, however, felt uncomfortable with the title poem – a militantly pro-Zionist response to the 1929 Hebron riots – and complained that the collection as a whole was too grim, even "repellant." Rabbi Max D. Klein was even more negative; he growled that the poems had "too much of death and worms, spit, spittle and spew." As a result, the volume was rejected in 1933. Klein revised the volume and resubmitted it under the title "Gestures Hebraic" in 1935, but to no avail. Solis-Cohen complained about "the same faults that I found before," and the volume was rejected again.<sup>7</sup>

In 1940, Behrman House in New York did publish a volume of Klein's poetry – his first – entitled *Hath Not A Jew*. It contained "Greeting On This Day," as well as a good many other Jewish poems, many earlier published in contemporary Jewish periodicals. The volume created a minor stir in Jewish cultural circles, due in no small measure to Ludwig Lewisohn, one of the community's most distinguished literary figures and a proud Jew. Lewisohn, in his foreword, pronounced Klein "the first contributor of authentic Jewish poetry to the English language," and "the only Jew who has ever contributed a new note of style, of expression, of creative enlargement to the poetry of

issue]; and Pierre Anctil, "A. M. Klein: The Poet and His Relations with French Quebec," in Moses Rischin (ed.) *The Jews of North America* (Detroit, 1987), pp. 247-264.

<sup>7</sup>JPS Publication Committee Minutes, Feb. 7, 1932, p. 2; A. M. Klein to JPS (September 16, 1931); S. Solis-Cohen to JPS (February 8, 1932); Oscar Loeb to Cyrus Adler (nd, February 1932); Harry Ettelson to Julius Grodinsky (March 30, 1932); Max Klein to JPS (nd, March 1932); Julius Grodinsky to A. M. Klein (June 20, 1933); A. M. Klein to Isaac Husik (March 1, 1935); Solomon Solis-Cohen to Jack Solis-Cohen (June 11, 1935); Isaac Husik to A. M. Klein (July 17, 1935) all in Klein file (copies in author's possession) unpublished books series, JPS Papers, Philadelphia Jewish Archives Center, Balaban Institute, Philadelphia, PA. [hereafter: PJAC]. The brief account in Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, p. 71 needs to be revised on the basis of these new documents.

that tongue." This was high praise indeed, and the Jewish Publication Society soon sat up and took notice.<sup>8</sup>

Surviving correspondence suggests that Judge Louis Levinthal of Philadelphia, then chairman of the JPS Publication Committee, took the initiative in soliciting a new volume of poetry from Klein, apparently at Lewisohn's behest.<sup>9</sup> The fact that Levinthal himself came from an East European Orthodox background, played a prominent role in the Zionist movement, and had turned to law, just as Klein did, may help to explain the personal interest that he took in the poet; he found in Klein a kindred spirit. Whatever the case, Klein was clearly flattered. He began working on a new collection at once, and boasted to his friend, the writer and critic A. J. M. Smith, that the Society had a "subscription list of five thousand" – a larger audience by far than the average book of poetry could ever hope to reach.<sup>10</sup> As it turned out, Klein's book was not distributed to the entire general membership, as many JPS books then were, but was published only as an alternate selection, available just to members who specially selected it. Still, its first printing did amount to two thousand copies, which for poetry was a highly respectable figure.<sup>11</sup>

On February 18, 1942, Klein dispatched his manuscript, tentatively titled "Poems by A. M. Klein," directly to Judge Levinthal at his chambers. Levinthal read the manuscript, liked it, and turned it over to Solomon Grayzel, JPS editor since 1939, with the comment that "there is some really fine writing in this work and I have a feeling that the

<sup>8</sup>A. M. Klein, *Hath Not A Jew....* (New York, 1940); Lewisohn's foreword is reprinted in Miriam Waddington (ed.) *The Collected Poems of A. M. Klein* (Toronto and Montreal, 1970), pp. 350-352. According to Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, pp. 71-74, Leo W. Schwartz put Klein in touch with Behrman House, which scheduled the book, then titled *Selected Poems*, for 1937. Owing to financial problems, the volume did not appear until 1940. Klein was reportedly disappointed "at the small amount of attention his book received from serious reviewers of poetry" (Caplan, p. 86). In Jewish cultural circles, however, the book seems to have won more notice.

<sup>9</sup>Palnick, "A. M. Klein," chapter 3, p. 13.

<sup>10</sup>Klein to A. J. M. Smith (November 28, 1941), reprinted in Mayne, *The A. M. Klein Symposium*, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Maurice Jacobs to A. M. Klein (December 20, 1943; January 3, 1944), Klein file, Box 24, Published Books correspondence, JPS Papers, PJAC [hereafter: Klein file, JPSP]; JPS Publication Committee Minutes (December 10, 1944), part II, p. 4: "This is a small book of 86 pages, and only 2,000 copies were printed. While The Society does not expect a large sale of a book of poetry, we feel it necessary to occasionally print such a book in order to encourage Jewish poets."

Society would enhance its own reputation if it published this...."<sup>12</sup> Following JPS policy, the manuscript was sent out to readers, and in this case they seem to have felt a particularly weighty responsibility. JPS had published only two other original books of modern poetry in its entire history going back to 1888 – Philip Raskin's *Songs of a Wanderer* (1917), and Jesse Sampter's *Brand Plucked From the Fire* (1937) – and neither proved particularly popular with members. American Jewish literature suffered in those days from what Milton Steinberg called a "poverty of poetic creation." While this stimulated JPS to continue the search for a native Jewish bard, it knew perfectly well that what members really craved in the midst of World War II was not somber poetry, but uplifting literature and lighthearted humor.<sup>13</sup>

## II

At least eight different readers read Klein's manuscript, and each came back with a different opinion. Some loved the poems, others hated them, and most suggested deletions or substitutions. Grayzel, who found himself in the middle of this controversy, believed that the debate was futile: "it all boils down," he wrote, "to a matter of taste in poetry." Viewed from a historical perspective, however, the clash takes on a great deal more meaning, for it concerned nothing less than the standards by which Anglo-Jewish poetry should be judged. JPS, as the foremost publisher of Jewish books in English, perceived itself as the arbiter of Jewish culture; it saw its logo as equivalent to a community seal of approval. Before offering its imprimatur to Klein, it needed to be certain that he represented what authentic Anglo-Jewish poetry should be.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>A. M. Klein to Louis E. Levinthal (February 18, 1942); Louis Levinthal to Solomon Grayzel (Feb. 24, 1942), Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>13</sup>Milton Steinberg to Grayzel, (November 16, 1942), Klein file, JPSP; Sarna, *JPS*, esp. chapter 6. S. Felix Mendelsohn's *Let Laughter Ring*, a joke book published by JPS in 1941, went through at least six different printings and sold tens of thousands of copies.

<sup>14</sup>Solomon Grayzel to Louis Levinthal (August 16, 1942), Klein file, JPSP. Some of the evaluations of Klein's manuscript have not survived. We know that Rabbi Harry Ettelson of Memphis, Professor Shalom Spiegel of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Henry Hurwitz of the *Menorah Journal* all recommended that the volume be published, but so far their letters have not turned up. What do exist are the letters back and forth between Klein and the JPS, and also the evaluations of Felix Gerson, Milton Steinberg, Julian Feibelman, Robert Abrahams, and Mortimer Cohen.

Robert Abrahams, a Philadelphia lawyer, author and poet, active in JPS, suggested a simple two-part test for evaluating volumes of poetry:

Books of poetry to be worthy of publication should fall into either of two categories....First, those in which the poet has something of broad interest to say which will strike an immediate emotional response in the general reader. Second, a book in which the poems are of such high literary merit that even though the general reader may not value them, the discerning one will derive so much inspiration and stimulation from them as to warrant their publication, even though the audience will be limited.<sup>15</sup>

Klein's poems seemed to him to belong "in neither category," and he refused to recommend them. Klein, given the chance to respond, attacked Abrahams' scheme as "both wide enough to include everything and ambiguous enough to mean nothing." The first category, he complained, suggested to him that JPS "should publish the doggerel used to advertise Lifebuoy soap – its interests are broad, its response immediate, and its readers general." The second, he charged, "begs the question....Who is the discerning reader?"<sup>16</sup>

Julian Feibelman, the cultured Reform rabbi of New Orleans, employed a far more traditional and subjective standard to his criticism of Klein's poetry. He expected Jewish poetry to offer him "deep devotional refreshment," and to be "in keeping with the spirit of our past, in tradition, in history, and in faith itself." Only some of Klein's poems, he thought, passed muster. In a somewhat related vein, Felix Gerson, editor of the Philadelphia *Jewish Exponent*, insisted that poetry be judged on the basis of its "beauty" and "strength." He demanded that new offerings hold up not only in comparison to biblical and classical poetry, but Elizabethan poetry, Browning and Whitman as well. These lofty standards notwithstanding, he "unhesitatingly" recommended Klein's poems. By making them widely available, he wrote, "we would be honoring ourselves." Rabbi Mortimer Cohen, also of Philadelphia, scorned this approach as "anti-modern." He proposed instead yet another two-part standard for poetry: first, that modern Jewish poetry should speak in a modern idiom – not employ archaic forms as Klein did, and second that the poetry should reflect "some basic philosophy...of Jewish life and its values." Since he found Klein

<sup>15</sup>Robert D. Abrahams to JPS (July 7, 1942), Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>16</sup>Klein to Louis Levinthal (August 7, 1942), Klein file, JPSP.

wanting on both counts, and thought besides that Klein "would not be read by any of our members," he voted for the manuscript's rejection.<sup>17</sup>

Klein, who at 33 was substantially younger than any of his critics, urged JPS to adopt a more flexible approach to poetry. Like so many modern poets, he refused to be straightjacketed by any single definition; poetry, he pointed out "has eluded definers from time immemorial." The only guidelines he employed were aesthetic ones: "emotion recorded in tranquility" (Wordsworth), "a surprising by a fine excess" (Keats), and "thought in blossom." Jewish poetry, he believed, implied a kind of dualism. Anticipating the most remarkable feature of his later books, particularly *The Rocking Chair* (1948) and *The Second Scroll* (1951), he identified himself as "the bearer of two cultures," writing "the thoughts of one, in the language of the other." His work, he thought, carried forward the same diaspora tradition as "the Arabic of Maimonides and the German of Heine."<sup>18</sup>

The significance of this debate over Anglo-Jewish poetry is two-fold. First, it largely mirrors a secular debate of the day, transferring questions of definition and standards into the Jewish realm, but without really adding anything new. When Klein showed his impatience with suggested standards and opined that "books of poetry published by the J.P.S. should be first of all – poetry," he was echoing a view then being expressed by many modern poets. Wallace Stevens, for example, explained in a note prepared for the *Oxford Anthology of American Literature* that "My intention in poetry is to write poetry: to reach and express that which, without any particular definition, everyone recognizes to be poetry, and to do this because I feel the need of doing it."<sup>19</sup>

The second significant fact about this debate is that only Klein himself really came to grips with the specific question of what defines "Anglo-Jewish poetry" – how, for example, it is to be distinguished from poetry that happens to be written by someone of the Jewish faith. Klein's understanding of his dual role – bearer of two cultures, mediating between the one and the other, searching for a Jewish idiom in the English language – is easy to understand today when such views have been widely echoed. But in 1942 these ideas had not yet been frequently expressed, and most Jewish writers had totally different

<sup>17</sup>Julian Feibelman to JPS (n.d.); Felix Gerson to JPS (May 18, 1942); Mortimer J. Cohen to Solomon Grayzel (July 24, 1942), all in Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>18</sup>Klein to Levinthal (August 7, 1942), Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Samuel French Morse, *Wallace Stevens Poetry As Life* (New York, 1970), p. 113; see generally Charles Norman (ed.) *Poets on Poetry* (New York, 1965).

aspirations. Klein's conscious awareness of the special role reserved for the multi-cultural poet was a cry in the wilderness – a cry, one might add, that a Canadian Jewish poet living in the multi-cultural atmosphere of Montreal was much more likely to sound than his contemporaries in the United States. In Canada, Jewish writers faced no established literary tradition to which they were expected to conform. Expressions of bi- or multi-culturalism thus came easier to them than to their neighbors to the South, for they were consciously molding a new tradition rather than moving forward within an already established one.<sup>20</sup>

### III

For all of his eloquence, Klein did not fully convince the literary moguls of JPS that his view of poetry was the right one. In mid-June 1943, after over a year of wrangling, the Society did accept his book for publication, but only with an important caveat – "that some of the poems submitted should be omitted from the volume." Leaving aside those poems that were objected to on literary grounds – Klein agreed that these "were not as good as those that remained"<sup>21</sup> – two major categories of poems were called into question: 1) poems deemed undignified, improper, or obscene, and 2) poems deemed blasphemous of God, or unduly critical of the Jewish people. Both categories reveal much about JPS's sense of propriety, for as a Jewish publisher, it felt obliged to uphold standards that would place it above reproach.

<sup>20</sup>American Jewish poets at this time proposed far more apologetic and less sophisticated definitions than Klein did; see Philip M. Raskin (comp.) *Anthology of Modern Jewish Poetry* (New York, 1927), esp. p. 9; Louis Untermeyer, "The Jewish Spirit in Modern American Poetry," *Menorah Journal* 7 (August 1921), pp. 121-122; and the general discussion in Louis Harap, *Dramatic Encounters* (New York, 1987), pp. 51-52. For Canada, see the roundtable on "Jewish Culture and Canadian Culture" in M. Weinfeld, W. Shaffir and I. Cotler, *The Canadian Jewish Mosaic* (Toronto, 1981), pp. 315-342; and the illuminating comments of Seymour Mayne in his interview in the literary supplement of the Israeli newspaper *Maariv* (March 23, 1984), p. 1.

<sup>21</sup>Klein to Levinthal (July 1, 1943), Klein file, JPSP. Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, p. 55 claims that "rarely in his life did Klein stand for red-penciling." He reiterates this in a private letter to me (January 31, 1985), writing of Klein's "barely suppressed anger" at JPS for his treatment of him (see also Caplan, pp. 90-91.) The correspondence I have, however, does not quite support this interpretation. Although Klein clearly lamented some of the changes JPS imposed, he agreed that others would improve his manuscript, and he went out of his way to thank Grayzel for his "fastidious editing" when the book appeared.

The first category reflects, to a considerable degree, the temper of the times, considerably less liberated than our own. The Society, born in the late Victorian era, felt an obligation even to readers who had a high (or prudish) sense of morality, and sought to project an image of Jewish probity, dignity and righteousness, especially in matters concerning love and sex. Accordingly, when Rabbi Feibelman found "too much biology...mostly feminine" in Klein's poetry, that was a serious criticism. As a result of this and other suggestions, six love sonnets were deleted completely. A malediction on Hitler that he "be remembered if remembered at all,/ In the name of some newly found, particularly disgusting fly,/ Or in the writing on a privy wall," was also removed; the word "privy" proved objectionable. In addition, "gutter" was changed to "pavement," "ugly filth" became "ugly words," and at least one reader sought to tone down a steamy reference to "nine months" in relation to the birth of a first-born child. In this case, Klein put his foot down: "I am informed by my wife and by the Civil Code of the Province of Quebec," he wrote, "that the period of gestation is nine months."<sup>22</sup> The offending reference remained in place. One might note, however, that the Reconstructionist Haggadah, published at about the same time (1941), did censor the reference to those unseemly "nine months" from its translation of "*Ehad Mi Yodea*," and the earlier Reform Haggadah (1923) deleted the "nine months" even from the original Hebrew.<sup>23</sup>

One final example of a poem deemed inappropriate on these grounds is Klein's "Psalm 154, A Song of Loves" which he described as "a benediction upon the Lord's poisonous chemicals." Half a dozen drugs including cannabis and morphine find praise here, and though Klein insisted that he only had in mind medicinal purposes, that "he would be a churl who would not be grateful for this piece of the Lord's creativeness," and that specifically in the case of morphine he had himself "on several occasions received the blessings of its effects, and they are precisely as described in the last lines of the poem," JPS was unyielding; all Klein's protests came to naught.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>22</sup>Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, pp. 90-91; Klein to Levinthal (July 1, 1943); Solomon Grayzel to Klein (December 3, 1943), Klein file, JPSP; see Miriam Waddington, *The Collected Poems of A. M. Klein* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 257, 213, 230, 221.

<sup>23</sup>Mordecai Kaplan et al (eds.) *The New Haggadah for the Pesah Seder* (New York, 1941), pp. 155-57; *The Union Haggadah* (New York, 1923), p. 88.

<sup>24</sup>Klein to Levinthal (July 1, 1943); Grayzel to Klein (December 3, 1943), Klein file, JPSP; Waddington, *Collected Poems*, p. 256; Klein reprinted the poem as "Grace Before Poison" in his *The Second Scroll* (1951; NCL Classic edition,

Moving on to the second group of objectionable poems, those deemed blasphemous or unduly critical, there was, for example, the poem "Rabbi Yom-Tob of Mayence Harangues His God." Under JPS pressure, "harangues" was toned down to the more acceptable "petitions," and printed. By contrast, Klein's "A Psalm of Resignation," with its plaintive cry, "For who indeed can keep his quarrel hot/ And vigorous his cries,/ When he who is blasphemed, He answers not,/ Replies no word, not even a small sharp word?" proved too unsettling. It was excluded. So was "Kalman Rhapsodizes" with its uncomplimentary reference to angels, as well as "Psalm 173," a frightening evocation of inner madness that could easily be interpreted in a Jewishly negative way (but in fact probably referred to the mental illness that later silenced Klein's pen altogether.)<sup>25</sup> The JPS sought to appeal to a full spectrum of Jews, and felt that it had to keep within certain acceptable theological bounds. Furthermore, there were those who questioned the wisdom of projecting too "hopeless a cry in a day when nearly the only thing left to the Jew is hope."<sup>26</sup> Klein understood: "The J.P.S., which knows not who its eavesdroppers [sic] are," he wrote to Judge Levinthal, "cannot afford to give its imprimatur to something which the enemies of Israel might use against us." He realized, since he himself occupied a responsible position in the Jewish community, that prudence was the better part of wisdom. On second thought, however, he was not so certain. "We have indeed come to a sorry pass," he mused, "when we cannot even afford the luxury of self-criticism, lest the foe seek to confound us out of our own mouths."<sup>27</sup>

*Poems* finally appeared late in 1944. Klein pronounced himself "greatly pleased." "Even the fastidious editing, against which I sometime struggled," he wrote Solomon Grayzel, "is in the totality now justified and confirmed."<sup>28</sup> But if *Poems* represented the true search for authentic "Anglo-Jewish" poetry, we are left with a paradox. On the one hand, according to Klein, authentic Anglo-Jewish poetry involves

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Toronto, 1982), p. 137. Klein's acquaintance with drugs and apparent use of them deserves further study. In his letter to Levinthal, he identifies the drugs alluded to in the poem as cannabis ("hemp of India"), aconite ("monk's hood"), belladonna ("nightshade"), and digitalis ("blossom of the heart"); he also mentions by name hemlock and cocaine.

<sup>25</sup>Klein to Levinthal (July 1, 1943); Grayzel to Klein (December 3, 1943), Klein file, JPSP; Waddington, *Collected Poems*, pp. 239, 261, 49, 260.

<sup>26</sup>Felix Gerson to Grayzel (May 18, 1942), Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>27</sup>Klein to Levinthal (July 1, 1943), Klein file, JPSP.

<sup>28</sup>Klein to Levinthal (January 5, 1945); Klein to Grayzel (January 5, 1945), Klein file, JPSP.

mediation: writing the thoughts of one culture in the language of the other. On the other hand, authenticity also mandates so great a concern for community interests that the poet is constrained from giving full expression to his thoughts; he is, in other words, mediator and censor at one and the same time. The extent to which this dilemma – which, *mutatis mutandis*, has affected culturally creative Jews throughout diaspora history – subsequently influenced Klein's shift away from Anglo-Jewish poetry, I do not know. Most critics interpret the shift as one toward greater universalism as well as an effort to achieve wider acclaim.<sup>29</sup> But I am intrigued by the following stanza in Klein's "Portrait of the Poet as Landscape" (1948) that may allude to the dilemma I am suggesting, even if it points to no solution:

O schizoid solitudes! O purities  
 curdling upon themselves! Who live for themselves,  
 or for each other, but for nobody else;  
 desire affection; private and public loves;  
 are friendly, and then quarrel and surmise  
 the secret perversions of each other's lives.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Cf. Caplan, *Like One That Dreamed*, p. 91.

<sup>30</sup>Waddington, *Collected Poems*, p. 333.