

Monika Adamczyk-Garbowska

## **The Role of the Polish Language and Literature in I.B. Singer's Fiction**

When Oyzer Heshl, the protagonist of *Di familye Mushkat* (*The Family Moskat*) first visits Hadassah in her room, he looks at her book shelf and notices a number of Polish books, among others Adam Mickiewicz's *Pan Tadeusz* and Stanisław Przybyszewski's *The Outcry*, as well as a thick novel entitled *Pharaoh*<sup>1</sup>. The name of the author is not mentioned in this case, presumably to indicate that Oyzer Heshel, and perhaps indirectly the author as well, are not familiar with this particular novel. Oyzer Heshl declares that he wants to read all of these books and indeed he reads some of them as we later find out. But we never find out if he read *Pharaoh* or any other books written by its author Bolesław Prus, the best known positivist Polish writer, famous for his detailed depictions of Warsaw and creation of compelling characters, including Jewish ones. Does Bashevis purposely distance himself from the writer whose works naturally come to mind to Polish readers of his novels set in the nineteenth century Warsaw in order to prevent any possible parallels or perhaps to conceal some affinities?

When Bashevis received the Nobel prize in 1978 a number of Polish critics and journalists tried to present him as a Polish writer. It wasn't the case only with Polish critics. Even a couple of years later when Czesław Miłosz received the Nobel prize it was characterized in *London Times* as the fourth Nobel literary prize for Poland (after Sienkiewicz, Reymont and Singer)<sup>2</sup>. Bashevis himself claimed that if they wanted to consider him a Polish Jewish writer he did not mind being labeled like that. In a letter to his friend Maria Unger, he wrote:

In America Poles consider me as one of their writers, that's how I was described in one of the pamphlets published here. I consider myself a Jewish writer writing in Yiddish, an American writer and also a Polish writer as I write almost exclusively about Poland and I know Poland best. It's high time people in Poland learnt that they have their writer in America.<sup>3</sup>

The letter was written at the time when Bashevis was completely unknown in Poland and it shows that he cared about his popularity there. When Bashevis's works finally appeared in the country of his birth, there have been speculations in Poland how well he knew the language and how well read he was in Polish literature. I have come across various opinions, ranging from those expressing admiration for his excellent command of Polish to those claiming that he did not know it at all.<sup>4</sup> Neither was the writer himself consistent in his own estimations of his knowledge of Polish. It is beyond the point to speculate on this matter. Depending on the assumed criteria we could consider Bashevis' knowledge of Polish as very good (if we take into account the fact that he wrote exclusively in Yiddish and that he left Poland as a young man) or as very poor (if we take into account that he spent as many as thirty one years of his life in Poland). Bashevis mentioned on various occasions that he learnt Polish quite late, already as a young man and that he read some secular literature in Polish, including not only original works written in this language but also translations from other languages. We can state for sure that Polish was necessary for Bashevis for his daily existence when he still lived in Poland and on the other hand served as a helpful tool in rendering the speech of Poles and assimilated Jews.

A number of critics noticed a striking resemblance of *The Manor* and *The Estate* to works by Polish positivist writers, especially the above mentioned Bolesław Prus. A superficial acquaintance with his work accompanied by the lack of knowledge of Yiddish literature and additionally

supported by Bashevis's rhetorical statements can lead to far fetched conclusions. Some critics and readers in Poland believe that he knew Polish literature very well and patterned his works on it. However, most of these statements, no matter how complimentary for Polish literature, are not well grounded. In spite of seeming similarities, Bashevis's Polish characters are created from a completely different perspective, usually a critical one, contrasting with the heroic patriotic point of view characteristic of many Polish authors. What's more, this perspective is determined not only by taking the point of view of the other but also shaped by Bashevis's imagination and literary technique, his tendency to hyperbole and caricature.

Bashevis himself admitted to reading a number of Polish writers but there is no doubt that he never faced the dilemma a number of Jewish writers living in Poland did: a choice between Yiddish, Hebrew and Polish. He never even tried to write in Polish like Y.L. Perets or Sholem Asch did. His attitude towards Jews writing in Polish was very negative. It is hard to believe but he claims that he came across Bruno Schulz's name only while reviewing his English translation in the sixties and he observes that only after reading him in Polish he could see the power of his prose (which testifies to his continued, even if occasional interest in Polish literature and an ability to evaluate texts written in the Polish language); nevertheless he also claims that if Schulz had written in Yiddish he would have been a better writer<sup>5</sup>. It was similar with his opinions about assimilated authors like Julian Tuwim, Marian Hemar and Józef Wittlin whom he described as good enough but nothing special. Only later in America did he admit that perhaps he had judged them too harshly since that's exactly what Jewish writers in America did, they assimilated to the English language. What is quite interesting, he adds that it's a pity that such talented authors do not know Yiddish because they could enrich it and, what is more, it would be easier for them to have an audience in

America since compared with Polish Yiddish is a live tongue there (sic!)<sup>6</sup>. His critical stance aside, there is no doubt that he was to some extent affected by Polish literature and that he used Polish for artistic reasons in multiple ways.

Reading Yiddish literature against Polish literature is often quite helpful and illuminating. To give a few examples: in Y.L. Perets's plays you can find echoes of Stanisław Wyspiański's poetics, Avrum Sutskever's poem *Tsu Polin* has each stanza ending with a quotation from Juliusz Słowacki's famous poem *Smutno mi Boże (I'm Sad, God)*. Yankev Glatshteyn uses a quotation from one of Maria Konopnicka's poems as the motto to his *Ven Yash is geforn*, and it is highly probable that the name Yash itself is a reference to Konopnicka's poetic story for children *O Janku Wędrowniczku (On Yash the Wanderer)*, in which the protagonist, a young boy from a village, travels in his imagination far and wide, including America, and then goes back to his mother and the native village. Some critics have noticed parallels between Władysław Reymont's *Ziemia obiecana (The Promised Land)* and I.J. Singer's *Di brider Ashkenazi (Brothers Ashkenazi)*, suggesting that the latter can be treated as a polemic with the former<sup>7</sup>.

In case of Bashevis's output the most striking example, a parallel situation to that of Singer versus Reymont, is *Der kenig fun di felder (The King of the Fields)* that bears a clear resemblance to Józef Ignacy Kraszewski's *Stara Baśń (The Old Fairy Tale)*. When Jerzy Kosinski published *The Painted Bird*, one of the many accusations raised against him was that of plagiarism - taking long excerpts from Begeleisen's ethnographic study published in Poland before World War II. A similar accusation was raised a number of years later when Kosinski published *Being There* whom most Polish critics immediately recognized as a version of *Kariera Nikodema Dyzmy (Nikodem Dyzma's Career)*, a very popular novel from the interwar period, and again accused him of

plagiarism<sup>8</sup>. No accusations like these have ever been raised in the case of the Singer brothers since apart from similarities they are very different in tone and treatment of the subject matter and can be rather treated as polemics, often quite ironic, with their predecessors.

We might add that contacts between Polish and Yiddish literatures were for years one sided. Yiddish writers knew Polish literature to a lesser or greater extent while very few Polish writers were familiar with Yiddish literature. This is probably best rendered in Aaron Zeitlin's mystery play *Esterke* in which Mickiewicz's and Perets's shades appear and in which the latter says: "Ver du bist - dos veys ikh, nor ver ikh bin - dos veystu nisht..." (I know who you are, but who I am - you do not know).<sup>9</sup> Even if Polish writers expressed some interest in Yiddish works at the end of the nineteenth century or in the period between the wars, they would not really draw inspiration from them. Paradoxically, the situation became to some extent reverse in recent years due to translations of Isaac Bashevis's works. And ironically enough, like the first translations from Yiddish into Polish were done via Russian, so Bashevis' translations reach the Polish reader predominantly via the English language. The interest in them, however, is enormous compared with that in Mendele Mocher Sforim's works done by Klemens Junosza-Szaniawski in the late nineteenth century. In contemporary Polish literature from the eighties and nineties we encounter some references to Bashevis, for example in Jarosław Marek Rymkiewicz's *Umschlagplatz* there is a character clearly based on the writer; allusions to Bashevis and his brother also appear in Hanna Krall's stories.

The use of the Polish language and Polish literature by Bashevis met with very little critical attention outside of Poland. One of the critics who mentioned the topic was Irving Buchen who

compares *The Family Moskat* to *Pan Tadeusz*, the epic poem by Adam Mickiewicz<sup>10</sup>. According to him both authors have similar aims, that is to preserve the picture of the vanishing community. One could also add that both Bashevis and Mickiewicz wrote their works in exile, Mickiewicz in Paris and Bashevis in New York. Undoubtedly the meaning of *The Family Moskat* is much more tragic since the community was destroyed in an exceptionally brutal way. Nevertheless in both works we have detailed descriptions of holidays, customs, as well as a multitude of distinct and vivid characters. Buchen also notices that Stefan Żeromski and his *Szyfowe prace* (*Sisyphus' Labors*) influence Oyzer Heshel's philosophical idea and so do Przybyszewski's *Homo Sapiens* and his Nietzschean protagonist Eryk Falk.

The above mentioned examples as well as a number of others deserve more than an occasional digression. Therefore in this essay I would like to mention and discuss briefly a variety of ways Bashevis uses Polish language and literature in his work by dividing them into separate categories. The first three categories refer to literary aspects of his oeuvre while the remaining ones belong more to the linguistic sphere:

### *1. Direct reference to or polemic with a Polish literary work*

*The King of the Fields*, as I mentioned, is the most striking example. Kraszewski's novel *Stara baśń*, published for the first time in 1876 was a part of an entire historical cycle written at the time of partitions. From the whole of Kraszewski's extremely voluminous output it is the most respected one and had become a classic while other novels have largely been forgotten and treated as dated. *Stara baśń* depicts the beginning of the Polish state and is based on both legendary and historical sources. It is written in an archaized Polish. In contrast, Bashevis's book is written in

modern language (e.g. he does not use stylization that he earlier employed in *Satan in Goray* albeit he makes use of some archaic words) and it is based almost exclusively on Yiddish legends according to which Abraham, a Jewish trader, almost became the king of Poland. While Kraszewski was sometimes criticized by Polish critics for the depiction of the Slavic tribes as cruel, they are mild compared with those created by Bashevis. The functions and contexts in which the two novels were shaped are obviously very different. Kraszewski's novel was written when Poland did not exist as a state and it constitutes a part of a long historical cycle depicting different periods of Polish history. *King of the Fields* also constitutes a part of the cycle devoted to tracing Jewish presence on Polish lands throughout centuries but it is only seemingly a historical novel. Its message can be interpreted in the post-Holocaust context as that of the absence of the Jewish community in Poland since the single Jewish character Ben Dosa has to leave the country in order to prevent unrest and he is only later recalled with nostalgia by some inhabitants. Bashevis borrows some names and episodes from Kraszewski giving them a different function. There are parallels in the usage of names, e.g. the tribe of Leszeks in Kraszewski and Leshniks (Pol. Leśniks) in Bashevis, as well as Znosek - Nosek, Jaga - Jagoda respectively. In Kraszewski's book Znosek is very clever but he is a negative character while in Bashevis Nosek is one of very few positive ones. They are alike however in physical appearance. In Kraszewski Znosek is a small fellow with cropped hair and catlike eyes, wearing a tight garment<sup>11</sup>. In Bashevis Nosek is "slightly built, with neither hair, nor beard, and a pale face."<sup>12</sup> It's worth noticing that this is not the first example of an Yiddish writer being inspired by Kraszewski, e.g. Aaron Zeitlin creates his characters in the mystery play *Esterke* on the figures presented in Kraszewski's *Król chłopów* (*The King of the Peasants*) which deals with the legend about King Casimir and Esterke

(Kraszewski also wrote another book with Jewish themes *Żyd - The Jew*). Concerning the close relation between Bashevis and Zeitlin one can wonder to what extent they discussed Kraszewski's books together; there is also a striking parallel between the titles *The King of the Peasants - Der kenig fun di felder*.

2. ***Pseudo-translation*** (or perhaps - 'fictional translation' - question to the editor)

*Der man fun khaloymes (Man of Dreams)*, published in installments in *Forverts* in 1970, is presented as a book originally written in Polish and translated into Yiddish. The narrator named Adam Stanisław Kordecki is a man of various identities, a repenting Jew but earlier a convert to Protestantism and Catholicism. He explains that he does not want to recall the profane vicissitudes of his stormy and sinful life in Hebrew, the holy tongue, and his Yiddish is no longer good enough for this purpose, so he chooses a profane language that he is familiar with and that language is obviously Polish. The manuscript is supposed to remain in a safe for one hundred years before it can be revealed to the outside world. This literary device has even led to misunderstanding by some critics that the novel was actually written in Polish.

3. ***Symbolic function of the Polish language***

Polish often creates distance between characters or between characters and their social environment, its usage is sometimes accompanied by estrangement, e.g. when Hadassah starts speaking Polish her tone changes:

Vi nor zi iz ariber oyf poylish, hot zikh geendert der ton. Frier iz ir shtim geven kindish, di zatsn zaynen aroys say tsetsoygene, say opgerisene. Itst zaynen ir di poylishe verter mit di ale



veykhe un halb-veykhe konsonantn aroysgekumen fun moyl daytlekh un sharf. <sup>13</sup> (When she switched to Polish, her tone changed. Earlier her voice was childish, her sentences were alternately drawn out and cut off. Now the Polish words with the soft and half-soft consonants came from her lips precisely and clearly).

On the other hand in Oyzer Heshl's lips Polish becomes more homey:

Er hot geredt gramatikalish. Er hot nisht farbitn, vi der foter irer, dem dritn fal oyf dem fertn. Nor der zatz-boy iz geven an oysterlisher. Dos goyishe loshn hot bakumen in zayne lipn a nogndike heymishkeyt, vi poylish volt durkh epes a nes gevorn yidish. <sup>14</sup> (He spoke grammatically. He didn't confuse, like her father, the third case with the fourth one. But his syntax was strange. In his mouth the goyish language acquired a hauntingly intimate tone, as if Polish had suddenly, by some sort of miracle become Yiddish).

But later Oyzer-Heshl's and Hadassah's daughter can speak only Polish and cannot communicate with her grandmother. Contrariwise, in stories from *Meyn tatns bes din shtub* when the young narrator goes to *jene gasn* (those streets), the Christian quarter, he hears the foreign tongue that he does not understand and that increases his sense of being lost.

#### ***4. Standard use usually employed in literature to mark the speech of various characters in a multilingual society***

Polish is often used especially in dialogues to mark the speech of Polish or polonized Jewish characters, e.g. in this dialogue between Klonia's (Klonia is Hadassah's Gentile friend) mother and Oyzer Heshl:

Di pana Hadasa, khotsh fun altn zakon iz bay mir vi an eygn kind... Pana Hadasa iz nit far a kapotshazh, a khosed. Zi kon baym gloybn zikh haltn, nor ir kharakter iz an adeliker. Der khlopak fun der Gnoyne gas, mit di lange peyes, iz nisht keyn man far ir.<sup>15</sup> (Miss Hadassah, although of Mosaic faith is for me as my own child... Miss Hadassah isn't for a fellow in a long gaberdine, a Chassid. She can hold to her faith, but she is delicate by nature. That boy from the Gnoyna Street with long sidelocks is not a suitable man for her).

Here the Polish expressions like 'stary zakon' ('Mosaic faith,' literally 'the old order' - euphemistic word for Jews), 'kapociarz' (contemptuous word for traditionally clad Jews) or 'chlopak fun der Gnoyne gas' (in Polish Gnojna means Dung Street) evoke numerous connotations and consequently define the character much better than if only Yiddish words and expressions were used.

### *5. Folk and fairytale elements*

Polish words in folkloristic or fairy-tale contexts add variety and exoticism, e.g. Topiel, Baba Jaga. In folk and fairy tale stories nouns often function as proper names, e.g. a cat is called Kot, a hog Wieprz, a city Miasto. Sometimes usage is particularly strange, e.g. a pagan princess is called Koza (goat; in Polish used also in reference to lively young girls).

### *6. Polish first and family names*

Linguist Maria Karpluk notices that Bashevis made a class distinction in Polish names.<sup>16</sup> For example peasants bear names like Antoni, Antosia, Jadwiga, while their family names are often not mentioned, and if they are, they are usually meaningful, referring to objects or living creatures;

in turn, representatives of gentry are often called Felicja, Zbigniew, or Zdzisław and bear family names ended with -ski and -cki which is largely concordant with the truth. Sometimes a name is a kind of nobilitation or demotion, e.g. a likeable shoemaker bears the name of Zawadzki and a vicious priest is called Dziobak (the name which however can only have a connotation for a reader familiar with Polish - literally it may mean “platypus” but it may also refer to prodding or stabbing). On the whole, compared with the variety of Yiddish names, Bashevis is quite limited in his choice of Polish ones, he often uses similar names to depict similar types which in a sense coincides with his usage of types and stereotypes, since on the whole his Polish characters are more stereotypical than Jewish ones. Some of the Polish names he uses were earlier used by Israel Joshua Singer or other Yiddish writers. This may testify to his limited contacts with the Polish speaking circles or lack of interest in a more thorough research. His favorite names are Wilk, Piorun, Zbigniew, Tekla. The first two are used both in reference to animals and people.

### 7. *Proverbs and sayings*

They give additional flavor and sometimes serve to express ideas that according to the narrator and characters are difficult to render in Yiddish. Such elements are usually introduced with some additional information to underline their foreign origin: ‘As the Poles say..’ or ‘As the goyim say...’

Usually Bashevis has a good intuition and uses Polish expressions in the right context. The most problematic is his employment of Polish in *The King of the Fields* where he is not consistent and uses expressions that sound very bizarre in the context even if we do not treat the novel as historical. Apart from archaic words that are often derived from Kraszewski there are words and

expressions from other historical periods (e.g. the form 'Pan Cybula' or 'Niech żyje Polska' - Long live Poland [Poland as a country or state did not exist at that time]) or 'kułak' which theoretically is correct because in the old Polish it means 'fist' but since it was used in the Stalinist period in reference to allegedly rich peasants, has a very strange resonance for contemporary Polish readers. Because we know that Bashevis had some contacts with Polish speaking people in America, this might rather have been caused by the lack of contact with the Polish language after the war as used in Poland.

#### 8. *Polish place names*

They are also very important in Bashevis's works as they convey numerous connotations, e.g. the fragment from Hadassah's diary when she expresses her love for Warsaw:

Varshe, shtot mayne, vi tustu mir bang! Ikh benk shoyt faroyt nokh dayn Marshalkovske un Naye Velt, nokh dayn alt-shtot un Povishle. Ikh vel afile benken nokh dem Gzhibov un di andere yidishe geslekh... Es iz gevis gut tsu lebn in oysland, nor oyb mir iz bashert tsu shtarbn, vil ikh lign oyf der Genshe gas, nebn mayn bobeshi.<sup>17</sup> (Warsaw, dear city of mine, how sad I am! Even before leaving you I long for Marszałkowska and the New World Boulevard, for the Old Town and Powisle. I will even long for Grzybow and other Jewish streets. I know it will be good to live in a strange country, but when my time comes to die I want to lie on the Gesia street near my granny.)

The very enumeration of various streets in Warsaw and a distinction made between the elegant and predominantly Christian parts (Marszałkowska, Nowy Świat [New World Boulevard]) versus Grzybów and other Jewish streets,<sup>18</sup> inform the reader about the position occupied by the

protagonist in the fictional world, that on the border between worldliness and traditional Jewishness.

One has to emphasize that most of these literary allusions and elements of the Polish language used in various contexts for multiple purposes can be fully appreciated mainly in the Yiddish originals which were written for a reader with a rudimentary knowledge of Polish. Usually Polish words are placed in the Yiddish texts without any additional explanations as it is assumed that they will be understood by the reader; only rarely one can encounter explanations in brackets. While reading Bashevis in the original one knows immediately in what language - Polish or Yiddish - the characters speak, most often with Polish this is marked by the use of polite form 'pan,' 'pani' or 'panna' (Mrs., Mr., Miss). In most English translations additional explanations are necessary or most often it is not mentioned what language the characters actually speak; readers can only guess. This distinction also disappears of course in Polish translation. Last but not least, reading in the original allows a sense of the world in which different cultures and languages existed together and were mutually used. Apart from Polish we also encounter elements of Russian, Ukrainian, and of course later in his works placed in America or involving American characters - English.

Bashevis is known as a good stylist exploring different conventions; his idiom is extremely rich and is enriched even more by his use of Polish, including Polish proverbs, songs or even curses that express various emotional states of his characters. I would say that especially in his novels it is more interesting *how* he writes rather than *what* he writes. This can be certainly said about his novel recently published in English as *Shadows on the Hudson*. His characters like to talk and the variety of their idiom is more fascinating than the content of their often repetitive (if we know Bashevis's other works) and pseudo-philosophical discussions. Aunt Yentl or Gimpel the Fool,

the paradigmatic figures from the shtetl, are not the only monologists appearing in Bashevis's oeuvre, there are also a number of them living on the Upper West Side after the war. Unfortunately this rich variety can be fully appreciated mainly by the reader who is becoming more and more rare. But as Joseph Sherman recently proved by his excellent rendering of *Shadows on the Hudson*, one can translate Bashevis into fluent English and still preserve much of his linguistic variety.

In sum Polish language and literature can add exoticism and color, can signify progress but at the same time danger, can sound familiar but also foreign and hostile, can unite two communities and divide them. Wanda from *The Slave* and Jadwiga from *Enemies*, Polish partners of the Jewish protagonists, express their love to them in their native tongue (and in the case of Wanda she has to pretend being mute while living in the Yiddish speaking community since her language would betray her), but at the same time hostile looks accompany the contemptuous and offensive word 'Żydy' (kikes) heard often from anonymous lips in the street or on a train. The function of the Polish language and literature is as ambivalent as of Poland, a country in which the Jewish community feels both at home and alien, but it also testifies to the centuries long entanglement of the two languages and cultures and their mutual absorption.

## NOTES

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<sup>1</sup>See Isaac Bashevis (Singer), *Di familye Mushkat* (New York, 1950), I, p. 58.

<sup>2</sup>It was mentioned by Ryszard Wasita in his polemical piece in which he states that it is the language that determines the writer's affiliation and not the country he comes from. See "Decyduje język [Language is the Decisive Factor]," *Polska* 2 (1981): 1.

<sup>3</sup>Quoted by Elżbieta Wolicka, "Wśród swoich obcy. Problem stosunków żydowsko-polskich w utworach Izaaka Bashevisa Singera [Stranger among Neighbors. The Problem of Jewish-Polish Relations in Isaac Bashevis Singer's Works]," *Krytyka* 40 (1993): 214.

<sup>4</sup>E.g. according to Jerzy R. Krzyżanowski, a Polish American critic, Bashevis spoke eagerly and fluently in Polish, quoting Adam Mickiewicz's opening verses to *Pan Tadeusz*, as well as folk songs, visibly enjoying speaking in Polish, as if enchanted with the sound of the language. See J.R. Krzyżanowski, "Spotkanie z Singerem [An Encounter with Singer]," *Archipelag* 12 (1985): 120. This statement is supported in the article by Marian Turski, a Polish journalist, who reports that while speaking Polish Bashevis would sometimes stop and hesitate to find the right word but on the whole he spoke without mistakes, with proper intonation, in the Polish 'preserved' as it was in the first half of the twentieth century, without unelegant colloquial expressions and other 'novelties.' See Marian Turski, "Wieczor z Singerem [An Evening with Singer]," *Polityka* 27 (1984): 11.

<sup>5</sup>Yitzkhok Varshavsky (I.B. Singer), "A bukh fun poylish-yidishn shreyber in english," *Forverts* (December 1, 1963). See also Philip Roth, "Roth and Singer on Bruno Schulz," *New York Times Book Review* (February 13, 1977): 50.

<sup>6</sup>I.B. Singer "Kilka godzin z Polakami, [A Few Hours with Poles]" *Felietony, eseje, wywiady* [Feuilletons, Essays, Interviews], transl. from the Yiddish by Tomasz Kuberczyk (Warszawa, 1993): 95-96, 98-99.

<sup>7</sup>See my article "Between Art and Stereotype: I.J. Singer's *Brothers Ashkenazi* and W.S. Reymont's *The Promised Land*," *Proceedings of the 12<sup>th</sup> Congress of Jewish Studies*, forthcoming.

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<sup>8</sup>On Kosinski's reception by Polish critics see my article "Return of the Troublesome Bird: Jerzy Kosinski and Polish Jewish Relations," *Polin* (1999):

<sup>9</sup>Used as the motto to Ch. Shmeruk's study *The Esterke Story in Yiddish and Polish Literature: A Case Study in the Mutual Relations of Two Cultural Traditions* (Jerusalem, 1985). The study itself contains a lot of valuable information on contacts between Yiddish and Polish literature and points at areas that require further research.

<sup>10</sup>Irving Buchen, *Isaac Bashevis Singer and the Eternal Past* (New York, 1968), p. 48, n. 2.

<sup>11</sup>See Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, *Stara Baśń* [The Old Fairy Tale] (Warszawa, 1972), p. 98.

<sup>12</sup>Isaac Bashevis Singer, *The King of the Fields* (New York, 1988), p. 46.

<sup>13</sup>*Di familye Mushkat*, p. 59. I use my own translations into English in brackets since the published English translation contains numerous omissions and changes.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 59-60.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 174.

<sup>16</sup>Maria Karpluk, "Imiona i nazwiska Żydów polskich przykładem językowej interferencji [First Names and Family Names of Polish Jews as Examples of Linguistic Interference]," *Onomastica* 29 (1984): 207-208.

<sup>17</sup>*Di familye Mushkat*, p. 194-195.

<sup>18</sup>In the English translation all these names, except Gensha [Polish Gęsia], were omitted.]