

HILLEL BAVLI

1893-1961; family name Raschgolin, Raschgolsky (hence Bavli), father rav is Lithuanian town; learned with father and then briefly in Kovno and then to US in 1912; studied at Columbia, Hebrew teaching and then at JTS. Shirim, 1938, Divir, contains two volumes; the first has poems from 1910-28. Aderet hashanim, Mossad Bialik, 1955.

Presented by Epstein as a man who declined extremes, found his identity in his calling as a poet, accepted the fate of obtaining beauty from sadness, a classical writer by temperament who goes deeper in the existing forms and explores what is unchangingly human about humankind.

Early poems written at the time of his immigration express a pained sense of dislocation and anomie. Of the American Hebrew poets, an example of turning away from the din of the immigrant experience; no attempt to engage it. Never entirely alienated from his roots in his father's home in Lita and from his relation to the tradition. Scattered throughout the collection are a genre rare among the Americans: prayers to God, supplications, kinds of selihot. (Some have been incorporated in the Conservative liturgy.) P. 51 surprised to find a prayer issuing from his lips in this alien land. 64 poem on experience in church and the seductiveness of Christian liturgy, with rejection at end.

Al berakhat George, 125-8, with last poem dedicated to Halkin. Abandonment to the beauty of nature, uplifted, delighted, sustained in spirit, but not a source of transcendence. And here, perhaps, is the diff. from Halkin; nature for Bavli is the font of metaphysical exploration but remains on the level of the senses and the spirit.

Beginning at the end of Book One, narrative emerges as a key strategy for B. Mrs. Woods, 136-45 is a celebrate and anthologized idyll/poema that fuses the fascination with rural America with the preoccupation with portraiture, story telling, monologue. Edwin Arlington Robinson as key figure [TO BE INVESTIGATED!] and ideal. Eulogy poem quoted by Epstein. Idealization of old America, dream of wholeness. Parallel effort in Bema'avar leNew York, 149-55 on believing Jew who has lived in Staten Island for 30 isolated from the teeming Jewish immigrant neighborhoods and suffers the absence of Jewish life. Monologue on the ferry.

Book Two opens with the cycle Neginot Erets, written on and in the wake of his trip to EY in 1928. Identified with labor and settlement and oppressed by the religious sites. Compare to the thinness of Efros's cycle, which is all about ships and the ocean. Here the connection to the land is critical and the sense of painful resignation at departing is powerful. Disappointment in himself (Bevekhi mimekh yatsati, 199); fated sacrifice. But, as in the case of many of the writers, we do not know, at least from the poetry, the constraints and factors in their choice not to settle.

Poems addressing the poet, himself; Epstein: basic situation is beauty extracted from sorrow; classic lyric move.

Love poetry: two extended cycles: Ts'if yegonim (297-332) and Besevakh hayamim (433-46). As E remarks, these are not of the drunken abandonment of youth but a more mature man who enters and experiences the tangle of emotions involved in loving another and parting. Measured, extended; diff. bet. the two.

Poem on changed friendship, 341: meditating on time and acquaintance
Moving tribute to Silkiner, 344

Benai Lita cyle in Aderet hashanim (impresses Harshav): flowing narrative, monologue portraits, types from childhood shtetl.

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no date, after k'o'ss

complex little poem runs on contradiction but. the classic
tone of hell that bring delight to hearer & hidden violence
& suffering that produce them

Virtuoso performance in making so much borne by so little.

Thematizing the ideal of small ~~set~~ simplicity in this art/poetic
exercise: characteristic ^{short words, biblical lexicon} ~~guaranties~~ but compressed,

squeezed - rhyme in b-d pattern, also, but used to
illustrate the essential paradox or antinomies at heart of

the brief lyric: 1, 2, 3, ~~etc~~ of diff

Reading

I onomatopoeia etc. on first wd, poem as whole - title +
initiating situations: ~~exact~~ delightful areas w/ keller's clapper-
py announcements - little, inside part - endearment -
sing voice of first user

741 131218 - how delightful! children's voice & prospect of
delight does not change with 73 * animated, talking objects
Analogy prepared - what, fable, still ^{rapot whisking & singing in Disney movie} when a voice
even fairy tale situation - at this point only plaintive

II Second stanza is a shock - takes us inside the bell & exposes
^{the} internal mechanism that produces pleasing reverberation
that travel to the ears of others -

131218
check if
bib.
131218 is dominant semantic anchor - itself a violation of
lexical register. - familiar to all from Davis & Gelman's story
but only in xxx form