

other examples of how the two groups crossed paths. One such that Anttil brings forward with particular delight centers around the Monument National, inaugurated by the Société St.-Jean-Baptiste in 1893 to serve French Canadian nationalist ends. Circumstance gave this building a parallel community-building vocation in the Jewish community, as preferred venue for Yiddish Theatre and Vaudeville, as overflow hall for the High Holy Days and as the place in which the founding meeting of the Canadian Jewish Congress was held.

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Pollock, Zailig, Seymour Mayne, and Usher Caplan editors. *A.M. Klein: Selected Poems*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1997. 190pp.

Klein's selected poetry, edited by Pollock, Mayne and Caplan, is a superb gift to all interested in Canadian and Jewish Canadian literature. It is a selection readily accessible to all due to its multicultural nature and the editors' painstaking and illuminating annotation. It goes without saying that this volume is of importance in both Canadian and Jewish Canadian literature. The poems constitute a chronological selection from Pollock's edition of Klein's *Complete Poems*. The book is a miniature encapsulation of Klein, and is a fine addition to the many other contributions of the editors. The introduction provides a clear perspective on Klein and his poetry. The edition includes an index of titles and first lines.

Klein was a modernist, in tune with the traditions of both Jewish and English literature and lore. His scope is so broad and yet so specialized; Klein has the ability to fuse many images providing a sensibility of expression which may be uniquely Jewish in theme but relies heavily on the poetic expression of classic masters like Shakespeare or Coleridge. Although a Jew writing frequently on Jewish themes, he was a Canadian poet as well as an alienated modern poet, the roles in

which he saw himself as well. This review will examine three poems briefly to illustrate three of the most important aspects of Klein.

In “A Psalm touching Genealogy,” Klein sees himself as the epitome of Judaism and Jewish nationhood within the form of Jewish universalism. The poem projects a heightened awareness of Jewish identity. It is a historical psalm, with biblical overtones, in which the blood of Jewish history flows through the poet’s veins.

Klein as poet and philosopher appears in two masterful poems, “Out of the Pulver and the Polished Lens” and “A Poet as Landscape.” Spinoza is the alienated figure of the first poem, a solitary man of breeding and a thinker who perceives indifferently what Klein portrays as an overfed Jewish rabble, ignorant and vulgar. God is constantly pulled down by His people. Klein and Spinoza wish Him to be without these abhorrent helpers, to let him loose to play his game of celestial solitude. The God described here is natural and pantheistic, free in spirit like Spinoza and Klein, but tied down by externals.

“A Poet as Landscape” gives us a much wider view of a man alienated from his community. In it, we find a twentieth century poetic alienation, a modernism evoked most seriously. The poet is a solitary figure, living completely submerged in an impersonal world. The outside constantly upsets his private world and thought.

Klein read and was greatly influenced by the poetry of both modern Yiddish and Hebrew writers. The translations of the Hebrew poet Bialik in this collection are truly stunning. According to Yankev Glatstein, the well known Yiddish writer and critic, A.M. Klein was also thoroughly familiar with the Yiddish poetry of his era. It is unfortunate that this selection provided no translations of these poems.

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