

Yiddish Literature

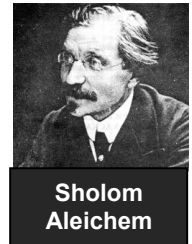
8.00pm Saturday 24 March

An evening with Bonita Posen



Bonita regularly gives literary seminars and presentations. She is particularly fond of the nineteenth century classical novels including Yiddish writing. Bonita made Aliyah about 13 years ago and now lives on a moshav near Pardess Hanna and is a doting grandmother to three small children. She retired from a career in England as a prison educator and teacher trainer. Bonita is delighted and grateful to be able to indulge a passion for reading and enthuse about it to others.

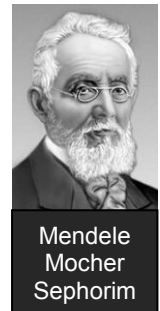
The three founding fathers of Yiddish literature, the 'greats' are **Sholom Aleichem**, **Mendele Mocher Sefhorim** and **IL Peretz** and some of their work could have been written in Hebrew since, for so many, Yiddish was a despised language.



However, Mendele Mocher Sefhorim's conversion to writing in Yiddish occurred when he realized that Yiddish was the language most people spoke in the Pale. It was the language they would understand as they read about their own lives.

We have jewels of stories such as *On Account of a Hat*, one of several railway journey stories where a man accidentally picks up the wrong hat and believes he has changed identity with hilarious and dismal effects when he doesn't make it home for Pesach.

Peretz's *Brontsha the Silent* recounts the story of extreme misery provoking in Brontsha such humility that in Paradise he is rebuked for his failure to cry out against his suffering. This story interestingly serves as a counterpoint to the recent production in Netanya of *Gimpel the Fool* by Bashevis Singer where suffering is accepted as a tool of heaven, not to be railed against.



Brontsha was used to urge the Jews never again to accept passively the suffering inflicted on them in the Pale but to defend themselves against their tyrants.

Mendele Mocher Sefhorim, (real name Shalom Abramovitch) picks up a similar theme in *The Little Man* and *Fishke the Lame*. Fishke is too ugly to marry a cholera bride and is only chosen as a replacement groom when the first choice fails to turn up to the chuppa. So what is a cholera bride.....?

These stories will be told in a presentation of dramatized readings with interpretation and filmed extracts of original Yiddish film obtained from the United States. This will be an evening of nostalgia, laughter and tears and, above all, instant recognition of the life in the old country of our grandparents and great grandparents as they recalled it and would like it to be continued to be told to successive generations.

Members pre-booked NIS 35
Non-members and at door NIS 45