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| Singer, Isaac Bashevis (1904-1991) |
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| Singer was born in Leoncin, Poland, where his father was a Hasidic rabbi. He grew up from 1908-1917 in Warsaw and 1917-1921 in Bilgoray (Biłgoraj), which shaped his knowledge of small-town Jewish life. The younger brother of Yiddish writers Israel Joshua Singer and Esther Kreitman, Singer began reading secular literature at 10, and after years of religious study, he eventually followed his brother into Warsaw’s bohemian literary Yiddish community, translating several modern writers into Yiddish. He did not marry the woman who bore his son in 1929 before she and the child moved to the Soviet Union and later to Israel.  Singer’s first novel*, Der Sotn in Goray [Satan in Goray]*, set in 17th century Poland amid pogroms and the false messiah Sabbatai Zevi, appeared in 1934, and the next year, he joined Israel Joshua in New York City where both wrote for the Yiddish press. In 1950, Singer married Alma Haimann Wassermann, a German Jewish immigrant from a once wealthy family who supported the couple as a retail clerk. Singer wrote in Yiddish for his entire life; most of his novels were serialized in the *Jewish Daily Forward* Yiddish newspaper. Unlike most great Yiddish writers, he found success in translation, particularly after Saul Bellow’s translation of the story ‘Gimpel the Fool’ appeared in *Partisan Review* in 1953. |
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| Further reading:  (Farrell)  (Hadda)  (Wolitz) |