David Fogel (1891-1944)

David Fogel was born in 1891 in the town of Satanov in Podolia. In 1912 he moved to Vienna where he stayed until 1925. During World War I, he was arrested and spent time in internment camps. In 1917, he began publishing short lyrical poems in the Hebrew press. He married in 1919, but his wife soon died from tuberculosis, an illness he also suffered from since 1920. His collection of poetry, Lifnei ha-sha’ar ha-afel (Before the Dark Gate), was published in 1923 in Vienna. In 1925 he moved to Paris and settled there. While in Paris, he wrote prose and poetry and remarried. In 1929 he and his new wife immigrated to Palestine and his daughter was born. However, their settlement in Palestine was not successful, and soon after they returned to Paris. Upon his return to Europe he gave a series of lectures concerning language and style in modern Hebrew literature. When World War II erupted, Fogel and his family were in Paris. His wife and daughter were saved, but he was arrested by the Vichy Police. The last time he was seen alive was in 1942. From this point on he disappeared; information concerning his whereabouts was fragmentary and contradictory. He was probably released from internment camp, but in 1944 he was arrested again by the Gestapo and sent to Drancy, a transit camp for French Jews. He was later sent to Auschwitz and murdered there.

Although Fogel did not publish much in his lifetime, his writings are considered today to be an important part of Hebrew modernism. But this was not always the case. eDu to his departure from Palestine shortly after his arrival, he was not considered to be one of the main Hebrew writers of the time. Also, his poetics was markedly different from others writing at the time in Palestine. Taking his influence from European poetry, Fogel’s style was mostly impressionistic, which was in some ways [?] rejected by the Hebrew literary establishment of the time. Chaim Nahman Bialik set the literary tone in those years and did not approve of Fogel’s poetry. It was almost forgotten. But in 1954, the then influential Israeli poet Natan Zach published an article titled “After a Forgotten Poet,” choosing Fogel as an alternative for the leading poet [?] of the time (over, for example, Natan Alterman). Fogel’s poetry started to gain more appreciation following Zach’s endorsement.

His novel, Ha-yei nisui’m (Married Life), was written during the years 1929-1939. It was re-published in Israel in 1986, and became a bestseller. It is considered to be one of the finest novels written in Hebrew up until this day. His novella “Nochach yam” (Facing the Sea), published first in 1932, is still read as an important modernist piece. In 2005, the Hebrew literary scholar Dan Miron published an essay on Fogel and positioned him as one of the most important poets in Hebrew. In 2009 an unknown novel by Fogel was discovered in his archive. It was published in 2012.

List of publications:

• *Lifnei ha-sha’ar ha-afel* (Before the Dark Gate) (1923) Vienna: Keter; (2012) Kibbutz ha-meuchad.

• *Be-veit ha-marpe* (In the Sanatorium) (1927) Jerusalem: Mitzpe. (2008) Bnei Brak: Hakibutz ha-meuhad.

• *Nohah Yam* (Facing the Sea)(1973) Tel Aviv: M. Noyman; (2005) Tel Aviv: Hakibutz ha-meuhad.

• *Ha-yey nisu’im* (Married Life) (1929) Jerusalem: Mitzpe; (1986) Tel Aviv: Hakibutz ha-meuhad.

• *Tahanot kavot* (Extinguished Stations) (1990) Tel Aviv: Hakibutz ha-meuhad.

*David Fogel: Kol ha-shirum* (David Vogel: All his Poems) (1998) Tel Aviv: Hakibutz ha-meuhad.

• *Roman Vina-ee* (Viennese Romance) (2012) Tel Aviv: Am Oved.

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