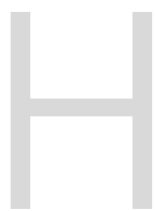




Anne Kleiman, Elementary School Graduation, St. Joseph, MO, 1921.
Courtesy of Adina Kleiman



EBREW POETRY IN TRANSLATION:

Anne Kleiman

Introduced and translated by
Yosefa Raz

In “Seas and Wind” Anne Kleiman’s speaker shouts “rise up sea!” In Hebrew, these words are a direct quote from the Song of the Sea. Anne Kleiman, an American poet choosing to write in Hebrew in the 1940s, invokes Miriam’s voice to add strength to her own personal voice. It seems fitting then, for the first contemporary translations of her work to appear in an issue devoted to interpretations of the biblical Miriam. Translating Anne Kleiman’s work for the past year, I am struck by the largeness of the voice she musters, all the way to heaven and back, as well as by the poignancy of her short writing career. I had the honor of meeting her in 2006, months before her 97th birthday, surrounded by her children, friends and family, at a reading organized in her honor. When I asked her

why she stopped writing after her first book, *N’tafim* (Droplets), came out in 1947, she said, “I’m waiting.” Her answer reminded me of Tillie Olsen’s, *Silences*, in which she asks us to pay attention to the silences in the careers of women writers, and the complex reasons for them. For Anne Kleiman, a long, full life followed, raising children, painting, teaching, and always continuing to read and study; but I still can’t help but wonder what her poetry would have continued to say about Israel, her Jewish identity, and the power of women in the 1950s, ’60s and beyond. These poems are part of a larger project I have undertaken with Shachar Pinsker, a professor of Hebrew Literature at University of Michigan, to translate, annotate and contextualize Kleiman’s book, and publish it as a bi-lingual edition.