

## **Molly Picon and the Cinematic Archetype of a Jewish Woman**

**by Jérôme Segal and Monika Kaczek**

The scene took place in Vienna, in November 2009, in the Metrokino, one of the oldest cinemas in the city, which has been used as a theatre since 1920. An actress was on stage, alone with a pianist, part of the programme of the seventeenth Vienna Jewish Film Festival. Caroline Koczan, the actress, was devoting a whole show to her American idol, Molly Picon (1898-1992), in a crowded cinema. She showed two extracts from Picon's films. Who's Molly Picon, appearing boyishly, in pants and a cap? Why have so many people come? Do they know Molly Picon?

After a brief glance at her biography and the specific characteristics of Yiddish theatre and cinema, the paper will focus on three aspects of Picon's archetypical femininity: its influence on the migration discourse, the gender issue and the preservation of the Yiddish language.

### **I – An American-Jewish Actress with Yiddish Background**

According to Deborah Felder and Diana Rosen, Molly Picon ranks among the *Fifty Jewish Women Who Changed The World...* together with another actress, Barbra Streisand (born in 1942). Molly Picon is described as 'One of the few actresses to successfully make the transition from the Yiddish theater to the Broadway stage and Hollywood films.' (Felder and Rosen 2003, 145)

She was born on the Lower East Side of Manhattan on 28 February 1898 as Margaret Małka Opiekun, daughter of Clara Ostrow, a wardrobe mistress, and Louis Opiekun, a poor shirt-maker who soon left his wife and daughters (Molly was very close to her sister Helen). As was stated in a recent exhibition, which also dealt with her childhood, 'Molly's mother, Clara Ostrovsky (later Ostrow),

had left Rizshishtchov ('a little town that looks like a sneeze and sounds it', near Kiev, Russia) with her brothers and sisters (eleven, eventually) in 1890, just ahead of the pogroms.' (Green 2009) Clara supported the family by working as a seamstress at Kessler's Theater. She recognized her daughter's talent during a spontaneous performance in a tram and introduced Molly to a talent show at the age of five.

'A drunk on the trolley demanded that she do her act then and there. She consented, concluding with an imitation of the drunk himself. Impressed, he collected pennies for her from the other passengers. At the contest, she would add to them the first-prize five-dollar gold piece and the loose change that her first legitimate audience had spontaneously tossed onstage. Molly Picon had begun her theatrical career.' (ibid.)

In 1912, Picon debuted at Arch Street Theater and rapidly rose to become a star of the Yiddish stage on Second Avenue. During a tour, Picon met the Yiddish actor Jacob 'Yankel' Kalich (1891-1975). He had been born in Galicia and was fluent in five languages. They swiftly fell in love and married on 29 June 1919, in the back of a grocery store, the bride in a dress which her mother had sewn from a theatre curtain. In August 1920, Picon gave birth to a stillborn baby girl. 'Peculiar that a perfect love should bear dead fruit', she wrote in her autobiography. Pelvic disease left her unable to bear more children, but she and Kalich later decided to adopt children.

After this tragic episode, Kalich organized a tour to Europe with his wife. They acted in Yiddish in many different theatres. Between 1921 and 1923, they could be seen in Vienna, Paris, London and Bucharest, but also in Czernowitz and Lemberg, the capitals of two former crown lands of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy where many Jews had remained.<sup>1</sup> It was in Austria that she shot her first three films, all in Yiddish (see filmography): *The Jewish Girl* in 1921, *Watch your Daughters* the following year and *East and West* in 1923, the only film which has been preserved.

In 1932, the couple went to Palestine. They lived on a Kibbutz and performed in Yiddish despite the Hebrew-only policy. Back in the United States, she was a true star, also broadcasting on radio in Yiddish. Nevertheless, she kept on shooting films in Europe, or in Poland to be more precise: *Yiddle with His Fiddle* in 1936 and *Mamele*, a milestone in the history of Yiddish cinema since it was the last film made immediately before the outbreak of the Second World War. Picon made her English language debut on stage only in 1940. Her most important film was undoubtedly *Fiddler on the Roof* (1971), an adaptation of a music-hall production which won three Oscars.

## II – Jewish Archetypes in American Theatre and Cinema

Yiddish theatre developed in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Attachment to the Yiddish language, spoken mostly by Ashkenazi Jews in Central and Eastern Europe, revealed an ambivalent stance between tradition and modernity. On the one hand, tradition related to the themes of the play, e.g. those by Sholem Aleichem (1859-1916), and Yiddish theatre served as a vehicle of revolutionary ideas, on the other. In their book on the *Revolutionary Yiddishland*, Brossat and Klingberg described the effects of the Russian Revolution as an outburst of freedom in Yiddish plays: 'It made fun by deriding religion, rigid morality and the traditional life. The production insisted on collective actions and mass movements'. (Brossat-Klingberg 2009, 190, authors' translation). Yiddish theatre was also a means of self-affirmation, for those Jews who opted for self-expression and partly rejected assimilation. It was also a way of expressing Jewishness without reference to the Jewish religion, but some Jews were wary of this art form, thinking that some plays might serve anti-Semitic purposes.

Initially, Yiddish cinema was an extension of the theatre, but it also meant moving from the *shtetl* to the city. In his seminal book, *Bridge of Light - Yiddish Film Between Two Worlds*, the film specialist, Jim Hoberman,

distinguishes five phases in the history of Yiddish film. The period from 1911 to the end of the First World War was a time which coincided with the 'development of movies as a mass medium, marking the discovery of a Jewish film audience in the Tsarist empire and, to a lesser degree, in the United States' (p. 5). The second period, from 1917 to the end of the silent era, is characterized by 'sporadic but ambitious attempts to make specifically Jewish movies within the industries of the new states – Austria, Poland and the Soviet Union' (p. 6). Only half a dozen films from this period have been preserved, including *East and West*, starring Molly Picon. *The Jazz Singer* (Crosland, 1927) is not only considered the first feature-length motion picture with synchronized dialogue sequences, it is also 'Jewish' in a novel way. As Hoberman worded it:

'Far more than Poland and even the Soviet Union, America offered an unprecedented opportunity for assimilation – or mutation. The immigrant Jew had not only the option of exploring secular modes of Jewishness, but of submerging himself alongside other wildly disparate groups in the creation of a new national identity. In the *Jazz Singer's* extravagant paean to personal reinvention, a cantor's son from Orchard Street, played by the cantor's son Al Jolson, becomes nothing less than 'The World's Greatest Entertainer' – as Jolson himself was known – by applying burnt cork and singing about his Mamy from Alabammy.' (p. 114)

This film marked the start of the third period, characterized by a development of Yiddish cinema that largely took place in the United States, with a total of about 20 films. Molly Picon was one of the Jewish entertainers of the 1920s who used the same trick as in the *Jazz Singer* to mask themselves with a black face. They were no longer immigrants, but could choose American identity in this reference to slavery.

The fourth period was marked by a reanimation of the Polish movie industry in 1935 and also includes Molly Picon's hit, *Fiddle with His Fiddle* (1936) and *Mamele* two years later. This period lasted until 1945, which spelled as it were the death of Yiddishland. Since that time, the production of

Yiddish films has only been considered a decision made in the field of cultural politics to try to resuscitate the Yiddish language (today fewer than 3 million speakers worldwide).

Molly Picon was the only actress to play major roles in all these periods. The great American director D.W. Griffith noted that she was 'the most interesting actress in America' (Felder and Rosen 2003, 148). Griffith wanted her for his first talking movie, *The Yiddisher Baby*.<sup>2</sup> The variety of her acting was often related to her femininity, since she dared to go beyond the stereotypes frequently attached to women in the films of that time. The filmmaker and historian Eve Sicular, who has organized an exhibition on Yiddish films notes: 'Picon's gleeful performances were a unique phenomenon, given how rarely women in Yiddish films were depicted as more than some man's mother, wife, daughter, sister or sweetheart.' (Sicular 1995, 14)

Interestingly, this acting complexity was linked to her role as a street urchin disguised as a boy. In the oldest scrapbook related to her tour of Europe in the early 1920s, a French journalist from the journal *Menorah* reported: 'when she wants us to laugh, she becomes a real street urchin [*'gavroche'*]', adding, 'The prodigious activity of Maly (sic) Picon is not confined to theatre. Art is her life. In Vienna she has created the first Jewish movie, *East and West*, which will soon be screened in cinemas all over Europe and America. Her husband has established a cinematographic company with its head office in Palestine, and her inner taste for beauty, so characteristic of Maly Picon, her taste for the real, for what is big, for life, will find an unlimited field of expression in this 'seventh art form', the cinema.'<sup>3</sup>

Journalists and reviewers early spotted Molly Picon's ability to play with genders, while successfully changing from theatre to cinema and vice versa. She embodied the female counterpart to the American dream. In an article entitled '\$35 a week to \$3,000 in 8 yrs', we read:

'When little Jewish girls in ghettos all over the world have their sweetest and boldest dreams, they imagine themselves Mollie Picon. From the poverty and obscurity of Orchard St., in New York, where her father was a poor shirt-maker, Mollie Picon reached the pinnacle of Yiddish stage success. Today she is the highest paid Yiddish actress in the world, her weekly pay exceeding \$3,000. Eight years ago her salary was \$35 a week.'<sup>4</sup>

Three aspects of this description deserve a closer look: the importance of migration, the gender issue and the preservation of the Yiddish language.

### III – Migration and the Jewish Clash of Culture in Films

'Like all people who have nothing, I lived on dreams. With nothing but my longing for love, I burned my way through stones walls till I got to America. And what happened to me when I became an American is more than I can picture before my eyes, even in a dream.' (Yeziarska 1920, 114)

Anzia Yeziarska was one of the first writers to bring stories about immigration and American-Jewish women close to the mainstream audience. She also chronicled the hunger of her generation of newly arrived immigrants around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Born in the Russo-Polish village of Mały Płock in the early 1880s, Yeziarska arrived in the United States with her family around 1890. The film *Hungry Hearts* (E. Mason Hopper, USA 1922) was based on her short stories and focused on the members of the Levin family who emigrated from Eastern Europe to New York's Lower East Side. Abraham, the pious and religiously erudite father, had difficulty making a living and adjusting to life in America. His daughter Sara scrubbed floors in the tenement in order to earn money and 'become somebody'.

Until the Immigration Act of 1924, the inscription on the Statue of Liberty was relevant and reflected American immigration policy.<sup>5</sup> When Molly Picon

toured Europe, she represented America, still the safe haven for all Jews from Central Europe. The image she presented was also that of modernity, and Jewish life in Europe contrasted sharply with that in the United States. During a European tour, which consisted of performing plays in Yiddish, Molly Picon shot her third film, *East and West*, a film dealing with this very clash of cultures. In a book about Jewish women entitled *Blessed is the Daughter*, Carolyn Hessel wrote in her chapter on 'Women on Stage and Screen' (consisting of biographical sketches of Molly Picon, Lauren Bacall and Barbra Streisand): 'During the 1920s and 30s, Picon performed all over the world – in America, Europe, South America, and South Africa. One of the major themes of her plays and films was the growing gap between American and European Jews.' (Hessel 1999, 101)

Picon's husband, Kalich, helped the director, Sidney M. Goldin, and the co-writer, Eugen Preiss, in the production of *East and West*. Goldin (b. in Odessa around 1880, d. in New York in 1937) was a silent film director as well as a prominent writer, actor and Yiddish theatre producer. The result was outstanding, and was heralded as a milestone by the first commentators. A Viennese critic, E.G. Fried, wrote for instance:

'Now, after a long time, I have ventured to watch a Jewish film, because the name of one actress, Mali (sic) Picon, attracted me. I was enjoyably surprised. The film *East and West*, for which Sidney Goldin and Eugen Preiss wrote the script, reproduces authentic Jewish character and a real Jewish atmosphere. The plot itself is simple; it does not satisfy – one might say, thank God - high literary demands. A real American-educated Jewish girl goes with her father into her uncle's house in a little Polish town. The *enfant terrible* causes trouble in the tranquility of a life woven in tradition; one of the jokes turns sour, because in a mock wedding the girl really becomes the wife of a Talmud *bocher* by virtue of the marriage vows and the ring ceremony, and to get free, she has to get a divorce letter from him. But the Talmud boy (Jakob Kalich) loves the American girl and does not want to divorce her. The disaster lasts five years, until the boy, originally from a small village in Poland, metamorphoses externally and internally in Vienna. He becomes a famous author, an orientalist, wears clothes from a top-class

tailor and horn-rimmed spectacles from time to time and he certainly gets his wife at the end.

(...)

As a Jewish female scallywag from America, Mali Picon has gorgeous natural charm and is full of gags of a delicate, discreet humour. In situations in which the humour becomes rather crude, it probably derives from the director's ideas. Her and Jakob Kalich's relaxed and intimate partnership add to the joy I already felt watching a film with an authentic Jewish atmosphere.<sup>6</sup>

One of the reasons for this enthusiasm was the ambiguous gender representation in Molly's character.

#### **IV – Gender Representations in Picon's Films**

All biographies of Molly Picon indicate that her father was unhappy that his first child, nicknamed 'Molly Dolly', was a girl. Felder and Rosen go so far as to state that 'Louis was an indifferent father.' (Felder Rosen 2005, 146) Psychoanalytical interpretations should be treated with caution, but the relationship Molly had with her father before he left home probably played a major role in her interest in boyish characters. Caroline Koczan, the contemporary theatrical actress who played Molly Picon in a one-woman-show in the autumn of 2009, explained the importance of this episode in Picon's biography: 'Molly was very conscious about being a woman. She was a kind of emancipated woman and did not want to follow the traditional Jewish roles of spouse, mother and housewife. She had learned, through the separation of her parents, that a woman can manage her life on her own'. For her, the interesting question is also to ask how her husband, Kalich, viewed her.<sup>7</sup>

Beyond the influence of her childhood, one could also envisage the legacy of the Jewish tradition of disguise (a religious feast with carnival elements during Purim). Eve Sicular, who has extensively studied gender issues in Jewish films, has downplayed this influence, recalling that Purim



'had been essentially only a one-way, male-to-female, once-a-year religiously sanctioned ritual involving men or boys playing both men's and women's parts. While women were allowed to witness Jewish men dressed as Vashti and Esther, the reverse did not pertain to performances done by any girls' yeshivas. Clearly, all sorts of Old-World order had already been thrown into question to allow an act as unconventional as Molly Picon's to be considered popular family fare. The 1921 show which launched Picon's career ensured that, from the beginning, her fame was linked to her performance in boys' clothing.' (Sicular 1995, 15)

During the tour Molly and her husband went on to Europe, a journalist stated:

'A concert from the Yiddish repertoire was given by Miss Mali (sic) Picon and Mr. Jacob Kalish (sic) at the Rivoli on Sunday afternoon, in aid of the Palestine Workmen's Fund. Mali Picon is a comedienne of the first order. Her character studies of a little girl, a sophisticated school girl, a nervous bride, and a neglected matron, were highly amusing, but **she excelled as a *cheder*** [traditional elementary school] **boy**, her husband and partner being the patient-impatient *melamed* [religious teacher or instructor in general].' (London, Tuesday 9 October 1923) (p. 2 of the scrapbook #1, authors' emphasis – see similar article after her show in Vienna, p. 18)

In the journal *Neues Czernowitz Tageblatt* of 3 January 1923, it can be read: 'if we add (particularly for the female world) that in this role she wears male clothing, then we have shown almost all the assets of this really great artist'. (p. 19 of the scrapbook #1, authors' translation) This pose by Molly Picon was both the expression of her Jewishness and a consequence of a view of femininity progressively considered as a social construct. David Lyle Solomon wrote his Ph.D. thesis on American- Jewish theatre and the politics of representation. The play with stereotypes, e.g. with the model of African-American experience, results from the tension between the fact that Jews could be assimilated as elements of the American melting pot, but still felt the need to express their Jewishness, yet without reference to religion. Solomon

states 'performing Jewishness is a process that embodies imagined cultural representations' and he subsumes the different attitudes this way:

'In fact, the emphasis upon the body as the heart of Jewishness connects nearly all of the plays (...) : be it adopting a black body to prove Jewish whiteness (Raphaelson's *The Jazz Singer*, Jewish minstrel performances), manipulating blackness to dramatize Jewish difference (...), redefining beauty in order to represent Jewish difference (...), paralyzing the Jewish body to represent prejudice against the Jewish population (...), putting the Jewish body in drag to challenge Jewish masculinity (Molly Picon's pants roles on the Yiddish stage, Jewish comedians' drag routines, Fierstein's *Torch Song* Trilogy), allowing the Jewish woman's body to speak, an act which in and of itself challenges stereotypes of Jewish masculinity (...), comparing the Jewish body to the AIDS-stricken body in order to link the Jewish and the gay American experience (...), rendering the Jewish body impotent as punishment for abandoning a Jewish identity (...), punishing the Jewish body for a desertion of ethics (...). (Solomon 2004, 263-64, authors' emphasis)

This specific feature of Molly Picon, as it can be observed in two of her early films, is at the core of her idiosyncratic approach to the Jewish question. In *East and West* (1923), we see Molly disguised as a boy who gatecrashes a pre-wedding celebration. In *Yiddle with his Fiddle* (1936), she is a boy for most of the film. In order to earn money as an itinerary *Klezmorim* (traditional Jewish musician), her father hits on the idea of dressing her as a young boy to make the trip safer. At the beginning, she complains loudly, "If only I was a man", and later on, when she is drinking in a tavern 'like a man', she fusses around a woman with long braids, incorporating typical macho behaviour as part of a masculine identity. It is only towards the end of the film (76') that this dialogue takes place: "Yiddle, be a man", "I don't want to be a man (...) I am a girl". Molly then comments on her love, which had seemed impossible before this revelation ("A man in love with another man?", 83').<sup>8</sup>

The decisive role played by Molly Picon in the expression of a new femininity is unfortunately omitted in the recent collective book on *Queer*

*Theory and the Jewish Question* (Boyarin 2003). Nevertheless, this work contains stimulating insights on the gender aspect of Jewish femininity. The editors state:

'If a Jewish woman can pass as a man, this is because, at least according to stereotype, she is already something of a man (...). Or, perhaps, and just as well, a Jewish girl can be a Jewish boy, because Jewish boys are already girls? Both work, and they work together at the level of cultural discourses that the film *Yentl* embodies and represents. (Boyarin 2003, 7 and 9)

*Yentl* (directed and acted by Barbra Streisand, 1983) is a famous film (three Oscars), adapted from a play by Isaac Bashevis Singer (1902-1991), '*Yentl, the Yeshiva Boy*' (originally *Yentl, der jeshive Bocher*, as Singer wrote in Yiddish and was awarded the Literature Nobel Prize for his writings in Yiddish).<sup>9</sup> This story of cross-dressing is about a rabbi's daughter with 'the soul of a man and the body of a woman'. After her mother's death, the young woman Yentl is raised by her father, who gives her lessons behind draped windows and locked doors because girls were not allowed to study the Talmud. Yentl is so intent on learning that after her father's death she defies Talmudic law by disguising herself as a man in order to attend a *yeshiva* (a religious school). Several adventures take place as circumstances force Yentl/Anshel into playing many roles simultaneously until she/he finally reveals her identity to the young man, Avigdor, who has become her closest friend and whose former fiancée she has married.<sup>10</sup>

As Eve Sicular notes, cross-dressing was important throughout Molly Picon's career. 'Molly Picon continued to be remembered for her cross-dressing roles throughout her career. Even in 1982, when receiving a lifetime achievement award from New York's YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, she arrived in a stylish tux.' (Sicular 95, 14)

Apart from these odd aspects of Picon's roles, her femininity was also expressed in 'straightened' way in *Mamele* ('Little Mother', Joseph Green and

Konrad Paul, 1938). This film had a huge impact on the public and has a place in film history as the very last vestige of Yiddish culture in Poland. Adapted from a theatrical comedy that Molly Picon had performed in the US a decade earlier, the film tells the story of a young woman who takes care of her four siblings and feckless father, after her mother has died. As Jim Hoberman observes, 'Even more than *Yidl*, *Mamele* is a vehicle for the vivacious Picon. What's remarkable is that, having just turned forty, she is still playing the gamine: this 'miracle' even forms parts of the film's subtext. In one of Picon's numbers (...), she ages from adolescent to octogenarian, appearing variously as a little girl, a young woman at her first dance, a stout matron of forty-eight, and a seventy-eight-year-old grandmother. (...) *Mamele* is essentially a comic melodrama; a saga of maternal (or Jewish) misery.' (Hoberman 1991, 289-290)

In summary, Molly Picon's roles contributed to the conquest of new areas of expression. Her tomboyish roles challenged gender representations, whereas in *Mamele* she demonstrated how much responsibility a woman can take. As an actress involved in civil society, Molly Picon also worked for the preservation of Yiddish culture.

## V – Commitment to the Preservation of Yiddish Culture

During the trip to Europe Picon went on with Kalich in 1922, the couple met Chaim Weizmann, who later became the first President of the State of Israel. Molly Picon reminisced:

'We did a concert at Baden-Baden. [Chaim] Weizmann was there. It was a convention at which he spoke and [poet Chaim] Bialyk was there to hear Weizmann. Then he came to hear me because it was a Yiddish concert and he did not know what

material we did nor who we were. Well, it was not on Bialyk's level. Ours was the popular *shund* [lowbrow] musical theater. Anyway, he came backstage and said to Yankel in Yiddish: *zi makht fun a podeshve, aingemakhts (she transforms the sole of a shoe into marmalade)*. Then Bialyk invited us to Israel...Palestine, for a Seder [Jewish holiday].' (Leon 2009)

After the War, when Molly Picon returned to Israel in 1954, she was invited to sing at the Israeli Knesset. As Green remarks, 'Making a strong statement about the preservation of Yiddish language and culture, she entertained almost exclusively in Yiddish throughout her stay in the Hebrew speaking country.' (Green 2009) In an interview, she recalled: 'I just did concerts in Israel and the people who came to see me are the people who saw me all over in Europe who finally escaped to Israel'. 'People threw bouquets at me after each song. *'Molly! Gedenkst Varshe? Molly! Gedenkst Vienna? Kishinev?'* *Molly do you remember Warsaw, Vienna, Kishinev?* ' she replied: 'I did. I never forgot.' (Leon 2009)

In 1985, the Congress of Jewish Culture awarded her a 'Goldie', named after one of the fathers of Yiddish theatre, Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908). She accepted, again wearing a tuxedo in homage to the roles she had played in the 1930s. Molly Picon, 'the girl who gets older every year and younger every day', remained active until she was afflicted by Alzheimer's disease in her final few years. Throughout her career, she had lived up to her beloved husband Yankel's slogan: 'Molly, that's our job. Make them laugh' (Green 2009). At the same time, she also conveyed an image of femininity whose legacy has rarely been recognized.

### **Filmography (selected films mentioned above)**

With Molly Picon:

- 1921: *Das Judenmädel* (The Jewish Girl), directed by Otto Kreisler, Austria.

- 1922: *Hütet eure Töchter* (Watch for Your Daughters), directed by Sidney M. Goldin, Austria.
- 1923: *Misrech un majrev* (East and West), directed by Sidney M. Goldin and Ivan Abramson, Austria.
- 1936: *Jidl mit'n fidl* (Yiddle with His Fiddle), directed by Joseph Green and Jan Nowina-Przybylski, Poland/USA.
- 1938: *Mamele* (Little Mother), directed by Joseph Green and Konrad Tom, Poland.
- 1971: *The Fiddler on the Roof*, directed by Norman Jewison, USA.

On Molly Picon:

- 2007: *Making Trouble*, directed by Rachel Talbot, USA.

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<sup>1</sup> Since January 2009, an exhibit of the American-Jewish Historical Society, which is also available online, has shown the 22 scrapbooks that Jacob Kalich and Molly Picon kept from 1919 to 1967. Mostly containing documents in Yiddish and English, the 22 scrapbooks hold 'clippings, reviews

and interviews, fan letters, programs, telegrams and other ephemera' (press release, see <http://www.ajhs.org/scholarship/Molly/index.cfm>, accessed 21 December 2009).

<sup>2</sup> Eventually, this film was never shot. Picon played in her first talking film, *A Little Girl with Big Ideas*, in 1930, directed by Joseph Henabery (Hoberman 1995, 166).

<sup>3</sup> Scrapbook #1, 1923-1931, p.1, quoting a Viennese critic: "Quand elle veut nous amuser, c'est un vrai gavroche", and the journalist from Menorah added "L'activité prodigieuse de Maly (sic) Picon ne se limite pas au théâtre. L'Art est sa vie. Elle a créé à Vienne le premier film juif : *L'Est et l'Ouest*, qui sera bientôt projeté dans les cinémas d'Europe et d'Amérique. Son mari a fondé une société cinématographique dont le siège est en Palestine, et le goût inné du beau chez Maly Picon, son goût du vrai, du grand, de la vie, trouvera sans doute un champ d'expression illimité dans ce 'septième art' qu'est le cinéma."

<sup>4</sup> Scrapbook #1, 1923-1931, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

<sup>6</sup> Scrapbook #1, 1923-1931, p.5.

<sup>7</sup> Interviews of Caroline Koczan with the authors, December 2009.

<sup>8</sup> For this film, see also (Hoberman 1995, 237-242).

<sup>9</sup> Singer frequently used the theme of transvestism, e.g. in 'Disguised', (Singer 1986).

<sup>10</sup> See Garber's paper in Boyarin 2003 especially pp. 20-27 on *Yentl* as a 'straightened version' of Singer's short story, which contains this pithy statement, 'What a strange power there is in clothing'.