

SONGS IN DARK TIMES

YIDDISH POETRY OF STRUGGLE FROM
SCOTTSBORO TO PALESTINE



AMELIA M. GLASER

HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, Massachusetts, and London, England

2020

CONTENTS

Preface

The Optimists ix

Introduction

Yiddish Passwords in the Age of Internationalism 1

1 FROM THE YANGTZE TO THE BLACK SEA:

Esther Shumiatcher's Travels 39

2 ANGRY WINDS: Jewish Leftists and the Challenge of Palestine 72

3 SCOTTSBORO CROSS: Translating Pogroms to Lynchings 107

4 NO PASARÁN: Jewish Collective Memory in the
Spanish Civil War 139

5 MY SONGS, MY DUMAS: Rewriting Ukraine 174

6 TESHUVAH: Moishe Nadir's Relocated Passwords 211

Afterword

Kaddish 243

APPENDIX: Poems from the Age of Internationalism 251

H. Leivick, "A Sacco-Vanzetti Year" 251

Esther Shumiatcher, "At the Border of China" 252

Moyshe Teyf, "Sing, Desert Wind" 253

Shifre Vays, "Accusations" 255

Malka Lee, "God's Black Lamb" 256

Peretz Markish, "Spain" 257

Aaron Kurtz, "Kol Nidre" 261

Dovid Hofshateyn, "Ukraine" (1944) 262

Moishe Nadir, "Closer" 263

Aaron Kurtz, "Kaddish" 264

NOTES 269

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS 333

INDEX 337