



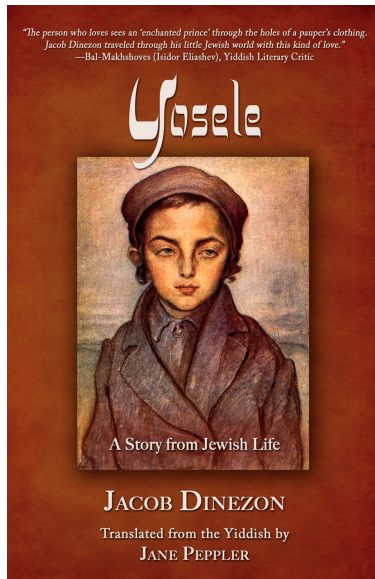
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For Immediate Release



YOSELE

A Story from Jewish Life

Author: Jacob Dinezon

Translator: Jane Pepler

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FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF YIDDISH NOVEL THAT TRANSFORMED JEWISH EDUCATION IN EASTERN EUROPE

Raleigh, NC — In 1899, the successful and beloved Jewish writer Jacob Dinezon published *YOSELE: A Story from Jewish Life*. Writing in a style similar to Charles Dickens, Dinezon exposed in stark detail the cruel and outmoded teaching methods prevalent in the traditional *cheders* (Jewish elementary schools) of the late 19th century.

Writing in Yiddish to reach the widest Jewish audience, Dinezon described the sad, poverty-stricken, and violent life of a bright and gentle schoolboy whose treatment at the hands of his teacher, parents, and shtetl society is shocking, painful, and heartrending.

The pathos and outrage resulting from this novel's publication produced an urgent call for reform and set the stage for the establishment of a secular schools movement in Eastern Europe which transformed Jewish elementary education.

Translated into English for the first time by Jane Pepler, *YOSELE* by Jacob Dinezon presents a rarely seen sociological and cultural picture of Eastern European Jewish life at the turn of the 20th century.

Jacob Dinezon (1852?-1919) was a central figure in 19th century Eastern European Jewish literary circles, and was a contemporary of such leading Yiddish writers as Sholem Aleichem (author of the Tevye stories) and I. L. Peretz (master of the Jewish short story). Dinezon focused on the emotional conflicts affecting young people as the modern ideas of the Jewish Enlightenment challenged traditional religious practices and social norms. The plight of his characters frequently brought tears to the eyes of his ardent readers.

Jane Pepler is an award-winning singer and musician, musical historian, and Yiddish translator. She has translated Yiddish stories by Sholem Aleichem and Mendele Moykher Sforim, and completed English translations of three Jacob Dinezon novels: *Yosele: A Story from Jewish Life*, *Hershele: A Jewish Love Story*, and *Alter*.

Jewish Storyteller Press was founded in 2007 to bring the works of 19th century Jewish writers to 21st century readers. Learn more at:

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