

NEVER SAY DIE!

לא אמות פי אחיה

לא אמות כי אחיה

טויזנט יאָר ייִדיש אין ייִדישן לעבן און שאַפן

שיקל פֿישמאַן, רעדאַקטאָר

Never Say Die!

*A Thousand Years of Yiddish
in Jewish Life and Letters*

Edited by JOSHUA A. FISHMAN

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מײַנע קינדער און איה״ש קינדסקינדער:
זאל זייער אהבת-ישראל זיך נישט ענדיקן
פֿון דרויסן פֿאר דער שוועל פֿון ייִדיש,
און זאל עס זיך נישט ענדיקן מיט ייִדיש אליין!



The major Eastern European Yiddish dialect areas: to the left of the north-south line, the 'central dialect' (popularly referred to as 'poylish/galitsyaner'); to the north of the east-west line, the 'northern dialect' (popularly referred to as 'litvish'); south of the east-west line, the 'southern dialect' (popularly referred to as 'volinyer/podolyer/besaraber'). Arrow points to Tshernovits.

וועגן יידיש

איך בין גיט קיין יידישיסט, וועלכער גלויבט, אז דאס
לשון אליין שטעלט מיט זיך פאר אן אבסאלוטן ווערט.
אבער א גמרא-ייד בין איך יא, און איך ווייס, אז היילי-
קייט און אבסאלוטקייט זיינען גיט אלעמאל אידענטיש.
די הלכה האט פארמולירט צוויי אידעען פון קדושה: (1)
גופי קדושה; (2) תשמישי קדושה. זי האט אפגעפסקנט,
אז מען דארף ראטעווען פון א שרפה שבת, גיט נאר די
ספר תורה נאר אויך דאס מענטעלע, אין וועלכן זי איז
איינגעוויקלט; גיט בלויז די תפילין, נאר אויך דעם זעקל,
אין וועלכן זי ליגן. ממילא, יידיש ווי א שפראך, גיט
קוקנדיק וואס זי איז גיט פאררעכנט צווישן גופי קדושה,
געהערט זיכער צום קלאס פון תשמישי-קדושה, וועלכע
זיינען אויך הייליק און וועלכע מען מוז באשיצן מיט אלע
כוחות. איז דען דא א שענערער „תיק“, אין וועלכן די
הייליקסטע ספרי-תורה זיינען געווען און זיינען נאך אלץ
איינגעוויקלט, ווי יידיש? אויף דער שפראך האט דער
רמ"א, דער מהרש"ל, דער ווילנער גאון, ר' חיים וואלא-
זשינער און אנדערע גדולי ישראל מיט זייערע תלמידים
תורה געלערנט. אויף יידיש האט דער בעל-שם-טוב, דער
מעזעריטשער מגיד און דער אלטער רבי — סודות פון
מעשה בראשית דערקלערט. אויף פשוטן מאמע-לשון
האבן די יידישע מאסן זייער אמונה, פשוטע ליבע און
טרישאפט אויסגעדריקט. עדי-היום זאגן גרויסע ראשי
ישיבות זייערע שיעורים אויף יידיש. אזא „תיק“ איז זי-
כער הייליק, כאטש זיך קדושה איז גיט קיין אבסאלוטע.
נאר אן אפגעלייטעטע, אין דעם גדר פון תשמישי-קדושה.
אויפהאלטן דעם „תיק“ איז א גרויסער זכות!

Abstract of Yiddish text on page VII

About Yiddish. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, one of the world's foremost rabbinic authorities, declares that although Yiddish is not holy in-and-of-itself, it nevertheless possesses holiness-by-association, in view of its centuries-old relationship with traditional Jewish piety, scholarship, exemplary leadership, and authentic way of life. Accordingly, it is a great privilege for Jews to exert themselves to protect Yiddish with all the power at their command. (*Der tog*, February 24, 1961)

Preface

JOSHUA A. FISHMAN

During the past two decades, I have devoted considerable effort to the sociology of Yiddish, on the one hand, and to more general sociolinguistic theory and research, on the other hand. In this volume I have tried to bring these two aspects of my work into a closer and more total relationship with each other than has ever been the case in the past. In doing so I have tried to create a volume on Yiddish for my sociolinguistic students and colleagues and, simultaneously, a volume informed by sociolinguistic theory and research for my students and colleagues from the field of Yiddish. However, since both volumes are actually one, I have also hoped that sociolinguistic specialists would find in its sociolinguistic component some materials and concepts that they would consider to be stimulating, whereas Yiddish specialists would, similarly, find in its Yiddish component a number of exciting and valuable suggestions and ideas.

The last few years have witnessed a substantial growth of Yiddish studies at the tertiary (college and university) level throughout the world, but particularly in the United States. However, most of the students benefiting by this development have concentrated on literary and linguistic materials. As a result, the full world of Yiddish, as it was and as it is, is frequently never focused upon or merely vaguely glimpsed. It was (and is) a world that deserves to be inspected directly and exhaustively, if only that its language and literature might be more fully understood and appreciated, but also, most basically, because, like every other human world, it gives testimony to the complexity, the resilience, the creativity, and the conflictedness of society in general and of language in society in particular.

Since it is my hope that a variety of readers may be interested in this volume, differing greatly from each other in area of specialization as well as in level of advancement within their field of special expertise, I have tried to include some basic introductory data, some information of a moderate degree of advancement, and some highly specialized material throughout the interrelated and mutually reinforcing sections of this volume. My own 'prologue' is multi-tiered accord-

ingly, and my 'epilogue' seeks to address itself to further studies in the sociology of Yiddish as a fruitful field for sociolinguistic and Yiddish specialists alike.

The Holocaust of the Nazi years has taken from us the bulk of the world of Yiddish. As that world recedes into history, at best, and into forgetfulness, at worst, it becomes even more subject to either deification, as the epitome of all that was and is holy, noble, wise, and genuine in the Jewish tradition, or to satanization, as the epitome of all the dislocation, pain, poverty, and persecution in Jewish history. It is my hope that this volume will add perspective to most popular reactions to Yiddish – whether pro or con – by providing a dimension of realistic depth and an appreciation for the internal struggles and external pressures that this world continually experienced. Far from being either superhuman or subhuman the world of Yiddish was – and still is, for it is far from over and done with – brimful of very human ambivalences: extremism and compromise, idealism and materialism, shortsightedness and eternal verities, tenderness and cruelty. It was and is a complete world: a full-woven tapestry; a varied world: a multicolored tapestry; a creative world: a still unrolling tapestry. The sociology of language – and, I am convinced, mankind in general – will be richer for becoming more familiar with it.

Of the many who have encouraged and enabled me to undertake and complete this volume, I want to single out for public thanks the Yivo, particularly its library, and most particularly Dina Abramovitsh, head librarian of the Yivo, for locating many dozens of items that I needed to examine, as well as Mordkhe Shekhter, Columbia University, for his friendly criticism and assistance in connection with dozens of queries, Robert Cooper, Hebrew University (Jerusalem), for his very helpful comments on an early draft of the Foreword to this volume, Leyzer Ran for permitting me to make use of so many of the splendid illustrations in his exemplary publications *Fun eliyohu bokher biz hirsh glik* (1963) and *Yerushelayem delite ilustrirt un dokumentirt* (1974), and, most importantly, members of my immediate family who helped me assemble the readings and check the bibliography, and, above all, who convinced me to include readings in Yiddish per se, so that through this volume the language would not merely be 'read about' – but would actually be read and studied directly. In the last analysis, language is not only a socioaffective referent but a cognitive–expressive system first and foremost. Like all languages, but somehow even more than most, Yiddish pleads to be and needs to be read, spoken, laughed, cried, sung, shouted. It is a breath of life itself. This volume, therefore, is, in part, also a contribution to those who will continue to breathe it, to use it, rather than just admire or long for it, and an attempt to add to their ranks.

January 1980

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... we dare not abandon one of the foundations of national unity in the very hour that the languages of the peoples around us rob our people of thousands and tens of thousands of its sons, so that they no longer understand the language used by their parents. We must not destroy with our own hands the power of our folk language to compete with the foreign languages which lead to assimilation. Such destruction would amount to suicide. There being no hope of converting our ancient national tongue into the living and daily spoken language in the Diaspora, we would be committing a transgression against our national soul if we did not make use in our war against assimilation of the great counterforce stored up in the language of the people.

... When the language problem is posed in all its ramifications and when it is clarified not from the viewpoint of one party or of one literary clique or another, but from the general national viewpoint, then there will be no place for such errors in this matter. Insofar as we recognize the merit of national existence in the Diaspora, we must also recognize the merit of Yiddish as one of the instruments of autonomy, together with Hebrew and the other factors of our culture.

Shimen Dubnov (Simon Dubnow). Khiyev hagoles; vegn shliles hagoles fun akhed hoom [Affirmation of the Diaspora; Concerning Aḥad Ha-'am's Negation of the Diaspora], in his *Briv vegn altn un nayem yidntum* [Letters Concerning Old and New Jewry]. Mexico City, Mendelson Fund, 1959 [1909].

The Sociology of Yiddish: A Foreword

JOSHUA A. FISHMAN

PART I: SOCIOHISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON YIDDISH

Two major viewpoints underlie most reflections about Yiddish across the centuries, be they by adherents or detractors, clergy or laity, language specialists or laymen. One view is that Yiddish is ‘just another’ Jewish diaspora vernacular – just one more member in a club whose membership has been both rather unselective and fleeting. The other holds that it is much more than that, whether for good or for evil. In relatively recent years, aspects of both views have come to be held simultaneously and dialectically by the same observers, so that the insights of both have been brought together in an intriguingly complementary perspective.

What all three of the above views have in common is their implicit contrastivity. Indeed, the aura of contrastivity accompanies Yiddish throughout the entire millennium of its existence (S. Birnboym 1939, 1968; Opatoshu 1950; Shiper 1923, 1924; M. Vaynraykh 1973) and leads both to a heightened componential consciousness *intralinguistically* (i.e. to a consciousness even among many ordinary members of the speech community as to the fusion nature of the language as a whole as well as of the ‘origins’ – real or purported – of particular words or structures) and to exaggerated efforts with respect to sociohistorical comparativity *interlinguistically*. Thus, Yiddish speakers in the United States are minimally aware, if not totally oblivious, of the hybrid or fusion nature of English (Acher 1902) e.g., but are fully aware of (even mesmerized by) that fact *vis-à-vis* Yiddish. Similarly, even those who have no more than a nodding acquaintance with Yiddish have a ready-made paradigm with respect to its componentiality (as well as with respect to its longevity), even though they have absolutely no such paradigm for languages with which they are far more familiar from the point of view of personal use and fluency. The foregoing observations are meant not merely to imply that ‘a little knowledge is a dangerous thing’, which is true enough, but that Yiddish is ‘one of those things’

The sections of this Foreword correspond to the sections of this volume.

about which there are readily available *Weltanschauungen*, conceptual maps, which it is exceedingly difficult to penetrate, to alter, to restructure. There is something about Yiddish that stimulates most ‘beholders’ to act as if they were comparative sociolinguists. Yiddish excites comparative and prognostic tendencies.

The fact that Yiddish has so obviously been the major Jewish diaspora vernacular of modern times – certainly it was such until the early 40s when the Holocaust savagely diminished the number of its users by some 75 per cent – led many polemicists (and even some scholars) who were more basically concerned with *other* Jewish languages to pursue their interests with one eye on Yiddish. Reminders that *loshn koydesh* was the holy tongue basically served to stress that Yiddish was not (Levinson 1935). Reminders that Hebrew was an eternal language served to underscore that Yiddish was not (Levinson 1935). The emphasis on the continued growth of modern Hebrew constantly pointed to the ‘obviously’ shrinking base of Yiddish (Bachi 1956; Hofman and Fisherman 1971; Maler 1925). Other Jewish vernaculars have regularly been explored in the light of questions, problems, prejudices, and findings initially derived from the intellectual, political or emotional sphere of Yiddish (e.g. Birnboym 1937; Blanc 1964; Bunis 1975; Faur 1973; Jochnowitz 1975; Shaykovski 1948; Vidal 1972; Ziskind 1965; etc.).

A related pattern is apparent in scholarly work pertaining to Yiddish per se. The view that it should be considered as a language in its own right, a language with systematic characteristics, relationships, functions, and concerns that are particularly and peculiarly its own within its community of users, is constantly ‘clinched’ by the view that Yiddish is a language *like* all other languages, *equal* to others, as *good* as others, whether the others be Jewish or not. Tsinberg, the major historian of Jewish literature, begins his treatment of Yiddish literature (1975 [1935]) with a chapter on the status of Yiddish in the period of early Yiddish literature. The chapter does *not* give extensive treatment to this topic, although the English translator pretended that it *does* by entitling it ‘Languages Among the Jews: The Origin of Yiddish’. Somehow neither Tsinberg nor his translator considered it possible to jump into the beginnings of Yiddish literature without at least a brief, comparative, sociolinguistic excursus. M. Vaynraykh, the master of modern Yiddish studies, does exactly that, and most thoroughly, whether he deals with Yiddish literature (1923b, 1928) or language (1973). The work on the variety of early names for Yiddish (including zhargon – jargon – and ivre-taytsh – translation of Hebrew) quickly points out that both the lack of naming consensus and the lack of self-acceptance (among its users) that are revealed by many of the early designations for Yiddish are quite like those obtained for many languages, including many Jewish languages (S. Birnboym 1942), the world over, and that this condition was even more widespread in centuries gone by and in the very heartland of Europe to boot (e.g. Dubnov

1929b; Prilutski 1938b, 1935; Spivak 1938). Even the YIVO (originally Yiddish Scientific Institute-YIVO and, since 1955, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research), in its widely distributed brochure entitled *Basic Facts about Yiddish*, is quick to point out that Yiddish 'is about the same age as most European languages' (1946), a claim that would concern only specialists, at best, in conjunction with English, French or Polish.¹

Componentialism, contrastivity, language relativism within and relativism without: these are all the marks of a language that arose among a people already literate (even biliterate) and the conscious and conscientious carriers of a classic tradition, as well as of a classic and seemingly inescapable burden, among the nations of the Euro-Mediterranean world. Both the tradition and the burden have fostered insecurities or, at the very least, sensitivities and awarenesses *vis-à-vis* Yiddish among its lay-devotees (Grosman 1974a; Samuel 1971a), that few other language communities of similar size and creativity have retained for anywhere near as long. However, the sublimation of these cognitive and conative tensions surrounding Yiddish has led to some of the century's major works on linguistics in general (Mizes 1915; U. Vaynraykh 1953), on Jewish interlinguistics more specifically (S. Birnboym 1951; Gold 1974; Paper 1978), and on Yiddish *per se* within a comparative framework (in particular M. Vaynraykh 1954,

1. The appreciable historicity of Yiddish is necessarily based upon historical reasoning and analogy in so far as its earliest beginnings are concerned (M. Vaynraykh 1973). The earliest datable *written* evidence of Yiddish stems from the thirteenth century (M. Vaynraykh 1963; Sadan 1963), although the likelihood that earlier written records existed and were lost due to lack of interest as well as because of expulsions and other adverse circumstances of Jewish life is great indeed. The deeper problem, which Yiddish shares with all *ausbau* languages, is that of arriving at a balance of criteria, psychological, social, and linguistic, according to which 'beginnings' can be validated or verified. Thus, dating the beginning of Yiddish *vis-à-vis* German, presents an issue that is also of interest to Slovak (*vis-à-vis* Czech), Croatian (*vis-à-vis* Serbian), Ukrainian and White Russian (*vis-à-vis* Russian), Urdu (*vis-à-vis* Hindi), and most particularly, Macedonian (*vis-à-vis* Bulgarian) and Indonesian (*vis-à-vis* Malaysian). Both subjective and objective criteria are of concern in this connection, although they will not always agree. Objective criteria alone are not enough for they tend to overstress the significance of structural linguistic features which may have had little or no social or psychological visibility or significance at the time. However, subjective criteria alone are equally fallible, given that language consciousness is commonly so rare (or, if present, so easily influenced by community leaders or even by

outside authorities) among ordinary rank-and-file members of speech communities, probably even more so in centuries past than in modern times. The fusion nature of Yiddish (its componentiality) makes both objective and subjective dating easier and more reliable. Nevertheless, this entire topic remains one that deserves and requires additional attention both within Jewish interlinguistics and within the sociolinguistics of *ausbau* languages more generally. Now that the topic of 'language-death' has recently received well-deserved attention (see *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 1977, no. 12, entire issue), it may be hoped that language birth will also receive more attention. Most of the recent attention given to the latter topic has been in connection with problems of pidginization and creolization. It would be premature at this time to conclude that this is the only sociopsychological-linguistic context in which language birth takes place. Whereas it has been proposed that Yiddish might best be considered a pidgin in its earliest stages (Jacobs 1975), this would seem to be questionable, or at least highly atypical for pidgins, given (a) the biliterate nature of most of its male speakers, (b) the fact that they did not lack prior, fully fashioned intragroup language varieties while Yiddish was coming into being as such (i.e. while it was leaving behind its initial intergroup functions and characteristics), and (c) the fact that no 'reduced stage' of the language has ever been evinced.

1973). This endless contrastivity – amounting almost to the assumption that comparison is the *only* intellectual stance, that multiplicity of languages (dialects, varieties) is *the* human condition (Goldsmid 1968), and that the moral triumph over inner bias and outer rejection is *the* bittersweet compensation of the disadvantaged – serves to make the sociology of Yiddish a stimulating field for many who have neither a direct nor an indirect affiliation with it. All who are interested either in other insecure language communities today or in the earlier, more temporary periods of insecurity that all languages have faced, including the great languages of this day and age before arriving at their currently uncontested social functions, can recognize in Yiddish parallels to frequently glossed-over parts of their own stories.

However, it would be highly unlikely for any vernacular of a chosen people not to be perceived as incomparable as well, particularly if this vernacular uniquely accompanied and fostered this people's modern national awakening. The deep involvement of Yiddish in modern Jewish authenticity movements (most of them being, naturally enough, modernization-plus-authenticity movements) has indelibly associated it with the chosenness, the specialness, the heightenedness of Jewishness. Professors, poets, and prose masters alike have ascribed to it a unique cultural impact (Mark 1969), an elevating individual role (Leyvik 1957), and an updating, softening, and universalization of the classic Jewish contribution to civilization (Shtif 1922, 1924; Opatoshu 1949b). Thus, it is not only claimed that Yiddish reflects *yidishkayt*, the entire life-pattern and world view of traditional Ashkenazic Jewry (e.g. M. Vaynraykh 1953, 1959, 1967, 1972, 1973; Fishman 1974, 1976a; Tsaytlin 1973) but that it is/was itself a contributor to the creation, development, and preservation of Jewish values, Jewish traditions, and of the survival of the Jewish peoplehood itself (Golomb 1962a, 1962b, 1970; Niger 1928b; Lerer 1940; Bez 1971a). Indeed, every Yiddish word has been viewed in quintessential Herderian perspective, i.e. as not only denoting but as embodying Jewish values (*yidishe verter*: *yidishe vertn*), wit, humor, and Jewish eternity itself. Significantly, the richness of Yiddish words – their emotional loadings, their innuendos, their diminutives, their endlessly nuanced connotations of collective experience – has been admired, envied and regretted by modern Hebraists faced by the comparative artificiality of Israeli Hebrew (Epshteyn 1910; Kazenelson 1960; Megged 1966; for several additional citations see M. Vaynraykh 1973, vol. 3, p. 262).

Indeed, the presumably unmediated character of Yiddish, making it an instrument of something akin to Jewish phatic communion, its seemingly natural, impulsive involvement in emotional stances, led to early and continued attacks upon it by most of those who championed enlightenment (Nusboym 1882), Zionism (reviewed by Pilovski 1973, 1979), and traditional or reform religion alike (Feder 1815 [in Lifshits 1863], Hakohen 1902; Mendelssohn 1783). Yiddish has long touched and still touches an emotional nerve. It is close to the

vital and volatile likes and dislikes of a threatened people, of insecure protoelites, of insufficiently recognized intellectuals. As such, it is rarely reacted to dispassionately.² Just as Jews themselves stand accused in the eyes of many outsiders of simultaneous but opposite derelictions (capitalism *and* communism, clannishness *and* assimilation, materialism *and* vapid intellectualism) so Yiddish stands accused – within the Jewish fold itself – of being a tool of the irreligious *and* of the ultraorthodox, of fostering ghettoization *and* rootless cosmopolitanism, of reflecting quintessential and inescapable Jewishness *and* of representing little more than a hedonistic differentiation from the ways of the gentiles, of being dead or dying, *and* of being a ubiquitous threat to higher values. In all cases, however, the claims made and the association played upon are more extreme, more articulated, and more uncompromising in the case of Yiddish than any that are made pertaining to other Jewish post-exilic languages. ‘There is probably no other language . . . on which so much opprobrium has been heaped’ (Weiner 1899, p. 12). Perhaps this is the fundamental uniqueness of Yiddish. Perhaps it is this enmeshment in never-ending controversy and deep feeling that prompts so many comparisons: the status of most exceptional post-exilic language of an exceptional people; the most itinerant language of an itinerant people; the constantly self-renewing language (its demise being predicted – desired? – generation after generation for centuries) of a constantly self-renewing people.

PART II: ORTHODOXY: THEN AND NOW

The relationship between Yiddish and Ashkenazic Orthodoxy has traditionally been ambivalent and bimodal. Obviously, Yiddish arose at a time when Orthodoxy not only reigned supreme, but also was identical with the Jewish way of life, and when Ashkenaz itself was just coming into being as a relatively self-sufficient Jewish civilization with its own normative authorities *vis-à-vis* the

2. The Yiddish literary critic and historian Bal-makhshoves contrasted Yiddish and Esperanto primarily in connection with the emotional dimension that he considered so vital for an understanding of the significance of Yiddish. Writing over 70 years ago (1953b [1908b]) he suggested that Yiddish and Esperanto were really polar opposites in the family of languages. Whereas Esperanto, he contended, was intended to serve superficial and ahistorical human interactions, Yiddish was related to deep emotions and to a millennium of history. Furthermore, whereas Esperanto served primarily for communications between culturally dissimilar interlocutors, Yiddish not only served those who shared intensely a thousand concerns and experiences, but served to bring back to the community those who had unfortunately drifted

away from it. Setting aside the fact that not only Yiddish and Esperanto but all mother tongues and Esperanto can be differentiated along very much the same lines that Bal-makhshoves advanced, it is of interest to point out that Zamenhof, the inventor of Esperanto, was himself a Yiddish speaker and writer. Not only did he see to it that a Yiddish translation of his proposal for a world language was published the very year after Esperanto itself was ‘born’ (Esperanto 1888), but he was sufficiently interested in the state of Yiddish to urge that its grammar and orthography benefit from early codification and standardization (Dr. X 1909). A detailed Yiddish–Esperanto, Esperanto–Yiddish dictionary was completed thanks largely to the efforts of Yiddish-speaking Esperantists in Israel (Rusak 1969, 1973).

classical halakhic tradition. (For the whole sociocultural matrix of this earliest period see M. Vaynraykh 1973; for its earliest extant linguistic clues see M. Vaynraykh 1963; Sadan 1963.) Thus, for nearly a millennium, Ashkenazic Orthodoxy and Yiddish were intimately intertwined and, with the dispersion of Sephardic Jewry in the fifteenth century, this duo ultimately came to be viewed as a phenomenological identity. This apparent identity carries along with it both some of the greatest assets and some of the greatest burdens of Yiddish today. As the vernacular – and, more belatedly and more meagerly, as a language of written and printed communication – of Ashkenazic Orthodoxy, Yiddish was (and to some extent still is) protected by a sociocultural configuration least likely to change and, therefore, least likely to exchange Yiddish for other vehicles of oral communication. The link of Yiddish to *yidishkayt* derives from this origin and from the uncontested centuries in which Yiddish reigned supreme as the intragroup vernacular of Central and Eastern European daily Jewish life.

Supremacy, however, has its functional boundaries. The world of Orthodoxy also clamors and cleaves most assiduously to the two-in-one languages of holy and sanctified writ – ancient and medieval Hebrew and (Judeo-)Aramaic – together: *loshn koydesh*. These alone were long considered completely qualified to be the process languages of worship and the target of textual study, in short, for all traditional, text-anchored activity and, by natural extension, for all serious intracommunal written and printed communication. And yet, Orthodox Jews spoke to each other only (or almost only) in Yiddish; unmediated supplications poured forth from their hearts and mouths in Yiddish (Freehof 1923); they argued the Talmudic law and its interpretations in Yiddish; they testified in intracommunal litigations in Yiddish; they sang in Yiddish, they issued their intracommunal and intercommunal regulations in Yiddish (Dubnov 1929a) and increasingly – certainly as the modern period draws nigh – read both for entertainment and for moral instruction in Yiddish, leaving a printed record half a millennium old in these various functions. Thus, the original ‘language problem’ of Ashkenazic Jewry has long been that of how far to admit Yiddish into the realms of serious, ritualized, scriptified, and, ultimately, printed functions. However, if this was a ‘problem’, it long had exceedingly low saliency among the rank and file. Their view was that current in all traditional diglossia settings: attitudinal priority is clearly given to elevated H but most of life proceeds in cozy L. ‘The traditional Jew who saw Yiddish always as *mame-loshn* and Hebrew as *loshn ha-koydesh* never felt the need to choose between the two’ (Jacobs 1977).

Although the process of Orthodox acceptance of Yiddish as textually co-sanctified is both slow and ultimately incomplete, it progressed for centuries. The acceptability of Yiddish as the *obligatory* language of testimony in intracommunal litigation, as long as both parties admit to knowing Yiddish and at least one party requests its use, is documented in print as of 1519 (Rivkind 1928).

Of approximately similar vintage is a Yiddish concordance to the Bible, *Mirkeves hamishne* (1534), and even a prayer book in Yiddish (1544). Beginning toward the end of the sixteenth century, there are abundant indications of a widespread rabbinic view that it was far preferable to use Yiddish books for prayer and study than to use *loshn koydesh* uncomprehendingly or, what was worse, than not to be able to pray or study at all (see M. Vaynraykh 1973, vol. 3, p. 272). By the end of the sixteenth century the rights of Yiddish begin to be explicitly guaranteed in community records for the above advocated purposes (Balaban 1912, 1916), and various rabbinic educational authorities appear whose championship of Yiddish is open, explicit, and lifelong (Nobl 1951).

For several centuries such efforts continued and slowly multiplied, but usually under the apologetic guise of being intended for women (Niger 1913a) or for uneducated men. (Note, e.g. the *tsene-urene* [Shatski 1928] a 'women's edition' of the Pentateuch first published in 1628 and still in print today.) However, these disguises (protective of the status of *loshn koydesh* and of the latter's gatekeepers) were also increasingly dropped – first with respect to the avowed restriction to women and then with respect to the focus upon the uneducated more generally. By the eighteenth century 'the author of *Emunas yisroel* declared that all that the school boy can acquire from a teacher, he can just as well read . . . in Yiddish "for nowadays we have the whole Law and the precepts in Yiddish"' (Zinberg 1928 [1946]). Similarly, the *Zohar*, the central source of modern Jewish mysticism, was rendered into Yiddish by 1711, with the explicit indication that scholars might well study it in that language 'for the original itself is not in Hebrew but in the vernacular of the land of its origin [i.e. Aramaic]'.

However, if Orthodox use of Yiddish in a few of the traditional functions of *loshn koydesh* begins early and develops continually, Orthodox opposition thereto long compensates (or overcompensates) therefor. Yiddish books of ritual or scholarly significance are explicitly banned (and even burned) as late as the eighteenth century (see, e.g. Tsinberg 1928, M. Vaynraykh 1973, p. 278), and the protective coloration of proposed focus upon females or upon the unlearned male therefore continues not only into the twentieth century but – to some extent – is encountered to this very day. Certainly, it is unwarranted to claim that the early Orthodox adherents of Yiddish were – with very few exceptions – Yiddishists in the modern sense of that term, since, regardless of the focus of their various works, they did not in any way seek to more generally displace *loshn koydesh* from its central sanctified prerogatives in prayer and ritual (Pyekazh 1964). This is true even with respect to Hasidism, whose use of Yiddish for the purpose of spreading its views (and the wonder stories of its rabbis) among the masses was truly massive (Finklshteyn 1954; Hager 1974). Even in this connection, however, some two centuries elapsed, and other social movements – some of them non-Orthodox and others anti-Orthodox in nature – had already begun to make ample use of Yiddish for mass-propaganda purposes, before the

ב ק ש ה

למוצאי שבת

נמצא בכתבי קודש של הרב הקדוש רבי לוי יצחק מברדיטשוב זצ"ל
בעל המחבר ספר „קדושת לוי" וזה לשונו:

סגולה גדולה להצלחה

שיאמרו אנשים ונשים וטף בקשה זו בכל מוצאי שבת קודש
קודם הבדלה שלש סעמים. ובסוף אני שיצליחו בודאי א"ח:

איה בין סדרויקערט אזוי. וועלען אי"ה בעגליקען.

גאט פון אברהם און פון יצחק און פון יעקב.

בעה"ט דיין ליב פאלק ישראל פון אלעם בייען אין דייןעם
לויב אז דער ליבער שבת קודש גייט. אז די וואך און דער
חודש. און דער יאר זאל אויך זיין קומען צו אמונה שלימה
צו אמונת חקמים צו אהבת חברים. צו דביקת הבורא ב"ה.
מצמין צו זיין בשלש עשרה עקרים שלח ובהאיילה קרובה
במקרה ביימינו. ובתחית המתים. ובגבועת משה רבינו עליו
השלום.

רבונו של עולם דו בינט דאך הנותן ליצחק בם.
גיב דייןע ליבע יודישע קינדערליך אויך בם דיע צו לייען.
אין גאר דיע צו דינען און קיין אנדערין חלילה נישט. און
אז די וואך און דער חודש און דער יאר זאל אויך קומען
צו געוונד און צו מזל און צו ברכה וטהרה. און צו חסד
און צו בני סיי אריכי ומזוני רויסי וסיעתא דשמיא לנו
ולקל ישראל ונאמר אמן:

“Kodesh Hillulim” Yeshiva, Jerusalem
named on Rabbi Hillel of Kalamey
P.O.B. 1247 — Jerusalem

תיבת „קודש הילולים” ירושלים
ע"ש הרה"צ ר' הלל מקאלמעי וצוקל
ה"ד. 1247 — ירושלים

Figure 1. 'Supplication as the Sabbath Ends.... From the holy writings of the holy Rabbi Levi Yitskhok of Berditshev [1740-1809]... to be said by men, women and children.' The explanatory introduction cited above is in Loshn Koydesh. The supplication itself is in Yiddish, with many traditional learned phrases. This supplication can be bought (on a laminated card) to this very day in Orthodox bookshops in Jerusalem.

nineteenth century avalanche of Yiddish Hasidic publications really got underway. Even this avalanche – precisely because it was intended for the masses – did not establish a serious scholarly or ritual niche for Yiddish among the Orthodox, but rather, primarily a popular emotional one (Lieberman 1943).

As we have seen, Eastern European Orthodoxy's ambivalence with respect to Yiddish continued past the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth (see Feder 1815 [in Lifshits 1863]; Shnayd 1956). By then, however, Yiddish had to be, on the one hand, defended among the Orthodox, its adherents pointing to it as a bulwark against coteritorial vernaculars with their penchant for detraditionalizing and secularizing Ashkenazic life (Anon 1931b; N. Birnboym 1913, 1931; Likhtnshteyn 1872 and 1878; Shenirer 1931).³ On the other hand, Yiddish had by then become an article of faith of Eastern European Jewish secularism in its various political manifestations and, as such, also a new danger for Orthodoxy (Poll 1965; Shatski 1932). As a result, Orthodox defenders of Yiddish tended to relate it increasingly to a glorious and romanti-

3. The Yiddish advocacy of Nosn Birnboym deserves special mention and, indeed, further investigation in connection with the topic of reethnification of elites. Such reethnification and accompanying relinguification is a common process in the early stages of modern ethnicity movements and exemplifies both the protoelitist return to (or selection of) roots (often after failure to transesthnify 'upwardly' in accord with earlier aspirations) as well as the masses' groping toward mobilization under exemplary leadership. However, modern ethnicity movements are essentially attempts to achievemodernization,utilizing'primordial'identificational metaphors and emotional attachments for this purpose. Thus, they are not really 'return' movements (not really nativization- or past-oriented). They exploit or mine the past rather than cleave to it. Partially transesthnified elites can uniquely serve such movements because of their own double exposure. Birnboym is therefore exceptional in that he ultimately rejected his secularized, Germanized, Europeanized milieu on behalf of a genuine return to ultra-Orthodoxy. By the second decade of this century he had rejected modernization (in the guises of socialism, Zionism, and Diaspora nationalism), all of which he had once charted, as hedonistic and as endangering Jewish (and world) survival. There is about the latter Birnboym a Spenglerian aura foretelling the 'decline of the West' and cautioning Jews that their salvation (and the world's) would come only via complete immersion in traditional beliefs, values and practices (Birnboym 1946). He viewed Yiddish as a *sine-qua-non* in that connection, rejecting its use for modern, hedonistic purposes such as those which he himself had earlier espoused

(Alpern 1977), both immediately before and after the Tshernovits Language Conference of 1908 (Birnboym 1931; see section IV, below). This rare combination of complete Orthodoxy and uncompromising defense of Yiddish within an Orthodox framework have made Nosn Birnboym into something of a curiosity for both religious and secular commentators (Anon. 1977b; Kaplan and Landau 1925; Kisman 1962; Mayzl 1957). Such genuine returners to roots also exist in the context of other modernization movements (for example, in the nineteenth and twentieth century Greek, Arabic, Slavophile, and Sanskrit contexts) and represent a vastly overlooked subclass within the study of ethnicity movements. Even in their case it would be mistaken to consider them as no more than 'spokes in the wheels of progress' merely because they frequently represent an attempt to attain modernization without Westernization. A contrastive study of Birnboym and other such 'genuine returners' would be most valuable for understanding this subclass as well as the more major group of 'metaphorical returners'. Note, however, that Birnboym remained a committed advocate of Yiddish even when he embraced ultra-Orthodoxy, whereas 'true returners' in other cases embraced their respective indigenized classic tongues. To revive Hebrew was long considered antitraditional and was not possible except in speech networks that were completely outside of the traditional framework – ideologically, behaviorally (in terms of daily routine) and even geographically. The dubious Jewish asset of complete dislocation and deracination was denied the unsuccessful advocates of Sanskrit and classical Greek, Arabic or Irish.

cized past, when Orthodoxy reigned uncontested (Elzet 1929; Toybes 1950, 1952) and when its way of life was whole and uncontaminated (A. Levin 1976). Indeed, by mid-twentieth century the bulk of Orthodoxy per se had already wholeheartedly adopted modern participationist life-styles and had already made the difficult transition to the coterritorial vernaculars (including Ivrit in Israel), not only for conversational but for scholarly purposes as well. Since then a transition that had never been completely made before – certainly not in so far as Eastern-European Ashkenaz was concerned – has been made in the course of two generations of exposure to English, French or Spanish. Modern neo-Orthodoxy now views Yiddish wistfully, at best, and derisively at worst, but definitely allocates to it an even lower priority than that assigned to the study

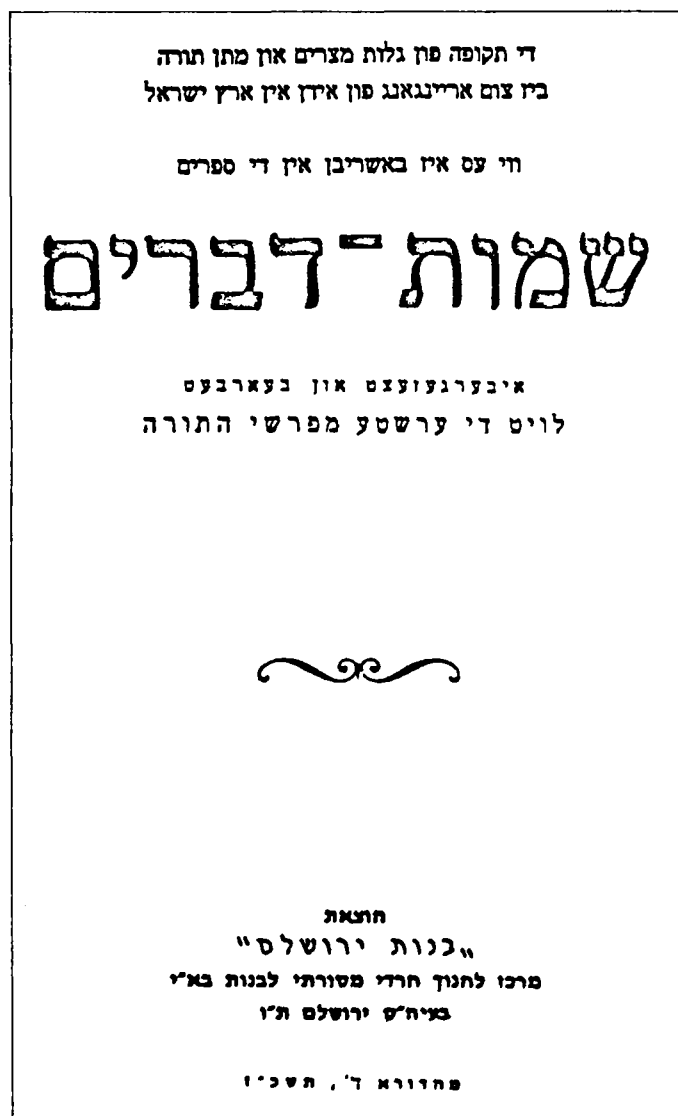


Figure 2. Yiddish textbook ('The period from the Egyptian exile and the Giving of the Law until the entrance of Jews into the Land of Israel, as it is related in the books of Exodus-Deuteronomy, translated and edited in accord with the first commentators on the Torah') for ultra-Orthodox schools for girls in Jerusalem. Fourth edition, 1967. The full series of Yiddish texts for these schools covers Yiddish language per se, arithmetic, history, and ethics.

of *loshn koydesh* originals via the coterritorial vernaculars (Fishman 1972; Fishman and Fishman 1977). With respect to safeguarding the future of Yiddish, neo-Orthodoxy does too little and does even that too late. Once coterritorial vernaculars become the process languages (i.e. the L varieties) of *yidishkayt* then it becomes patently unclear to Orthodoxy what Yiddish should be used for, since it 'obviously' cannot be used for H purposes. Even unreconstructed ultra-Orthodoxy the world over has recently begun to utilize a variety of non-Jewish languages in order to reach a wider public with the message of traditional life. Thus, for the first time, Yiddish is now encountering other instructional vernaculars even within the very classrooms, study halls and prayer houses of ultra-Orthodoxy that were its undisputed turf, and where even Sephardic and Western-secularized newcomers would learn Yiddish by dint of constant and intensive exposure. The next generation will reveal whether ultra-Orthodoxy will follow the path of neo-Orthodoxy with respect to Yiddish or whether it will remain a distinctive bastion of Yiddish rather than merely a nostalgic, ambivalent admirer from a distance.⁴ Here it is still possible to take steps to alter the drift toward coterritorial monolingualism (Elberg 1962, Susholtz 1976). Ashkenazic Orthodoxy might have become a launching-pad for the spread of Yiddish to

4. I have pointed out elsewhere (see final chapter of this volume) that Israel represents a particularly good context for studying this particular topic. This is so not merely because of the well-entrenched enclaves of Yiddish speaking ultra-Orthodoxy there (Bogoch 1973; Poll 1980) but because the coterritorial population consists largely of fellow Jews (most of them secularized and some of them fervently antireligious) and the coterritorial vernacular is *ivrit* (= modern Israeli Hebrew), a modernized version of *loshn koydesh*. Both of the latter are therefore ambivalent referents for ultra-Orthodoxy and a classical double approach-avoidance dilemma surrounds interactive communication with or via them. This context is not only substantially different from the usual context of interaction with coterritorial non-Jews and use of coterritorial non-Jewish languages, but it is even different from the context of interaction with coterritorial secularized/assimilated Jews via Yiddish or the coterritorial non-Jewish vernacular. Ultra-Orthodoxy in Israel alone views Yiddish in a context where the brunt of secularization/assimilation is expressed in Hebrew. The traditional ultra-Orthodox reluctance to profane *loshn koydesh* for secular affairs may thus endow Yiddish with an additional edge (although in doing so it reinforces the Israeli stereotype of Yiddish as a marker of antimodern and antistate extremism within the religious fold). One escape-hatch open to ultra-Orthodoxy in this context is to view *ivrit* as sufficiently dissimilar from *loshn koydesh* as to be regarded as a quite separate (and, therefore,

unobjectionably permissible) vernacular in the traditional diglossic sense. If *this* interpretation is adopted – and there is evidence that many are doing just that, particularly as they reach out to influence non-Ashkenazic Israelis – Yiddish may ultimately be as expendable for Ashkenazic ultra-Orthodoxy in Israel as it is beginning to be in the United States and elsewhere in the Diaspora. Thus, it is the linguistic status of *ivrit vis-à-vis loshn koydesh* that may be crucial for the future of Yiddish among Ashkenazic ultra-Orthodoxy, this being a twist on the more usual problem of Yiddish *vis-à-vis* non-Jewish coterritorial vernaculars. In Likhtnshteyn's end of the nineteenth century's defense of Yiddish (1882–1887) he advised his ultra-Orthodox readers that far from being a corrupted German, Yiddish was purposely and desirably different from German so that Jews could more easily maintain themselves separate from non-Jews. (A similar view had also been expressed somewhat earlier by the famous Rabbi Khsam Soyfer of Presburg/Bratislava). He also admonished parents 'not to send their children to such yeshives where the rabbi is a secularized Jew [a goyisher yid]... who easily abandons and changes the Yiddish language to German'. The phenomenological applicability of such admonitions in Israel, particularly to ultra-Orthodoxy, is deserving of special attention since it expresses in the most succinct terms the ultimate functional role of Yiddish, namely as a guardian of *yidishkayt*. Once that role too is denied to it, then it is truly but another unexceptional vernacular.

others, particularly to *baley-tshuve* (those who return to religion). Failing that, it might at least have become the fortress of uncompromising language-maintenance. Instead, it is in danger of becoming neither the one nor the other.

PART III: MODERNIZATION MOVEMENTS AND MODERN ATTITUDES

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Jewish Eastern Europe was caught up by the spirit of change. The coterritorial peoples, both those who were in political ascendancy and those who were politically powerless, reflected this spirit. Increasing urbanization, industrialization, massification of educational efforts, politicization of economic differences, movements for cultural autonomy and for national liberation made headway slowly but surely as the century began to draw to a close. The unification of Germany in 1865, the Junker victory in the Franco-Prussian War almost immediately thereafter, the subsequent Dreyfus case in France, the gathering *Drang nach Osten* of a militaristically intoxicated Germany, the increasingly evident internal problems of the multiethnic Austro-Hungarian, Czarist and Ottoman empires, all of these prompted a host of questions and answers among Eastern European Jewry. These questions and answers went far beyond the limited and guarded modernizing capacity of traditional Orthodoxy per se. New would-be elites (proto-elites) arose, as they did in all of the coterritorial modernization movements, to bring answers to the people (as well as the people to the proffered answers) and thus greatly heightened the issue of the language(s) to be used for these purposes. Under these circumstances it became impossible for any modern school of Jewish thought to avoid having a view with respect to Yiddish.

The mildest position – because it was least politicized – was taken by the initially inchoate forces referred to as the *haskole* (Enlightenment). These ‘forces’ (writers, journalists, educators) viewed general education, surface Westernization (in dress, in facial hair styles, in the privatization of religion), public vernacularization and a smidgeon or more of manual productivization as cure-alls for anti-Semitism, Jewish ‘backwardness’ and urban/small town poverty. (For a telling portrayal of the diversity of Jewish Eastern Europe that the *haskole* commonly overlooked see S. Birnboym 1946.) The *haskole* in Eastern Europe⁵ came to employ Yiddish in its efforts to reach the widest possible public

5. This designation (usually in the form *haskala(h)*/*haskolo(h)*) had also been used earlier in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in conjunction with a similar movement to Europeanize German (and, more generally, Western European) Jewry. The Western European *haskole* also vigorously opposed Yiddish (Kayserling 1862; Altman 1973), although it is an exaggeration to ascribe to it, or, as is more frequently done, to Moses Mendelssohn’s translation of the Bible into

German (so that the earlier Yiddish translations would no longer be needed), the decisive role in displacing Yiddish there. Although the Eastern European *haskole* inherited from its Western European predecessor a distinctly negative view of Yiddish (see Liptsin 1944 for the tradition of German dictionaries that define Yiddish in accord with the bias of the Western Enlightenment) the two *haskoles* ultimately took far different developmental paths. In the West the *haskole* led to mass

with its critiques and prescriptions, but commonly did so 'against its better judgement', half-heartedly, viewing Yiddish as a debased instrument at best. Debased, crippled, corrupted or not, it was the only way of reaching those most 'in need' of its message (Miron 1973a, 1973b). 'We will not wait until wags ask and prefer to say immediately that our simple Yiddish can certainly not be considered a language because it is no more than a corrupted German' (*Kol mevaser*, Nov. 15, 1862, p. 79). This is a view that appears early and retains adherents to this very day, as does the equally early view that it is unjust to

say that a language in which many thousands, a whole people, live, trade and work, is corrupted. Only something that was once better and became spoiled can be called corrupted. But where is the evidence that other current languages were initially better? Were they given on Mt. Sinai? They are all derived, as is our language, from various prior languages. Why, therefore, are they not called corrupted? . . . As soon as one of us begins to learn a foreign language he becomes an expert concerning the corruption of our language and begins to poke fun at it, and, finally, at us as well (Y. M. Lifshits in *Kol mevaser*, June 6, 1863, p. 326).

The facts of life were such that Yiddish *had* to be used, even by those self-proclaimed intellectuals who despised it, used even against itself; if the common man was to be reached, there simply was no alternative. Theoretically, elegant Hebrew would have been much preferable to the *maskilim* (the enlightened purveyors of *haskole*), but there was no real alternative to the use of Yiddish (indeed only via Yiddish could one lead the masses back to Hebrew if that was one's goal). Those like the renowned German-Jewish historian Heinrich Graetz, who were so ashamed of Yiddish as to refuse to use it at all, finally came to be viewed as full of self-hate and, therefore, as themselves a liability to the *haskole* and a source of general shame (Dinezon 1888).⁶

assimilation and apostasy (although not without difficulty; see, e.g. J. M. Cuddihy's *The Ordeal of Civility* [1974]) with an elitist intellectualistic focus upon Hebrew and Judaism as areas of scholarly inquiry. In the East the *haskole* led initially to the (reluctant) use of Yiddish as a vehicle for the spread of enlightenment, and finally to mass modernization movements of diverse but deeply Jewish orientation. Some of these movements, as we will see, became staunchly pro-Yiddish, while others wavered and finally opted otherwise. However, all of them pursued *kiyem ha-ume* (the continuity of the people) as an uncompromising and organized goal, a stage to which the Western *haskole* never attained.

The contextual reasons for the highly contrasted modernization routes of the *haskole* in Western and Eastern Europe need to be sought not only in terms of the Jewish formations in each (even in that connection it should not be overlooked that there *were* strong bastions of Orthodoxy in the German lands far into the nineteenth century, just as there *were* avowed assimilationists in the East at

a very early date). The entire coterritorial socio-economic context was different for Yiddish in the West and in the East, particularly in so far as the speed and depth of social mobility that was possible given detraditionalization. The entire view of the link between language and ethnicity in general, of the *possibility* of reethnification, was different in West and East, and these differences necessarily impacted the developmental path of the *haskole* and its relationship to Yiddish in both locales. For a model treatment of the influence of such pervasive differences upon a modernizing and potentially integrative language movement, see J. Das Gupta 1970.

6. Graetz called forth the wrath of several Eastern European *maskilim* because from his German (and Germanized) perspective it was both manifestly impossible and absolutely undesirable to use Yiddish for serious educational purposes. By the latter part of the nineteenth century, while this may well have been true in Germany proper, it obviously ran counter to the main thrust of *maskilic* efforts in Eastern Europe.

Once the initial reluctance to 'dirty one's pen' with Yiddish gave way, many Eastern European *maskilim* needed but a few decades or so to traverse the path from using (and advocating) Yiddish only for purposes of popular education and satire (see N.Z. 1944), to viewing it as a serious bridge to modernization (e.g. Lifshits 1867; for ample detail, see D. Fishman 1981), to valuing it as a means of moving masses toward Hebrew (or some other 'reasonable' language) as a spoken, written and read vernacular (Levinski 1889), to marveling at it as a surprisingly effective medium for even the most subtle communications from the intelligentsia to the masses (Bernfeld 1900; Sirkin 1900). By the end of the century several had gone further to accord it national, cultural/symbolic significance in its own right.

That the above-sketched *maskilic* progression was not uncontested is clearly indicated by the two contradictory quotations from *Kol mevaser* (within the period of a year). The latter view represented, more fully the basic view of the publication's editor, Aleksander Tsederboym, but it was frequently necessary for him to compromise with it and even to display the opposite stance, in order to avoid antagonizing the Czarist authorities and the small but influential russificatory/polonizing/germanizing circles (Shitf 1932, particularly pp. 29–33) that did not hesitate to report and defame pro-Yiddish tendencies to those authorities. Thus, whereas Mendele (the 'grandfather of modern Yiddish – and Hebrew – literature') proclaimed 'may God remember him for good, because he came to the help of his people with his newspaper *Kol mevaser* (1889 p. 26)' others were equally ready to condemn him for doing so, going so far as to suggest to the authorities that the modern education of Jews in the Czarist Empire could proceed only if all Yiddish publications whatsoever were prohibited (Tsinberg [1937] 1966: 148). That such recommendations did not fall upon deaf ears is clear from the record, although, fortunately, the Czarist authorities themselves were divided between those who believed that the modernization of Jews could proceed only *without* Yiddish and those who believed that only *through* Yiddish could the masses be led to Russian (or German, or even Polish) and to modernity. Tsederboym himself skillfully played upon this division within the Czarist ranks by admitting in 1862, the year that *Kol mevaser* began, that '...enlightened folk of this day and age stress that the masses must be dehabituated from speaking Yiddish and must become used to speaking the language of the country. Perhaps they are not entirely wrong, because one must understand the language of the country in which one resides; but in what language should one speak to simple folk, so that they will learn that which is necessary for everyone to know,

if 'after all is said and done, they understand nothing but Yiddish?' (Tsinberg [1937] 1966: 148–149). However, even the small group of contemporary Jewish polonizers felt that they could invoke Czarist support for their goals and against Tsederboym. 'Away with dirt, with spiderwebs, with *zhargon* and with all kinds of garbage! We call for a broom! And whom the broom of satire will not help, him will we honor with the stick of wrath! Quem medicamenta non sanant, ferrum et ignis sanant!' (*Jutrzenka* 1862, no. 50, 428; also see Tsinberg [1937] 1966, 101). As fate would have it, the polonizers themselves became suspect in the eyes of the Czarist authorities, due to the Polish independence revolt of 1863, and their publication *Jutrzenka* was closed, whereas the *Kol mevaser* prospered for many years and ceased publication in 1872 (primarily due to Tsederboym's neglect after his moving from Odessa to St. Petersburg and leaving the paper in other, far less experienced hands).

Of course, the above sketched early opposition to Yiddish is less than half of the story, since it does not encompass the Hebrew invested opposition to Yiddish which was developed by yet other *maskilim* (e.g. Aḥad Ha-'am 1910) and, subsequently, by both Orthodox and secular Zionism (see below). The closest parallel to this complex picture of opposition to the vernacular of the masses on the part of an internal H language of classical sanctity, on the one hand, and on the part of several different European vernaculars, on the other hand, is the case of modern Somali. Faced by Arabic, on the one hand, and Italian and English, on the other, the recent triumph of Somali (but note: to be written in Latin rather than in Arabic script) is presented in all of its conflicted intricacy in David D. Laitin's *Politics, Language and Thought: The Somali Experience* [1977]. Cases such as these are significantly different from those of European vernaculars that succeeded in coming out from under the sociocultural-political shadow of languages of foreign influence or control (e.g. Slovak vs. Hungarian, Czech vs. German, Ukrainian vs. Russian, Catalan vs. Spanish, Frisian vs. Dutch, etc.). The category to which the cases of Yiddish and Somali belong (as well as, e.g. the vernaculars of India vs. Sanskrit and English, modern Greek vs. Katharevusa and French or English, modern 'middle Arabic' vernacular vs. classical Arabic and French or English, modern Irish vs. classical Irish and English, etc.) is characterized by the existence of an *indigenized classical H*. Significantly, only in the case of Yiddish did the classical (Hebrew) also experience genuine vernacularization and modernization in its own right at the very same time as the vernacular (Yiddish) too was undergoing modernization and symbolic elaboration and codeification.

[illegible]

Figure 3. Front page of the first issue of *Kol mevaser* which initially appeared in 1862 as a supplement to *Hameliz*, a Hebrew weekly also owned and published by Alexander Tsederboym. 'We don't know how many subscribers there will be...but because we have made the price very inexpensive we cannot print any gratis copies. We are notifying all who want to subscribe so that later they will not be lacking the first issues...October 11–23, 1862.' The lead story deals with the American Civil War, with the widows and orphans and the grief and suffering that it has occasioned, and expresses hope that the two sides will come to an early understanding and cease further bloodshed ('frightful enough to curl one's hair').

The ranks of willing or begrudging ‘educators of the masses’ via Yiddish ultimately came to include most (or nearly so) of the illustrious *maskilim* of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Never uncontested, indeed always stoutly resisted almost every step of the way (e.g. Aḥad Ha-’am 1912; Drozdov 1959; Zilbertsvayg 1956), the use of Yiddish for *maskilic* communication early began to create true believers in Yiddish (e.g. Lifshits 1863; also note Prilutski 1917a re an 18th century ‘Yiddishist’ and fn. 14, p. 380, this volume). By the beginning of the twentieth century, the young Germanized *maskil* (and future academic) Matesyohu Mizes achieved notoriety for his advocacy of Yiddish as a reflection of authentic Jewish creativity in the modern world, and for his temerity in saying so in the very den of nascent Hebraic journalism and in open opposition to some of its most renowned spokesmen (Mizes 1907; Mizes 1910; Kresl 1957; for his exemplary academic works see Mizes 1915 [in refutation of Loewe 1911] and 1924). A similar change of heart occurred early in the Russified historian of Eastern European Jewry, Shimen Dubnov, later to become the major theoretician of a multicentric view of Jewish cultural autonomy (Dubnov 1909, 1929b; Maler 1967a; Mark 1962a; Rotnberg 1961). Countless others followed suit – more or less altruistically/exploitatively – but in conjunction with political passions that finally flowered in a wide variety of directions.

The late nineteenth–early twentieth century politicization, mobilization, and fractionation of the *haskole* into seemingly opposed *diaspora cultural-autonomist* and *Zionist* camps (albeit the majority in both were at an early point socialists) led to a further heightening and sharpening of the conflict pertaining to Yiddish. Both camps foresaw a deterioration of the Jewish position in Eastern Europe – some spokesmen, indeed, had glimmerings of a holocaust to come, particularly as it pertained to the viability of the *shtetl*, on the one hand, and to urban anti-Semitism, on the other – and, therefore, feverishly set about advocating and devising ‘a better future for the Jewish people’. Although most of them had come to agree as to the *immediate* utility of Yiddish, such agreement was hardly possible with respect to its long-range future. Finally, in the post-World War I era, the image of the desired, quasi-messianic future also fed back sharply on the implementation of the present. Blatantly pro- as well as anti-Yiddish activity was vigorously pursued ‘as a matter of principle’. Thus, Yiddish became the only post-exilic Jewish vernacular to become symbolically (rather than merely functionally) involved in the modern, nationalist ‘rebirth’ of diaspora Jewry. From this involvement is derived the major advocacy and opposition to it to this very day. However, as we have seen, this involvement was inescapable.

The *diaspora cultural-autonomist* pro-Yiddish position did not develop easily out of the *haskole*’s ambivalence toward Yiddish. Socialism’s dream of a united proletariat initially pointed toward Russian, German, or even Polish as the language(s) of the supraethnic brotherhood to come among all exploited nations of Eastern and Central Europe (Goldsmith 1976a; Hertz 1969; Pinson 1945).

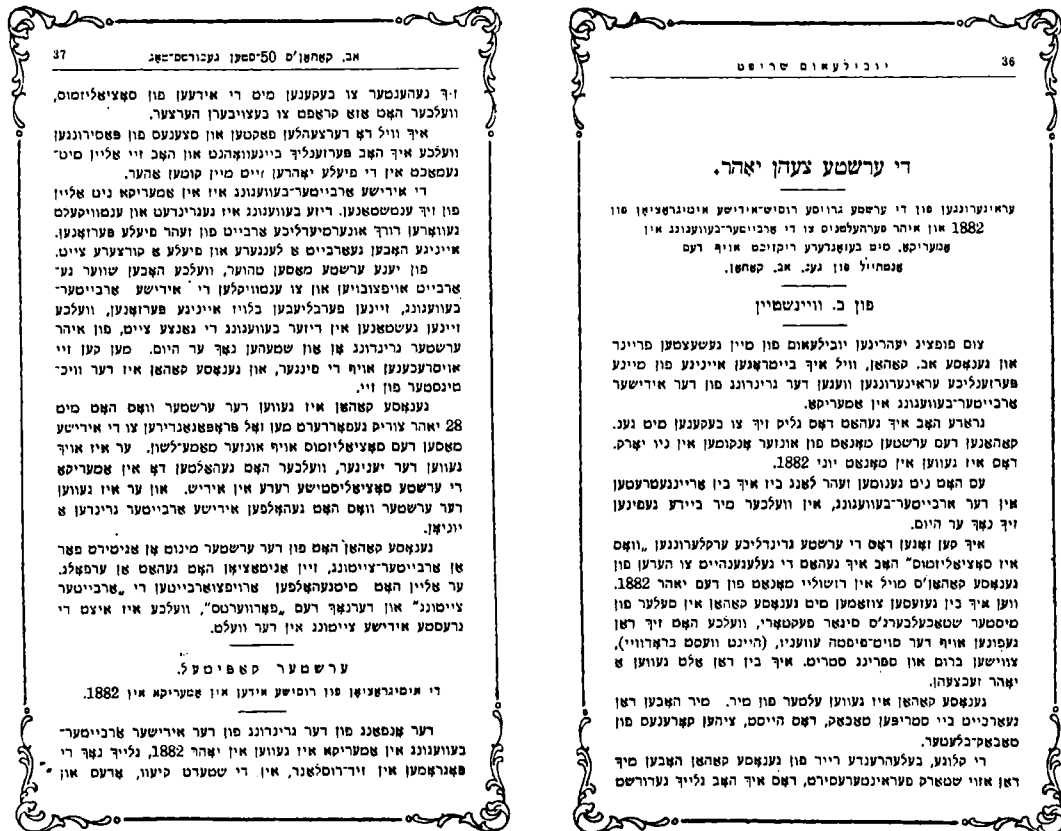


Figure 4. The first socialist lecture in Yiddish in New York was given by Ab Kan (Abraham Cahan) in 1882. 'The intellectuals almost laughed out loud at this odd suggestion: "To propagandize in Yiddish!... Where will you get propagandists in Yiddish?"', Mirovitsh asked. "Would you yourself be willing to lecture in Yiddish?" he asked Comrade Kan. Comrade Kan accepted... That was the beginning of Comrade Ab Kan's popularity, which continues to grow to this very day (Vaynshteyn 1910).'

However, the increasingly exceptional attitude toward Jews within the ranks of the coterritorial exploited bore unexpected fruit *vis-à-vis* Yiddish. The clearer it became that only Jews had been allotted no definite future as an ethnocultural entity in the proletarian heaven to come, and that, more immediately, Jews remained unwelcome even as proletarians in the coterritorial urban centers attracting growing numbers of unemployed Polish, Ukrainian, Russian, Lithuanian, etc., ex-peasants, the more necessary it became for the 'Jewish Workers Bund of Russia, Poland, and Lithuania' to take an unambiguous position on behalf of Jewish cultural autonomy and economic activity in Yiddish, both for the here and now and for 'the better future' to come (Mendelsohn 1970; Tobias 1972). Although the non-Zionist radical camp was never fully united on this issue (not even among Bundists) – e.g., note the determined Soviet policy of cultural genocide toward Yiddish since the mid 1930s – the view that socialism and Yiddish culture (usually referred to as 'Yiddish secular culture') should and

could flourish symbiotically became increasingly more popular, both prior to the first World War as well as during the interwar period. From weak origins in the last two decades of the nineteenth century (Bloom 1971, Kazhdan 1956a, 1956b) a truly amazing combination of pro-Yiddish literary–educational–political talent was assembled. No matter how typical such an assemblage was for all other Eastern European vernacular-based revolutionary movements of the time, it was essentially novel in the annals of Jewish history. Indeed, socialist Yiddishism gathered influential spokesmen from the ranks of popular educators (Zhitlovski 1900, 1912, 1923, 1940),⁷ literary aspirants (Nomberg 1931) and budding linguistic specialists (Shtif 1933), to become one of the major paths of modern Jewish life prior to the Holocaust, and, to remain such for some to this

7. The seminal role of Dr. Khayim Zhitlovski in transforming Jewish socialism from a fixation upon Jewish amalgamation with the supraethnic proletariat into an acceptance of the legitimacy of Jewish peoplehood even in the socialist hereafter (not to mention during the ‘long haul’ till then) is belatedly becoming more apparent even to those for whom the bulk of his Yiddish writings are still largely inaccessible (thanks to Goldsmith 1975, 1976a, 1976b; Gutman 1976; Howe 1976; Knox 1945). From early beginnings in laborite Zionism, Zhitlovski first moved into Diaspora-oriented socialism-nationalism, and finally moved abruptly leftward into the fellow-traveler camp in the late thirties, to the consternation of most of his earlier admirers who remembered over half a century of pioneering Zhitlovskian formulation and advocacy of Yiddish based, secular, cultural-autonomism (Pinski 1935; Rivkin 1935). Both in Europe and in America Zhitlovski’s moving and meticulously systematic lectures and articles (Robak 1935) swayed thousands of Jewish socialists and ‘folk intellectuals’ to divest themselves of opposition to Yiddish and Jewish ethnicity and, instead, to oppose assimilation (as well as the ‘blue-white terror’ of Hebraism via the ‘blood-red counter-terror’ of revolutionary Yiddishism [Zhitlovski 1923]). Although a committed exponent of dialectical materialism, Zhitlovski has been accused of ‘Yiddishism without dialectics’ (Maler 1967b) in view of his refusal to accept a lesser role for Yiddish in the 30s than that which he had envisaged at the beginning of the century. What most needs to be remembered today, however, rather than one or another of his extreme formulations, are his reconciliation of socialism and Jewish national-cultural creativity, his pioneering and positive formulation of modern Jewish secularism as a ‘poetic-national rejuvenation of Jewish peoplehood’ (see P. Matenko’s English translation of this crucial early essay in Goodman 1976: 149–158, as well as Goodman’s translation of Zhitlovski’s early essay ‘What is Jewish secular

culture?’ 47–56; for a bibliography of Zhitlovski’s writings up to a decade before his demise, see Roznboym 1929), the vital inspiration that he provided to the organizers and builders of Jewish secular schools in the United States and Canada (Novak 1948) and his early contributions to the terminological modernization and purification of Yiddish via his own voluminous writing on philosophical and sociopolitical topics. For similar careers of pioneering and extremism – such that ideological initiatives ultimately remained more important than actual accomplishments, many of which were vitiated by subsequent ideological initiatives – see Einar Haugen’s ‘Language planning in modern Norway’ (1961) (particularly: the treatment of Ivar Aasen), and Jack Fellman’s treatment of Eliezer ben Yehuda in his *The Revival of a Classical Tongue* (1973). Like both Aasen and ben Yehuda, Zhitlovski remains a controversial figure, subject to both adulation and sharp criticism to this very day, some forty years after his demise.

Zhitlovski’s intercontinental role (he settled permanently in the United States soon after the Tshernovits Language Conference [1908] with 20 years of leadership already behind him) is an excellent example of the extent to which the ideological positions originally developed in Eastern Europe were quickly replanted and took root anew in the early postimmigration years in the United States and elsewhere. The Jewish socialist (‘labor’) secular scene in the Eastern European immigrant ‘colonies’ in the New World long witnessed many of the same debates, allegiances, schisms, and quandaries of its counterpart origin in the old country. Ab Kan (Cahan) claimed to be the first to give socialist speeches in Yiddish in the United States (in 1882) and, what is more, to demand that Yiddish (rather than Russian, German or English) be used for educating Jewish workers with respect to their socialist responsibilities and American opportunities (Vaynshteyn 1910; Higham 1975). Ab Kan’s Yiddish speeches

very day. (On the need to keep in mind the assimilated bourgeoisie and attempt to attract it back to Yiddish see Zilberfarb 1928.)⁸

If the final and general socialist-autonomist *acceptance* of Yiddish had to struggle valiantly until its path was clarified even unto itself, the final and general Zionist *rejection* of Yiddish came more naturally, more easily, although, at least on the part of some, not without deep regret. Zionism and Hebraism were a natural pair and sprang full-blown, so to speak, from the brow of Jewish tradition into the modern activist arena. Even the assimilationist ripple in the Zionist sea, that ripple that saw in Zionism no more than an opportunity to be 'like unto (all) the gentiles' (or, as Aḥad Ha-'am put it, who saw in Zionism

were consciously peppered with Anglicisms and Germanisms (as were his many articles in the daily *Forverts* which he edited for so many years [1902–1951]) and its use at all was originally motivated pragmatically, in line with the views toward Yiddish of most early *maskilim*. After Irving Howe's volume on this topic (1975), it is not necessary to go into detail here concerning the long, sometimes conflicted, but remarkably creative and uplifting role of Yiddish in the American Jewish labor movement and its related cultural, philosophical, and ideological offshoots. Unfortunately, Howe tends to slight the role of Yiddish in nonsocialist circles during the same early immigrant period – the Orthodox and Zionist milieus being overlooked in particular, as well as a good bit of the communist oriented activity on behalf of and through Yiddish. Also somewhat paler than desirable is Howe's treatment of Yiddishism per se and, therefore, of the transformation or spillover from laborite *use* of Yiddish (admittedly, often enough, creative use) to laborite (and finally more than laborite) *symbolic elaboration and cultivation* of Yiddish (see, e.g. A. Tsh 1939 re B. Faygnboym's laborite-Yiddishism of the mid-1880s and Trunk 1976). The very process of elevation of Yiddish into a value and a cause in its own right, that had occurred in Eastern Europe between 1880–1920, also occurred, somewhat later on the whole, in the United States, and much of its impetus came from nationalist-secularist laborite circles (Levenberg 1974). This also tends to be the case to this very day, even though the designation 'laborite' must be understood more as an indication of sympathy and weltanschauung than of actual station in life (Doroshkin 1970). Nevertheless, we must take care not to commit the error *vis-à-vis* Yiddish that American laborite Yiddish secularism itself committed, namely, to assume that laborite Yiddish secularism was as central to the total world of Yiddish as the latter obviously was to the former. 8. The dual process of symbolic elaboration and spillover to new networks is evident in all successful

language (and language and nationalism) movements and has been documented several times. I have attempted to delineate the theoretical grounds for both, but particularly the process of symbolic elaboration and cultivation, in my *Language and Nationalism* (1972b) and in my 'Ethnicity and language' (1977b). The Yiddish case is worthy of special attention because of the advanced biliteracy of its early ideologizers, thus enabling them to more rapidly formulate and disseminate their views as well as more rapidly to develop the capacities of their linguistic instrument while so doing. On the other hand, two themes that have been well developed in other contexts are, as yet, little developed in conjunction with the Yiddish case: (a) the extent to which the rhetoric/metaphor of symbolic cultivation is shared (e.g. Herderian) or indigenous (e.g. biblical, talmudic) and how the former source comes to be connected to the Yiddish scene; (b) the objective factors *distinguishing* between early pro- and anti-Yiddish protoelites, given that they shared so many socio-cultural and politico-economic characteristics.

Due to the multiple tragedies that have befallen Eastern European Jewry and the doubly dislocative mobility that its 'colonies' have experienced, Yiddish secularist-cultural-autonomism failed to accomplish those social, political, and economic goals and safeguards that it generally recognized as necessary or desirable in its pre- and post World War I period of greatest growth and consolidation. As a result it presents a very advantageous case for the study of the course of ideological reformation and reinterpretation. Similar ideological revisions are going on in Norway (*vis-à-vis* Landsmaal or Nynorsk) and in Ireland (*vis-à-vis* Irish) today. An interesting comparative study is thus possible dealing with those elites who *do* and those who do *not* change their views, and what changes as well as what does not, when the objective circumstances surrounding language movements become drastically (and negatively) altered.

merely a solution to 'the Jewish question' – i.e. finding a place where persecuted Jews could live in safety – rather than a solution to 'the Jewishness question' – i.e. creating a society in which Jewish culture could develop without dislocative interference), could confidently prefer Hebrew to Yiddish (Heller 1974, 1977). Few Hebraists expected them to cultivate the former – which was fully alive only in the far away 'Land of Israel' – whereas the latter was ubiquitously present (Kazhdan 1956b) and called for use rather than merely admiration. 'Russian or Hebrew' 'Polish or Hebrew' were slogans that could unite Zionists, neo-Orthodoxy, and assimilationists both prior to and after the first World War, since their common element was hostility to Yiddish. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the obvious linguistic implications of the Zionist dynamics of 'returning to origins', to the wellsprings of eternal Jewish greatness in the Ancient Land, of the 'ingathering of exiles' including non-Ashkenazim as well, and of the striving for 'normalization' in all respects, including monolingualization⁹

9. The Zionist identification of multilingualism with Jewish exceptionality and the Zionist striving toward the monistic model of 'one language, one people' requires further elucidation. The objective need for a homeland and the subjective need for the original homeland do not necessarily imply monolingualism in Hebrew as Klatzkin ([1914] 1960) and so many others implied. The omnipresence of multilingual peoples throughout Jewish and general history (see Glyn Lewis's 'Bilingualism: the Ancient World to the Renaissance' in Fishman 1976c: 150–200) could not have escaped the attention of Zionist theoreticians and activists. Some analysts and critics would derive the Zionist rejection of traditional Jewish societal multilingualism from its more inclusive rejection of the Diaspora experience as a whole (*shilul haglut*) and of Jewish exceptionality more generally, whether in the homeland or in the Diaspora. However, to the extent that that is so, Zionism manifests a tension present in most nineteenth century European nationalist movements, all of which took the putatively monoethnic Western European polities as their models of Europeanism and modernity.

Social theorists in eighteenth–nineteenth century England, France, and Germany (and even in Spain, Holland, and Scandinavia) spuriously viewed their own societies as ethnically homogeneous. They ascribed all sorts of benefits to such homogeneity, which they also advocated for the rest of Europe, thereby recognizing the fewest possible state-building and state-deserving nationalities. As I have indicated elsewhere (see Fishman 1972b, 1980a), it was the process of political consolidation and stabilization that Western social theory postulated as legitimately formative of ethnicity. Whereas Central and Eastern European

nationality movements adopted the opposite stance (namely that ethnicity is and should be the creator of the state, rather than its by-product) they nevertheless adopted the Western ideal of ethnic and linguistic homogeneity as hallmarks of modernity. Unlike Third World compromises with multilingualism since the end of World War II, nineteenth-century nationality and state-building movements neither allowed for diglossia 'within' nor for multilingualism 'between' ethnicity collectivities. Rather than accept one or more languages of special communication for controlled intragroup and intergroup functions, as is the modern stance (see Fishman 1977c), they assumed that their own preferred vernaculars could and should suffice for all purposes, particularly at the intragroup level, very much as English, French or German could in *their* respective establishments.

Thus, the predominant Zionist rejection of either integrative or subethnicity symbolic functions for Yiddish and other post-exilic Jewish vernaculars is part and parcel of its late nineteenth-century (Eastern) European social theory heritage. To this more general stance one must add Zionism's particular distaste for Yiddish as the language associated with both ultra-Orthodox and secular rejection of Zionism. Note however the long continuing search for some positive accommodation with Yiddish in certain (particularly laborite) Zionist circles and the recent (post-Holocaust and particularly 70s) general mellowing toward Yiddish in Zionist/Israeli circles described below. For one of the few Zionist thinkers who has consistently viewed Zionism as the means of preserving and furthering all Jewish cultural diversity see Sadan 1977, 1978.

(Fishman 1979), the Zionist abandonment of Yiddish was not uncomplicated. Some trotted out the Orthodox argument of Hebraic eternity (Aleksander 1914; Byalik 1931; Bilezki 1970; Golomb 1943; Liptsin 1970; Sirkin 1923), even though they were themselves far from Orthodoxy. Others, like Sokolov, stressed the purported superiority of Hebrew for the ingathering of exiles from non-Ashkenazic settings (Malakhi 1961; Ben-tsvi 1956), although Yiddish speaking Ashkenazim were by far the bulk of early Zionist leaders, pioneers, supporters and settlers, and they could, therefore, have converted the non-Ashkenazim to Yiddish – just as they converted them to vernacular Hebrew and to many other secular-socialist Zionist ideals – had they wanted to do so. Still others ‘innocently’ claimed that Yiddish simply lacked the ‘dynamism’ to become the language of the new *yishuv* (settlement) (Ben-tsvi 1956), even though punitive methods frequently had to be resorted to in order to ‘discourage’ settlers from using this purportedly undynamic tongue (e.g. Aleksander 1914a; Kazenelson 1919) and in order to provide Hebrew with some of the punch that it apparently lacked in purely verbal interaction.¹⁰

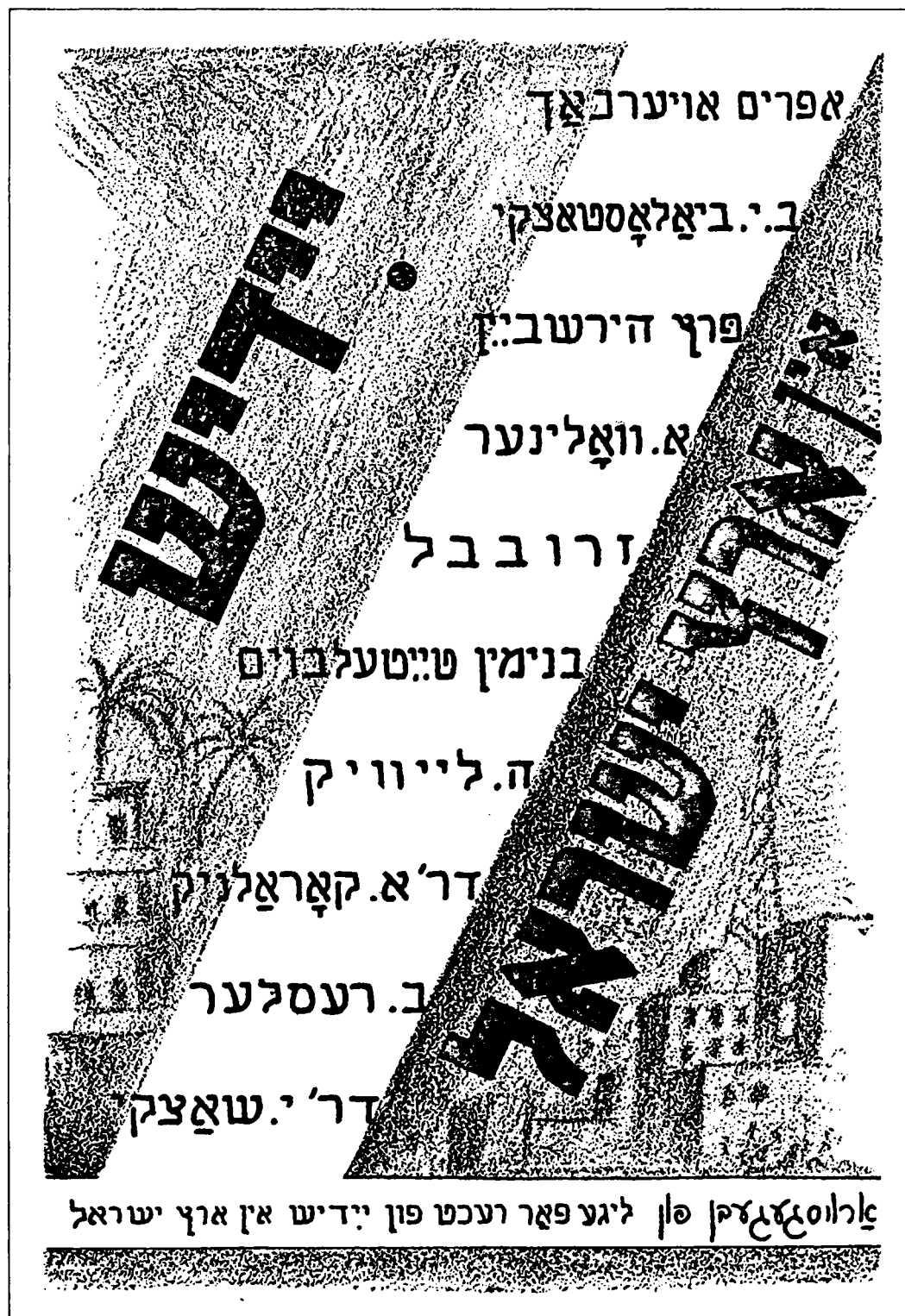
And still it did not come easy. Not only had some of the leading diaspora *haverim* (comrades) made major contributions to the study and cultivation of Yiddish (e.g. Borokhov 1913a, 1913b; also see Alpern 1977; Maler 1967c; and Zerubovl 1966), and not only did socialist colleagues (from inside and outside

10. For a detailed analysis of the first decade and a half of the *riv haleshonot* (the language dispute) see Pilovski 1973, 1977, 1979. The details concerning the second decade and a half have not yet been integrated. Among the interesting pro-Yiddish reflections of the latter period see Anon. 1935a (‘Yiddish in Erets-Yisroel must be tolerated, respected and legalized’), Kendzherski 1937, and Zerubovl 1936. The dispute provides ample data for the student of language attitudes. On the pro-Hebrew side an article by Sirkin (1923) handily summarizes (in Yiddish) the major Zionist stereotypes concerning Yiddish then current (and largely repeated to this very day): Yiddish is no more than an ephemeral ‘daughter of the earth’ whereas Hebrew is the true and eternal ‘daughter of heaven’. Although Yiddish is demonstrably little different from German (except for its Hebraisms; note Sirkin’s elaborate ‘proof’ for laymen) it can nevertheless fill several important functions, e.g. to help make the masses conscious of Hebrew, to lead them to it, and, finally, to abdicate in favor of her heavenly sister.

Writing at the same time and in the same journal, Tshermer articulates the two major Yiddishist counterclaims: Yiddishism seeks its language for the masses; Hebraism seeks the masses for its language. Without Yiddish a new generation

must arise in Erets Yisroel that has no connection either with *yidishkayt* or with world Jewry.

The Yiddish vs. Hebrew claims and counter-claims differ interestingly from those advanced in certain other diglossic settings but are strikingly similar to yet others. Commonly, where no deeply classical tradition exists, L-advocates claim greater authenticity, i.e. symbolic relatedness to the original and uncontaminated *volksgeist*. This is true in conjunction with Landsmaal vs. Riksmaal, Turkish vs. Persian/Arabic, Guaraní vs. Spanish, etc. However, where such a classical tradition *does* exist the L cannot claim to be as directly related to it as is the H (note the cases of Sanskrit, Katharevusa, classical Arabic). L, therefore, is defended as useful, natural, unmediated, affect-laden and sanctified-by-association, whereas it is attacked as ephemeral, irregular, irrational, contaminated by foreign influences, unpolished and demeaned/demeaning. All of these respective attitudinal composites can be discussed in terms of the absence or presence of one or another of Stewart’s dimensions (vitality, historicity, autonomy, and standardization) but it is the reversal with respect to historicity that I would like to stress here in comparing the view of Ls, even among many of their own adherents, when we view Ls in the absence and in the presence of classical indigenous or indigenized Great Traditions.



‘the movement’ proper) appeal for cultural democracy *vis-à-vis* Yiddish, but within the movement itself, and within the Holy Land itself, the debate continued well into the 1930s (Zhitlovski 1914; Yehoyesh 1917; Pilovski 1973, 1977, 1980). Meyerzon cautioned against a Zionism that was intolerant and that rejected its Yiddish speaking mothers and fathers as if they were contaminated (1919), offering them neither simple decency nor Jewish recognition. Loker argued against the schizophrenia of exploiting Yiddish in the diaspora (for fund raising, resettlement agitation, and Zionist education more generally) while exterminating it in the Homeland, even though it still possessed thousands upon thousands of speakers in the latter locale (1920). Left-wing Zionist pioneers claimed that ‘free expression in Yiddish in all areas of cultural life is required for the satisfaction of our spiritual needs; it is not a reaction against anyone, but rather, an organic necessity of life. We neither can nor will we stop short of the greatest sacrifices in order to satisfy our needs in this respect’ (Anon 1928a). Others were convinced that Marxism itself, not to mention the whole course of modern history, demanded the triumph of the proletarian vernacular (Maler 1925, 1947). Even today, after the struggle is considerably muted (Fishman and Fishman 1977), when all that Yiddish asks or can hope for in Israel is a fairly minimal symbolic nod (Herman 1972, 1977), its echoes continue to reverberate in more poetic form in conjunction with memories of cadences lost, of songs and expressions borrowed but not acknowledged, of sensitivities denied, of laughter stifled and spontaneity yet to return (Hameiri [1950] 1973; Megged 1966; Pat 1960; Sadan 1972c).

If the pre-World War II Zionist struggle against Yiddish has led to no major, post-Holocaust Zionist *mea culpas* (and, indeed, to continued anti-Yiddish activity in the diaspora – particularly in Latin America – under the slogan of ‘Hebraizing the diaspora’) the same cannot be said of the pro-Yiddish cultural-autonomist camp. Here we find regrets aplenty, particularly that traditional life was unnecessarily abandoned or destroyed, without adequate thought as to what, if anything, could take its place, as a daily pattern that would shield Yiddish in modern, interactional urban life on a minority (and often immigrant minority) footing (Golomb 1947; Saymon 1954a, 1954b, 1970). Nevertheless, the life-urge among secular Yiddishists continues, only slightly the worse for wear, and plans or pleas for the revitalization of Yiddish abound. Among some, it reveals an unabashed Yiddishism in all of its pristine secularism and linguocentrism (Pen 1941; Robak 1958a, 1958b). In others, it takes on a more all-inclusive ‘united front’ guise and an anti-assimilationist focus (Kozlovski 1967; Mark 1970; Tsanin 1966; Shteynberg 1968). In still other

◀ Figure 5. ‘The League for the Rights of Yiddish in Palestine’ (1935–1939) attracted both Zionist, non-Zionist and anti-Zionist members. One of its major accomplishments: the establishment and maintenance of a Yiddish printing establishment in Ramat Gan, necessary because most printers were too frightened by Hebraist strong-arm tactics to agree to print Yiddish books or periodicals.

cases, it is espoused more metaphorically, in terms of its most subtle (and elusive?) connotations, associations, and implications with respect to the total complex of Ashkenazic Jewry (Landis 1962; Winer 1961; M. Vaynraykh 1951a; Golomb 1967). Whether it is fated to disappear or not, the struggle for Yiddish is far from over as far as the true believers are concerned. For them it has become not merely an article of faith but a faith per se (Hesbacher and Fishman 1965).¹¹

PART IV: HISTORIC MOMENTS

The flow of events from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the last quarter of the twentieth century has witnessed both the heights of attainment and recognition for Yiddish, as well as the depths of annihilation and rejection. So much in one century! A few dramatic events represent the peaks of what was, as well as pay homage, often belatedly, to what might have been.

Perhaps the loftiest peak of all was the Tshernovits (Chernovtsy, Chernowitz)

11. The advocacy of Yiddish, the strong bonds of affection that continue for it even among some of those who rarely speak it, as well as the tender fondness for it that often springs up among some who never spoke it (and who may even only have seldom heard it) and who will probably never come to speak it, is an important phenomenon of considerable sociolinguistic generality. This phenomenon deserves further clarification at least on three levels. Most generally put, affect toward language seems to be only weakly related to knowing or using it. This is evidenced both positively and negatively, in connection with classical tongues, vernaculars, and languages of wider communication, and has been documented most extensively in recent days in conjunction with English (see Fishman 1977d) and Irish (see Anon. 1975). Classical languages such as Hebrew, Latin, Arabic, Sanskrit, etc. have benefited from mass attitudinal haloization unrelated to usage for centuries, and vernaculars are also capable of affective functional autonomy along similar lines.

However, in the case of Yiddish and other rather disadvantaged vernaculars there is more involved in such affective 'after-life' than all of the great and beautiful societal ideals, cultural/literary monuments and movements, or acknowledged integral life patterns with which it was (and often still is) associated. Yiddish also seems to represent *gemeinschaft* lost, the intimate and unconscious attachment to place and people, the touching particularism of premodern interdependence, in short, the sight and sound and smell of primordiality that so moved the peripathetic Ulysses when he once again caught a distant glimpse of the smoke slowly rising out of

his own homey chimney. Yiddish, therefore, even when unspoken, can represent not only an antedeluvian High Culture which must be appreciated, salvaged, and reconstructed, but it quintessentially represents (as does, for some, Irish, Breton, Occitan, Romansch, Frisian, etc.) not so much emotion or mirth alone (both of which have been much overstressed) as the *weltschmerz* and longing for intimate roots and relationships that modern life both denies and exacerbates, counteracts and reinforces. The paradise of primordiality may be both false and unregainable, but the longing for it is destined to flicker on and to flame up anew as the benefits of modernity fall short of our aspirations and as the problems of modernity (most of them, unanticipated system linkages tied into the benefits thereof) multiply endlessly.

Thus does the past remain an emotional dynamic in our perception of the present and in our program for the future. Yiddish, however, is not only relatable to an idyllic past and Messianic future (dynamics evident also in connection with other similarly disadvantaged vernaculars), but it is the possession of a people that has long incorporated and several times experienced rebirths, returns, and recoveries. The faith in Yiddish seems, therefore, to be triply protected, both general and unique dynamics being at play and reinforcing each other in the conscious behavior of the faithful. In Fishman 1966 (see particularly chapter 12) I have tried to explain why such ethnicity-related language-faith is so difficult to hand on intergenerationally. In Fishman 1977b, I have tried to indicate why such ethnicity-related language-faith is self-renewing in modern contexts, even in the absence of overt language use.

Language Conference of 1908 (Lerner 1957; Goldsmith 1976b), a brainchild of S. Birnboym, Zhitlovski and the Labor-Zionist oriented writer, David Pinski (Pinski 1948). It left behind it a whirlwind of commentary, memoirs, and expectations – and, as with all things that touch upon Yiddish, a huge gamut of opinion. Now, over seventy years later, it is still not clear, as it was unclear even at the Conference and immediately thereafter, just what it accomplished. Its concrete recommendations never materialized, for it had no follow-through apparatus. However it did signal a change in mood, focus, and level of self-regard along the entire spectrum of Yiddish activists and devotees (Mayzl 1928b). At Tshernovits, Yiddish was proclaimed *a* (not *the* but *a*) national language of the Jewish people. As such it deserved respect, cultivation, protection, recognition, and calculated promotion, for both secular and traditional functions, both among Jews as well as between Jews and non-Jews (e.g. with governmental agencies, in legislative bodies in which other minority languages were recognized, and in government-subsidized cultural efforts). Its writers, teachers and advocates were to be viewed as engaged in a great national mission of furthering the identity and fostering the creativity of the Jewish masses (Mizes 1931). A panoply of schools, theaters, modern and traditional genres (including a modern translation of the Bible, see Ash 1931, Elzet 1951), and organizations would arise to serve it and through it to serve the people. Verbiage? Certainly. Mysticism? Perhaps. But the spirit of the times was such as to take note! Even in distant America the daily Yiddish press tried, albeit not very successfully, to explain how the Tshernovits principles could (or could not) relate to American Jewish realities (Rothstein 1977). Closer at hand, in Austro-Hungarian Galicia and Bukovina, both Zionists and Bundists intensified their pre-Tshernovits campaign to declare Yiddish as their ‘national mother tongue’, even though replies to this effect in the 1910 Census were not only to be discounted but were punishable by fines (Shveber 1911; Sokal 1942). However, the spirit of Tshernovits marched on. The initial published reports (not only in Yiddish, as e.g. A.R. 1908; Prilutski 1908a; Zhitlovski 1908; Perets 1909; and, more generally, Anon 1931a, but also – and, of course, more negatively – in Hebrew, e.g. Aḥad Ha-’am 1908; Epshteyn 1910; as well as at the so-called ‘Hebrew Language Conference’, Zaydman 1910)¹² have been ritually followed up every decade (except perhaps,

12. Aḥad Ha-’am refused to join a planned protest by Hebrew writers outraged at the ‘excesses of Tshernovits’. He termed the whole Conference a *purim shpil* (Aḥad Ha-’am 1908; also see Drozdov 1959) and cautioned that it would be far better to ignore it since to attack it would be to dignify it and to publicize it. If only Jews had followed similar advice in connection with Jesus and Hasidism, he concluded, both would have received far less attention and experienced far less success than they did. Aḥad Ha-’am tended to take the Tsher-

novits Conference far less seriously than it deserved to be, given the configuration in which it transpired. The utility of language conferences for the quite separate purposes of (a) language promotion for demographically and functionally strong languages and (b) language maintenance for demographically and functionally weak ones is discussed in my paper on the 1976 World Conference for Yiddish and Yiddish Culture (Fishman 1976b). In general the former have been quite successful (or, better put, related to successful

for the first, when much of Eastern Europe was still reeling from war [but note Shtif 1919]. There have been articles commemorating: twenty years since Tshernovits (Vislevski 1928; Pludermakher 1928; Prilutski 1928; Mayzl 1928a; Zhitlovski 1928; Golomb 1928; Kan 1928a, 1928b; and a list of others in Anon 1931; note the negative evaluations at that time by Kazhdan 1928 and Khmurner 1928), thirty years since Tshernovits (Vays 1937), forty years since Tshernovits (Niger 1948; Pinski 1948) – the Congress for Jewish [= Yiddish] Culture coming into being in connection with this date – fifty years since Tshernovits (Kisman 1958; M. Vaynraykh 1958) – the Committee for the Implementation of the Standardized Yiddish Orthography pegging its initiation to this date – sixty years since Tshernovits (Rozenhak 1969; Mark 1968; Kazhdan 1969) and, most recently, seventy years since Tshernovits (Bez 1976). As with all unforgettable crescendos, future admiring commentary can be predicted with absolute confidence.

In comparison to Tshernovits other moments are paler but yet clearer. At the 1919 Peace Conference in Paris, it was agreed to require that public elementary schools for Jewish children in the new Poland be conducted in Yiddish, the mother tongue of the children (Tenenboym 1958; somewhat similar provisions also pertained in the Baltic region). Unfortunately, the Polish constitutional convention in 1920 adopted a far weaker provision, not only with respect to the language of schooling of minority children but with respect to public or official usage of minority languages more generally (Tikotshinski 1937). Seven years later (1927) Yiddish was once more slighted, and this time in Jerusalem. There the newly established Hebrew University decided *not* to establish a chair in Yiddish (Anon 1928b, 1928c). Retrospectively this was attributed to fear of

movements) whereas the latter have been singularly unsuccessful.

Calls for another international conference to be concerned with furthering 'Yiddish culture' began to be issued quite soon after Tshernovits (see, e.g. Sh. N. 1922; Pludermakher 1928). At that time the demographic-functional role of Yiddish in Eastern Europe was even more favorable than it had been during Tshernovits. Such calls multiplied after the Second World War, particularly as it became clear that neither the Congress for Jewish [= Yiddish] Culture (founded 1948) nor the left-wing YIKUF (Yidisher Kultur Farband, founded 1937) could mobilize the funds or the manpower that was required if Yiddish was to recover from the decimation of its heartland. Such calls inevitably harkened back to Tshernovits (e.g. Zhitnitski 1952; Mark 1968; Zelitsh 1968) but, unfortunately, did not grasp the diminished possible significance of language conferences for languages under adverse demographic-functional circumstances. Conferences necessarily relate best to the affective (liking) and cognitive (knowing)

levels of language behavior, since the means of fostering attitudes and familiarity are most easily influenced. However, not only is the link between liking and using an extremely tenuous one (see note 12, above) but the link between knowing and using is even more tenuous (viz the millions of students who spend years learning languages that they never use, not so much because they have not learned them well enough but because their interpersonal networks neither substantially require nor reward such use). The major problem facing demographically/functionally weak languages is not that they are unliked and not that they are unknown, but, rather, that they are unused for crucial life functions, particularly as mother tongues and as vernaculars of crucial status-role interactions. Thus, what is needed, basically, is to bring about the demographic re-nativization and the functional renaturalization of such weak languages and this is both more difficult to attain and usually not appreciated by the literary, artistic, educational, activist oriented leaders of, and participants in, language conferences.

drawing upon the still fledgling University the fire of the militantly Hebraist *gedud m'giney hasafa*, which had alerted the public that 'an idol was about to be brought into the Sanctuary' (Shwabe, in Anon. 1951; Pilovski 1977). However, nearly a quarter century thereafter (1951), that wrong was righted and a chair in Yiddish *was* finally established in Jerusalem, accompanied by all of the academic and governmental pomp and circumstance normally associated with expiations of guilt (see particularly the remarks by Dinaburg, Greenberg, and Sadan in Anon. 1951). Nearly another two decades slipped by before an Israeli Prime Minister could admit – at a private ceremonial rather than at a governmental substantive initiative – that

the spirit of the murdered millions lives in Yiddish culture. We dare not commit the offense of not having provided our youth with a consciousness of deep attachment to those millions and to the great cultural treasure they created. . . It is now much easier to do so than it was a few decades ago. . . This is a wonderful youth and it would be the greatest injustice for them not to recognize the great Jewish-national values that Jews have created in Yiddish (Meir [Meyer] [1970] 1973).

Figure 6. The Hebraists' response to the Tshernovits Language Conference of 1908 was, in part, to studiously ignore it (Ahad Ha'am's advice) and, in part, to counter with a conference of their own, held in Berlin, December 19–21, 1909. A Yiddish brochure was published (in a first edition of 10,000 copies) to make sure that the Jewish masses would learn of the conference's efforts to revitalize the Hebrew language.



And finally, six years later, in 1976, yet another Yiddish language conference took place. Almost seventy years after Tshernovits, and 50 years after the original refusal to establish a Yiddish chair at the Hebrew University, a World Conference for Yiddish and Yiddish culture took place in Jerusalem and was officially greeted by the Minister of Education as follows:

Together with the Jewish people that was incinerated in the Nazi crematoria, both languages [Yiddish and Hebrew] went up in flames. And many generations will be unable to fill the vacuum which was created in our national life. We cannot bring back the communities that were destroyed in the Holocaust. However, we *can* preserve their great spirit and their rich and glorious culture. In my opinion that is the duty and the responsibility of the State of Israel. It is our responsibility to exert ourselves to gather all of the cultural treasures that the Jewish people has brought with it from the diaspora. This is a noble but a difficult responsibility, but it is clear to us that what the State of Israel will not manage to do in this area... will simply not be done (Yadlin 1976).

Just prior to this conference, and as an obvious move in setting the mood and preparing the ground for it, the Ministry of Education announced that the study of Yiddish and Judesmo could count toward high school graduation for those students who wished to study yet another foreign language in grade 10 (in addition to English, the study of which is begun in grade 5). If this too, not unlike modern Orthodoxy's 'change of heart', was too little and too late (Sheyntukh 1977), it was at least, a markedly new tune. (For an earlier solitary 'break-through' of Yiddish into the Israel high school world see Zamir 1968.) It still remains to be seen, however, whether the Conference in Jerusalem will have significantly more tangible results than did the one in Tshernovits some seventy years earlier, or whether it will remain at the level of plans, promises, and party politics (Anon. 1977a; Botvinik 1976; Fishman 1976b; Pelts 1976) at a time when there is no longer any hinterland such as the one that Tshernovits possessed and when nativization and naturalization are the crying needs, rather than more propaganda and more publications.

PART V: FORMAL INSTITUTIONS OF LANGUAGE

Yiddish journalism

Beleaguered and bedeviled as it always was and is, both from without and from within, a modern world of Yiddish nevertheless came into being, boasting many of the modern urban institutions of cultural expression and development. Almost all of these institutions had their modern beginnings toward the end of the nineteenth century, but, if carefully examined, their origins can be found much earlier. Thus, though the *Kol mevaser* is ostensibly the first Yiddish weekly with any stability in the Czarist empire, beginning publication in 1862 (Arz 1869; Malakhi 1965), the roots of the Yiddish press date back hundreds of years earlier – indeed to 1687 – and to Western Europe per se (see e.g. Hal 1975; Probst 1922;

די ייד. פרעסע פון גאר דער וועלט אין פארש. שפראכן

אין די יארן 1557-1920 *

די סאטצעס ווײַנען צונויפגעשטעלט צוריק מיט עט-
לעכע חרדישע און פאר דער צייט ווײַנען אין מיינע רשי-
מה פארענקענען אייניקע צענדעריגען. דעריבער שטייען
נישט די ברויפאלס אין די סאטצעס אין קלײַנעקייטן.

1. 5. 5. 5. 5. 5. 5.

די יידישע פרעסע אין פארשידענע שפראכן פון יאר 1557-1920.

[illegible]

Table 1. 'The worldwide Jewish press in various languages for the years 1557-1920' (Probst 1922). Of the 3827 publications listed, 1443 are in Yiddish, 635 in Hebrew, 538 in German, 495 in English, 200 in Russian, 105 in French, 103 in Judesmo, etc. Of the 177 dailies identified, 150 are in Yiddish.

ד'י"ד ש' פרעס' לויט' שטעט און לענדער:

1	ביזלעס	2	נחיריד	1	ארגענטינע: (19)	1	אנגלארן: (13)
3	בערין	1	פירט	1	אכט	8	טוראפערט
5	גראדנז	1	פראנקפורט	17	בונדאס אירעס	2	מאראקאס
308	הארטע	2	קעניגסער	1	קאלאניע קלאר	1	סטערקאס
1	העלעלאדעק		דענעמארק: (3)		ארץ-ישראל: (21)	1	פיליפפין
2	וואלעכע		קאפעהאגן	3	יפו	1	קאטין
19	לאדוס	3	ווייסרוסלאנד: (50)	17	ירוסלים		אוקראינע: (121)
3	לובלין		באבויסק	1	ראטון-לציון	31	אדעס
2	פינסק	5	בזרודזשע	1	בוקאווינע: (9)	1	וויטאמיר
5	פיעטריקאו	5	כינסק	9	טערעזאפאל	16	כארקאס
2	שעלענסקאוו	40	זיבנברגן: (1)		בעמען: (3)	2	פאלאטאס
1	ראדאס	1	ביסטריץ	3	פראג	3	פיליפין
1	ראדאס		ליטע: (118)		בעלגיע: (3)	63	קעזע
2	שערדעץ	107	חילע	2	אנטווערפן	3	אינדיע: (4)
	פראנקרייך: (8)	1	פאניקעוויטש	1	געט	1	באכני
8	פאריז	8	קאוונו		בעסארעביע: (1)		קאלקטא
	קאנאדע: (4)	1	שאנזל	1	קייטע	2	אוראגאז
2	סאראטא	1	שירחוט		גאלאציע: (119)	1	אטלאנטא
2	מאטערעל	1	ליפלאנד: (8)	2	בראד	4	באליסטא
	קאזאקא: (2)	1	האלק	3	דראקאביטש	7	באסטאן
2	באקו	6	ליבאנע	3	זאקאטע	1	בראזיל
	רומעניע: (26)	1	מעהרען: (1)	1	זאקאטע	6	ברוקלין
3	באטיסאני	-1	ברין	4	זאקאטע	1	דעסאט
13	בוקארעסט	1	מז'ים: (1)	2	זאקאטע	1	הארטשעסטער
2	באלאן	1	קארע	2	זאקאטע	4	חניפוב
8	יאסי	1	ענגלאנד: (56)	45	זאקאטע	2	לאטאוויע
	רוסלאנד: (89)	1	לאטאוו	2	זאקאטע	2	מילאדוקע
1	באליסטא	2	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	1	זאקאטע	2.5	ניו-יארק
1	דזינסק	1	מז'ים: (1)	15	זאקאטע	1	נעו-יארק
8	האטע	2	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	4	זאקאטע	3	סאן-פראנצ
1	הארקא	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	3	זאקאטע	6	סיט-לואיס
5	חיסטאט	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	7	זאקאטע	1	פראקידען
5	יעקאטערינאפאל	52	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	20	זאקאטע	3	פוטער
16	מאקאדע	2	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)	6	זאקאטע	15	פאטערסאן
1	מוראס	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	4	פילאדעלפיע
1	מאראטא	21	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	1	קליפאנד
50	פריז	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	1	קענטין
	שווייץ: (4)	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	1	ראסטערס
3	גנע	1	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	26	סיקאטא
1	לוצערן	11	עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע		אפריקע: (6)
	שוועדן: (2)		עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע	6	יאקאטע
2	שטאקהאלם		עלז-לאטרינגען: (2)		זאקאטע		

Shatski 1932; Shaykovski 1970). From the outset, however, the Yiddish press was a supplier of more than news (Fishman 1960). It printed poetry, novels, and short stories (Frostig 1910). It published commentaries on the biblical and prophetic portions of the week. It sought to educate its readers and to prepare them for both Jewish and general responsibilities. Ultimately it drew them into the political process as well and activated them on behalf of innumerable Jewish and general causes. The Yiddish press has been a trusted friend, an advisor, an ally of the reader, no less so in the United States and in other centers of mass immigration than in 'the old country', and, indeed, perhaps even more so (B. Z. Goldberg 1971; Margoshes 1965). The first Yiddish newspapers in the United States began appearing (first in New York) in 1870, i.e. less than a decade after *Kol mevaser* began appearing in Odessa (Rischin 1962; Shaykovski 1970; Lifshits 1974). These newspapers quickly spread to most centers of Jewish population concentration throughout the country (e.g. Selavan 1976; Marmer 1928; Khaykin 1946a) and reached a combined paid circulation of three quarter million in the second decade of this century (Fishman 1965b; Goldberg 1941, 1943, 1945; Shelyubski 1945). They very gradually abandoned their archaic and Germanized linguistic idiosyncrasies (Hurvitsh 1917 [1902]; Shulman 1936; Kobrin 1976), but very quickly pursued various political and cultural goals (Hurvitsh 1917 [1909]), including Americanization (Soltes 1924; Dawidowicz 1963), biculturalism (Fishman and Fishman 1959), Zionism, socialism (Rappaport 1957; Dawidowicz 1964), Orthodoxy, etc. Much diminished in recent years, the Yiddish press still reveals occasional noteworthy spriteliness (Fishman 1960) and, in spite of difficulties, an ability to keep going that is truly remarkable (note the *Forward's* 80th anniversary in 1977).¹³ Remarkable too is the fact that

13. Similarly noteworthy accomplishments are evident in connection with the Yiddish press in Palestine/Israel (Feyges 1928; Kresl 1951), Roumania (Sh"s-roman 1929) and Poland-Russia. The latter is particularly outstanding in the annals of Yiddish journalism both for its literary quality and its virtually overpowering quantity. After 1917 both Hebrew and Russian journalism for Jewish audiences continued, particularly under Zionist auspices (Yashunski 1922), but quickly became relatively minor in terms of number of publications and readers, due both to governmental prohibition (in the USSR) and the overriding and recurring need of all Jewish political parties to rally their followers. As a result, Yiddish journalism in interwar Poland alone consisted literally of thousands of periodical publications (Shayn 1963, 1974).

The educating and activating role of the Yiddish press has not remained unnoticed by social scientists and specialists in minority affairs more generally (see, e.g. Witke 1957 and Y. L. Chyz 1959).

However, what has been largely overlooked is the extent to which the Yiddish press represents the acme of mass Yiddish literacy. With the double exception of a very few extremely popular authors, on the one hand, and Yiddish commentaries and translations of religious staples, on the other hand, the masses of Yiddish readers associated reading Yiddish with the newspaper and the newspaper alone. Thus, whereas even the most popular of Yiddish books and booklets may have reached only hundreds of thousands of readers, the Yiddish press reached millions and did so regularly. This in itself would not be so noteworthy (since the periodical press of all vernaculars regularly reaches vastly more readers than does the world of books) were it not for the fact that in the minds of many, Hebrew (or a coterritorial language) remained identified with serious books and bookishness while the image of Yiddish was tied to the ephemeral, popular press. I suspect that this was (and even is) so, notwithstanding the fact that most Yiddish authors were/are also the mainstays of the

II ע ל ע ז ז ט

מס' ספר	מס' עמוד	מס' שורה	מס' עמוד	מס' שורה
27	10	—	17	הנה
15	3	—	12	הנה
13	7	—	6	הנה
9	1	—	8	הנה
58	35	6	16	הנה
7	2	—	5	הנה
1	—	1	—	הנה
25	20	—	5	הנה
32	11	4	17	הנה
187	90	11	86	הנה

ה'תרע"ח - ה'תרע"ט

שם המדינה		ערב	גרמניה	הולנד	דנמרק	שוודיה	גרמניה	א.י.
26	7	4	2	6	—	1	4	2
13	1	—	3	4	3	—	—	2
13	1	—	—	2	3	3	1	3
7	1	—	—	2	1	1	—	2
6	2	—	—	—	—	1	1	2
5	—	1	1	1	—	—	1	1
4	1	—	—	1	1	—	—	1
3	—	—	—	—	—	—	3	—
2	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—
1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

tion of Yiddish with journalism and of Hebrew with books represents an attempt to clarify and simplify their functional specificity in accord with the lines or domains of their predominate legitimation. As long as some such complimentary distribution is maintained, even if it is not completely accurate, both languages are needed and no 'either/ or' choice is necessary. Under these circumstances bilingual readers (and particularly writers) are not at all unusual. However, when these diglossic tensions are eased and the functional differences ignored, than tendencies toward intergroup monolingualism are fostered and both readers and writers increasingly line up, on one side of the fence or the other. Sadan's plea for a return to the bilingual literary pattern of the beginning of this century and the end of the last (1972b, also see below) thus represents more than a restructuring of literary and literacy habits but, rather, a fargoing functional reallocation of both Hebrew and Yiddish in Jewish life.

Table 3. 'The Yiddish book in 1923' (Mayzl 1923). Of 364 Yiddish books published in 1923, 24.4 % were belles-lettres, 13.5 % were for young readers, 11 % were textbooks, 8.5 % were poetry, 8.8 % were dramas, etc. Twenty-five of these books were translations from other languages. Over 70 % were published in Poland, 19 % in Germany, 6 % in the USA, and 6 % in the USSR.

outside of Israel all Jewish *dailies* are in Yiddish. Their number may be getting smaller, but they represent an intensity of Jewish commitment that no others can match. (For a wealth of additional scholarly detail on the American Yiddish press from its earliest beginnings through the 1970s, see Shtarkman 1979 and his extensive bibliography and notes.)

Of wider repute throughout the world (primarily because of translations and dramatizations) is the Yiddish literary scene – particularly insofar as some of its leading lights are concerned – although the extent of the latter's dependence on the Yiddish daily and periodical press, for both sustenance and audience, remains largely unrecognized. Indeed, the partnership is often a tripartite affair and includes not only the press and the literary world, but the world of ideological–political efforts as well. This dovetailing goes back to the very beginning of organized efforts not only to educate the masses via Yiddish (note, e.g. the editorial on 'Yiddish bibliography' in *Kol mevaser* [Anon. 1869], urging readers to buy the compilation of Goldfaden's plays, the book about the Rothschilds and other 'truly worthwhile Yiddish books' that the periodical had undertaken to publish on a regular basis), but to activate them and, thereby, simultaneously, to build both 'a better world' and to foster 'Jewish cultural work' (see, e.g. Frostig 1910; Lyesin 1954; Litvak 1921; Mendeleyev 1959 [1889]; Niger 1914). The rhetoric quoted above is late nineteenth and early twentieth century, but the goal and, particularly, the intimate tie between the creators of journalism and the creators of literature, originates far earlier.

Yiddish literature

Just as the origins of the Yiddish press may be found in Western Europe, with the modernization, expansion, and social activation thereof coming towards the end of the nineteenth century in Eastern Europe, so also the developmental path of Yiddish literature more generally (see, e.g. Erik 1928; Madison 1968; Robak 1940; Tsinberg 1937, vol. 9; Reyzin 1923; Shatski 1936; Viner 1940; etc.). Even in Eastern Europe, however, far from the blandishments of Reform and massive assimilation, its path was conflicted, particularly at the outset, with leading lights of the *haskole*, of Orthodoxy, of Zionism, of Hebraism, and of socialism all asking, in chorus as it were, 'is a Yiddish literature necessary?' (Ravnitski 1889a). Various merits and justifications were advanced (e.g. Ravnitski 1889b) – originally quite innocuous and artistically unpretentious or self-effacing ones – but the controversy raged on for decades (see e.g. Verses 1938; Kresl 1954) and has been renewed, on occasion, even in post-Holocaust years (see e.g. Niger-Charney 1955). Although the drift and needs of the day led more and more late nineteenth-century writers of stature to write in Yiddish (while, in most cases, also continuing to write in Hebrew), it was many decades, indeed not until after the First World War, before it was generally felt no longer

פארלאג „קולטור-ליגע“, הארשע

פאריכט

פון דער פארלאגס-טעטיקייט פארן יאר 1923

ט.נ.	האָטערע הערע	ד.ר.אָפּ ב.ר.י.נ. אין בוך	ב.ר.י.נ. אין בוך	האָטערע הערע	נ.	האָטערע הערע	ד.ר.אָפּ ב.ר.י.נ. אין בוך	ב.ר.י.נ. אין בוך	סך העל ד.ר.י.נ.
בעלעטריסטיק									
1.	סלום-עליכס-בתים פון א קאמפאזיציע	14	1500	21000	42	איבערגעטראגן	104 ^{1/4}	1500	170400
2.	לעבנדיג-יוט-טוב	16 ^{1/2}	1350	22000		ה. נאטאנאטאן-שפּיטאָוא	3	1500	4500
3.	יידשע קינדער	12	1500	18000		און בערגטאן			
4.	בלויטקער שפּאט-1-טע טייל	27	1500	40500		סך-הכל	107 ^{1/4}		174900
5.	2-טע טייל	19	1500	28500		יונגס און קינד. ליטעראטור			
6.	מאָטל דעם חנוס 2. אויפּל.	14	650	9100	43	שלום עליכס-טוב 2 אויפּל.	11 ^{1/2}	1000	11250
7.	3.	11	1000	14000	44	בענדעלע פּוּט-מסעות בנימין	6 ^{1/4}	1000	6125
8.	יאָסעל סאָלאָווי	14	1500	21000	45	השלישי 2-טע אויפּל.	10 ^{1/2}	2000	21000
9.	קינדער-שפּיל	7	1500	10500	46	ה. הויפּט-מסעות בנימין	3	1000	3000
10.	שלום אט-קרויטשעס 1 אויפּל.	12 ^{1/4}	1500	18375	47	ה. הויפּט-מסעות בנימין	2	1000	2000
11.	קרויטשעס 2-טע אויפּל.	12 ^{1/4}	1000	12250	48	קליינער פּוּט	3 ^{1/2}	1000	3500
12.	כענדעל-מאָרין 1-טע אויפּל.	10	1500	15000	49	סאָל	1 ^{1/4}	1000	4250
13.	2-טע אויפּל.	10	1000	10000	50	קאָפּל פּוּט	2	1000	4000
14.	1-טע אויפּל.	20	2000	40000	51	פ. הירשפּין-מסעות בנימין	2	2000	3000
15.	2-טע אויפּל.	22	1000	22000	52	ב. אינגאטאן-בערל פּראָגער	2	1500	2000
16.	אָנעל פּאָטע	14	1500	21000	53	שלום עליכס-מסעות בנימין	2	1500	2000
17.	הענציוו	15 ^{1/2}	1500	23250	54	ש. אט-אָרעכער און רייכער	2	1000	3000
18.	כאָמפּאָזיציע דראַמען	21 ^{1/2}	1000	21500	55	פ. מאָרין-זאָנע-גאָלד	2	1000	2000
19.	נאָמאָנאָל דראַמען	21	1000	21000	56	ב. קיפּוּט-חברים	1	2000	2000
20.	כאָמפּאָזיציע גאָלד (דראַמע)	5 ^{1/2}	1000	5500	57	קעזל-קאָמער	1	2000	2000
21.	גאָלד פּוּט	6	500	3000	58	קאָמער	1	1500	1500
22.	פּוּט פּוּט	4	500	2000	59	ש. גיטלעס-אריע ריו	1	2000	2000
23.	הויט	6	500	3000	60	ל. קוויטקא-לידעלעך	1	2000	2000
24.	משיחע זייטן	5	500	2500		מ. ליטוויץ-ח.גדיא	2	1000	2000
25.	אונזער גלויבן	5 ^{1/4}	500	2625		סך-הכל	54 ^{3/8}		76125
26.	א. שנירל פּערל	5	500	2500		ליטוויץ			
27.	א. שנירל פּערל	5 ^{1/2}	500	2625		יעקב פאט-מסעות בנימין	1 ^{1/4}	1200	1500
28.	י. אפּאָטאָו-פּוּט-וועלדער	22	1000	22000	61	אָנעל-וועלדער	4	1000	4000
29.	א. ראָבאן פּוּט א. פּערל-גאָלד	15	2000	30000	62	ראָב. זיידל-אָרעכער-סול	6	3000	18000
30.	פ. הירשפּין-פאָרן-כאָמפּאָזיציע	6 ^{1/4}	1500	9375	63-68	י. פאט-לייטעלעך און שרייבן 6-1			23500
31.	בנה-זאָל ריטער	14	1500	21000		סך-הכל	11 ^{1/4}		
32.	ה. ליטוויץ-אין קיינעם לאַנד	12	1500	18000		זעטראַפּן			
33.	ב. שנירל-דראַמען 2 א.	4 ^{1/4}	1000	4250	69-72	ביכער-העלס 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 6	35	2000	70000
34.	א. פּראָט-סאָט 3-טע אויפּל.	12	1000	12000	73-74	נייע שולס 5, 4, 3, 2, 1	18	800	14400
					75-77	שול, און לעבן	13	1200	15600
35.	ת. שמיט-איינשטיין-טעאָריע	9	1600	14400		סך-הכל	66		100000
36.	ו. רייזען-פון בענדעלעך	26 ^{1/4}	2000	52500		בעלעטריסטיק	85 ^{1/2}		530350
37.	ת. קיסעל-הנץ-חיסנאטא	19	1500	28500		קריטיק און חיסנאטא	107 ^{1/4}		174900
38.	ג. פּוּט-דאָס גאָלד	12	1500	18000		יונגס און קינדער ליט.	54 ^{3/8}		76125
39.	דיר י. שפּער-געזיכטע	14	1500	21000		פּערל-בער	11 ^{1/4}		22500
40.	ב. שפּיטאָו-זיידל	20	1500	30000		זעטראַפּן	66		100000
41.	א. בערנאָט-פּוּט-אין בעלעטריק	4	1500	6000		זאָמאָט דרוק-בויגן	324 ^{3/8}		904575

necessary to justify or explain why one felt it proper to do so. Such justifications are to be found by Mendele (Miron 1973a, 1973b; Sadan 1965), Sholem Aleykhem (Novershtern 1971; Sholem Aleykhem 1889), and Perets (Byalestotski 1940; Kalmenovitsh 1949; Rabinovitsh 1946; Shveyd 1955a; Turkov-Grudberg 1965), the three great giants of modern Yiddish literature, and obviously also for many writers who ultimately found their way primarily to the Hebrew side of the fence: Byalik (Sadan 1974; Biletski 1970; Byalik 1931), Berditshevski (Mayzl 1965), Agnon (Agnon 1969; Sadan 1969) and others. And, nevertheless, Yiddish literature blossomed and did so on literary-aesthetic rather than only on the utilitarian-educational-political grounds that movement after movement encouraged (Shtif 1924). That this was so was beginning to be recognized even before the turn of the century (Sholem Aleykhem 1892).

The Yiddish muse is not a figment, which lives only in the imagination of hot-headed advocates of Zhargon, not a fable that corresponds to no reality, but she really exists... (and is) one of the heavenly daughters sent down to sweeten the lives of our people. Yes, the Yiddish muse lives and will always live, and the flowers that she strews upon Zhargon grow up on holy soil. This should not be forgotten by all who cast haughty glances at our Ivre-taytsh and who consider it below their dignity to speak of it as one speaks of a literature (Lerner 1889).

Up to the beginning of the Second World War, Yiddish literary productivity continued to grow at a rapid rate (Mayzl 1923; Meyer 1922a, 1922b; Shalit 1913), although the economic rewards for its participants were slim indeed (Prilutski 1908b; Tsitron 1923).

In America too Yiddish literature goes back quite far (Marmer 1928 and Shtarkman 1939 discuss the first book that appeared in 1877) and begins to attract critical recognition quite early (Wiener [1899] 1972). However among the English reading public it has only recently begun to receive the popular recognition (Howe and Greenberg 1954, 1969, 1975, 1977; Howe 1976; Singer 1979) and the professional scholarly attention (e.g. Miron 1973a, 1973b) that it deserves. Its sole support and acclaim has long come from the small circle of Yiddish writers, critics, and readers who have focused upon it both as a literature with problems and processes of its own (Opatoshu 1954; N. Goldberg 1940) and as a superb record of Jewish life (Gliksman 1966; Nobl 1954; Rabinowicz 1965; Stillman 1977). Although, due to its primary role as literature, it probably should not be taken uncritically as either a faithful or a balanced record of Jewish history, Yiddish literature can nevertheless be a significant reflector of Ashkenazic history for American Jewry, from the history of the printing press and publishing

◀ Table 4. 'Kultur-liga Publishing House, Warsaw. Report of Publishing activity for 1923.' An advertisement of one of the largest and highest quality Yiddish publishing houses in interwar Poland. Approximately one million pages had been set in type, 59% were belles-lettres (including poetry and drama), 19% were science and literary criticism, 8% were for young readers, 3% were textbooks, and 11% were periodicals. A volume by Sholem Aleykhem and another by Sholem Ash each appeared in an addition of 40,000 copies.

itself among Jews (Rabin 1969; Madison 1976), through to the early, middle and most recent days of immigration to the New World (Hapgood 1966 [1902]; Ronch 1975; Landis 1975).

Two views have increasingly come to the fore as post-Holocaust perspectives on Yiddish literature. The first is that Yiddish literature should be viewed jointly with Hebrew literature – ‘one literature in two languages’ – as an inextricably intertwined flowering of one and the same national genius (Bal-makhshoves 1953 [1908]; Golomb 1967; Niger 1957 [1941]; Ravitsh 1958; Shtarkman 1965). The other is that Yiddish literature has had (and still has) a particular moral, humanistic, and even redemptive message focused upon the sanctity of human life and the nobility of justice (Pomerants 1966; Opatoshu 1949b; Leyvik 1963 [1957]). Although literary analysis per se is not our concern here, but rather the social context and implications of literary efforts, literary goals, and literary response, it is worth stressing that views such as both of the foregoing imply that Yiddish literature, far from being a minor, off-beat concern, is a unifying and eternal repository of the very best that the Jewish people as a whole has created (Leyvik 1963 [1948]; Ravitsh 1947, 1951; Niger 1939, 1950; Friedman 1957–1958).¹⁴

Yiddish theater

Another pillar of the world of modern Yiddish, and one that has brought it great recognition and considerable acclaim of late, is the theater. Although the theater, as an art medium, may have had a later start among Jews than among coterritorial gentiles (Ernst 1930a; Prilutski 1945), perhaps precisely because theater in Europe originally had christological associations that made it seem even more morally questionable in Jewish eyes than it was for others, it nevertheless grew to massive proportions after its modern beginnings in Roumania a century ago (Berkovitsh 1976). Even more so than Yiddish journalism or Yiddish literature, Yiddish theater became a truly popular vehicle.

14. Ravitsh's view that Yiddish creations too belong in a new Book-of-Books (to encompass the very worthiest literary creations of Jews during the past two thousand years) represents a complete reversal relative to the view of Yiddish literature that still predominated a century ago. From the view that the language itself was deficient and that nothing particularly refined, noble, subtle or uplifting could be said or written in it (note even Hapgood's view [1902] that Yiddish was so defective as an instrument of expression that it impeded the thought processes of its users), Yiddish literary work has now come to be viewed as fit to be included among the very best that the Jewish people has created during its entire Diaspora

experience. 'And the nature of the matter, of *this* matter, naturally leads to the conclusion that the language of the second Book-of-Books will be primarily – although not entirely – Yiddish, *mame loshn*. And in this fashion the language of the martyrs will remain alive eternally. In a Book-of-Books it is not only the contents that becomes hallowed but the form as well, and the form, the garb of a book, is its language' (Ravitsh 1951: 98). Ravitsh's attitude would be shared by most Yiddish writers today as would the view, probably shared with Jews the world over, that that which is included between the covers of such a book is destined for (is automatically an example of) eternal life.

It called upon spoken expression – much more the language's true metier in the popular mind than even its most widely known written works – and audience empathy (which, not infrequently, became audience participation) and presented not only folk-comedy and melodrama but the greatest works of world and Jewish literature alike. Thus, in the United States, while Broadway was cultivating the American musical comedy, barely literate Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side were reverberating to versions of Ibsen, Shakespeare, and Tolstoy, in addition to Gordin (*Mirele Efros*), Gutskov (*Uriel Acosta*), Goldfadn (*The Witch*), and, of course, Hirshbeyn (*Green Fields*), Leyvik (*The Golem*), and many, many others of major dramatic worth (Clurman 1968; Gorin 1913). Yiddish theater is most active today in Israel (Fishman and Fishman 1977; see Ernst 1930b for the beginnings of Yiddish theater in Palestine), but its texts (Bez 1977; Landis 1966; Lifson 1965; Warembud 1975), its techniques (Lifson 1965) and its talents (Rosenfeld 1977), have come to be most widely appreciated in the United States, both by memorists and by the nostalgic grandchildren of the theater's original devotees (see e.g. Adler 1959; Kaminska 1973; Kobrin 1925; Rumshinski 1944; Turkov 1951; Tomashefski 1937; Yung 1950; Yablakov 1968, 1969).

As its audience shrank and angified, Yiddish theater in America attempted to draw an audience opting almost entirely for pulp musical comedy. Currently, no more than a mere shadow – quantitatively and qualitatively – of its former self (Kohansky 1977), the Yiddish theater still attracts the interest of serious students (e.g. Manger, Turkov, and Perenson 1968, 1971; Sandrow 1977; Shmeruk 1971; Shayn 1964; Zilbertsvayg 1931–1969), as it did before (Anon. 1926; Beylin 1934; Gorin 1923; Shatski 1930; Y. Sh. 1930; Shiper 1923, 1925), and the devotion of small ensembles that insist on performing 'the better repertoire' no matter how small the audience for it may be. Although the modern heirs of the *purim shpil* have suffered worse reverses than either the Yiddish press or the Yiddish literary scene, probably due to a variety of objective and subjective factors,¹⁵ they still have hopes and make plans for a better theater,

15. The eclipse of the *quality* Yiddish theater, particularly in America, may have more to do with objective theater-industry factors (e.g. the high cost of unionization of stage hands in New York City) and with objective aging per se (an aged clientele can still read a newspaper or book at home but can no longer travel into center-town for attendance at theater performances) than with such matters of subjective culture as the value of the theater. Nevertheless, in conjunction with demographically-functionally weakened languages, a variety of double-bind situations have been noted such that these languages are further weakened both if they *do* as well as if they *don't* take certain corrective steps. In this connection see the

issue on 'Language Death' (Dressler and Wodak-Leodolter, eds. 1977). A possible example of this type of bind in the case of Yiddish would be the literary area. In a weakened state the language is further downgraded because of the meager *cultural tradition* of literacy via Yiddish. On the other hand, attempts to foster literacy in Yiddish provide further negative feedback with respect to attitudes toward the language if the literary material given to the learners is rejected by them as being of poor quality, un- or anti-traditional or otherwise ideologically unacceptable.

The Yiddish theater could conceivably be involved in a double-bind relationship *vis-à-vis* Yiddish in general. On the one hand, it might

particularly in the United States and Israel, and also continue to perform regularly in Poland, Roumania, Canada, and Latin America as well as intermittently in the USSR and Western Europe.

As of now, however, only Yiddish vaudeville and musical comedy are generally to be found, and lo and behold, at times found aplenty. Even so, for a medium that was supposed to have died ever so long ago, this phenomenon has prompted general as well as Jewish amazement, if hardly critical acclaim. Interpreting its implications constitutes a veritable projective test: if a popular Yiddish theatrical pulse still beats, much to everyone's surprise, can a 'better' Yiddish theater be far behind? If Yiddish film classics are now once again being widely shown, and they are, then can the return of Yiddish theater classics be far away? Thus while some wonder how long Yiddish dramatic art can continue at all, others wonder how long its second coming can be delayed.

Education in Yiddish

Finally, schooling in Yiddish must be recognized as a major – in former days, *the* major – formal institution (outside of the family per se) involving the language. Certainly this is so if modern literacy-related pursuits are of concern and, some would claim, doubly so if the continuity of the language is of interest. Here again we find very early origins, specifically as the oral process language of education (with a history as old as that of Ashkenaz itself; see Fishman 1973; Roskies 1977; Shtern 1950), and even in written use as well. In this latter capacity it should be remembered that instruction in *writing* Yiddish is also centuries old (e.g. the communal ordinances of Kracow, 1595, call for teaching boys in elementary school to 'write the sounds [of the language] in which we speak' [Asaf 1925, vol. 1, p. 101]). This responsibility came to be entrusted, as early as the sixteenth century, to the *shrayber* (writing teacher), a functionary who continued to serve Jewish education in Eastern Europe to the very threshold of the present century (Kazhdan 1956c). Through this side door other non-classical subjects also found their way into elementary Jewish education for

generally be considered to be less threatening to traditional diglossic functional allocations because of its oral rather than textual nature. On the other hand, being textually unsanctioned and traditionally unprotected, it may be viewed as more frivolous, unworthy, and dispensable than other forms of Jewish cultural expression. Once the negative demographic-functional cycle has begun, and the theater begins to lose its better actors (when was the last time that either Hollywood or Broadway lured away a Yiddish actor 'as in days of old'?, or do failures on the English stage now gravitate toward Yiddish 'slim-pickins'?), *serious*

Yiddish theater compares more and more poorly with its coteritorial rivals, and this further exacerbates the negative (or, at least, the burlesque) aura surrounding the theater and its language. The double-bind dilemma of weak languages further underscores the care that is required to distinguish between them and officially unrecognized or even underdeveloped languages that have a strong demographic base and intimacy-membership function. Poorly chosen language cultivation efforts may actually intensify rather than overcome or avoid the double-bind 'damned if you do; damned if you don't' dilemma.

יידישע ביבליאטעקן אין פוילן												
א.מ.	ש.כ.א.ס	נאמען פון ביבליאטעק	זאץ בייכער					אָלגעמייןע באָך ביכער	באָך לעזער	חוב"ב ביכער א"י א' לעזער		
			יידישע	פּוילישע	רוסישע	העבר.	גערמאנ.					
1	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	350	—	—	—	—	—	160	350	2	
2	אָנאָרמאָ	יונגס-ביבליאטעק	250	—	—	—	—	—	120	250	2	
3	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביבליאטעק	70	—	—	—	—	—	65	70	1	
4	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אר. היים	546	—	—	—	—	—	52	546	5	
5	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביבליאטעק	1364	1004	789	790	191	—	500	4138	8	
6	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	200	50	—	—	—	—	75	250	3	
7	אָנאָרמאָ	—	350	—	—	—	—	—	120	350	3	
8	אָנאָרמאָ	פראַנצזישע	182	42	—	—	—	—	49	274	5	
9	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע פאָלקס-ביב.	900	—	—	—	—	—	120	900	7	
10	אָנאָרמאָ	יו. י. י. ב. אָנאָרמאָ-ביב.	105	—	—	—	—	—	81	105	1	
11	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	195	25	—	—	—	—	90	220	2	
12	אָנאָרמאָ	גייס פראַ. פ. נאָר. אר.	150	—	—	—	—	—	—	150	—	
13	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	415	—	—	—	—	—	198	415	2	
14	אָנאָרמאָ	פראַנצזישע ביבליאטעק	400	—	—	—	—	—	100	400	4	
15	אָנאָרמאָ	שטאט-עליכס-ביב.	5000	500	6000	1000	1500	—	1000	14000	14	
16	אָנאָרמאָ	ביבליאטעק און לעז. זאל	600	700	3500	200	150	—	125	5150	41	
17	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי דער אר. געז. קולטור	180	—	—	—	—	—	50	180	4	
18	אָנאָרמאָ	אר. ביבליאטעק	300	—	—	—	—	—	60	300	5	
19	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים פ. פ. האנד. אָנאָ	560	—	—	—	—	—	85	560	7	
20	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	100	—	—	—	—	—	55	100	2	
21	אָנאָרמאָ	—	450	—	—	—	—	—	150	450	3	
22	אָנאָרמאָ	אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	1000	—	—	—	—	—	250	1000	4	
23	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביבליאטעק	2000	600	—	500	—	—	355	3100	9	
24	אָנאָרמאָ	אר. ביבליאטעק	600	200	462	—	—	—	236	1262	5	
25	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	154	—	—	—	—	—	72	154	2	
26	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים פ. פ. נאָר. אר.	97	—	—	—	—	—	54	97	2	
27	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביבליאטעק	222	313	55	25	—	—	60	615	5	
28	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	225	78	—	—	—	—	65	303	5	
29	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביב. ביי דער ק. פ.	380	—	—	—	—	—	203	380	1	
30	אָנאָרמאָ	ביב. ביי פא. יונגס	1800	—	—	—	—	—	203	1800	9	
31	אָנאָרמאָ	יוד. נאב. פאָלקס-ביב.	400	700	—	—	700	—	250	1800	7	
32	אָנאָרמאָ	יוד. פאָלקס-ביבליאטעק	360	—	—	—	—	—	90	360	4	
33	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים יונ. קולטור-פאריוו	410	—	300	50	—	—	70	760	11	
34	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים אר. קלוב. גראַסער	3000	300	—	—	—	—	325	3300	10	
35	אָנאָרמאָ	פראַנצזישע ביבליאטעק	2080	694	820	90	—	—	516	3684	7	
36	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים פ. פ. טון דרוק. אר.	850	—	—	—	—	—	160	850	5	
37	אָנאָרמאָ	טעקסטיל	2600	—	—	—	—	—	284	2600	9	
38	אָנאָרמאָ	ביב. ביי יוד. פייכטאָל	320	281	101	742	39	—	—	1483	—	
39	אָנאָרמאָ	הומיר	1161	198	300	487	120	—	307	2276	7	
40	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי דער געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	1000	—	—	—	—	—	400	1000	3	
41	אָנאָרמאָ	פראַ. פ. ב. אָנאָרמאָ	267	—	—	—	—	—	133	267	2	
42	אָנאָרמאָ	יוניש-פאכאָנאָ	280	—	—	—	—	—	75	240	3	
43	אָנאָרמאָ	פליישער-אר.	800	—	—	—	—	—	—	800	—	
44	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים קאפ. אר.	1547	400	—	—	—	—	234	1947	8	
45	אָנאָרמאָ	אר. ביב. א. נ. גראַסער	600	—	—	—	—	—	70	600	9	
46	אָנאָרמאָ	ביי דער געז. אָנאָרמאָ קורסן	531	—	—	—	—	—	115	531	5	
47	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים פ. פ. טון האנד. אָנאָ	1220	1003	—	—	—	—	186	2223	12	
48	אָנאָרמאָ	יודישע ביבליאטעק	1216	—	—	208	—	—	173	1424	8	
49	אָנאָרמאָ	יוד. שטאט-ביב. קולטור	470	51	1160	50	—	—	184	570	3	
50	אָנאָרמאָ	פראַנצזישע ביבליאטעק	1900	1250	—	296	—	—	875	4636	5	
51	אָנאָרמאָ	דינעטאן-ביבליאטעק	277	—	—	301	—	—	154	854	6	
52	אָנאָרמאָ	פאָלקס-ביבליאטעק	922	479	—	369	—	—	212	1790	8	
53	אָנאָרמאָ	ביים טעקסטיל פאריוו	20	20	30	—	40	—	140	340	2	
54	אָנאָרמאָ	לעזער פאריוו	280	—	—	—	—	—	60	280	5	

Table 5. 'Jewish libraries in Poland' (Meyer 1902b). Jewish communities in large and small localities supported their own Jewish libraries. The table lists 138 localities with a total collection of 147,177 books. Of these 63 % were in Yiddish, 15 % were in Polish, 13 % were in Russian, 6 % were in Hebrew, and 3 % were in other languages. In 1922 over 23,000 subscribing members borrowed books from these libraries.

מ.מ.	ש.ש.מ.	נאמען און ביבליאטעק	צאָל בייכער					אָנזעכעניצע צאָל ביכער	צאָל לעזער	ווייניג ביכער איינפאך לעזער
			יידישע	פאלישע	רוסישע	הונג.	אנדערע דיאלעקטן			
55	ולאזשעוו	ביי דער נעז. זוקונפט	160	—	10	—	—	170	50	3
56	זשינלין	פאריין. ביבליא. לעזער-וואל	900	300	—	110	—	1310	290	5
57	טאכאטאוו	בר. גראטער	350	—	—	—	—	350	105	3
58	טשענסאבאך	ביי דער ארג. יוגנט	200	—	—	—	—	200	—	—
59		ב. ארג. קלוב. פארייניקטע	1000	250	—	—	150	1400	250	6
60		באראטאוו. ביבליאטעק	96	27	—	—	—	123	58	2
61	יאנאוו-הראדזש	יידישע ארג. ביבליאטעק	625	—	—	—	—	625	125	5
62	כביעלניק	יידישע שטאט-ביבליא.	1200	—	—	—	—	1200	238	5
63		ביי דער ארג. יוגנט	150	50	—	—	—	200	60	3
64	כעלם	ארבעטער-ביבליאטעק	750	—	—	—	—	750	80	9
65		באראטאוו. ביבליאטעק	805	570	16	120	—	1511	400	4
66	לאדזש	ביבלי. ארג. טער-היים	2030	1080	404	281	—	3795	600	6
67		ביים פראג. פאר. האנדל-אג.	900	2300	800	350	150	4500	400	11
68		גראטער-ביבליאטעק	4683	232	—	—	—	4916	964	5
69	לאנדאראווא	ביי קולטור-ליגע	504	—	—	—	—	504	67	8
70	לאקאטשי	באראטאוו. ביבליאטעק	312	—	20	—	—	332	61	5
71	לעבאדעוו	י. נעקער-ביבליאטעק	420	95	—	110	—	625	160	4
72	לובלין	יוגנט-ביבליאטעק	294	60	—	—	—	354	156	2
73		ארבעטער-היים. ביבלי.	682	—	—	—	—	682	312	2
74		ביים צענט-ראט פון פ.	600	50	350	—	—	1000	422	2
75	לוצק	ביבלי. ביי "אונט-קורסן"	1693	74	—	—	—	1767	242	7
76	לאווטש	יוד. לעזער-וואל און ביבלי.	1200	400	200	200	—	2000	245	8
77	לאנצוט	לאק. קאמ. אונאפהענג. פ.	120	—	—	—	—	120	28	4
78	לאדזש	ביים צ. ר. פון פ.	1675	40	251	225	—	2191	245	5
79	מאקאוו	ארבעטער-יוגנט-ביבלי.	150	—	—	—	—	150	70	2
80	מעזריטש	ביבלי. ביי די פרי. קל. פאר.	600	—	—	—	—	600	400	2
81	מיר	יוד. שטאט-ביבליאטעק	2900	65	2000	1100	—	6065	385	16
82	מינסק-מאזאוו	ביי דער יוג. ארג. זוקונפט	100	—	—	—	—	100	40	3
83	מלאדע	באראטאוו. ביבליאטעק	135	—	—	—	—	135	67	2
84	נאדזשנידזש	יוד. ביבליאט. קולטור	440	—	—	265	—	705	215	3
85	נאדזשנידזש	ביים צענט-בירא פון פ.	582	—	—	—	—	582	71	8
86	נאדזשנידזש	פאלקס-ביבליאטעק	685	120	—	—	—	805	200	4
87	ניי-מיש		160	20	—	—	—	180	54	3
88	ניי-טאנג	מ. ראזענפעלד. ביבלי.	450	300	—	—	—	750	150	5
89		יוגנט-ביבליאטעק	1000	—	—	—	—	1000	200	5
90	ניעסוועזש	יידישע ביבליאטעק	76	—	60	—	—	136	64	2
91	טאנאק	ראזענפעלד. ביבליאטעק	600	—	—	50	—	650	150	5
92	טאטאווין	ביי דער "ארבעטער-היים"	600	—	—	—	—	600	200	3
93	טאקאטאוו	ביי דער ג. אונט-קורסן	260	—	—	—	—	260	150	2
94		ברענער. ביבלי.	400	—	100	—	—	500	130	4
95	טערדין	מ. צ. ביבליאטעק	86	—	—	—	—	86	44	2
96	טערדין	באראטאוו. ביבליאטעק	308	—	—	—	—	308	108	3
97	טאני	יוד. פאלקס-ביבליאטעק	519	13	149	236	106	1023	120	8
98	טראנסן	ביי "האפענונג"	350	39	—	—	47	436	70	6
99	טראנסקא	יוד. ביבליאטעק	168	52	—	—	57	277	76	4
100	טקידל	יוד. ארג. ביבליאטעק	421	—	—	—	—	421	94	4
101	פאליאניץ	ביי "ארבעטער-היים"	450	—	—	—	—	450	123	4
102	פארעשעוו	ביבלי. ביים נאדל-פאריין	210	—	—	—	—	210	140	2
103	פולדאוו	ביי אונט-טולע	220	45	—	—	—	265	142	2
104	פולטוסק	"פריד" ביבליאטעק	480	86	—	16	—	582	223	3
105	פערטקאוו	יידישע ביבליאטעק	310	473	—	74	18	875	76	12
106		"האטור" און "אייניקייט"	647	—	—	—	—	647	126	5
107	פלאנסק	"ביבליאטעק"	100	—	—	—	—	100	—	—
108	פלאצק	ביי דער ג. אונט-קורסן	130	—	—	—	—	130	—	—

boys as well as for girls (Golomb 1957; Shekhter-vidman 1973): e.g. arithmetic, geography, the rudiments of the coterritorial language, etc. From these humble and generally unrecognized functional beginnings of written Yiddish in traditional Jewish education, through various slow and stagewise functional expansions (Shatski 1943), there developed first the thought of Yiddish as the written language of supplementary (secular) Jewish education, under traditional auspices (Reyzin 1933) and then the practice of using Yiddish as a sub-rosa written and spoken comedium of instruction in governmentally supported semitraditional schools (the so-called *kazyone* schools) primarily utilizing Russian or German as language(s) of instruction (Tcherikover 1913; Kazhdan 1956i). Finally, at the very end of the nineteenth century (1898), there came the initiation of schools with Yiddish as their sole medium of written and spoken instruction in conjunction with a totally secular curriculum (Niger

א. סטאַטיסטישע אויספירן			
לויט די ציפערן וואס מיר האבן ארויסגעבראכט אין אונזער אַרבעט, באקומט זיך אזא ציפער-סך-הכל פונעם גאנצן יידישן שול-בנין אין אומאפ-הענגיקן פוילן:			
אין די דריי סעקטארן פון שולן פאר יידישע קינדער איז געווען (אין 1934-35):			
ריכטונג	צאל אָנשט'	צאל קינדער	ס"ה לויט די סעקטארס
רעליגיעזער סעקטאר			
חורב. ווארשע	568	71.000	
און חילגע	250	38.000	
בית יעקב	184	12.277	
יבנה	58	10.300	
גמיע-שולן	1.500	40.000	
חדרים			
	2.560 אָנשט'	171.577 קינדער	
	29.5 פראָצ'		
יידי העברי וועלט			
לעכער סעקטאר			
"צישא"	169	15.486	
"תרבות"	269	37.000	
"שולקולט"	16	2.343	
	454 אָנשט'	54.829 קינדער	
	9.3 פראָצ'		
פוילישער סעקטאר			
פויליש-העבר'	31	6.022	
גימנאזיעס		343.671	
מלוכהשע פאלקשולן			
נישט-יידישע פאר		5.398	
פריואטע מיטלשולן			
		355.091 קינדער	
	61.2 פראָצ'		
אַלגעמיינער סך-הכל			
	581.497 קינדער	100 פראָצ'	

Table 6. Types of schools attended by Jewish children in Poland 1934-1935. Of the 500,000 unduplicated registrants, approximately 60% received their education completely or partially in Polish. Of the remaining 40% almost all (with the exception of the Hebraist Tarbut and Yavne schools) received their formal education entirely or primarily in Yiddish (Kazhdan 1947).

1913b). Although the first such schools in Eastern Europe were illegal and their teachers were exposed to governmental arrest (Gilinski 1922; Mishkovski 1913) their numbers continued to grow by leaps and bounds, whether under autonomist, socialist, or Zionist auspices (separately or in various combinations). Indeed, even *some* Orthodox schools began to add modern subjects to their official curriculum, and not only to teach these in Yiddish, but to do so consciously and conscientiously (see entire issue of *Beys yankev*, 1931, 8, no. 70–71, ‘Yiddish Issue’), in contrast to *others* that demonstratively began to teach both modern and traditional subjects via Hebrew (*Beys yankev tsentrale* 1933).

The most innovative and forceful cutting edge in the movement for Yiddish as the language of education for Jewish children – both for the bulk of their general education as well as for all of their (secular) Jewish education – doubtlessly occurred under Bundist auspices (Eisenstein 1949a, 1949b; Gilinski 1922; Grosman 1974b; Kazhdan 1956d, e, f; Pat 1954), even though the majority of all children receiving their education via Yiddish continued to do so under Orthodox auspices (Sh’b 1931). ‘Yiddish schools’ (i.e. secular schools employing Yiddish at least as colanguage of instruction in some grades) also arose under more nonpartisan auspices, i.e. with a more culturist–autonomist and less socialist orientation (Eisenstein 1949b; Kazhdan 1947, 1956g; Kan 1928c). A few arose even under various Zionist auspices (Eck 1947; Tartakover 1926, 1931, 1967), and, briefly, a whole system of such schools came into being during the pre-Soviet period in the Ukraine (Kazhdan 1956h) and, later, during the first two and a half decades of the communist regime itself (Altshuler 1977; Frank 1935; Z. Halevy 1972, 1976; Rotnberg 1973; E. Shulman 1971). Under all of these auspices, education became highly politicized and, at the same time, so was all of life. However, whether the educational goal was that of ‘freedom for the Jewish child’ (Ester 1910; Perelman 1918), the equality of the Jewish people (Prilutski 1971 [1916]) or the victory of the proletariat – including the Jewish proletariat – against capitalist (including Jewish capitalist) exploitation, or other partisan and non-partisan goals, the assumption that ‘normal development and freedom for our children’ required Yiddish as the oral and written medium of instruction came to be increasingly self-evident to an ever growing segment of the Jewish population in Eastern Europe (note Bal-dimyen 1908 and Niger 1913b for early Orthodox, Zionist, and ‘bourgeois’ opposition to Yiddish secular education). Although fascist and communist regimes later restricted and crushed these schools (see Tikotshinski 1937; Valk and Klyonski 1920; and Zr–li 1922 for early Polish opposition; Burd 1938; Mutshnik 1938; Orland 1938; Reminik 1938; and E. Shulman 1971 for Soviet Russification policies and pressures), and, although the internal opposition to them from Orthodoxy and Zionism continued with little abatement, they nevertheless represented the modal approach to *modern* Jewish education in Eastern Europe during the inter-war years. (For brief post-World War II flurries there, see

Kazhdan 1958; Melezin 1948.) Thanks to them the names *Tsisho*, *Kultur-Lige*, and *Shulkult* came to be socioeducational designations that every historian of Jewish education and, indeed, every specialist in modern Jewish affairs must investigate with care.

Many of these school types had their American counterparts too (Fishman 1952; Parker 1973, this volume), but, with the exception of their Canadian (see articles by Vaysman and others in Novak 1935) and Latin American incarnations (Meyern-lazar 1948), they were almost entirely supplementary in nature (Novak 1935; Frank 1935). This fact – as well as the cruel course of Jewish history itself – led to their final concentration on Jewish subject matter alone and, therefore, to a severe narrowing of their impact as originally conceptualized.¹⁶ The

16. The major compendium on Yiddish secular schools is Novak 1935, which not only contains accounts of various types of schools in various countries but also provides educational-philosophical perspective on these schools by major 'theoreticians' and 'statesmen' such as Zhitlovski, Golomb, Lerer and others. Other interesting sources are: (a) on the Labor-Zionist schools, which were the first to attempt Yiddish secular supplementary education in the United States, see Glants 1913, Shapiro 1962; (b) on the Workmen's Circle schools, the largest Yiddish secular school network in the United States, generally with laborite coloring, see Faynerman 1929, Levin 1920, Niger 1940; (c) on the Sholem Aleichem schools, a small, nonpartisan Yiddishist effort limited to New York, Chicago, and Detroit, see Anon. [1927] 1953a, [1953] 1972b, and Gutman [1962] 1967. Sources pertaining to the schools of the pro-communist International Workers Order can be found in Novak 1935 as well as in Parker, this volume.

The Yiddish secular school arena provides a choice vantage point for monitoring the changing interpretations of Yiddish secularism as a whole. The initial stance is one of triumphant modernization. Through this school Eastern European Jewry (and its immigrant offshoots in the Americas and elsewhere) will join the ranks of all modern nations, all of which have switched to their vernaculars as media of education (Goldberg 1914). Not only is this so because 'the revival of Hebrew is impossible in the diaspora and improbable in Palestine', but, more fundamentally, because traditional life and education are 'neither vital nor alive' (Niger 1928a). In the modern world, traditional education, with its emphasis on the dead hand of the past (prayer book, pentateuch, commentaries, Talmud), 'provides a mere foundation, with neither walls nor roof for modern life'. However, the view that grave dangers lurked

in the ahistorical and simplistic 'formula(tion) linguistic-secularistic' began quite early (Lerer 1928a, 1928b, 1940a, 1940b), particularly as the dependence of Yiddish secularism on a strong, surrounding, traditional milieu for the maintenance of Jewish life patterns became clear. This dependence or interdependence led both to a searching reexamination of what Jewish secularism really implied, both for the school and for the adult community that supported it (see e.g. Mark 1948, 1972; Gutman 1972, 1976), as well as to a pervasive (re-)traditionalization under the impact of the Holocaust. Continuing Americanization in language, outlook, and daily rounds (Pen 1958a) finally prompted Yiddish educators to realize the weakness of walls and roofs without foundations.

The postwar recovery of American Orthodoxy merely confirmed the lukewarmness (if not outright hostility) of the daily Yiddish press to the Yiddish secular school (Khaykin 1946b). The religious and Zionist press had generally viewed these schools as radical deviations from their own directions. The laborite and left-wing press, on the other hand, had viewed them as sources of chauvinism and removal from solidarity with the united proletariat. Thus, into the 1930s, with rare exceptions, the Yiddish secular school experienced more criticism than support from the Yiddish press since the daily press was always oriented toward much larger segments of the Jewish population and toward much more massive ideologies than those that Yiddish secularism could control.

The inability of immigrant based Yiddish secular education to build and maintain viable, self-perpetuating speech communities to correspond to its own ideological-philosophical preferences should be contrasted to the school emphases of various language movements. Ben Yehuda, Ivar Aasen, Takdir Alisjahbana, Kemal Atatürk and many other language mobilizers stressed the school as the very basis of their language-in-society

integrative circumstances (both ideological emphases as well as practical opportunities) of American life also required that these schools provide new rationales for themselves, since the rationale that 'Jews are a separate people' became less and less acceptable or even intelligible to American Jewish parents, given the acceptance of the tripartite melting pot and a general view of Jewish ethnicity as merely a narrower intimacy experience within the broader American

goals. However, modern sociolinguistic theory tends to ascribe far lesser potency to the school as an independent factor in language and culture maintenance and spread. More often than not, the school appears to be merely a secondary status system, able to (help) prepare individuals for advanced roles in primary status systems (economy, religion, government), but not, by itself, to replace the latter or substitute for them. (For further details and examples, see Fishman 1980b.) That the Yiddish secular school viewed reality quite differently is probably due to circumstances, only some of which correspond to the circumstances that led other language movements to stress the school as a major sociolinguistic force.

Yiddish secular education arose in the tradition of the 'revolutionary school', i.e. of the school that is part of a movement to rebuild all of society: culturally, politically, economically. When such movements are successful, such schools are, indeed, part of the cutting edge that both destroys and rebuilds. As such, the self-image of the school (including administrators, teachers, pupils, and even parents) is that of a victorious change-agent, i.e. a self-image that does not fully realize the part-whole context that obtains and that ascribes to the self far more causal power than is justified. The larger revolutionary forces often do not reach the young as regularly and as persistently as does the revolutionary school, but if the former forces fail, the roles and statuses for which the school prepares become not only nonfunctional but self-defeating and intrapunative. In this light one might say that in less than a century the Yiddish secular school traversed the distance between riding the crest of a revolutionary transformation of society to serving a society that either no longer existed or no longer existed in terms of adult roles and statuses in which its students could participate.

The original self-image of the Yiddish secular school was probably overblown due to its *narodnik* and its traditional inheritances as well. From the former it inherited an ennobling tradition of serving the masses and activating them via their own language. From the latter it inherited, without knowing it, a stress on schooling as a significant (perhaps even a primary) status system. Unfortunately for the Yiddish school, both of these in-

heritances increasingly lost their viability. The *narodnik* role for Yiddish vanished as coterritorial vernaculars pre-empted not only those functions for which there was coterritorial competition but the intracommunal functions as well. From a practical point of view, the language of coterritorial social status and social mobility for post-Holocaust Jews also determined intracommunal status and roles, thus robbing Yiddish of its functional significance and the Yiddish school of its *narodnik* mission. The Yiddish secular school might still have benefited from the traditional Jewish emphasis on the primacy of education for its own sake. However, the school's own antitraditional emphases led it to pursue modern societal impact directly rather than the continuity of traditional, unmobilized life patterns. Although Yiddish secular schools continued to draw inspiration from the focus on education that *toyre lishmo* provides, they did not create nor relate to a society of their own in which *toyre lishmo* significantly existed and called upon dedication to Yiddish for its implementation.

The 'failure' of the Yiddish secular school, particularly in its post-Holocaust and postimmigration years, needs to be viewed in several mitigating perspectives. The first such perspective is the failure of the schools of all other participationist immigrant minorities to be effective language maintenance instruments (see my chapter on 'The ethnic group school and mother tongue maintenance' in Fishman 1966: 92-126). The second such perspective is the generally dismal failure of Jewish education to teach even Hebrew successfully enough to make it into a Diaspora vernacular, even with all of the affective positiveness with which it is surrounded. Finally, foreign or second language education as a whole is certainly one of the very least successful branches of all modern education, rarely succeeding in developing spoken facility among pupils *unless clear and powerful functional-demographic reinforcement is present* (see Fishman 1976c, 1977c). Little wonder then that Yiddish secular schools succeeded no better than they did, given that their societal base was so exposed to external and internal onslaught and that Yiddish secularism itself was so weak, so novel and so superficial, either as a movement or as a societal pattern of *yidishkayt*.

dream (Krug 1954; Mark 1948; Yefroykin 1951; Parker 1978). Even in Vilne, Warsaw, Lodz, and elsewhere in the Nazi-organized ghettos, Yiddish teachers continued to be trained specifically so that the remnants of the Jewish school-age child population could receive their education totally or partially in Yiddish (Anon. and Ringblum 1945; Dvorzhetski 1948, 1970; Gersht 1947). Under the circumstances of American (and Israeli) freedom the need for modern Jewish education in (or even including) Yiddish is neither as clear nor as pressing. (For an affirmation of Yiddish in Jewish education in both of these settings, see Bez 1971b.) As Yiddish secularism and its schools wane (Eisenberg 1968; Rudavsky 1955) – and as Yiddish in education becomes either a marker of unreconstructed Orthodoxy, on the one hand, or a higher educational elective, on the other hand – the Yiddish secular school recedes into history as a memorial to the vicissitudes of Jewish modernization and cultural pluralism. The wealth of love and devotion lavished upon it, by teachers, *shultuers* (school-board members), parents, and children alike, is eloquent testimony to the need that it served.

Vivo: The ministry of Yiddish cultural efforts

The crownpiece and nerve center of the delicately orchestrated Yiddish culture 'movement' – the intellectual and spiritual integrator, elevator, and interpreter of all else that went on in the modern world of Yiddish (except, of course, for its doomed efforts in the Stalinist empire; see Zaretski 1928 for a programmatic

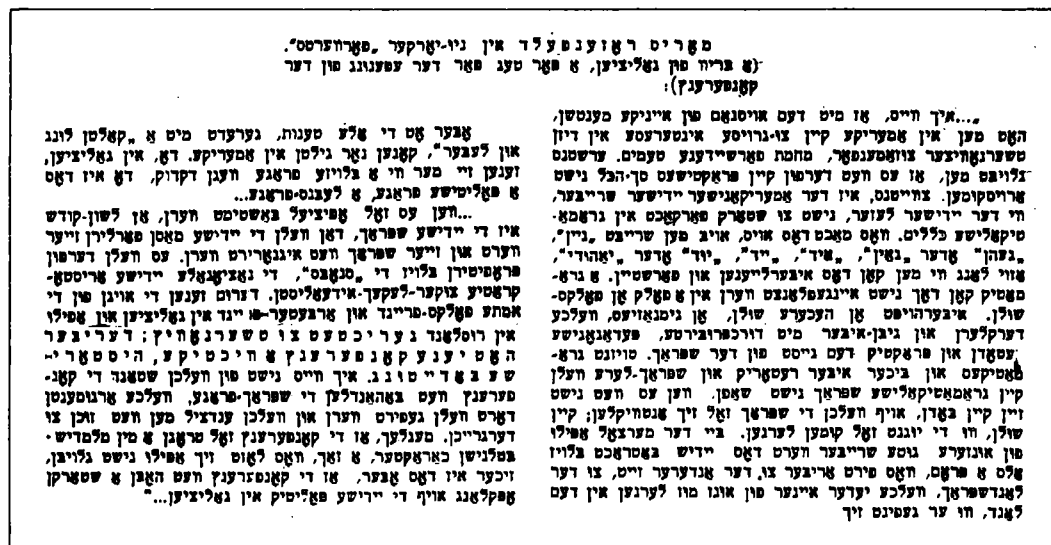


Figure 7. An excerpt from an advance effort to explain the 1908 Tshernovits Conference to readers of the New York *Forverts* (when it was believed that linguistic-orthographic issues would be of major concern), inserted in the recommendations and demands of the American youth delegation at the '(Jerusalem) World Conference for Yiddish and Yiddish Culture', August 1976.

statement of early hopes there and Choseed 1968 for their abandonment even prior to their official destruction) was to have been the Yiddish Scientific Institute – Yivo. Its special mission was to go beyond explicit ideology, into the higher realms of culture planning, and there to bring to bear the contributions of modern research methods in the humanities and social sciences for the solution of the uniquely difficult sociopsychological, demographic, linguistic, cultural, and even socioeconomic problems of the Yiddish speaking masses (Anon. 1925; Niger 1931; M. Vaynraykh 1936, 1943, 1945). A combination of a think-tank and an action-research center, the Yivo was far more than a university. It was at the hub of the *kultur-bavegung* (Shveytser 1967; Stupnitski 1920). It was part of it; it was involved. While it promised dispassionate, nonpartisan study (although not neutrality *vis-à-vis* the fascist and communist depredations), it was regarded (and self-regarded) as the culmination and fusion of all that Yiddish and its masses hoped for in the arena of modern cultural efforts in interwar Europe and even in its emigration colonies abroad. An extraterritorial people and language prided itself with its extraterritorial *sanctum-sanctorum* in the very capital of Yiddish, Vilne, the Jerusalem of Lithuania.

It would have been miraculous had the Yivo been able to deliver all that was expected of it. In many ways it did accomplish miracles, being associated with the major works of Yiddish scholarship and of research on Eastern European Jewry during the past half century (Fishman 1977). However, the ultimate miracle was denied it. With the Holocaust the Yivo lost not only much of its staff and its archival/library holdings but, more basically and irreplaceably, its sociolinguistic heartland. Although it functions actively to this very day, and is one of the very few Eastern European institutions to successfully relocate in the West, its social mission is largely gone (Gutman 1977). It is a unique interacademic research and teaching agency serving all who have an interest in Eastern European Jewry (Gilson 1976). As such, its routinization follows the typical postethnic lines traveled so often before by formerly ethnic institutions that have ‘successfully’ outgrown their original missions and clienteles.¹⁷

PART VI: MAINTENANCE AND SHIFT

Languages the world over are popularly characterized via stereotypes concerning their ‘nature’. German is viewed as harsh, and French as precise. Italian is considered musical, and English vigorous. And Yiddish? Yiddish is dead or dying. One must be ‘an insider’ (of the Yivo, of the Hasidic community, of the

17. Of course it is not merely failure that leads to the ideological attrition of routinization but also success. Examples of the latter type of routinization of sociolinguistic institutions are the language academies whose ‘charges’ have attained full-fledged societal acceptance and functional legiti-

mization along the entire range of modern activities. Such academies also have their ideological ground cut out from under them. For case studies of Israel, India, and Indonesia in the latter connection see Rubin et al. 1977.

world of Yiddish *kultur-arbet*), i.e. a member of a very small inner circle indeed, to have a different image or to know enough to question the stereotype. Curiously, this view is infinitely more pervasive than its former companion that *Kol mevaser* alternately so attacked and so espoused, namely that 'Yiddish is a corrupted German'. The latter view has substantially receded as linguistic perspective has seeped down from higher professional spheres. It is also an exceedingly insulting position to take in view of the slaughtered six million who died with Yiddish on their lips (Bez 1971a, 1971b; Faerstein 1965). But that very slaughter, sanctifying and purifying Yiddish in the popular mind, merely adds to the dominant theme of its death (Freidlin 1977). For well over a hundred years that theme has been repeated, as if by a Greek chorus, in conjunction with each and every Yiddish enterprise, until, as with all predictions pertaining to the death of mortals, it might yet come to pass and provide prophets with the additional satisfaction of that final twist of the knife: 'I told you so!' Even repeated exhortations to 'save Yiddish' are an indication of its uncertainty (Tsiviyen 1948).

As far as pre-World War II Eastern Europe itself was concerned the prognostication was so completely premature as not only to be unfounded, but to reveal wishful thinking, *schadenfreude* or both. By the time of the *haskole* in Eastern Europe, it was fairly well known that in past generations Yiddish had been displaced in Western Europe (Beem 1954; Landmann 1967; Niger 1959; Shatski 1936; Shaykovski 1939, 1964; Shpirn 1926; Weinberg 1969). This awareness continued to provide an air of expectancy with respect to the future. However, as if in 'perverse disregard of history' the Czarist census of 1897 revealed that almost all Jews in the Empire (97.96 percent to be exact) claimed Yiddish as their mother tongue, the lowest rate of claiming being 95.74 percent in Poland (Goldberg 1905a). Even then, i.e. even prior to the impact of Yiddish secular literature, 49.4 percent of the males and 26 percent of the females claimed that they could *read* Yiddish as well as speak it (Rubinow 1907). However, that was 'before the flood' (World War I). The next Eastern European census for which we have data related to Yiddish is that of 1921 and the area covered is Poland alone (Y. L. [Leshtshinski] 1936). Actually, this census reports religious claiming and nationality claiming. If the latter can be interpreted (as it is by Y.L.) as pertaining primarily to mother tongue then the rate of Yiddish mother tongue claiming among Polish claimants of Jewish religion was slightly under 70 percent. This was lower than the proportion of such claiming in 1897 but it was still substantial. By 1931 the Polish census reported that 79.9 percent of all Jews by religion claimed Yiddish as their mother tongue (with 7.9 percent claiming Hebrew). Lo and behold, the rate of Yiddish claiming had risen, although it was still short of the 1897 rate (Leshtshinski 1940, 1943). However, not only was the total number of claimants a hefty 2.5 million strong, but in certain key urban areas of Jewish cultural and political concentration the rates

of Yiddish claiming were actually higher in 1931 than they had been in 1897, e.g. in Warsaw (94.0 percent vs. 84.5 percent) and in Vilne (99.2 percent vs. 97.0 percent; see Goldberg 1905b; Leshtshinski 1940)! Even at the university level in Warsaw, where a previous generation of Jewish students had been almost completely assimilated linguistically, 50.3 percent of all Jewish students in 1931 claimed Yiddish as their current 'home language', with many more doing so in the humanistic, pedagogical, and social science faculties (64 percent, 77 percent, and 83 percent respectively). Interestingly enough, the demographer L. Hersch comments on these figures as follows: 'Ever-broader segments of Jewish diplomaed intellectuals are now derived from those strata where Yiddish is a living language' (Hersh 1931). That this had not always been the case is testified to by Hersh's own student-day memories, as well as by stern warnings of a generation earlier that intellectuals who did not speak Yiddish in their private lives could not be expected to lead the people to national strength and dignity (Olgin 1911). This condition continued into the 30s and it is, therefore, quite clear why there were those who preferred to stress the *empty* half of the glass of water (Mirkin 1939, retrospectively Tartakover 1946).

However, if it could be argued that the demographic-functional position of Yiddish was not deteriorating in Poland prior to the Second World War, this could not be claimed for either the USSR, Palestine/Erets Yisroel or the United States (where the three major concentrations of Yiddish speakers are to be found today). Not only have their absolute numbers and their proportions of Yiddish mother tongue claimants continued to fall (although some 4.1 million out of a worldwide total of 14 million Jews – i.e. 30 percent of the worldwide total – probably would/could claim Yiddish as their mother tongue today [Kloss and McConnell 1978]), but this fall has been even more precipitous than imagined if we seek some more certain indicator of usage than is mother tongue per se. In the Soviet Union the proportion of Jews claiming Yiddish as their 'national language' fell rapidly and continuously, from 72.6 percent in 1926 to 41 percent in 1939 (albeit some 60 percent of Jewish children attended Yiddish schools in the 30s) to 17.9 percent in 1959, to 16.8 percent in 1970 (Lipset 1970; somewhat different figures are reported by Kantor 1962–1963). Even this last figure is little short of miraculously high (as is the fact that some 23 percent of Jews in the RSFSR – *not* a particularly Jewish area of the USSR – claimed in 1970 that Yiddish was their first or second most *used* language; Checinski 1973), given both the 'encouraged' assimilation of Jews and the unabashed repression of Yiddish in the USSR (at least since the mid-thirties; see, e.g. Emyot 1960; Gitelman 1972; Graubert 1974; J. Halevy 1972; Hirzowicz 1974; Korey 1974; Levenberg 1968; Pomerants 1962; Rozental-Shnayderman 1974. For Soviet counterclaims in the mid-30s see Dimanshteyn 1935. For the post-war eradication of the remnants of Yiddish in Poland see Sfard 1974). In Israel, the proportion claiming to speak Yiddish either as their 'principal' or 'additional' language

was only 13.4 percent of the total Jewish population in 1961 and 14.6 percent of the Jewish population aged 14 or above in 1971 (both being remarkably high figures, but probably underestimates, given Israeli-Zionist discrimination against Yiddish in the Holy Land since at least the mid-thirties; Fishman 1973; Fishman and Fishman 1977; Seikevich 1976; Tsanin 1974). Finally, in the United States, Yiddish was claimed as the principal spoken language of only 2.1 percent of the total Jewish population in 1969, even though it was still claimed as mother tongue by some 1.6 million Jews in 1970 (Ellman 1978), i.e. by nearly a third of the entire American born Jewish population, comfortably ensconced though it was by then in thoroughly Anglified suburbia. Differences in overclaiming fads and underclaiming fads make comparisons across and even within these three settings quite risky.¹⁸ Even only a relatively small nucleus of dedicated and creative users could become a serious force (M. Vaynraykh 1951b). Nevertheless, the language is obviously declining with respect to the number of its overt users and the situation looks even worse if the age distributions of claimants are examined. These distributions are consistently and considerably top-heavy, containing few young people and disproportionately many old people. Similar age trends have appeared in such bastions as Canada

18. Although the precise figures for Yiddish usage in the USSR, Israel and the United States are not to be taken at face value, their relative magnitudes may nevertheless be indicative. All three settings are characterized by self-fulfilling prophecies concerning the destinies of their respective unifying languages. Marx is expected to triumph over Herder in the USSR, notwithstanding the elaborate structure of 'autonomous' republics, regions, and districts defined on ethnic grounds. As early as 1927, over half of all those young people being trained to conduct *politufkler* (political enlightenment) among Jews were non-Yiddish speakers or seriously deficient in their command of Yiddish (S. 1927). Only a third claimed that their Yiddish was at least as good as their Russian and early hopes for party support for Yiddish waned rapidly (Ben Adir 1919; Shtif 1927), as the party per se turned out to be the major opponent of Yiddish. In Israel, Yiddish is spoken much more in private than in public (Herman 1961) and its speakers have generally as much facility in speaking and reading Hebrew as does the population at large (Kaz 1972; Fishman and Fishman 1977). Indeed, even those who champion Yiddish there view Hebrew as though it were an irresistible superhuman ocean of the future into which all rivers must ultimately flow (Sadan 1974). Certainly English is widely viewed not only as the manifest destiny of the United States but as the unifying language of the world at large. Thus, all that can be hoped for, in the eyes of most, is that Yiddish will provide

a unique flavor to Jewish popular culture (Friedman 1975). In a country in which 'all aspire to mobility' via English (Fishman 1963), Yiddish appears to be functionally empty even for most children of Yiddishists. These still admire it from afar (Lerer 1961) but have rarely made it their daily language, not even with the generations above them, let alone with interlocutors of their own generation or younger.

Claiming Yiddish usage in the early 70s had an antiestablishment implication in all three locales of its major use. Since antiestablishment feelings were more 'in' than they used to be, Yiddish use was probably overclaimed, but probably not as significantly as the overclaiming revealed by *mother tongue* statistics of roughly the same years. (The substantial validity of these claims for estimating Jewish population figures is apparent from Rosenwaike 1971, 1974.) That the United States should reveal the least usage claiming for Yiddish and the USSR the most (16.8 percent vs. 2.1 percent) is testimony to the much greater dislocative impact of immigration, modernization, social mobility, and interactionism than of most of the foregoing in the absence of immigration. In the Yiddish case, voluntary participation in the world's most sustained social mobility experience has been far more disruptive of ethnic mother tongue use than has indoctrination and repression. This is probably a paradigm for modern days: more languages are probably enticed into disuse rather than battered into that condition.

(Yam 1973; Kloss 1977), Latin America (Turkov 1968; Virkel de Sandler 1977), Australia (Medding 1968; Klarberg 1970) and Israel (Hofman and Fisherman 1971; Fishman and Fishman 1977).

The view is similarly grim if we consider such related matters as: the age distribution of Yiddish authors, whether in the United States alone (Fishman 1965) or, comparatively, in the United States, the Soviet Union and Israel (Fishman and Fishman 1977); the market for Yiddish books from the early 30s (M. V. [Vaynraykh] 1934; Z. Reyzin 1931) to this day, as well as the number of such books published (Fishman and Fishman 1977); the number and circulation of Yiddish periodicals (Fishman 1960, 1965a, 1972; also see Soltes 1924; Fishman and Fishman 1976); the number and length of Yiddish radio broadcasting (Fishman 1965a, 1972); the number of Yiddish theater performances (Fishman 1965a, 1972; also see Lifson 1965); and the use of Yiddish as a medium of Jewish education (Fishman 1952, 1965a, 1972; Klarberg 1970). Even the former growth of Orthodox day schools in the United States utilizing Yiddish as *the* (or as *a*) language of instruction of Jewish subjects has slowed considerably (Fishman 1972) and is now considerably outdistanced by the growth in the number of Orthodox day schools teaching Jewish subject matter via English and/or Hebrew. This has probably happened in other countries as well. Nevertheless, both Orthodoxy and ultra-Orthodoxy have clearly become the bedrock of whatever remains of Yiddish-speaking Jewry (Fishman 1972; Saymon 1970), however little interest either the one or the other may have in Yiddish literature or in formal study of Yiddish per se. Yiddish continues to be the language of daily intragroup life and of traditional (Talmudic) study for a very substantial proportion, particularly of ultra-Orthodoxy, although it too may well have turned a corner in this connection, as even part of this sector seeks to reach out and to bring others, particularly wayward adolescents and young folks, back into the fold. For the first time in a thousand years Ashkenazic ultra-Orthodoxy may be conducting more of its work in the diaspora in non-Jewish vernaculars than in Yiddish. The situation in Israel, *vis-à-vis* Hebrew vs. Yiddish as *vernaculars* among the ultra-Orthodox, is probably also approaching the tipping point in so far as actual usage is concerned, if it has not already gone beyond that point. As for 'modern Orthodoxy' whether in Israel or in the United States, its abandonment of Yiddish is well-nigh complete and its return thereto on a nostalgic basis is still retarded by the uneasy and self-conscious emphasis on Orthodoxy's own 'modernity'. The two Orthodox universities (Yeshiva and Bar Ilan) are conspicuous by their peculiar inability to recognize Yiddish either as meeting foreign language requirements ('Does Yiddish have a literature? Is learning Yiddish really a broadening experience, exposing the learner to universal themes, like learning X literature?') or as meeting any part of the Jewish studies requirements ('Yiddish is not a Hebraic study!', even though the specialized study of Judesmo or Yahudic [= Judeo Arabic] *is*).

חודש פאר יידיש און יידישקייט

דער יידישער קאלטוראלער פארבאנד



ליגעראדאניסער פארבאנד

אונאן נאר די אינטערעסן פון די בית-יעקב-סולן
און ארגאניזאציעס בנות-אגודת-ישראל אין ניו-יארק
רעדאקטאר: א. ג. פרידמאן

72-71

דער יידישער קאלטוראלער פארבאנד

8

ב"ה, לאַדזש-קראָקע-וואַרשע, סיון תרצ"א

תוכן פון היינטיקן יידיש-גומער:

יידיש אין אמעריקא

(א) פאר יידיש: יצחק מאיר בונים און ד"ר ז. ה. בלוסטאן
(ב) יידיש-גומער: הרב אליעזר וילבער
(ג) יידיש מיט יידישקייט: הרב ישראל ראזנבערג
(ד) בנות ישראל און "יאנג איוראפעלי": הרב ד"ר ב. רעזעל
(ה) פרופעסור און יידיש: מרדכי דאנציס
(ו) דער בונד פון דורות: הרב ד"ר אלי יונג
(ז) שלא שינו את לשונם: הרב ד"ר דוד שטערן
(ח) יידיש אין ישיבות און תלמוד תורות
(ט) אונט (ל"ד) צורא גוטמאן
(י) היפלע זענען רעדן הענט יידיש?
(יא) וואס איז יידישקייט? יעקב לאנדא
(יב) אין מערב איז דא גוט: מאיר שווארצמאן
(יג) דער נצחון פון אינדזער אויסלאז: ש"ן
(יד) וועגן ליטווישן דיאלעקט אין קאנגרעס פוילן: נסע ירוחם בערלינער
(טו) ווער גירעכט: ב'
(טז) פלאנסטער אין דער נאָמא: אשר
(יז) לינקע פערל: ש'
(יח) ים-מיניאסורן: וו. לייכטער
(יט) באהערשן און באַזינגן: לייב פיינבלאד
(כ) פונקט פון "יידישקייט" און יידיש
(כא) אַלערס-רוף צו אונדזערע מרבינעס
(כב) אַלדינגס (ליר) בר-גט
(כג) וועגן די באוועגן פון אליעזר שינדלער
(כד) תבניות
(כה) מודעות

(א) תוכן און לבוש
(ב) פאר ווערטער העגן יידיש: דר. נתן בורנבוים
(ג) יידיש (ליר): אליעזר שינדלער
(ד) יידיש לשון און יידישער לעבנס-שטייגער: הרב שמעון שטאקאמער
(ה) בעזשונג פון דער (ליר): בר-גט
(ו) דאס לשון אין מיל פון דער מאַסן: אליעזר גרשון פרידמאן
(ז) שמואל גאלער: דער טייל פון יידיש-פרעסע
(ח) שרה שענירער: יידישקייט און יידיש
(ט) הרב שמואל דוד לאַסקי: רעס יידיש
(י) די ראלע פון יידיש אינעם חסידות: אַלכסנדר וואָא פרידמאן
(יא) יידיש אין דער שול: יהודה לייב ארלעאן
(יב) יידישקייט פון האַרץ און צונג: אסתר ראז
(יג) גוט מיר לשון (ליר): איש לוי
(יד) דאס מיל פון יידיש: שמואל אסטערעווער
(טו) דאס באַנעגניש מיטן מורה: ריקל בירנבוים
(טז) חזאל איז אינדו (פאלקס-ליר): בנימין וואסמאן
(יז) פון אַלעס פורים און פון אַפּאָליקן לעבן:
בר-גט (ליר): (1) א יידיש פאנסטער אין ביטערע צווייט: (2) א יידיש
שיר-גלייך פונעם תוספות יום-טוב: (3) א בייזל פונעם תוספות יום-טוב
היי-מחברטס: (4) א ליר פון א מירעל: (5) מה ליר, 16 אשירא לעבט.
העללעכקייט: (7) דאס לעבנס ספר אויף יידיש, (8) א ווייז פארן לשון.
תנ"ך צום פארבינדן: (9) פונעם שמואל-בוק, (10) פונעם שוואַס-בוק: (11)
דריק פאר נשים: (12) באיה וואיט אין אריינגעל: (13) פאקס און יידיש
דורך שניף אונדזער יאר: (14) א יידישער רעדער.

יח. די גרים און ווער העגן אליעזר שינדלער
(יט) שעהין פון דער מלחמה: שלמה בירנבוים
(כ) יידיש חובס און יידיש רעדן: מאיר האלץ ניעטשטאפאיער
(כא) געפאלן: (ליר) בר-גט
(כב) א מעשה שהי' משה צעכאנאף
(כג) ווי אַלט איז דאס יידישע לשון? ש"ב
(כד) רויטע לייגה (ליר): בר-גט
(כה) צוויי חזוין קלל געווען: דר. שלמה בירנבוים

רעדאקטירט דורך

דר. שלמה בירנבוים

There is one bright spot on the Yiddish maintenance-and-shift horizon at this time, although it is hard to tell whether its significance is real or imaginary. Yiddish as a college-level subject grew tremendously in the decade from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies (Pen 1958b; Prager 1974; Smolyar 1977). However, all in all, this growth has attracted only two thousand or so students at any one time over the entire world, and did not begin to make up for the loss in attendance at secular Yiddish elementary schools (which have almost become extinct in the United States and which have run into increasing problems of late in Canada and Latin America – fiscally, politically, and in terms of Zionist opposition). At any rate, the likelihood that Yiddish can be functionally mastered via college courses, even among those who *do* enroll, is apparently negligible (i.e. not appreciably more so, nor more permanently so, than it is with respect to achieving mastery of *X* language via college courses). Finally, it does appear that the number of such courses has hit its maximum, given current fiscal and demographic limitations, as well as given the more general rollback of the ethnicity mood which seems to have peaked just a few years ago and is now considerably subdued. Nevertheless the college level texts and dictionaries prepared and planned in conjunction with this erstwhile area of growth will long retain their usefulness and the air of hopefulness with which they were undertaken (Dawidowicz 1977).

Thus the sad prophecies of the last century may yet be realized. Nevertheless, the true and dedicated believers, though fewer and older, remain undaunted, unbowed and unbeaten (see e.g. Ben-adir 1942; Glatshetyn 1972a, 1972b; Robak 1958b, 1958c, 1964a, 1964b; Samuel 1971b, 1972; Toybes 1950. For examples of atypically younger devotion see Yugntruf, particularly 1976, no. 37–37). As with the defenders of all Jewish values, they are blessed with a healthy dose of supernatural and superrational strength which provides unexpected faith, energy, and opportunity.

PART VII: SOCIOLINGUISTIC VARIATION AND PLANNING

More or less dispassionate ('academic') linguistic research on Yiddish began quite early (see e.g. Mansch 1888–1890; Saineanu 1889; Landau 1895; Gerzon 1902) but inevitably, given a language that has always been spoken by a community so many of whose members have been bilingual, and that has been as exposed, as has Yiddish, to social and political pressures from such a variety of coliterary languages, a substantial amount of ink (and, ultimately, even blood) soon came to be spilt over the sociopolitical question of what models Yiddish

◀ Figure 8. Table of Contents of a 1931 issue of *Beys-Yankev*, journal of the ultra-Orthodox Agudas Yisroel schools for girls in Poland. This issue was devoted entirely to advocating maintenance of Yiddish in religious life and education. Among the contributors to this issue are: Nosn Birnboym, Shloyme Birnboym (ed.), Eliezer Shindler and Bernard Revel.

should follow. If successive new English dictionaries are met with storms of criticism and dissonance as to whether certain terms should have been included or excluded (even though the pedigree of English is unquestioned), if French authorities struggle openly and normatively to curb the in-roads of 'franglais' (even though the future of French [in France] is unthreatened), is it any wonder that the counterparts to such normative codification and disagreement should be discernible in the field of Yiddish as well? Although modern language planning theory might imply that Yiddish could not really hope to struggle successfully – given its weak implementational resources – with the vicissitudes of modern social communication, a century's efforts to engage in such planning have, of course, continued, and in so doing have revealed the political and sociocultural biases of the combatants.¹⁹

One of the earliest and best established modeling tendencies in conscious Yiddish language planning was that of *ausbau* from modern Standard German (e.g. Yofe 1910, 1958; Niger 1912; Sholem Aleykhem 1888b). This effort, carried on during the interwar years under the slogan of 'away from German', sought (and seeks today) to stress that Yiddish follows standardizing conventions and authorities of its own and that these are autonomous from those that pertain to modern Standard German (Kalmanovitsh 1925; M. Vaynraykh 1936, N.P. 1938; Prilutski 1938; Reyzin 1938). The underlying dynamic in this struggle against *daytshmerish* (unnecessary New High German borrowings) is the perennial one of demonstrating that Yiddish is by no means a 'corrupt German', a goal which is still very much alive within Yiddish language planning to this very day

19. One of the earliest proponents of Yiddish language planning was Y. M. Lifshits, the compiler of a Yiddish–Russian dictionary (1876) and a consistent, open and vigorous advocate of Yiddish in the otherwise meandering *Kol mevaser*. 'At home' with both French and German, and with the literature of the former and the natural science associated with the latter, he quickly concluded that whatever it was that mid-nineteenth century Yiddish lacked in terms of codification and elaboration was due to the limited scholarly-literary attention devoted to the language rather than to any inherent quality of the language itself. His motto in this connection was: '*Nisht der fidl iz shuldik nor der klezmer*' (The fault lies not with the fiddle but with the fiddler). He rejected the corruption myth with particular vehemence, stressing that all other living languages constantly borrowed from each other and that this was especially true of Russian, a language favored by many of the perpetrators of the corruption myth *vis-à-vis* Yiddish. As with the chief advocate of language planning for Malaysian-Indonesian today, Lifshits did not so much advocate formal codification or elaboration *per se* as serious literary

use of the language in order to advance its cultivation. Other advocates of Yiddish language planning (usually referred to as *shprakhkultur* since the late 20s and early 30s, e.g. Spivak 1931) have often stressed one or another goal, e.g. grammatical codification (Dr. X [= I. Zamenhof, the father of Esperanto] 1909), *ausbau* from all current and past coteritorial languages (Reyzin 1938), standardized spelling and lexical elaboration (Shekhter 1961), etc. All in all, more has been accomplished for the language-in-print in each of these connections, and under the most adverse of circumstances, than might have been expected (Fishman 1979; Shekhter i.p.). However, at the same time, the world of Yiddish-in-print has shrunk to such an extent that the circles of the remaining planners and the circles of those who still publish in Yiddish criss-cross much more fully than they did at the beginning of the century. As in the case of Hindi (*vis-à-vis* Sanskritization) the success of language planning may be advanced at a time of functional-demographic failure due to the fact that the remaining users are both fewer and easier to influence or control.

(Shekhter 1969), even though the stereotype of Yiddish as a 'corrupted German' is somewhat weaker today than it was a generation ago.²⁰ Similar (although less long-lasting) struggles have been waged against 'excessive' Hebraisms,

20. Although 'away from German' was a generally accepted conscious goal, it was very often also compromised with, as Shekhter (1969) has revealed, even among the 'planners' themselves (for a defense of 'necessary Germanisms' see Mark 1963). The *haskole* per se and the very process of modernization as a whole were themselves powerful forces leading to a massive injection of new German borrowings and calques (see, e.g. M. Vaynraykh 1933 on Tsederboym). In addition some of the early pro-Yiddish activists were willing to accept a German model for spelling even if not for lexical or grammatical development (Herbert 1913; for a similar earlier view by I. M. Dik see Niger 1952). So great was the total onslaught of German influences (we must remember that German represented the major cultural-technological force in Eastern Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century, for Jews as well as for non-Jews) that some scholars prematurely concluded that Yiddish was actually returning to the womb of German from whence it had emerged (Rubshhteyn 1922; note the detailed refutations by Bal-dimyen 1923 and M. Vaynraykh 1923b).

The problem of being engulfed by the very language from which one is seeking to establish distance is not unknown in other settings. French language planning in Quebec faces this very issue today, one of the major problems of the Office de la Langue Française being that technology worldwide is English language dominated whereas it is precisely the technological functions that the Quebecoise movement must seek to control. The problem of Yiddish *vis-à-vis* German was more difficult, however, because, on the one hand, it was an *ausbau* language from shared Germanic origins to begin with and, also, because it so completely lacked either political power or full-fledged internal acceptance. The general problems of seeking purity by *ausbau* from the big brother with whom one shares common origins is analyzed beautifully for Ukrainian and White Russian by Paul Wexler in his *Purism and Language* (1974). The problem of lack of political power to enforce decisions is discussed by Jack Fellman, *vis-à-vis* the early work of the Hebrew Language Committee in his *The Revival of a Classical Tongue* (1973) and by U. Vaynraykh in comparing Yiddish and Romanch (1972). The mutually magnifying interaction of both of these problems remains to be discussed. (Re excesses during the brief period of Soviet political manipulation of Yiddish language planning see Anon. 1935b, Erlich 1973, Redaktsye 1932.)

Two more roadblocks in the rejection of New-High Germanisms remain to be mentioned. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the habitual (even if archaic) Jewish usage of referring to Yiddish as German was externalized. Both Czarist Russian and Imperial Austro-Hungarian permits to publish in Yiddish often referred to the language as German (or as German in Hebrew characters: a designation that was quite appropriate for some much earlier Central European publications) and many *maskilim* hoped to use such publications to slowly lead the masses, step by step, back to 'real German'. This usage fed back upon internal views and readiesses *vis-à-vis* combatting New-High Germanisms.

However, the concept of German itself was also a constantly shifting one, if not for linguists than for more ordinary mortals. Was the more Germanized Yiddish of Kurland, of Western Hungary, of much of Galitsye and Bukovina, Yiddish or German? If it was hard for many to tell *in situ* (since more and less German was a stylistic functional variable present in the linguistic repertoire of many Yiddish speakers) it became even harder *after* immigration when coteritorial German speakers or intellectuals were no longer nearby. Folk interpretations of what were the differences between Yiddish and German abounded. For Zelvovits (1909) it was the difference between *o* (Yiddish) and *a* (German). For Berliner (1931) it was the Litvak dialect in the mouths of Polish Jews vs. either dialect *in situ*. For Toybes (1948) it was the difference between *oy* (Yiddish) and *au* (German). (Toybes points out that those seeking to oppose Yiddish often claim that the *oy* sound is ugly, coarse, uneducated, whereas the *au* sound is beautiful and elegant. However, these same 'phonetic anti-Yiddishists' have no complaints against the *oy* sound in English [as in *boy*, *cloister*]. He concludes that it is not the purported departure of Yiddish from German that troubles the *oy*-haters but, rather, its steadfast association with Jews and *yidishkayt*.) In our own day and age, the continued drive to combat New-High Germanisms is constantly complicated by the fact that most Yiddish speakers are out of touch (or have never been in touch) with German and therefore face additional difficulty in 'recognizing the enemy'. (For the special 'stage standard' in Yiddish see Prilutski 1927; for different approaches to defining a modern literary standard see Shekhter 1977b. For the role of Yiddish-in-print in fashioning this standard see Fishman 1981).

particularly by Soviet planners (Spivak 1935; Shtif 1929, 1931, 1932; Zaretski 1931a; note the counter-struggle in defense of Hebraisms by Hershls 1889; Kalmanovitsh 1925; Nobl 1957/58; Vaynraykh 1931, 1941b, etc.),²¹ against 'excessive' Russisms/Sovietisms/Slavicisms (Kalmanovitsh 1931; Niger 1934; Shulman 1937; Tsvayg 1930. For views sympathetic to various degrees of Russification/Slavification see Shapiro 1967; Spivak 1930; Zaretski 1931b; Yofe 1927; for evidence of continued slavophilia in Soviet Yiddish, see S. Birnboym 1979b and Shekhter 1969–1970 and 1971); as well as more restrained struggles with respect to Polonisms (Gelnberg 1930; Prilutski 1938a), Anglicisms (Glatshetyn 1972b; Mark 1938, 1958; Shvarts 1925; M. Vaynraykh 1941a; Yofe 1936), Hispanicisms (Robak 1964c) and internationalisms [= Latinisms in worldwide use] (Prilutski 1938a; Zaretski 1931c).

Of all of the above modeling and antimodeling efforts, the one involving [New-High] Germanisms is not only the most continuous but it is also prototypic for all efforts to reject 'foreignisms' not only in the linguistic but in the ethnoauthentic, sociocultural sense as a whole. Yiddish should be *yidishlekh* (M. Vaynraykh 1942). The burden of the puristic argument here is that there are ample 'good old Yiddish words and Jewish concepts' that predate and are superior to newly introduced, unnecessary and distinctly unwholesome Germanisms (Russisms, Anglicisms, etc.). Obviously, therefore, the struggle for/against Hebraisms is often of a different coloration. Rather than being basically in-group–out-group contrastive it is differential basically on an intra-group basis. However, these two types of stances have often been in complementary distribution. Those who have most opposed Germanisms or other foreignisms have frequently favored Hebraisms since the latter have been viewed as not only representing an old (the oldest) layer of the language-culture

21. It is interesting to note that Hebraisms and Ivritisms have been regarded quite differently by some. Whereas Hebraisms connote authentic ties for Yiddish with 'the way of the *Shas*', i.e. with a millennium of traditional Ashkenaz, Ivritisms are just another kind of unnecessary foreignism, particularly for non-Zionist language planners (Shekhter 1977a; Bogoch 1973b). Pro-Zionist writers, on the other hand, are likely to be quite fond of Ivritisms and to prefer them both because of their modern Israeli connotations as well as because Ivrit appears to them as the natural continuation of *loshn koydesh* (Gros-tsimerman 1962; Ayznman 1976). The human capacity to redefine erstwhile opponents as friends and friends as opponents is evident in the language attitudes field generally and in the sociology of Yiddish particularly. However, similar tendencies are easily found in almost every politicized language planning context. The most obvious example of

this capacity to redefine and yet to claim ideological consistency may be found in Ataturk's 'Great Sun Theory'. Believing that his movement to purify Turkish had gone further than was practical (given that modernization-Europeanization was also one of his goals), this theory enabled Ataturk to consider European languages as being derived from Turkish (the great sun language that had cast its rays over all of Europe) and, therefore, to view the incorporation of French, English, and other Western terms as no more than welcoming back into the Turkish language fold some of its very own long lost children. The general point here is not that language planning rationales are arbitrary, but, rather, that they are intended to advance larger societal purposes and, therefore, are subject to reevaluation and reinterpretation in the light of those purposes, with 'authenticity' frequently remaining officially 'enthroned' but yet quite differently defined.

complex but as representing language use among the most deeply Jewish and scholarly (and, therefore, the most prestigious) speech and writing networks. Similarly, many of the interwar detractors of Hebraisms were in favor of Sovietisms/Slavisms and of the secularization and Sovietization not only of Yiddish but of Jewish society as a whole (Volobrinski 1930; Gitlits 1934). Just as Ben-yehuda preferred to modernize Hebrew by drawing upon classical Hebrew roots, Aramaic roots, Hebrew roots from other historic periods, and, finally, Semitic roots from other languages (even Arabic), similarly many Yiddish linguists have had their rank ordering from most preferred to least preferred sources for the modernization of Yiddish, e.g. old Yiddish stock (including nonstandard dialects), Hebrew-Aramaic, internationalisms, on the one hand, and Anglicisms, Russisms, Germanisms, on the other.

Although normative efforts in Yiddish have often been ridiculed as either inauthentic in the light of dialectal reality (Tsukerman 1972), or as reflecting no more than one man's (or one group's or one agency's) arbitrary opinion/bias (Itkovitsh 1973; Gutkovitsh and Tsukerman 1977) such efforts have been neither rare nor without effect (Kan 1973; Shekhter 1961, 1975, i.p.), although possible negative effects have never been carefully investigated. Such efforts are certainly far more precedented throughout the world (indeed, they are frequently authoritatively cultivated) than their critics within the Yiddish fold generally recognize or admit. Basically, such efforts and their evaluations reflect sociopolitical-cultural views and assumptions concerning the historic importance of Yiddish in Jewish life, and views toward the Jewish past as such, views concerning the independent validity of Yiddish, and views concerning its future validity. Thus, the advocacy of Yiddish toponymics is not only part of the more general struggle against foreignisms but also an emphasis upon Jewish coteritorial priority and/or permanence (S. Birnboym 1916; Prilutski 1938a; Shekhter 1957; for linguistic analyses see Guggenheim-Grunberg 1965; Stankiewicz 1965).

The lexical and morpho-syntactic concerns that the above efforts have commonly highlighted are paralleled – certainly in so far as broader sociopolitical-cultural inclinations are concerned – in connection with the various Yiddish orthographic conventions and *their* corresponding 'schools of thought'. Although many of the orthographic conventions followed in all Yiddish orthographies predate Yiddish itself (S. Birnboym 1930a, 1931a, 1953) these and more modern conventions are continually reinterpreted in terms of modern rationales of modeling and antimodeling (S. Birnboym 1930b, 1977; Fishman 1976; Sh'b 1928; M. Vaynraykh 1939). Particularly ingrained in Yiddish spelling are certain toward-Hebrew and toward-German tendencies (Sholem Aleykhem 1888) which in modern times, have come under attack from antiforeign, anti-German and anti-Hebrew sociocultural spokesmen and their followers (e.g. Anon. 1930a, 1930b; Litvakov 1928). Although the entire world

אינשטיטוט פאר יידישער קולטור און אקאדעמיע. פילאָלאָגישע סעקציע

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די יידישע שפראך

גארטל פאר יידיש שפראכבוים

מיט דער פארארדענונג פונעם פאלקאמבילד איג אוסירר דעם 22 יולי 1929 י. (אינ ביולעטענ
פונ פאלקאמבילד 1929 י. № 32 (171), ארט. 451, פ. 11, אבז. 1) איז באשטעטיקט דער נמער אויסליג,
וואס דער צווייטער אלפארבאנדישער יידישער קולטור-צוואמענפאך איג כארקאוו האט אָנגענומען (זע
„יידישע שפראך“, 1929 נ. 1 (14) שפ. 57—60.

די „יידישע שפראך“ האט איג די לעצטע נומער פאקטיש שוין אינגעפירט דעמאָוויקע אויסליג.
געבליבן זינען נאך די שלאס-אויסעס. מיט דעם איצטיק נומער מאכט די רעדאקציע דעם לעצטן שריט
צו פארווירקלעכען די פריערדערמאנטע באשלוסן און הייבט אָן צו דרוקן דעם זשורנאל אָן שלאס-
אויסעס.

רעדאקציע.

דריטער יאָרגאנג

№ 4-5 — (17-18)

יולי — אָקטאבער

1929

Figure 9. *Di yidische shprakh* [The Yiddish Language], publication of the Institute for Jewish Culture of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Philological Section, subsequently continued under the title *Afn shprakhnfront* [On the Language Front]. The insert announces that, by government edict, the journal is changing its spelling so as to discontinue the use of the five final-letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

of Yiddish orthographic concern is small and specialized, it has produced a relatively huge literature (Shaykovski 1966), replete with broader sociocultural rationales (Gold 1977) as well as with an inevitable degree of interpersonal rivalry (Anon 1959; Robak 1959; M. Vaynraykh 1959b).²² Today, the Yivo's 'Unified Yiddish Spelling' is widely considered to be the standard. The only other frequently encountered systematic spelling is that of Soviet publications, the formerly popular 'traditional' (= Orthodox) spelling having almost disappeared (although it is still advocated by S. Birnboym 1977, 1979a).

Far less touchy for those within the fold is the topic of Yiddish influences in other languages. Although this has been particularly well-documented with respect to Hebrew (e.g. Ben-amotz and Ben-yehuda 1972; Blanc 1965; Elzet 1956; Koyrey 1967; Kornblueth and Aynor 1974; Oyerbakh 1975; Reisner 1976; Rubin 1945) it has also been noted in connection with English (Dillard 1975; Mencken 1936; Feinsilver 1962, 1970), Dutch (Beem 1954), German (Weinberg 1969), etc.²³ Another 'internal topic' is that of selecting from among Yiddish dialects, particularly insofar as orthoepy and transliteration into non-Hebrew characters are concerned. The literature and altercations on this topic have been reviewed by Shekhter 1977b.

Least examined, but closest to the heart of the entire sociolinguistic enterprise, is the topic of 'oral' functional variation in (or partially in) Yiddish. The 'corruption' stigma has so traumatized and energized several generations of Yiddish linguists, and the language shift threat has so mobilized generations of advocates that the normal fluctuation from one variety to another within

22. It seems to be a generally accepted sociolinguistic premise that it is more difficult to alter orthographic systems than almost any other kind of linguistic system (e.g. the lexical or semantic systems). Many hypotheses have been advanced to account for this, e.g., that writing systems, like grammatical patterns, encompass the whole language and, therefore, changing these systems elicits much more opposition since it is impossible to side-step them as one can do with disagreeable lexical change (see Fishman 1977c). The Yiddish experience leads me to question this premise, or, at least, to suggest that it must be qualified by reference to literacy level, depth of literary tradition, magnitude of publishing and typographic investments, etc. My impression of the Yiddish scene is that it has responded more to orthographic change than to purification attempts and more to purification attempts than to lexical modernization (neologism) planning. (For proposals to romanize Yiddish spelling see Acher 1902, Dr. X 1909, and an extensive bibliography in Gold 1977.)

23. There is also a small but important literature concerning Yiddish influences on other literatures

(e.g. Cukierman 1977; Eber 1967; Leftvitsh 1977; Mordoch 1972) and theaters (Beck 1972; Zilbertsvayg 1968). My impression is that there is much more to these influences than has as yet been recognized. The influence of Yiddish on the English theater in America must have been both direct and indirect, via personnel that was bilingual/bicultural and via dramatic techniques that were both consciously and unconsciously borrowed. Indeed, American, Soviet, and Israeli literature and theater would probably reveal myriad mutual influences and relationships with the world of Yiddish that have yet to be delineated. The influences and relationships also have their more narrowly linguistic dimensions as well. A host of Yiddishisms have penetrated into English from the Yiddish stage, and, similarly, the English speaking entertainment world has impacted not only Yiddish but most major languages of the world during the past 50 years. Through the impact of Yiddish on 'entertainment English' various Yiddishisms have attained worldwide currency (see Almi 1928 for an early intimation along these lines).

Modern
ENGLISH-
YIDDISH
YIDDISH-
ENGLISH
DICTIONARY

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