

An Annotated Bibliography
of
Maria Yakovlevna Frumkina (Esther)

by

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Statement of originality

I declare that this thesis represents my own original work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Suzanne Faigan', with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Suzanne Faigan
22 June 2018

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Abstract

This thesis provides the first annotated bibliography of the publications of Maria Yakovlevna Frumkina (Esther), a significant figure in the Russian Jewish political sphere in the pre- and early Soviet period. Often known as Esther Frumkin, this proponent of Bundist and, subsequently, communist ideology intended almost all of her publications for readers of Yiddish who were members of the Jewish working class or Jewish intellectuals like herself who devoted their lives to the masses. While Esther's written output, and indeed her life's work, can essentially be seen in terms of two periods, corresponding to before and after the dissolution of the Russian Bund, there is some variety among the publications of each period, in terms of their nature, purpose and audience. Some items are translations, some are memoirs, some are didactic party journalism, some are theoretical, some are poetic, some are for younger readers, some appeal to the emotions, some contain humour or derision, some are moralistic, and so on. All are masterfully crafted, using the same clear, assertive style. Many have a very personal quality, which could only have reinforced their author's reputation as 'the famous Esther Frumkin'. These publications thus offer a personal perspective on the historical events they describe. They cast additional light on those events and on the writer herself, although the biographical portrait they sketch is incomplete, and they reveal how contemporary Marxist ideologies were communicated to the Yiddish-reading public during a period when Yiddish was a language of politics. The list of 357 items is not an exhaustive bibliography of Esther's publications, but it is surely representative and should permit consideration of Esther's publications beyond the small proportion for which she is best known. To the same end, the majority of the enumerated bibliographic listings are accompanied by an annotation and a translation into English of a brief extract from the item.

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Introduction

Aims

This dissertation seeks to contribute to knowledge about Eastern European and Jewish political literature and history by offering an annotated bibliography of publications by one of the outstanding personalities of Russian Jewish politics. The 357 bibliographic listings enable consideration of Esther's published output as a body of work spanning an entire career. The proportion of her publications that have previously attracted scholarly attention or been available to a non-Yiddish-reading audience is minimal. The information presented here is likely to be of interest and use to scholars in Judaic Studies, Slavonic Studies, and other fields of the humanities that focus on Eastern Europe.

Listings in this bibliography typically contain details of the authorship, publication, language, attribution, and provenance of the item, a précis reviewing its content and related secondary references, and an illustrative quotation translated by myself unless otherwise indicated.

Most of the listed items were published in Yiddish, only seven are in Russian. Yiddish was, or is, the most enduring of the many Jewish vernacular languages that have arisen and fallen into disuse over time.¹ Today, Yiddish literature and other materials continue to be published in English translation, and many individual and institutional translation efforts can be found online.² The present bibliography for English-readers can be seen

¹ Emanuel S. Goldsmith, *Modern Yiddish Culture: The Story of the Yiddish Language Movement*, 1987, Fordham UP, 2000, 28. Yiddish is still used as a vernacular by some ultra-Orthodox communities and among yiddishists.

² Among the recently published English translations of Yiddish literature are *Avrom Sutzkever. Still My Word Sings. Poems. Yiddish and English*, edited and translated by Heather Valencia, Düsseldorf UP, 2017; S. An-sky, *Pioneers: The First Breach*, translated by Rose Waldman, Syracuse UP, 2017; Blume Lempel, *Oedipus in Brooklyn and Other Stories*, translated by Ellen Cassedy and Yermiyahu Ahron Taub, Mandel Vilar Press / Dryad Press, 2016; and *Vilna, My Vilna: Stories by Abraham Karpinowitz*, translated by Helen Mintz, Syracuse UP, 2016. On questions concerning translation of Yiddish literature into English, see Anita Norich, *Writing in Tongues: Translating Yiddish in the Twentieth Century*, U of Washington P, 2013. Recent translations of Yiddish non-fiction include Charles Zachariah Goldberg, *Tales of Bialystok: A Jewish Journey from Czarist Russia to America*, translated by Phyllis Goldberg Ross, Rootstock Publishing, 2017. Online Yiddish translation projects include *Candles of Song* (shevazucker.com/blog), the Texts and Translations section of *In geveb: A Journal of Yiddish Studies* (ingeveb.org), and Joshua Fogel's gradual translation of *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur* (edited by S. Niger and J. Shatzky, Congress for Jewish Culture, New York, 1956-81. 8 vols) on his *Yiddish Leksikon* website (yleksikon.blogspot.com).

as part of this tradition of translation which, while acknowledging the decline of Yiddish as a widespread vernacular, allows readers to enjoy the fruits of Yiddish culture even though the language itself may be unknown to them.

Among the listed items are journalistic articles, essays, books, translations, songs and poetry. The majority are propagandistic, that is, intended to convey a political message. Just as in non-political literature, they use literary devices to attract and hold readers' attention.³ Many rely heavily on emotional resonance to communicate their message to readers. It was important to retain such literary elements in the translations made for this project. In general, the principle behind preparing the synopses and translations was to reproduce the meaning and effect of the text that confronted the reader in its original language. Spelling mistakes in the source text and inappropriate word usage (catachresis), of the sort that Zvi Gitelman observed in a passage in which 'tradition' should have read 'tragedy', have been silently corrected and the general sense retained.⁴

Unlike the texts it lists, this dissertation has no political aims, nor was it written out of a concern to 'retrieve just a few of the documents of these almost forgotten trends from what Trotsky habitually referred to as "the dustbin of history"'.⁵ The aims of this project are purely academic, in the spirit of Joshua A. Fishman's article presenting his translation of a lecture by Nathan Birnbaum; Jonathan Frankel's book presenting his translation and annotation of two Russian Marxist texts by Vladimir Akimov; and, closer to home, Matityahu Mintz's article presenting his translation and discussion of a previously unexamined letter written by Esther.⁶

³ On the use of literary devices in Jewish political literature, see Susanne Marten-Finnis, *Vilna as a Centre of the Modern Jewish Press, 1840-1928: Aspirations, Challenges and Progress*, Peter Lang AG, 2004, for example 73-106.

⁴ Zvi Gitelman, *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics: The Jewish Sections of the CPSU, 1917-1930*, Princeton UP, 1972, 212n169. Emphasis in the original texts is also retained and is indicated by underlining.

⁵ Richard Mullin, Preface, *The Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party, 1899-1904: Documents of the 'Economist' Opposition to Iskra and Early Menshevism*, Brill, 2015, x.

⁶ Joshua A. Fishman, 'Nathan Birnbaum's *The Tasks of Eastern European Jews*,' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, vol. 2014, issue 226, 83-99. Jonathan Frankel, *Vladimir Akimov on the Dilemmas of Russian Marxism, 1895-1903*, Cambridge UP, 1969. Matityahu Mintz, 'Te'udah she-aḥerah ve-misaviv lah,' *Iyunim be-tkumat yisrael*, 2, 1992, 368-77.

Esther Frumkin

Esther was born in Minsk, a Jewish metropolis in the heart of the Pale, on 1 May 1880 (OS), to Meyer Yankev and Basya Lifshits, who named her Malke.⁷ She was active as a writer from around 1900, when she turned twenty, until the time of the Soviet purges of the 1930s, when she was in her fifties. Dates suggested for her death range between 1938 and 1943. Her career can be seen as divided into halves by the dissolution of the Russian Bund, the organisation in which she rose to an influential role and became well-known in the Jewish world.⁸ In the second half, after the Bolsheviks had taken control, ‘No woman was more admired or more hated by Jews under the first phase of Soviet rule; no woman in Eastern Europe achieved such stature in Jewish politics’.⁹ Overall,

⁷ ‘Maria [Mariya] Yakovlevna Frumkina’, which appears in the title of this thesis, is the russified name which Esther tended to use in the course of her work as a Soviet functionary along with her Jewish revolutionary pseudonym ‘Esther’. Nathan Chanin recalls that she was already known as Maria Yakovlevna during her first days of teaching in Minsk (‘Briv tsu a fraynd,’ *Der veker* [New York], 12 Feb. 1938), though official publications from that time call her Malka Yakovlevna Frumkina (for example, *Pamyatnaya knizhka minskoy gubernii na 1904 g. (Visokosnyy)*, Izdanie Minskago Gubernskago Statisticheskago Komiteta, Minsk, 1903, 101). The cultural duality in these names exemplifies the general difficulty in neatly pigeonholing Esther. David Shneer writes of ‘fluid and ever-changing identities’ in connection with Esther’s names (*Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture, 1918-1930*, Cambridge UP, 2004, 229n11). The various names under which Esther’s signed publications appeared are identified in the bibliography where known. They include ‘M. L.’, ‘M. Alef-R.’, ‘Alef-R.’, ‘D. Katsenelenboygen’, ‘D. K.’, ‘Esther’ (in traditional Hebrew spelling), ‘Ester’ (in phonetic Soviet Yiddish spelling), ‘-ST-’, ‘M. Frumkina’, ‘M. Frumkin (Ester)’ and, ultimately, simply ‘Frumkina’. Sometimes two of these forms appear on the one publication. The description of Minsk here is from Elissa Bemporad, ‘Issues of Gender, Sovietization and Modernization in the Jewish Metropolis of Minsk,’ *Modernity and the Cities of the Jews*, edited by Cristiana Facchini, *Quest. Issues in Contemporary Jewish History. Journal of Fondazione CDEC*, n. 2, Oct. 2011. Other scholarship about Jewish Minsk by Elissa Bemporad includes *Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk*, Indiana UP, 2013, and her biography of Esther is forthcoming. On Jewish Belorussia, see also the work of Leonid Smilovitsky. On dating style, see *Methodology* below. Esther’s birth details derive from her official birth record, which gives her name as Malka in Russian script and Malkah [Ysh. Malke] in Hebrew script.

⁸ The Bund – Der algemeyner yidisher arbeter-bund in lite, poylen un rusland [The General League of Jewish Workers in Lithuania/Belorussia, Poland and Russia]. Founded in Vilna in 1897, it was dissolved in Russia in the years following the October Revolution of 1917 but endured overseas. The major works on the Bund are *Di geshikhte fun bund*, general editor J. S. Hertz, Farlag Unzer tsayt, New York, 1960-1981, 5 vols, and *Doyres bundistn*, edited by J. S. Hertz, Farlag Unzer tsayt, New York, 1956 and 1968, 3 vols. Other books discussing the Russian Bund in the period of Esther’s involvement include Ezra Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle in the Pale: The Formative Years of the Jewish Workers’ Movement in Tsarist Russia*, Cambridge UP, 1970; Henry J. Tobias, *The Jewish Bund in Russia from its Origins to 1905*, Stanford UP, 1972; Jonathan Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics: Socialism, Nationalism and the Russian Jews, 1862-1917*, Cambridge UP, 1981 (especially Chapter 4); Yoav Peled, *Class and Ethnicity in the Pale: The Political Economy of Jewish Workers’ Nationalism in Late Imperial Russia*, Palgrave Macmillan, 1989; *Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe: The Bund at 100*, edited by Jack Jacobs, New York UP, 2001; David E. Fishman, *The Rise of Modern Yiddish Culture*, U of Pittsburgh P, 2005, Chapter 4: The Bund’s Contribution; and Vladimir Levin, *Me-mahapekha le-milkhamah: Ha-politika ha-yehudit be-rusiyah, 1907-1914*, Zalman Shazar Center, 2016. Articles include Roni Gechtman, ‘A “Museum of Bad Taste”?: The Jewish Labour Bund and the Bolshevik Position Regarding the National Question, 1903-14,’ *Canadian Journal of History*, 43, 1, Spring 2008, 31-67; David E. Fishman, ‘The Bund and Modern Yiddish Culture,’ *The Emergence of Modern Jewish Politics: Bundism and Zionism in Eastern Europe*, edited by Zvi Gitelman, U of Pittsburgh P, 2003, 107-19; articles on the Bundist press by Susanne Marten-Finnis, referenced in *Vilna as a Centre*; and articles by Henry J. Tobias and Charles E. Woodhouse.

⁹ Naomi Shepherd, *A Price Below Rubies: Jewish Women as Rebels and Radicals*, Harvard UP, 1993, 139.

Esther was ‘the best-known woman in the Russian Jewish revolutionary movement’.¹⁰ Memoirists would recall her as ‘the famous Esther Frumkin’.¹¹

Modern-day scholars obtain information about this prominent figure from a small number of sources, the most influential of which has been the section devoted to her in Naomi Shepherd’s *A Price Below Rubies: Jewish Women as Rebels and Radicals*, published in 1993.¹² It was a major source for the article on Esther in the online *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, which has in turn influenced the content of other web publications such as *yiddishkayt.org*.¹³

Naomi Shepherd’s work on Esther made use of primary sources, materials from the YIVO archive,¹⁴ and scholarship by Zvi Gitelman,¹⁵ but its major source was the series of biographical articles by Elye Falkovich that were printed in a Warsaw Yiddish newspaper in 1965.¹⁶ While Falkovich writes from a communist perspective which acknowledges Esther’s political errors, he generally treats his subject with great sympathy and his articles give the impression of being a reliable source of biographical information. This impression derives from Falkovich’s scholarly approach to presenting and referencing his material, the assertion that he knew Esther personally, and the general concurrence of his account with primary sources including information gleaned

¹⁰ Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, ‘Esther Frumkin: Bringing the Revolution to the Jewish Street,’ *Jewish Intellectual Women in Central Europe, 1860-2000: Twelve Biographical Essays*, edited by Judith Szapor et al, Edwin Mellen Press, 2012, 173.

¹¹ For example, Dov Lipov, ‘Ketei zikhronot,’ *Minsk, ir va-em*, edited by Shlomo Even-Shushan, Jerusalem, 1975-85, vol. 2, 207.

¹² See the articles and conference paper about Esther by Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild: ‘Bringing the Revolution’; ‘Frumkin, Esther,’ *Biographical Dictionary of Women’s Movements and Feminisms in Central, Eastern and South Eastern Europe: 19th and 20th Centuries*, edited by F. de Haan et al, Central European UP, 2006, 140-42; and ‘Esther Frumkin: From Bundist to Bolshevik,’ Di Froyen: Women and Yiddish, Tribute to the Past, Directions for the Future conference, 28 Oct. 1995, Jewish Theological Seminary, New York. Conference Presentation (Proceedings published 1997); Susanne Marten-Finnis, ‘Von der Sprache der Frauen zur Sprache der Revolution? Esther Frumkin, der “Bund” und die “Entführung” des Jiddischen im nachrevolutionären Rußland,’ *Frauen und Frauenbilder in der europäisch-jüdischen Presse von der Aufklärung bis 1945*, edited by Eleonore Lappin and Michael Nagel, Edition Lumière, 2007, 79-88; and Dovid Katz, *Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish*, Basic Books, 2004, specifically Chapter 9, The Twentieth Century.

¹³ ‘Lifshits, Khaye Malke,’ by Roni Gechtman, *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*, online ed., 25 Aug. 2010, http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Lifshits_Khaye_Malke. ‘Esther,’ *Yiddishkayt*, yiddishkayt.org/view/esther-frumkin.

¹⁴ These include a number of newspaper articles about Esther and her work.

¹⁵ Specifically *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics*. Shepherd does not reference Aryeh Gelbard’s 1985 article ‘Esther Frumkin: Demut muflah be-toldot tenuat ha-poalim ha-yehudit [Esther Frumkin: An Outstanding Figure in the History of the Jewish Labour Movement],’ *Me’asef taf-vav: ketavim le-heker tenu’at ha-po’alim ha-yehudit*, Makhon le-heker tenu’at ha-po’alim ha-yehudit a. sh. Barukh Lin, Givat Havivah, 1985, 61-76.

¹⁶ On Elye Falkovich, the Yiddish linguist, academic and war hero (1898-1979) who was Esther’s student (Gitelman 517n7; Shepherd 312n44), see L. V., ‘Falkovitsh, elye,’ Nigir and Shatzky, *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, vol. 7, col. 302-03; Gennady Estraiikh, ‘Falkovitsh, Elye,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 6 Aug. 2010; ‘Eli Falkovich,’ *Yad Vashem*, www.yadvashem.org/research/research-projects/soldiers/eli-falkovich. Elye Falkovich, ‘Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,’ *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], 7 articles: no. 79 (3193), 22 May 1965, 5; no. 80, 25 May 1965; no. 81, 26 May 1965; no. 82, 27 May 1965; no. 83, n. d.; unnumbered (no. 84?), n. d.; no. 85, 2 June 1965, YIVO Institute archives. Box 1400, ME-25.

from Esther's writings. With this in mind — given the extent of the articles' influence on current conceptions of Esther — and additionally in keeping with the value ascribed to translation in this thesis, some translated extracts from Falkovich's articles are presented here to provide a concise biographical portrait of Esther.



'Childhood and Youth'¹⁷

A certain bourgeois philosopher, probably Lombroso, once said that a normal person is one who eats, drinks, sleeps and doesn't think about tomorrow. Esther had all the opportunities to be a "normal" person. But she did not want to be one.¹⁸ The times, her environment and her conscience molded her into one of those people who do think about tomorrow, and not just about themselves but about the common good, for all of humanity....

Esther or, as she was called as a child, Malke Lifshits, was born in 1880 in Minsk, to wealthy parents. Her mother, a very beautiful, kind and dynamic woman, managed the family's two-storey home and helped her husband in his lumber business. Esther's father, who was accomplished in Jewish learning despite being a maskil, loved nigunim and zmires, and had a weakness for writing poetry and stories.¹⁹ Both her parents wanted their three daughters, Malke, Gite and Hodl, to be educated, and they achieved this aim. The eldest, Malke, especially distinguished herself.

Until the age of 11, Malke received a Jewish education at home, studying Hebrew and Tanakh.²⁰ According to Z. Reisen's *Leksikon*, she knew Mapu's *Ahavat Zion* by heart.²¹ Subsequently she entered the Minsk Women's Gimnasium, where she studied well and was well liked.²² And how could they not like her, when she was so beautiful, stately, cheerful, a singer, full of charm and a head taller than all her classmates. When, in break times, she would spread out her arms like wings and carry a pair of girls on them down the length of the corridor, it was wonderful to see. In addition, she was nice and

¹⁷ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 79 (3193), 22 May 1965, 5.

¹⁸ The preceding passage is quoted in Devra Kay, 'Esther,' *Routledge Encyclopedia of Jewish Writers of the Twentieth Century*, edited by Sorrel Kerbel, Fitzroy Dearborn (Taylor & Francis), London / New York, 2003, 266.

¹⁹ Maskil – adherent of the Haskole [Haskalah, Jewish Enlightenment] movement which, for example, supported the study of secular subjects. Nigunim – Jewish, often Hasidic, melodies. Zmires – Shabes [Shabbat, Sabbath] songs.

²⁰ Tanakh – the Old Testament.

²¹ See Zalmen Reisen, 'Esther,' *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese un filologye*, vol. 1, B. Kletskin, Vilna, 1928, col. 143-45. Abraham Mapu's *Ahavat Zion*, often said to be the first Hebrew novel, was important to more than one young person who would later become prominent, including Sholem Aleichem (Curt Leviant, editor and translator, *From the Fair: The Autobiography of Sholom Aleichem*. Viking Penguin, New York, 1985, 146-47). S. M. Dubnow read Mapu's novels (Robert M. Seltzer, 'Dubnow, Simon,' *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 3 Dec. 2010).

²² Gimnasium – 'A high school with an emphasis on the humanities' (Frankel, *Prophecy and Politics*, xv).

friendly, with a warm heart. Her house was always open to all. If they did not understand their schoolwork, they could come and ask her. And it was a pleasure to hear how she helped them to understand.

Girlfriends would come to her throughout the day and she would help with their homework and difficult questions. She made the issues clear. She liked it when, in doing so, she herself acquired a deeper understanding of the academic subjects she was talking about. She did not make them rote-learn the teachers' words or the pages of the textbook, she let them develop their own ideas and enjoyed both the benefit this gave her friends and the educationalist flame it kindled within her.

At age 16, Malke (Manya) graduated from the gimnasium. Before long, she got to know the socialist activist and poet Abraham Valt (Liesin), who was involved with socialist propaganda in the workers' circles in Minsk prior to his departure for America.²³ He brought her into contact with female Jewish workers and for a while she ran a circle of Jewish working women.

In 1897, she enrolled to study in the Advanced Pedagogical Courses for Women in St. Petersburg.²⁴ Among those courses, in the philology department, she especially focussed on Russian history and literature, and also on teaching methods and education. At the same time, she diligently studied Marxist literature, spending many nights sitting over *Das Kapital*, and participated in the student movement. She was also involved with the Jewish community, including work in the colonisation organisation ("Yeko"), in the Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment among the Jews (Mefitsey haskole), and took part in a student circle that studied questions relating to Jewish history.²⁵

During her student years, Malke made her first serious literary attempts....²⁶

It seems that Malke graduated from the Courses in 1900, and then returned to Minsk....

²³ Abraham Valt (Liesin), Bundist, poet, editor of *Di tsukunft* [New York] (1872-1938).

²⁴ According to Aino Kuusinen, Esther utilised a bold means of obtaining official permission to reside in the capital: After she had completed her schooling in Minsk, she wanted to study at the university in St. Petersburg, but female Jews were not permitted to live in the capital. However Esther found a cunning way out. She knew that Jewish prostitutes could live in the capital. She went to Petersburg, registered herself at the police station as a street walker and obtained her yellow ticket, as it was called. Once a week, she had to register at the police station. (*Gospod' nizvergaet svoikh angelov: Vospominaniya, 1919-1965*, Petrozavodsk, 1991, 128)

²⁵ The Jewish Colonization Association [JCA, ICA, Rn. EKO [Yeko], Ysh. Yika] worked to settle Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe on its agricultural colonies overseas. The Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia [Ysh. Mefitsey haskole, Rn. OPE] existed 1863-1929. Esther later criticised this society as a 'fortress of russification'; see for example 'Glaykhberekhhtigung fun shprakhn,' [continuation], 1910, 25, **145**. (Bolded reference numbers point to the numbering of the bibliographic items.)

²⁶ Unlike Trotsky (see, for example, *Leon Trotsky on Literature and Art*, edited by Paul N. Siegel, Pathfinder Press, New York, 1970), Esther did not engage in literary criticism, but in her writing signs of a great appreciation for literature are discernible. The earliest items in this bibliography are translations of or about literature, and there are literary references in her publications.

In the first Jewish workers' circles

When did Esther join the Bund? Zalmen Reisen gives the year 1901. A. Kirzhnits demonstrates that from 1898 Esther was a regular participant in all the literary activities of the Central Committee (CC) of the Bund and the author of many appeals and articles in the illegal *Arbeter shtime*.²⁷ According to the first edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* (Russian), from 1897, Maria Yakovlevna Frumkina (pseudonym "Esther") led propagandistic circles for Jewish workers in Minsk. In the same year, she joined the Bund (vol. 59, p. 260). As may be inferred from the information presented earlier in this article, the latter date corresponds the closest to reality.²⁸

After the courses, Esther worked as a teacher and administrator of the Minsk Jewish Vocational Girls' School and as a teacher of evening courses. At the same time, she maintained constant relations with revolutionary circles. Esther had vast international interests. In connection with Wilhelm Liebknecht's death in 1900 she wrote a speech, 'The History of the German Labour Movement', and subsequently read it at a workers' gathering. Later, when a Bund literary centre was established in Minsk, Esther was very involved with its activity: she wrote articles for the illegal newspaper *Minsker arbayter*, flyers, speeches, and similar.²⁹

In 1902, Esther married a chemical engineer, Borukh (Boris) Frumkin. It was a large wedding, with dancing, singing and revolutionary speeches. Within about a year, the young couple had a daughter, Freydl (Fride).

Boris Frumkin was a very clever man but unwell. In 1898, already a Bundist, he was in the harsh Kresty prison in St. Petersburg and developed lung disease. The son of well-to-do parents, in 1903 he went for treatment to Berlin and subsequently Switzerland, where Esther's sister Gite was studying medicine. He died there in 1904.³⁰

From 1904, Esther became more involved with practical political work. She travelled around the cities and shtetls giving lectures.³¹ She could be heard in the forest at a gathering of Bundists from two neighbouring shtetls, and then again a few hours later at

²⁷ Falkovich's reference: A. Kirzhnits, *Der yidisher arbeter*, vol. 2, Moscow, 1925, 391.

²⁸ Emphasis in original.

²⁹ Susanne Marten-Finnis mentions *Der minsker arbayter* in her description of local newspapers, one of the six categories of Bundist literature in her classification (59ff.). The only locatable holdings for *Der minsker arbayter* are in Harvard College Library and amount to one issue, No. 2, I, Jan. 1901, which is a ten-page booklet. Aimed at a worker audience, it is the organ of the Minsk Social-Democratic Committee. Along with revolutionary slogans, its banner includes the names of the Bund and Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (RSDLP). The issue's lead article concerns the workers' struggle to reduce their work day to twelve hours, the maximum permitted by a neglected piece of legislation. In all, the issue consists of six articles and a poem. Only one of these carries the author's name, a comical feuilleton, 'No Censor', by Ister Vahl.

³⁰ The active Bundist speaker and author Boris Markovich Frumkin (B. Gornberg or Gorenberg) survived into the 1930s ('Frumkin Boris,' *Elektronnaya yevreyskaya entsiklopediya*, www.eleven.co.il/article/14378; 'Frumkin, Boris Markovich,' *Jewish Virtual Library*, www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/frumkin-boris-markovich). He was Esther's cousin (Franz Kursky, Letter to Dina Blond, 9 Jan. 1942, YIVO Institute archives, Box 1400, MG-9 / MG-10, 46).

a school in one of the shtetls. In a short time, she became well known in wider workers' circles. In the spring of 1905, she took part in an all-Russia teachers' conference which at the time carried great political significance. Esther was one of the most prominent female leaders of the social-democratic wing of the conference.

Arrests and emigration

During the elections for the First Russian State Duma in the spring of 1906, Esther was arrested. This caused her mother not only great suffering but also a lot of work because it was her daughter's wish that she bring food for the entire cell. After four months in prison, Esther was released and resumed work.

In the autumn of 1906, Esther joined the editorial committee of the Vilna *Folks-tsaytung*.³² When the Second Duma opened, in March 1907, she was in St. Petersburg as the newspaper's Duma correspondent. Her long and detailed Duma reports were read with keen interest. After the dissolution of the Second Duma in June 1907, Esther returned to Vilna, worked on the *Folks-tsaytung* and subsequently on *Der hofnung*, and also taught at the Vilna evening courses when they began in Yiddish.³³ In October 1907, together with other activists, she was arrested in the editorial office of *Der hofnung*. In prison, Esther led a protest against the law about the social-democratic faction of the Duma and tried to organise a demonstration.³⁴ On 11 July 1908, she was sentenced to three years' exile in Vologda gubernia, but due to lung problems she was allowed to leave the country instead. In prison, Esther had a meeting with her five year-old daughter who visited with her grandmother.

While abroad, Esther kept up her work.³⁵ For a long time, she was active in the Galician Bund.³⁶ She was also very involved in the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference (August 1908).³⁷

³¹ Shtetl – market town (Gitelman).

³² This biographical detail also appears in Yu. A. Gorbunov, 'Frumkina, Malka Yankelevna,' *Pisatel' nitsy Rossii: Materialy dlya biobibliograficheskogo slovarya*, book.uraic.ru/elib/authors/gorbunov/sl-20.htm. Vilna – Vilnius, capital of Lithuania. See the discussion between some modern-day English-language Yiddish scholars about choosing from the various names of Eastern European cities, 'Vilne? Vilna? Wilno? Vilnius?: Place Names in Yiddish,' by Ben Sadock, Samuel Spinner, and Sarah Ellen Zarrow, *In geveb*, 20 Mar. 2016, ingeveb.org/blog/vilne-vilna-wilno-vilnius-place-names-in-in-geveb.

³³ Zalmen Reizen recorded that Esther was the 'Duma correspondent of *Der veker (Folks-tsaytung)*' (144), reflecting the publication history which saw *Folks-tsaytung* appear after *Der veker* had ceased operation in the February. Subsequently, *Folks-tsaytung* in turn was re-named *Di hofnung*.

³⁴ Falkovich's reference: N. A. Bukhbinder, *Materyelen far der geshikhte fun der yidisher arbeter-bavegung in rusland*, 1923 (Russian).

³⁵ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 80, 25 May 1965.

³⁶ Galicia – region straddling the border of modern-day Poland and Ukraine.

Attitude to the Czernowitz Conference

Esther showed special interest in the Czernowitz conference, both because she had an inclination towards philology and because she was a teacher of Yiddish (one of the first Yiddish teachers in Russia) and a long-standing contributor to the Yiddish press, and because the other participants included Y. L. Peretz, Sholem Asch, Abraham Reisen, H. D. Nomberg, Dr Chaim Zhitlovsky, and other well-known figures.³⁸ What would be the political resonance of such a gathering today?!

But Esther did not enjoy the conference. She discovered that the majority of conference participants had very little interest in questions of Yiddish linguistics. Esther pointed out that S. Eisenstadt's talk on orthography could not be heard. Miseses's lecture on the hybridity of languages and the Yiddish lexicon evoked a noisy response in the hall. When Y. L. Peretz proposed that the conference publish Miseses's lecture as the first scientific work about the Yiddish language, the commotion from the Zionist-bourgeois audience became even greater. Esther asked why the workers of Czernowitz had been kept as distant as possible from the conference. From Esther's perspective, it was a chance gathering which did not represent the spirit of the Jewish masses or the spirit of the intelligentsia or the cultural work being conducted in Yiddish.³⁹

³⁷ Czernowitz – Chernovits, Chernivtsi, Cernăuți, Chernovtsy, etc, then in Austro-Hungarian Empire, now in western Ukraine. Esther's contributions to the conference are recorded in the conference book published by the YIVO in 1931, *Di ershte yidische shprakh-konferents*. Included are transcripts or summaries of informal verbal addresses, plus commentary extracted from her report published in *Di naye tsayt* (134), and her letter to *Dr birnboym's vokhenblat* (135). Other publications which focus specifically on the conference include Emanuel S. Goldsmith, *Architects of Yiddishism*, 1976, reprinted as *Modern Yiddish Culture*, 1987; *Czernowitz at 100: The First Yiddish Language Conference in Historical Perspective*, edited by Kalman Weiser and Joshua Fogel, Lexington Books, 2010; and articles by Joshua A. Fishman, in particular 'Attracting a Following to High-Culture Functions for a Language of Everyday Life: The Role of the Tshernovits Language Conference in the 'Rise of Yiddish'' (*International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 24, 1980, 43-74; *Never Say Die! A Thousand Years of Yiddish in Jewish Life and Letters*, edited by Joshua A. Fishman, Mouton Publishers, 1981, 369-94). Dissertations include Karina Shyrokykh, 'Jewish Politics in Austrian Bukovina: Czernowitz Yiddish Conference of 1908,' Masters thesis, Central European University, 2010. Books devoted specifically to major figures of the conference include Jess Olson, *Nathan Birnbaum and Jewish Modernity: Architect of Zionism, Yiddishism and Orthodoxy*, Stanford UP, 2013; Kalman Weiser, *Jewish People, Yiddish Nation: Noah Prylucki and the Folkists in Poland*, U of Toronto P, 2011; Ruth R. Wisse, *I. L. Peretz and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture*, U of Washington P, 1991; and Joshua A. Fishman, *Ideology, Society and Language: The Odyssey of Nathan Birnbaum*, Karoma Publishers, Ann Arbor, 1987. A related unpublished item is the 'letter from Esther', written in a small, neat, Russian hand, apparently a personal report about the conference for Bund colleagues ('Pis'mo ot 'Ester' o chernovitsnoy konferentsii yevreyskago yazyka [Letter from 'Esther' about the Czernowitz Jewish Language Conference], 6 Sept. (24 Aug.) 1908, YIVO Institute archives Box 1400, ME-25. Incidentally, the same handwriting is recognisable on reports of the Bund's Foreign Committee dating from the early teens, as held in the Algemeyner Yidisher Arbeyter Bund Collection, International Institute of Social History). Because the conference was well publicised to Jews around the world at the time and is still a significant event in Yiddishist history, it is often mentioned in biographical writing about Esther. Later, her participation in the conference would bolster her reputation as a veteran advocate for Yiddish (see, for example, Hersz Smoliar, *Vu bistu khaver sidorov?* Farlag I. L. Peretz, Tel Aviv, 1975, 61).

³⁸ Esther's activity at the conference, and her published and unpublished writing about the event, indicate that Bundist principles were her priority in Czernowitz. Yitskhok Leybush (Isaac Leib) Peretz, author and playwright (1852-1915). Sholem Asch, poet, author and essayist (1880-1957). Abraham Reisen, writer, poet and editor (1876-1953); Emanuel S. Goldsmith provides a long list of sources for information on Abraham Reisen (66n42). Hersh Dovid Nomberg, writer and journalist (1876-1927). Chaim Zhitlovsky, philosopher, writer and literary critic (1865-1943).

³⁹ Falkovich's reference: From Esther's report about the conference in the fourth volume of the anthology *Di naye tsayt*, Vilna, 1908.

While abroad, Esther studied social pedagogy, and did practical and theoretical study of the national question in Austria. Esther spent nine months in Geneva, in the Bund's Foreign Committee, where she fulfilled many important party assignments.

Back to Russia

In the autumn of 1909, Esther entered Russia illegally. That was the period of dark reaction.⁴⁰ Disappointment and despair reigned all around. Of the almost thirty-four thousand Bundists on the eve of the 7th Conference (August 1906), now not even two thousand remained. Only a small group of responsible activists stayed at their posts. Esther, however, was not the type of person to be disappointed. She knew the power of life and the laws of history, and she went straight to work. She took part in editing and publishing a number of anthologies and brochures, writing many herself, mostly about education and about the national question (for example, in *Tsayt-fragen*, vol. 1, 1909; vol. 2, 1910; vol. 5, 1910).⁴¹ Also in 1910, her major work *Tsu der frage vegn der yidisher folks-shul* was published.

During the election campaign for the Fourth Duma, in August 1912, Esther, along with Moyshe Rafes and Ayzenshtat (Yudin), settled in Odessa, where they succeeded in taking over a Russian newspaper and published several issues of a Yiddish newspaper. Before long, however, they were arrested. Esther was held for four months in prison and then sent to Arkhangelsk gubernia. Because of her poor health, she was once again able to convince the authorities to allow her to go abroad. While away, she worked in the Vienna publishing office of *Tsayt* and on other publications.

According to police records, at the beginning of 1914, Esther must have been in Russia. An ordinance dated 27 January 1914 describes Esther's appearance (her height, the colour of her eyes and hair, "she dresses in the latest fashion", etc) and orders the appropriate police officials to detain her if they see her.⁴² However, from Esther's biography, which the Minsk newspaper *Der veker* published on 2 November 1917, Esther stood as the Bund's candidate for the All-Russia Constituent Assembly, and also from Esther's sister Gite's notebook, which records where and when Esther was before 1917, it is not apparent that Esther was in Russia at the beginning of 1914. It seems

⁴⁰ The 'black reaction', the period of particularly severe government activity against insurgency, is generally considered to have started in 1907. Esther mentions the increased difficulty of conducting social-democratic work in this period (see for example *Di tsveyte gosudarstvene dume*, 1907, 130).

⁴¹ In addition to *Tsayt fragen*, Esther was one of the editors of the Bundist anthologies *Di naye tsayt, Fragen fun leben* and *Di naye shime* (Z. Reisen), all of which appeared in a small number of issues between 1909 and 1911 and to which she was also a contributor. She also worked on the *Otkliki bunda* (*L'Echo du Bونده*), the 'non-periodical organ' of the Bund's Foreign Committee, which was issued in Geneva from March 1909 to February 1911 (5 issues) (Gorbunov).

either that the police department made a mistake, or that Esther had intended to travel but had an attack of remorse.

At the beginning of the war (1914), Esther was in Geneva.⁴³ There she succeeded in obtaining a permit to return to Russia. After a long journey through Scandinavia, she arrived in Minsk at the end of 1914 (or early 1915). She had to leave Minsk, spent several months in Romania, then 4-5 months in Astrakhan gubernia, in Chërnyy Yar, and from there moved to Astrakhan....

During the war, homeless people (“bezhentses”), predominantly old, weak, invalids and helpless women, arrived there. The community aid work there focussed on aid for the homeless. Esther took part in that work, especially in the employment bureau and the children’s home....

In Astrakhan, Esther married a man named Vikhman. It does not seem to have been a marriage of equals, and they soon parted company. However, Esther kept the name Vikhman for some years and often signed herself ‘M. Frumkin(a)-Vikhman’.⁴⁴

After the February Revolution

After the February Revolution, Esther returned to active party work. At the 10th Bund conference, in April 1917, she was elected to the CC, and at the beginning of May 1917 she returned home [to Minsk] and started editing the Bund newspaper *Der veker*. For some time, she did this work with Helfand (A. Litvak).⁴⁵ Besides that, she was a member of Minsk’s workers’ and soldiers’ soviet and of its executive committee, a member of the municipal Duma, the leader of her social-democratic faction and of the commission for Jewish schools. For a certain period, she was the director of the education section of the state administration.⁴⁶ As a Bund delegate, she also took part in the work of the kehile, often giving talks and lectures, participating in meetings and courses, fighting opponents, and preaching the political positions of the Bund.⁴⁷

⁴² The folders pertaining to Esther in the YIVO Institute archives contain a copy of this document.

⁴³ A list of Russians stranded abroad by the war during 20 August to September 1914 indicates that ‘Malka Yakovlevna Frumkina and her daughter’ were living in Geneva at that time (Ministerstvo inostrannykh del, *Spisok russkikh poddanykh, zastignutykh voynoy za granitsey. Vyp. 2 (s 20 avgusta po 4 sentyabrya 1914 goda)*, Tip. V. F. Kirshbauma, Petrograd, 1914, 104.

⁴⁴ None of the publications in this bibliography are signed with this hyphenated name but it can be seen elsewhere. For example, *Der veker* [Minsk] gives the name of its editor as ‘M. Frumkin-Vikhman (Esther)’.

⁴⁵ Haim Yankel Helfand (A. Litvak), Bundist writer, editor and cultural activist, from Vilna (1874-1932).

⁴⁶ Esther’s activity in this governmental role, including a successful campaign against illiteracy, is discussed in Emanuil Iofe, “‘Asveta zrabilasya spravay zhytstsya...’,” *Litaratura i mastatstva*, 21 sakavika 2003, 15.

⁴⁷ Kehile – ‘The umbrella organisation of the Jewish community in a given place, responsible for charity and other common interests’ (*Prophecy and Politics*, xvii). Several memoirists list Esther as a Bund representative among the delegates at this time. For example, Rabbi Asher Kershtein, another kehile delegate, recalls an antagonistic exchange he had with Esther, a clash between religion and communism (‘Im gedolei ha-torah,’ *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 2, 154). Hanan Goldberg writes that while Esther was involved with the kehile, which received funds from abroad to help the war needy, she argued against using funds deriving from exploitation (‘Im ha-tenu’ah,’ *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 2, 182).

A mother to orphans⁴⁸

Esther also had to devote a lot of time to her family. Besides Freydl, her daughter, she had Freydl's wet nurse, the wet nurse's daughter and her sister Gite's two small children. (Gite died in March 1917.) Esther considered it her duty to raise Gite's babies (one was only a few days old), especially given that their father, her party comrade A. Vaynshteyn ("Yerakhmiel"), was overloaded with community work.⁴⁹ Esther looked after all the children for a number of years with great love and warmth. She educated them well and to this day when they speak of Esther they call her 'Mama' and recall her thoughtfulness, sincerity and goodness....

A talented publicist

In short, Esther worked tirelessly, producing *Der veker* with great devotion for several years (besides some minor interruptions) and often writing for it, sometimes even two articles in one issue. She wrote well, clearly, simply and often very lyrically. She knew how to utilise parables, comparisons and other descriptive devices to express an idea precisely and in a popular style. For this work, she used material from different sources, often those which she had studied in her youth. For example, when demonstrating 'Why We Do Not Need a Tsar', she employed the prophet Samuel's reasoning against tsarist authority.⁵⁰ When fighting the leader of the Minsk kehile, which wanted to cooperate with the reactionary Belorussian Rada, she reminded them of the saying from Psalms: 'Blessed is he ... who sits not in the company of scoffers'.⁵¹

In her articles and speeches, Esther popularised the positions which the Bund had formulated in the first issue of *Der veker*, published in Vilna at the end of 1905: "Our principles are the principles of the international Social-Democracy, our programme is the programme of the General Jewish Labour Bund in Lite, Poland and Russia ("the Bund").⁵² Our goal is to support the development of the class consciousness of the Jewish proletariat."

In keeping with these positions, Esther strove to reveal the class contradictions which govern Jewish life, and to demolish the illusion of the unity of the Jewish people. She

⁴⁸ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 81, 26 May 1965.

⁴⁹ Aron Vaynshteyn (Rakhmiel or Yerakhmiel), teacher, member of the Bund CC from 1917, senior communist official in Belorussia, arrested after speaking publicly in support of Esther after her arrest (1877-1938); see Grigory Aronson, *Di yidishe problem in sovet-rusland: Sakhakln un oysfirn*, Farlag "Veker", New York, 1944, 152ff; Yitskhok Kharlash, 'Arn "Rakhmiel" Vaynshteyn,' *Yiddish Leksikon*, 20 May 2016.

⁵⁰ Falkovich's reference: *Der veker*, 1 Aug. 1917.

⁵¹ Quotation from Psalms 1:1. Falkovich's reference: *Der veker*, 11 Oct. 1917. Ellipsis in original.

⁵² Lite – Yiddish name for the northwestern area of the Russian Empire, incorporating Lithuania and part of Belorussia.

fought passionately against Zionism and called upon the masses to go hand in hand with workers of other nations.

Contradictions and errors

At the same time, however, in her work and in her views, both before the revolution and in the first years of the revolution, Esther often hindered the Jewish masses from going with their “Christian” friends and thus in fact supported the policy which she herself fought against, the policy of *klal yisroel*.⁵³

This contradiction lay in one of the primary Bundist demands, national-cultural autonomy, whereby each nation would govern its own education affairs independently. This actually meant that education in each land would be governed not by a united international front of all workers but by individual nations which might themselves be governed by religious or bourgeois groups....

From the earliest days of the October Revolution, Esther opposed the policies of the Soviet government.⁵⁴ She expressed this in her speeches and in her editorial work for *Der veker*. Most of the sources she used for obtaining information for the newspaper were then in the hands of antisoviet elements.... In short, a great many newspapers were going to great trouble to discredit the workers’ revolution at that time.⁵⁵ This forced the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets to decide to limit the freedom of the antisoviet press.

That decision perturbed Esther. How is it possible, she wrote in *Der veker* on 8 November 1917, that the ‘highest organ of democracy’ could make such a decision? She was completely opposed to it and ended her article with the words “Long live the free word!”...⁵⁶

Esther also committed these and similar errors later, especially after Minsk and its environs were occupied by the Germans at the end of February 1918 and became further separated from the great revolutionary centres, and the local reaction (in Belorussia and

⁵³ *Klal yisroel* – ‘politics based on the idea of Jewish unity as against the politics of the class struggle’ (*Prophecy and Politics*, xvii).

⁵⁴ The following extracts are from Falkovich, ‘Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,’ *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 82, 27 May 1965.

⁵⁵ See, for example, articles by Maxim Gorky, ‘To the Democracy,’ *Novaya zhizn*, no. 174, 7 (20) Nov. 1917; ‘For the Attention of the Workers,’ *Novaya zhizn*, no. 177, 10 (23) Nov. 1917; and ‘Untimely Thoughts,’ *Novaya zhizn*, no. 89 (304), 1 (14) May 1918, published in English in Maxim Gorky, *Untimely Thoughts: Essays on Revolution, Culture and the Bolsheviks, 1917-1918*, translated and annotated by Herman Ermolaev, Garnstone Press, London, 1970, 85-87, 182-84.

⁵⁶ See ‘Vayter in keyten,’ **198**.

Ukraine) grew in strength.⁵⁷

In the ranks of the revolution

In time, however, Esther began to change her mind and come to her senses. ...at the end of 1918 she, together with a significant part of the Bund, made an about-face towards Soviet power. When Minsk, at the end of 1918, became free from the German occupation and then installed a soviet of workers' and soldiers' deputies with a Bolshevik majority, Esther was entrusted with the administration of the education section of the Minsk gubernia revolutionary committee. In 1919, before Piłsudski's army entered Belorussia, the Minsk communists set up military groups. To teach military knowledge, Esther ... helped to train the groups and actively took part in the military exercises, positioned, because of her height, in the first row of the right flank. In December 1919, Esther (together with "Rakhmiel" Vaynshteyn) took part in the 7th All-Russia Conference of the Soviets. And although she delivered a criticism of the work of the soviets and of Lenin, the attitude of the Bundist delegate to the Soviet administration was already rather warm....⁵⁸

In the ranks of the Communist Party⁵⁹

Esther was in the vanguard of the majority which led the Bund to communism, and from March 1921 she became a member of the Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks). In the first edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, it says that Esther (Frumkina) had been a member of the RCP(b) since 1920.... [This official date derives from the fact that in April 1920,] thanks to its left wing (Vaynshteyn, Esther, Levin and others), the XII general Bund conference in Minsk adopted the programme of the RCP.⁶⁰ In 1920, Esther moved to Moscow. (Before that, she and the children had lived in Gomel' for a little while.) In Moscow, she published a number of issues of *Der veker* and in the summer of 1920 took part in a conference for Jewish cultural activists which she actually organised.⁶¹ She was also a delegate to the III Congress of the Comintern in

⁵⁷ Dov Lipov recalls that Esther wrote a series of articles in *Der veker* expressing her opposition to the dissolution of the Bund, entitled 'Letters to My Friends' (207) .

⁵⁸ Falkovich's reference: *Stenographic Report of the 7th All-Russian Conference*, Moscow, 1920 (Russian).

⁵⁹ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 83, n. d.

⁶⁰ Yankl Levin, Bundist from Gomel', became head of the Yevseksiya in Belorussia, authored *Fun yene yorn* (see **295**) (1882-1938); see Khayim Leyb Fuks, 'Yankl Levin,' *Yiddish Leksikon*, 22 May 2017.

⁶¹ Gennady Estraiikh surveys Yiddish Communist newspapers like the Minsk *Der veker* in 'The Yiddish-Language Communist Press,' *Dark Times, Dire Decisions: Jews and Communism*, edited by Jonathan Frankel and Dan Diner, Oxford UP, 2005, 146-89.

the summer of 1921, and participated in the work of the women's division of the CC of the RCP(b), and of the committee to aid the hungry (1922-23).

In 1921, Esther worked in the Commissariat for National Education and administered the Jewish section of the High Commission for Political Enlightenment, having close contact with N. K. Krupskaya, Lenin's wife, who headed that commission....

In the Central Bureau of the Jewish Sections

From 1921 to 1930, Esther was a member of the Central Bureau of the Jewish Sections in the CC of the RCP(b) and a member of the Central Bureau of the Jewish Sections in the CC of the Communist Youth League. She was also a member of the editorial committee of *Yung-vald*, a periodical for young workers, and she took part in editing the monthly pedagogical journal *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul*.⁶² With M. Litvakov, she edited the first eight-volume edition of Lenin's work in Yiddish.⁶³

During these years, Esther also wrote a lot in Yiddish and in Russian. Often, her articles were unsigned. Everything she wrote was interesting, justifiable and influential. Take, for example, her brochure in Russian, *Spasayte detey [Save the Children]*, which explains the causes for abandonment of children and how to combat it, or the brochure *Doloy ravvinov [Down with the Rabbis]*, which reveals the causes of religiosity among Jews and the struggle that Jewish workers wage against it. Take those two brochures which were published in 1923, and you will see what a brilliant propagandist Esther was.

Esther's great work *Lenin un zayn arbet*

In the spring of 1925, when the controversy had intensified in and around the party about the future path of the revolution, about the possibility of building socialism in one

⁶² Falkovich does not mention Esther's work in this period on *Der emes* [Moscow]. Zalmen Reisen writes that while Esther worked in the editorial committee of this Yiddish-language communist newspaper, she 'published many articles [in it], predominantly on questions of culture and education, the "new way of life", etc' (144). On *Der emes*, see for example David Shneer, 'The History of "The Truth": Soviet Jewish Activists and the Moscow Yiddish Daily Newspaper,' *Yiddish and the Left: Papers of the Third Mendel Friedman International Conference on Yiddish*, edited by Gennady Estraiikh and Mikhail Krutikov, Oxford, 2001, 129-43.

⁶³ Moyshe Litvakov, theorist, journalist, editor of *Der emes* [Moscow] (1875/80-1939); see Mikhail Krutikov, 'Soviet Literary Theory in the Search for a Yiddish Canon: The Case of Moshe Litvakov,' *Yiddish and the Left*, 226-41; Gennady Estraiikh, 'Litvakov, Moyshe,' *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 26 Aug. 2010. The volumes of collected works were published gradually over several years from 1925. References to Esther's work on this project appear in many encyclopedia entries, for example, Moshe Mishkinsky, 'Esther,' *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Keter / Macmillan, New York, 1971; 'Lifschitz, Malkah,' *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, New York, 1942, vol. 7, 58; Ignacy Schipper (I. Sch.), 'Esther,' *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Eschkol-Verlag, Berlin, 1930, col. 801. The latter dates publication to 1922.

country, and there was increased interest in Lenin's teaching, Esther published her work *Lenin un zayn arbet*. (A second edition appeared in 1926)...⁶⁴

The brilliant propagandist⁶⁵

In Moscow, Esther was very busy with verbal propaganda in Yiddish and in Russian. She would often speak to large assemblies and led propagandistic circles. People always listened to her very attentively. She employed interesting facts, and knew how to derive a question from a fact, how to connect the present with the past and both of them with tomorrow. She was very capable of making a topic relevant, showing its importance for the listener, even when it concerned remote or completely foreign material. She liked to illustrate her assertions with events in which she had been involved or at which she was present. This all served to stimulate the listener and enable him to make decisive conclusions.

Esther often spoke very emotionally, with much feeling, being strongly interested in influencing the listener and not letting him be cold or indifferent to what he was hearing. She spoke to listeners as though to equals, showing respect for them, and they would feel this, and esteem and relate to Esther with great respect.

Rector of CUNMW

In the years 1921 to 1936, Esther headed the Communist University of the National Minorities of the West ("the Mayrevke").⁶⁶ At first she was a lecturer and administered a department. In 1925, after the death of the rector, the well-known communist and activist of the international labour movement, Julian Marchlewski (Karski), she was appointed to his position. From then on, the university was named after J. Marchlewski... The entire work of the "Little International" (as the Mayrevke was once called in a journal) was administered by Esther with erudition and tact. She would often remind her colleagues that the activists trained by the university would end up working in extremely difficult circumstances. Staff must understand that they should be ideologically loyal party activists, conscious revolutionaries, real, convinced

⁶⁴ Grigory Aronson writes that when Esther fell out of official favour, her books about Lenin were confiscated by the government along with her other Soviet-era publications (*Di yidische problem*, 157).

⁶⁵ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebns-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], copy unnumbered (no. 84?), n. d.

⁶⁶ The Communist University of the National Minorities of the West [CUNMW, Rn. KUNMZ, Ysh. Mayrevke or Mayrev-universitet] – party university, organised in linguistic sectors, where Esther was a senior administrator throughout its existence (1921-36). Personal accounts of this institution include Smoliar, *Vu bistu*; Arn Yerusalimsky, 'Di "mayrevke" – Undzer "kleyninker internatsyonal"...,' *Sovetish heymland*, no. 2, 1974, 168-73. See also Julia Köstenberger, 'Die Geschichte der "Kommunistischen Universität der nationalen Minderheiten des Westens"

internationalists. Students must not only be armed with knowledge but also taught correct Marxist thinking. In teaching, it is insufficient to pursue new facts and phenomena, the causes of facts and the laws of phenomena must also be revealed. Around a thousand undergraduate and postgraduate students studied at the university. Esther knew every one of them, how he lived, what he dreamt about, and what difficulties he had (many had families to look after). Esther knew what kind of party assignment could be entrusted to a student, what kind of work could be recommended to him after graduation. For the students, she was not only an educator and teacher but also a friend and a mother. And among themselves, the students would call her just that, “Mama”....

Esther was very capable of reprimanding a student or an employee if they deserved it. However, she did it courteously, delicately, so as not to offend the person or discourage him. She knew the power of a word and tried to use her words positively, so that the person would become braver, better and want to correct their errors and be in a position to do so.

Her work at the university required Esther to have proficiency in many questions, not only academic ones but also with the correct politics. She had to be very familiar with what was taking place in the various countries and communist parties that had representatives studying at the Mayrevke. She had to help students make sense of a range of local ideological and political disputes. She had to be closely connected with the CC of the party, with a number of sections of the Comintern, and so on. In brief, she was overloaded with work. She was only capable of fulfilling her numerous duties thanks to her extraordinary work capacity. At a meeting or a gathering she was always doing two jobs: writing something and simultaneously listening very attentively to what was being said.

Director of the Institute for Foreign Languages⁶⁷

In May 1936, the Mayrevke was closed. This was an unexpected blow for Esther. She had managed and developed that institution and invested so much of her heart and mind in it. And suddenly, it was gone. In the building that had housed the Mayrevke, the Institute for Foreign Languages was installed. Esther was appointed director of that very

(KUNMZ) in Moskau 1921-1936,' *Jahrbuch für historische Kommunismusforschung 2000/2001*, edited by Hermann Weber et al, Aufbau Verlag, 248-303.

⁶⁷ The following extracts are from Falkovich, 'Esther: Der lebens-veg fun der groyser revolutsyonerin,' *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], no. 85, 2 June 1965.

important institute. She was not out of work for one day, but it was not a forge for party cadres as the Mayrevke had been.

Of course, Esther was a suitable person for the language institute too. She actively mastered five or six languages, understood questions of methodology, and had experience in teaching languages. In addition, she possessed great administrative competence. The staff of the institute appreciated their new director, but the butcher's knife of those horrible years also targeted Esther. At the end of 1937, she was removed from the job, and in January 1938, she was arrested.

The last bitter years of her life

She experienced several different prisons, tormented by swollen feet and diabetes. She suffered not only physically but also morally. She had sacrificed her life for the revolution and for socialism....

In August 1940, sixty year-old Esther was sentenced to eight years in a camp in Karaganda. There she was excused from physical work. She was weak and her diabetes tormented her. However, she couldn't sit without working and would often come into the camp office to do the accounts of the camp administration. She had a hard life. She seldom received packages....

However, Esther, as we know, was not the type of person to despair. From time to time in the camp, she would be stopped by women who remembered her, who had heard about her, and would shake her hand and sometimes help with something. Someone would remind her of a speech which she had given in Minsk, in Moscow, or in Berlin. Also, nature around her gave her motivation and hope.... She wrote to the appropriate offices, demanding that her case be reviewed, that they repeal the false, groundless judgement. Finally she prevailed somewhat, obtaining a permit to leave the camp on the grounds of invalidity. (A complete rehabilitation took place only in July 1956.) However, it was already too late. The diabetes had increasingly weakened her, she had had no insulin, and on 8 June 1943 she died....'



Additional biographical information about Esther can be found in memoirs,⁶⁸ popular articles⁶⁹ and encyclopedia entries⁷⁰ written by her contemporaries, and some more recent popular articles⁷¹ and encyclopedia entries⁷² contribute new information and perspectives despite relying heavily on their predecessors. Scholarly books and articles about Russian Jewish history during the period of her activity tend to mention her,⁷³ and there are published records of her contributions to conferences,⁷⁴ meetings and other events, plus other useful notices and documents.⁷⁵ J. S. Hertz's encyclopedia of Bund activists, *Doyres bundistn*, does not devote a separate entry to her, but she is mentioned in other entries.⁷⁶ Biographical information from many of these sources was incorporated into a Yiddish-language novel about Esther's life and career, which was published in Tel Aviv in 1982.⁷⁷

⁶⁸ For example, those of Bund figures Abraham Valt (Liesin), Vladimir Medem and Raphael Abramovich, and of acquaintances from the Soviet period like Aino Kuusinen, Hersz Smoliar and Boris Bogen. Recollections of Esther also appear in the memorial anthology *Minsk, ir va'em*, such as the account by Rebbetzin Raḥel Ḥadash.

⁶⁹ For example Bentsion Katz's 'Di sore-bas-toyvim fun der rusishe revolutsye: Tsum shlus fun esther frumkins karyere' (*Der Morgen Zhurnal / Jewish Morning Journal* [New York], 13 Feb. 1931); and Mayrevke student Leopold Trepper's 1975 article 'Ha-tizmoret ha-adomah she-li' (*Yediot Aḥronot* [Tel Aviv], 25 July 1975, 5-7).

⁷⁰ For example, Z. Reisen, 'Esther'; 'Frumkina (psevd. Esther), Mariya Yakovlevna,' *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, Gosudarstvennyy Institut "Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya", vol. 59, 1935, col. 260.

⁷¹ For example, Y. Gordin, 'Esther frumkin – a herlekht geshtalt' [Esther Frumkin: A Heroic Figure], *Yidishe shriftn* [Warsaw], no. 1 (242), Jan. 1968, 9.

⁷² For example, Y. Kharlash, 'Esther (frumkin),' *Niger and Shatzky, Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, vol. 1, 141-43; 'Frumkina,' *The Encyclopedia of Russian Jewry*, edited by Herman Branover, Biographies A-I, 1988, 363-64; 'Frumkina, Mariya Yakovlevna,' *Kratkaya yevreyskaya entsiklopediya*, edited by Yitzhak Oren (Nadel) et al, Society for Research on Jewish Communities / Hebrew U of Jerusalem, 1999, col. 460-61; Rochelle Goldberg Ruthchild, 'Frumkin, Esther,' *Biographical Dictionary of Women's Movements*, 140-42; Tamar Kaplan Appel, 'Esther Frumkin,' *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, 1 Mar. 2009, *Jewish Women's Archive*, jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/Frumkin-Esther; Yu. A. Gorbunov, 'Frumkina, Malka Yankelevna,' Encyclopedia entries containing atypical details include 'Lifschitz, Malkah,' *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, (was exiled to Siberia during WW1 until 1917; was a leading Jewish Communist in 1942); 'Frumkina, Maria,' *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, by Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch, Hoover Institution, Stanford U, 1986, 128-29 (worked as a writer of fiction under the name Malka Lifschitz); 'Esther,' *New Standard Jewish Encyclopaedia*, Facts on File, New York, 1992, 313 (died in prison in 1937); and Devra Kay, 'Esther,' *Routledge Encyclopedia*, (married Rabbi Vibnin and wrote as Esther Vibnin-Frumkin).

⁷³ Notably, many publications by Gennady Estraihk include information about Esther deriving from Russian archival materials. A significant academic work containing references to Esther is the PhD thesis by Vladimir Levin ('Ha-politikah ha-yehudit ba-imperiyah ha-rusit ba-idan ha-re'akziyah, 1907-1914,' PhD dissertation, Hebrew U of Jerusalem, 2007; 2016 book cited above).

⁷⁴ Conferences include the Third Congress of the Galician Jewish Social-Democratic Party (reported in *Der sotsyal-demokrat* [Krakow], 23 Oct. 1908, 1); the Second Congress of the Communist International (Fifth Session, 28 July 1920, see www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/2nd-congress/ch05.htm#v1-p155); the Ershter alfarbandisher idisher kultur-tsuzamenfor [First All-Union Jewish Cultural Conference], 25 November to 2 December 1924 (reported in *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 8, Dec. 1924, passim); and the Sixth All-Union Conference of the Jewish Sections in December 1926 (reported in *Alfarbandishe baratung fun di idishe sektsyes fun der AIKP(b)*, as qtd. in Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Jews in the Soviet Union*, Arno Press, 1972, 122-26).

⁷⁵ Among the vast quantity of such material are the articles and notices in *Der veker* [Minsk] which reveal the plan to establish a Jewish National [Folks] University named after Bronisław Grosser, in which Esther was to lecture on the national question (no. 130, 19 Nov. 1917, 1) and how she promoted her candidacy for the elections to the Constituent Assembly (no. 136, 26 Nov. 1917, 1).

⁷⁶ Examples from Volume 1 of *Doyres bundistn*: Khaim Kazdan, 'Yekutiel Portney (Noyekh),' 91; Grigory Aronson, 'Isay Eyzenshtat,' 150, 152; J. S. Hertz, 'Avraml Himelshsteyn,' 405.

⁷⁷ Lili Berger, *Nisht farendikte bletlekh [Unfinished Pages]*, Yisroel-Bukh, Tel Aviv, 1982. This book is discussed in Dorothee Van Tendeloo, 'Paper Treasures: An Introduction to the Life and Work of the Yiddish Novelist, Literary Critic and Essayist Lili Berger (1916-1996),' Masters thesis, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, Sept. 2000; and Sandra Chiritescu, "'Too Bad Malkah Isn't a Boy": The Life of Communist Esther Frumkin in Lili Berger's *Nisht Farendikte Bletlekh* (Unfinished Pages),' Association for Jewish Studies 48th Annual Conference, 18-21 Dec. 2016, San Diego, CA, Conference Presentation.

Methodology

This project was originally conceived as a biographical study of Esther's life, career and writings, but it became apparent that there was a greater need for an annotated bibliography of her publications.⁷⁸

The bibliography lists what can be assumed to be the majority of the material Esther wrote expressly for publication.⁷⁹ This material includes articles, essays, books, translations, songs and poetry. Subsequent editions and independent reprints are listed separately. While, for reasons including limited availability of and access to source material, it cannot be a complete list of works even in its narrowed category, it is arguably representative.⁸⁰

Similarly, while not all items are subject to more than a bibliographic listing, those that are examined and quoted provide a representative picture of the range of concerns and consistent style within the body of Esther's written output. The quantity of description is not uniform for each item, more description is offered of items containing Esther's personal perspectives and theoretical arguments. The two longest works, *Lenin un zayn arbet* (325) and *Oktyabr-revolutsye* (342), are not reviewed thoroughly.

The items are listed in chronological order, except *Tsu der frage vegen der yudisher folks-shul* (147) is listed slightly later in order to keep the main articles on language equality and national education together.

⁷⁸ A focus on Esther's publications is the approach of my article 'Esther in Her Own Yiddish Words,' *Melbourne Chronicle*, no. 72, Kadimah Centenary Edition, 2012, 76-78. This approach concurs with Nurit Orchan's 2013 comment about the article on Esther in the *Jewish Women's Archive* online encyclopedia: 'A full picture of Frumkin's nationalistic ideology cannot be obtained without reading some of her essays in Yiddish....'

⁷⁹ Handwritten material such as letters and postcards, publications edited but not written by Esther, and speeches or lectures are excluded. Esther is purported to have been a 'fiery orator' (Gitelman 60, 349n67) who gave many public presentations but information about only a few of these survives. One speech, 'On the History of the German Labour Movement,' was given in 1900 at an event commemorating the death of Wilhelm Liebknecht (Falkovich, no. 79 (3193), 22 May 1965). Elias Schulman mentions a speech given in Minsk in July 1917 concerning new secular schools (*A History of Jewish Education in the Soviet Union*, Ktav / Brandeis U, New York, 1971, 37-38). Several addresses by Esther are mentioned in *Di geshikhte fun bund*. Esther's address to the Kombund conference in 1921 is recalled as a 'masterpiece' delivered by a very talented orator (Hershl Metalowiec, *A veg in lebn: Fragmentn fun an oytobyografye*, Y. L. Peretz Farlag, Tel Aviv, 1982, vol. 2, 433). Elissa Bemporad mentions a lecture in 1922 on communist ethics, for the Jewish teachers' college in Minsk (*Becoming Soviet Jews*, 98). A notice in *Der emes* indicates that Esther spoke at an evening meeting for Jewish communists on the central party school on 9 March 1922 (no. 45, 8 Mar. 1922, 4). Zvi Gitelman mentions a speech at KUNMZ in 1926, in which Esther spoke warmly of Hebrew (279n131). A lecture was reported in the Moscow *Eynikayt* in an article entitled 'Tsveyter miting fun forshteyer funem yidishn folk' (no. 1, 7 July 1942, acc. IYP). Hersz Smoliar recalls listening to one of Esther's powerful and moving speeches (50-53). Leyb Levita would try to attend all of her lectures which, he recalls, were brilliant even if their content was implausible ('Pirkei minsk,' *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 2, 113).

Producing this dissertation involved work with source material which amounted to collecting, reading (and, where necessary, deciphering), deciding about attribution, annotating, translating, enumerating, and cross-referencing.

Collecting materials relied on library and archival holdings in the United States, Israel, Russia, Belarus, and online digitised resources. The Index to Yiddish Periodicals of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem was a crucial tool, as were the online catalogues of institutions with holdings of Esther's work. In some cases the catalogues themselves were a source of bibliographic information.

Information for the biographical notes came mostly from web sources. Prominent among these was Russian *Wikipedia*'s 'Spisok chlenov Gosudarstvennoy dumy Rossiyskoy imperii [List of Members of the State Duma of the Russian Empire]'.⁸¹ Other sources included *The Encyclopedia of Russian Jewry*.⁸²

Among obstacles to attribution of Esther's publications are that many items are anonymous or not recognisably signed, and some other authors use similar signatures.⁸³ This has led to some uncertain or apparently incorrect attributions in secondary sources. One area of uncertainty concerns articles relating to news from Poland or published in Poland and signed 'Alef-R' or 'Alef. R.', both of which signatures appear in the by-line of many of Esther's articles.⁸⁴ Because articles with those signatures continued to appear in Polish publications after the October Revolution, their author can be assumed to have been a writer based in Poland.⁸⁵ Therefore, some questionable pre-revolutionary articles relating to Poland are excluded from this bibliography. Some less questionable ones are included. Another questionable attribution is *Aynzame menshen*, the Yiddish translation by M. Frumkin of Gerhart Hauptmann's play *Einsame menschen [Lonely People]*, attributed to 'Malke (Lifshitz) Frumkin' in the NYPL catalogue. More

⁸⁰ It is particularly regrettable that more information could not be included on articles in *Der veker* [Minsk], *Yung-vald* and *Mayrevnik*, or any details of the antireligious articles in *Komunistishe fon* mentioned by Zvi Gitelman (31In213). It should also be noted that none of the periodicals consulted were available in a complete collection.

⁸¹ 'Spisok chlenov Gosudarstvennoy dumy Rossiyskoy imperii,' *Vikipediya*, ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Список_членов_Государственной_думы_Российской_империи.

⁸² *The Encyclopedia of Russian Jewry*, edited by Herman Branover, Biographies A-I, Jason Aronson, 1988.

⁸³ Falkovich mentions that many of Esther's articles were anonymous (no. 83, n. d.). As an example, Esther's name appears in the list of contributors to the Vilna newspaper *Der veker* from its first issue on 25 December 1905 (3 Jan. 1906), but no articles in it have been attributed to her. The newspaper appeared in 33 issues (*Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 437; Marten-Finnis 155; see holdings on www.epaveldas.lt) before production ceased in February 1906. Falkovich only mentions it in passing, and out of chronological order (no. 81).

⁸⁴ Alef – this Hebrew letter must be accompanied by a vowel symbol in order to carry a vowel sound. In this dissertation, it is rendered as 'Alef' if used as an initial without an accompanying vowel. The Polish articles discussed here appeared in the Vilna *Folks-tsaytung*, for example.

certainly incorrect are attributions to ‘Esther Frumkin’, in the NLI catalogue, of translations such as the Yiddish text of *Di blinde* by Alef. Frumkin, published in 1906, from Maurice Maeterlinck’s play *Les Aveugles [The Blind]*. These translations were more probably by Abraham Frumkin, who made many literary translations into Yiddish in London around that time.⁸⁶

In this thesis, review of the content of the publications pays particular attention to the arguments therein and their means of expression, which include use of humour, emotionalism and appropriate cultural references.

The translation work for this project is proposed as an academic activity in itself, particularly since it utilised language skills acquired academically.

The précis and translations in this thesis employ some Yiddish words that are fairly commonly known by Jewish English-speakers. The text uses New Zealand English spelling, except when naming or quoting from sources that use American English spelling. Spelling of personal names follows either modern English convention or the Latin alphabet spelling in the person’s own publications. But, in relation to the Czernowitz Yiddish Conference, Emanuel S. Goldsmith’s *Modern Yiddish Culture* is the model for the spelling of names and places. Personal and place names appearing in the middle of publication titles are left uncapitalised in transliteration from Yiddish. In cases where a copy of the item was not available for viewing, it has been necessary to rely on the spelling in the reference to the item, whether in a library catalogue or in another publication.⁸⁷

Romanisation of Yiddish follows the YIVO system, but orthography replicates that of the source text where available.⁸⁸ Transliteration of Hebrew-origin words used in

⁸⁵ In places, the name Meir-Alter Gantser is suggested in the IYP as a possible author.

⁸⁶ In addition to translation, Abraham (Avrom) Frumkin (1872-1946) worked on Yiddish-language anarchist newspapers, as alluded to in the title of his memoirs, *In friling fun yidishn sotsyalizm: Zikhroynes fun a zhurnalist [In the Springtime of Jewish Socialism: Memoirs of a Journalist]*. See details of some incorrect or questionable attributions of poetry below.

⁸⁷ Because my transliteration accords with the spelling on the item, it often differs from the spelling in catalogue listings. For example, the article entitled ‘Kegn der oykh-mir farzikherung’ in IYP is listed as ‘Gegen der oykh-mir ferzikherung’ here.

⁸⁸ There was no international standard for transliteration of Yiddish at the time when the items in this bibliography were published, though many of the publications from the Soviet period were produced in accordance with the Soviet language laws relating to Yiddish orthography. Today, the YIVO Unified system, first published in 1937, is widely used internationally as a standard for transliteration of Yiddish.

Yiddish derives from U. Weinreich's *Modern English-Yiddish Yiddish-English Dictionary* or S. Beinfeld and H. Bochner's *Comprehensive Yiddish-English Dictionary*.

Romanisation of Russian and Belarusian follows the BGN/PCGN system, although initial [e] is rendered as [ye].

Romanisation of Hebrew uses the *Encyclopedia Judaica* General transliteration system.

Romanisation of placenames conforms to the US National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency database at www.geonames.nga.mil/namesgaz.

For translation, several models were used for appropriate rendering of terminology. In annotations relating to the national question, Ephraim Nimni's *National Cultural Autonomy and its Contemporary Critics*, including the translation by Joseph O'Donnell of Karl Renner's *State and Nation* (1899), provided some terminology; some terms in the Duma reportage are from Stephen F. Williams, *The Reformer: How One Liberal Fought to Preempt the Russian Revolution*; some translations of Lenin's *Collected Works* in the Marxists Internet Archive at marxists.org were consulted as a standard for terminology and conventional English titles in relation to works by Lenin; and some definitions of terms derive from Zvi Gitelman's *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics* and the glossary of Jonathan Frankel's *Prophecy and Politics*.⁸⁹

The words 'nation' and 'national' are used in the same sense as their cognates in, for example, Russian, that is, not in relation to a country but to a national or ethnic group. So, 'national education' is culturally specific education tailored to a particular national or ethnic group.

Where dates are followed by a second date in parentheses, such as '17 August (30) 1908', this reflects the different dating systems then in use within and outside Russia, and also before and after the Russian system was brought in line with that of its neighbours, following which the two Russian systems were called Old Style (OS) and

⁸⁹ Ephraim Nimni, editor, *National Cultural Autonomy and its Contemporary Critics*, Routledge, 2005. Stephen F. Williams, *The Reformer: How One Liberal Fought to Preempt the Russian Revolution*, Encounter Books, 2017.

New Style (NS).⁹⁰ Most of the items in this bibliography print the Russian/OS date first followed by the outside Russia/NS date in parentheses, but this is reversed in places.

Referencing and general style follows MLA, 8th ed., with some exceptions which are maintained consistently.⁹¹

Bibliographic conclusions

The scope of this project could not extend to a thorough analysis of the materials listed in the bibliography, but it is possible to make some conclusions based on an overview of the bibliographic record presented here for the first time.

Among Yiddish writers, Esther belongs firmly in the camp of the socialists. The genre of her publications can be categorised as popular political or propagandistic literature. A value of this collection of written work is the evidence it provides of how the changing political ideas of Russia's principal revolutionary period were transmitted to the Jewish masses. Educational, or propagandistic, motives are visible in all but a handful of these publications, in accordance with Susanne Marten-Finnis's observations about the typically political purpose of the modern Jewish periodicals she studied.⁹² They reveal indirectly that Esther always saw herself as an educator, at classroom and mass levels.

Esther's publications are also a direct source of information about the writer herself, an individual who was prominent as much for her writing as for her work as a responsible, public, politicocultural activist. They chart some of her involvement in events and organisations, and her travels. Due to her consistently personal style, which keeps the author/narrator never far from the foreground, her publications serve as an incomplete political diary of the period they cover. This first-hand account brings history to life for modern readers.

⁹⁰ From 17 February (1 March) 1900, the difference between the two systems was thirteen days. Essentially, when it was 17 August in Russia, it was 30 August in countries like Germany or Poland. Only the first item in this bibliography was published before 17 February (1 March) 1900, when a difference of twelve days was still in effect.

⁹¹ For example, footnotes are preferred to in-text referencing, single instead of double quotation marks are used for titles and quotations, square brackets are used with translations of titles, and in the main text quoted extracts are not indented nor the author's name inverted.

⁹² See Marten-Finnis 19-20, 42, etc.

Esther's body of publications displays a great devotion to Yiddish.⁹³ This can be seen in the context of her loyalty to the Bund's programme and later to the national positions of the RCP and can largely be attributed to the contemporary value of Yiddish as a vehicle for mass political propaganda and a social factor which could be employed to support ideology.⁹⁴ Many contemporary political and literary writers in Eastern Europe found that their writing would reach a mass Jewish audience most effectively if it was in Yiddish. Bundist claims of the dominance of Yiddish over Hebrew as the Jewish national language supported efforts to diminish religiosity among Jews and to raise the Yiddish-speaking masses to ideological dominance over the Jewish bourgeoisie. Without religion in their lives, Yiddish would bond Jews not only as a distinct ethnic group but also as a nation, an entity entitled to national rights. In the 1920s, for the Yevsektsiya, Yiddish was purely a political tool.⁹⁵ But it is clear that Esther saw value in Yiddish per se. As she wrote in 1907, Yiddish was the language of 'the masses at the moment of their awakening'.⁹⁶ Its future was assured since it had successfully survived 'the moment when the masses appeared on the historical scene as an active power' and its use will even increase because an historical process will remove the 'language wall' separating the Jewish intelligentsia and masses and instigate struggle for Yiddish schooling.⁹⁷ Esther also wrote of a personal attachment to Yiddish commencing in her youth.⁹⁸

The volume of her output demonstrates that Esther indeed possessed the personal qualities remarked upon by the memoirists who remember her as very 'talented and energetic' with 'vast abilities', 'one of the most capable and clever' young women in Minsk, 'the most capable woman in the movement', 'a talented woman ... an activist

⁹³ In Esther's publications, readers can follow a changing approach to writing Yiddish in conformity with the changing practices of the day, from the early heavy use of German words, to adherence to the contemporary rules of Soviet Yiddish.

⁹⁴ An explanation in one of Esther's articles supports this perspective. To the question of whether cultural activity is suitable work for a political party, she answers that the party finds only indirect merit in this work, it strives to create the necessary political and social conditions for the national culture's natural development but circumstances dictate that this task must be extended in order to gain influence in cultural institutions and use that influence to struggle for national rights, to promote the party's national demands, and to maintain contact with the masses. ('Glaykhberekhigung fun shprakhen,' [continuation], 1910, 26, **145**.) Vladimir Levin sites cultural efforts such as the Bund's struggle for rights for Yiddish against the background of the period of governmental reaction (1907-14) during which socialist organisations were particularly involved with "legal opportunities" ('The Jewish Socialist Parties in Russia in the Period of Reaction,' *The Revolution of 1905 and Russia's Jews*, edited by Stefani Hoffman and Ezra Mendelsohn, U of Pennsylvania P, 2008, 115).

⁹⁵ Gitelman 278n129. Yevsektsiya – common name for the Central Bureau of the Jewish Sections of the RCP.

⁹⁶ 'Hot zhargon a tsukunft?' *Der tsayt-gayst*, **129**.

⁹⁷ 'the moment when the masses appeared' (ibid.); use will increase with removal of 'language wall' ('Vegen natsyonaler ertsihung,' **139**).

⁹⁸ See her reminiscences in 'Avraham Valt (Liesin),' **212**. Naomi Shepherd writes that Esther's essential political philosophy, undercut by her love for Yiddish, was the transformation of this 'women's language' to a national language (157).

with uncommon energy'.⁹⁹ For example, her many articles for the Vilna *Folks-tsaytung* were clearly written by a very committed, capable and energetic person, since they were printed almost daily over the course of several months, and some are very long.

Esther's passion for the arguments she proposes is clearly perceptible. Emotions in her writing include soaring indignation and enthusiasm. Sarcasm, irony, derision, sympathy and poetic qualities are also employed. The lyricality and emotionality in her writing can be reconciled with Raphael Abramovich's recollection that 'Her boiling temperament did not allow her to sit still for a moment. When she spoke it was with her eyes, with her hands, with her whole face, with her entire body ... some considered her hysterical ... [but this was correct only in the sense that] when she followed a certain line she was always too extreme....'¹⁰⁰ At the same time, her intelligence is discernible from the close familiarity she displays with the issues she discusses, with a wide range of literary sources and with international current and historical events.¹⁰¹ For Esther, the Bund seemed to represent a world of opportunity for intellectual debate as well as for leadership. For all that she writes about struggle and standing proudly at demonstrations, her Bund is largely an intellectual milieu, not the Bund of the streets like, for example, the Polish Bund experience of Bernard Goldstein or of her own sister Gite, the doctor, who smuggled 'literature or arms' for the Bund.¹⁰²

It is possible to make an assessment of Esther's abilities as a writer.¹⁰³ Reading her publications validates Elye Falkovich's comments about her abilities as a 'brilliant propagandist' who 'wrote well, clearly, simply and often very lyrically'. Her clarity of style is consistent throughout her body of work. The individual pieces of writing are well crafted. However, comprehension is occasionally impeded by a convoluted argument, and more often by the precedence of commentary over explanation of subject

⁹⁹ 'talented and energetic' with 'vast abilities' (Haim Yankel Helfand (A. Litvak), *Geklibene shriften*, Bildungskomitet fun arbeter ring, New York, 1945, 195); 'one of the most capable and clever' young women in Minsk (Abraham Valt (Liesin), *Geklibene verk: Zikhroynes un bilder*, Congress for Jewish Culture / CYCO-Bikher Farlag, New York, 1954, 277); 'the most capable woman in the movement' (Gina Medem, *A lebensveg*, Gina Medem Book Committee, New York, 1950, 185); 'a talented woman ... an activist with uncommon energy' (Julian Marchlewski's wife, qtd. in Gitelman 349n67).

¹⁰⁰ Raphael Abramovich, *In tsvey revolutsyes*, vol. 2, 143-44, qtd. in Gitelman 311.

¹⁰¹ As Abramovich put it, 'She had masculine comprehension, good and clear logic, and the ability to grasp a new thought' (ibid).

¹⁰² On Bernard Goldstein, see his *Twenty Years with the Jewish Labor Bund: A Memoir of Interwar Poland*, translated and edited by Marvin S. Zuckerman, Purdue UP, 2016. Jack Jacobs mentions Gite's smuggling activity, in *Bundist Counterculture in Interwar Poland* (Syracuse UP, 2009, 83-84) and 'Bund,' *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*, 1 Mar. 2009, *Jewish Women's Archive*, jwa.org/encyclopedia/article/bund.

¹⁰³ These comments about writing quality only relate to Esther's prose.

matter in her journalism.¹⁰⁴ And, as can be expected, the necessary clarity and the political purpose of the writing hamper its literary quality.

Unexpectedly, poetry constitutes a recognisable minor theme among publications attributed to Esther. During the Czernowitz Conference, she surprised Abraham Reisen with her praise for the poetry of Sholem Asch.¹⁰⁵ Her own connection to poetry includes the original poem signed A. Katsenelenbogen in the *Vilna Folks-tsaytung* (47); the translation from Nekrasov in *Tsu der frage vegem der yudisher folks-shul* (Section I, third part, 147); her expressed admiration for the poems of Liesin and Peretz (212); two poems in New York magazines attributed to her in the IYP ('Fun a kholem,' 1922; 'Shney,' 1923); her song lyrics in *Yung-vald* in 1924 (296); and her translation of the marching song of the brave comrades (334).¹⁰⁶ This pattern hints at a possibility that the 1935 translation by M. Lifshits, *A yingele farkert*, of a small collection of poem-stories for children by the Russian writer Agnia Barto, and the poetry in Russian by Maria Frumkina published in Vilna newspapers in the early 1930s might also have been Esther's.¹⁰⁷

From the content of Esther's publications, it is possible to reassess some claims made about her. For example, claims that Esther made a 'defence of women's role in preserving cultural traditions in the home' and praised religious rituals such as candle-lighting are not borne out by the items listed here.¹⁰⁸

A remarkable feature of the content of Esther's publications is the drastic change in political direction that accompanied the dissolution of the Russian Bund and Esther's proximate adherence to the RCP. Esther had been part of the faction within the Bund's

¹⁰⁴ Describing the type of propagandistic writing that Esther produced as journalism is supported in *Vilna as a Centre*, where in addition the writers are called 'Yiddish political journalists' (147).

¹⁰⁵ A. Reisen, vol. 3, 326. In addition, Hersz Smoliar recalled Esther reciting a long poem possibly of her own writing at a gathering. Its topic was 'the Yiddish language which will resound proudly in university departments and scientific institutes' (58), foreshadowing the establishment of CUNMW with its designated Yiddish sector.

¹⁰⁶ Attribution of 'Fun a kholem' and 'Shney' to Esther is questionable and they are not included in this bibliography.

¹⁰⁷ Agniya Barto, *A yingele farkert*, Nots'sekter, Melukhe-farlag fun vaysrusland, Minsk, 1935, 20 pages (Yiddish). On poetry by Mariya Frumkina, see *Album de Wilna: Stikhi russkikh poetov mezhoennoy Vil'ny* [*Vilna Album: Poems by Russian Poets of Interwar Vilna*], www.guelman.ru/frei/dictant/Texts/Album.html. These items are not included in this bibliography as there is insufficient evidence for attribution to Esther. An additional attribution of poetry pertains to a book of poems, *Lider* (Buenos Aires, 1920), which is attributed to 'Frumkina, M. (Malka)' in Hollis, the HCL online catalogue, but to Me'ir Frumkin in other catalogues such as NYPL's.

¹⁰⁸ Ruthchild, 'Bringing the Revolution,' 199. See also, for example, 'Bringing the Revolution,' 188; Marten-Finnis, 'Von der Sprache'; Joshua Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews and the Politics of Nationality*, U of Wisconsin P, 2004, 247; Shepherd 160-62; Gitelman 62n114; Henryk Ehrlich, *Der veker* [New York], 27 Dec. 1930, 10; Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich, 'In di yorn fun reaksye,' *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 562. By contrast, David E. Fishman notes Esther's disdain for religious rituals: 'Frumkin scoffed at celebrating the Sabbath and Jewish holidays as part of the children's education, noting that it would be utter hypocrisy for a modern person to bless Sabbath candles' (*Rise*, 103).

CC which eventually decided that the Russian Bund should merge with the RCP, and promoted this position so successfully that the general vote during the Bund's conference of March 1921 favoured it.¹⁰⁹ Her persuasive address was an oratorical 'masterpiece'.¹¹⁰ At the time, Esther wrote that 'Bundism will live and will be triumphant!' (216) but in subsequent publications she wrote, now a communist functionary, with a somewhat neutral attitude to the Bund, before the critical stance appeared in her work in 1922. Historical accounts such as the encyclopedia entries about her tend to mention her involvement in the schism and dissolution of the Russian Bund, indicating the general view about her responsibility for those events. Responses within the Bund follow the same direction. During the conference, Isay Eyzenshtat (Yudin) regretted having to 'part company forever' from old friends like Esther who had promoted the schism.¹¹¹ Henryk Ehrlich wrote in 1930, 'We will not forget her disgraceful articles and speeches about the "Bund"'.¹¹² This perspective is said to have extended into Bundist historiography. Dovid Katz writes, 'One reason some histories of the Bund ignore her is that she, like many others who "landed" in what became the Soviet Union after the revolution, later (around 1920) joined up with Soviet communism, against which international Bundism fought relentlessly....'¹¹³

Esther's reputation as a controversial figure may have originated at the Czernowitz Yiddish Conference.¹¹⁴ Following the Bund's dissolution, that reputation was compounded by her antireligious work with the Yevseksiya. Western commentators, such as Boris Bogen and a reviewer of her book *Doloy ravvinov!*, criticised her sharply for the repressive activity which she saw as beneficial to Soviet Jewry.¹¹⁵ Yet, several memoirists recall that she showed unexpected mercy, in helping to have the Maggid of Minsk released from prison,¹¹⁶ agreeing to extend students' exemption from labour

¹⁰⁹ This process within the Bund is described in detail by Zvi Gitelman, Chapter IV. See also Aryeh Gelbard's *Sofa she-lo ke-thilato: ki-zo shel ha-'bund' ha-rusi*, Ha-makhon le-ḥeker ha-tfutsot, Tel Aviv U, 1995.

¹¹⁰ Metalowiec 433.

¹¹¹ Aronson, 'Eyzenshtat,' 152.

¹¹² Henryk Ehrlich 11.

¹¹³ D. Katz 263. For example, there is no entry dedicated to Esther in Hertz's *Doyres bundistn*. However Jack Jacobs shows that Esther was only one of many former Bundists who do not have a dedicated entry in *Doyres bundistn (Bundist Counterculture, 87n33)*. A somewhat positive view of the dissolution of the Bund is proposed by Aryeh Gelbard, who sees the merger with the RCP as an opportunity for the continuation of the Bund's aims, as realised in such activities as the creation of Yiddish schools (*Sofa*).

¹¹⁴ Regarding the Czernowitz Conference, it is suggested that 'as an ardent Yiddishist she caused endless controversy and bitter feeling that lasted beyond her death' (Devra Kay, 'Esther [Malke Lifshits; Esther Frumkin] (c. 1880-1939?)', *Encyclopedia of Modern Jewish Culture*, edited by G. Abramson, Routledge, Oxford, 2005, vol. 1, 242).

¹¹⁵ Boris Bogen, *Born a Jew*, Macmillan, New York, 1930, 328-29. R., 'I. Frumkina (Esther): "Doloy Ravvinov", Izdatel'stvo "Krasnaya nov"', Moskva, 1923, 'Dos fraye vort [Berlin], 1, Mar. 1923, 33-35.

¹¹⁶ Rebbetzin Raḥel Ḥadash, 'Bayit avi, ha-magid mi-minsk,' *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 515.

drives to yeshive students,¹¹⁷ voting to give back a house of study that had been seized by the Yevseksiya in Vitebsk,¹¹⁸ and enabling some Zionists to leave the Soviet Union for Palestine.¹¹⁹ The writer of the latter account urges readers to remember Esther for the better because of this good deed.¹²⁰ It seems that Esther is predominantly remembered in written accounts with great love, admiration and respect. Her bourgeois origin did not obstruct her acceptance by the masses, who could perceive her complete devotion to her ideals.¹²¹

From Esther's publications, it is possible to make some conclusions about her direct influence and importance.¹²² Secondary references reveal the reach of the material's content beyond the original readership. Some works were published in several editions in Russia, some were reprinted abroad. Her literary work relating to Lenin suggests that she was esteemed as a responsible party activist during part of the Soviet period. It is evident that the projects she worked on increased in volume and level of responsibility as her career continued, until the very final years. Boris Bogen comments on the wide-scale publication of *Doloy ravvinov!* in 'hundreds of thousands' of copies, yet it is widely claimed that Esther's most influential publication was *Tsu der frage vegem der yudisher folks-shul*.¹²³ David E. Fishman observes that Esther was the most prolific of the Bundist writers on Yiddish education, and Jeffrey Shandler pinpoints this prominence to *Tsu der frage*.¹²⁴ It is likely to be this work, and Esther's other writing on equal rights for Yiddish, which were the source of Esther's influence, noted by Dovid Katz, on the Vilna Yiddish publisher Boris Kletskin and the 'major Yiddish scholar of the twentieth century' Max Weinreich.¹²⁵ It is further evidence of the high regard in which she was held and her particular importance in the field of Jewish education that when the first Jewish teachers' college in the USSR was established, in 1921, it was named in honour of Esther.¹²⁶

¹¹⁷ Y. M. Mali, 'Resisei zikhronot,' *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 532. Yeshive – school for study of Jewish religious texts.

¹¹⁸ Gelbard 72.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*

¹²⁰ David Zakai, 'Minsk be-yamei reshit ha-me'ah,' *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 334.

¹²¹ Lipov 207.

¹²² Susanne Marten-Finnis writes about the influence of literary devices from Bundist journalism on the Bolsheviks and communist discourse in general (78, 109-15). This is one of the domains in which Esther had widespread influence as part of a group. Other domains include the antireligious and resettlement work of the Yevseksiya.

¹²³ Bogen 328. Further references concerning the importance of this work are in the bibliography at 147.

¹²⁴ Fishman, *Rise*, 57. Jeffrey Shandler, *Adventures in Yiddishland: Postvernacular Language and Culture*, U of California P, 2006, 67.

¹²⁵ D. Katz 263.

¹²⁶ The achievements of the Vitebsker idisher pedagogisher tekhnikum afn nomen fun kh. ester [Vitebsk Jewish Teachers' College named after Comrade Ester] are outlined in an article in *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 7-8, Tsentraler Felker-Farlag fun FSSR, Nov.-Dec. 1927, 62-65.

Bibliography

First publications, 1900-07

1900

1. M. L., translator. 'Geyne i Galevi: Parallel' [Heine and Halevi: A Comparative Study]. By Natan Samueli. *Knizhki Voskhoda* [St. Petersburg], Landau, Jan. 1900, pp. 3-19 (Russian)

Attributed by Falkovich.¹²⁷ Copy from Slavic Reference Service, UIUC.

This is a translation from a German manuscript of an essay, containing passages of poetry, about the influence of the poetry of Judah Halevi on Heinrich Heine.¹²⁸ It appears in a Jewish intellectual journal about literature and politics.¹²⁹ Falkovich classes it with Esther's 'first serious literary attempts' and mentions that it dates from her student days. The publication of this translation indicates that she was already considered to be a competent linguist and translator. ☞

'I am aware that this closeness between a German poet of the 19th century and a Jewish poet of the 11th century will seem strange to some readers; I am sure that more than one refined lady, for whom the "awkward" name "Rabbi Judah Halevi" may evoke little more than an image of a Jew in a caftan with long sidelocks and a disheveled beard, will smile suspiciously and ironically at the merest suggestion that this same Rabbi Judah Halevi could have written the most ardent, intoxicating love poems, such poems which could scarcely be devised even by a passionate, deeply lovestruck troubadour and, it can be said, no other poet has depicted the charms of a woman with such marvellous power as in the poems of Rabbi Judah Halevi.' (3; par. 2)

1904

¹²⁷ Falkovich, no. 79 (3193), 22 May 1965.

¹²⁸ Judah (Yehuda) Halevi, Spanish Jewish physician, philosopher, and poet (1075-1141). Heinrich Heine, German Jewish-born literary critic and poet (1797-1856).

¹²⁹ Contributors to *Knizhki Voskhoda* included established scholars such as S. M. Dubnow. The journal's use of Russian indicates its adherence to the contemporary Jewish movement to encourage Jews to use Russian and study secular topics. This literary work may have been the nature of Esther's involvement, mentioned by Falkovich, with

2. unnamed, translator. *A agodo vegen flor, agrippa un menakhem ben-yehuda [A Tale about Flor, Agrippa and Menakhem ben Yehuda]*. By Vladimir Korolenko, Di naye biblyotek, Vilna, 1904. 40 pages. (Yiddish)

Attributed to Esther by Zalmen Reisen.¹³⁰ Copy from NYPL.

This is a translation from Russian of Korolenko's *Skazanie o Flore, Agrippa i Menakheme, Syne Yegudy [The Legend of Flor...]*.¹³¹ The original story, which dates to 1886, is 'not just a historic account of the Judean war, but also an answer to Tolstoy's motto of "non-resistance to evil".¹³² According to Korolenko, force cannot be judged as good or bad without knowing the purpose for which it has been used'.¹³³ This work may have been Esther's first book-length publication. ☺

'And in Jerusalem too there arose a great commotion among the peoples. No unity was there among the men, so they made noise and argued. Some said:

Will we have to suffer this slander and blasphemy for long? Do none of you see where Flor is heading, with his bad heart and his lust for gold? He will not stop until he has plundered our temple and, if he does plunder it, this will spur him on to new outrages. The way troops stand around the flag, so stand our people around the temple. And just as the flag soon falls into the hands of the enemy, the troops flee and the enemy very easily murders the fleeing troops, so Flor will also think to himself: "If the people could not defend their temple, then what will they stand up for?" Is this what we want? Do we want the Roman soldiers returning home laden with bounteous plunder and saying to their friends: "Go to the land of Judea, the people there have a lowly soul, a soldier is in no risk of encountering any danger in battle there, only pure pleasures..." (11; par. 3 - 12; par. 1).

1906

3. M. Alef-R. *Di yidishe vahl komiteteten un zeyer klal-yisroel politik [The Jewish Electoral Committees and Their Klal Yisroel Policy]*. No. 66, Di velt, Vilna, Sept. 1906. 16 pages. (Yiddish)

the Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment among the Jews in Russia (Mefitsey haskole), which espoused these principles.

¹³⁰ Z. Reisen 144.

¹³¹ Vladimir Galaktionovich Korolenko, Russian humanitarian, journalist and author (1853-1921). Korolenko's other connections with the Jewish world include his several essays decrying the persecution of Jews, and his active support for Mendel Beilis during his famous ritual murder trial of 1913.

¹³² Count Lev (Leo) Nikolaevich Tolstoy, great Russian writer and moralist (1828-1910).

¹³³ Radha Balasubramanian, 'Vladimir Galaktionovich Korolenko,' *Reference Guide to Russian Literature*, edited by Neil Cornwell, Routledge, 2013, 465-66.

Attributed by J. S. Hertz.¹³⁴ Copy from NLI.

This is a small book. Its context, like that of the following item, is the Bund's electoral campaign for the Second Duma.¹³⁵ Its message is that the concept of klal yisroel is a falsity because there are class divisions among Jews which ensure that wealthy Jews only look after their own interests and neglect those of the poor Jewish working masses, and therefore, election committees made up of Jews from parties other than the Bund will not support workers' interests. The tone of the booklet is scathing – Naomi Shepherd calls it 'a blistering article' – and ultimately revolutionary.¹³⁶ A 'meeting of Jewish urban voters' is portrayed as typical and tiresome.¹³⁷ Arguments for the klal yisroel approach are countered in what Naomi Shepherd calls 'imaginary dialogues'.¹³⁸ The Zionists and Kadets, both political opponents to the Bund, are ridiculous and wrong since, for example, they scorn the revolution.¹³⁹ Representatives of classes, not nations, will sit in the Duma. The Bund maintains that the interests of the Jewish working masses are more closely connected with the interests of the working masses of other nations than with those of other classes within Jewry. A new democratic order will be needed if Jews are to achieve rights, and will lead to freedom for all oppressed nations. Only those who fight for the freedom of the whole country are fighting for the freedom of their own people. Ultimately, workers are the true defenders and supporters of Jewish rights. ☞

'Raising high the banner of struggle, we call all the poor and oppressed to follow us. In the struggle for freedom the masses must follow the organised proletariat. In this struggle the Jewish masses must follow the organised Jewish proletariat, the Bund. And in this struggle, civil, political and national rights will be obtained by all oppressed nations and among them too the Jewish people.' (concluding paragraphs)

4. M. Alef-R. *Ver fertheydigst ambesten di interesen fun folk? [Who Is the Best Defender of Jewish Interests?]*. No. 70, Di velt, Vilna, 1906. 16 pages. (Yiddish)

Attributed by J. S. Hertz.¹⁴⁰ Copy from NLI.

¹³⁴ Hertz, 'Di ershte ruslender revolutsye,' *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 478n246. NLI catalogue concurs.

¹³⁵ Vladimir Levin relates that Esther wrote several pro-Bund election-related booklets for distribution among Jewish voters (322n120).

¹³⁶ Shepherd 154.

¹³⁷ The first part of this scene, par. 1-4, is reproduced in Hebrew by Vladimir Levin (321n109).

¹³⁸ Shepherd 155. The use of dialogue here recalls Benjamin Harshav's argument that this device in the Jewish political journalism of this period originated from the sermons and commentaries in Hebrew exegetical texts (*The Meaning of Yiddish*, Berkeley, 1990, 18-19, qtd. in Marten-Finnis 79-80). This device is also used in the next item.

¹³⁹ On the Zionists' political party, see Simon Rabinovitch, *Jewish Rights, National Rites: Nationalism and Autonomy in Late Imperial and Revolutionary Russia*, Stanford UP, 2014. The Kadets – the centrist political party of the Constitutional Democrats.

¹⁴⁰ Hertz, 'Di ershte ruslender revolutsye,' *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 479n246. NLI catalogue concurs.

This small book argues that the Bund is the best defender of Jewish interests. It contains six sections. In the **first section, Rabi Mordkhay with His Questions** (3-4), the prominent narrator, a committed Bundist revolutionary, dialogues with a shopkeeper of the Pale, who has trouble understanding how Bundists can even call themselves Jews since they are not interested in religion and do not believe in klal yisroel, let alone the Messiah. He does not see how the Bund will eradicate the Jews' troubles. He asks for all the explanations to be put into a book. The present book claims to respond to that request. The **second section, What Does the Proletariat Want?** (4-8), clarifies some of the theoretical bases of the Bund's position. The Bund is the party of the working class, and also of the wider Jewish masses. It strives for socialism, under which there will be no unjust socioeconomic divisions. To fight for this equality, the proletariat needs a truly democratic order in a democratic republic, to ensure that 'the wider masses have the necessary effect on all ideas in the country' and that those who currently occupy the upper strata will not seize control. Lack of democracy leads to internal hatred such as antisemitism, and inequality. The proletariat, which stands on the lowest rung of society, is the best defender of political rights. Within a large country like Russia there are areas of idiosyncratic economic development, lifestyle, and traditions which each need their own fairly elected governments. The proletariat demands full freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of unions and of strikes, all of which, except the last, pertain not just to workers but to the whole nation [folk]. Similarly, arguments for a proportional system of taxation, removal of excise taxes on essential items, and transfer of land to the peasants pertain to the entire Jewish masses. Eradication of the class system will be part of a chain of events which could lead to the end of antisemitism. The proletariat demands a people's militia as in Switzerland, rather than a standing army. Living conditions will improve when the masses control the administration of cities and regions. The proletariat strives for enlightenment, for school education, for the same schools for rich and poor where all children can obtain a free, broad elementary education, 'a broad development', and food and clothing at school. Artisans and shopkeepers must support these demands of the proletariat. The **third section, Our National Demands** (8-11), locates antisemitism in the context of a general 'national hatred' which serves the ruling classes and the forces of reaction. For example, the Black Hundred agitates against both Jews and non-Jewish workers.¹⁴¹ Because Jews have limited access to employment in factories and other industries, and

¹⁴¹ Black Hundred – Russian nationalist and antisemitic movement often associated with pogrom violence. Often called 'Black Hundreds'.

because they are not allowed to speak Yiddish at meetings, they have the highest number of unemployed and are the most oppressed group. The proletariat of all nations fights for national equality. The Social-Democracy demands for every nation the right to self-determination and to develop its cultural skills freely. Workers want education for themselves and their children, and public services, in their mother tongue. Even in a democratic order there will still be inequality. Only national-cultural autonomy, as envisaged by the Bund, will ensure the existence of Jewish schools and opportunity for national development. Under national-cultural autonomy, each nation will govern its own education and culture, with funding provided by the government or directly by 'its members', with legislative power.¹⁴² Jewish workers defend the interests of the wider Jewish masses, 'better than all the klal-yisroel-minded benefactors of the Jewish people'. **Section 4, Our Economic Struggle** (11-12), reiterates that many of the demands of the proletariat in Russia which are based on its most urgent class interests are also demands of the wider, non-proletarian Jewish masses. Yet, the economic struggle can take forms that are detrimental to workers and bosses, due to the current unusual situation which would not occur in a liberated Russia. Essentially, 'we cannot unite under a klal-yisroel banner'. Though we are 'opponents of economic life', we are concerned that the struggle not be waged in conditions of rightslessness and slavery. The **fifth section, Who Is Fighting and How** (12-14), differentiates the Bund from its competitors, such as the Zionists, and argues, in response to the claim that the Bund's actions cause pogroms, that attacks on Jews had been instigated by Plehve before the Bund existed.¹⁴³ Groups like the Zionists, who 'are dragging the people backwards' and will not 'stand with courage against the enemy', only give the people 'empty fantasies' and 'castles in the air', talk about their home as a temporary residence 'in goles' and will not defend the interests of the masses.¹⁴⁴ The **final section, What Has the Bund Done for the Jewish Masses?** (14-16), spells out the Bund's success in building Jewish pride, self-worth, and revolutionary courage, and in organising self-defence which saved lives in Odessa, deterred attackers in Białystok, and which creates an awareness of Jewish revolutionary strength which makes the government unwilling to upset Jews and willing to give them concessions. Ultimately, Jews must vote for a Bund member in the upcoming Duma elections. ☺

'The government hopes to turn the Duma into a blind tool in its hands. With every effort, it is striving to fashion a Black Hundred-dominated popular representation.

¹⁴² The same term is used to denote the proposed governing body, 'the national-cultural autonomy'.

¹⁴³ Vyacheslav von Plehve, director of the imperial police, Minister of the Interior, assassinated (1846-1904).

The people must send to the Duma representatives who will persistently, courageously and boldly uphold the demands of the people.

To stand boldly to the end and fight with determination and courage – this can best be done only by they who must do it, who have no other option.

Such are the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat.

And the wider masses of the people must elect to the Duma the representatives of the fighting proletariat.

And the wider Jewish masses must send to the Duma the representatives of the proletariat, [namely] social-democrats, members of the Bund.’ (concluding paragraphs)

5. Esther. ‘Naye direktiven [New Directives].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 165, 24 Sept. (7 Oct.) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This short newspaper article announces that municipal governors have been ordered to increase their already extensive efforts to quell the current unrest.¹⁴⁵ 🐼

‘The governors and governors-general may feel deeply insulted. For already three quarters of a year they have strained every nerve to arrest and exile people. They have already swapped all suspicious individuals amongst themselves; they have broadly colonised the Narym area and other blessed parts of Siberia.¹⁴⁶ They arrest 1000 people at once for travelling without a ticket, they arrest people for using the words “hooligan” and “Black Hundred-nik”; they compete amongst themselves over the highest number of hanged and shot; they put their utmost energy into supporting the “Russian people”, and organise pogroms large and small...’ (par. 2).

6. Esther. ‘Di feldgerikhten arbayten [Military Field Courts Are in Operation].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 169, 2 Oct. (15) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article uses stirring revolutionary language to decry the installation of a military field court in Łódź and to encourage the strike action protesting the installation of this court.¹⁴⁷ 🐼

¹⁴⁴ Goles [Heb. galut] – Jewish Diaspora, outside the Holy Land.

¹⁴⁵ In this bibliography, newspaper articles are described as short (up to around 200 words), fairly short (around 500 words), medium-length (around 1000 words), fairly long (around 2000 words), and long (around 2500 words and above).

¹⁴⁶ Narym – one of the main places of internal exile for political prisoners in Russia.

¹⁴⁷ The military field courts imposed a harsh justice independently of the regular judicial system. Łódź – city in central Poland, in the period of these articles a major textile-producer and site of economic protest.

‘A military field court is sitting in Łódź! The news has swept through the proletariat of Łódź like an electrical storm. People seem to be asking who will be tried, a revolutionary or not, someone guilty or someone innocent?
The terrible, hellish machine has begun its work in Łódź. Death hovers above the heads of the people...’ (par. 3-5).

7. Esther. ‘Tsvey dokumenten [Two Documents].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 171, 4 Oct. (17) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This short newspaper article discusses two documents which relate to the visit to Russia planned by members of the British parliament but ultimately cancelled. The article considers the differences and similarities of the two documents, which were communications from separate Russian sources to separate English destinations, and ultimately implies that these separate official communications make it unclear who is the actual government of Russia. ☹

‘Two documents have been printed in the newspapers concerning the English deputation, may it rest in peace.

One, according to *Strana*, is a communication from the Russian government via the Russian legation in London to the deputation committee.

The other is a telegram from the Moscow monarchists to the English king.

Their content is the same. They make insinuations that, in Russia, the delegation will be honoured “in the true Russian style”.

But between the two documents there is a difference.’ (par. 1-5)

8. Esther. untitled. *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 173, 6 Oct. (19) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.¹⁴⁸ Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article, consisting of three sections, presents the story of a boy of nineteen who is thrown out of his family home for being a socialist, wanders the streets of a wealthy city looking for somewhere to sleep, is arrested for possessing a revolver and sentenced to three months’ imprisonment. Soon, to his astonishment and to the great amusement of his jailers, instead of being left to serve his sentence and await his release, he is shot by firing squad. The piece is epigraphed by a line deriving from ‘a

¹⁴⁸ The IYP listing calls this item a poem, no doubt because it is comprised of one-sentence paragraphs and therefore has the appearance of a poem.

letter from Łódź’, “He was told that he would be freed”, and this line is also reproduced in the text. ❧

‘And while they buried him, they must have laughed.

Such a good laugh, at such a great game.

Drunk with blood, gorged with human suffering, they make merry.

And in that air of gunpowder, smoke and of blood, their wild laughter must have resounded:

“Freed! Ha ha ha! Freed!” (third section – par. 13-17)

9. Esther. ‘A biterer bisen [A Bitter Morsel].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 181, 16 Oct. (29) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerning the armed forces sympathises with the soldiers who have been ‘poisoned’ to make them commit violence against their own people, and discusses the government’s efforts to keep sedition out of their ranks. Those efforts, the final paragraph boldly declares, will not succeed. ❧

‘Letters from St. Petersburg say that of all the young people who offered themselves for voluntary service (volnoopredelyayushchiesya), only one was accepted. The others were declined on the grounds of “physical” defects.

There is great uncertainty about whether the defects are indeed physical, or rather intellectual and of a certain sort; whether they might not be sick with that modern illness called “sedition”.’ (par. 5-6)

10. Esther. ‘Tsum 17-ten oktober [On 17 October].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 182, 17 Oct. (30) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article marks the first anniversary of the October Manifesto by emotively highlighting the miserable lives and early deaths of children, implying that the Manifesto has brought no improvements.¹⁴⁹ ❧

‘Silent is the night, silent and sad. I stand by the window and think.

I cannot sleep.

¹⁴⁹ October Manifesto – manifesto promising political reforms, issued by Tsar Nicholas II during the revolution of 1905.

Tomorrow is the day when the Russian freedom was born, the day when her first young freedom cry was spilt with blood, suppressed in the smoke of fires, muffled in the thunder of shooting.’ (par. 1-3)

‘Now a few ghosts appear before me.

They are the ghosts of slain children.’ (col. 2, par. 1-2)¹⁵⁰

‘And like far-off, stifled, silver bells their voices ring:

“We died from hunger on our mothers’ thin chests, in a faraway, forgotten village, in the workers’ neighbourhood of a rich and brilliant city.”

“We died from cold, in little shanties, in high garretts, in damp cellars.”

“We were carried off by diseases, diseases of poverty, of hunger, of darkness, of dampness, and of cold.”” (col. 2, par. 4-7)

‘And a thought flares up in my tired head, a thought of their mothers.

What do you do in the terrible night, sisters of mine! Unfortunate sisters of mine.

Do your burning eyes still shed tears?’ (col. 2, par. 15-17)

11. Esther. ‘Oys revolutsyoneren – vayter shehne menshen [Revolutionaries No Longer, Fine Fellows Again].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 183, 18 Oct. (31) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article is divided into three sections. It is a scathing opinion piece about how the new Party of Peaceful Renovation, which had been considered harmful, became acceptable in the eyes of the government.¹⁵¹ This change is one of several recent political events that constitute ‘signs of spring’, that is, positive new developments. ☺

‘Instead of the turbulent name “party”, it gave itself the peaceful, genteel name “society”. Concerning that revolutionary programme, the men “upstairs” decided not to look at it, whatever an overly excitable bureaucrat may scratch out onto paper!

And Stolypin himself asked that they review their statute once more, not with regard to procedure but to the remainder.¹⁵²

And mazltov, the “Peaceful Renovation” went from treyf to kosher.’ (2; par. 5-8)¹⁵³

¹⁵⁰ Column numbers refer to the columns within the article.

¹⁵¹ Party of Peaceful Renovation – liberal breakaway party from the Octobrists, formed in 1906.

¹⁵² Pëtr Arkad’evich Stolypin, Prime Minister and Interior Minister of Russia from 1906-11 (1862-1911). See Abraham Ascher, *P. A. Stolypin: The Search for Stability in Late Imperial Russia*, Stanford UP, 2002. The statute mentioned here would have compelled landowners to give up their land in return for ‘a certain reward’.

12. Esther. 'A brief in redaktsye [A Letter to the Editor].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 184, 19 Oct. (1 Nov.) 1906, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This short newspaper article is printed as a letter amongst local news, telegrams, etc. It sympathetically describes the unfortunate situation of a worker who had been injured in the course of revolutionary struggle and was now in need of prosthetic feet since one foot had been amputated and the other was paralysed. It calls for readers to send funds urgently, care of the newspaper. ☹

'A worker came to see me. On his knees, he had climbed the high, stone steps, up to the third floor.' (par. 1)

'He needs to travel abroad, where feet can be made for him. Then he would be able to learn an easy craft, and he would then be able to live a decent life.

But this requires a lot of money. He must receive help. The help must be fast.' (par. 4-6)

13. Esther. 'Tsadikim [Saintly Men].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 185, 20 Oct. (2 Nov.) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article sarcastically calls some violent thugs 'tsadeks' (tsadikim). Several attacks are described with indignation, after an explanation that tsadeks always receive their reward, after they have passed through a trial. The trials of these 'tsadeks' were the legal processes and detention they underwent following their crimes, and their reward was early release. Prison inmates who remained in detention after the ones in question were released were furious, but they are simply 'Fools!' ☹

'Some other tsadeks... a whole 6 at once.¹⁵⁴ They were "real-Russian" peasants.

One fine morning, the holy fire ignited within them and they organised an attack on 40 peasants. Some they killed, others wounded, and all were savagely beaten.

The 40 peasants were criminals, they were not real-Russians.

But tsadeks must undergo a trial. All six were put in prison.

Together with subversives, campaigners for land rights, strikers and so on, they suffered, the 6 holy, pure, real-Russian souls.' (par. 14-19)

14. Esther. 'Vayter der graf vite [More about Count Witte].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 190, 26 Oct. (8 Nov.) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

¹⁵³ Mazltov – congratulations. Treyf – unacceptable by Jewish dietary law. Kosher – acceptable by Jewish dietary law.

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article questions the newly positive attitude shown by the newspaper *Eko* towards Count Witte.¹⁵⁵ ☹

“‘Never pray for the downfall of a bad nobleman,” the newspaper *Eko*, the former *Vperëd*, has realised, and the same Count Witte against whom it waged a fiery campaign together with the entire press half a year ago is now, for *Eko*, a tsadek who has been unjustifiably persecuted.’ (par. 1)

‘And no doubt we will soon read on the front page of *Eko* in bold black letters:

“Citizens, demand Count Witte for a premier! Long live the liberator of Russia! Long live the hero of Sakhalin and 17 October!” (concluding paragraph)

15. Esther. ‘Vegen kleynshteteldige vehler. Un vegen di gutskeyt fun dvinsker uprave [On Provincial Voters. And on the Goodness of the Dvinsk Administration].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 191, 27 Oct. (9 Nov.) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from NYPL.

This is a fairly short newspaper article. Its **first part** concerns the problem of shtetl residents needing to make long, difficult trips to cities in order to vote, amid obstruction by government agencies and nationalist groups. The solution is to devote more energy to encouraging voters to make the trip. The **second part** concerns news from Dvinsk that police certificates are not required for electoral enrolment there.¹⁵⁶ This may be a trick. To be safe, voters are advised to obtain the certificates or a notarial contract. ☹

‘But against all these obstacles which our electoral system imposes, against all the legal and illegal efforts used by the government to protect itself from the democratic elections, we must impose one thing: our energetic work and determination. We must utilise every detail, every point to increase our power. We must remember that while the Jewish provincial voter behaves democratically, the Christian provincial petit-bourgeois is often the most backward and reactionary element in society, and that the Black

¹⁵⁴ Ellipsis and use of digits in original.

¹⁵⁵ *Eko* [*Echo*], published legally by Lenin, ran in fourteen issues from June to July 1906 (V. I. Lenin, *Lenin on Literature and Art*, Wildside Press, 2008). Count Sergey Yul’evich Witte, high-level Russian government figure whose important responsibilities had included close participation in producing the October Manifesto of 17 October 1905 (1849-1915); see Sidney Harcave, *Count Sergei Witte and the Twilight of Imperial Russia: A Biography*, 2004, Routledge, 2015. The mention of Sakhalin in the quoted extract refers to the negotiations that concluded the Russo-Japanese War several weeks before the Manifesto was issued.

¹⁵⁶ Dvinsk – Daugavpils, Latvia.

Hundred organisations will use all means possible to drag such voters to the elections, there is money for that...' (col. 2, par. 2).¹⁵⁷

16. Esther. 'Der "nabor" geht durkh ruhig [Recruitment Is Proceeding Smoothly].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 192, 29 Oct. (11 Nov.) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article advises that news about military recruitment proceeding smoothly is untrue as the recruits are actually gathered by force.

Additionally, the recruits have revolutionary tendencies, they sing revolutionary songs and believe that all men are brothers, "even the Japanese". ☞

'And they whose older comrades, nonconscious and dark, with their blind hand took so many children from their people, the same men enthusiastically and loudly sing the solemn funeral march behind the same victims: "You Fell Victim!"...¹⁵⁸

And silent, shocked and mute, the officers run from the hall, sensing, with a wild horror, the same old implacable enemy there, so close, right by them...

Yes, recruitment is proceeding smoothly...' (concluding paragraphs).

17. Esther. "'Khaveyrim, makht nit keyn keyten!" [Comrades, Don't Make Chains!].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 192, 29 Oct. (11 Nov.) 1906, p. 2
(Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This is a short newspaper article. Prisoners in St. Petersburg were refusing to make prison chains, so the authorities planned to have them made in Moscow prisons instead. A letter from the St. Petersburg prisoners pleaded with their Moscow comrades to refuse also. ☞

'Deep on the dark ground of life, there in the stale, heavy air of crime, there where the pure and sacred human spirit is often so sullied, so moldy that men become like animals, there where it is right to kill one another for 25 kopecks, there where brutal, terrible debauchery and intoxication create a real hell, there it waited, the pure, the holy, the sacred glimmer of love and respect for them, for the "dear fighters", for the hundreds of soldiers, peasants and workers who are sent to prison for fighting for right and justice.' (par. 4)

¹⁵⁷ Ellipsis in original

18. Esther. 'Hinter di ayzerne grates [Behind the Iron Grates].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 196, 2 Nov. (15) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article complains about bad conditions in prisons, 'that dark Gehenna', around the empire, with particular focus on the misery of the 'politicals'. ☹
'But most terrible of all are the daily insults. The daily kicks. The junior administration and the guards have learnt quickly and thoroughly that politicals are not people, that their lives are not worth a kopeck, and that to kill a political on the slightest provocation and for no reason at all is a mitsve which will be rewarded in this world.'¹⁵⁹ (par. 7)

19. Esther. 'Tsu der glaykhberkhtigung fun poyerim [On the Equal Rights of Peasants].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 197, 3 Nov. (16) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns new rights granted to peasants. It argues that the new rights are inadequate and that institutions which the new ukase aims to strengthen, such as the zemsky nachalnik, oppress the peasants in a 'terrible, severe yoke'.¹⁶⁰ The article is not dramatic or emotional, but rather sardonic, with particular use of humour in the final paragraphs which suggest the peasants could benefit from the help of 'good, experienced nannies' to keep them in line while they enjoy their new rights and responsibilities. This suggestion and the imagery of peasants lying in their huts like meat in dumplings indicate a certain attitude towards the peasantry. The article has a personal tone created by several authorial self-references. ☹

'Our readers no doubt know that as of 5 October the peasants have the same rights as all other citizens. The peasants, who read no newspapers and "lie" in their dumplings ... may not be able to feel that equality; but it is a fact that, as the ukase of 5 October has clearly explained, the peasants now have equality, and *Novoe vremya* and *Rossiya* and others have also confirmed this, so what more is needed?'¹⁶¹ (par. 1)

20. Esther. 'Vi m'zukht ferfalene uryadnikes [How They Search for Lost Officers].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 198, 5 Nov. (18) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from NYPL.

¹⁵⁸ 'You Fell Victim to a Fateful Struggle [Vy zhertvoyu pali],' the funeral dirge of the Russian revolutionary movement, written in 1878. Ellipses in original.

¹⁵⁹ Mitsve – good deed with religious merit, or commandment.

¹⁶⁰ Ukase – official decree with legislative enforcement. Zemskiy nachal'nik – local administrator of high authority.

This fairly short newspaper article ridicules a very determined police effort to find two lost officers in Taurupe volost.¹⁶² ‘This is not a story for small children, this is true’.

Excessive police violence in the same region is also described. ☹

‘In Kreuzburg, General Wendt published a list of the people who will be sentenced to death should any more attacks or robberies occur in the area under his authority. The list is alphabetical. All the surnames begin with giml. Presumably after the next attack there will be a list for dalet, and so on until tof.’¹⁶³ (col. 2, par. 12)

- 21.** Alef-R. ‘Hamtsoes [Ingenious New Ideas].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 199, 6 Nov. (19) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article is the first in this bibliography to use an abbreviation in its by-line. It concerns a new ordinance that government officials must not be members of political parties. A comment, ‘And the machine began to work’, creates an ominous tone and recalls similar imagery in an earlier article.¹⁶⁴ The article is critical and increasingly sardonic. ☹

‘The governor of Podolia has decided that this medicine can be given not only to officials but to other insurgents too, and has ordered the students at the nursing and art schools to give their signatures [to statements of non-membership] too. The plan is a good one. There is an old saying that a Russian citizen is made up of three parts: body, soul and passport. Now there is a possibility that a fourth part may soon be added, a police certificate stating that he belongs to no parties. This will be certain to eradicate sedition. Halevay!’¹⁶⁵ (concluding paragraphs)

- 22.** Alef-R. ‘Der tself-sho’ diger arbayts-tog [The Twelve-Hour Workday].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 200, 7 Nov. (20) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the struggle for a shorter workday. It tells of an old law from the time of Catherine the Great which legislated a workday ‘from 6 until 6’ but which had lain forgotten until the early days of the ‘then purely economic’

¹⁶¹ *Novoe vremya* and *Rossiya* – government newspapers.

¹⁶² Volost – administrative subdivision of the Russian Empire, smaller than an uyezd. Following the peasants’ emancipation, a self-governed unit. The area of the former Taurupe volost is in Latvia.

¹⁶³ Giml – third letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Dalet – fourth letter. Tof – final letter.

¹⁶⁴ See ‘Di feldgerikhten arbayten,’ 6.

¹⁶⁵ Halevay! – if only!

labour movement.¹⁶⁶ It uses some revolutionary language and concludes with a message of encouragement and fellowship for those suffering under an economic system which disadvantages the workers. There is humour in the reference to Stolypin ‘stumbling about in Catherine’s papers’, and some vivid imagery. ☞

‘The movement has grown powerful and violent, long has it wreaked havoc on all laws and regulations of the bizarre ‘handwerksordnung’, long has the old slogan ‘from 6 until 6’ stayed in the background, and long has the dead hundred year-old law, which the young labour movement in its first childish steps had dragged from its grave, returned to the underworld.¹⁶⁷ But a reformer has arrived and dragged the corpse from its grave.’
(par. 6-7)

23. Alef-R. ‘Fermishpet tsu hunger un kelt [Sentenced to Hunger and Cold].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 200, 7 Nov. (20) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article concerns the desperate situation of unemployed workers and their families in St. Petersburg, and the fate of aid efforts which are generally frustrated by Duma members, some of whom are frivolous millionaires. The burning hatred and limitless resolve of the proletariat will transform them. ☞

‘[The Duma says to the proletariat:] Go, break your heads against a wall! Send your wives and daughters to sell themselves! Go, feed your children the blood from your hearts, the marrow from your bones, or stifle them! Go, drown yourselves, burn yourselves! What concern is it of ours!’ (col. 2, par. 9)

24. Alef-R. ‘Tsu di vahlen: Di shtots-dumes un di politsey bay der vahl arbayt [On the Elections: The State Dumas and the Police during the Election Work].’

Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 201, 8 Nov. (21) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns government obstruction of the electoral process. The Dumas are elitist and every effort is made to create a right-wing parliament. Recommended tactics for avoiding the obstructions include submitting enrolment forms by mail. The tone is indignant. ☞

‘In addition to the various difficulties created by the police while they issue the necessary certificates, in many places they are refusing even to issue the certificates.

¹⁶⁶ On this law of 1789 that was discovered by Shmuel Gozhanskiy, one of the Bund’s founders, see Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle*, 49ff.

This has occurred in Vitebsk and in Mogilëv. Because of this, many hundreds of voters have lost their voting rights.’ (par. 1)

25. Alef-R. ‘Nokh a bisele logik [A Little More Logic].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 202, 9 Nov. (22) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the Kadets’ request to Stolypin to re-open their club with the opening of the new Duma, and details the subsequent to-and-fro of arguments. The tone is bemused. Stolypin’s thinking is logical, and with just a little more of such logic there will be ‘no memory left of the revolution’. ☹

‘Stolypin answered them decisively that they are a revolutionary party and the government will not allow them a thing. “If you were to be permitted a club, why should the socialists not be permitted the same?”

The Kadets said he certainly should permit the socialists too, like in Western Europe. After that naïve comment, Stolypin took the trouble to explain to the Kadets that the socialists from Western Europe are indeed fine children, and much more decent than them, the Kadets. A long debate followed.’ (col. 1, par. 2 - col. 2, par. 3)

26. Alef-R. ‘Farglaykh [Comparison].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 205, 13 Nov. (26) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article compares Russia with Finland, where horrors like military field courts are merely ‘tales from another world’. Finland had become practically a haven for political activity banned in Russia but would now be required to detain people wanted for crimes in Russia. It is sarcastically ‘hoped’ that Finland will soon be more like Russia with military field courts and ‘other fine, proven things’. ☹

‘The requirement that someone handed over to the Russian government must have committed a confirmed crime is also not too important...¹⁶⁸ According to the Russian laws, belonging to an “illegal association” can also constitute a confirmed crime, and according to this police circular it is perfectly simple to seize a meeting, call everyone “criminals” and hand them over to the Russian government.’ (2; par. 4)

¹⁶⁷ Handwerksordnung – here, a metaphorical allusion to the German law governing artisanal trades.

¹⁶⁸ Ellipsis in original.

27. Alef-R. 'Di kazyone prese vakst [The Government Press Grows].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 207, 15 Nov. (28) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the newspapers produced by the government for dissemination of official opinion. It uses a lot of mocking humour, opening with sarcasm: 'Once, in the olden days, everything was simple and good'. ☹
'For months now, the writers at *Rossiya* have toiled to fashion a healthy social opinion. They publish articles about socialism and class struggle, ... they pat the heads of the Octobrists for their true constitutionalism, they look for any tactical errors committed by the Social-Democracy, quarrel with the Kadets, etc. The newspaper is distributed by any means necessary; entire bales are sent for free to district offices, various administrative departments, etc. Their especially "hot" articles are wired by telegraph to the Petersburg Agency so that all of Russia can immediately hear a healthy opinion about every new prank of the insurgent press.' (col. 1, par. 5 - col. 2, par. 3)

28. Alef-R. 'Der sof fun dem shpiel [The End of the Show].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 217, 27 Nov. (10 Dec.) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the trial and sentencing for the Moscow Uprising.¹⁶⁹ The Moscow administration made the process a 'vaudeville show' but the comedy could have had a more tragic ending. ☹

'And despite the fact that death hovered over the heads of the accused the whole time, and despite the sad images of wasted, broken lives in the speeches of the accused, and despite even the vast memories which were awakened by the often dry and colourless, often hateful pronouncements of the witnesses, the impression was unfortunately of a comedy.' (col. 2, par. 3)

29. Alef-R. 'Af ale keylim [With Every Effort].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 218, 28 Nov. (11 Dec.) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article details the government's latest, increased efforts to hamper the election process, while membership to the Union of the Russian People and

¹⁶⁹ Moscow Uprising – important event of the 1905 revolution.

the Union of 17 October is ‘a silver key which opens all doors’.¹⁷⁰ Nonetheless, the election campaign continues at full strength. ☞

‘The old method of requests for advice [shayles utshuves] between Stolypin and the senate naturally persists; only now it is strengthened by more means and more energy. Correspondents now report that there is a police circular about making every effort to eliminate from the election campaign men who belong to illegal organisations and who agitate against the government. In Yalta, dozens of men are sent away every day: doctors, lawyers, random intellectuals.... It is believed that many are being sent to Narym. Such information is arriving from everywhere. Everywhere that politicals are sent is already over-filled; according to *Rech* there are at least 300,000 in the prisons, and arrests and exiles occur daily.’¹⁷¹ (col. 1, par. 3 - col. 2, par. 1)

30. Alef-R. ‘Di kinder shpielen [The Children Play].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 220, 30 Nov. (13 Dec.) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article tells of children committing acts of terrible violence. It argues that in their ‘games’ these children are simply aping the institutionalised violence they see around them. ☞

‘A few weeks ago, some young shepherds hanged one of their friends, also a shepherd, because he lost a sheep. They made a pretend military field court, they sentenced the criminal and immediately hanged him from a tree.

Children’s games mirror their reality. Who does not remember how groups of children in the streets and alleys would fill their air with their noisy games of “Boers and Englishmen” and “Japanese and Russians”; who does not know the demonstrations of 7-8 year-old children wearing little red kerchiefs, and the games of “meetings”, “barricades”, etc...¹⁷² ... Children who once played mummies and daddies now play military field courts.’ (par. 2-6)

31. Alef-R. ‘In dem kenigraykh fun hunger [In the Kingdom of Hunger].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 223, 4 Dec. (17) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

¹⁷⁰ Union of the Russian People – right-wing, nationalist organisation. Union of 17 October – Octobrists, a moderate monarchist party.

¹⁷¹ *Rech* – pre-revolutionary daily newspaper of the Kadets.

¹⁷² Ellipsis in original.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the famine in Russia. The administration has bought grain to help starving peasants, but it sits in railway cars ‘under the rain and snow’, undelivered. A letter from Prince Lvov reports on his trip to famine-struck areas where he witnessed many horrors and where people eat “hungry bread” made of acorns.¹⁷³ The repeated phrase, ‘And they wait’, emphasises the helplessness of the starving who can only wait for aid which may or may not arrive. Amid the crisis, financial scams abound. ☹

‘The newspapers rumble, the newspapers boil and froth. The discovery of the Lidval affair tore the veil from many other smaller affairs: here a governor, there a zemsky nachalnik, there another fellow.’¹⁷⁴ Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands in filched money...

And they wait and wait...’ (concluding paragraphs).¹⁷⁵

- 32.** Alef-R. ‘Der lokaut in lodz [The Lock-out in Łódź].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 226, 7 Dec. (20) 1906, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article reports on Poznański’s factory which refuses to re-open until its workers apologise and are punished for an insult to an engineer. If the workers reject these terms, other factories too will close. The workers and their families face hunger and want but have not lost their courageous revolutionary spirit. ☹

‘To force the workers to apologise; force them, who have so often caused others to tremble, who have so often reigned in the city, who have with the mighty breath of struggle awakened the sleepers and brought disquiet and commotion into daily life, to force them to kiss the hand that beats them, with what boundless satisfaction such a thought must fill the hearts of the Łódź gold-sack!’¹⁷⁶

But Poznański’s workers have responded to the demand of the administration with scorn and derision. With revolutionary singing they have abandoned the factory.’ (col. 2, par. 3-4)

- 33.** Alef-R. ‘Mied gevoren tsu leben [Tired of Living].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 227, 8 Dec. (21) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

¹⁷³ Prince Georgiy Yevgen’evich L’vov, senior political figure (1861-1925).

¹⁷⁴ Eric Lidval, businessman, participant in the Gurko-Lidval affair, a scandal in 1906 concerning corrupt handling of a government grain purchase. See, for example, Abraham Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905: Authority Restored*, Stanford UP, 1992, 266ff.

¹⁷⁵ Ellipses in original.

¹⁷⁶ Gold-sack – collective reference to wealthy capitalists.

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns a new phenomenon of hungry people committing suicide in public places in Russia. Its tone is sympathetic and appalled. ☞
'It should be silent and solitary when a man takes his own life; he finds the furthest corner to hide in. In silence he casts his last glance at life; says his last "adieu" to everything he once loved, that once delighted him, to everything that tormented, oppressed and troubled him. In silence, he bids farewell to his last ray of hope.' (1; bottom - 2; par. 1)

- 34.** Alef-R. 'Der handels-flot in zikhre hend [The Merchant Fleet in Safe Hands].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 228, 10 Dec. (23) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns a strike among the crew of merchant ships in Odessa, a protest against the restructure of the workers' organisation to make it 'a plaything in the hands of the bosses'. The Union of the Russian People had inexperienced strike-breakers sent in. ☞

'There are hopes that by their productive work, [the strike-breakers] will ruin the entire Odessa merchant fleet. But what would be the use of that? Even if they are not masters of nautical wisdom, as long as they are pure patriots, that is the most important thing. Oh dear, will business suffer? Well, what can be done about it? The obstinacy of the seditious seamen must, however, be crushed.' (concluding paragraph)

- 35.** Alef-R. 'Azoy makht men oysforshungen [This Is How Investigations Are Made].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 229, 11 Dec. (24) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article provides examples from around Russia of police prejudice against Jews. ☞

'All Jews vouch for one another, this is an old rule. Now perhaps we must console ourselves with the fact that we are not alone, that the same discovery was made by the Baltic "pacifiers" with regard to the Latvians, the Kavkaz with regard to the Kavkaz population, and all the Russian "pacifiers" with regard to the Russian peasant generally. In this respect we have achieved equality.' (concluding paragraphs)

- 36.** Alef-R. 'In varshever idishen shpitol [In Warsaw's Jewish Hospital].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 1, no. 231, 13 Dec. (26) 1906, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article paints a chilling picture of a hospital ward at night, made even more unpleasant by the sudden intrusion of a military unit. ☹

‘And suddenly... a fearful sound of pushing and of weapons, the heavy clatter of a hundred feet...¹⁷⁷ A whole gust of sharp, frosty air bursts into the silent kingdom of suffering. A search. Hundreds of soldiers and police attack the wards. With cold, rough hands, they turn each patient over and out. They search. They search the bed of a terminal patient, of a woman in labour, in the nappies of a newborn; they lift and turn the terrible, sweaty head of a typhus patient, the weary, aching body of a wounded man.’ (par. 5-9)

‘And they go over to the insane who spring up out of their beds, desperate and dreadfully frightened.’ (par. 12)

37. Alef-R. ‘Vegen idische kinder [About Jewish Children].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 233, 15 Dec. (28) 1906, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This is a fairly short newspaper article. The appearance of part of its content in a piece by M. Frumkina (Esther) published in 1926 helps to confirm that ‘Alef-R.’ is Esther.¹⁷⁸ The article is sentimental. Its topic is children’s involvement with the Bund, referred to ironically as ‘Jewish childrens’ games’. The **first part** describes a letter from a young Bundist who has decorated the paper and writes in a child-like, yet resolute manner. The **second part** describes the grave of a boy who was a member of the Kleyn-bund, and his death during a demonstration.¹⁷⁹ He was felled by a bullet while telling his young comrades not to run from the shooting.¹⁸⁰ The **third part** describes the scene of a meeting held in a synagogue under tense conditions, where young activists give their full, passionate attention to the speakers while light filters in through the large windows, plays about a chandelier and illuminates the excited young faces. The **fourth part** recalls an occasion in Warsaw when a crowd of small children went out into the street with red banners, singing revolutionary songs and shouting in Polish, “Open the doors!” Some wore arbekanfesn from which the tsitses were visibly dangling.¹⁸¹ When a shot

¹⁷⁷ Ellipses in original.

¹⁷⁸ See ‘Deti-bortsy,’ 326.

¹⁷⁹ Kleyn-bund – Little Bund, the Bundist youth organisation.

¹⁸⁰ This boy, Avram Himelshteyn (c.1891-1905), is the subject of a short entry in Hertz, *Doyres bundistn* (J. S. Hertz, ‘Avraml himelshteyn,’ vol. 1, 404-05) which quotes from this article (405).

¹⁸¹ Arbekanfesn – ritual undergarment worn by religious Jewish males. Tsitses – tassels with ritual significance.

rang out, one young “leader” encouraged the children to run towards its origin, which they did, proving that the shot had not succeeded in scaring them. ☹

‘I remember a cemetery in a large city in Lite.

And I remember a little grave, a tidy one, well looked-after. And a flat piece of board had been fixed to a stick. And the red letters on it read as follows:

“To live in freedom

To die in battle!

Our comrade Avram Himelshteyn

The Kleybn-bund”

This was done by the little “masses” for the grave of their fallen comrade. They themselves cleaned the grave. They themselves painted the board and wrote on it.’ (col. 2, par. 4-10)

38. Alef-R. ‘Di finstere arbayt [The Dark Work].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 236, 19 Dec. 1906 (1 Jan. 1907), p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the destructive, reactionary activity of the zemstvos around Russia, a ‘wild dance of ignorance and darkness’ in which ‘a whole stream of black mud is inundating the small, poor islands of culture over which certain idealists have toiled for years’.¹⁸² The people will only have real education, culture and healthcare when they themselves have control of the associated services. ☹

‘A range of telegrams and appeals from various zemsky assemblies which express complete satisfaction with the current government policy; the most savage persecutions of the so-called “third element” (teachers, doctors, statisticians), the destruction of the important scientific statistical project representing many years of work – this is a picture of the activity of dozens of zemstvos.’ (par. 5)

39. Alef-R. ‘An energisher gubernator [An Energetic Governor].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 237, 20 Dec. 1906 (2 Jan. 1907), pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns news of a noble who joined a village council and therefore appeared to be ‘a democratic aristocrat, a Tolstoyan’.¹⁸³ The story,

¹⁸² Zemstvos – district councils. The black colour of the mud recalls the Black Hundred.

¹⁸³ Tolstoyans strove to live in accordance with Tolstoy’s moral code, including in separate communities.

which became convoluted, involving the noble's country estates and election candidacy, is likely to have stemmed from an 'energetic governor'. ☹

'But the Podolian governor is not giving up. He had a difficult job with one liberal noble, but against seditious peasants he has found a simple solution. He has sent out a circular to all the mir representatives, advising that they may freely remove from the electoral registers all suspicious peasants, he absolves them of all related responsibility.¹⁸⁴

And why search for superior wisdom when it is already decided? They must not cease for any reason.' (concluding paragraphs)

40. Alef-R. 'Reyne hend [Clean Hands].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 238, 21 Dec. 1906 (3 Jan. 1907), p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly short yet intense newspaper article. Previously, priests were not allowed to attend university, but now 'priestly black clothes have been seen in the nest of sedition'. The senior clergy are unhappy about the new access because of the possibility that the young priests will come into contact with blood, for example during medical studies. This is hypocritical considering the bloodshed endorsed by the church. ☹

'The hands of the servants of God's altar must be pure. They must not even touch a doctor's scalpel; they must not spill blood even to bring health and life. They must not cut even a corpse; their delicate, loving hand must not cause any suffering even to a frog or a cat, God's creations; their heart must be mild and tender like the heart of an innocent child.

And when the Pochayev archimandrite Vitaly writes his newsletter "Pochayev News", in which each word spurts fire and blood, and when dozens of priests went with crosses, with holy images, and led the mob to pogroms and bloodshed; and when the Volhynian archbishop Antony says that 100,000 men must be hanged; and when metropolitans and bishops bless bandits' knives and bless the union of pogromists, and when in the sacred cloister, near the holy altar on which only bloodless sacrifices are brought, stands the banner calling for bloodshed, then the synod is silent or stammers weak, barely audible, vague words. Yet the priests' hands stay clean.' (par. 7-8)

¹⁸⁴ Mir – pre-revolutionary peasant community structure.

41. Alef-R. 'Regirung, visenshaft un industrye [Government, Science and Industry].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 242, 26 Dec. 1906 (8 Jan. 1907), pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the recent ministerial conference on labour legislation. One minister regretted that no workers could attend the conference, 'but they have no organisations'. The **second part** reports that homeless workers succeeded in obtaining aid from a gas industrialist in the Caucasus. ☹

'Someone speaks about banning night-work for women and children. A sugar manufacturer stands up and tells how "females" have fallen at his feet asking to be taken on. He requests an exemption for the sugar industry. A glass manufacturer stands up and says that in the glass industry it can be done, there should be no restrictions...' ¹⁸⁵ (2; par. 7).

42. Alef-R. 'A naye gzeyre af zhandarmen [A New Edict on Gendarmes].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 1, no. 243, 27 Dec. 1906 (9 Jan. 1907), p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article mocks a new requirement that gendarmes be educated in politics, economics and 'all seven wisdoms' to prepare them to struggle with the revolutionaries. It facetiously suggests that the gendarmes would benefit from taking part in educational circles, propagandistic meetings, and reading revolutionary literature. ☹

'And a tragic scene appears before my eyes, where a gendarmerie official sits at a table writing a "general report", and looks now at Martov's *A Gift for the Workers and Peasants*, now at Medem's 'Social Democracy and the National Question', now at a Maximalist proclamation, and now at a translation that the "uchënyy yevrey" has made of a Socialist-Zionist editorial, and now perhaps at Lenin's *One Step Forwards and Two Steps Back*, and is drowned and cannot climb out, and curses his days and years, and groans, "Oy, it's a hard way to earn a living..." ¹⁸⁶ (concluding paragraph)

¹⁸⁵ Ellipsis in original.

¹⁸⁶ Yuliy Osipovich Tsederbaum (L. Martov), leader of Menshevik faction of RDSL (1873-1923). See Israel Getzler, *Martov: A Political Biography of a Russian Social Democrat*, Cambridge UP, 1967. *A Gift for the Workers and Peasants* [*Podarok "russkim" krest'yanam" i rabochim"*], 1906. Vladimir Medem, highly respected Bund leader and theoretician (1879-1923). On Medem, see, for example, Roni Gechtman, 'National-Cultural Autonomy and "Neutrality": Vladimir Medem's Marxist Analysis of the National Question, 1903-1920,' *Socialist Studies*, 3:1, Spring 2007, 69-92. 'Social Democracy and the National Question [Di sotsyal-demokratye un di natsyonale frage],' 1904. Maximalists – radical faction of the Socialist-Revolutionary (SR) party. Uchënyy yevrey – Learned Jew, adviser on Jewish affairs. Socialist-Zionist party – often known as SS, founded in 1905. *One Step Forwards and Two Steps Back* [*Shag" vperëd", dva shaga nazad" (Krizis" v" nashey Partii)*], Geneva, 1904. Ellipsis in original.

1907

43. Alef-R. 'Nito mer keyn koykhes tsu layden [No Strength Left to Complain].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 2, no. 248, 2 Jan. (15) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article is not about the suffering poor but about Russian rightists claiming they can not tolerate Jewish violence. Its tone is mocking and sarcastic. ☹

'But the "Union of the Russian People" proposes its old method [for responding to the assassination of the prosecutor-general]: a good old Jewish pogrom. The newspaper *Russkoe znamya* ... printed the following notice inside a black frame:

"The Prosecutor-General Vladimir Petrovich Pavlov was killed by a Jew.¹⁸⁷ Killed after the members of the State Duma, Kadets and Jews, had threatened him with a bloody vengeance. Russian people! Now you know who are the killers of your loyal defenders!" (col. 1, par. 5-7)

'Bulatsel, Vostorgov, Gringmut and Dubrovin all live their lives to protect the Jewish people.¹⁸⁸ Their "Union" is against terror and violence. They are not responsible for the "voluntary security group" which makes death threats towards contributors to progressive newspapers.' (col. 2, par. 2)

44. Alef-R. 'Unbekante [Unknown Individuals].'
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 2, no. 249,
3 Jan. (16) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article comments on revolutionaries who operate as unknown individuals, concealing their real names. It evokes sympathy for the solitary unknowns. Repetition within the piece creates a rhythm reminiscent of marching, complemented by a stirring revolutionary conclusion. ☹

'They have buried the body of the unknown individual who shot at Sheremetev. Unknown individuals on Aptekarsky Island, unknown individuals in Fornarny pereulok...¹⁸⁹

Unknown individuals shot by guards. An unknown individual in the Grand Hotel. Long rows of unknown individuals' ghosts...' (col. 2, par. 2-6).

¹⁸⁷ Vladimir Petrovich Pavlov, military general, assassinated by an SR sailor in connection with the law establishing military field courts (1851-1906).

¹⁸⁸ Pavel Fëdorovich Bulatsel, lawyer, co-founder of the Union (1867-1919). Ioann (Ivan) Ivanovich Vostorgov, Orthodox protoiereus (priest), Union member. Vladimir Andreevich Gringmut, newspaper editor, leader of Black Hundred (1851-1907). Aleksandr Ivanovich Dubrovin, doctor, Union leader (1855-?).

¹⁸⁹ Aptekarsky Island, Fornarny pereulok, Grand Hotel – locations in St. Petersburg. Ellipses in original.

‘And there will be no names, no gravestones left behind for future generations, only one great, enormous, fiery name: The revolution.’ (concluding paragraphs)

45. Alef-R. ‘Vegen der “naketen” bunt [On the ‘Naked’ Rebellion].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 251, 5 Jan. 1907 (18), p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns a drastic protest against poor conditions in Smolensk Prison. It argues that the public and press are indifferent to the suffering of prisoners and exiles, and that protest efforts are therefore often futile and only increase prisoners’ suffering. ☹

‘In the middle of winter, amid harsh frosts, they have been completely naked, rejecting underwear, clothing, beds and bedding, naked during the day and sleeping naked at night, ever since 21 December.

Hunger strikes are too common, so they have devised a new “cold strike”.

Among them are sick, tubercular prisoners.

And when the local administration was ready to surrender, that was forbidden in Petersburg.

And people are freezing and torturing themselves with cold, and fighting...

And the Smolensk public knows this and looks on, and says nothing. Perhaps because these are foreign “convicts”?...’¹⁹⁰ (concluding paragraphs)

46. Alef-R. ‘Un dokh!... [And Yet!...].’¹⁹¹ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 252, 7 Jan. (20) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article reports on pre-election activity in St. Petersburg, including some poorly attended political rallies held by Octobrists, Peaceful Renovators and ‘real-Russians’. It includes a comical anecdote about an “agent” of the Union of the Russian People who causes offence in Ufa by snubbing the chief of police, a Pole.

Purishkevich is unconcerned about this matter.¹⁹² The article’s tone is a combination of bemused and disgusted. ☹

‘Unlimited freedom of the assembly and the press, the strictest personal inviolability, the widest material and moral support from the government and of a significant number

¹⁹⁰ Ellipses in original.

¹⁹¹ Ellipsis in original.

¹⁹² Vladimir Mitrofanovich Purishkevich, highly visible right-wing politician, Right deputy from Bessarabia in the Second Duma (1870-1920).

of priests, and the whole government apparatus at their fingertips – [the nationalist parties] have everything on their side.’ (par. 1)

47. A. Katsenelenbogen. ‘In tfise [In Prison].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 254, 9 Jan. (22) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a poem in which every second and fourth lines rhyme. It has similarities to Esther’s articles, such as the use of visions which highlight reality, Jewish motifs, and a very present narrator.¹⁹³ It first presents the scene of a cold prison, where the sounds of chains, groaning and a hangman’s laughter are audible. The narrator suddenly sees a ‘dream’ which transforms the prison into a garden of flowers where there is a marble statue of a slave in chains straining to escape, a ‘neyrtomed’ burning at his feet.¹⁹⁴ A ‘powerful song’ can be heard, people are singing an oath to freedom. A child starts to play a golden lyre, but the heavenly sound is interrupted by the words of a prisoner farewelling his comrades as he goes to be hanged. The narrator sees the ‘dreamer’ smiling from the gallows and wonders whether he has gone to the lovely dream-garden.

48. Alef-R. ‘Brider gegen brider [Brothers against Brothers].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 255, 10 Jan. (23) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly short newspaper article, an apocalyptic account of bloody battle which, it is only revealed mid-way through, refers to violence against strikers in Łódź. ☹

‘With all its strength, the proletariat supports its fighting comrades. At a whole range of factories, the workers share their work with the homeless. Wives of workers who have work give up their places for the homeless in the factories. And hard-earned groshens are collected from all sides.

And through the bloodthirsty haze which encloses the unfortunate city, beams of love shine. And the mighty voice of proletarian unity resounds and drowns out the wicked voice of Cain’s children.’ (par. 11-12)

49. Alef-R. ‘Kapitalisten aler lender, fareynikt aykh! [Capitalists of All Nations Unite!].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 257, 12 Jan. (25) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

¹⁹³ Esther used the surname Katsenelenbogen to sign articles in *Tsayt-fragen* in 1910.

This fairly short newspaper article with an attention-grabbing title reports on manufacturers supporting one another during the lock-out in Łódź.¹⁹⁵ It uses some revolutionary language but has no specifically Jewish content. ☹

‘Today’s telegrams from Łódź, which report that Scheibler’s and Grohmann’s factories have fired their master craftsmen and employees, “prove” that the Łódź manufacturers do not intend to put down their weapons so quickly, and that Poznański’s lovely expression, “There is one thing we can use against them: hunger”, will be the real slogan of the Łódź gold-sack.’ (par. 4)

50. Alef-R. ‘Frayhayt fun ferzamlungen [Freedom of Assembly].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 260, 16 Jan. (29) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a medium-length newspaper article. Stolypin had confirmed that political meetings would be legal prior to the elections, but they are nonetheless obstructed by the authorities. This situation is farcical. ☹

‘In their pursuit of seditious speakers, the police often get themselves into ridiculous situations. Recently at a meeting they seized a speaker with a large beard. They detained him and began to demand that he remove the beard. The man swore that the beard was his own, a real, natural one, and they insisted it was false. In the end, they were persuaded that the beard was real and left its owner in peace.’ (2; col. 2, par. 3)

51. Alef-R. ‘Di ershte yedies [The First News].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 261, 17 Jan. (30) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page printed from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article reports on early signs of success for the Bund, and failure for the Zionists, in the regional selection of electoral candidates, even though the Bund is encountering difficulties such as the problem of having to reveal the names of its candidates. Regardless of the ultimate results, the Bund has fulfilled ‘a large part of its historical task’ during the campaign, despite the obstacles presented by both the government and the ‘klal yisroel dreams’ which rule the Jewish street. ☹

‘All our victories are at the same time a blatant failure for the Zionists. After their entire campaign in Grodno, they had to withdraw their list of candidates; after all the tricks, after the greatest, most bitter struggle in Białystok, at a meeting of 1000 voters they

¹⁹⁴ Neyrtomed [Heb. ner tamid, eternal light] – traditional synagogue fixture. The presence of the neyrtomed near the statue may be intended to associate the slave with the Jewish people.

found only 2 supporters; after all the manoeuvres and meetings in Volhynia gubernia, at a meeting of over 600 voters in Zhytomyr they received only 57 votes.¹⁹⁶

And once more we have the right to see this as a victory for us.’ (2; par. 5-7)

- 52.** Alef.-R. ‘Tekhnishe derklerungen tsu di vahlen in di shtedt un shtedtlekh [Technical Information about the Elections in the Cities and Shtetls].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 263, 19 Jan. (1 Feb.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article provides substantial, detailed information about how to cast a vote, in the lead-up to local (uyezd) elections.¹⁹⁷ ☞

‘It may occur that a voter does not wish to put on his ballot slip the entire list offered by an organisation. He may, for example, have been given an already-completed ballot slip and wishes to remove a few coupons and replace them with others. He must remember that by tearing and pasting, or erasing and amending, he can render his ballot slip completely invalid. In the instruction it is clearly written that on the ballot slips there must not be any crossed-out words, any amendments, any erased areas, or any marks or symbols on the top or the left side. They must be written clearly and simply.’ (2; col. 1, bottom - col. 2, top)

- 53.** Alef.-R. ‘Vayter vegen der peterburger agentur [More about the Petersburg Agency].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 264, 21 Jan. (3 Feb.) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the unreliability of information from the government’s press agency and its bias against the Lefts. ☞

‘But the finest news was reported today by *Nov.*¹⁹⁸ Its correspondent reports, based on reliable sources, that well before the elections, the Petersburg Agency sent its agents an instruction about how to supply information. Among other advice, the instruction included the following suggestion: If any Lefts get in, announce their faith and nationality but not their party.’ (par. 4)

¹⁹⁵ See **32**.

¹⁹⁶ Gubernia – administrative governorate within the Russian Empire.

¹⁹⁷ Uyezd – secondary-level administrative subdivision of the Russian Empire.

¹⁹⁸ *Nov.* – likely *Novoe vremya*.

54. Alef-R. 'Fun der vahl-kampanye in dorf [From the Election Campaign in the Villages].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 265, 22 Jan. (4 Feb.) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article presents examples of peasant audiences around Russia rebuffing right-wing speakers and brochures. By contrast, Left candidates are receiving a positive response. ☞

“Send them away! They should leave! We don’t want to hear them!” cried the 200 peasants of the Pokrovka volost assembly (Samarskaya gub.), when the Black Hundred-niks began to speak.’ (par. 1)

‘At the conference for small landholders in Kostroma, only progressives were chosen, among them an important Kadet. A year ago at the same conference only Rights got in.’ (par. 10)

55. Alef-R. 'Di regirung in kampf mit di kandidaten fun bund [The Government in Battle with the Bund’s Candidates].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 267, 24 Jan. (6 Feb.) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article reports on last-minute exclusions of Bundist electoral candidates. The government will not succeed in silencing the Bund. ☞

‘Meanwhile, we have details of how the government has waged its electoral campaign against our candidate in Grodno. At the last pre-election meeting on the eve of the election they sent a police official especially to advise that Gozhansky is excluded.¹⁹⁹ The next day, election day, notices were pasted in all the streets saying that Gozhansky is excluded.’ (par. 8)

56. Alef-R. 'Di sots.-dem. un di vahlen [The Social-Democracy and the Elections].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 272, 30 Jan. (12 Feb.) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article announces some electoral successes of the SD, amid government persecutions.²⁰⁰ ☞

‘And despite all of this, SDs are getting in as candidates, in significant numbers.

¹⁹⁹ Samuil (Shmuel) Naumovich Gozhanskiy, Bund co-founder and activist (1867-1943). See also 22.

²⁰⁰ The SD (Social-Democracy) here is the RSDLP, which won sixty-five seats in the elections to the Second Duma. Lenin, who was on the Presidium of the RSDLP at this time, was in Finland throughout 1907.

In Eastern Siberia, in Blagoveshchensk, in the far west, in Libava, in the distant steppes of Central Asia, the banner of the Social-Democracy is rising over entire cities.²⁰¹
The odd electoral system and the military field courts are incapable of stifling the commanding voice of the people.’ (concluding paragraphs)

57. Alef-R. ‘Shiker fun freyd [Drunk with Joy].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 275, 2 Feb. (15) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article disproves reports in government newspapers of SD electoral failures. In one such report, ‘every word is an impudent lie’. ☞

‘The professors in Petersburg, the Jewish elite in Vilna, the respectable provincial Jews in our shtetls and the Kadets in Kiev all unite in hatred for the Social-Democracy, in disdain for the proletariat, in boundless fear of [SD] candidates, and bravely and boldly confront the Black Hundred peril. It is no peril for them when the Lefts are concerned.’ (concluding paragraph)

58. Alef-R. ‘Der kampf mit der vahl-kramole in dorf [The Battle with Electoral Sabotage in the Villages].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 278, 6 Feb. (19) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article provides many examples of government efforts to influence the peasants’ voting choices or to prevent them from voting at all. ☞

‘The means used in the villages against the elected Left candidates are not hard to guess: the same ones as in the cities but with more open khutspe, with more insolence, with greater assurance and candour.²⁰² There are arrests, exiles, searches, irrevocable deletions from the electoral lists, and so on.’ (col. 2, par. 10)

59. Alef-R. ‘Der letster tog [The Last Day].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 280, 8 Feb. (21) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article relates to the last day before the elections. It is political commentary and unemotional, but a sardonic tone is used to describe the Rights’ unfair pre-election tactics, which include having charges brought against

²⁰¹ Libava – Liepāja, Latvia.

²⁰² Khutspe – audacity, impudence.

candidates, and having candidates summoned back to work by their employers. Also, because Krushevan is now standing as a candidate in Kishinëv, the Kishinëv elections which were to be cancelled will go ahead.²⁰³ The ending conveys uncertainty: ‘we will see what happens’. ☹

‘And just as it is in the senate, in the Heavenly Court, so it is in the gubernia commissions, the Earthly Court.... In Yalta, where the second elections had already contributed 3 Lefts, at least one of them has been thrown out and charged under Article 126 and instead of him they have installed a “comrade” from the Union of the Russian People.... In such cases, some complicated electoral arithmetic is made which creates Right majorities in places where the elections of candidates have brought quite different results. Why exactly they have not systematically charged all Left candidates under Article 126 is difficult to understand.’ (col. 2, par. 3-6)

60. Alef-R. ‘Tsu di shreken in odes [On the Horrors in Odessa].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 281, 9 Feb. (22) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article reports on violence against Jews in Odessa. The situation is serious enough to be called a pogrom. The attackers are ‘bloody bands from the “Union of the Russian People”, a large number of them in student and gimnasium uniform’. The article gives details, some graphic, about the brutal violence against people and property, bringing to life the terror of the events. It depicts a dense cloud of terror and hopelessness over Odessa. A terse final comment, ‘No words!’, suggests that no words can adequately describe the emotional impact of the violence. ☹

‘And the police arrive after everyone else, and they come and reprimand the pogromists, proving to them by the book that it isn’t fair to beat an old defenceless Jew. They lecture them that they must not do it again, leave them in peace and go away, and within about a minute the same hooligans are back at their job again.

Whom do they pillage? A small shop selling seltzer water, a cobbler’s workshop... more of the same familiar, terrible images.²⁰⁴

Fear and madness reign in the city. And no help, no hope.’ (2; par. 3-5)

61. Alef-R. ‘Feld-gerikht far zelvstshuts [Military Field Court for Self-Defence].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 282, 11 Feb. (24) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

²⁰³ Pavel Alexandrovich Krushevan, ultra-right-wing nationalist, involved in publishing the antisemitic literary forgery *Protocols of the Elders of Zion* (1860-1909). Kishinëv – Chişinău, Moldova.

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This short newspaper article provides news and commentary about the case of four Jewish members of a self-defence group in Odessa, who are to be brought before a military field court for demonstrating resistance to druzhiniki.²⁰⁵ The article, which argues that this case constitutes judicial prejudice against Jews, is sardonic in tone and increasingly sharp, ending in anger. ☹

‘The 4 Odessa Jews did not kill anyone, even in self-defence. One of them did shoot into a band of pogromists who attacked him in the street but he did not hit any of them; the other 3 were seized together with him in an attic where he was hiding.’²⁰⁶

They were handed over to the military field court. The “Russian People” were told openly and officially that their members are inviolable.

They are holy, like the chosen among the people. Whoever touches them, death to him! Whoever shoots in the air above their heads, death to him!

Death to you, Jew!

If you fall into the hands of the Black Hundred, death to you! If you survive, death to you! Death to you, Jew!’ (concluding paragraphs)

- 62.** Alef-R. ‘Di kirkhe un di vahl-kampanye [The Church and the Election Campaign].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 284, 13 Feb. (26) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article argues that the church is the state’s ‘loyal handmaiden’, which ‘sings Hallel to everything it does’, never more so than in the last election campaign.²⁰⁷ It is written with humour tinged with indignation. It asserts, in a rebellious and somewhat revolutionary tone, that all these efforts of the church to support the Right factions and the nobility, exploiting the faith of its flock, will fail. ☹

‘Old, prehistoric monks who spend their days in prayer and fasting, and who had long ago renounced the world, with their vanity of vanities have thrown themselves vigorously into the election campaign.’ (col. 1, par. 5)

‘In Grodno, the peasant candidates were also given special treatment earlier. A solemn service was held for them in the archiereus’s cloister.’²⁰⁸ The archiereus, with a raised

²⁰⁴ Ellipsis in original.

²⁰⁵ Druzhiniki – civilian police.

²⁰⁶ Digits in original.

²⁰⁷ Sings Hallel – Hallel is a collection of psalms of praise, to sing Hallel is to praise. Along with this reference to religious ritual, we may note the words from the biblical book of Ecclesiastes in the first quoted extract.

²⁰⁸ Archiereus – bishop in the Orthodox Church.

cross, appealed to the peasants in the name of Christ to vote for noblemen, and not for urban candidates and workers, the people who sold Christ, the Jews. The peasants promised, and afterwards the noble official thanked the peasants for refusing to vote for the people who sold Christ and for the “vile Jews”.’ (col. 2, par. 12)

‘For hundreds of years, the blind faith and deep reverence of the masses has been growing. For hundreds of years, it has swathed their brains like a thick cobweb.’ (col. 3, par. 3)

The Second State Duma, 1907

63. Alef-R. ‘Erev der dume: Peterburg [On the Eve of the Duma: St. Petersburg].’

Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 2, no. 290, 21 Feb. (6 Mar.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ contains commentary and description, plus records of discussions which keep the author present in the scene. At an SD gathering in an untidy residence where everyone sits on beds, Esther feels ‘like I am at an illegal skhodke meeting’.²⁰⁹ Her response on hearing that church pressure prevented Jews from being selected for the Duma in Kiev gubernia reveals her perpetual consciousness of the Bund’s rivalry with the Zionists.²¹⁰ A deputy from Kiev is ‘a living illustration from one of Gogol’s Ukrainian stories, with merry, slightly thievish eyes’.²¹¹ The cautious response to one of her questions suggests that the peasant deputies do not know the difference between the policies of the SDs and SRs. An ‘intellectual’ advises that a nakaz entrusted to a deputy from Saratov by his worker constituents does not include a demand for abolition of restrictions based on nationality because it is obvious that they oppose the restrictions.²¹² The SD delegates appear inexperienced. An addendum evaluates party numbers and associated party strength, and relates Mensheviks’ dissatisfaction with Alexinsky.²¹³ ☹

²⁰⁹ Skhodke [Rn. skhodka] – group of party activists, generally organised by profession (‘Deti-bortsy,’ **326**, 90n1).

²¹⁰ Content concerning church pressure in the previous item (‘Di kirkhe un di vahl-kampanye,’ **62**) includes the report of candidates confined in a lavra.

²¹¹ Nikolay Vasil’evich Gogol’ [Ukr. Mykola Vasylovych Hohol’], major writer in Russian (1809-52).

²¹² Nakaz – mandate.

²¹³ Grigoriy Alekseevich Aleksinskiy, Bolshevik, co-leader of the SD faction in the Second Duma, and one of the sixteen deputies accused at the time of dissolution (1879-1967).

“The Social-Democratic deputies P. G. Izmaylov and S. M. Dzhugeli invite Social-Democratic deputies and colleagues to enquire after information at the following address: Tauride Street, Building 21, a private residence”.²¹⁴

I read this notice in the newspapers and set off for Tauride Street.

I find myself there, in a wonderful little corner which is currently the only place in this great land where the Social-Democracy is legal.’ (par. 1-3)

‘[Concerning the lack of Jewish representation in Kiev gubernia:] “Now the Zionists will blame us,” I say. “They will say: ‘You see, a Left gubernia sent 14 Left deputies to the Duma and not even one Jew among them; your Lefts are antisemites too.”

“Well, what could we have done?” answers the silent one.

The Samara deputy sides to the side, listens to the silent one, strokes his wide, yellow beard and looks thoughtfully at everyone with his deeply nestled, intelligent, clear, blue eyes.’ (2; col. 1, par. 14-16)

- 64.** Alef-R. ‘Spetsyel: Telegramme tsu der “folks-tsaytung” [Special Notice: A Telegram to the *Folks-tsaytung*].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 290, 21 Feb. (6 Mar.) 1907, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This brief, single-paragraph communication ‘from our special correspondent’ reports on the appointment of office bearers in the Duma. ☞

‘St. Petersburg, 20 [February]. On the 19th in the evening, at a meeting of 300 deputies from the Koło, Kadets, Trudoviks, Popular Socialists, Socialist-Revolutionaries and Social-Democrats, the following were elected: for chairman, Golovin; for deputy chairmen, a Kadet and a Trudovik; and for a secretary, a Kadet.’²¹⁵ (entirety)

- 65.** Alef-R. ‘In dume: I. Der ershter tog fun der nayer dume. II. In der sotsyal-demokratisher fraktsye. III. Bay di trudovikes [In the Duma: I. The First Day of the New Duma. II. In the Social-Democratic Faction. III. Among the Trudoviks].’ *Folks-tsaytung*, Vilna, 2, no. 291, 22 Feb. (7 Mar.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

²¹⁴ Pëtr Grigor’evich Izmaylov, Menshevik peasant deputy from Novgorod, exiled after dissolution, joined RCP(b) in 1921 (1880-1938). Severian Moiseevich Dzhugeli, SD deputy from Tblisi, died in prison (1876-1909).

²¹⁵ Koło – Polish nationalist party. Trudoviks – moderate labour party. Popular Socialists [Rn. NSP] – neo-populist party founded in 1906. Fëdor Aleksandrovich Golovin, co-founder of the Kadets’ party (1867-1937).

This is a fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Of its three sections, the first is much longer than the other two, which are effectively minutes of meetings. The author/narrator is very present. She describes what she sees, inside and outside the Duma. She observes the Duma delegates, whose attire indicates their noble or peasant origin, or ethnicity. On catching sight of Krushevan, she shudders. She overhears conversations in the corridors and among the crowd. She is scathing about the Rights, Stolypin ‘looks calm. Cold-blooded’; Golovin ‘looks like a sharp knife’. A song wishing the Duma many years of effective productivity ‘resounds with such falsehood and hypocrisy!’, and cries of ‘Greetings to those who are under arrest!’ and ‘Amnesty!’ as the crowd passes the Predvorilka sound empty, because it is obvious that the demands of the people will not be met so quickly.²¹⁶ A conflict between a student and a sabre-wielding Cossack terrifies women nearby. Police on horseback ‘dance around in the middle of the crowd’. Readers can perceive the nervous excitement of the Duma’s first day, particularly the tension in the crowd where safety was threatened by the large number of people as well as by the armed Cossacks and police. ☞

‘[During the ballot to select a chairman:] They call up the deputies by alphabetical order of governorate. First the Aqmola region, Arkhangel’skaya gubernia, then Bessarabskaya gubernia, so the pogromists go up one by one onto the platform...’²¹⁷ (1; col. 3, par. 19). ‘We cross over Shpalernaya ulitsa. We can hear the ‘Marseillaise’ ...’²¹⁸ The high flags flutter. Soldiers look out from the surrounding barracks. We pass the artillery school. Soldiers open the windows and applaud....

“This is an unreliable crowd. One minute they are applauding and the next minute spilling blood,” says [a shopkeeper].

More Cossacks and more pushing from one side. More screams.

“Don’t run, don’t run!”

The mood is tense. Soldiers pass by.... The drum beats. The ‘Warszawianka’²¹⁹ ... a funeral march. The “Predvorilka”. We stop, someone is speaking. What he is saying nobody can hear.’ (2; col. 1, par. 33-42)

66. Alef-R. ‘In dume [In the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 293, 25 Feb. (10 Mar.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

²¹⁶ Predvorilka – presumably the Shpalerka remand prison at 25 Shpalernaya ulitsa. These crowd scenes are reminiscent of Alexander Herzen’s account of the large crowd moving along the boulevards of Paris at the time of the revolution of 1848 (see, for example, Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts*, translated by Constance Garnett, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1973).

²¹⁷ Ellipsis in original.

²¹⁸ Ellipsis in original.

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article reports on the Duma's second session. The first day had been by no means festive [yontevdik], and the second is already mundane [vokhedik]. The session is mostly taken up by ballots for administrative roles. In the corridors, there is discussion about asking the Duma for amnesty and, among other peasant discussions, a debate about whether they need freedom or land first. Esther comments, "Reboyne-sheloylem, old men like these are deputies these days."²²⁰ She observes Krushevan closely. A 'wicked glimmer' burns in his eyes, the eyes of an 'abnormal man'. He casts her a 'dark look'. Outside, she overhears foreign correspondents speaking about him in French. ☹

'The unfortunate correspondents whose fate it is to sit on the upper level cannot access the corridors and bemoan their bitter luck. Golovin has already made enemies among the correspondents, although he has been the boss of the Duma since his election and may make decrees there. As his heart dictates, he refuses to open the way down from above, under the pretext that this must be decided by the entire presidium of the Duma and until he is voted out all must remain as it is currently.

We remind you that, from the first minute, Muromstev did the correspondents all possible favours, and now the bad prince appears...²²¹

Some of us, including myself, leave the back way, make a real journey through the streets, and access the corridors that way. The doormen and other holy souls [bale-koydesh] try to protest but we, full of khutspe, go that way anyway... ' (col. 3, par. 4-6).

67. Alef-R. 'In dume un arum dume [In and around the Duma].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 294, 26 Feb. (11 Mar.) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' includes many observations. The Duma session comprised voting, discussion of technicalities and sanctioned obstructions from the Rights. The corridors are full of talk, including Trudoviks conducting 'intense agitation' among the non-aligned peasants, a large crowd questioning Ivashchenko, and peasants furious with a Kadet who suggested that bosses should be paid for land.²²² A Muslim deputy chats with Esther about equality for women, an issue important for democracy but at odds with his faith which dictates that

²¹⁹ 'Warszawianka' – the Song of Warsaw, a popular revolutionary hymn.

²²⁰ Reboyne-sheloylem – God, lord of the world.

²²¹ Sergey Andreevich Muromtsev, Chair of the First Duma (1850-1910). Ellipses in original.

²²² Ivan Samoylovich Ivashchenko, Octobrist deputy from Minsk (1851-1924).

women must cover their face and abstain from worldly things. After the session, two deputies are attacked by someone ‘in civilian clothes, apparently a spy’ crying, “You are selling Russia!”. They argue with the police officer who comes to help, whose rudeness to them is ‘hard to describe’. ☹

‘And in a corner a whole bunch of correspondents surrounded a peasant declaiming the story of the pig under the oak and explaining that the peasants are the roots of the tree.’²²³ He spoke in an affected, sweet voice about the suffering of the people. He is non-aligned, all parties are good if they mean well. He himself is wealthy but cannot tolerate the suffering of the little man.’ (col. 1, par. 14)

68. Alef-R. ‘Arum der dume [Around the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 296, 28 Feb. (13 Mar.) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This is a medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. On this day the Duma is not in session and correspondents are not permitted to speak to deputies, while deputies process the mandates pertaining to their election. In the Trudoviks’ club, Esther interviews a Trudovik about matters of general principle and the SD notice on amnesty of the previous Duma. There is a sense that the SD is distrusted in the Duma, whereas the SRs are linked haphazardly with the Trudoviks and others and disregarded. ☹

‘According to the rule, the Duma cannot function until over half of the mandates of all deputies have been processed. It may be that the next session will not be until Sunday. In that session, Stolypin must make his declaration.’²²⁴ After the declaration the Kadets intend to propose simply proceeding with the agenda without allowing time for any debates about it. The attitude of the Left is still unknown.’ (col. 1, par. 14)

69. Alef-R. ‘Arum der dume [Around the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 298, 2 Mar. (15) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ discusses Stolypin’s anticipated declaration, the processing of the mandates, the correspondents’ difficulties in fulfilling Okhrana requirements, the suitability of Golovin to be Duma

²²³ A fable by Ivan Aleksandrovich Krylov (1768-1844) about a pig grubbing for acorns without caring whether the tree which produces the acorns is damaged.

²²⁴ The next article advises that it is not known exactly what the declaration will contain (col. 1, par. 1).

chairman, etc.²²⁵ On the way home, Esther chats with her coachman about why there was no Duma session today and whether the Duma might ‘give us land’. A conference of the Jewish group, closed to correspondents, had made resolutions about the Zionists and emigration. ☞

‘Near the quarters of the Left deputies, spies stand guard.

Each day, new judgements concerning the deputies pour out as from a sack.

“Such disorder, such disorder,” the Okhrana boss lamented on Saturday to a well-known journalist, pointing to the noisy, seething crowd in the corridors...

And, no doubt to preserve order, on Monday the boss did a search in the room of the SD faction, though what could be found there is hard to understand since it is only a little room where a table without drawers and a few chairs are the only furniture.

“You will see, they will end up hurling a bomb into the faction,” a correspondent says ...²²⁶

There is much talk of the Duma dissolving. Some say they will do it simply on the pretext that there are revolutionaries in it, others that they will dissolve it without any pretext. The mood is very tense.’ (col. 2, par. 1-6)

70. Alef. R. ‘In dume un arum dume: I. Di deputaten megen goyml benshen. II. Arum stolipins deklaratsye [In and around the Duma: I. The Deputies May Give Thanks for Their Safety. II. Around Stolypin’s Declaration].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 299, 4 Mar. (17) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Its **first part** concerns the collapse of the ceiling of the Duma. Kirienko gives his opinion on the cause of the collapse.²²⁷ A team of architects had examined the building only recently.

The **second part** sees the parties formulate their responses to Stolypin’s declaration. ☞ ‘I ask some attendants what happened.

“At six o’clock there was a bang like a bomb or a cannon. We came running and it was just like you see it now. If it had fallen half an hour later while the hall was being cleaned, many attendants would have been killed.”

²²⁵ Okhrana – tsarist secret police.

²²⁶ Ellipses in original.

²²⁷ Ivan Ivanovich Kirienko, engineer, SD deputy from Kiev, after dissolution sentenced to four years’ hard labour, ultimately shot by command of counterrevolutionary Admiral Kolchak (1877-1918).

A few deputies say that it is not so simple, that it was planned to postpone the sessions; that the fact that it happened when there could be no victims shows it was no accident...²²⁸

It is not hard to imagine that in the distant, far-flung corners of this vast land, the story will be about an attack on the deputies.’ (col. 2, par. 13-16)

71. Alef-R. ‘Arum der dume [Around the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 302, 7 Mar. (20) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns general matters while the Duma is not sitting. A major event is encountering a large group of grey, glassy-eyed military engineers who have been repairing the Duma building. ☞ ‘Officers are forbidden to attend the Duma sessions, they must not become infected with the spirit of sedition. But the spirit of sedition now hovers in every corner of the ruined hall. Every splinter screams with its own seditious tongue. Why were they not too scared to send in soldiers?’ (col. 2, par. 16-17)

72. Alef-R. ‘In dume: Stolypin in dume [In the Duma: Stolypin in the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 303, 8 Mar. (21) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns a Duma session in the luxurious Nobles’ Club. Esther sits in an area barred to all other correspondents. During the discussion about mandates, Krushevan gives a fiery address about the ineligibility of Alexinsky, which is refuted. Stolypin presents his declaration, outlining how the Duma will work ‘to make Russia a legal state’, but ignoring the issues of military field courts and concessions for Jews. Tsereteli gives a strong (despite his severe tuberculosis), moving address about the failings of the government, to which the Rights respond rudely.²²⁹ Each party presents its response to Stolypin’s declaration, including many ‘Black Hundred speakers’, ending with Krushevan. ☞ ‘And Tsereteli stands calmly on the podium. When it becomes quiet, he starts to speak again. No traces of residual agitation can be heard in his voice; and as before the simple, terse words resound, unaffected and free of beautiful images, with a deep, unshakeable faith.’ (2; col. 1, par. 19)

²²⁸ Ellipsis in original.

73. Alef-R. 'In Dume: Di hunger-frage in dume [In the Duma: The Hunger Question in the Duma].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 304, 9 Mar. (22) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent', providing a sometimes emotional, detailed account of the parliamentary discussion about hunger in the land and whether to establish a commission to deal with it. ☹

'The deputy Khasanov holds up a lump of dirt and says, "This is not dirt, this is the bread that people eat in my uyezd!"'²³⁰ (col. 2, par. 2)

'And it seems that all can hear the terrible chorus of hunger and desperation which resounds throughout the land. And it seems that all can hear the murmurs of streams of people's blood and tears which flow throughout the land and flow here, in the high house of justice, and it seems that soon, the windows will burst open, the velvet drapes will be thrown aside, and the millions of starved, tormented people will fill the shining hall...'²³¹ (col. 2, par. 4).

74. Alef. R. 'A spets. telegram tsu der "folks-tsaytung": Stolipin greyt zikh obtsushafen di militer feld-gerikhten [A Special Telegram to the *Folks-tsaytung*: Stolypin Prepares to Set Up Military Field Courts].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 305, 11 Mar. (24) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a short dispatch of one brief paragraph. ☹

'Petersburg, 10 [March]. According to reliable information, on Monday Stolypin will announce in the Duma that the government can install military field courts at a moment's notice.' (entirety)

75. Alef. R. 'In dume: Stolipin ferteydigt di forlage fun di kadeten [In the Duma: Stolypin Supports the Kadets' Proposal].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 305, 11 Mar. (24) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

²²⁹ Irakli Tsereteli, SD deputy, subsequently a minister in the provisional government and a member of the Georgian constituent assembly (1881-1959).

²³⁰ Kalimulla Gumerovich Khasanov, deputy from Ufa (1878-1949).

²³¹ Ellipsis in original.

This is a fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Discussions in the Duma about creating a commission to help the hungry are heated, as the Kadets oppose the proposal and the Rights react noisily to comments they disapprove of. ☹
‘The Rights are not working today. They are only supporting the Kadet leaders with their united power. They make noise, applaud, prevent Lefts from speaking even a moment longer than the permitted 5 minutes and insist that Rodichev may speak as long as he wishes.’²³² Purishkevich jumps up onto the podium and starts to reprove the Duma. Every day of its existence costs the public 5,000 rubles but it occupies itself with chit-chat. Work! No more empty talk!

He receives an answer from the SD Zhigilev, who asks him how much the Kishinëv pogrom cost the public, how much do the dozens of spies who watch every step of every deputy cost it.²³³ The question remains unanswered.’ (2; col. 2, par. 8-10)

76. Alef-R. ‘Fun vos ontsuhoyben? [Where to Start?].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 305, 11 Mar. (24) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns some of the parties’ ideas about which issue the Duma should consider first. ☹

‘The Kadets do not intend, while the Duma is not yet firmly on its feet and still poorly engaged with the public, to put the type of question which might soon crumble the opposition and provoke conflict. They believe it necessary to put a question about the peasantry, but not one that is too complicated and dangerous for the first steps of the Duma.’ (col. 2, par. 1)

77. Alef. R. ‘In dume: Tsu der zitsung fun 9-ten merts [In the Duma: About the Meeting of 9 March].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 306, 12 Mar. (25) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly short newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns voting on matters including an investigative mission to famine areas. ☹

‘The joy of the Rights is difficult to describe. They used all the strength in their necks, in their hands and feet: no consultation even took place for them. It was enough for Rodichev to make a proposal or the least movement for all the Rights to jump up as one

²³² Fëdor Izmaylovich Rodichev, lawyer, co-founder of the Kadets’ party (1854-1933). Digits in original.

²³³ ‘Zhigilev’ may be Nikolay Andreevich Zhidelëv, SD deputy from Vladimir (1880-1950).

man and support it, and the same “Yoshke Hessen” that Krushevan complained about in his famous telegram was yesterday given such rousing ovations from Krushevan, Purishkevich and even Count Bobrinsky that the windows actually shook.’²³⁴ (col. 1, par. 2 - col. 2, par. 1)

78. Alef-R. ‘In dume: Di frage vegen feld-gerikhten [In the Duma: The Question of Military Field Courts].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 308, 14 Mar. (27) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns a long session which heard over sixty addresses on abolishing military field courts. The Rights support this form of justice. Shulgin spoke coldly of hanging terrorists, though he would rather hang those who devise and encourage terrorist acts, like Korolenko, than the lunatics who commit them.²³⁵ Bobrinsky made a comparison with the death penalty during the French revolution. The Octobrists distanced themselves on this issue from the ‘pogromists’, siding instead with the Kadets, among whom Maklakov and Teslenko spoke strongly in opposition to field courts.²³⁶ Gerus spoke on the class character of the question.²³⁷ Tikhvinsky placed the responsibility for the deaths of those hanged on the government ministers and church leaders present, and called upon them to act, but Eulogius refuted this argument.²³⁸ An officer spoke of the loathsome burden to the army of carrying out death sentences. ☹

‘A fiery address for abolishing field courts was given by the Peaceful Renovator Konstantinov.²³⁹ Do field courts pacify the country? No, he answered. They have pacified nothing. And he tells of a letter from an officer acquaintance, a commander of a punitive expedition who had to carry out a death sentence. The last word of the accused was “Long live freedom!”

²³⁴ Iosif Vladimirovich Hessen (Gessen), Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1865-1943). The Yiddish name he is given here alludes to his Jewish origin. Vladimir Alekseevich Bobrinskiy, Octobrist then moderate Right deputy from Tula (1868-1927).

²³⁵ Vasiliy Vital’evich Shul’gin, Right deputy from Volhynia, later spent twenty years in the Soviet gulag (1878-1976).

²³⁶ Vasiliy Alekseevich Maklakov, lawyer, prominent Kadet deputy, part of the defence team of Mendel Beilis during his famous legal process (1869-1957); the subject of Stephen F. Williams, *The Reformer*. Nikolay Vasil’evich Teslenko, lawyer, Kadet deputy from Moscow (1870-1942).

²³⁷ Longin or Loggin Fëdorovich Gerus, teacher, SD deputy from Kuban, said to be still teaching English in 1950 (1876-?).

²³⁸ Fëdor Vasil’evich Tikhvinskiy, priest, member of the peasant union, independent left-wing deputy (1861-?). Yevlogiy (Eulogius) – member of Second and Third Dumas from the Orthodox population of Lublin and Siedlce gubernias 1907-12, Bishop of Chełm 1912-14 (1868-1946).

²³⁹ Grigoriy Semënovich Konstantinov, formerly Octobrist deputy from Novgorod (1869-?).

“Is it not clear that in other conditions this young man would be one of the best children of the fatherland?” The hall shook from the vigorous applause.’ (1; col. 1, par. 10-13)

- 79.** Alef-R. ‘In dume: Di frage vegem feld-gerikhtn [In the Duma: The Question of Military Field Courts].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 15 Mar. (28) 1907, 2, no. 309, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. In anticipation of Stolypin’s address, the Duma hears more addresses about military field courts.

Another mention of the French revolution queries what its history suggests about the future of Russia. A comment by a Kuban Cossack deputy, that soon Cossacks will no longer use their knouts, provokes an uproar among the Rights, Bobrinsky calling it an insult against the army. ‘The old naïve dreamer’ Dolgopolov speaks emotionally, urging the ministers to end the bloodshed.²⁴⁰ Sinadino’s long address includes many esoteric references.²⁴¹ Alexinsky compares the government’s bloodshed with terrorism and finds the former to be much more brutal. The death penalty is justified by its use in the West, but it would be better to adopt other Western practices such as democracy. ☞

‘We saw how the noble optimism of Kuzmin-Karavaev crumbled under the hard light of reality.’²⁴² He imagined that the Duma would unanimously say, “Enough! Enough bloodshed!” But as soon as he left the podium, men got up onto it shouting, “More! More bloodshed!” One joyfully related that the death penalty exists in every country; the other had visited America and his real-Russian heart was delighted that a man had been shot in San Francisco; a third proposed another tactic instead of field courts: pogroms.’ (2; col. 1, par. 8)

- 80.** Alef. R. ‘In dume: Di frage vegem feld-gerikhten [In the Duma: The Question of Military Field Courts].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 310, 16 Mar. (29) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long newspaper article concludes the previous article. Purishkevich and his ‘band’, with ‘provocative khutspe’, call the SRs bandits, even though the SRs renounce terror as a party tactic. “You killed Pavlov!” the Rights accuse them.²⁴³ One of the most

²⁴⁰ Nifont Ivanovich Dolgopolov, doctor, SR deputy from Nizhegorod (1857-1922).

²⁴¹ Panteleymon Viktorovich Sinadino, Right deputy from Bessarabia (1875-1941).

²⁴² Vladimir Dmitrievich Kuz’min-Karavaev, co-founder of the Party of Democratic Reform (1859-1928).

²⁴³ See 43.

interesting moments of the session is Kuzmin-Karavaev's powerful address during his dispute with Bobrinsky over the existence of field courts in Austria. After many other addresses, Stolypin speaks, expressing the same views as the Rights. The question of military field courts is referred to committee. There is some debate over the Rights' proposal that the Duma condemn terrorist acts. ☹

'The session closed.

The miracle had not occurred.

In how many places around the country did people await this day in fatal suspense?

How many men expect to live their final hour tonight? How many gallows will be built tonight? How many such nights will yet cover this tormented land with their black veil?

Who will answer?' (concluding paragraphs)

- 81.** Alef-R. 'In dume: Di dume un di arbaytslozikayt I. II. III. Der yustits-minister fertheydigt di gezetslikhkayt. IV. In di kuluaren [In the Duma: The Duma and Unemployment, Part I and Part II. III. The Justice Minister Defends Legality. IV. In the Corridors].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 311, 20 Mar. (2 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-2, 5 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther Frumkin?'. Copy from NYPL.

This is a long newspaper article in four parts. The **first part** concerns the discussion of homelessness in the Duma. Dzhaparidze speaks well though his voice is impaired by tuberculosis.²⁴⁴ His address is interrupted by clamour from the Rights and corrections by Golovin. The Kadets plan to upset the Rights by mentioning the murder of Iollos.²⁴⁵ Pełowski speaks passionately about persecution of Polish workers, but can such 'velvet phrases' mask the treacherous work of the Koło in Poland?²⁴⁶ The **second part** outlines further addresses and voting on homelessness. The author comes into focus during the account of a conversation with a fellow correspondent, about whether the decision to help participants in political strikes is a revolutionary victory. Krushevan had voted 'for', to aid homeless victims of the Jews. The **third part** concerns the violent incident involving Sigov in Krasnoufimsk.²⁴⁷ The **fourth part** relates conversations overheard in the Duma corridors about the land question, including a heated discussion between Bobrinsky and a Trudovik peasant. Such incidents occur every day. Non-peasants discuss the anticipated dissolution – before or after Easter? ☹

²⁴⁴ Archil Levanovich Dzhaparidze, SD deputy from Tblisi (1875-1908).

²⁴⁵ Grigoriy Borisovich Iollos, journalist, Kadet deputy in the First Duma from Poltava, killed in a terrorist act by a member of the Union of the Russian People (1859-1907).

²⁴⁶ Edward Pełowski, Koło deputy from Piotrków gubernia (1880-1960).

‘Filosofov is clearly angry with the SD and screams at them like a strict rabbi at his kheyder pupils.’²⁴⁸ But he hopes that the majority in the Duma will not allow such things and will do the same as with the famine relief question. The homeless must be helped, but if they come and scream bread, bread, bread, work! (Filosofov himself screams and enlarges his eyes frighteningly and looks comical) the government is not obliged to respond to them (!). The causes of homelessness must be investigated, then all will see that the speakers in the Duma exaggerated greatly’ (2; col. 2, par. 19 - col. 3, par. 1).

82. Alef-R. ‘In dume: Di agrar frage in dume [In the Duma: The Agrarian Question in the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 312, 21 Mar. (3 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns a Duma session about the agrarian question, beginning with a long address by Prince Svyatopolk-Mirsky in opposition to the peasant commune and to giving more land to the peasants.²⁴⁹ For him, the peasants and the country need the leadership of the nobles. Karavaev presents figures demonstrating the dire situation of the Russian peasantry.²⁵⁰ Tsereteli speaks of the “sacred” principle of private ownership, mentioning destruction of homes by the authorities, and outlines the SD programme on the agrarian question. Kutler insists that all land be given freely to the peasants, unlike the Trudoviks’ idea of only giving land to those who work.²⁵¹ The final speaker, the minister of agriculture, Vasil’chikov, speaks poorly and unintelligibly, not even the Rights realise it is time to applaud when he finishes.²⁵² ☹

‘During the entire month of the Duma’s existence, the non-party peasants have wondered and muttered about why it has occupied itself with “side questions”; they complain that they have been overwhelmed with letters, that people curse them and accuse them of not working at the most important task, the land question. The Rights have waged a determined agitation on this terrain, claiming that the Lefts do not want to give any land to the people, they only want to make uprisings, etc.’ (opening paragraph)

²⁴⁷ Pavel Sergeevich Sigov, teacher, SR deputy from Perm (1865-1937).

²⁴⁸ Dmitriy Aleksandrovich Filosofov, Minister of Trade and Industry until his sudden death in December 1907 (1861-1907). Kheyder – religious primary school.

²⁴⁹ Prince Dmitriy Nikolaevich Svyatopolk-Mirskiy, Right deputy from Bessarabia (1874-1950).

²⁵⁰ Aleksandr L’vovich Karavaev, doctor, Trudovik deputy from Yekaterinoslav, killed by Black Hundred-ists (1855-1908).

²⁵¹ Nikolay Nikolaevich Kutler, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg, later a board member of the Gosbank of RSFSR (1859-1924).

- 83.** Alef-R. 'In dume: Der byudzhet in dume [In the Duma: The Budget in the Duma].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 313, 22 Mar. (4 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' emphasises the importance that the Duma successfully determines a budget. Not doing so would be 'a revolution'. The finance minister gives a long address, then Kutler speaks from a Kadet perspective. Afterwards there are lively discussions in the corridors, and further addresses follow the break. The report is succinct, with minimal commentary.

Purishkevich accuses the SD of inciting a popular uprising. ☹

'The Popular Socialist Shcherbyna, the famous scholar and statistician, is a very bad speaker.'²⁵³ In his address he justified the proposal that until the budget rights of the Duma, which are specified by the rules of 8 March, are modified, the budget cannot be adopted.

The speech of the SR Zaytsev made a sad impression.²⁵⁴ He spoke indistinctly and quietly, choked and spluttered, looked constantly at a piece of paper and made pauses of several minutes; it was pitiful to look at him.' (2; col. 5, par. 2-3)

- 84.** Alef-R. 'In dume: Der byudzhet in dume [In the Duma: The Budget in the Duma].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 314, 26 Mar. (8 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' is divided by eight sub-headings. During the next Duma session about the budget, Alexinsky's address responding to the finance minister is praised by all. He presents the SD faction's proposal rejecting the budget. Polish deputies speak of the inadequacies of the budget with regard to Poland, spurring protests from the finance minister. His comment that these matters will be discussed elsewhere should not be seen as an allusion to the imminent dissolution of the Duma. The SRs largely concur with the SDs on the budget. The Popular Socialists approve the budget only conditionally and would not formally approve its referral to committee. The Trudoviks are still undecided but make several criticisms. The Kadets respond critically both to the government and the SD. The Octobrists mildly criticise the budget and rebuke the chair for allowing odious material

²⁵² Prince Boris Aleksandrovich Vasil'chikov, senior government official, not officially titled 'minister' (1860-1931).

²⁵³ Fedir Andriyovych Shcherbyna, writer, academic, public figure, PS deputy from Kuban Oblast' (1849-1936).

to be read from newspapers. The Rights are most visible in objecting to comments made by other parties. Purishkevich is ridiculous while expressing Rights' support for the budget, employing an analogy about Socrates, a story about a king with new clothes, a French proverb, etc. Bobrinsky's address is vulgar. ☹

'I will focus on 2 interesting moments in Berezin's very long address.²⁵⁵ Concerning the harsh criticism of the government in general and yesterday's incident with the Rights, who perceived an insult to the monarchy in Alexinsky's quotes about the dissolution of the Duma, he said the following: "Among the Trudoviks, there are peasants who are no less, and even greater, even truer monarchists than the Rights, and who correctly understand these relationships and the difference between the monarchy and the government. Here, the government is criticised, but the peasants do not confuse the government with the sacred person of the monarch. Criticising the government does not mean criticising the monarch.'" (2; col. 5, par. 9-10)

- 85.** Alef-R. 'A kadetisher miting [A Kadet Meeting].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 315, 27 Mar. (9 Apr.) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL microfilm.

This short newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' reports on a public discussion of Kadet policy, held at Komissarzhevsky's Theatre in St. Petersburg. ☹
'An interesting view is held by Milyukov about the Kadets' tactic concerning the SD improvement to the resolution about the homeless.²⁵⁶ He believes that the Kadets did not act appropriately in that matter; they should have suggested an improvement in the same vein, their support of Kutler's formulation was an error, they simply lacked a man with initiative who could grasp immediately that it was an error, but only they who do not work make no errors.' (concluding paragraph)

- 86.** Alef-R. 'In dume: der tsveyter agrar-tog [In the Duma: The Second Agrarian Day].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 316, 28 Mar. (10 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' provides detailed accounts of many Duma addresses. Today's topic is important but the generally poor addresses attract little interest. The SDs object to the Kadets' proposal to refer the agrarian

²⁵⁴ Mikhail Gerasimovich Zaytsev, doctor, deputy from Vyatka (1864-1909).

²⁵⁵ Mikhail Yegorovich Berezin, Trudovik deputy, Deputy Chair of the Second Duma (1864-1933). Digit in original.

question to committee. Pyanykh's fine address urges peasant deputies to reject leadership by the nobility which will lead them to disaster just as swimmers will drown if someone sits on them as they swim.²⁵⁷ An old peasant reminds the Rights of how peasants used to be private property which could be lost at cards, and speaks touchingly of the earth as a mother stolen from her children. Melnik's query about Polish matters is replete with national hatred but contains some truths.²⁵⁸ Shulgin, speaking 'as a true Right must,' reminds the Lefts that the greats of Russian literature were nobles and some of them, such as Turgenev, fought for the emancipation of the peasantry.²⁵⁹ Shulgin's proposal concerning a land and monetary fund is a foolish parody of the Lefts' proposal. Konstantinov comments that this address insults its speaker. ☞ 'The impoverishment of the villages is a major cause of the crisis in the cities; recovery in the villages is the primary condition for general economic recovery in the country. What remedy is recommended for this illness? The minister and Prince Svyatopolk-Mirsky see one method: developing private ownership. The government tried to do this. Did it succeed? Did it manage to transform sand into gold?' (1; par. 10-11)

87. Alef-R. 'In dume: Di ende fun di byudzhet-debaten in dume [In the Duma: The End of the Budget Debates in the Duma].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 317, 29 Mar. (11 Apr.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This is a long newspaper article 'from our correspondent'. In this session, Zurabov makes one of the best budget speeches heard so far.²⁶⁰ He describes how the government extracts wealth from the people, for example, by its alcohol monopoly. He urges the people to repel this exploitation. The fact-filled address of Fëdorov is barely heard.²⁶¹ He argues that the way to initiate economic recovery is through developing productivity rather than increasing indirect taxation. Most other addresses simply repeat information heard in previous budget sessions. The Rights' contribution is merely purim-shpileray.²⁶² In the corridors, it is agreed that referring the budget to committee had guaranteed the Duma two months' existence, but 'we will see'. ☞

²⁵⁶ Pavel Nikolaevich Milyukov, Kadet leader, Foreign Minister in the provisional government in 1917 (1859-1943).

²⁵⁷ Ivan Yemel'yanovich P'yanykh, peasant, SR deputy from Kursk (1863?-1929).

²⁵⁸ Varfolomey Minich Mel'nik, peasant, non-party deputy from Minsk (1867-1907?).

²⁵⁹ Ivan Sergeevich Turgenev, major Russian writer of fiction (1818-83).

²⁶⁰ Arshak Gerasimovich Zurabov, Menshevik SD deputy from Tblisi (1873-1920).

²⁶¹ Of the four deputies named Fëdorov in the Second Duma, this was most likely Georgiy Georgievich Fëdorov, the Menshevik deputy from Kiev who served on the state expenditure and national education committees (1878-1938).

²⁶² Purim-shpileray – buffoonery similar to that of actors performing in a specific genre of theatrical presentation of the story associated with the Purim festival. Several articles from this period liken the Rights' behaviour to purim-shpileray, perhaps in connection with the recent festival which in 1907 was in early March.

‘I want to devote a few warm words to Struve.’²⁶³ He told us that we expect the Kadets to reject our proposal, but we had not expected that. Alexinsky proposed that all democratic elements side with us on this matter. Struve enjoyed talking about a siege, but he does not know the rules of battle. When you besiege a city, you try to prevent any food from reaching it. Struve besieges the government like this: he orders them food, opens the door for them and tells them we will not enter the city, we will sit by the door and eat kasha. That is no siege. Struve talks about a siege and thinks that he truly is besieging!’ (2; col. 2, par. 3)

88. Alef. R. ‘In dume: Der driter agrar-tog in dume [In the Duma: The Third Agrarian Day in the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 319, 1 Apr. (14) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This is a long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Its **first section, Purishkevich Ejected from the Session**, recounts a scandal during which Purishkevich persistently argues with the chairman, and Rights are heard to call the Duma ‘Jewish’. Afterwards Bobrinsky speaks with a correspondent, expressing ‘no great love or respect for the victim of the Jewish Duma’. The **second section, How to Select the Agrarian Commission**, comprises a few short paragraphs on this procedure. The **third section, The Agrarian Addresses**, occupies most of the article. The addresses are ‘hardly interesting’. Bobrinsky speaks of the emancipation of the peasants, referring to the Bible and to Herzen, who ultimately recanted his revolutionary stance saying, “You have won, Galilean!”²⁶⁴ Herzen wrote that the tsar would be killed by a noble, but nobles did not kill Alexander II, ‘the red flag you wave is not the flag of emancipation, it is the flag that is red with the holy blood of the Liberator-tsar’.²⁶⁵ Bobrinsky argues further that private ownership is the solution to the agrarian question. Esther’s coachman tells her of Bobrinsky’s vast land holdings in Tula. There is no diversity of opinion among the SRs, who support the existing communal system but include no facts or figures in their addresses. Sayko speaks poetically of his home village, and of how Catherine the Great crushed the freedom of Ukraine and gave its land to the nobility.²⁶⁶ He asserts that the Ukrainian peasantry opposes private ownership. Shingarëv

²⁶³ Pëtr Berngardovich Struve, writer, political and economic theorist, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1870-1944). See the works of Richard Pipes on Struve, for example, *Struve: Liberal on the Left, 1870-1905*, Harvard UP, 1970.

²⁶⁴ “You have won, Galilean” – supposed last words of anti-Christian Roman emperor Julian the Apostate (332-63).

²⁶⁵ Alexander II – the Liberator-tsar who emancipated the peasantry, assassinated by the revolutionary organisation Narodnaya volya (1818-81).

²⁶⁶ Yefim Antonovich Sayko, Trudovik deputy from Poltava (1879-?).

challenges the veracity of Svyatopolk-Mirsky's examples about Germany and England.²⁶⁷ Shingarëv's own figures show that famine mortality numbers decreased and births increased proportionately to size of land holdings. He proposes that the writers alluded to by Shulgin would say, like Pushkin, "You are as repulsive to the soul as coffins!"²⁶⁸ Shingarëv makes less effective arguments against the Lefts. Karaulov speaks about communal land ownership among Cossacks, a system which could be employed effectively throughout Russia.²⁶⁹ ☞

'Fokeev touched on the Christian perspective, reminding the government that it calls itself a Christian government, and the Rights that spiritual leaders sit among them.'²⁷⁰ He quoted passages from the Bible [Toyre]. "If a prophet arose today, preaching what it says in the Bible, he would already have been in Narym for some time now," he said, to applause. He recalled Count Tolstoy, who formulated a truly Christian perspective on land, and who was officially excommunicated.' (2; col. 2, par. 23 - col. 3, par. 3)

- 89.** Alef-R. 'Di frage vegen di ongeklogte deputaten [The Question of the Accused Deputies].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 319, 1 Apr. (14) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This is a fairly long newspaper article. In this Duma session, Hessen proposes referring to committee the question of the charges under Article 126 against Gerus, Kuznetsov and Kraselyuk and their possible exclusion from the Duma.²⁷¹ Alexinsky refutes this proposal, employing biting sarcasm. Other responses, before the proposal is adopted, concern such fundamental aspects of the question as the efficacy of the rules themselves and, by extension, of the entire Russian legal system. ☞

'[From Teslenko's address:] A court must be a temple, a great temple where the sacred rituals of the social conscience are performed. But in our case is not the social conscience of that temple already long expelled? Are not the doors of that temple locked? Before Christ began his ministry [lernen zayn toyre], he drove from the temple all who had to be driven out. He who demands respect for the law must first purify the

²⁶⁷ Andrey Ivanovich Shingarëv, doctor, publicist, Kadet deputy from Voronezh, minister in 1917 governments (1869-1918).

²⁶⁸ "You are as repulsive..." – from 'Poet i chern [The Poet and the Crowd],' 1828, by Aleksandr Sergeevich Pushkin, great Russian writer (1799-1837). Shul'gin made the address alluded to several days earlier, see **86**.

²⁶⁹ Mikhail Aleksandrovich Karaulov, writer, Cossack leader, deputy from Terek Oblast' (1878-1917).

²⁷⁰ Mikhail Semënovich Fokeyev, barrister, SR deputy from Nizhegorod (1871-1918).

²⁷¹ Aleksandr Afrikanovich Kuznetsov, SD deputy from Simbirsk (1875-1918?). Ivan Nikitich Kraselyuk, Trudovik deputy from Kiev (1873-?).

temple of its defilers. He must open the doors of the temple for the social conscience (rousing applause).’ (3; col. 1, par. 10)

- 90.** Alef.-R. ‘In dume: Der fierter agrar-tog in dume [In the Duma: The Fourth Agrarian Day in the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 322, 4 Apr. (17) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ contains very little commentary. The author’s conversation with a comrade brings her into focus very quickly and she maintains a presence throughout. She observes the ‘politically unaware and dark’ peasant deputies, whose boredom permeates the session hall when complicated facts and figures are presented. In the bustling corridors, Krushevan quietly tells Karavaev that ‘during the Kishenëv pogrom he was somewhere else, and that after the Częstochowa pogrom he had asked the Jewish rabbis to restrain their youth because they are in danger’. During the addresses, ‘the peasant Sakhno’ says, “The priests ... console us with the world to come [oylem-habe]. I think that if people knew how to obtain the world to come, the noblemen would have snatched the largest part there as well”.²⁷² The addresses relate to land, its use and ownership, and the personal experience of the speaker or his constituency, ‘their own, local misery’. Purishkevich fills his long address with ‘verses, with songs, with aphorisms, with proverbs, with quotations in Latin’, at one point ‘lets out a tear’, and provides amusement with a discourse on syphilis arguing that doctors are engaging in politics instead of treating their patients. ☹ ‘And in all the discussions, in the bargaining [for votes] and in the noise, one thing is perceptible, a secret, possibly subconscious, faith that the commission will do something, that something concrete will emerge, with real and imminent results. This is mostly perceptible among the non-party deputies.’ (2; col. 1, par. 9)

- 91.** Alef.-R. ‘In dume: Di ekstra-interpelatsyes fun der S. D.-sher fraktsye [In the Duma: The Extraordinary Interpellations of the SD Faction].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 323, 5 Apr. (18) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ details the addresses of this session. The first interpellation concerns an attempted escape from prison in Riga

which was violently suppressed, with 70 men still at risk of execution. During the discussion, Shulgin causes unrest by asking whether any deputies have bombs in their pockets. After he is sent out, Esther tells nearby deputies her opinion of the matter, and they agree with her. The second interpellation, concerning the military expedition to Baku to quell the strike in the merchant marine, is referred to committee after some discussion. The third interpellation, brought by Tsereteli, concerns the violent military expedition and large financial penalty in Kutaisi gubernia.²⁷³ The last interpellation concerns Hershelman, who quashed the mild sentence of a military field court and had the matter re-tried, resulting in a death sentence.²⁷⁴ ☹

‘Alexinsky adds to Maklakov’s address [about Hershelman] an incident concerning a worker killed by an officer whom he had bumped, although he had apologised twice, concluding: This is not a question of illegality, but of criminal use of power.’ (2; col. 4, par. 10)

92. Alef-R. ‘In dume: I. Der finfter agrar-tog in dume. II. A tog fun interpelatsyes [In the Duma: I. The Fifth Agrarian Day in the Duma. II. A Day of Interpellations].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 325, 8 Apr. (21) 1907, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections and sub-sections. In Part I, the first sub-section concerns debates about the duration of **Postponement of Duma Sessions** over Easter. **The Enquiry about the Events in Akatuy and Other Places** concerns brutal violence against prisoners.²⁷⁵ **The Debates about the Elections to the Agrarian Committee** comprehensively details this electoral process and reviews the debates. **The Agrarian Debates** begins with a gossipy political tale about Petrochenko, before outlining his address and that of Shimansky.²⁷⁶ **The People Cannot Obtain Land without Freedom** concerns the competent address by Anikin responding to Purishkevich.²⁷⁷ **Why the Rights Are Delighted by the**

²⁷² Vasilii Grigor’evich Sakhno, SD deputy from Kiev, after dissolution denied membership of the SD faction at his trial and was acquitted (1864-?). Lenin mentions his address in *The Agrarian Programme of the Social-Democracy in the First Russian Revolution, 1905-1907*, 4. The Non-Party Peasants, Chapter v.

²⁷³ Kutaisi gubernia – governorate covering much of western Georgia.

²⁷⁴ Sergey Konstantinovich Gershel’man, infantry general, Governor-General of Moscow 1906-09 (1854-1910). This incident and related legal implications are mentioned among the history of the Second Duma in Chapter 7 of Williams, *The Reformer*.

²⁷⁵ Akatuy – mining settlement for political criminals, part of the Nerchinsk katorga system in Zabaykal’ya (Transbaikalia).

²⁷⁶ Fëdor Ignat’evich Petrochenko, non-party peasant deputy from Vitebsk (1875-1918?). Ivan Adamovich Shimanskiy, non-party peasant deputy from Minsk (1872-1938).

²⁷⁷ Stepan Vasil’evich Anikin, writer, SR deputy from Saratov (1869-1919).

Peasants' Emancipation outlines Alexinsky's address explaining how the nobles kept the best land after the emancipation. **The Law on Leaving Village Organisations**, like the following sub-sections, continues Alexinsky's address. **The Colonisation of Siberia** concerns the government's efforts to encourage peasants to settle in Siberia and stay there. **The Peasant Bank** explains the nobility-oriented motives of this institution. With **The Confiscation of Nobles' Land**, Alexinsky concludes his address, urging the peasants to struggle for freedom. Esther corrects one of his supporting facts. **Seizing Nobles' Land Means Reducing Cultivation** presents arguments of Sinadino and Stenbok-Fermor.²⁷⁸ Part II relates to the following day's session, when three interpellations were approved. **The Horrors in Akatuy** contains Uspensky's report of the violence and of negligent treatment of unwell female prisoners, among them Spiridonova.²⁷⁹ In **Sozonov's Letter**, Uspensky discusses a personal account sent to the author Melshin by a prisoner who, they heard, had since died.²⁸⁰ **The Government's Policy on Political Exiles** contains Uspensky's critical comments on abuse of prisoners, and related addresses, several of which were discontinued by the chairman. **The Interpellation on General Taube's Mission to Baku** contains basic information about the incident in question and the committee's investigative proposal.²⁸¹ **The Nature of the Strike on the Caspian Sea** contains Aframovich's address on this topic, a personal account of the strike and comments about what the incident, an economic protest which became political, reveals about governmental antagonism towards the people.²⁸² **Taube Was Sent to Influence the Bosses Too** outlines Struve's unique perspective, noting his errors. Kapustin and Yevreinov also speak about general principles.²⁸³ 🗨️

'Alexinsky is on the podium. It is pointless to speak of legality, [he says,] when you burn a house, you break the windows and you try to break even more, you jump on the glass and smash it.

Golovin, who today "was bitten by a fly", as they say in the corridors, interrupted him. I cannot explain my perspective any other way and I renounce my permission to speak, announces Alexinsky. There are calls to him to continue speaking. He descends, to applause.' (2; col. 5, par. 7-10)

²⁷⁸ Vladimir Vasil'evich Stenbok-Fermor (Stenbock-Fermor), agronomist, Right deputy from Kherson (1866-1950).

²⁷⁹ Viktor Petrovich Uspenskiy, doctor, SR deputy from Ryazan' (1869-1919). Mariya Aleksandrovna Spiridonova, SR activist who shot an official, publicly complained of being physically abused while under arrest (1884-1941).

²⁸⁰ Mel'shin, pseudonym of Pëtr Filippovich Yakubovich, writer and revolutionary (1860-1911). Yegor Sergeevich Sozonov, SR activist who participated in the assassination of Plehve in 1904 (1879-1910).

²⁸¹ This general may be Baron Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Taube (1864-1919).

²⁸² Kazimir Mikhaylovich Aframovich, doctor, SD deputy from Samarkand (1857-?).

93. Alef-R. 'In dume: Di tambover vahlen [In the Duma: The Elections in Tambov].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 326, 9 Apr. (22) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' provides the essential details from the debates about electoral mismanagement and related complaints in Tambov. ☞

'Rodichev ... describes the administration's election stunts as systematic cheating. Bobrinsky protests about this, calling it unparliamentary. Rodichev answers him that in French there is a special technical term for such stunts, "fraude electorale", but in Russian there is no other word for it but cheating. And that it is cheating is as correct as the fact that Count Bobrinsky is wearing trousers (!).' (2; par. 4)

94. Alef. R. 'Di idenfrage in der komisye vegen frayhayt fun gevisen [The Jewish Question in the Commission on Freedom of Conscience].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 327, 10 Apr. (23) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly short newspaper article 'from our special correspondent'. Interviews with commission members and related comments bring the author into focus. The commission previously worked on a bill about the Old Believers. A ministerial bill on freedom of conscience had not included removal of restrictions on Jews because it considered the restrictions related not to religion but to the status of Jews as inorodtsy, 'both Abramsohn and Kirienko told me this'.²⁸⁴ But the commission determined that since conversion to Christianity exempts a Jew from restrictions, the restrictions are religious and therefore come under its mandate. To Shapiro's suggestion that the work of the commission is politically motivated, the author/narrator responds: 'I will refrain from further details'.²⁸⁵ ☞

'Abramsohn told me that the same Mikhail Stakhovich who in last year's commission supported a gradual repeal of the Jewish restrictions has now become much more

²⁸³ Mikhail Yakovlevich Kapustin, doctor, medical professor, deputy in the Second and Third Dumas (1847-1920). Vladimir Vyacheslavovich Yevreinov, SR deputy from Astrakhan (1873-1935?).

²⁸⁴ Inorodtsy – legal category applied to particular non-Russian ethnic groups. Shakhno Girshevich (Aleksandr Grigorievich) Abramson, Jewish Kadet deputy from Kovno gubernia (1861-1907).

²⁸⁵ Yakov Nokhimovich Shapiro, Zionist Kadet deputy from Courland (1865-?).

radical and feels that one question should be isolated, the question of the right of Jews to buy land, and that the remaining restrictions should be repealed immediately.²⁸⁶ According to Abramsohn, the question of giving Jews the right to buy land is also a sticking point for some peasants. They say there is no squabble about the other restrictions, but “the land-rights” of the Jews must be determined as part of the general agrarian question. Other peasants say: “First give land to the peasants, then talk about others”...²⁸⁷ But overall, Abramsohn feels that the mood in the commission is “very good.” (par. 5-7)

95. Alef.-R. ‘In der sots. dem. fraktsye [In the Social-Democrats’ Faction].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 327, 10 Apr. (23) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ contains observations amid a lively scene at SD headquarters. When Esther reads a protest about SD deputies’ failure to speak in the Duma about national equal rights, the issue is discussed at length, particularly its Jewish aspect. Vera Zasluch is present.²⁸⁸ Esther tries to ask Nalivkin about his anticipated duel.²⁸⁹ There are two small concluding subsections. **On the Interpellation of the Vilna Professional Unions** concerns the faction’s possible use of Polish and Yiddish at meetings. **A Threatening Letter** concerns a letter to Dzhaparidze from a new antirevolutionary organisation. ☞ ‘And there stands Alexinsky, surrounded by people. He seems to deal with more issues than anyone else. He is small, lean, crooked, with one shoulder higher than the other; a long, thin, stretched, grey, sickly face, sunken eyes, narrow, fine, transparent hands; a weak, hoarse voice; dressed carelessly; his jacket hangs on him as if it were not his; he is 27 years old;²⁹⁰ he looks much younger, he has no beard.’ (2; col. 2, par. 4)

96. Alef. R. ‘In dume: Der zekster agrar-tog [In the Duma: The Sixth Agrarian Day].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 328, 11 Apr. (24) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

²⁸⁶ Mikhail Aleksandrovich Stakhovich, leader of the Party of Peaceful Renovation, later Governor-General of Finland (1861-1923).

²⁸⁷ Ellipsis in original.

²⁸⁸ Vera Ivanovna Zasluch, prominent early Russian Marxist (1849-1919).

²⁸⁹ Vladimir Petrovich Nalivkin, army officer, ethnographer, teacher, Menshevik deputy from Tashkent (1852-1918). He was challenged to a duel after calling the government corrupt over the issue of military field courts (T. V. Kotyukova, ‘Nalivkin, Vladimir Petrovich,’ *Gosudarstvennaya дума Rossiyskoy imperii: 1906-1917*, B. Yu. Ivanov, A. A. Komzolova, I. S. Ryakhovskaya, ROSSPEN, Moscow, 2008, 393-94).

²⁹⁰ Digits in original.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections. **Rumours** concerns new rumours of dissolution. It discusses Golovin’s and Stolypin’s audience with the Tsar, to arrange the dissolution? Tatarinov speaks for two hours.²⁹¹ **Tatarinov’s Address: In Russia, Aid for the Hungry Is an Habitual Expense** provides aid statistics. **The Question of the Commune** argues against destruction of the peasant commune. **The Only Solution Is Increasing Peasant Land Ownership** makes this argument. **Internal Emigration** opposes this incentive. **The Peasants’ Bank** claims that the peasants’ bank is ineffective. **The Only Way to Increase Peasant Land Ownership Is Compulsory Alienation of Privately Owned Land** discusses this viewpoint. **The Russian Government Has Effected Compulsory Alienations** provides examples. **Will Compulsory Alienations Reduce Cultivation?** relates to agricultural technology. **Will the Peasants Lose Their Profits?** challenges the minister’s figures and explains that peasants’ inferior land produces less grain than nobles’. **How Much Will It Cost?** discusses the cost of compulsory alienation, concluding Tatarinov’s address, during which he strongly criticises the ‘utopian’ local land committees. **The Other Addresses** focuses on the addresses of Kapustin and Prince Urusov, who quotes Kautsky.²⁹² **The Question of the Rights’ Proposal about Terror** discusses when to consider this proposal. The article ends as it began, on the topic of dissolution. ☞

‘A small curiosity. One of today’s proposals was that a new building must be constructed for the Duma and that the funds for it must be allocated in the budget for 1907. A quiet laughter permeated the hall.

“Build indeed!” commented a peasant. “On the verge of dissolution and they want to start building...”²⁹³ (concluding paragraphs)

97. Alef.-R. ‘In dume: Di zitsung fun dinstag, 10 april [In the Duma: The Session of Thursday 10 April].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 329, 12 Apr. (25) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections. **The Chairman** discusses Golovin’s absence to visit the tsar. **The Rights’ Announcement** concerns a proposal to designate a week after Easter for discussion of

²⁹¹ Of the two deputies surnamed Tatarinov, this is Fëdor Vasil’evich Tatarinov, Kadet deputy from Orël (1860-1933).

²⁹² Prince Aleksandr Petrovich Urusov, ‘ultra-Right’ Octobrist deputy from Tula (1850-1914). Karl Kautsky, influential Marxist theoretician (1854-1938).

the terror question. **The War Minister's Urgent Bill** concerns a bill determining recruit numbers, to be discussed in a closed session because 'army numbers are a secret'. **The SDs Vote with the Rights**, continuing from the previous section, concerns forming a new commission. **About the Staffing (Pay Rates) of the Duma's Administrative Office: The Kadets' Bureaucracy** concerns addresses on this matter. Alexinsky urges abolition of the current, unequal payment schedule. **The Horrors in the Baltic Region: The Report of the Interpellation Commission** introduces the report. **The "Investigative Commission"** concerns the group of police and spies entrusted with investigating politicals and permitted to kill them without judicial procedure, the often fatal violence against the prisoners, and the related recommendations to the government, as detailed in the report. **Makarov's Address: The Government Will Not Use the Legal Term** explains that the government will respond to the report immediately.²⁹⁴ **The Ministry of the Interior Has Received No Accusations** concerns the presentation of this information to the Duma, and newspaper reports. **Makarov Describes the Psychology of the Riga Police** seeks to justify police behaviour during an 'epidemic' of extreme criminality. **What Has the Ministry Done** outlines the ministry's actions since the incident. **The General Impression of Makarov's Address** relates that the Duma had understood from the address that although the reports were exaggerated, people had indeed suffered. **The Address of the Deputy Justice Minister** reveals the ministry's perspective that the prisoners had attacked the guards. **Pergament Endorses the Interpellation** concerns Pergament's address of support.²⁹⁵ **Ozol's Exhaustive Address** details Ozol's counter-arguments to Makarov.²⁹⁶ At the session's end, Purishkevich 'makes a scandal' over a notice about Polish autonomy. ☞
 'Ozol emphasises cases where people were abused purely for an illegal newspaper, for involvement with an illegal organisation or an economic strike. He calculates the total activity of the punitive expeditions. Over 1,200 people were shot in the Baltic region, only a minority among them by court order and the remainder without any authorisation, even from a military field court. Over 300 peasant estates were burnt.'²⁹⁷ Is it any wonder then that peasants lurk in the woods and become involved in criminal activity?' (2; col. 4, par. 1)

²⁹³ Ellipsis in original.

²⁹⁴ Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Makarov, in this period Stolypin's Deputy Interior Minister in charge of the police, later Interior Minister, then Justice Minister (1857-1919).

²⁹⁵ Osip Yakovlevich Pergament, lawyer, writer, Kadet deputy from Odessa (1868-1909).

²⁹⁶ Ivan Petrovich Ozol, businessman and accountant, SD deputy from Riga, later emigrated to USA (1878-1968).

²⁹⁷ Digits in original.

98. Alef-R. 'In dume: Di ziebeter agrar-tog [In the Duma: The Seventh Agrarian Day].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 331, 15 Apr. (28) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)
First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article is divided into sections. **The Terror Notice** concerns the Rights' proposal about discussing the terror question after Easter. **Is the "Terror Notice" a Provocation** contains Bobrinsky's refutation of this suggestion. **Threats** continues Bobrinsky's address. He claims that ignoring the terror question would threaten the existence of the Duma. **Red Laughter** concerns the laughter in the hall when the speaker mentions attacks against Russian nationalists, and voting. **The Agrarian Debates** outlines Semënov's confused address demanding that peasants and nobles be indistinguishable.²⁹⁸ **We Must Break Down the Door** concerns the address of Moroz, who expresses the same views as Semënov.²⁹⁹ **The Land Will Fall into the Hands of Jews** details the views of Mikhaylyuk.³⁰⁰ **Eulogius's Address** introduces the bishop's views. **The Law Is on the Side of the Nobles, and Greater Justice Is on the Side of the Peasants** continues Eulogius's somewhat anti-Polish address. The next speaker, Kiselëv, is no intellectual but speaks in a literary, logical fashion.³⁰¹ **The Peasants Will Not Starve** continues Kiselëv's address, which proclaims peasants' independence from nobles. **Rubber Land** outlines addresses including that of 'the Cossack' Afanasev criticising the idea that nobles could teach peasants about agriculture and accusing nobles of seeking to coopt peasants' land.³⁰² Bobrinsky responds to Semënov's criticism. **On Urgent Notices** concerns the SD proposal to discuss urgent notices immediately they are announced. **The Proposal of the SD on Sending an Investigative Commission to the Baltic Region** concerns this proposal. Kelepovsky describes the interpellation as a novel written by Pergament, called "The Secrets of the Spanish Inquisition", and recommends discontinuing the interpellation.³⁰³ **The Interpellation about the Massacre at Chesher's Factory** lists the SDs' questions to the interior minister about this incident. **The Debates about Urgency: The Massacre at Chesher's Factory Is the Result of the Provocation Tactics of the Petersburg Administration** outlines the debates on the incident. **The Union of the Russian People** includes Alexinsky's address and conflict with the Chair over reading from the Union's newspaper, and related debates and resolution. ☞

²⁹⁸ Averkiy Ivanovich Semënov, Trudovik deputy from Podolia (Ukraine) (1857-?).

²⁹⁹ Prokhor Semënovich Moroz, Trudovik deputy from Podolia (1861-?).

³⁰⁰ Ivan Andreevich Mikhaylyuk, 'Right' non-party deputy from Kiev (1861-1913?).

³⁰¹ Andrey Yevdokimovich Kiselëv, teacher, Popular Socialist deputy from Tambov (1868-?).

³⁰² Avvakum Grigor'evich Afanas'ev, Kadet deputy from the Don Host Oblast' (1860-1917?).

³⁰³ Sergey Ippolitovich Kelepovskiy, Right deputy from Kherson (1873-1928).

‘The addresses of the worker-comrades make a strong and profound impression. Above all, Belanovsky’s first address, which is simple and strong.’³⁰⁴

“They are laughing there,” he concluded (the Rights had laughed). “There is nothing to laugh about! You know that only the workers, the tested fighters for the people’s representation, brought you to the Duma!”

Rousing applause.’ (2; col. 5, par. 5-8)

99. Alef. R. ‘In dume: Di shreken in baltishen gegend [In the Duma: The Horrors in the Baltic Region].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 331, 15 Apr. (28) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article is divided into sections. Before reporting on the addresses, it announces another shooting at the Riga prison. **The Possibility of Such a Document Is an Insult to the Duma** relates Alashev’s opinion about the report on the Riga incident.³⁰⁵ **Torture Is a Pleasure for the Executioner** provides graphic description. **These Horrors Are Cultivated in the Upper Echelons** argues that officials who commit atrocities are trained to do so, concluding Alashev’s address. **The Fourteen Year-Old Revolutionary** contains the horrific case presented by Shapiro. **Why Nobody Complained** contains Shapiro’s explanation of this purported fact. Arkhangelsky says that the Riga incident mirrors the horrific situation throughout the country.³⁰⁶ **More Facts** concerns additional information, presented by Treimanis, including graphic details, and his perspective on issues already raised.³⁰⁷ He too makes a comparison with the Spanish Inquisition. **The Horrors in Rostov Prison** contains Nesterov’s address about similar horrors.³⁰⁸ **Purishkevich’s Address** comments that the speaker weeps crocodile tears, movingly recalling the death of Gogol’s hero Ostap.³⁰⁹ He argues that if the accounts are true, the deputies are to blame, that the current time is one of ‘sadistic insanity’ and there have been equally deplorable atrocities committed against officials.³¹⁰ The men sent to investigate would only be ‘spiritual sans-culottes’.³¹¹ **Kelepovsky Again** recalls the prior comment about Pergament’s novel. Kelepovsky adds that, given the part of the story about abuse against women, the author

³⁰⁴ Dmitriy Konstantinovich Belanovskiy, tradesman, SD deputy from Kursk (1879-1954).

³⁰⁵ Nikolay Valerianovich Alashev, Popular Socialist deputy from Vyatka (1869-?).

³⁰⁶ Vasilii Gavrilovich Arkhangel’skiy, SR, co-leader of the SD faction (1868-1948).

³⁰⁷ Edvards Treimanis-Zvārgulis, Latvian actor, poet and satirist, Kadet deputy from Livonia (1866-1950).

³⁰⁸ Anton Yakovlevich Nesterov, tradesman, SD deputy from the Don Host Oblast’ (1879-?).

³⁰⁹ This character from the novel *Taras Bulba*, 1835, was publicly killed by torture.

³¹⁰ The article contains definitions, of sadism, of ‘Tsaira! [Ça Ira]’, a French revolutionary song, and others.

must be erotomaniac. Abramov gives a fine address but shares Purishkevich's perspective.³¹² The interpellation is approved. ☹

'[From Treimanis's address:] Even if the tortured prisoners were hardened criminals, as the German press and the administration imagine, what kind of crime would they have to commit to merit such a punishment? And who is the greater criminal, an ordinary bandit, or someone who tortures people so coldly and calmly?' (3; col. 1, par. 11)

100. Alef. R. 'Spetsyele telegrame tsu der "folks-tsaytung" [Special Telegram to the *Folks-tsaytung*].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 332, 16 Apr. (29) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

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This is a short dispatch of one small paragraph. ☹

'St. Petersburg, 15 [April]. The Trudoviks have decided to vote against the contingent of recruits, forsaking the right of members of the faction who do not agree with the majority to abstain from voting.' (entirety)

101. Alef.-R. 'Di shreken in baltisher gegend [The Horrors in the Baltic Region].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 332, 16 Apr. (29) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent', divided into sections, concludes this topic. **Alexinsky's Address** contains Alexinsky's brilliant response to the Rights, and briefly mentions other addresses. **The Discussion between the Justice Minister and the Duma** describes how Pergament refutes the minister's arguments. **The Duma Must Reveal the Sources of Its Information** discusses one of the minister's arguments. **The Sources of the Information** contains Mandelberg's comments, with details of sources.³¹³ **Who Is Meller-Zakomelsky?** continues Mandelberg's address.³¹⁴ Being from Siberia, where Meller-Zakomelsky commanded forces, Mandelberg already knows of the governor's brutality. Gubarev supports an investigative mission, and Ozol's address is successful despite his poor oratorical ability.³¹⁵ **Ozol's Address. Sources.** details Ozol's comments about sources and the

³¹¹ 'Spiritual sans-culottes' – term connoting the French revolution, defined in the article as denoting men without principles.

³¹² Vasilii Semënovich Abramov, tradesman, SR deputy from Samara (1872-1937).

³¹³ Viktor (Avigdor) Yevseevich Mandel'berg, doctor, SD (Menshevik) deputy from Irkutsk, after dissolution escaped to Finland, in 1917 briefly returned to Russia before emigrating to Palestine (1869-1944).

³¹⁴ The member of the military Meller-Zakomel'skiy family referred to here is likely to be Baron Aleksandr Nikolaevich Meller-Zakomel'skiy, infantry general and member of the State Council (1844-1928).

³¹⁵ Ivan Andreevich Gubarev, worker, SD deputy from Moscow (1876-?).

question of revenge as an inducement to violence. **Hessen's Address. The Justice Minister Wants the Duma to Investigate.** contains Hessen's point that the Duma's rules require it to investigate information about illegal acts. **The Duma Cannot Rely on the Telegrams Read by the Deputy** continues Hessen's address supporting an investigation. **Adzhemov's Address** contains some of Adzhemov's responses to the Rights.³¹⁶ **The Justice Minister Again** reports on Shcheglovitov's nervous responses to Hessen.³¹⁷ Golovin finds that this address provides new information and therefore re-opens the debate. **The Duma Is Not Obligated to Provide Any Documental Statements** contains Pergament's skilful legal analysis of Shcheglovitov's address. The minister replies that soldiers must shoot at a prison uprising. Pergament points out that the prisoners had no weapons. The Duma approves the interpellation. ☞

'[From Pergament's analysis:] But why does the representative of state power forget that the State Duma can ask the representative of the government about evidence but the representative of the government has no right to ask the Duma for evidence? The Duma can request such evidence of its members, but to put this question as the justice minister has done constitutes disregard of the principle of interpellation. The principle of interpellation is clearly determined; according to our laws it distinguishes itself from interpellations in Western Europe in two aspects: 1) its membership requires a minimum of 30 deputies; 2) it can only rule on illegality, not on the appropriateness of the undertakings of the administration.' (3; col. 1, par. 11 - col. 2, par. 1)

102. Alef.-R. 'Arum der dume: Neben di fermakhte thiren (klangen) [Around the Duma: By the Closed Doors (Rumours)].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 334, 18 Apr. (1 May) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

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This medium-length newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' concerns a closed Duma session. It describes how correspondents wait outside the building for a deputy to come out and inform them, and then reproduces some material about the session from *Novoe vremya*. The matter under discussion is the contingent of recruits. An unnamed SD deputy's comment about the army's inability to succeed under autocracy causes a commotion. ☞

'Golovin opens the session. The ministerial box is empty. He announces the following: Having read the stenogram, he is convinced that the speaker insulted our brave army.

³¹⁶ Moisey Sergeevich Adzhemov, lawyer, Kadet deputy from Rostov-na-Donu (1878-1953).

³¹⁷ Ivan Grigor'evich Shcheglovitov, Minister of Justice 1906-15, Duma Secretary in early 1917 (1861-1918).

He revokes his permission to speak and proposes that the Duma put him on notice. He hopes that the Duma will accept this like a man.’ (col. 2, par. 12-13)

103. Alef.-R. ‘In dume: Di ershte gezetsen [In the Duma: The First Laws].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 335, 20 Apr. (3 May) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns the first legislative activity of this Duma. A law on the contingent of recruits is passed in closed session, a second law allocating funds to ‘help the hungry peasants’ is passed in open session. The author/narrator soon becomes present while overhearing a conversation after the closed session: “‘It was sad without the press,” I hear from several deputies’. In the corridors, correspondents find out what happened in the closed session. **From Behind the Closed Doors** reports on Abramsohn’s and Kirienko’s scientific refutations of an assertion that Jews ‘run from military service’. The previous day’s insult against the army is raised. Bobrinsky addresses this issue in French. A pro-Kadet journalist truly believes the army was insulted. Struve accuses the Lefts of wanting to dissolve the Duma, but in fact ‘our Girondists’ were those who spread rumours of dissolution and Golovin himself. Zurabov had failed to obtain a copy of the stenographic report.³¹⁸ A meeting in the armed forces’ club had discussed challenging him to a duel. **The Open Session** describes the deputies’ exhaustion. **Aid for the Hungry** concerns the issue of allocating funds, primarily to existing soup kitchens. The substantial famine relief work of the Red Cross is merely ‘a drop in the ocean’. Among other addresses, Alexinsky argues that the funds should instead go to local committees. Next, the Duma discusses and votes on an interpellation about the colonisation of Siberia. The SD brings a complaint against the chairman for unduly interrupting speakers. There is conflict over whether the law on abolishing military field courts can be discussed, since this issue is not on the agenda. No further discussions are possible as the hall is now too empty. ☞

“‘How will you answer the challenge to a duel?’”

“‘Firstly I will say that I have not insulted the army, only the order and the ministry. The soldiers are the children of the people. I have not insulted them and did not intend to insult them. Secondly I will say that I am a Social-Democrat and a member of the faction and I do not approve of duelling.’”

Incidentally, he says that he is a former officer and a very good shot.’ (col. 3, par. 4-6)

104. Alef.-R. 'In dume: Der entfer fun der regirung af di interpelatsye vegen hershelmanen [In the Duma: The Government's Response to the Interpellation about Hershelman].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 345, 2 May (15) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' covers a session devoted to the interpellation about Hershelman.³¹⁹ It first reviews the facts of the case and the government's attitude to it. **Rediger's Response** outlines Rediger's 'childish', 'crazy' arguments supporting Hershelman, which even the Rights do not applaud.³²⁰ **Shcheglovitov** describes how the minister's argument that Hershelman did not technically repeal the initial ruling is met by laughter. **Makarov** details Makarov's responses to several aspects of the case. **The Deputies' Response** summarises an array of responses. Mandelberg presents the SD view that the government's defence of Hershelman constitutes adopting responsibility for his crime. **Maklakov's Address** contains Maklakov's brilliant refutation of some points supporting Hershelman. **Kuzmin-Karavaev's Response** recalls the terrible case of four men hanged for possessing bombs although the maximum sentence permissible was penal servitude. Maklakov's second address notes the contradictions between the three ministerial addresses. The concluding paragraphs contain authorial comments. ☞
'If the Kadets' addresses gave the ministers some very unpleasant minutes, the Kadets' transitional formulation must have calmed them a little. And, after Maklakov's fiery words, it gave the impression of "a mountain that gave birth to a mouse."³²¹ (2; col. 2, par. 11)

105. Alef.-R. 'In dume: Dinstog, di zitsung fun dem ershten may [In the Duma: Thursday, the Session of the First of May].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 346, 3 May (16) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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This fairly long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' reports on the session of International Workers' Day. Its only discussion topic is the staffing of the Duma's administrative office.³²² **Purishkevich Makes Scenes** relates Purishkevich's

³¹⁸ This seems to be the earliest indication that the offensive comment was made by Zurabov.

³¹⁹ See 91.

³²⁰ Aleksandr Fëdorovich Rediger (also Roediger), Minister of War from July 1905 to March 1909 (1853-1920).

³²¹ 'A mountain...' – this reference to Aesop's fable 'The Mountain in Labour' emphasises that the fiery words provoked expectations of something significant which did not eventuate.

³²² See 97.

agitated response to a procedural instruction by the Chair, and further outbursts later during which he calls the Lefts ‘matadors and toreadors’.³²³ **The Women Question** concerns Fokeev’s protest about the restriction of women to the lowest category of employees in the Duma. Saltykov proposes removing the restrictive clause, this is discussed.³²⁴ **The Debates about Qualifications** concerns the requirement that officials in the administrative office have a qualification. The Lefts argue that a university diploma is no indicator of education. Another type of qualification is land ownership. Mandelberg explains to Esther why the SD abstained from voting. 🌀

‘If on the streets of St. Petersburg (the central ones at least) there is almost no sign of the great workers’ festival, this is not so in the hall of the Duma. All the Social-Democrats, some of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and a few Popular Socialists wear red flowers in their buttonholes, and in the gloomy hall, against the grey background of dark clothes, the red flowers are like sparks of fire, like drops of blood, and give the ultra-Left side of the hall a wonderful fiery appearance.’ (opening paragraph)

106. Alef.-R. ‘In dume: In dume un arum dume [In the Duma: In the Duma and around the Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 347, 4 May (17) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is sub-headed **A) The Deputies away from the Duma**. It contains observations and conversations overheard by Esther at the station in Vilna and in the last train back to St. Petersburg. Two Lithuanian deputies have trouble getting tickets, bystanders discuss them. In the train, deputies discuss their recent activities. Povylius gives a long account of his fraught return to his village.³²⁵ Kupstas had attended a meeting where SD deputies were criticised for not basing their addresses on sufficiently socialist foundations, and where there was a row between Bundists and Zionists.³²⁶ Other passengers join the discussion. Esther puts questions to them all. She concludes the article with a fiery revolutionary comment about noble estates beginning to burn, after someone mentions that Kirienko’s lodgings have been searched. 🌀

³²³ These bull-fighting terms are explained in the text.

³²⁴ Sergey Nikolaevich Saltykov, writer, SD deputy from Vyatka (1874-1937).

³²⁵ Antanas Povylius [Rn. Anton Mateushevich Povilyus], SD deputy from Kovno (1871-1961).

³²⁶ Antanas Kupstas [Rn. Anton Sigizmundovich Kupstas], SD deputy from Kovno (1881-1963).

‘Got tickets. We are already in the carriage. There are around 12 deputies in the train.’³²⁷ Several Kievans, 3 Lithuanians, a few from Volhynia. The Lithuanians still stand on the platform. With them is a group of young people, mostly girls. Young, merry voices can be heard; young, enraptured eyes look at the deputies with love and trust.’ (1; par. 10)

107. Alef.-R. ‘In dume: I. Der akhter agrar-tog. II. Di frage vegen folks-bildung [In the Duma: I. The Eighth Agrarian Day. II. The Question of National Education].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 348, 8 May (21) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

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This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections and sub-sections. **Part I** covers an address by Grabski on Polish concerns, and other addresses about land.³²⁸ Comments include news that Zurabov has received letters of sympathy from officers. **Part II** concerns education problems faced by minorities in Russia. The information relating to a sensational sub-heading, **Purishkevich, Kelepovsky and Sozonovich Excluded from Duma for 15 Sessions**, appears only at the end of the article.³²⁹ **The Bill about General Education. VI. Hessen’s Address** outlines Hessen’s proposal for Duma decisions about individual schools. **The Minister’s Address. The Russian People Is More Ignorant than All Other Nations of Russia. Schools Must Be Free of Politics** outlines Kaufman’s address, which includes education statistics.³³⁰ **Before the Bill Is Referred to Committee There Must Be General Debates** concerns Arkhangelsky’s address. He notes that the school question is just as important as the agrarian question, one provides the people with bread and the other provides them with light, and “It is not possible to live without both”. But general education can be a tool of the government and ruling classes, and the government has done its best to keep light from the people, by imprisoning and exiling teachers. The Duma must make some fundamental decisions about education. **The General Content of the Debates** reveals that most addresses describe the russifying aims of existing schools. **The Polish Addresses** includes Chomiński’s response to the minister’s comment about Jewish illiteracy: ‘Not all [Jews] know Russian but they

³²⁷ Digits in original.

³²⁸ Władysław [Rn. Vladislav Feliksovich] Grabski, deputy from Warsaw, later Prime Minister of Poland (1874-1938).

³²⁹ Ivan Petrovich Sozonovich, literature professor at Warsaw University, Octobrist deputy from Mogilëv, Right deputy and secretary in the Third Duma (1855-1923). Digits in original.

³³⁰ Pëtr Mikhaylovich fon-Kaufman, Education Minister from April 1906 to January 1908 (1857-1926).

almost all read Yiddish and Hebrew.³³¹ Even though he strongly decries the terrible oppression the Poles live under, he does not mention that the Jewish situation, where secular Jewish primary education [folks-bildung] receives no state support, is ‘not normal’. The fact is that even many progressives in Poland oppose Jewish ‘national’ equality. **The Government Should Renounce Politics in Schools** comprises an extract from Chomiński’s address on this topic. **The Poles’ Proposal** reveals the Poles’ overall support for the bill. **Protecting Each Nation’s Right to Learn in Its Own Language** contains the address of Father Gralewski on this topic.³³² While he speaks of education difficulties in Poland, Rights call out “Just as it should be!” In **Melnik’s Address**, Melnik accuses the Rights of taking peasants for ‘a dark [ignorant] mass’. “Why are we dark? Because we have no schools.” Part of his address appears verbatim ‘to show what goes on in the heads of the Right peasants’. **The Situation of the Muslims** covers the address by Mahmudov about the oppression and russification affecting Muslim schoolchildren.³³³ **The German Colonists’ Schools** relates the German experience. Rights heckle the speaker. **The Scandal** describes how, during the address of Khasanov about Bashkiri concerns, the Rights’ behaviour deteriorates until there is general commotion in the hall. The exclusion is imposed upon the three Rights after they refuse to leave. When the session closes, the deputies comment, “Free of them for at least three weeks, thank God!” The final line suggests ominously that the ‘real-Russian’ deputies will use the break to build up energy ‘for the demolition’. 🌀

‘The content of [most] of today’s addresses ... was unvarying: general education is a tool for the russification of the various nations of Russia, where the government, which protests so strongly against politics in schools, itself uses schools for political purposes; where the interests of particular geographical areas and particular nations are deliberately ignored. This was the nature of, for example, the long address of the Dashnaktsutyun deputy Tigranian, who put forward the principles of nationalisation and decentralisation of schools.³³⁴ Schools must not be in the hands of the central government. A central education ministry cannot govern schools. For each ethnic group and each geographical area, schools must take the form that the ethnic group itself demands.’ (2; col. 5, par. 7)

³³¹ Aleksander Chomiński, writer, deputy from Vilna (1859-1936).

³³² Jan Gralewski, Catholic priest, Koło deputy from Warsaw (1868-1924).

³³³ Mustafa Mahmudov, teacher and school principal, deputy from Baku (1878-1937).

³³⁴ Dashnaktsutyun – Armenian nationalist party. Sirakan Faddeevich Tigranyan, teacher of philosophy, Dashnak deputy from Yerevan (1875-1935).

108. N. ‘In dume: Der nakaz. Di begrisungs-telegram dem finlender seym [In the Duma: The Instruction. The Greeting Telegram to the Finnish Seim].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 350, 10 May (23) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed to Alef-R in contents list. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns discussion of changes to the rules governing the Duma, and a proposal to send greetings to the new Finnish Seim. The discussion of the wording of the telegram is comical, but there is news that there would be another search of SD lodgings in the morning. ☹

‘Krupensky, for example, is interested to know which language the telegram would be written in.’³³⁵ His curiosity is satisfied by Berezin, who says goodnaturedly, “How about Russian!” Deputies Bobrinsky, Kapustin and Reyn propose taking out the line about the best electoral system.’³³⁶ (col. 2, par. 9)

109. Alef-R. ‘In dume: Di shlisung fun di agrar-debaten [In the Duma: The Closure of the Agrarian Debates].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 357, 18 May (31) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

First page from epaveldas.lt. Full copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections. **The Priest Petrov** concerns the exciting arrival of this new, still unaffiliated deputy.³³⁷ Milyukov also arrives. **The Agrarian Debates** concisely introduces this topic. Varun-Sekret reports that while at home Nechitaylo and Kirienko encouraged ‘agrarian-pogroms’.³³⁸ **The Lithuanian SDs’ Proposal** concerns the agrarian proposal presented by Povylis. **The Other SDs** concerns addresses revealing the truth about Siberia, discussing Shulgin’s “Project of the SDs”, compulsory land alienation, land nationalisation, the incompleteness of the SD land platform, Stolypin’s declaration. Tsereteli is still absent, Gerus may need to speak for him. **Rodichev’s Address** reports on Rodichev’s response to Stolypin’s declaration. Critical of nobles, he holds private ownership to be sacred, but it should not be abused. He reminds the government that right is not based on might. His beautifully worded address is actually false and hypocritical. **A Peasant’s Response** briefly mentions Vasyutin’s scorn- and hatred-

³³⁵ Pavel Nikolaevich Krupensky, nationalist Right deputy from Bessarabia (1863-1939).

³³⁶ Georgiy Yermolaevich Reyn, doctor, Octobrist deputy from Volhynia, later professor of medicine in Bulgaria (1854-1942).

³³⁷ Grigoriy Spiridonovich Petrov, Orthodox priest, writer, public figure, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1866-1925).

³³⁸ Sergey Timofeevich Varun-Sekret, Octobrist deputy from Kherson (1868-1962). Semën Vasil’evich Nechitaylo, Trudovik deputy from Kiev (1862-1907?).

filled response to Stolypin.³³⁹ **Closure of the Debates** describes the three rounds of voting required before the deputies agree to close the debates. The last paragraph, advising of the next day's plan, threatens that the deputies' 'time is limited'. ☹
'There was also local character in the address of Comrade Kosmodamiansky, which was dedicated to the situation of the migrants in Siberia and which revealed the meanness of the government agencies' efforts to fool hungry peasants into going to that so-called blessed land that flows with milk and honey.'³⁴⁰ (2; col. 1, par. 15)

110. Alef-R. 'In dume: Der entfere fun der regirung af di interpelatsye vegen der baltisher inkvizitsye [In the Duma: The Government's Response to the Interpellation about the Baltic Inquisition].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 358, 20 May (2 June) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This long newspaper article, divided into sections, reports on a Duma session 'rich with dramatic moments'. **General Characteristics** sets the scene. The Rights use the opportunity of Poznansky's 'weak' chairmanship to resubmit their motion on terror, which the Kadets had tried to bury.³⁴¹ The Kadets condemn terror indirectly. **The Ministers' Addresses** provides the 'humorous' response of the two ministers who claim the interpellation is 'pure lies' which 'never was and never happened', while the violence of the revolutionaries is 'a terrible anarchy'.³⁴² **Ozol's Response** summarises the new details of torture and abuse in Riga presented by Ozol. Ozol responds with documental evidence to every point made by the ministers. He is a poor speaker who never employs an 'original expression' but his factual evidence makes an impression nonetheless. **Kuznetsov's Address** provides the SD perspective, that the government's poor treatment of prisoners is symptomatic of its war against the people, and that interpellations are only useful in awakening the people. **The Popular Socialists** reveals the PS view about referring the interpellation to a higher authority. **The Rights** shows how the Chair allows the debates to digress. The Rights present no new information. Shulgin shows a photograph of exiled revolutionaries dressed 'coquettishly' and smiling, to prove that they are not being mistreated. Kuzmin-Karavaev condemns all violence. It seems that all applaud him except the SDs and SRs. **Rodichev's Address** advises that Rodichev says nothing new but says it skillfully. He addresses the ministers

³³⁹ Fëdor Kuz'mich Vasyutin, Trudovik deputy from Kharkov (1877-?).

³⁴⁰ Ivan Ivanovich Kosmodamianskiy, veterinarian, SD deputy from Ural Oblast' (1869-?).

³⁴¹ Nikolay Nikolaevich Poznanskiy, barrister, non-party deputy from Kharkov (1868-1926?).

³⁴² 'Never was and never happened' – quotation from the Talmud, Bava Batra 15a, explaining that Job was fictitious.

scornfully. The Kadets' voting choices reveal the emptiness of their fiery addresses. **The Transitional Formulations** lists eight formulations which express each party's attitude to the interpellation. **The Voting** recounts in detail the voting on the formulations. In **After the Break**, there is discussion about whether the Trudoviks may redraft their formulation, and about voting. **Article 60** concerns the legal argument in the corridors about the applicability of this article of the Duma rules. Esther asks Pergament for his opinion. The unity of the Left in today's voting is notable. ☞ 'The Duma is upset while watching [Shulgin]. Each tone of his sickly sweet little voice makes listeners more agitated. It is intolerable; it is impossible to describe. Our language is still too poor to describe the boundless disgust that this man provokes, by his appearance, his voice, his every movement. He is interrupted with yells of "Out!" The Duma is in terrible upheaval. And he is calm and cold-blooded.' (2; col. 3, par. 14 - col. 4, par. 1)

111. Alef-R. 'Di zitsung fun fraytog, dem 18-ten may [The Session of Friday, 18 May].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 358, 20 May (2 June) 1907, p. 3 (Yiddish)
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This fairly short newspaper article concerns a session largely devoted to reports about the mandates authorising the election of each deputy. Some unfair electoral practices are listed. Pergament argues that the corrupt Poltava elections should be quashed. The most interesting item on this session's agenda is the justice minister's bill about criminal responsibility for praising criminal acts in a speech or in the press. ☞ 'I will not write about the debates due to lack of space, but they contained interesting details. In the end, the voting was secret. There were 277 votes for invalidating [the Poltava elections], 148 against. 277 does not constitute two thirds, so the elections were confirmed. Who were the 50-60 men besides the Rights and Octobrists, who voted against invalidation? People say they were Kadets. Who knows? The secrecy of the closed ballot conceals all...' (par. 7-8).³⁴³

112. Alef-R. 'In dume: Der gezets-proyekt vegen krimineler ferantvortlikhkayt far'n loyben ferbrekherishe thaten in redes oder prese [In the Duma: The Bill about Criminal Responsibility for Praise for Unlawful Acts in Speeches or the Press].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 359, 21 May (3 June) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)
Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ concerns the commission’s report about the bill, delivered by Pergament. Myakotin gossips with Esther about the deputy justice minister.³⁴⁴ Kuzmin-Karavaev makes a brilliant legal argument against the bill. ☹

‘I must remind the reader that despite the suppression of this bill, which aims to impose its heavy hand on the overly free word, the government retains the important Article 129, under which every newspaper article and every speech that contain an element of “provoking” the population to criminal acts can be severely punished. And the ease of detecting such elements in every simple “explanation of motives” shows the rich experience of Russian reality.’ (col. 3, par. 5)

113. ‘Di frage vegen folks-bildung in der gosud. dume [The Question of National Education in the State Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 360, 22 May (4 June) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

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This medium-length newspaper article argues that the various bills before the Duma relating to national education all make the same error in that they offer ‘no real guarantees’ that they can meet the educational needs of the various nations. The bills considered are those of the ‘Narodniks’ and the Ukrainians, and the issues raised include administration of schools, enforcement of legislation, decisions relating to language of instruction, for example, in areas with a mixed population, and the need for gradual transition to an improved system.³⁴⁵ It is to be hoped that the forthcoming SD bill will not contain errors. ☹

‘Besides the “organic law,” the Narodniks group proposes a “provisional law” about national education. However, this law, it must be said, gives the national minorities no guarantees whatsoever. In paragraph 3 it says explicitly that in educational institutions, both of the government and the local administration, instruction is in the mother tongue of the majority of pupils and that is simply all.³⁴⁶ The theoretical basis for ignoring the interests of the minority, and also the merely “provisional” status, is incomprehensible.’ (1; col. 3, par. 2)

³⁴³ Digits in original.

³⁴⁴ Venedikt Aleksandrovich Myakotin, historian, writer, co-founder of the Popular Socialists’ party (1867-1937).

³⁴⁵ Narodniks – in this context, a coalition from the Trudovik, NS and SR parties. ‘NS’ is the Popular Socialist party, founded by former SRs.

³⁴⁶ Digit in original.

- 114.** Alef-R. ‘Di sotsyal-demokratisher fraktsye in der frage vegen algemeyner bildung [The Social-Democratic Faction in the Question about General Education].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 360, 22 May (4 June) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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This medium-length newspaper article expresses strong disappointment with Mandelberg’s recent performance in the Duma. He did not adequately communicate the Jewish education situation, or even general SD national principles. He therefore failed at his task, unlike the Polish and Ukrainian deputies who successfully represented their own people (while ignoring their Jewish communities). In a multi-national land like Russia, the education question stems from the national question, particularly given the government’s practices of national oppression and incitement of inter-national conflict.³⁴⁷ The article’s tone is indignant. The author becomes present while recounting a brief conversation between herself and Mandelberg, and commenting on his unsatisfactory response. Hopefully the SD faction will be able to serve Jewish constituents adequately and achieve complete equality for the Jewish minority. ☺

‘But he did not say that the Jewish masses strive for more than just Russian culture or that they, like every other nation, strive for their own schools, for the development of their own culture, or that they, just like other nations, have the right to demand that the state guarantee them a Jewish school with instruction in Yiddish, with Yiddish textbooks, Yiddish teachers...’³⁴⁸

He did not explain how this striving is suppressed in the Jewish masses, how translation into Russian is required in talmetyres, how in the Jewish teachers’ college it is not permitted to become a teacher of subjects besides Jewish studies and mathematics, how the Yiddish language is persecuted, how it is not permitted to hold lectures or courses in Yiddish and how the Jewish proletariat suffers because of this.’³⁴⁹ (1; col. 2, par. 3-4)

- 115.** Alef-R. ‘Di gosudarstvene dume: Di gezetsgebende arbayt in fulen gang [The State Duma: Legislative Work in Full Swing].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 361, 23 May (5 June) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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³⁴⁷ Inter-national – ‘among nations’ rather than ‘among countries.’

³⁴⁸ Ellipsis in original.

³⁴⁹ Talmetyre [Heb. Talmud-Torah] – ‘community schools organized for the children of the poor, where no tuition fee was charged. Special permits were required for organizing these schools, in which secular subjects were taught, whose charters required that Russian should be the language of instruction. Jewish subjects, such as Bible, were

This fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ reports on the discussion and adoption of two new laws and on the growing expectation of dissolution. The two laws are about criminal responsibility for praising crimes, and abolishing penalties for covert education in the western provinces and Poland. ☞

‘Our readers surely know already what an effect these rules [about covert education] had in their day, how a father of children would be convicted if children of his neighbours or friends learnt with his children, how men would be sent to prison and persecuted whose entire crime consisted of teaching small children to read. These rules placed a great burden upon the Polish and Lithuanian population.’ (2; col. 1, par. 6)

116. Alef-R. ‘Di gosudarstvene dume [The State Duma].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 362, 24 May (6 June) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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This is a fairly long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Rumours of imminent dissolution are rife, Golovin’s last meeting with the tsar had apparently been “cold”, and the mood is tense. Bakunin tells Esther that a Duma resolution that land may be seized forcibly will lead to dissolution.³⁵⁰ Today’s Duma session is dedicated to electoral mandates, and it considers several bills, some promoting and others restricting freedom, which would be ridiculous if the times were not so sad. The latter type of comment is prevalent in this article. ☞

‘Speakers speak; others respond to them. They demonstrate that “prevention chains” are inappropriate; Kuzmin-Karavaev devotes all the powers of his oratorical talent and legal knowledge to proving that sentencing someone in a military court for propaganda in the army is inappropriate, it diminishes the value of the general court...³⁵¹

And we sit in the correspondents’ box and do not know whether to cry or to laugh...’ (2; col. 1, par. 6-7).

117. Alef-R. ‘Di gosudarstvene dume: Der interpelatsyons-tog [The State Duma: The Interpellations Day].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 364, 27 May (9 June) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

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permitted to be taught in Yiddish. The Talmud Torah differed from the *hadorim* by introducing secular, nonreligious subjects’ (Schulman 3).

³⁵⁰ Aleksey Il’ich Bakunin, doctor, nephew of the famous anarchist, Kadet deputy from Tver (1874-1945).

³⁵¹ Ellipses in original.

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections. The interesting part of this Duma session was the conflict over the agenda at the end. **The Government’s Response to the Interpellation about Lanchkhut** first reviews the case of the punitive expedition which demanded the village pay a large fine.³⁵² Baron Nolde, who instigated the interpellation, provides more information, with details added by Zurabov.³⁵³ The Rights call out their approval of the brutality he describes.³⁵⁴ Other speakers add their perspective. The Duma rejects the government’s explanation. **The Debates about the Agenda** covers an interpellation about a fine imposed on Muslims after a murder in a Muslim neighbourhood, and determination of Saturday’s agenda, which provokes a battle which electrifies the air. In **The Proposal about the Local Court**, Hessen argues that the court issues should have priority on the agenda. **What the Duma Can and Cannot Do** provides a detailed account of ‘the second Hessen’s’ support for his namesake, outlining the Duma’s limitations.³⁵⁵ This address encapsulates the Kadets’ entire worldview. **Rodichev** concerns Rodichev’s opposing views, and queries whether he believes what he says. **The Rights Defend the Amnesty** concerns the ‘Jesuitical’ address by Sinadino supporting the original agenda which included the amnesty question. **The Response to the Kadets** contains the counter-arguments of Berezin and others, and the voting results. The amnesty question will have priority over the court question. All agree that the discussion of the former will be critical for the Duma. The Duma is now more stable due to the strengthening of Russian financial markets caused by the recent dissolution rumours. ☺

‘There has never been such a strong sense of the utterly fantastical utopianism of our real-politicians as in these passionate addresses in which they tried to demonstrate that the new forms of life can be introduced in a state of war, under the rule of governors-general and punitive expeditions.’ (2; col. 3, par. 7)

118. Alef-R. ‘Di gosudarstvene dume: Der sof fun di agrar-debaten [The State Duma: The End of the Agrarian Debates].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 366, 29 May (11 June) 1907, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)

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³⁵² Lanchkhut – Lanchkhuti, a small city in western Georgia.

³⁵³ Baron Emmanuel Yul’evich Nol’de, member of the State Council, deputy for the Viceroy of the Caucasus Viceroyalty (1854-1909).

³⁵⁴ Here Esther uses a religious term, with God’s help [beezres-hashem], while relating that local Caucasian administrators were ultimately not hurt by an officer who was threatening them (1; col. 2, par. 7). Later, she uses a similar term, thank God [borekhashem] (2; col. 1, par. 5). These are very commonly used expressions, presumably she uses them to connect with readers while ignoring their religious connotation.

³⁵⁵ Vladimir Matveevich Hessen (Gessen), lawyer, liberal writer, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1868-1920).

This long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ is divided into sections. **General Content of the Session** summarises the day’s session. Amnesty is not discussed. **Mushenko’s Address** contains the suggestion that SRs heard the premier’s address calmly because they have not been captivated by illusions.³⁵⁶ **The Government Learns** criticises the government’s negligence. **The Nobles’ Perspective** argues that land-owning nobles force Stolypin to protect their interests. **The Government Will Gladly Abandon Its Dreams** refutes Kutler’s argument about the connection between land and unrest. **Who Encourages Violence?** claims that SRs do not cause unrest and queries where the impetus to violence lies. **The Ministers’ Ignorance** claims that the ministers know little about the parties they criticise and could ‘go to kheyder’ to learn more. **“There Won’t Be Enough Land”** discusses the ministers’ principal, avaricious argument. **The People Accept the Challenge** introduces an SR amendment to the Trudoviks’ resolution. **“You Can’t Cure a Patient with His Own Flesh”** responds to Stolypin’s argument about compulsory land alienation. **The Muslim and His Two Wives** relates the position of the Kadets, who are caught between two worlds, to a tale about a man whose two wives remove all his hair. This concludes the address of Mushenko, one of the SRs’ best speakers. **Kutler’s Address** explains the interesting part of Kutler’s address, a clarification of the Kadets’ position. **Taking Land by Force Is a Tradition from Russian History** concerns one of Kutler’s key points. **The Interests of Cultivation** questions Kutler’s argument that giving land to peasants will reduce the land’s productive capacity. **It Is False that Peasant Agriculture Must Be Non-Productive** concerns Kutler’s claim that improved economic conditions will see peasant agriculture improve. **Correct Appraisals and Market Prices** concerns land pricing. **The Financial Side of the Question** considers the crisis that will arise from over-pricing, which makes the financial aspect crucial in the agrarian question, concluding Kutler’s address. **Against the Rights** concerns Tsereteli’s address countering arguments of the Rights and Kutler about prices and productivity. Mentioning Shulgin causes a commotion. **The Polemic with the Kadets** includes the issue of justice. **The Peasantry and the Proletariat** reveals that the present is a time of great bourgeois revolution, to which land seizure is fundamental. Land seizure is not only possible but necessary. **Against the Narodniks** explains that the SDs do not share the position of the Narodniks on land use. **Against Confiscating Small Land Holdings** explains that only large and medium holdings will be affected by seizure. **The Principle of Land Norms** reveals that “equality dreams” about land holdings only obscure reality.

³⁵⁶ Ivan Naumovich Mushenko, mining engineer, SR deputy from Kursk (1871-1950).

Against Nationalisation explains that the SD opposes land nationalisation and a government-managed land fund which will create injustice for minorities and empower the enemies of the people. **Conclusion** discusses the impact on Russia of revolutionary ideas. Tsereteli's stirring words move even a correspondent to applaud. He proposes replacing the peasant bank with land committees. Only the SD could vote for such a formulation. There are five transitional formulations in all. ☹

'It is clearly incorrect to say that we are inconsistent because we demand the confiscation of the land but not the confiscation of factories.

That will come later, says the speaker, and those simple words sound like inspired prophecies, that will come later, when conditions are appropriate for the social revolution, but these conditions have not yet eventuated and, in order to create them, the old feudal regime, which is already condemned by historical development, must first be farewelled.' (3; col. 1, par. 3-4)

119. Alef-R. 'Di gosudarstvene dume: Der sof fun di agrar-debaten [The State Duma: The End of the Agrarian Debates].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 367, 30 May (12 June) 1907, p. 1 (Yiddish)

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This fairly short newspaper article 'from our special correspondent' concludes the previous article. It reiterates that a resolution for land confiscation will lead to the dissolution of the Duma, and summarises the arguments of Kizevetter and Bulgakov about the proposed formulations.³⁵⁷ The Duma rejects all formulations. Someone who applauds the result is hushed from all sides. A description of the sad ambiance after the announcement of the result is repeated for effect. ☹

'And because behind the Kadets' entire argument one thing was perceptible, limitless fear of the unspoken danger, and because behind the Lefts' addresses the same vile, unmentionable form was visible, it was hard to breathe in the hall and a bitter sense of powerlessness and humiliation seized everyone, the "conquerors" and the "conquered"...³⁵⁸ A difficult and a sad minute.' (concluding paragraphs)

³⁵⁷ Aleksandr Aleksandrovich Kizevetter, historian, writer, Kadet deputy from Moscow (1866-1933). Sergey Nikolaevich Bulgakov, Orthodox priest, philosopher of religion, economist, non-party deputy from Orlov (1871-1944).

³⁵⁸ Ellipsis in original.

120. Alef-R. 'Di gosudarstvene dume: A nayer nitsokhn fun di kadeten [The State Duma: A New Victory for the Kadets].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 367, 30 May (12 June) 1907, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)

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This long newspaper article provides a detailed account of the session during which the Kadets succeed in having the amnesty question referred to a committee called by the correspondents the 'burial society committee'. Initially the Duma is unsettled and nervous. Golovin remains nervous and ineffectual as a chairman throughout.

Shcheglovitov explains that amnesty is a form of clemency which has always been a right of the tsar. Maklakov says that a tsar cannot repeal a judicial sentence, Shcheglovitov refutes this argument. Tikhvinsky speaks poorly against the delegation proposal, explaining that the Trudoviks do not wish to reduce the tsar's powers. A commotion breaks out over procedure. The Trudoviks vote against their own proposal, shocking the correspondents. Afterwards, Esther confronts a Trudovik. ☹

'I fall upon the first Trudovik I can restrain.

"If we hadn't voted *for*, amnesty would have been rejected today. But if the bill goes to committee, part of it might go through. Maklakov said that administrative sentences are not the prerogative of the tsar."

"But you heard what he said at the end, that the Duma cannot repeal administrative sentences by legislative means either, it can only repeal sentences of exile, revoke the administration's right to exile someone. How does that relate to your bill?"

"Much better with a committee." (3; col. 1, par. 19-22)

121. Alef-R. 'Di gosudarstvene dume: Di debaten vegen ortigen gerikht [The State Duma: The Debates about the Local Court].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 368, 31 May (13 June) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a long newspaper article 'from our special correspondent', divided into sections.

General Mood introduces the issue of the local court. The deputies, presumably pessimistic about improvement, seem indifferent to this issue. **Hessen's Address** describes the informative part of Hessen's address. **The Minister's Bill** outlines some prescriptions, concluding that if judges must be landowners then only nobles or bourgeois can be judges, and that the new court will not be truly independent. **The Committee's Response** details the committee's opposition to the bill. **The Language Question** discusses the question of language in courts. The committee had not

stipulated that judges know local languages. This will create a particular burden for Jews. An interesting issue is the use of traditional local means of handling some civil matters. The minister defends his bill: the nobility was always the most highly cultured class, it is most important that the court be apolitical. **The Debates** outlines ‘not particularly interesting’ addresses on issues raised earlier in the session. ☞
‘According to the minister’s bill, the use of traditional rights is very widespread. The committee recognised the need to restrict this practice, finding that the bill in fact sanctions the greatest arbitrariness and injustice. It considered it permissible only for inheritance problems and conflicts over ownership of medium or large land holdings.’ (2; col. 2, par. 3)

122. Alef-R. ‘Di gosudarstvene dume: Der letster tog?... [The State Duma: The Last Day?...]’³⁵⁹ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 370, 3 June (16) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This medium-length newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’ shows the Duma in a mood of great uncertainty and tension as dissolution seems imminent. In the corridors, deputies chat with correspondents – Zurabov approaches Esther for a chat – and even ask them for news. The correspondents wait outside a closed session, though Osten-Sacken tells them to leave.³⁶⁰ They surround a deputy who comes out. His account is dramatic, charges were laid against the entire SD faction. Purishkevich and Krupensky spoke of the accused deputies going to the gallows. Tsereteli gave a ‘brilliant’ address comparing the current situation with Napoleon’s coup of 18 Brumaire which also saw armed soldiers brought into the parliament building. The situation had created ‘a rare unity among the entire opposition, the Kadets included.’ The article contains minimal commentary but the author/narrator is constantly present while relating her actions and observations, as in the dramatic conclusion, a brief exchange she overhears about whether deputies will go to Vyborg.³⁶¹ ☞

‘Osten-Sacken runs around, a small, round man with a red, chubby face, very busy. He looks at us with great displeasure. He goes up to one person after another and tells them to leave.

“We’ll go into the dining room.”

“No, you have to go right out.”

³⁵⁹ Ellipsis in original.

³⁶⁰ Count or Baron N. D. Osten-Sacken, described as ‘an Okhrana colonel’ in Ascher, *Stolypin* (183).

The correspondents decide to act as if they hadn't heard.

Soon he approaches someone else.

“You are actually here illegally.”

“What, illegally? What a day this is!” the correspondent jokes.

We are staying here, it seems.’ (2; col. 1, par. 14-22)

123. Alef-R. ‘In dume: Di gsize [In the Duma: The Death Throes].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 371, 4 June (17) 1907, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a long newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. Its account begins with a street scene – mounted troops stand in battle formation, and the weather is grey, echoing the metaphorical dark cloud above the Duma. Inside, the corridors are full of deputies and correspondents, ‘everyone is there’, discussing various aspects of the situation. During a break, peasants talk together, not about dissolution but about land. In the session, the noise of the press talking about the situation drowns out the speaker. A vote on whether to continue discussing the local court is an important moment as it shows the Duma retaining control over itself ‘until the end.’ Fiery words by Tsereteli ‘scald the Rights and inflame the Lefts’. It is a ‘comical and perhaps tragicomical incident’ when Golovin ‘innocently’ queries Arkhangelsky’s assertions about a government coup. Esther has a friendly chat with Nabokov.³⁶² During his next address, Tsereteli refers to ‘the immortal expression of Karl Marx’ about placing a gun on the agenda. After the session, Nabokov and others make farewells, as if there may not be another session. But vote trading the next morning could save the Duma. ☺

‘From behind the wall we can hear Tsereteli’s excited voice, and violent applause interrupting him. The little bell rings again. The Lefts appear. Apparently the SDs have made the following proposals: to close the debates about the local court; to put the budget on the agenda and approve it; subsequently to approve the agrarian laws which were proposed under the article; and to enforce the amnesty and abolition of the death penalty which are included in the law on personal inviolability. In a word, to use the time to make more problems for the government and make it clearer and more comprehensible why the Duma had to be dissolved.

“Surely this is actually all illegal,” someone asks.

³⁶¹ Several hundred deputies had gone to Vyborg, Grand Duchy of Finland, after the dissolution of the First Duma.

³⁶² Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov, jurist and writer, one of the leaders of the Kadets’ party, a deputy in the First Duma, presumably present here as an observer or commentator (1869-1922).

“Naturally it’s a revolutionary move,” an SD answers, “but there was no other option left.”

“So, what about the Poles?”

“Dzhaparidze went to tell them our decision and ask their view of it.”

An eminent Popular Socialist is going around very upset.

“This is all like a fantasy,” he is saying.’ (2; col. 4, par. 1-11)

124. Alef-R. ‘Peterburg: Nokh’n tsutrayben [St. Petersburg: After the Dissolution].’
Folks-tsaytung [Vilna], 2, no. 372, 5 June (18) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is a fairly short newspaper article ‘from our special correspondent’. The article itself is dated 3 June (OS), the official date of the dissolution. By midday, there is no longer access into the Tauride Palace, even for deputies and administrative staff, and there are many policemen and soldiers outside. The article describes scenes on the street, in the Kadets’ club and other places, as the author goes about observing, listening and stopping people on the street for information. Some deputies have been arrested, and 16 SD deputies are wanted for immediate arrest. ‘Eminent’ Trudoviks had been subjected to house searches through the night, some taken into custody temporarily. Later, journalists are no longer admitted into the Kadets’ club. On the street, Kalinin walks with a policeman and is therefore not ‘one of the 16.’³⁶³ In the evening, SD deputies speak of their experiences that day of house searches and police. At a Trudovik’s quarters, Esther hears how police had caught Dzhaparidze by ‘ambush’. The mood in the city is calm, there is even a glittering party in the garden of the Tauride Palace, and no soldiers are visible. Assemblies planned by deputies had failed. The concluding words are not dramatic, just a simple news statement about Kamyshansky and the continuation of the work of the committee.³⁶⁴ 🐦

‘At two o’clock I go to the Kadets’ club. The conference is being held in top secret. Correspondents are not allowed in, they are turned away on the steps. There is talk of the arrest of Anisimov, and others talk also about Izmaylov who was seized during the day.’³⁶⁵ It is said that one of the deputies, at the time of his arrest, demanded to see an arrest warrant, at which the officer took out his revolver and said “here is your warrant”.

³⁶³ Aleksey Vasil’evich Kalinin, SD deputy from Kostroma, after dissolution exiled to Siberia (1882-?).

³⁶⁴ Pëtr Konstantinovich Kamyshanskiy, Prosecutor of St. Petersburg Supreme Court (1862-1918).

³⁶⁵ Vasiliy Anisimovich Anisimov, teacher, SD deputy from Saratov, after dissolution imprisoned and exiled for nearly ten years, after 1917 a member of the Soviet government (1879-1939).

Everyone is interested to know what has become of deputies Tsereteli and Dzhaparidze, as nobody has news of them.’ (2; col. 1, par. 6-7)

125. Alef-R. ‘Nokh’n fanandertrayben [After the Dissolution].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 373, 6 June (19) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL microfilm.

This fairly short newspaper article, dated 4 June, describes the mood in St. Petersburg on the day after the dissolution. The city is quiet, as if people are hiding in their homes, and there is little talk in the streets about the important event. Only mundane activity is visible around the building that housed the Duma. A notice advises deputies when they can access stenographic reports. An SD deputy tells Esther that he is forbidden to leave the capital, that he has been given 70 rubles for his expenses, that at least 16 SD deputies have been arrested, that three others said to have been arrested are in fact at liberty, and that he does not know what will happen next besides the involvement of the investigator. News is coming in from around the country about massive arrests, home searches, and Black Hundred demonstrations. ☺

‘Near the Duma, all is deathly quiet. The yellow-white building appears to be sleeping. Only the May bushes are blooming and vibrant, joyful and young, and the purple and red flowers in the flower-beds laugh from afar at the courtyard.

And by the main door a few workers in snowy white aprons potter about. They are shaking out the green, velvet tablecloths, and now you can see for the first time how old that velvet is, how tattered and yellow the lining is.

And there he is, the vivacious, rotund, red-faced Osten-Sacken, the true host, who survived a hard three months and now, thank God, is rid of the guests.

He runs around, intensely busy as always...’ (col. 2, par. 3-6).

Between the Dumas, 1907

126. translator. ‘Vos iz tsoke? [What Is Charity?].’ By Anatole France. *Di proletarishe velt* [Vilna], no. 6, June 1907, pp. 29-38 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Frumkin, Esther [=Esther, (Frumkin)]’.

127. Alef-R. 'Vegen "zhargon" [On Yiddish].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 422, 5 Aug. (18) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article was re-printed in an American periodical.³⁶⁶

128. Alef-R. 'A geshprekh mit a mitglied fun der imigratsyons-komisyen in di fereynigte shtaaten [A Conversation with a Member of the United States Immigration Commission].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Vilna], 2, no. 425, 8 Aug. (21) 1907, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns current American immigration policy, particularly Jewish concerns. A young Congressman, William Bennet, was visiting Vilna with a delegation investigating the causes and potential outcomes of immigration to America from certain European and Ottoman cities.³⁶⁷ An interview with him is interspersed with polite narratorial comments and many autoreferences which maintain the author's presence. Dr Morris Fishberg advises that half of all Jews who had migrated to Palestine subsequently moved on to America.³⁶⁸ Mister Bennet thinks it unlikely that the US will change its open-door policy soon, and claims that opposition to immigration comes from all social strata and is prevalent among Jews who were once immigrants themselves. He smiles at the suggestion that the opposition to immigration may stem from class conflict, since this phenomenon does not exist in the US, where some socialists are wealthy employers and workers support either of the political parties. He says that antisemitism plays no role in this issue as it is rare in the US. ☞ 'The sad fact that the mightiest labour organisation in America is in this regard, as in many others, very distant from the principles of international socialism, is regrettably a well-known truth. As far as Jewish workers are concerned, during the consideration of the restrictions bill the United Jewish Trade Unions have, as far as we know, agitated against it to the extent of their ability.

"But in any case," Mister Bennet adds, "the opposition has no hope of success. All true Christians fight energetically against such injustice."

³⁶⁶ See 'Hot zhargon a tsukunft?' 129.

³⁶⁷ William Stiles Bennet, from New York (1870-1962).

³⁶⁸ Morris Fishberg, ethnographer and anthropologist, his works include *Physical Anthropology of the Jews* (1902) and *Jews: A Study of Race and Environment* (1911) (1872-1934). Travelling with the expedition as an expert, he acted as an interpreter during this interview.

Whether the basis of this struggle is only a matter of pure Christianity, or also of real and predominantly Jewish economic interests, I did not find it necessary to debate with my interlocutor.’ (2; col. 3, par. 10 - 3; col. 1, par. 1)

129. Alef-R. ‘Hot zhargon a tsukunft? [Does Yiddish Have a Future?].’ *Der tsayt-gayst* [New York], 3, no. 106, 6 Sept. 1907, p. 7 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This fairly long article was re-printed from *Folks-tsaytung*.³⁶⁹ It assertively refutes comments by Herr Lilienblum in *Der fraynd* which express concern that if Jews do not use Yiddish, the language will die out.³⁷⁰ In the past, it was debated whether “jargon” can be considered a language or ‘merely a bastard among languages, which has no grammar, which sounds strange, terrible, sickening, etc’. Herr Lilienblum affirms that Yiddish is a language, it must be spoken and formally taught to Jewish children. For him, Yiddish is not ‘our national language’ but Herr. R. contends that Hebrew no more adequately meets Lilienblum’s criteria for a national language than Yiddish and that the debate is semantic. Lilienblum believes that Jews should not speak Russian or Polish amongst themselves, whereas Herr Epshteyn says that Jews can consider Polish to be their language because ‘in secondary school it becomes their mother tongue’. The difference between Lilienblum and Epshteyn is that the ‘assimilated’ Epshteyn, who is ‘a true Pole of the Mosaic faith’ is disgusted to hear Yiddish spoken, whereas ‘the old Jewish writer’ Lilienblum is disgusted not to hear Yiddish spoken. In fact, they have both forgotten about those “few” Jews who do not attend secondary school or speak a foreign language, and Lilienblum also forgot historical perspective, since he claims that Jews will forget Yiddish just as they historically forgot Syriac, Greek and Arabic. Unlike those languages, Yiddish is the language of ‘the masses at the moment of their awakening’. If a language is sufficiently stable to survive ‘the moment when the masses appeared on the historical scene as an active power’, its future is assured. The development of the masses also supports the language, and such development is now in evidence. As Herr Manyes observed, Lilienblum ignores the masses. Other minorities use Russian or Polish yet they love their own languages no less and the future of their languages is not in question. The ‘major Jewish writer’, who, Lilienblum complains,

³⁶⁹ See ‘Vegen “zhargon”,’ **127**.

³⁷⁰ Moses Leib Lilienblum, prominent Zionist, author (1843-1910); see H. Rosenthal and A. S. Waldstein, ‘Lilienblum, Moses Löb,’ *Jewish Encyclopedia*, 1906; *Prophecy and Politics*, passim; Israel Bartal, ‘Lilienblum, Moshe Leib,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 25 Aug. 2010. *Der fraynd* – Yiddish daily newspaper founded in St. Petersburg in 1903; see Sarah Abrevaya Stein, *Making Jews Modern: The Yiddish and Ladino Press in the Russian and Ottoman*

converses in Russian, simply indicates the level of assimilation of the intelligentsia, who have not yet been fully drawn into the current of the awakened masses. Even avowed enemies of Yiddish are forced to ‘break their tongues’ using ‘the odd-sounding bastard-language’ for public work. To prove that Yiddish is not being ousted by local languages, ‘I will not engage in prophecy’ but the cases of a Warsaw Yiddish newspaper ousting a Polish paper, and a Yiddish theatre attracting away the audience of the Russian and Polish theatres, are positive phenomena despite the middling quality of these Jewish cultural products. In the future, when conditions are freer, Yiddish will be in even greater use, for example, in education, newspaper production, the judicial system, arts and healthcare. Herr Lilienblum ignores these positive phenomena and prospects. ☹

‘Without wishing to resurrect the old arguments that the *Iskra* theoreticians used to make about the future of Yiddish, they said exactly what Herr Lilienblum is maintaining now, that in a few decades’ time, after the fall of the Pale, the Jews will be scattered across the whole of Russia like dust, they will be distanced from each other and will lose their special national character, in particular their language.³⁷¹ The response they received was that, both from economic and historical perspectives, there are no grounds for such predictions. On the contrary, the Jewish wandering masses display a tendency to concentrate themselves en masse in particular places and this is natural; whatever the extent of the emigration from the current Pale, this historical Jewish territory of the past few centuries will remain ever after the centre of life for the Jewish masses. The fact that Jews will, almost everywhere, in order to interact with the surrounding population, learn the local languages is in itself not such a threat to their mother tongue. But Herr Lilienblum, who is so practical, is not worried that, for the sake of Yiddish at school, the children will on the whole not know the local language and will not be able to interact with the local population.’ (col. 2, par. 2)

130. M. Alef.-R. *Di tsveyte gosudarstvene dume [The Second State Duma]*. No. 97, Di velt, Vilna, 1907. 32 pages. (Yiddish)

Attributed by J. S. Hertz.³⁷² Copy from NLI.

This is a small book about the Duma, like the two pre-election books from 1906 (**3, 4**) and the next item. It assesses the activity of the Second Duma during its brief existence

Empires, Indiana UP, 2004. Esther made some other responses to *Der fraynd*: see ‘Tsu der frage vegen der idisher folks-shule,’ *Di hofnung*, **133**; and ‘Tsu der kharakteristik fun a nayer shtremung,’ *Tsayt-fragen*, 1910, **142**.

³⁷¹ *Iskra* – newspaper of the RSDLP, closely associated with Lenin (1900-05).

³⁷² Hertz, ‘Di ershte ruslender revolutsye,’ *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 479n246. NLI catalogue concurs.

from late February to early June 1907, essentially arguing that the government consistently worked to obstruct and destroy this ‘cautious’ convocation of the Duma, even before it opened. The **introductory section** (3-4) includes comparison of the First and Second convocations. The remainder is divided into five named and numbered sections plus an epilogue.³⁷³ **Section Alef, A Fettered Duma** (4-11), argues that the Duma was not expected to open. It discusses financial issues such as the economic reasons which compelled the government to convene the Duma, the importance of the budget question in the work of the Duma, and how the government’s wealth enabled it to ‘fight the people’ during the second convocation. **Section Beys, The Kadets ‘Defend’ the Duma** (11-15), argues that even though the Kadets claimed to uphold defence of the Duma, they worked in opposition to the SD. **Section Giml, Docile and Yet Dangerous** (15-21), notes that the Black Hundred is correct to perceive the Duma as dangerous, since some Duma deputies were representatives of the revolutionary proletariat in the person of the SD. Because the government will never make any concessions, the only hope is military dictatorship and overthrow of the autocracy. There are further examples of divergence between the Kadets and the SD. The important role of the people in the achievement of the goals of the SD was revealed in the Duma by Tsereteli. The people knew of the crimes of the Duma, which was a tool of reaction and therefore had to fall, and was also under constant attack from reactionary groups. **Section Dalet, A Conspiracy Is Invented** (21-27), concerns the accusations against the SD deputies. Accusations of, for example, planning an uprising, were made even from the Duma’s first session. Such a threat would seem an acceptable justification for dissolving the Duma. Yet the SD had never been secretive about its revolutionary intentions in the Duma. When the formal accusation was made, Dzhaparidze said that the actual conspirators were the government ministers. Further quotes from Tsereteli emphasise the importance of the people in the work of the SD and publicise his reference to Napoleon’s coup.³⁷⁴ At the end of that session, it was unknown whether the Duma would still exist the next day. **Section Hey, The Last Day** (27-30), recalls the Duma’s last day, when the deputies debated about how to use the remaining limited time. **The Epilogue** (31-32) outlines the events of the day after the dissolution. The work of Kamyshansky and the commission regarding the accusations against the SD deputies had ultimately been pointless since the balance had already fallen and the next day the doors of the Tauride Palace were locked. The press, the public and the

³⁷³ Unusually, the section numbering uses Hebrew, not Roman or Arabic, numerals.

³⁷⁴ See ‘Di gosudarstvene dume: Der letster tog?...’ 122.

army are so downtrodden that they were unable to make any protest or even any comment. ☹

‘The government dissolved the First Duma after long hesitation, after long deliberation; it decided on this step with trembling, with doubts. In a certain sense, this event led to injustice for the wider strata of society.

With the Second Duma, it was different. Its fate was decided even before it was born. The sword of the angel of death hung over its head for the whole 103 days of its sick life, which was actually entirely a long, painful death throe.

‘If the government’s agrarian laws do not go through, the Duma will be dissolved,’ the ministers’ newspaper *Rossiya* announced openly on the very first day of the existence of the Duma.’ (3; par. 7-9)

131. M. Alef.-R. or Alef-R. *Di beste folks-fertreter [The Best Representatives of the People]*. No. 98, *Di velt*, Sept. 1907, Vilna (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by J. S. Hertz.³⁷⁵

132. Alef-R. ‘*Di parlaments-prese in der driter dume [The Parliamentary Press in the Third Duma].’ Di hofnung [Vilna]*, 1, no. 38, 24 Oct. (6 Nov.) 1907, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns the imminent third convocation of the State Duma and new rules which will further restrict press freedom. It includes some comparison with previous press arrangements which were already difficult and biased in favour of the right-wing press. It begins light-heartedly, joking that the parliamentary correspondents were previously so frustrated by overbearing security at the Tauride Palace that they had half considered going on strike, since the Duma would be worthless without the press. One of the new rules is that correspondents will not have access to the corridors, which will greatly restrict their ability to obtain information. The imposition of these new rules will be the first act among many to handicap the Lefts and advantage ‘the real-Russian Black Hundred-ists and Octobrists’ in the new Duma. ☹

‘The press did one thing, it made a podium of the unofficial Duma that was the corridors. It told the land what was boiling and rumbling behind the parliamentary walls. [In the corridors], unrestricted by the chairman’s bell or by the parliamentary rules, there was free and open access to the benefits of the addresses of the Lefts. There,

unafraid of the stenographer's pen, the Rights spoke their minds more openly and brazenly, and the mouths of the still and silent who were too afraid to speak up on the podium were opened. There, more than anywhere else, there occurred that mysterious process when a Right monarchist peasant would become a Trudovik, his dark mind illuminated by new rays of light.' (col. 1, par. 7 - col. 2, par. 1)

- 133.** Alef-R. 'Tsu der frage vegem der idisher folks-shule [On the Question of the Jewish Primary School].' *Di hofnung* [Vilna], 1, no. 42, 29 Oct. (11 Nov.) 1907, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This fairly short newspaper article responds acerbically to comments in *Der fraynd* by Dr S. G. Bernshteyn.³⁷⁶ Khaim Kazdan quotes a passage, noting its argument that Hebrew has no place in primary schools.³⁷⁷ Dr Bernshteyn had mentioned 'the bitter need of the Jewish school question', and that this question 'almost' exclusively relates to 'Jewish, meaning Hebrew, studies'. Does his 'almost' perhaps refer to such matters as seating and ventilation? Dr Bernshteyn mentioned a lack of good teachers of Jewish studies. In fact, Hebrew should not be taught in primary schools, and people who talk about a "Jewish psyche" and "national dignity" while forgetting that a public school must only use the mother tongue of the children know nothing about a proper Jewish school and therefore should not express their opinion about it. In the new school, no special Jewish studies will be taught as the entire school environment will be Jewish, yet secular. Some Hebrew teachers from the old schools may adapt to the new age, but Hebrew teachers are not 'great meyvns' on the subject of the new school, so it is ridiculous to grant them an important role in the school question.³⁷⁸ The Jewish school that Dr Bernshteyn envisages could only be constructed by a reactionary energy. ☹ 'The new school must be a secular school; the need for separation of religion from schooling is one of the most burning [needs] for all cultural nations. The teachers' circles in Vilna, Warsaw, Kishinëv, etc which think about the new school think about this sort of school.

But how will those people whose existence is linked with the old school, with Jewish kheyders, with religious instruction, with khumesh and with the esrim-vearbe feel about

³⁷⁵ Hertz, 'Di ershte ruslender revolutsye,' 479n246. Also Levin, Bibliography.

³⁷⁶ Simon (Shimen) Gershon Bernstein, Zionist activist and writer, PhD from Bern (1882-1962); see 'Shimen-Gershon Bernshteyn (Simon Bernstein),' *Yiddish Leksikon*, 30 Mar. 2015.

³⁷⁷ Khaim Sh. Kazdan, *Fun kheder un 'shkoles' biz tsisho: Dos ruslendische yidntum in gerangl far shul, shprakh, kultur*, Shlomo mendelson fond bay der gezelshaft far kultur un hilf, Mexico, 1956, 274-75. Aryeh Gelbard reproduces an abridged version of the same passage without discussion (67).

such a school?³⁷⁹ Is it not clear that only some of them will be able to relate to the new school without enmity?

There may also be, among the melameds and Hebrew teachers, people who understand that their time has passed, people who see that they must adapt to the new conditions of life, people who are perhaps capable of this; it may be that from among them too there will emerge new teachers for the new Jewish school.³⁸⁰ (col. 2, par. 7-10)

The Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference, 1908

1908

- 134.** Alef-R. 'Di ershte idische shprakhkonferents: obgehalten in chernovits fun 17 (30) oygust biz 21 oyg. (3 semp.) (brief fun an' anteylnehmer) [The First Yiddish Language Conference: Held in Czernowitz from 17 August (30) until 21 Aug. (3 Sept.) (Letter from a Participant)].' *Di naye tsayt [zamlheft]* [Vilna], vol. IV, 1908, pp. 89-104 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from YIVO Institute.

This long 'letter' is a conference report. Elye Falkovich and Emanuel S. Goldsmith used it as a source for Esther's views about the conference and it was a source of conference information for Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich and Aryeh Gelbard.³⁸¹ It echoes much of the content of the handwritten 'Pis'mo ot 'Ester', though Esther complained in another letter that the journal editors had redacted so much from it that she expected to be blamed for incorrect reporting.³⁸² It expresses disappointment with the conference, based on the following assessments: many participants were Zionists and therefore not true friends of Yiddish, and their contribution was to the detriment of Yiddish and of the conference; attendees did not take the conference seriously, arriving late and not listening quietly to the addresses;³⁸³ the conference turned out to be merely a preparatory, 'chance' meeting which could only plan for a subsequent, real conference

³⁷⁸ Meyvn – expert.

³⁷⁹ Khumesh – Pentateuch, first five books of the Bible. Eshrim-vearbe – the twenty-four books of the Bible (Beinfeld and Bochner, 448).

³⁸⁰ Melamed – teacher in a kheyder.

³⁸¹ Falkovich, no. 80, 25 May 1965. Goldsmith 216-17; this includes a quote from pages 86-87. Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich, 'In di yorn fun reaktseye,' *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 550ff. Gelbard 63-66.

³⁸² 'Pis'mo ot 'Ester', see n37 above. Concerning Esther's complaint about excessive editing, see Mintz 377.

and was therefore ‘a falsification’; it operated on the fictive principle of klal yisroel, and had a bourgeois character which marginalised workers and their interests, and there was therefore no opportunity for radical proposals to succeed. The report also relates the significant events of the conference, including Esther’s own participation.³⁸⁴ Despite the overall negative impression, the report ends on a somewhat positive note, crediting the conference with paving the way to a future conference in which all cultural organisations using Yiddish could participate. ☞

‘On Wednesday, the aforementioned resolution that Yiddish is a national language was adopted. The next day, there were announcements. Peretz read a long announcement to the effect that as he considers Yiddish a folk language and not a national language he can no longer work in this conference. He will work in the future since he considers this to be merely provisional.

I also announce that I am only staying to work because I consider this conference to be only provisional, that it will only consider the question of how to convene a new conference and will establish a provisional bureau with preparatory informative functions. I immediately propose the following draft:

In the second conference, participants will be representatives from all cultural organisations and institutions which work in Yiddish: art and education associations, teachers’ associations, schools, professional associations with systematic cultural activity, theatrical troupes, newspapers, publishing houses, libraries, etc. Only organisations which, no later than three months prior to the conference, forward at least six rubles at their own expense can have representation.’ (100; par. 5-8)

- 135.** Esther. Letter. *Dr birnboym's vokhenblat* [*Dr Birnbaum's Weekly Newsletter*], no. 3, 18 Sept. 1908. Reprinted in *Di ershte yidishe shprakh-konferents: Barikhtn, dokumentn un opklangen fun der tshernovitser konferents 1908* [*The First Yiddish Language Conference: Reports, Documents and Repercussions*], Philological Section, Biblyotek fun YIVO, Vilna, 1931, pp. 131-32 (Yiddish)

This medium-length letter, printed here under the title ‘Esthers derklerungen [Esther’s Explanations],’ aims to correct errors by Herr A. K. in the first two issues of *Dr birnboym's vokhenblat* and to counter some ‘personally offensive’ allegations. The errors relate to conference resolutions. Not all are specified. The offensive allegations

³⁸³ Esther’s criticism of the attendees’ behaviour is among passages from this article quoted by Joshua A. Fishman in ‘Attracting a Following’ and *Ideology, Society and Language: The Odyssey of Nathan Birnbaum*, 48.

³⁸⁴ David E. Fishman gives some attention to Esther’s involvement in the conference, including her comment in this article that the proposal to translate the Bible into Yiddish is Zionist propaganda (*Rise*, 60).

are that Esther and others took advantage of low and sympathetic attendance in the conference hall to annul a prior resolution. The letter refutes this claim. It proves that attendance at that session was no smaller than at others, and remarks that the proponents of the resolution were not only Bundists and Poale Zion but also the esteemed Dr Zhitlovsky, ‘the false accusation of Herr A. K. therefore also falls on Zhitlovsky’.³⁸⁵ ‘Herr A. K. is therefore reporting about a rejected formulation. Furthermore, the rejected proposal pertained to a fundamental resolution, whereas Herr A. K. speaks of decisions. Naturally, in voting, nobody intended to disparage the previously adopted resolutions and comments. It was only intended that, concerning participation in the future conference, the attitude to Yiddish will have to be formulated.’ (132; par. 2-3)

136. article in *Der sotsyal-demokrat* [Krakow], no. 38, 18? Sept. 1908.

Not sighted. Attributed by Matityahu Mintz.³⁸⁶

This article, published in the newspaper of the Jewish Social-Democratic Party in Galicia, reports on the Czernowitz Conference. ☞

Bundist anthologies, 1909-10

1909

137. Alef-R. ‘Der driter kongres fun der idisher sotsyal-dem. partey in galitsyen [The Third Congress of the Jewish Social-Democratic Party in Galicia].’ *Di naye tsayt [zamlheft]* [Vilna], vol. V-VI, 1909, pp. 111-17 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from YIVO Institute.

This medium-length anthology article comprises a conference report and background information about the Galician party struggling for recognition.³⁸⁷ It describes the dark, miserable life of the proletariat in Galicia, where the new party, the ŻPS, struggles to function amid determined obstruction by the larger Polish party, the PPS. The survival of the fledgling party in such an atmosphere is proof that it emerged from historical need, and the same historical need will bring it recognition. The entire congress is

³⁸⁵ The Poale Zion [Ysh. Poyle-t sien or Paletsien], Russian Zionist party founded by Ber Borochov in 1906.

³⁸⁶ Mintz 374n18.

³⁸⁷ This congress and Esther’s attendance are mentioned in Rick Kuhn, ‘The Jewish Social Democratic Party of Galicia and the Bund,’ Jacobs, *Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe*, 143.

devoted to organisational matters relating to the establishment of the party. A typical debate concerns the question of transferring the party's executive from Kraków to Lemberg in order to be among the Jewish masses.³⁸⁸ The age of party members is a matter of concern. Overall, the party is doing well. ☹

'The congress ended with a lecture from Comrade Grossman, "On the Question of Tactics with Regard to Other Parties".³⁸⁹ He concluded that in Galicia there is currently no real bourgeois democracy and that the fighting proletariat there is the sole representative of democracy. His resolution was adopted unanimously.

After a short address from Comrade Landau the III congress was closed.³⁹⁰ The participants and guests slowly went their separate ways, singing 'Di shvue'.³⁹¹ A large number of delegates and guests could be heard singing through the streets, and the songs of struggle echoed long afterwards in the streets of Lemberg...' (concluding paragraphs).³⁹²

138. Alef-R. 'Artshil Dzhaparidze.' *Di naye tsayt [zamlheft]* [Vilna], vol. V-VI, 1909, pp. 125-28 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This medium-length anthology article is an obituary for the young SD activist who died from tuberculosis in the prison wagon of a train during the sentence connected with his activity as a deputy of the Second Duma. Its biographical overview includes much about Dzhaparidze's Duma activity, which Esther witnessed. His death was the tragic loss of a heroic fighter. ☹

'He was young, barely 30 ... he left behind a young, weak wife ... he was the child of a peasant, he grew up in a village, and managed with great effort to get an education ... early on he found the way to the great struggle...' (125; par. 4).³⁹³

'The clatter of the wheels, the whistling of the locomotive and the clanking of the chains were the last music to accompany the dying man...' (concluding paragraph).

139. Alef-R. 'Vegen natsyonaler ertsihung [On National Education].' *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], no. 1, Nov. 1909, pp. 15-30 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from YIVO Institute.

³⁸⁸ Lemberg – L'viv, Ukraine.

³⁸⁹ Henryk Grossmann, Marxist economist, historian and activist, founder of the ŻPS (1881-1950).

³⁹⁰ Leib Landau, lawyer, leader in the ŻPS (1879-1943).

³⁹¹ 'Di shvue' – the Bund anthem, written by S. An-sky in 1902.

³⁹² Ellipsis in original.

³⁹³ Ellipses at end of each extract in original.

This anthology essay argues that Jewish children need a distinctively Jewish education, in a Jewish school, with a corresponding Jewish cultural life at home and in the community, and that this national upbringing will be the foundation for the child's path to international culture. An editor's note mentions differences of opinion about this issue and invites submissions from those who disagree with the article. A response by B. B-ski was published in the second volume of *Tsayt-fragen*, and Esther's response to him appeared in the fifth volume.³⁹⁴ About the present article, Khaim Kazdan comments that 'Esther contends that for the Jewish worker family the issue is not about national education but about education in general, because in the Jewish worker family, education is automatically national' and cites the related passage.³⁹⁵ He next cites from the concluding pages about schooling-related work that can be done in advance of the implementation of national-cultural autonomy. He observes that the programme Esther proposes relates to conditions following the 1905 revolution, and that the concept of Yiddish-language kindergartens was a novelty at that time. He cites another extract from the last page of the article before turning his attention to B. B-ski's response. Joshua Zimmerman locates the arguments about schooling in Yiddish in the context of the Bund's programme of national-cultural autonomy and quotes several short extracts.³⁹⁶ Aryeh Gelbard outlines the content of this and other articles to provide a general picture of Esther's views on national education.³⁹⁷ David E. Fishman links the ideas in this and the later article to the roughly contemporary *Tsu der frage* (147).³⁹⁸ The present article is divided into five numbered sections. **Section I** (15-16) considers the influence of national consciousness and its counterpart, assimilation, on the Jewish masses and intelligentsia. A recent increase in national consciousness among the intelligentsia had correspondingly increased Hebrew learning, empty religious gestures

³⁹⁴ B. B-ski (Boris Levinson-Benski), Esther's fellow editor and contributor to the Bundist press (1880-1923); see Khayim Leyb Fuks, 'Boris Levinson-Benski,' *Yiddish Leksikon*, 5 June 2017; and J. S. Hertz, 'Dr. boris levinson,' *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 273-77. The debate between Esther and B. B-ski, and her subsequent criticism of views of Medem, can be seen in the context of a development within the party noted by Jonathan Frankel, whereby in 1906 the Bund started to become a more representative organisation than in its formative years, and the new system involved 'open debate in the party press' (*Prophecy and Politics*, 181). It is clear from the initial editorial note that debate is encouraged. B. B-ski's article is 'Eynige bemerkungen tsum artikel fun alef-r vegen natsyonaler ertsihung,' *Tsayt-fragen*, 2, Mar. 1910, 55-60. Esther's subsequent response is 'Nokh a mol vegen natsyonaler ertsihung (an entfer B. B-ski'n),' 146. Elias Schulman cites from the three articles (6-7).

³⁹⁵ Kazdan 278-80. This passage appears at the beginning of Section III, 20-21. Part of the same passage is quoted in translation by Elias Schulman (6), who also lists some other points from the article, about teaching Yiddish in schools.

³⁹⁶ He seems to read the passage commencing 'When we speak of education in a proletarian spirit, we do not mean that children should recite part of the Erfurt Program instead of the Shema' to mean that the traditional customs should be retained (Joshua Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews and the Politics of Nationality*, U of Wisconsin P, 2004, 247). The same passage is quoted by Zvi Gitelman (61).

³⁹⁷ Gelbard 67-70.

³⁹⁸ Fishman, *Rise*, 103.

and pointless cultural activities such as Maccabi evenings.³⁹⁹ The combination of Yiddish and Russian cultures leads to ‘a split in the soul’ and assimilation, and creates a distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Giving a child Yiddish literature in Russian translation denigrates Yiddish. In this split culture, Shabes is glorified unrealistically, and attempts to ‘revive the High Holy Days’ are futile.⁴⁰⁰ These are vague Zionist feelings of nostalgia. In fact, Jewish children must be raised and educated entirely in Yiddish, and the basis of this national education is a special secular Jewish school. **Section II** (16-20) develops this schooling argument. Such an education provides ‘a link to the Jewish past and ties the child to the generations before him and to the nation around him’.⁴⁰¹ It increases his work prospects within the community, and boosts the improvement of the language itself. Use of Yiddish will increase due to a historical process which will remove the ‘language wall’ separating the Jewish intelligentsia and masses and instigate struggle for Jewish schooling. **Section III** (20-23) considers the education choices of Jewish workers, who are subject to certain pressures and influences and are ‘deeply national’. They send their children to Russian schools to give them a better life and because there are no other schools available to them, not because they prefer Russian culture to Jewish culture or because, as Rosa Luxemburg claimed, the revival of Jewish culture is a fiction created by publicists and translators.⁴⁰² But Russian schooling creates a rift between parents and children, and the children forget their Russian because their school hours occupy such a small proportion of their life, as Renner explained.⁴⁰³ Worker parents do not understand that they should be raising ‘fighting proletarians’. Their ignorance developed over generations but workers cannot be assimilated, significant economic and political development will lead them to want freedom for their cultural development, which will bring home the assimilated intelligentsia. It is the task of the conscious proletariat to lead the people to struggle for their right to Jewish schooling.⁴⁰⁴ **Section IV** (23-29) explores the question of education in a proletarian family. An important factor in proletarian education is increased parental awareness. Granted, feeding children party literature is worse than no education

³⁹⁹ Maccabi – Zionist sports movement.

⁴⁰⁰ The High Holy Days – major festivals Rosheshone [Heb. Rosh ha-Shanah] and Yonkiper [Heb. Yom Kippur]. With reference to this article, Naomi Shepherd writes, ‘...according to what [Esther] wrote in early articles about the Jewish home and the role of the mother, it is clear that she was far from being antagonistic to Jewish family tradition...’ (154). Shepherd’s reference is most likely to this part of the article, which describes a beautiful, idyllic Friday evening, when a lovely mother lovingly, peacefully lights candles and weeps, by a beautiful dinner table covered with food, an imaginary scene which is presented as popular but fictitious. Thus, rather than vaunting the merits of religious traditions, the article aims to demonstrate their hollowness and, furthermore, proposes that the old traditions be replaced by new, proletarian ones.

⁴⁰¹ Gitelman 61.

⁴⁰² Rosa Luxemburg, important figure in Polish and German Left politics (1871-1919).

⁴⁰³ Karl Renner, Austrian leader and political theorist (1870-1950).

at all. But it is never too early to start teaching Marxism, since understanding will develop from a child's subconscious perceptions and beliefs if he is concurrently taught to question and reflect. Parents do not need to look up to their Russian-educated child but instead must share their necessarily national knowledge and culture with the child, who will thus become aware of the life and struggle of the proletariat, and will see the 'greatness of that struggle', learn to love his people, language, etc, and will naturally develop 'the most noble national pride'. The family must celebrate new, joyous proletarian festivals, having abandoned the old yontoyvim, and must commemorate the yortsays of fallen comrades.⁴⁰⁵ Even a child can understand 'our ideal', especially a Jewish child whose people have read the prophecies of Isaiah for generations.⁴⁰⁶ Existing schools cannot provide this education so parents must teach it while continuing to fight to improve schools. Because workers cannot create a socialist school, extracurricular education is very important, especially since schools use a foreign language. Lessons in Russian are not interesting to Jewish children, and the only remedy for this is a Yiddish school. Before this national school is created, (i) Russian schools could allocate time for lessons in Yiddish and (ii) extracurricular classes could teach Yiddish language and literature. Also, children must be encouraged to read Yiddish writers and appreciate the natural world both directly and through literature. This national education will shift their attention to the Jewish working class. Studying Jewish history enables children to understand their own situation, and Jewish festivals can 'to a certain degree be filled with proletarian content'. But if their family life is void of the 'living joys and sorrows of today, the living hopes for tomorrow' of the Jewish people, lessons about history and legends will not connect a Jewish child to his people. **Section V** (29-30) argues that greater class unity will lead to better education, and that much can be done in advance of national-cultural autonomy. The conscious proletariat is obliged to work actively towards establishing Jewish schools. In Poland and Kovno gubernia, the law imposing usage of Russian at gatherings is not enforced, so the conscious proletariat there can insist that community educational institutions teach Yiddish, and continue to agitate for Yiddish schooling.⁴⁰⁷ Additional efforts can be made in Lite, where some schools teach Yiddish instead of handwriting and divine law, and some evening schools use Yiddish. Also, new Jewish organisations must be created, modelled on existing child welfare organisations with extensive rights, to run lectures

⁴⁰⁴ This argument is quoted by Zvi Gitelman (61).

⁴⁰⁵ Yontoyvim – festivals. Yortsayt – anniversary of a death.

⁴⁰⁶ Quoted in Gitelman (61) and Gelbard (69).

⁴⁰⁷ Kovno – Kaunas, Lithuania.

for parents and children, set up ‘Jewish kindergartens, children’s libraries, evening courses in Yiddish language and literature’, organise plays for children, entertainments and excursions to factories, and make community institutions teach Jewish subjects in schools. At community events like these, children from different classes will mingle, and those from the intelligentsia will be ashamed of their poor ability in Yiddish and will be drawn to ‘their national language and culture’, and worker parents will learn about education. All of these efforts will strengthen the influence of the conscious proletariat on the rest of the working class, ‘and this work can only be national’. ☺

‘The basis of national education is the national school, a school which is national according to the language and the cultural material it uses. The national school turns at least some works of some national artists into the experiences of the whole people; it communicates to the younger generation, however partially, however incompletely and subjectively, the work of the preceding generations of their nation and of humanity. It is the carrier of the living tradition, of the intellectual creation of the people; it leads the child to his national culture and through that to international culture. The serious school, in the current order, if it is not run in a foreign language, does at least one thing: it transforms the mother tongue of the child into a language which is the same mother tongue only deeper, richer and finer, and thereby opens for the child, at least in some way, a path to books, it connects the child with the generations which lived before him and with his entire nation.’⁴⁰⁸ (16; par. 6 - 17; par. 1)

1910

- 140.** Alef-R. ‘Di menshen fun driten yuni un di natsyonale fragen [The Third of June Men and the National Questions].’ *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], 2, Di velt, Mar. 1910, pp. 13-24 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article links a high level of nationalism in the Russian government with its high level of discriminatory activity.⁴⁰⁹ It is divided into five numbered sections.

Section I (13-14) links the government’s nationalism to its dominant parties. The formerly influential position of the Octobrists is now occupied by nationalists who come from privilege and blame all of Russia’s problems on inorodtsy. The Union of the

⁴⁰⁸ Some of the last part of this passage is quoted in Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich, ‘In di yorn fun reaksye,’ *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 2, 562.

Russian People has tarnished itself politically and lost its influence, so some cultural development of non-Russian nations can now be contemplated. The nationalists intoxicate the people with their pedigrees and extinguish their yearning for a ‘human’ life and for unity with other oppressed peoples, an old programme reinvigorated.

Section II (14-16) discusses economic factors in national discrimination. While oppression of Jewish salesmen, etc, harms Russian capital since the two parties are not competitors, there are also political and financial advantages for Russian capitalists in national oppression. Yet this, like other forms of exploitation, cannot help Russia out of its economic crisis. Any positive action on national issues is hampered within the Duma which must constantly show its patriotism by displays of antisemitic discrimination. The Jewish residence legislation is the basis of the ‘frightful system of bribery that the Octobrist has stumbled upon’.

Section III (16-20) discusses national issues around Russia and related political factors. The government must curb the increase in nationalism and cease its oppressive, imperialist activity. The Duma’s every step puts it into contradiction with itself because of its ‘counter-revolutionary interests’. The local autonomy in the borderlands has relevance to the national question as it grants power to non-Russian bodies which thereby become ‘surrogates of national representation’.

Minority groups, however, will only attain national rights under national-cultural autonomy, but the national aspirations of majorities could lead to territorial autonomy. Efforts to prevent local nations acquiring too much power include importing Russians and shifting electoral boundaries to ensure Russian majorities. Poland and its national issues are the focus of the subsequent paragraphs, which include some Jewish population statistics and comments about antisemitic discrimination. As in Russia, increased rights for the majority in Poland led to decreased rights for Jews and Yiddish. There is antisemitism in the Polish press, and Grosser’s article about equality for Yiddish caused an outcry.⁴¹⁰ Russia uses divide and rule tactics, and trades national rights for political gain, as in Ukraine and Hungary. Inter-ethnic antagonism arrests the yearning for freedom, but the united international proletariat fights national oppression.

Section IV (20-22) links the question of schooling with the national question. The many ‘high phrases’ of senior Duma members show the importance of national primary [folks] education. The Third Duma has been working hard to compose suitable education legislation. Even a pro-government school is better than none. It is

⁴⁰⁹ It is not explained in the article that the ‘third of June men’ of the title are the members of the Third State Duma, which operated under the legislation brought in on 3 June 1907 when the second convocation was dissolved. The article’s last line promises to discuss the Kadets and the SD elsewhere.

recognised, and not only by revolutionaries, that if a primary school does not use the mother tongue of its pupils, they will know no language well, and even the Duma acknowledges the relevance of the multilingualism of the population to the school question. There are many obstacles to creating foreign-language schools, and such schools remain under Russian control. The Latvian and Polish primary schools are not a step towards independent Latvian or Polish schools, ‘God forbid!’, but nonetheless, ‘the Left Octobrist Kapustin’ sees them as separatist. The commission’s bill excluded Georgians, Armenians and Tatars, and a proposal about the Jewish school was rejected twice, so clearly ‘the patriotic Duma’ will not create a Jewish school. The dispute over whether Ukrainians are a separate nation or Poles, and whether they and Belorussians are Slavs at all, or inorodtsy, has implications for their entitlement to national rights. The bill would make the school a means of ‘more rational russification’, but it may not be passed by the Duma, even though the education minister Schwartz has shown so much real-Russian patriotism that the bill should meet with his approval.⁴¹¹ **Section v** (22-24) concerns the question of the local court, which has parallels to the national question. Crimes against people and property have increased so an efficient court is needed. Setting one up is a difficult process. It should be staffed in proportion to the nations in the area it serves. Its relevance to the national question lies in the need for communication in the courtroom. In Austria, the opinions within the Social-Democracy are (i) that judges must know all the languages of the population (which evokes questions about recognition of minority languages) and (ii) that the judge must be from the same nation as the parties to the case. Granted, the parties might be from different nations. Trials must use the language of the parties, and if this is held as a basic principle then all other questions become simply technical. This problem is ignored by the ‘third of June legislators’ because they only accept the use of Russian and, for Shcheglovitov, it is purely a matter of “convenience” which will impede justice. Antonov proposed that non-Russian-speakers use their native language in court and if necessary the judge should use an interpreter.⁴¹² Using an interpreter is inadequate but ‘better than nothing’. However, Antonov’s proposal will not help ‘us’ as he does not consider Yiddish a language. Requiring judges to know local languages would signify insufficient patriotism and rejection of a potential tool of russification. Therefore, half of Russia will have a court in which communication is impossible, it will be ‘not a court

⁴¹⁰ Bronisław Grosser, Bundist theorist (1883-1912); see Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich, ‘Bronislav groser,’ *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 319-34; and Joshua D. Zimmerman, ‘Grosser, Bronisław,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 10 Aug. 2010.

⁴¹¹ Aleksandr Nikolaevich Shvarts, Minister of National Enlightenment 1908-10 (1848-1915).

⁴¹² Nikolay Ivanovich Antonov, Octobrist deputy in all three Dumas, from Kharkov (1859-1938).

but a caricature'. Such caricatures of governance and public services are only to be expected from the current government. ☹

'Russia now has new saviours: the Russian nationalists. Who are they? Representatives of the nobility, for whom national oppression is a source of countless privileges, privileges at almost all higher levels in the military, the navy, the public service, even in public agencies, where they are tolerated in the border regions; privileges with land ownership over "foreign-born" people, privileges with loans and subsidies. Representatives of the priests, for whom oppression of foreign nations is closely linked with oppression of foreign faiths, with increases in religious fanaticism, with consolidation of their dark power. Representatives of the rich peasants, the "kulaks", who want to have a monopoly on sucking the blood from the poor village-dwelling masses and are scared that they will have to share it with other, foreign-born, exploiters.' (13; par. 2-3)

141. D. Katsenelenboygen. 'Vegen dem tсионisten-kongres in hamburg [About the Zionist Congress in Hamburg].' *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], 2, Di velt, Mar. 1910, pp. 86-92 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This fairly long anthology article is signed using a surname from Esther's mother's family.⁴¹³ Consisting of an introductory section, four numbered sections and a concluding paragraph, the article reports on the Zionists' event from a position of opposition to Zionism.⁴¹⁴ It comments on the congress, discusses the history of Zionism and practical considerations with regard to Palestine, and presents the Zionist movement as divided, ineffective and even reactionary, a counterpart to the government's black reaction. **Section I** (87-88) describes the 'gloomy' opening of the congress. It considers the history of Zionism, which is a history of disappointment and hopeless blind groping for 'the magical "alt-nayland"'.⁴¹⁵ The Zionist party leadership and internal party conflict are a miserable, stagnant state of affairs founded on the unattainable prospect of 'making a utopia into a reality'.⁴¹⁶ **Section II** (88-89) continues to paint a somber picture

⁴¹³ Esther's mother's descendance from Katsenelenboygens is noted by Z. Reisen (143) and Kharlash (141), and the latter mentions Esther's use of this name to sign her articles in Bundist anthologies. See, for example, **149** through **159**. See also **47**, which appears to be an early use of this surname.

⁴¹⁴ The event was the Ninth Zionist Congress, held in the last days of December 1909.

⁴¹⁵ Alt-nayland – old new land, a reference to the Zionist novel *Altneuland*, published in 1902, by Theodore Herzl, the central figure in the Zionist movement (1860-1904).

⁴¹⁶ This phrase, 'making a utopia into a reality', recalls the Czernowitz Conference where Esther used the term 'utopia' in reference to Zionist aims (*Di ershte*, 1931, 106 and 110; though not in the *Di naye tsayt* report of 1908) and the resolution of the Bund's 4th Conference of 1901 which called Zionism 'a utopia that cannot be made into a reality' (Khaim S. Kazdan, 'Der bund – biz dem finftn tsuzamenfor,' *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 1, 183; also cited in

of Zionist history, including the days when the Turkish revolution presented a miraculous possibility of access to Palestine but the ‘iron wall’ in the path of the Zionists’ success stood firm.⁴¹⁷ There is some consideration of the Turkish perspective and reference to congress addresses arguing feebly that Jews would make wonderful Turkish citizens in Palestine. **Section III** (89-90) comments on the situation in Palestine, where there are insufficient infrastructure and resources for taking control and accommodating Jewish immigration. Franz Oppenheimer’s concept of cooperatives is a ‘weak palliative’.⁴¹⁸ Even if Jewish commerce and investment are successful in Palestine, how will this benefit the masses? At the congress, a complaint was made that Zionist companies are not hiring Jewish workers because Arab workers are cheaper! And the “class conscious” Poale Zion was forced to go along with the capitalists in the interests of building the Jewish state in Palestine. **Section IV** (90-92) considers Zionist political theory. Herzl’s diplomacy and Wolffsohn’s commerce ignore the masses, rapprochement with the masses contradicts Zionist principles.⁴¹⁹ The ‘odd debate’ about *Gegenwartsarbeit* was not definitively resolved in Hamburg.⁴²⁰ A ‘familiar’ incident occurred when Gruenbaum was prevented from giving an address in Yiddish, even though the Helsingfors Program afforded equal status to Yiddish and Hebrew.⁴²¹ The lack of decision about *Gegenwartsarbeit* is ‘typical’, as is the overwhelming support for this principle in *Razsvet*, which habitually derides the new Jewish culture.⁴²² The closer Zionists get to “goles-arbayt”, the less Zionist they become.⁴²³ In fact this is a private, not a party matter. A form of Zionism gaining popularity in Russia is ‘Botanical Zionism’ whereby ‘every new colonist, every new little tree, every new little calf, every new little house in Palestine is a source of pride and hope that this is the way to the great ideal’, to the geule of the Jewish people.⁴²⁴ This attitude is a product of the period of reaction, when political indifference reigns in Russia and the people easily succumb to dreams of a new land, distracted from fighting for a better future here. The truth

Abraham Brumberg, ‘Anniversaries in Conflict: On the Centenary of the Jewish Socialist Labor Bund,’ *Jewish Social Studies*, 5, 3, 1999, 202).

⁴¹⁷ The Young Turk Revolution occurred in July 1908.

⁴¹⁸ Franz Oppenheimer, German Jewish sociologist and political economist (1864-1943). His plan for an agricultural cooperative in Merhavaya was realised in 1911.

⁴¹⁹ David Wolffsohn, prominent early Zionist, senior office-holder in the World Zionist Congress (1856-1914). ‘Wolffsohn’s commerce’ may refer to his support for Jewish agricultural ventures in Palestine.

⁴²⁰ *Gegenwartsarbeit* [work in the present] – extension of the Zionists’ focus to political and cultural activity in Russia.

⁴²¹ Yitzhak Gruenbaum, Polish Zionist leader, member of the Sejm, minister in the first Israeli government (1879-1970). Helsingfors Program – political platform devised at the All-Russian Zionist congress held in Helsingfors (now Helsinki) in 1906.

⁴²² *Razsvet* – Russian Zionist newspaper published in St. Petersburg 1907-11 (Dan Haruv, ‘Razsvet,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 16 Nov. 2010).

⁴²³ Goles-arbayt – work in the Diaspora, synonymical to *Gegenwartsarbeit*.

⁴²⁴ Geule [Heb. ge’ulah] – redemption.

about the hidden reactionary core and the ‘utopian and fantastical’ nature of Zionism, which is based on uncontrollable external factors, is increasingly revealed by each successive Zionist congress. ☺

‘And the solemn addresses by Wolffsohn and Nordau resounded with a bitter irony, as they tried to look proud, to show that there is no problem with the Young Turks, that it concerns the entire people, and they meekly and nervously tried to prove to the current bosses of Turkey that it would be expedient for them to take in the Jews, who are such kosher subjects, such obliging Turkish patriots, such loyal citizens who can be counted on for support (against whom? Perhaps against the revolutionary Arabs who are striving for national independence and also have pretensions to sovereignty in Palestine?)’⁴²⁵ (89; col. 1, par. 5 - col. 2, par. 1)

142. Esther. ‘Tsu der kharakteristik fun a nayer shtremung [On the Features of a New Political Tendency].’ *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], 2, Di velt, Mar. 1910, pp. 92-96 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article has five numbered sections. Its topic is a new Jewish intelligentsia which is interested in Yiddish and largely centred around *Der fraynd*.⁴²⁶ Khaim Kazdan observes that ‘Esther argues very intensely with the men from *Fraynd* and other yiddishists’, and that she ‘indignantly’ quotes H. D. Nomberg’s comment about the “very, very sad” prospects for the creation and patronage of a Jewish school.⁴²⁷ **Section I** (92-93) introduces the topic, noting that all Jewish parties demand equality for Yiddish, but only the conscious Jewish proletariat has fought for this demand. Now, a new direction does not strive for ‘Zionist and territorialist utopias but stands with both feet in goles’.⁴²⁸ It stems from a new intelligentsia with an interest in “Jewish-Jewish culture”. It will constitute a Young Jews group, ‘like the Czechs have their Young Czechs’, and ‘we’ will struggle together with them for our national demands: a Jewish primary school and equality for Yiddish. The literary outlet for the new direction is *Fraynd*, and its political and social profile reveals that ‘when two people say one thing, they are saying quite different things’. **Section II** (93-95) reminds readers that the Jewish primary school and Yiddish language and culture correspond to the needs of the conscious Jewish proletariat and the masses. Nomberg wrote in *Fraynd*

⁴²⁵ Max Nordau, doctor, co-founder of the World Zionist Organisation with Herzl (1849-1923).

⁴²⁶ In this article, the newspaper is called simply *Fraynd*. See also **129** and **133**.

⁴²⁷ Kazdan 278.

⁴²⁸ The Jewish territorialists wanted a Jewish homeland but did not focus exclusively on Palestine.

that Yiddish language and culture can halt the decline of the Jewish nation and awaken its national sentiments. While conscious workers value the Jewish school because it is the only possible school, *Fraynd* values it because it is Jewish. A concept from Bauer illustrates the point that for Jewish nationalists anything Jewish is good, all the contradictory positions and movements within Jewish culture are equally good.⁴²⁹ *Fraynd* prints ridiculous notices on the death of each rebbe.⁴³⁰ Nomberg writes about respecting the sentiments of the many people who are followers of rebbes, but presumably he does not feel the same respect for their non-Jewish counterparts, as depicted in Emile Zola's *Lourdes*, and those who believe the miracles reported in Kronstadt.⁴³¹ The problem lies in the influence and government links of the rebbes, and *Fraynd* only encourages respect for these rebbes and their 'system of amulets and pidyones'.⁴³² *Fraynd* had already regretted supporting the Orthodox in the Warsaw elections and Nomberg soon wrote weakly about resisting the rabbis. Weak too were the words of Herr Alef. V. about the rumour that the rabbis oppose the abolition of the Pale. Instead of gentle rebukes there should be 'merciless blows', but the situation is 'wrapped in historical romanticism' which opposes the new Jewish culture, serving the reaction. This happens because the national principle is primary for *Fraynd*, and this divides *Fraynd* and the Zionists, 'children of the same mother', from the backwards-looking, petit-bourgeois, national idea. **Section III** (95) considers *Fraynd*'s influence. A passage from *Yevreyskiy mir* reveals how *Fraynd* led it to 'national consciousness'.⁴³³ It is preposterous for a newspaper that wants to fight for Yiddish to publish a suggestion that "our intelligentsia" should not devote all its energy to politics and fighting for freedom. The nationalising influence of the Jewish masses is strongest when they participate in political struggle, but here they are encouraged to ignore politics and establish "national bastions". Herr Alef. V. in *Fraynd* ignores 'all social factors besides national', which is reactionary. **Section IV** (95-96) asserts that *Fraynd*'s elevation of 'the national criterium' prevents it from fighting for Yiddish and the Jewish school despite its passion for them. The masses are unaware that they need a Jewish primary school, they must be shown that the Jewish school idea is 'no utopia' and can become a reality 'sooner or later'. *Fraynd* derided Vladimir Medem's appeal for efforts towards a

⁴²⁹ Otto Bauer, Austrian SD political theorist and government minister (1881-1938).

⁴³⁰ Rebbe – leader of a community belonging to the Hasidic movement, which arose in Poland-Lithuania in the eighteenth century.

⁴³¹ Emile Zola, French writer and public figure (1840-1902). *Lourdes*, novel about a pilgrimage to the famous miracle site, published in 1894. The miracles in Kronstadt are presumably connected with St. John of Kronstadt, venerated Orthodox priest attributed with the gift of healing, canonised in 1964 (1829-1908).

⁴³² Pidyonos – payments for advice.

⁴³³ *Yevreyskiy Mir*, monthly Russian-Jewish literary and scientific anthology published in St. Petersburg 1909-11.

Jewish primary school, claiming that the masses do not need one. Nomberg cannot fight the ‘sad spirit of the masses’ due to his nationalist priorities that compel his readers to preserve their Jewish identity, in which process the Jewish school becomes a scapegoat. Such concepts are worthless clichés, remote from the real interests of the masses.

Section v (96) comments on the ‘natural’ origin of attitudes such as Nomberg’s, showing how a need to fight assimilation arises among the intelligentsia, causing conflict and chauvinism. Nomberg and his colleagues are heading down this long, misanthropic road and their ‘spiritual children’ may continue in the same direction. The proletariat welcomes the emergence of a new Jewish intelligentsia which values Jewish culture but it opposes the new group’s reactionary tendencies. The proletariat does not base its struggle on “national spirit” or Jewish unity but on ‘its real interests, which the assimilators trample on’. More harmful than the assimilators are the chauvinists, against whom, too, the proletariat must struggle vigorously, whether in ‘the Zionist *Razsvet* or the nationalist *Fraynd*’. ❧

‘I am not thinking of trying to convince Herr Alef. V., Herr Nomberg and others, far from it. Their position is a completely natural one. Everywhere that a national intelligentsia has begun to develop in the place of a previously assimilated [intelligentsia], it has been driven by the objective nature of its development to wage a stubborn struggle against assimilation. In this struggle, it has defended its fundamental interests. Everywhere, [the national intelligentsia] is the defender of historical experience, of a preserved national spirit. Everywhere, the petit-bourgeois intelligentsia is the voice of national conflict, and has the honour of sowing national chauvinism. Herr Nomberg and Herr Alef. V. are making the first uncertain steps along this path. It is long, very long; longer than a human life. A democratic past cannot be abandoned abruptly, such evolutions are not sudden.’ (96; col. 1, par. 5 - col. 2, par. 1)

143. Esther. ‘Glaykhberkhtigung fun shprakhn [Equal Rights for Languages].’

[first part] *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], no. 3-4, Di velt, Aug. 1910, pp. 25-47 (Yiddish)

Copies from YIVO Institute, epaveldas.lt and NYPL.

This anthology essay is the first in a two-part series, the second of which appeared in *Tsayt-fragen* 5.⁴³⁴ It explains the concepts and issues around language inequality, looks ahead to the time when national-cultural autonomy will be established, and outlines practical administrative systems that will see the language needs of all the minority

⁴³⁴ See 145.

groups in Russia fulfilled.⁴³⁵ The second article gives more attention to Jewish concerns, and suggests work to be done without delay. Khaim Kazdan explains that the two articles were written after the Bund's 8th Conference, to publicise conference resolutions.⁴³⁶ With general reference to the two articles, Joshua Zimmerman writes, 'Frumkin continued to develop her views in 1909 and 1910. More and more she situated the demand for Yiddish folk schools within the larger issue of minority language rights and national-cultural autonomy'.⁴³⁷ An explanatory note advises that Esther's views about broadening the authority of the national autonomy institutions exceed those of the editors.⁴³⁸ Labelled a 'discussion article', the text is divided into nine numbered and named sections. Its arguments are illustrated by a few practical examples, and the author maintains a presence by means of regular autoreferences. **Section I, Language Coercion** (25-26), introduces the concept of language coercion, of which there are two forms: natural and artificial. A situation requiring use of a language that is not a mother tongue constitutes language coercion. Natural language coercion results from the historical process of capitalist development, which alienates people from the soil and compels them to travel and have increased contact with people of other nations, and therefore seek common means of communication. Choice of language derives from many factors and is generally the language of the majority in a geographical area. Natural language coercion does not feel like national oppression but like 'an unavoidable inconvenience'. Other effects of the historical process include increasing the national consciousness of the masses and 'making artificial language coercion unbearable for them'. Artificial language coercion, which is effected by the state and organisations, halts national development. **Section II, Artificial Language Coercion in Public Life** (26-27), explains the two forms of artificial language coercion: direct, stemming from legislation, and indirect, stemming from 'such organisation of state, local and community institutions' which affects language choice and consequently leaves at least one party unable to communicate if they have not paid for the service of translators. Direct restrictions affect both public and private life. The simple solution to direct artificial language coercion is to legislate complete freedom of language choice in public life, for gatherings, cultural activities, publishing, etc. The legislation should dictate a penalty on obstruction of free language use, and a harsher penalty for

⁴³⁵ It is summarised as follows in the second article: 'In the previous article, we principally dealt with the questions of how to ensure that officials, public servants and judges will actually know the languages of the population; how to ensure that the language needs of each group in the population will be satisfied according to its actual size and as far as possible without national conflict'.

⁴³⁶ Kazdan 281. Like the 7th Congress in 1906, the Bund's 8th Conference of 1910 was held in Lemberg.

⁴³⁷ Zimmerman 248n125.

obstruction by an official. Consideration of whether these matters apply to civil or criminal law is best postponed. The government should not be asked to act on this issue, it should be asked not to act, that is, not to impose restrictions. **Section III, The Administrative Language Question (27-29)**, considers indirect artificial language coercion, which occurs during interaction between government agencies and the public, and which is much more complex than the direct form.⁴³⁹ The government must cater to the needs of the population, not force it to understand foreign languages, and the role of officials is to compel the government to serve the population. If officials do not speak the language of the citizens, this denies the citizens their rights, but creating the conditions which will ensure the provision of these rights is very difficult. It is often said that such steps as abolishing the bureaucracy, centralising the administration, and democratising the state by electing officials, including judges, from among the people would solve this complex problem. This is only partly correct, as while there would no longer be a state language it would only be replaced by dozens of dominant languages which would oppress the others. Capitalist democracies are not known for enshrining equality, in fact they enable the development of 'all social paradoxes'. National differentiation is very important in 'the economic struggle of the bourgeoisie', and national struggle caused by oppression will even occur under democracy. Vladimir Medem dedicated 'the brilliant parts' of his article on national questions and social democracy to this view. He wrote that inequality cannot exist in a democratic state, singling out the cultural arena as an 'Achilles' heel' of national conflict. Medem supported national-cultural autonomy, but some of his arguments raise queries. For example, the 'Achilles' heel' is in fact more specifically language, and inequality and oppression even exist under democracy. The best illustration of the latter is the 'administrative language struggle' in Austria. **Section IV, The Administrative Language Struggle and the Interests of Different Classes (29-32)**, describes the national conflict, even within SD parties, over such questions as public education and administrative language in Austria. In the disagreement between the Czech and German SD parties over administrative language in Bohemia, each accuses the other of aiding its corresponding national bourgeoisie.⁴⁴⁰ But the bourgeoisie is not motivated by language interests because it can hire lawyers and get advice. It is only concerned about language questions which impact upon its capitalist aims. 'Internal' and 'external' languages respectively signify languages spoken among officials or between officials and the

⁴³⁸ See end of précis.

⁴³⁹ The term 'administrative language' refers to the language or languages used by government bodies.

public.⁴⁴¹ The petites bourgeoisies of national groups in Bohemia and Galicia each want their own language used in public offices in order to control those offices and provide employment for their own nationals, and to suppress separatism among other nations. Comparing Austria with Russia, which has so many more national groups, produces pessimistic predictions. What will be the situation with administrative language when schools are created and national-cultural autonomy is established? Majority nations will fill jobs with their own nationals and oust others. Oppression of minorities will even occur unintentionally. One solution is to require by law that officials know local languages, but it is a ‘true utopia’ to expect a petty official to know five or six languages, in reality he will just use the ‘ruling language’, his mother tongue. There is a trend among professionals to close their private practice and work for the state or city, and this is essential, for example, with regard to medical services, and must be borne in mind in order to understand the needs of the oppressed nations which will be affected by the administrative language question. The issue of courts is especially important for the masses. Discussion about the harm in using interpreters in courts in the previous volume of *Tsayt-fragen* shows that even Shcheglovitov, Krupensky and Sinadino would share this view.⁴⁴² In court, the judge, witnesses, accused and plaintiff must be able to understand one another, and the judge must be able to understand the circumstances of the accused, as in the complicated trial process any uncertainty could lead to a ‘fatal judicial error’. Considering the many languages a judge would need to know in some cities of the empire, judges would need to be ‘outstanding linguists of unusual talents’. Consideration of the court language question continues to the end of Section IV. Ultimately, the proletariat suffers most from artificial language coercion. **Section V, The Administrative Language Question and National Culture** (32-34), re-states a point associated with Medem, that a Jew suffers from the lack of recognition of his language, simply ‘as a Jew’, as ‘a man whose mother tongue is Yiddish’ and not in any other capacity. He suffers both directly, when dealing with the police, court, etc, and indirectly, ‘as a member of the Jewish cultural community, of the Jewish nation’. It is not true that there will be no antisemitism under national-cultural autonomy. A subjugated language can survive if it was previously a state language. Use as a bureaucratic language affects the language itself, such as the influence of “court language” on Russian. If a language officially has equality but is ‘oppressed in

⁴⁴⁰ Bohemia – western area of the modern Czech Republic made up of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

⁴⁴¹ These definitions are accompanied by a direction to ‘See Renner’s, Bauer’s and Meissner’s articles in *Der Kampf*, 1907-1908’.

⁴⁴² This reference is to ‘Di menshen fun driten yuni un di natsyonale fragen,’ **140**.

government agencies', that is, not recognised in practice, it will not develop properly and neither will its associated culture. Bureaucratic offices thus become a tool to arrest cultural development. Oppression of Yiddish will push the Jewish intelligentsia towards foreign culture. That intelligentsia will only build Jewish culture when it returns its focus to the Jewish street and provides it with Jewish professionals, such as judges, who will need to speak and train in Yiddish. Then it will be possible to set up Jewish primary schools, gimnasia and universities. Institutions of higher learning are not directly relevant to proletarians, who do not attend them, but they should not be indifferent to them because they are an important factor in the development of institutions such as the national primary school: without a national secondary school, the national primary school will be a 'poor-school'. Teachers' colleges require their students to have a university, or at least secondary, education. Scientific literature in a language only used at primary level is likely to be of poor quality. The proletariat, which suffers most from linguistic oppression, must strenuously fight the 'artificial obstacles' which shackle cultural development. Inflamed national feelings and unfulfilled national needs are soil for the 'poisonous flowers of chauvinism' to grow. **Section VI, The Tasks of the Proletariat** (34-36), demonstrates the difference between the administrative language struggles of the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, using the example of the Ruthenian minority in Galicia. The bourgeoisie and intelligentsia have 'egotistical strivings' and 'egotistical group interests' which thrive on national conflict. The proletariat must "achieve the maximum protection against national conflicts possible in the capitalist order".⁴⁴³ Even under national-cultural autonomy, national hatred will persist in government agencies, and dominant nations will be able to oppress weaker ones. Not even decentralisation of government, democratisation of local government and appointment of officials from among the people will secure the language interests of minorities. The national programme of the Duma's SD faction incorporates proportional representation in local government. This could involve either national curia with a proportional system or a fixed number of national delegates. The ideas of Springer about national curia are relevant.⁴⁴⁴ However, even with proportional representation in local government, minorities will still be subjugated by dominant nations, and there is a strong likelihood of discord among the minorities, as in Austria. Section IV showed that

⁴⁴³ This quotation is not referenced in the article.

⁴⁴⁴ 'Rudolf Springer' was a pseudonym of Karl Renner. See Fredrik Lindström, *Empire and Identity: Biographies of the Austrian State Problem in the Late Habsburg Empire*, Purdue UP, 2008, 253; and Ephraim Nimni, 'Introduction: the national cultural autonomy model revisited,' *National Cultural Autonomy and Its Contemporary Critics*, 6. An explanation of the Austrian electoral curia appears in Roland Axtmann, *Liberal Democracy into the Twenty-First Century: Globalization, Integration and the Nation-State*, Manchester UP, 1996, 31.

legislation requiring officials to know multiple languages will not help, so what will ensure that the language needs of national groups will be met? Medem's words about the 'sick' nature of cultural and other functions, and the tendency of nations to isolate themselves, have relevance to this question, but are not perfectly applicable as 'the isolation has another nature than with cultural interests'. This can best be understood by considering national content and national form. **Section VII, National Content and National Form** (36-38), explains that many things can have both national and inter-national aspects but others, including the Jewish primary school and the theatre, cannot. Some cultural matters benefit from inter-national cooperation. A small town cannot build a separate theatre or school museum for each national group. There are practical issues around buildings for these institutions, sharing of buildings can even be expected in small shtetls. This article will not discuss shared universities with separate national sectors, as this is 'distant future music'.⁴⁴⁵ Full isolation is not required in cultural matters but there is limited opportunity for cooperation on such things as buildings and school subjects, where services are largely national, whereas other services such as medical care and the post office are inter-national. In fact, there is some cross-over. So, separate national hospitals are not necessary and provision of separate services relies on what the city can afford. The content of hospitals is more inter-national than national, therefore they should be run by inter-national municipal bodies without requiring 'free agreement among nations'. Similarly, in courts, the mother tongue of the accused should be used if possible, and Section IV showed that 'the national moment plays a role there', but court procedure has no national content and the proletariat wants uniformity of court procedure, to avoid obstruction of capitalist development. All such questions must be decided in parliament, not delegated to government agencies. Ultimately, the interests of the masses demand that services not be shared inter-nationally if they have a role in protecting their language interests. **Section VIII, How to Protect Language Interests** (38-43), maintains that separating services cannot isolate nations by language interests, since the complete separation required would be either impossible or detrimental. Renner explained how isolation can occur. In shared government agencies, isolation occurs through the positions 'owned' by various nationals. There is no isolation issue in monolingual areas, but in mixed areas there is the sort of national struggle described earlier. The language needs of each group can be determined from statistics about utilisation of services, and from the size of the group. To avoid a nation

⁴⁴⁵ This reference to universities with separate national sectors presages the Communist University for National Minorities of the West, founded in Moscow in 1921, where Esther was a senior administrator and closely involved

demanding too much, positions must be allocated proportionately. This will not create nationally specific forms of justice such as a 'Polish justice'. The appointment of judges is a matter for the public, but a judge's work is the concern of higher authorities. When the basic requirements for judges are met, such as language ability and proportional appointment, other requirements will emerge. The opportunity to have officials that are 'its own children' and thoroughly familiar with its language will encourage each nation to teach more languages in secondary schools. If parties to a court case are from different nations, they will agree to use the lingua franca of the area, which every judge will know, and if they insist on using their own language, they must use an interpreter. A judge will not be able to know all local languages equally, and this will create some inequality, which can only be decreased by the system of national judges. The main benefit of this system is its elimination of national struggle over judicial positions. There are other relevant and important questions concerning the establishment of a general principle, which is closely linked with 'the answer Marxist thought will give' to a range of issues regarding the judicial system. Springer has made comments relevant to these questions. National isolation can heal a 'sick area' of national conflict over jobs that turns every election into a national struggle where the bourgeoisie urges voters to support their co-nationals. SD deputies have no national bias, 'the "worst" Polish SD will defend [Jewish] interests better than the "best" Jewish Attainer'.⁴⁴⁶ Proportional national elections are proposed only to remedy the language and conflict problems in the current system, their use is exceptional. **Section IX, National Legal Protection** (43-47), continues on practical aspects of language equality questions. Legislation need not ensure provision of all basic services, only language services, most importantly in court where 'mobile elements' will need adequate "legal protection" to uphold their rights.⁴⁴⁷ The state must provide these language services, by delegating some of its authority and responsibilities to an internal organisation, 'the national autonomy'. Executive agencies will include 'legal protection bureaus' and a 'central national council' monitoring movement of members of different nations and assessing their need for language help. The bureaus can provide legal and translation services to members of their nation. Under this system, which will see the 'mediation' language taught in the national primary schools, 'an entire facet of national conflict becomes "healthy"'. Additional services should be entrusted to the national autonomy bodies. This accords with the general principle and spirit of the approved programme. Besides cultural services, the

with the Jewish/Yiddish sector.

⁴⁴⁶ Attainer – delegate from the Union for the Attainment of Full Rights for the Jewish People in Russia party.

national autonomy should govern ‘purely national’ services which ‘defend the rights of the national language and provide language help to wandering and scattered fellow nationals’. This is proposed because the general demand for language equality should incorporate the creation of new services to defend language rights, not rely on old ones. This system will provide ‘maximum protection’ against national conflict, in accordance with Medem’s view. A numbered list of measures to ensure state protection of language equality in a multinational state is provided, and information about the anticipated second article. ☞

‘I list here the means to protect language equality in a nationally mixed state:

- 1) A law establishing the freedom of each citizen to use his language in gatherings, clubs, schools, etc, and determining a penalty for breaches thereof;
- 2) Democratisation of the local administration;
- 3) Elections from the public for all judges and officials, at least of first instance, according to the system of proportional national appointment;
- 4) Legal protection for the minor national minorities and for mobile elements, as a service of the central institutions of the national autonomy;
- 5) Representation rights for the agencies of the national autonomy in questions of national and language rights.’ (concluding paragraphs)

144. Alef-R. ‘Notitsen: I. Dos gezetsproyekt vegen obshafen dem tkhum [Notices: I. The Bill on Abolishing the Pale].’ *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], no. 3-4, Di velt, Aug. 1910, pp. 98-103 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘[Esther (Frumkin)]’. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article concerns the Attainers’ bill, which is ‘a child of the Petersburg shtadlones-policy’.⁴⁴⁸ The article quotes from Maxim Vinaver and Naftali Fridman in a scathing tone, and reviews comments in the Jewish press about the bill and prospects for abolition or relaxation of the Jewish settlement restrictions.⁴⁴⁹ It argues that instead of the approach of these politicians, the Jewish masses must work in a mass movement involving both Jews and non-Jews. This bill will not go through since the Black Hundred is so influential in the Duma. ☞

‘But Jews hope. They want to hope....’

⁴⁴⁷ Mobile elements – people who are not settled in a particular locale.

⁴⁴⁸ Shtadlones – submissive petitioning to the authorities on behalf of Jewish communities, by derivation any submissive behaviour by Jewish leadership.

⁴⁴⁹ Maksim Moiseevich Vinaver, lawyer, co-founder of the Kadets and Attainers’ parties (1863-1926). Naftali Markovich Fridman, lawyer, Jewish Kadet deputy in the Third and Fourth Dumas, from Kovno (1863-1921).

The basis for all these hopes is hard to comprehend. The entire bureaucracy knows very well that the Pale is useless and harmful. The Octobrists know very well that the abolition of the Pale would be useful for industry and commerce. But it is a foolish and harmful illusion to believe that the real interests of the country, the need to develop its productive forces, can play a decisive role in the policy of a group that has one goal: to remain at the tiller regardless of the cost.’ (99; col. 1, par. 3 - col. 2, par. 2)

145. Esther. ‘Glaykhberekhtigung fun shprakhen [Equal Rights for Languages].’

[continuation] *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], V, Di velt, Sept. 1910, pp. 1-30 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This is an anthology essay, the second in a series.⁴⁵⁰ Like the first part, it is labelled ‘discussion article’ and is accompanied by a note explaining that the author’s views exceed those of *Tsayt-fragen* on the subject of broadening the authority of the national autonomy institutions. Echoing Khaim Kazdan, Aryeh Gelbard explains that these articles were written after the Bund’s 1910 conference, ‘to publicise and clarify the equal rights of every nation in relation to language’.⁴⁵¹ The second article will ‘consider some concrete questions (about state language, intermediary languages, territory languages, etc) and also the question of tasks for today in relation to equality for Yiddish’.⁴⁵² It refers to the first article in the course of discussing practical matters connected with the demand for legal equality for all languages spoken in Russia. Yiddish is scarcely mentioned in the first article but comes under direct focus in the second.⁴⁵³ According to Aryeh Gelbard, this article, particularly sections VII and VIII, shows that ‘Esther always believed in the existence of the future of the nation. In her opinion, the Jewish workers’ movement must demand and fight for national rights for Yiddish language and for the Jewish school’.⁴⁵⁴ The article is divided into nine named and numbered sections. Its author is constantly present, due to regular autoreferences.

Section I, Local Languages, Territory Languages, State Languages (1-6), first considers Zeltser’s article in the previous issue of *Tsayt-fragen*, including his rejection

⁴⁵⁰ See **143**. There is some confusion about the date of this issue of *Tsayt-fragen*: 1911 is printed on its cover but is corrected by hand to 1910, the volume’s title page says September 1910, and some secondary sources use one date and others the other.

⁴⁵¹ Kazdan 281; Gelbard 70.

⁴⁵² **143**, concluding paragraph. Concerning ‘territory’, the German word Land is translated as province/provincial in Joseph O’Donnell’s translation of Karl Renner’s *State and Nation* in Nimni, *National Cultural Autonomy and Its Contemporary Critics*, 20. However, here it is rendered as territory/territorial. A definition is provided in Section I of the article: ‘For the next topic, territory and state languages, ‘territory [land]’ denotes certain parts of the empire lying outside Russia proper, such as Poland and “Turkestan”’ (4; par. 4).

⁴⁵³ It is presumably for this reason that, of the two articles, the second has been the source of all citations and the subject of most references in the works relating to Jewish history that were viewed for this project.

⁴⁵⁴ Gelbard 69.

of Springer's concept of "metaphysical" national rights. That concept ignores the fact that work in relation to the language question depends on 'the real needs of the masses'.⁴⁵⁵ As demonstrated in the first article, the proposed penalty system will be of little use, so appropriate government agencies should be established to reduce the possibility of breaches of law. Imposing penalties without positive steps will increase recourse to courts, create difficulties and marginalise rights. A language is considered local if it is 'spoken in an appropriate place by an appropriate nationally organised group'. Local languages' rights must fundamentally permit use of the local language in all local government offices. Articles of association of clubs, associations, private schools, etc, may be submitted in each local language, and all official notices and decrees must be published in every local language. Naturally, 'in free conditions', such areas will have territorial autonomy with their own legislature and other administrative bodies. The principle for determining the languages used by those bodies is the same as for local languages. National autonomies in the territories will operate in accordance with the conditions in each territory. They will support smaller institutions and therefore 'a nation that has in its territory a national autonomy territorial organisation which supports national territorial institutions must have the right for its language to be recognised as a territorial language'. This discussion continues, allowing for the use of interpreters in certain cases. **Section II, The General-State Intermediary Language** (6-9), concerns the need for a single designated language for inter-national communication at government level, for example, for the text of legislation, of which there would be an 'authentic text' for each adopted bill, for parliamentary decisions, for communication within central offices and between departments, for financial documents and government statistics. Working in one language would save the state time and effort, and citizens need an intermediary language in government agencies in addition to the local languages so that a visitor can communicate with local government agencies if necessary, as 'the national interpreter will not be able to go around with him all day to the post office, the bank, travelling on trains, etc'. This system requires knowledge of the local and the intermediary language. When national primary schools are created, the intermediary language will be taught there 'too' and will be a compulsory subject in secondary schools where possible. This system could privilege one state language over the others and lead to privileges for one national intelligentsia, but only while a national struggle over jobs persists. Presumably the intermediary language will be Russian but the Russian bureaucracy will not automatically have a corresponding state-wide

⁴⁵⁵ Zeltser – pseudonym used by Bronisław Grosser.

influence. As Renner writes, “They will not denationalise the use of a foreign language”.⁴⁵⁶ The intermediary language must be selected fairly in parliament or at a new assembly of national representatives, and ideally the chosen language will not be regarded as another compulsory state language. It will already have acquired a high level of rights through use in public life and economic relations, as Russian has. Officials will know it from school. **Section III, The Territorial Intermediary Language** (9-10), explains the need for each territory of the empire to have its own official lingua franca in addition to the state language. In some territories the choice of language is obvious, as in Ukraine where it would be Ukrainian. In other territories, like Lithuania and Belorussia, no language is dominant, so the choice is more difficult there. This type of question could give rise to national conflicts, but conflict can be minimised with special attention from the authorities. The territorial intermediary language could be chosen either by the territorial government or a new assembly comprising representatives of the national autonomy territorial organisations. The territorial intermediary language must be taught in schools, ‘pedagogical conditions permitting’, and in the schools of the nation whose language is chosen, other local languages must be taught, but there must be the option to teach another local language instead of the territorial intermediary language if need be. The territorial administration uses the territorial intermediary language for communication between departments, and judges must know both the state intermediary language and the territorial intermediary language. Discussing the rights of the territorial intermediary language employs certain terms to identify different language statuses, and the SD faction in the Duma uses these terms incorrectly. **Section IV, The Discussion Language** (11-14), concerns the language of state and regional parliaments, municipal administrations and administrations in smaller settlements. Referring to Section II, it explains that requiring an authentic text of each piece of legislation does not mean that only one language can be used in parliament. A public official is a professional and should be multilingual if his work requires this, his language skills are just as important as his other professional skills. In the exceptional cases when a deputy cannot speak the intermediary language, interpreters may be used to convey his meaning in the intermediary language, to give him a voice by which to uphold the interests of the workers, but no interpreters will be needed for the reverse direction as even deputies who cannot speak the intermediary language will certainly be able to understand it. As Springer says, interpreters will be employed from each nation. These options, which will be legislated for the rare

⁴⁵⁶ This quotation is not referenced in the article.

occasions when they will be needed, will also apply to regional parliaments, especially since regional parliaments are closer to the population. If the intermediary language is chosen for a parliamentary discussion language, it will be the language of the majority so only minorities will suffer. Comrade Zeltser wants to instate Polish as the discussion language for all municipal administrations in Poland, but in some parts of Poland there are few or no Poles. Clearly, in monolingual or nearly monolingual settlements, the discussion language should be the local language. In multilingual settlements, the majority language might not be chosen as the discussion language through the representative selection process. If, for example, Polish is chosen in an area with a Polish minority, that decision was chosen freely. Comrade Zeltser would make it compulsory, which amounts to artificial language coercion. Poland cannot make the use of its language compulsory just as Russia cannot. The discussion language of every large or small autonomous unit must be determined by a decision process and the right to use one's mother tongue upheld. **Section v, The Internal Administrative Language** (14-16), concerns the language officials use amongst themselves. It opposes Zeltser's proposal that Polish be the internal administrative language of all city councils in Poland. The issue of internal administrative languages is difficult because the boundary between the internal and external spheres is often unclear. The principles for selecting internal administrative languages must be applied uniformly everywhere. Further response to Zeltser's views focusses on Poland and the use of Polish. Here the 'programmatic part' of the article concludes. It was not possible to give due space to all relevant questions or establish more than 'general foundations – the remainder must rather be considered illustration and example'. The fact is that the situation in Russia is much more complicated than in Austria, so many relevant questions have yet to find answers 'even theoretically'. **Section vi, The Present Moment and Equality** (17-19), acknowledges that thus far the article has discussed events which are still 'distant future music'. But even though the conditions needed to achieve the equality discussed here are still remote, and the current terrible times constitute a 'chronic pogrom' for the Jews due to the 'brutal nationalism' of Purishkevich and others, it is the task of everyone who knows that times will change to prepare for the new Russia, and this must be the purpose of all activity in the Duma. Strengthening the internal unity of the masses and fighting national chauvinism are important tasks. In this work, repeating general phrases about equality and fraternity causes them to lose meaning and can confuse even the speakers about their class perspective. This can be avoided if SD deputies and activists take certain practical steps. This is particularly important regarding the national

question, since there persist ‘deep prejudices inherited from the old time’ and a ‘naïve cosmopolitanism’ that views equality as assimilation and ‘national strivings as reactionary’. Concurrently, each nation has its chauvinists who exploit national sentiments for their own purposes and preach poisonous lies about a need for national domination, so the masses must be taught about the feasibility for different nations to coexist without harming their individuality. We must counter the efforts of the ‘heroes of the third of June’ and work towards national equality. **Section VII, Jewish National Equality** (19-22), explains that obtaining equality for Jews is particularly difficult under the current reaction and oppression. For Jews to gain national equality, the entire Jewish nation must become conscious of its national needs and claim those needs, and the non-Jewish masses must become conscious of those claims. There are no individual Jews, only the Jewish nation. If we truly believe our slogans and do not merely ‘believe them to be a utopia’ then we are obliged to make the masses aware of their real needs more quickly. Some imagine that the language of the Jewish cultural institutions will be decided only after national-cultural autonomy is established, but ‘for me, the national-cultural autonomy is the highest form of meeting already-determined cultural needs’. If there are no cultural needs, calling for national-cultural autonomy is meaningless and ‘rapid water through the mill for all the chatter about a mystical “national spirit” and the “eternal essence” of the nation’.⁴⁵⁷ Whereas Jewish schools may teach foreign languages and Jewish libraries hold non-Jewish books, the Jewish national-cultural autonomy can only uphold Jewish language and culture or it will never succeed.⁴⁵⁸ The struggle to establish national-cultural autonomy includes fighting the illusion that a nation can develop [bilden zikh] in a foreign language. When this is achieved, the masses will understand that the struggle is not to “preserve one’s Jewish identity [dos pintele yid]”, to ‘defend some kind of metaphysical “Jewishness”, as the bourgeois “Autonomists” would argue, but to fulfil their cultural needs’.⁴⁵⁹ The cultural needs of the masses will be met through an historical process, and ‘we must help this process’.⁴⁶⁰ This assistive

⁴⁵⁷ Khaim Kazdan cites from this and the following paragraph (281-82).

⁴⁵⁸ Sophia Dubnow-Ehrlich cites from this section (562).

⁴⁵⁹ The Autonomists favoured Jewish self-rule in the Diaspora, rejecting assimilation. Zvi Gitelman refers to this part of the article while outlining some of Esther’s fundamental views:

Esther did not question the existence or future of the nation; she was concerned for its national consciousness.

The immediate task of the Jewish labor movement was to make the masses conscious of their national *needs* so that they could demand their national *rights*. In Esther’s view this was entirely consistent with the class struggle because such an effort would oppose the *bourgeois* concept of national-cultural autonomy which “is a means of separating the Jews in order to preserve some sort of metaphysical ‘Judaism’ [while] for us it is a means of satisfying the needs of the masses”. (60)

⁴⁶⁰ About this point, Aryeh Gelbard writes, ‘Esther sharply criticised [Medem’s neutralist view that the Bund need not do cultural work if there is no active demand for it] and emphasised that the leaders of the Jewish proletariat cannot stand passively by and watch the mystical forces of history shape human events, they must play an active role in raising the national consciousness of the proletariat and the intelligentsia.’ (69)

role involves ‘gathering forces’ such as consciousness, mass education and mass movement. A typical misunderstanding is that the struggle for equality for Yiddish must be both external and internal, and this is just as harmful as the error that, as nothing can currently be done externally, such as making demands in the Duma, work must focus on internal matters. It is still undecided who should make and receive external demands, how to make them, how to have them accepted, and how to prepare for their realisation. These questions can form the basis for political education. **Section VIII, The Tasks on the Jewish Street** (22-27), argues that the demands for fulfilment of cultural needs should be made to every bourgeoisie that exploits the Jewish proletariat either directly or indirectly. The Jewish proletariat must be made aware of the russifying and polonising character of schools funded by Jewish “philanthropic” organisations and must demand that they teach Yiddish instead of Hebrew. These demands should be made in every forum, big or small, on the Jewish street and elsewhere, by the Jewish masses, and therefore ‘we must work amongst them’. People who ‘weaken the energy of the masses in the struggle for Yiddish’, ‘darken their consciousness of their cultural needs’ and ‘incite the masses with dreams about Hebrew (and at the same time go hand in hand with the russifiers and polonisers)’ are harmful to the struggle and must be combatted. Other works are referenced in relation to the distinction between the Bundist yiddishists and the ‘bourgeois yiddishists’, whose efforts are just as harmful as those of the hebraists and russifiers.⁴⁶¹ To deny that this work has a class character is short-sighted. The repeated metaphor of removing stones from the path, which illustrates the process of struggling towards desired goals or the work of others to impede attainment of those goals, is used for the first time here. ‘National consciousness’ means consciousness of national needs, and if someone clouds this consciousness ‘it is impossible to regard them neutrally’ since “a cult should not be made of any language”.⁴⁶² The Mefitsey haskole association is a ‘fortress of russification’ that only appears to do national-cultural work and issues its newspaper in Hebrew and Russian. Why it did not choose Polish ‘remains a kashe’.⁴⁶³ It has engaged teachers that do not know Yiddish, which is intolerable and a waste of effort and money. If Yiddish is to be recognised by the state, it must first be recognised on the Jewish street. Judging by the development of recent years this will be achieved, so the proletariat must not overturn

⁴⁶¹ The other works referenced are ‘Tsu der kharakteristik fun a nayer shtremung’ (142), and *Tsu der frage vegen der yudisher folks-shul* (147). This reference to *Tsu der frage* enables dating of the book relative to this article.

⁴⁶² As Zvi Gitelman highlights, ‘National consciousness is, for Esther, “only a concrete form of political consciousness”’ (60). Khaim Kazdan cites Esther’s ‘intense’, disapproving response to the neutral reply of the Duma deputy Fridman about whether Jewish schools should focus on Hebrew or Yiddish (282).

⁴⁶³ Kashe – difficult question.

history but ease its path as per its usual role. Is cultural activity like building schools suitable work for a political party like the SD? The party's main task is to struggle to bring about the conditions needed for national culture to develop on its own. But circumstances dictate that this task must be extended, so that influence gained in cultural institutions can be used to promote national rights, party positions can be publicised, and contact maintained with the masses. The activity of the current Jewish cultural institutions, during the reaction, is almost worthless. More important than creating national dignity is educating the masses to struggle for their rights and make appropriate political use of their awakening cultural needs. The vanguard of the working class cannot create a cultural movement but has a duty to support an existing one and influence its worldview. **Section IX, A Few Examples** (27-30), reiterates that the struggle for equality for Yiddish is not only external but also internal, on the Jewish street. The struggle must be organised well and every opportunity must be taken to raise the issue of equality for Yiddish. One opportunity was already lost, during the Duma discussions about local courts. The Duma now intends to discuss the question of national primary schools. It must learn that Russian primary schools have no relevance for the vast majority of the population. Details indicate how SD deputies should present their case for national primary schools and teaching Yiddish in private schools, and how conscious Jewish workers must assist the deputies in this task.⁴⁶⁴ The movement is small but will achieve its goals. If this section's first example is about discussions in the Duma about national primary schools, the second example is about proposed legislation on municipal administration in Poland. On this subject, readers are referred to Zeltser's article in *Tsayt-fragen*, no. 3-4. This proposed legislation has relevance to the national question, so deputies must make suitable demands. Polish and Jewish workers must protest together against national oppression and the inequality of minority languages in Poland, and demand a census that will determine the nationality and mother tongue of each citizen so that positions within the new municipal administration can be filled proportionally. There are seven essential demands in relation to language equality. Here some of the main points of both articles are repeated and the status of Russian now and in the future clarified. The two examples show the work that must be done now. The goals of this work must be realistic and must focus on educating the masses about the importance of equality for Yiddish. The fruits of this work will be enjoyed later. 🍏

⁴⁶⁴ Like Khaim Kazdan (282-83), Aryeh Gelbard quotes from this section. Gelbard comments that Esther 'took a principled stand' on this matter (70).

‘Of their free, equal languages, the free, equal nations will give certain special rights to one language which, due to a whole range of conditions, has already acquired these rights in the public life and economic relations of the state. Probably that language will be Russian, and we can be certain that the same Poles, for example, who now wage such a determined struggle against the “state language” will also choose Russian for the language which a Pole travelling in Tiflis and in Tomsk, in Arkhangel’sk and in Yalta, can use in government agencies. When Polish has full rights, when the Polish population does not have to deal with deployed Russian officials, then the Poles will no longer fear the russifying power of a language that also has certain rights alongside the local languages.’ (8; par. 7)

146. Esther. ‘Nokh a mol vegen natsyonaler ertsihung (an entfer B. B-ski’n) [On National Education Again (A Response to B. B-ski)].’ *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], V, Di velt, Sept. 1910, pp. 85-91 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from epaveldas.lt and NYPL.

This anthology article responds to some of the critical comments by B. B-ski about ‘Vegen natsyonaler ertsihung’ (139).⁴⁶⁵ A note affirms the editors’ agreement with Esther about the religious aspect of education, adding that this article is not intended to close the general discussion about national education. Aryeh Gelbard mentions the contentious issue that is raised first, Esther’s suggestion that ‘general education’ and ‘national education’ are equivalent, and some other points that she repeats here: that the bourgeoisie exploits the concept of national education whereas the proletariat’s interpretation reflects its interests; and that those bourgeois who fear assimilation tend towards national religious education but the proletariat wants the removal of religious content in education.⁴⁶⁶ The article is highly argumentative and permeated with autoreferences. It is divided into four numbered sections. **Section I** (85-86) asserts somewhat disdainfully that ‘B. B-ski is not happy with the way I pose the question’. He had argued that maintaining that there is no question of national education but only of general education is a ‘step backwards’. The question of national education is undeniable, but ‘national education’ and ‘general education’ are identical. It is impossible, a ‘strange nonsense’, for education to be void of national content. Educating a child in a language that his mother does not know removes the mother from the education process, rendering it unsystematic. Jewish workers must educate their

⁴⁶⁵ B. B-ski, ‘Eynige bemerkungen tsum artikel fun alef-r vegen natsyonaler ertsihung [Some Observations on Esther’s Article about National Education],’ *Tsayt-fragen* [Vilna], 2, Di velt, Mar. 1910, 55-60.

children ‘in a proletarian spirit’, in Yiddish, and thereby introduce them to Jewish culture. They would not have access to education or culture otherwise. B. B-ski maintains that national education is distinct because there are no materials for teaching literature or history in Yiddish, but in fact this situation is the same for general education. A child’s ignorance of his national history is the fault of his general education, and learning mathematics in Yiddish is just as much ‘an act of national education’ as memorising Yiddish poetry by Reisen or hearing the legend about the river Sambatyon, and learning mathematics in this way is necessary for the child’s general education.⁴⁶⁷ B. B-ski’s claim that this question involves more than just general education contradicts his own words in *Di naye tsayt* reproaching maskilim for endowing a Jew with two aspects, man and Jew, rather than considering him solely a Jew.⁴⁶⁸ **Section II** (86-87) explains that the form of education is uniform for the whole nation, but its content varies for each social class. The ruling classes impose their educational ideals on the other classes by talking about national education, but ‘when Minister Schwartz, the German Crown Prince, Herr Sliozberg and Hillel Zeitlin all talk about “national education”, it is easy to see whose interests each one of them is defending’.⁴⁶⁹ By contrast, the proletariat wants to prepare children for their ‘life struggle’ and imbue them with the proletarian worldview, through the family. The initial article was about ‘devising a complete education of a specifically proletarian sort’. That B. B-ski describes as “a few principles” the examples in that article, and more detailed examples could not be provided ‘for understandable reasons’, shows his ignorance of the ‘simple alefbey’s that the proletariat does not accept the type of education prescribed by the bourgeoisie.⁴⁷⁰ He even claims that only the German comrades should teach children proletarian social sentiments. He does not know how Jewish festivals could be filled with proletarian content since, for example, there are no proletarians in the Khanike story.⁴⁷¹ In fact, the modern-day situation has close relevance to this story, as the proletariat is the only living example of a freedom movement, the sole heir to the great biblical tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice, and the ‘living representative of the entire eternal striving of humanity for freedom and

⁴⁶⁶ Gelbard 68.

⁴⁶⁷ Sambatyon – river discussed in rabbinic literature, said to stop flowing every Sabbath.

⁴⁶⁸ B. B-ski’s article in *Di naye tsayt* may be the one referenced by Elias Schulman (5n18), ‘Di yidishe folks-shul,’ *Di naye tsayt* [Vilna], 1, 1908.

⁴⁶⁹ Genrikh Sliozberg, liberal lawyer, Attainer, model of nationalism and klal yisroel policy in Esther’s later articles (1863-1937). German Crown Prince Wilhelm (1882-1951). Hillel Zeitlin, mystical and journalistic writer in Warsaw (1871-1942).

⁴⁷⁰ Alefbey’s – ABC, by extension basic principles.

light, of all historical struggles for freedom'. For religious families, the focus of Khanike, 'perhaps the most beautiful national festival', was the miracle; nationalist families now see in it a Zionist theme; but proletarian families endow it with the 'most beautiful and noblest' significance, about a determined struggle against national oppression, the only view void of hypocrisy and falsehood. **Section III** (87-89) continues on the topic of replacing the content of traditional festivals. B. B-ski believes that removing the religious content from a child's life leaves a void which will cause his yidishkayt to disappear completely.⁴⁷² He ignores the fact that the old must pass on so that the new can be born. If assimilation is truly "lying in wait on all sides" as B. B-ski claims, nothing can be done about this, but a new yidishkayt will emerge, one that is mercifully free of 'meshiekh, of Yonkipper, of tashlekh, of kapoyres'.⁴⁷³ B. B-ski's words uphold the antiquated and show his ignorance of the fact that calling antireligiosity a "national danger" threatens the nation. In fact, 'the future belongs to antireligiosity, to enlightened human thought that brings heaven down to the earth and makes people equal to gods'. Some of B. B-ski's earlier comments about nationalists, the Jewish primary school and religiosity are discussed, and Esther wishes he would do as he accused her of doing and take a step backwards to the views expressed in his earlier comments, as this would in fact be a step forwards. **Section IV** (89-91) considers B. B-ski's ideas about the mystical and the fantastic in relation to general education, including the question of whether to introduce mysticism into education. Mysticism has been used by the ruling classes as a tool to mask their interests. Introducing it into education would only increase this exploitation. About the fantastic, wonder tales can be very enjoyable and educational even for children who know that the stories are fiction.⁴⁷⁴ Words of Sholem Asch show that no tale is as wonderful as nature, and natural wonders (buds forming on a bare branch, etc) will delight children and reveal fantasy at work, as will creative activities. Therefore, proletarian families must demand free kindergartens. Their demand for a shorter work-day will enable parents themselves to obtain education, which will encourage them to struggle for national education and for a new order where education is not linked with class. B. B-ski seems to pine for a 'golden age' when the Sabbath was holy and, for children, "the other six days of the

⁴⁷¹ Khanike – midwinter festival of light celebrating both a miracle that occurred in the Temple during the period of the Maccabean Revolt and the revolt itself. David E. Fishman links Esther's concept of a transformed Khanike to actual proletarian Khanike celebrations in the inter-war Polish Yiddish school system (*Rise*, 108).

⁴⁷² Yidishkayt – Jewish identity and culture.

⁴⁷³ Meshiekh – the Messiah. Yonkipper [Heb. Yom Kippur] – the Day of Atonement. Tashlekh – repentance ritual of casting off sins into running water. Kapoyres – repentance ritual of transferring sins to an item which is then donated. David E. Fishman quotes from this passage (*Rise*, 103).

⁴⁷⁴ Wonder tales – stories with an element of the supernatural, like those of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav (1772-1810).

week were only a sad, long tail to the short Shabes”. In fact, it would be a crime for even one day to be sad and long for a small child. Good kindergartens using the children’s mother tongue can make every day joyful without the need for Shabes and yontoyvim. The answer to the question of national education parallels that for proletarian education and does not lie in extinct traditions but in building new, vibrant ones. An additional error by B. B-ski concerns Esther’s argument that a mother can tell her children about “golden apples in the emperor’s garden” but not about the Sambatyon. Esther calls this a “vulgar falsehood”, as is the activity of parents who ‘although non-believers, perform religious traditions and tell their children about hell and the bad people who burn there’, whereas stories about the Sambatyon are perfectly acceptable. 🍏

‘He completely ignores those simple facts. He does not consider that the proletariat must fill the national form of education with its own content. He goes so far as to find it possible to say that the task of teaching young people proletarian and social sentiments is one for the German comrades but not for us. The Jewish workforce, it appears, suffers from an overabundance of proletarian and social sentiments; the Jewish worker family, it appears, is free of petit-bourgeois influences and experiences; the whole trouble with the Jewish labour movement is that Jewish children become familiar with socialism too early. And B. B-ski concludes the entire, remarkable (to put it kindly) sequence of ideas with the following severe judgement: “We can see that blindly copying (blind, of course, to the fact that such an activity does not exist on the Jewish street – Alef-R) the comrades outside Russia can be dangerous at times.”’ (87; par. 2)

A significant book on schooling in Yiddish, 1910

147. Alef-R. *Tsu der frage vegn der yudisher folks-shul [On the Question of the Jewish Primary School]*. Di velt, Vilna, Aug. 1910. 97 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from LOC.

This fairly short book was ultimately printed in three editions, and extracts were re-published for the *An entfer di gegners fun yidish* series in Czernowitz in 1922.⁴⁷⁵

References to the first edition tend to date it after the two articles entitled

⁴⁷⁵ See later editions, **186** (date unknown) and **187**; *An entfer di gegners fun yidish: Oystsugn fun esther’s broshur ‘Tsu der frage vegn der yidisher folks-shul’*, **221**.

‘Glaykhberekhigung fun shprakhen’, published in August and September 1910, but the later article indicates that the book was already published.⁴⁷⁶ This work made ‘the biggest splash on the socialist scene’, was ‘the crown of the Bund’s school-related literature at that time’, ‘the highlight of Esther’s scholarship on the problem of Jewish education at that time’, ‘Esther’s most influential work’ and, incorrectly, ‘her longest published work’.⁴⁷⁷ In summing up its content, Joshua Zimmerman (248) emphasises the connection it establishes between the demand for the Jewish primary school and socialist theory, and cites a passage expressing the demand for a Jewish primary school that uses Yiddish (29), whereas Aryeh Gelbard (70-71), echoing Khaim Kazdan (284-85), cites a passage concerning new demands and points out the important influence that writings of this sort by Esther and other Bundists had on the development of Jewish education ‘already in the first decade of the century’.⁴⁷⁸ Khaim Kazdan cites an additional substantial passage, about the mutual importance of the proletariat and the Jewish primary school, commenting ‘This is how Esther, in her book, also laid the foundation for an independent proletarian policy on the school question and for the ideology of a socialist education for Jewish children’.⁴⁷⁹ Naomi Shepherd cites a passage describing the completely Yiddish cultural environment of the Pale which, she adds, lacked Yiddish schools.⁴⁸⁰ Jeffrey Shandler observes that the book allies political and linguistic consciousness, citing a relevant passage from the introduction.⁴⁸¹ Elias Schulman makes the most comprehensive examination of the book and quotes several passages.⁴⁸² He ultimately comments, ‘She laid the basis for the new Jewish school – Yiddish, secular, democratic and socialist – thus formulating the Bundist program of Jewish education’.⁴⁸³ Conversely, Nathan Cohen observes that Esther’s views on education follow the Bund’s programme.⁴⁸⁴ The book, in which the author maintains a constant presence by means of regular autoreferences, comprises four named and numbered sections which are divided into fairly short numbered sub-sections. The **Preface** (1-2) gives some information about the circumstances and context of the

⁴⁷⁶ ‘Glaykhberekhigung fun shprakhen,’ 143 and 145. The preface, which is dated August 1910, notes that the writing of the book had been completed in October 1909.

⁴⁷⁷ ‘the biggest splash’ (Zimmerman 248); ‘the crown’ (Kazdan 284); ‘the highlight’ (Gelbard 70); ‘Esther’s most influential work’ (Shepherd 162); ‘her longest published work’ (Kay, *Encyclopedia of Modern Jewish Culture*).

⁴⁷⁸ The cited passage is from pages 94-95.

⁴⁷⁹ Kazdan 285-86. The cited passage is from pages 96-97. Part of the same passage is cited in Nathan Cohen, ‘The Bund’s Contribution to Yiddish Culture in Poland between the Two World Wars,’ Jacobs, *Jewish Politics in Eastern Europe*, 113-14; Ruthchild, ‘Bringing the Revolution,’ 186-87.

⁴⁸⁰ Shepherd 156-57; Ruthchild, ‘Bringing the Revolution,’ 176. On comparison with the original text (36), the cited passage is in fact a paraphrase.

⁴⁸¹ Shandler 67-68. The same passage is cited by Schulman (7-8).

⁴⁸² Schulman 7-11.

⁴⁸³ Schulman 11.

⁴⁸⁴ Cohen 113.

book's publication, explaining that its content is topical and that there are signs of progress towards the distant goal of recognition for Yiddish.⁴⁸⁵ A short **introductory section** (3-5) relates growing awareness of the need for national primary schools using their national language to the awakening of oppressed nations. The Jewish masses are not conscious of this need, since they, like the intelligentsia, perceive the education issue as 'how to infiltrate the foreign schools' and they consider Yiddish valueless.⁴⁸⁶ Their ignorance is natural since they are 'the oppressed of the oppressed'.⁴⁸⁷ Even where it is accepted that Yiddish is a language and that there is such a thing as a Jewish culture, the opinion prevails that Jewish primary schools 'must be Russian (Polish)'. This book provides material to help answer questions about the Jewish primary school. It does not cover the entire issue, just the part 'that is of particular interest to us'. **Part 1** (9-11) of **Section 1, The Mother Tongue and the Jewish Primary School**, notes that the primary school question is particularly important for the masses, because it will be their only opportunity for formal education. There is a connection between education and willingness to struggle for a better life, since education is crucial in that struggle. A proper education develops the intellectual, moral and cognitive powers and leads the child to 'the treasures of culture'. This must be the goal of the national primary school, according to modern pedagogy.⁴⁸⁸ Also, limited access to development and education can harm economic interests. **Part 2** (11-14) examines whether attending a foreign-language school causes only temporary inconvenience. A child does not start school empty of knowledge, schooling builds on the foundations of learning established in the home and the community, but if this learning is not in the school's language, there is no solid foundation on which schooling can build and its teaching is therefore a muddle. According to Ludo Hartmann, children in this situation need special classes, like those for 'abnormal, undeveloped, thick children', which set them back a year or more in their education, wasting time, effort and money.⁴⁸⁹ Hartmann makes the 'utopian assumption' that attending a foreign-language school leads to assimilation, but he is correct in that a child in such a situation becomes 'like an idiot', 'deaf and dumb', as he can neither understand nor speak at school, and this handicaps the entire nation. A legend about the biblical Sodom, where visitors were adjusted to fit a certain bed, illustrates the effect of assimilatory efforts on a child attending a foreign-language school. **Part 3** (14-19) describes the first lessons at school, in which pictures are used to help learn Russian

⁴⁸⁵ Elias Schulman cites the last 8 lines of the preface (7).

⁴⁸⁶ 'Foreign' here means Russian or Polish.

⁴⁸⁷ Elias Schulman cites two passages from this section (7-8).

⁴⁸⁸ Passages from this section are cited in Ruthchild, 'Bringing the Revolution,' 185-86.

letters. These are merely confusing for Jewish children. Even for a Russian child, learning to read is a ‘mechanical, dead’ process. There are various ideas about teaching methods. The learning material is already familiar from home, for example songs and stories, and this helps the child to learn to read. But for a Jewish child, Russian stories about ‘Brother Ivanushka’ and ‘Sister Alyonushka’, which are full of vernacular expressions, are foreign and incomprehensible. Doing arithmetic exercises requires clear understanding, otherwise the work is done ‘half mechanically’, and much time is lost in explaining the Russian instructions to Jewish pupils. These language difficulties create such an obstacle to education that ‘simple Jewish fathers’ can do mental arithmetic more easily than schoolchildren. New methods of teaching grammar rely on literary texts. But a ‘very weak’ translation into Yiddish of part of Nekrasov’s poem ‘Zelënyy shum’ shows that in translation some concepts must be expressed using different parts of speech than those in the original text.⁴⁹⁰ The new method does create awareness of the functions of the various parts of speech, but it allows a Jewish child no opportunity for development of cognitive and communication skills. **Part 4** (19-23) depicts a poorly trained teacher of the existing paltry Jewish primary school who ‘turns in an enchanted circle’, unable to be rid of inadequate old teaching methods and unable to bring in new ones such as the Anschauung method.⁴⁹¹ With this method, pupils devote time to observation (of nature, production, etc) and to activities including verbal and written expression. With the old methods, knowledge dissipates after children leave school. The ivrit be-ivrit method has many opponents, as does a similar method used in schools in the Caucasus, and those opponents are ‘carriers of the Russian state-idea’ who believe that everyone throughout the empire must know Russian.⁴⁹² There are examples of poor performance by students from minority groups in Hungarian schools. The educational value of writing and speaking is high. **Part 5** (23-29) explains that works of literature offer more than one level of meaning, since there is more to a language than just words and grammar: a language has ‘a soul, a spirit’ and this is especially noticeable in the act of translation. Each nation has its own individual conceptions which a word cannot adequately express. It is impossible to rewrite a poem by a great master at the standard of the original, certainly not without stifling ‘the music, the poetry of the verse’. To appreciate poetry completely, a child’s soul must be ‘open to the finest hues’ and if the poetry is in a foreign language only the ‘simplest and

⁴⁸⁹ Ludo Hartmann, Austrian historian, SD politician and advocate of ‘popular education’ (1865-1924).

⁴⁹⁰ Nikolay Alekseevich Nekrasov, realist poet and publisher (1821-78). ‘Zelënyy shum [Green Noise],’ 1863.

⁴⁹¹ The Anschauung method was developed by the educational theorist Johann Pestalozzi in the nineteenth century. It placed major emphasis on practical experience.

most primitive colours' can be perceived. Imagining the potential experience of a Russian child in a Jewish school elucidates the effect on a Jewish child who 'enters the great temple of poetry through the Russian door'. Although a Jewish child may know words that take yat 'as well as the Shema', a Russian school has not led him to Russian culture.⁴⁹³ But nor does a Jewish child have access to Jewish culture, because domestic use of his mother tongue does not provide the sort of vocabulary needed to engage with books and serious newspapers. The state of the Jewish primary school, under the current capitalist order, is deplorable. The situation is worse in foreign-language schools. Parents must demand a Jewish primary school that uses their children's mother tongue; teachers must protest against being used as a tool for tormenting children; and the proletariat must, 'in the name of the class struggle', demand a Jewish primary school that uses the mother tongue of its pupils.⁴⁹⁴ **Section II, Foreign Languages in Yiddish Literature** is called 'Foreign Languages and the Jewish School' in some external references.⁴⁹⁵ **Part 1** (33-35) emphasises the importance of teaching a foreign language in national primary schools.⁴⁹⁶ Bauer wrote of the folly in not learning both languages in bilingual areas. Learning Russian does not give Jews access to Russian culture but it affects their freedom of movement within the state. **Part 2** (35-39) relates to interaction between a nation and its neighbours. Even in Minsk or Vilna, Jews need Russian for communication in government agencies and 'with the peasant, with the landlord'. Every nation wants officials to know its language, therefore every nation demands equality for its language in government agencies. Yiddish is dominant in the daily life of the Jewish worker in Vilna who has almost no interaction outside his community.⁴⁹⁷ To interact with 'the environment' that surrounds Jewish communities it is best to learn local languages. Implementing this will be difficult for all. Due to its historical and practical merits, Russian must be taught in Jewish primary schools, even in Poland and the Baltic region. **Part 3** (39-42) concerns the level of competency in Russian or Polish needed by the Jewish masses. This will depend on the level of language instruction Jewish primary schools can provide. A general minimum must be set, emphasising practical, day-to-day, spoken language rather than scientific or theoretical terminology. Reading and writing must also be taught. Russian classes must only teach vocabulary, not concepts or other subjects, both because adequate learning cannot occur in a foreign language

⁴⁹² Ivrit be-ivrit – Hebrew taught in Hebrew, the Direct Method (Schulman 4).

⁴⁹³ 'Words that take yat' – classification in pre-revolutionary Russian orthography. Shema – important prayer recited every morning and evening.

⁴⁹⁴ Elias Schulman quotes three paragraphs from this section (9).

⁴⁹⁵ For example Z. Reisen 144; Kazdan 284.

⁴⁹⁶ 'Foreign' here means a language of Russia other than the primary language of the national school.

and because it would render Russian or Polish ‘a means to another goal’. No Russian textbooks on other topics must be used, as Russian should be taught ‘exclusively from the great masters of the Russian language’. Once a pupil has studied one language, studying another language is easier. Once a pupil perceives his mother tongue as an orderly system, it will be easier to recognise similar order in a foreign language. The more opportunity a child has to interact with his foreign neighbours, the better progress he will make with studying their language at school. See Otto Bauer’s related views on natural language coercion, published in *Kampf* in 1908.⁴⁹⁸ Pupils in higher classes will be able to undertake more advanced Russian studies, which may include Russian-language tuition on non-language topics such as Russian history. The best pupils may even be given the opportunity to learn to read Russian and ‘gradually approach Russian literature’. For average students, the Jewish primary school will grant them access to their own culture. **Part 4** (42-44) focuses on language in the workplace, concluding that job skills are more important than language skills. If an employer refuses to hire Jews, language skills, even ‘knowing Nekrasov by heart’, will be irrelevant. Obtaining job skills and freedom of movement for Jewish workers both require a national primary school that uses its pupils’ mother tongue. **Part 5** (44-45) considers language needs for Jewish emigrants from Russia, arguing that no matter which foreign language emigrants know, Yiddish will be of great benefit to them, both because of its kinship with German, which they can make use of in several European countries, and because of the presence of Yiddish speakers and Yiddish cultural institutions in other countries. The best preparation for emigration is education in a Jewish primary school which develops the mind and thereby facilitates language acquisition.⁴⁹⁹ **Section III, Yiddish** is called ‘Yiddish – A Response to the Claims about Yiddish’ in some external references.⁵⁰⁰ **Part 1** (49-50) lists some pessimistic claims about the Jewish primary school, centring on the supposed linguistic poverty of Yiddish. The claims are irrelevant but cannot be ignored since they create an air of negativity around the question of the Jewish primary school. **Part 2** (50-54) investigates whether Yiddish is a corrupted form of German. Firstly, every other language can similarly be called a corruption. Secondly, Yiddish words that seem like ‘corrupted German’ may be closer to Middle High German, from which Yiddish and German both derive. Corresponding word forms appear in

⁴⁹⁷ This passage is cited by Naomi Shepherd, 156-57.

⁴⁹⁸ *Kampf* – periodical produced by the Austrian Social-Democratic Party.

⁴⁹⁹ Elias Schulman quotes the concluding paragraph of this section (10).

⁵⁰⁰ For example Z. Reisen 144; Kazdan 284.

Grünbaum's *Jüdisch-Deutsche Chrestomathie*.⁵⁰¹ Fischel's *The Austrian Language Law* indicates words and forms used in German between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries and no longer used in modern High German but preserved in Yiddish as well as in some German dialects.⁵⁰² The development of Yiddish and German varied, and examples from Dutch, which cannot be called corrupted German, and Russian, which cannot be called corrupted Old Church Slavonic, show the similarity of their developmental processes to that of Yiddish. The history of a people is embedded in its language, because 'the language is the people itself'. **Part 3** (54-56) discusses the claim that Yiddish is a mixed language containing many introduced words. Leo Wiener found that only ten percent of Yiddish could be considered mixed.⁵⁰³ Actually, all European languages are mixed, and incorporation of new words into a language is 'no defect'. In the future, scholars will be able to create new words with more care and attention than 'our publicists' and 'the first Jewish political writers in their rushed, clandestine work' have done. The question about incomprehensibility among Yiddish-speakers from different parts of Russia can be answered by reference to the same sort of dialectal variety that exists in German and Russian. Alexander Harkavy maintains that it is a virtue that regardless of dialectal pronunciation Yiddish transcription is homogeneous.⁵⁰⁴ An argument against writing Yiddish in the Latin alphabet is that standardised transcription would be incomprehensible to speakers of other dialects. **Part 4** (57-63) refutes claims that Yiddish has no grammar or orthography. The first example presents a sentence in Yiddish which lacks grammatical features. The sentence is only comprehensible once the missing features are added. The second example demonstrates that Yiddish requires a certain word order which must be observed to prevent a speaker from sounding like a 'Nikolaevsky soldier'.⁵⁰⁵ If a certain tongue has rules like these, it 'is a language and has a grammar'. But few books are dedicated to Yiddish grammar, it is more of an oral than a written law.⁵⁰⁶ As an example of the firm rules of Yiddish grammar, descriptions from Harkavy's *Ha-yesh mishpat lashon le-sfat yehudit?* of the rules for forming diminutives are provided, and further relevant rules are added to Harkavy's.⁵⁰⁷ The grammar of Yiddish has not been elaborated completely but its laws operate nonetheless, in the same way that the laws of gravity operated before Newton

⁵⁰¹ Max Grünbaum, *Jüdisch-Deutsche Chrestomathie [Judeo-German Chrestomathy]*, Leipzig, 1882.

⁵⁰² Alfred Fischel, *Das Österreichische Sprachenrecht [The Austrian Language Law]*, 1st ed., Irrgang, Brünn, 1901.

⁵⁰³ Leo Wiener, linguist, translator, lecturer in Slavic Studies at Harvard University (1862-1939).

⁵⁰⁴ Alexander Harkavy, historian, Yiddish lexicographer and grammarian (1863-1939).

⁵⁰⁵ Nikolaevsky soldier – metaphorically, a person with little education or connection with their cultural heritage.

⁵⁰⁶ Oral law, written law – terms borrowed from classifications of Jewish religious texts.

⁵⁰⁷ Harkavy, *Ha-yesh mishpat lashon le-sfat yehudit? [What Is the Linguistic Judgement on Yiddish?]*, Rosenberg, New York, 1896.

discovered them. The first passable grammar of Russian was only written in the eighteenth century, of Czech and many others only in the nineteenth century. Scholarly work has been done on Yiddish grammar. The question of orthography is less straightforward, since various spellings are in use for some words and in many cases all the variations are considered acceptable. Spelling rules are now firmer than previously, newspapers have played an important role in this development. Many languages experience conflict between spellings based on history and those based on phonetics, and usually this results in spellings of mixed derivation. This phenomenon is visible in Goldfaden's poetry, which includes orthography that is now unacceptable, and in old and new orthography in Yiddish, Russian and French.⁵⁰⁸ Standardisation of orthography for a state language is 'partly artificial, by force'. Standardisation of the orthography of languages unsupported by state power, such as Yiddish, requires schools exclusively dedicated to them and scientific institutions with funds and authority. These schools and institutions will be governed by the future national autonomy. The major determinant for selection of acceptable forms of grammar and orthography is usage, changes to which are effected by the press, good literature, politics and the theatre. Even state languages display some fluidity in orthography, and the case of Yiddish is no different to that of recognised languages. **Part 5** (63-65) considers the claim that Yiddish has a terrible sound in comparison, for example, with German. By analogy, when someone listening to a familiar piece of music expects to hear a certain note but instead a different one is played, he objects, even though 'the inner harmony is unchanged'. Similar claims are made about other languages too. Words should not be considered independently but in the context of active speech. For example, nobody would think that the Yiddish 'zeydeniu [grandad]' is less tender than the corresponding German 'grossvaterchen', 'even though the former is a bastard-word with a "deformed" Slavic ending and the latter is a kosher child from the Germanic family'. Yiddish terms of endearment in a story by Peretz can be compared with German terms which have a nicer sound but look and sound awkward in a Yiddish text. There are no objective criteria for dividing languages into beautiful ones and ugly ones.⁵⁰⁹ But if we accept the general agreement that Italian is a beautiful language, Yiddish would fall into the opposite category and so would English, which is 'compared to the barking of dogs' despite being the language of Shakespeare, Byron, Shelley and so on. The true beauty of a language lies in its embodiment of the life of the people who formed it. **Section IV, The**

⁵⁰⁸ Avram (Abraham) Goldfaden, Yiddish poet and playwright, often called the father of Yiddish theatre (1840-1908).

Jewish Primary School and the Jewish People is the longest section, consisting of eight parts. **Part 1** (69-71) refutes the claim that “the Jewish primary school is a utopia” and presents the theoretical bases for the demand for a Yiddish-language primary school. The proletariat cannot create it alone, the intelligentsia and the wealthy and middle classes are not helping with this ‘great historical work’. The masses are uncomprehending, indifferent or averse, due to external conditions such as the lack of political and civil liberties and internal obstacles such as the ideology of assimilation which is also shared by many Zionists who oppose Yiddish, ‘the national goles language’ in favour of Hebrew, ‘the foreign territorial language’. Ultimately, assimilators and Zionists have little importance on the Jewish street, but their assimilation ideology is significant as it often causes lack of self-respect and accompanies national sentiments. This obstacle can be overcome through the process of national awakening which is already occurring. **Part 2** (71-75) relates Jewish assimilation to parallel developments in the history of other nations. Minority nations, particularly educated intelligentsia, may be ashamed of their mother tongue, as Bauer discusses. Now, the masses are awakening and starting ‘to appear on the historical stage’ and to make demands in relation to their needs. Bauer is quoted at some length, with some commentary, about this process of awakening and nationalisation, as experienced by Czechs. **Part 3** (75-79) focusses on the intelligentsia and its tendency towards assimilation, in light of contemporary economics. Kautsky writes about professionals’ utilisation of national culture to retain clients. The assimilation process sees the assimilated repelled from the foreign and attracted to their own nation. **Part 4** (79-81) explains how the intelligentsia and middle class become ‘fighters for equality for their language’ through psychological transformation. Henryk Grossman wrote about changes to employment on a national basis, an issue at the heart of the interest in language equality for the aforementioned classes. In order to fill vacancies with their own nationals, nations need their own higher learning institutions. **Part 5** (82-86) focusses on changes to the mentality of the Jewish intelligentsia. The Jewish masses have also undergone changes. For example, whereas Jews used to rely for their legal and medical needs on medieval practices of the sort that Mendele describes in his novel *Di klyatshe*, they now use the services of lawyers, doctors and dentists, and the bonesetters and wise women now “lie in the ground”.⁵¹⁰ This change is at least partly

⁵⁰⁹ Elias Schulman renders this argument about beauty as follows: ‘The question as to whether a language is “beautiful” or “ugly” is totally unscientific’ (10).

⁵¹⁰ Sholem Abramovich (Mendele Moykher Sforim or simply ‘Mendele’), author known as the grandfather of Yiddish literature (1835-1917). *Di klyatshe [The Old Mare]*, 1873.

due to the large numbers of Jewish masses now in the major cities. On the Jewish street, it has meant that Yiddish-speaking professionals are more popular than others, and the professionals are starting to understand this, to utilise the opportunity it offers them. The changes have brought about the emergence of ‘our own, purely national intelligentsia’. It is not a large group but still significant, and the majority of young Jewish writers and journalists are associated with it, so it influences ‘our young literature’. Facts such as the great popularity of serious Jewish artists and litterateurs are evidence of the growth of a Jewish public ‘with a demand for its own cultural values’, and though Yiddish literature may be small and dark, its existence is undeniable. One now encounters people who can live off their earnings from their writing in Yiddish. It is incorrect to say that a ‘cultural “renaissance”’ is commencing instead of political growth, but cultural growth is occurring and will not be stifled, though it has been hampered by the black reaction. **Part 6** (86-88) explores the gravitation to Yiddish of the intelligentsia and bourgeois families where, previously, fathers would read *Ha-melitz*, mothers would read a Yiddish novel by Shoymer, and sons would read *Russkie vedomosti*, but since 1907 each reads the Yiddish newspaper of his choice.⁵¹¹ Despite many differences between fathers and sons, they have begun to use Yiddish together, and fathers learn new words from their children. Inevitably, this stratum of the bourgeois intelligentsia is chauvinistic and must be combatted by the conscious proletariat. **Part 7** (89-93) posits some predictions. The next stage in Russia can be foreseen on the basis of the similar process that occurred in Galicia and Bukovina.⁵¹² In the course of their national awakening, the Ruthenians and Romanians in Bukovina demanded their own national schools. This gives hope for the establishment of Jewish primary schools in Russia. ‘Vegen natsyonaler ertsihung’ (**139**) discussed assimilation within the Jewish intelligentsia, a tendency which battles nationalisation, and, regardless of the outcome of that conflict, the high element of nationalisation will be an important factor in creation of the school. Assimilation is prevalent among the Jewish haute bourgeoisie, which may be the most cosmopolitan in the world. It is linked politically with the Jewish street, which is an object of its philanthropy and a source of political power for it by way of Jewish votes, and correspondingly its choice of political platform will affect its political success. **Part 8** (93-97) begins with a reference to ‘Vegen natsyonaler ertsihung’ and to an article by B. B-ski, about activity in advance of the establishment

⁵¹¹ *Ha-melitz* – Hebrew newspaper founded in Odessa in 1860. Shoymer, or Shomer, pseudonym of Nokhem Meyer Shaykevich, writer of popular Yiddish novels, criticised by Sholem Aleichem (c.1849-1905). *Russkie vedomosti* – liberal Russian newspaper (1863-1918).

⁵¹² Bukovina – multi-ethnic region now in Ukraine and Romania, location of Czernowitz.

of the Jewish primary school. In that work it is important to remember that the school's national form must dictate its operation, so that it does not become a tool of the ruling classes or a deficient institution. A Jewish primary school demanded by the Jewish petite bourgeoisie may be different to that demanded by the Jewish proletariat. The petite bourgeoisie would want it to teach chauvinism, faith, "national spirit", etc, so that the proletariat would need to struggle for it to remain secular and democratic. Use of pupils' mother tongue in national primary schools is only one of many demands of the conscious proletariat. The school must also provide a decent education; give the same education to all pupils regardless of their socioeconomic situation; enable its pupils to continue directly to secondary school with no interruption or additional classes for wealthy pupils; offer no religious instruction; be free and compulsory, at least in the junior classes; offer a minimum of eight years' instruction; employ university-educated teachers; give teachers equivalent remuneration to secondary and university teachers; give pupils hot food and all educational materials at no charge to them; and involve parents in decisions relating to their school, via elected school boards. School instruction must not be subject to government supervision, and all matters relating to primary education must be governed by autonomous national bodies with corresponding legislative authority, in other words, the national-cultural autonomy. Some 'democratic-bourgeois elements' may support these demands but there remains a profound difference between the attitudes of such people and of the proletariat. Naturally, this issue is only a very small part of the struggle against the capitalist order. National primary schools could not be fully effective under capitalism, given the selfish activity of the authorities. Currently, poverty, misery, alcoholism and prostitution exist, and children's abilities, intelligence and dreams are stifled in dark cellars, young souls are embittered, and art and science are consumer goods. The struggle for the national primary school cannot be an end in itself for the proletariat, but merely 'a means to ease its struggle for the future'. The Jewish proletariat has led the way in demands for equality and education, out of need. Until the Jewish intelligentsia started to repeat the proletariat's old slogan, that slogan provoked either mockery or indifference. The proletariat must ensure that the school does not become a tool of reactionary chauvinism. Nonetheless, the school plan 'will be a project for the [entire] nation'. The proletariat cannot achieve this goal alone but has the strength to ensure that the school will support the new vibrant culture. 🍀

'I have heard Russians who have said that Polish is a terrible language take healthy, pure, Russian words and tack on to them some hissing pshi's and psho's, some nasal a's

and e's... and when a Frenchman hears the English 'circulation' instead of his French 'circulation' he must also think, "Ugh, how awful".⁵¹³ And the Englishman probably thinks exactly the reverse about the Frenchman.' (64; par. 2)

'The beauty of language is just like the beauty of a folktune which tugs at the heart and evokes tears and passion and endless longing in a child of that people, and is for the average foreign listener "not an awful thing" at best, but more often mostly just a kind of song and in particular cases even ridiculous. Happy is he, however, who can elevate himself above his subjective worldview and understand with his heart how many old, old sorrows and joys, how many experiences, how many grey secrets, how many eternal strivings are embodied in every language, and how much inner beauty and harmony lie within it. Whether radiant and laughing, serious and strict, soft and dreamy, or sad and gloomy, it is always a divine work of art, always the image of the people that created it.'⁵¹⁴ (65; par. 2)

Before and during the war, 1911-16

1911

148. Alef-R. 'Der handverker-tsuzamenfor [The Artisans' Conference].' *Di idishe folks-shtime (zamlbukh)* [Warsaw], vol. 1, 1911, pp. 1-4 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to '[Esther (Frumkin)]?'.

This article reports on the All-Russian Artisans' Conference held in 1911. ☹

'The conference was divided not by national symbols but by class symbols. There were no antisemitic demonstrations there, only stormy class clashes. Class struggle instead of national struggle is one of the most important positive results of the workers' participation in the conference.'⁵¹⁵

149. D. Katsenelenboygen. 'Dem nayntsntn februar [The Nineteenth of February].' *Di idishe folks-shtime (zamlbukh)* [Warsaw], vol. 2, 1911, pp. 4-10 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to '[Esther (Frumkin)]?'.

⁵¹³ Ellipsis in original.

⁵¹⁴ Cf. another published translation of this passage in Shneer, Ruthchild and Lorber, see 221.

150. D. K. 'Folks-afklerung oder folks-ferfinsterung? [National Enlightenment or National Darkening?].' *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 1, Kletskin, June 1911, pp. 8-11 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to '[Esther (Frumkin)]?'. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article, divided into four numbered sections, reports on a meeting of the Mefitsey haskole association about Jewish primary schooling. **Section I** introduces the meeting's theme and mood. Supporters of Hebrew, Yiddish and Russian alike are united by nationalism, against assimilation. That 'pathetic' bourgeois nationalism blinds and exploits the masses. Among Jews it has a component of 'religious hypocrisy'. Thus the meeting's main speakers emphasise the need for religious instruction in Jewish schools and all streams oppose truly democratic schools without religious instruction. **Section II** explains that the "democrats" are reactionary. Their nationalism stems from their separation from the mass culture, their assimilation. They now acknowledge the national value of Yiddish but this simply cloaks a desire for russification. They consider Jewishness a purely religious distinction. *Novyy voskhod* criticised Rafes for pointing out that nation and religion are separate.⁵¹⁶ **Section III** explains that nationalists' religiosity is purely an opportunistic tool for influencing the masses. Religious instruction is expected to secure the "existence of the nation [kiem haume]". The meeting decides to teach all subjects discussed, even a bit of Yiddish, although the state had already recognised the right of Jewish children to primary education in their mother tongue. 'Woe to the national education work for which even the decisions of the Third Duma are too radical'. **Section IV** describes an address which calls upon the association to help create a Jewish school with instruction in Yiddish. The meeting refuses even to vote on the related resolution. This negative response shows disregard for the needs of the masses. The one resolution benefiting Yiddish is unlikely to be implemented. We must combat reactionary plans for schooling. ☹

'The task of combatting the reactionary tendencies in the sphere of primary education now confronts the democratic circles on the Jewish street more urgently. We must not allow schools to become a place of nationalist and religious stultification of the people; we must not allow Hebrew in primary schools, because this means robbing children of their already scant school years for the sake of a nationalist dream, because teaching a dead language in a primary school is a blatant crime against the most basic requirements of pedagogy. We must show those who have taken it upon themselves to worry about

⁵¹⁵ Dubnow-Ehrlich 610.

the nation that their reactionary work will not succeed. War on the stultification of the people!’ (concluding paragraphs)

151. D. Katsenelenboygen. ‘Di gezetsproyekten vegen arbeter-farzikherung [The Bills on Workers’ Insurance].’ *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 1, Kletskin, June 1911, pp. 11-15 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article consisting of four numbered and named sections discusses and criticises bills on income protection insurance before the State Duma. **Section I, Who Is Insured and against What?** (11-12), considers the situation of Jewish workers who will be left without income if they are unable to work or find customers. Insurance is essential. The new law will have limited significance due to its limited scope. **Section II, At Whose Expense?** (12-14), considers how the cost of the insurance is and will be divided between the state, employers and workers. The labour movement had managed to improve conditions, but workers and the government carry most of the cost, and the bill amounts to ‘crafty financial speculation’ which the bosses will relish since they will no longer be solely responsible for medical care for their employees. **Section III, Who Will Be the Boss?** (14-15), argues for amalgamation and transfer to workers’ control of all insurance agencies. However, bosses will likely retain this control. In Russia, bosses’ associations help them to organise lock-outs and blacklists, and leave workers largely defenceless, as it is these powerful associations which assess sick workers’ work capacity, calculate financial benefits and administer treatment. More importantly, allowing employers to control accident insurance impedes improvement to workplace safety, since injury pay-outs cost less than improvements. Workers’ authority over health insurance is only superficial, bosses chair meetings and play a powerful role in managing kasses.⁵¹⁷ Police and bureaucrats too have significant roles in the Russian system. Clearly, the much-vaunted “autonomy” is a sham, like the “insurance”. **Section IV, General Remarks** (15), reiterates that the proposed insurance is merely a tool for exploiting workers. As well as a ‘bitter mockery’, it is a ‘dry bone thrown in the face of the worker who has exhausted his strength on the battlefield of capitalism’. Workers’ insurance demands are listed. ☺

⁵¹⁶ *Novyy voskhod* – Russian Jewish intellectual journal aligned with the principles of the Mefitsey haskole (1910-15). Moyshe Rafes, prominent Bundist, later senior official in the Soviet Ukrainian government (1883-1942).

⁵¹⁷ Kasse – workers’ security fund.

- ‘1) Compulsory state insurance for all hired workers in case of sickness, accidents, invalidism, old age, death and unemployment; and additionally for women in case of pregnancy and childbirth.
- 2) The insurance must be funded by the state by means of a special levy on the employer and a progressive tax on inheritances and income.
- 3) All types of insurance must be administered by one organisation, which must be established on a geographical principle and on the basis of full independence of the insurance programme.
- 4) A worker who is unable to work must receive as a minimum his full wage in the form of assistance or a financial benefit.

These are the demands that the proletariat of Russia makes in response to the paltry insurance that the “renewed order” wishes to gift to it.’ (concluding paragraphs)

152. D. Katsenelenboygen. ‘Di ferzikherung fun kranke un tsushedigte in daytshland [Insurance for the Ill and Injured in Germany].’ *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 2, Kletskin, Sept. 1911, pp. 3-7 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article consisting of seven numbered sections discusses government income protection insurance schemes, including German schemes on which the Russian government is modelling its insurance. **Section I** (3) provides a concise introduction, explaining that information about insurance in Germany will help readers understand what has been carried over into the Russian scheme, and that sickness and injury insurance will be discussed here because it has been approved by the Duma. **Section II** (3) discusses the role of Chancellor von Bismarck in devising the German insurance schemes in the 1880s, and his motivation, which was to make ‘the magic flute with which the Social-Democracy captivated the masses lose its magic’ while making the masses believe he was helping them.⁵¹⁸ To that end, he appropriated aspects of socialism and even claimed to be a socialist, while repeatedly amending his proposals to please the capitalists. **Section III** (3-4) provides information about health insurance and the various types of kasse to demonstrate the weak position of the workers. **Section IV** (4-5) concerns accident insurance, which ‘the Russian legislators have faithfully imitated’. Russian workers can benefit from learning about their German comrades’ ‘bitter, very bitter experience’ of accident insurance which saw employer associations ‘wage a vicious struggle against the injured workers’. A discussion about assessment of work

capacity includes a comparison of the relative incapacity losing a finger causes different professions. Doctors hired by employers assess incapacity low to minimise pay-outs, and if injured workers consult other doctors they can lose their pay-out altogether. The type of injury with the ‘widest opportunity for exploitation’ is traumatic disorder, which a doctor can easily certify as exaggerated. Russian workers must fight for the transfer of control of accident insurance to the workers. **Section v** (5-6) provides further comparisons between insurance in Germany and Russia, and between conditions in the past and under the proposed legislation. **Section vi** (6) shows what was copied from Germany’s scheme. Essentially, anything that might have helped workers was rejected. Thus, readers can assess the veracity of the claim that Russia’s scheme copies Germany’s. **Section vii** (6-7) begins with the gripping statement that the most important difference between Germany and Russia will now be revealed. Then it returns to Bismarck, who tried to use insurance to pacify the German proletariat but failed since it made good use of the insurance’s many benefits. In fact, the German kasses are ‘true fortresses of the SD’, and though the benefits are a palliative, Germany’s accident insurance is still better than Russia’s. The German political system has enabled great freedom of revolutionary activity, which permits the proletariat to make use of every positive change. There is no such political freedom in Russia, therefore no insurance law can benefit the working class. This is the important difference. ☹

‘In Germany, the workers’ insurance was introduced by Bismarck, by the same Bismarck who created the Antisocialist Law and who made every effort to stifle and oppress the labour movement. The Antisocialist Law, on one side, and the workers’ insurance, on the other, were “the whip and the spongecake” which, in Bismarck’s mind, were to put an end to the German labour movement. To defeat the workers’ organisations, stifle the workers’ press and thereby destroy the Social-Democracy were the tasks of the Antisocialist Law. To throw the masses a beautifully dressed-up “social reform”, show them that the state cares about their well-being, and thereby tear them out from under the influence of the Social-Democracy were the tasks of the “workers’ insurance.”’ (3; par. 5)

153. D. K. ‘Kegn der oykh-mir farzikherung [Against the So-Called Insurance].’ *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 2, Kletskin, Sept. 1911, pp. 12-13 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘[Esther (Frumkin)]?’. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

⁵¹⁸ Otto von Bismarck, Prussian statesman and German Chancellor (1815-98).

This anthology article responds to an impression among workers that mere resolutions will not halt the Duma's insurance plans. It summarises the plans' deficiencies and explains that amendments can be made even in the later stages of consideration of a bill. Protests against the bill have had great political value in demonstrating that the workers are not fooled into believing this insurance will benefit them, and in making workers aware of their restrictions and needs. A good insurance scheme will only be achieved when workers are more involved in the legislative process and SD deputies have the support of 'strong and open organisations'. If workers are silent, bosses will only reduce rights further. The protest activity will make bourgeois deputies support the SD faction or will expose the falsity of their worker-friendly statements. Regardless of tangible results, whenever the workers speak up for themselves it is a victory. 🐦

'Each time the interests of the proletariat are damaged, its voice must be heard, especially about important questions which affect the vital interests of the masses. To stay silent would be a crime.' (concluding paragraph)

154. D. K. 'Gute eytses [Good Advice].' *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 2, Kletskin, Sept. 1911, pp. 19-20 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to '[Esther (Frumkin)]?'. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article discusses reports of growing tension between Polish and Jewish workers. One report initially depicts Jews as 'proletarians like Christ' but later criticises and blames them for the conflict. It expresses a hope that Jews will soon integrate themselves into Polish culture, having abandoned their "cult of barbarity" with its problematic festivals and mediaeval jargon.⁵¹⁹ This conception ignores reality, factories reject Jewish workers not because of the workers' religious values but because the Jewish owners do not want to compel Jewish workers to break Shabes.⁵²⁰ If factories will not hire Jews, it will not help Jewish workers even to know all of Mickiewicz by heart or to worship on Sunday and every other Catholic holiday.⁵²¹ Conscious Polish and Jewish workers must resolve this conflict together. The reports' assimilationist advice to Jewish workers 'brings no honour to the Polish labour movement and only delights Zeitlins and Niemojewskis'.⁵²² 🐦

⁵¹⁹ Esther's use of 'jargon' as a synonym for 'Yiddish' in this article is likely to be ironic, unlike in the 'Pis'mo ot 'Ester'' about the Czernowitz Conference.

⁵²⁰ Break Shabes – defy the laws of Shabes, in this case with regard to the prohibition against work.

⁵²¹ Adam Mickiewicz, Polish national poet, writer and political activist (1798-1855). The comment about knowing Mickiewicz by heart recalls *Tsu der frage* (Section II, Part 4, **147**), where the poet invoked is Nekrasov.

⁵²² Andrzej Niemojewski, Polish political activist and writer (1864-1921). He is described as a 'major anti-Jewish writer' in *Poland's Threatening Other: The Image of the Jew from 1880 to the Present*, by Joanna Beata Michlic, U of Nebraska P, 2006, 56-57.

‘*Wolny Głos* knows, it knows just as well as the proletarian Zionists, that Jews cannot exist in goles, without their own territory, that every thought of the possibility of leading a national life and developing a Jewish culture in goles is a dangerous reactionary utopia;⁵²³ it knows that Jews must assimilate and that assimilation is their only salvation.’ (19; col. 2, par. 6)

155. D. Katsenelenboygen. ‘Der yakres [The Cost of Living].’ *Di naye shtime (zamelbukh)* [Vilna], no. 3, Kletskein, Dec. 1911, pp. 2-7 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from epaveldas.lt.

This anthology article consisting of eight numbered sections concerns recent significant increases in the cost of living in Russia and elsewhere, and applies Marxist theory to this situation. **Section I** (2-3) explains the problem of increased food prices using examples from several countries and a description from economic theory. Kautsky, Bauer ‘and others’ agree that the high prices erode the wage victories of the labour movement. Protest in Western Europe about this issue ‘shakes the foundations of the capitalist order’. **Section II** (3-4) discusses research on the price increases, citing details of comparative pay rates compiled by Pazhitnov and Finn-Yenotaevsky.⁵²⁴ In Russia there is no opportunity for open protest which could influence the government. In Warsaw, factory bosses sell food to their employees but will not avoid wage strikes. **Section III** (4) refutes false claims about the causes of the situation. One ‘false and hypocritical’ claim is that strikes and higher wages inflate prices. Bauer’s brochure disproves the claim that shopkeepers and bakers cause the problem.⁵²⁵ **Section IV** (4-5) outlines the actual causes of this problem, which ‘lie deep in the foundations of capitalist development’ and are connected with urbanisation and industrialisation. Urbanisation increases demand for foodstuffs in the cities, requiring food importation, often from America, which due to a parallel process has reduced its exports, causing prices to rise in importing countries. Proper management would eliminate shortages and oversupply, but in the capitalist order the aim of production is not to fulfil need but to make profit. **Section V** (5) blames the problem on the Russian government and its agriculture and export policies whereby grain produced by ‘ruined and hungry’ peasants is exported while Russia goes hungry. **Section VI** (5) describes the role of indirect taxation in raising prices of non-agricultural commodities. Indirect taxation constitutes a

⁵²³ *Wolny Głos* – socialist newspaper published in Warsaw.

⁵²⁴ Konstantin Alekseevich Pazhitnov (1879-1964) and Aleksandr Yul’evich Finn-Yenotaevsky (1873-1943), economists.

⁵²⁵ Otto Bauer’s brochure, unnamed in the article, is likely to be *Die Teuerung*, published in Vienna in 1910.

major part of the state budget, therefore the poorest population shoulders the budget. **Section VII** (6) concerns industrial syndicates, which contribute to the problem of the high cost of living by setting prices intended to be competitive abroad but unaffordable in the domestic market. Their practices exploit consumers, and government support for them and for property owners inflates prices further. **Section VIII** (6-7) reiterates the article's main points and proposes solutions. It is impossible to eliminate high prices altogether under capitalism, and the idea of abolishing syndicates is 'a utopia'. But a democratic government policy can alleviate the harm. Workers must fight for higher wages, and thus will need better professional associations. A cooperative movement would eliminate the need for brokers and thereby increase wages. Ultimately, price increases must be met by wage increases. 🍀

'In other countries, the protests of the masses against the high cost of living are expressed openly in the press and at meetings, and the open labour organisations can influence the governments and parliaments. Here, workers' newspapers that write about the high cost of living are confiscated, open assemblies are not permitted and open organisations are not permitted. Consequently, the high cost of living is a "quieter" phenomenon than it is in Western Europe. Only a muffled murmur need be heard among the workers of the large cities, or the tsdoke pushke shaken in the bourgeois press, for empty and hypocritical phrases to be launched in bourgeois "society".'⁵²⁶ (3; col. 2, par. 6 - 4; col. 1, par. 1)

1912

156. D. K. 'Der gezetsproyekt vegn frayhayt fun shtrayken [The Bill on Freedom to Strike].' *Der onfang* [Vilna], 1912, pp. 14-17 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to '[Esther (Frumkin)]?'

This and the following two articles appeared in the same issue of *Der onfang*.⁵²⁷

157. D. Katsenelenboygen. 'Arum di poylishe fragen [Around the Polish Questions].' *Der onfang* [Vilna], 1912, pp. 26-34 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This anthology article concerns the transfer of Chełm from Polish to Russian jurisdiction, new restrictions on Jews, and language equality for Yiddish.⁵²⁸ It is often

⁵²⁶ Tsdoke pushke – charity moneybox.

⁵²⁷ This issue of *Der onfang* was the only one produced (Marten-Finnis 121).

indignant and uses sarcasm. It consists of five named and numbered sections. **Section I, The Rights that Were Sold** (26-28), opens dramatically: ‘The deal is done.... Now it is time to pay. The pay-out is dear, the price is Chełm’. The protests of the Polish “representatives” against the cession of Chełm, although possibly sincere, were ‘empty phrases’. Losing a battle is unfortunate but arming the enemy as these “representatives” did is ‘shameful, a crime’. The adoption of restrictions on Jews renders ‘hypocritical and ridiculous’ the promises that inter-national relations in Chełm would be managed peaceably and passively. The Polish deputies have simply ‘thrown stones into their own path’. **Section II, Dead Documents and Living Masses** (28-29), concerns the dispute between Polish and Russian nationalists over historical rights to Chełm. The dispute contradicts the interests of the conscious workers whose focus is the living masses, not “historical rights”, and who want joint rule by inhabitants. That perspective would eliminate any need for Jews to show ‘blood and sweat evidence’ that they have a right to live in Poland. **Section III, The “Russians” of Chełm** (29-31), commences with a statement by Eulogius that the Russians of Chełm must be saved ‘from under the Polish yoke’. These Russians are in fact Ukrainians, whose language and culture are persecuted in Russia, and who would therefore be no less oppressed under Russian rule. The question of freedom of conscience is raised in connection with conversions from Orthodoxy to Catholicism, which for the local Russian priests represents a disgrace and a threat. Despite talk about state and national interests, the reality is that Russians want to acquire cheap Polish estates and utilise new employment possibilities. Overall, it is ‘a triumph for the Russian national idea’. **Section IV, “Let Us Do It Too!”** (31-33) critiques the language proposal of Bulat.⁵²⁹ The Polish situation constitutes ‘a collision of two nationalisms’ in which Bulat’s proposal represents the timid entreaties of the oppressed Lithuanian petite bourgeoisie to join in the oppression. When Lithuania was granted rights in an area with a majority of Jewish inhabitants, Bulat said that Yiddish could not have rights there, recalling ‘the old theory’ by which Jews have less recognition even when they are a numerical majority. His proposal is no surprise since every oppressed nation becomes a carrier of nationalism when it awakens to national consciousness. There is a distinction between becoming national and becoming nationalistic. **Section V, Who Defends the Real National Equality?** (33-34), concerns the State Duma and parties’ attitudes to national equality. Only the SD deputies truly

⁵²⁸ The transfer of Chełm was effected on 23 June (6 July) 1912.

⁵²⁹ Andrey Andreevich Bulat, Lithuanian Trudovik deputy from Suwałki (1872-1941).

support national equality. Pokrovsky is prominent among them.⁵³⁰ His brilliant address reveals the reality of Russian and Polish nationalism, and proposes autonomy as the solution to the ‘national muddle’ in Poland. He predicts support for Jewish rights from the proletariats and democratic governments of Poland and Russia. By contrast, the Jewish deputies only support the rights of their petit-bourgeois voters. ☹

‘The conscious workers do not struggle for dead documents, they struggle for the living, creative and suffering masses of the people. And if we lived in a truly democratic order, where the national interests of each nation were protected by national-cultural autonomy and by a specific law on language equality; where all religious and national restrictions were removed; and where Poland had acquired territorial autonomy, the question for the Polish and Ukrainian population of the Chełm region about which area they will join would be decided above all not from a national viewpoint but from general-political, economic, and other viewpoints.’ (28; par. 7 - 29; par. 1)

158. D. K. ‘Nit keyn farshverung [No Conspiracy].’ *Der onfang* [Vilna], 1912, pp. 37-38 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘[Esther (Frumkin)]?’.

159. D. Katsenelenboygen. ‘Vos lernt unz di nohente fergangenheyt? [What Does the Recent Past Teach Us?].’ *Fragen fun leben* [Vilna], no. 2-3, July 1912, pp. 121-44 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This anthology article urges readers to remember the experiences of the five years of the Third Duma and vote for SD candidates in the upcoming elections.⁵³¹ It consists of six named and numbered sections. **Section I, What Have “the Only Jews” Done?** (121-26), criticises the minimal defence of Jewish interests by the two Jewish deputies in the Third Duma, Nisselovich and Fridman.⁵³² These ‘klal yisroel deputies’ reduce the interests of Jewish workers to a few high-profile issues which are only relevant to Jews but still fail to defend them. They cannot ‘support the national dignity of the Jewish masses’, being predictably indifferent to their needs. Sliozberg and Vinaver epitomise

⁵³⁰ Ivan Petrovich Pokrovskiy, doctor, SD deputy from Kuban, ‘the second Pokrovsky’ in the Duma (1872-1963).

⁵³¹ The present article was published in *Fragen fun leben*. According to Moyshe Rafes, Esther took part in producing *Lebens-fragen*, which was published in two issues in Warsaw from May 1912 (‘Bundovskaya pechat’, *Bol’shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya*, edited by O. Yu. Schmidt, AO Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya, Moscow, 1927, vol. 8, col. 120-23). Susanne Marten-Finnis records that *Fragen fun leben* appeared in three issues from 1911 (164) and differentiates it from the Warsaw *Lebens-fragen* (120).

proponents of klal yisroel policy. Sarcasm and some vibrant imagery are used to express soaring hopes and dismal failures, humble entreaties to the reboyne-sheloylem, scorn, disgust, victory, slavery, blame, immortality in Jewish history, and an overall sense of betrayal and hopelessness. **Section II, “Work and Not Phrases”** (126-29), considers the Kadets’ claim that they can offer voters work and not empty rhetoric, finding ‘an abyss’ between their words and deeds. The efforts of the SDs have greater validity than those of the Kadets. On the Jewish question, Maklakov spoke against antisemitism in relation to the Pale legislation but did not defend ‘the national interests of the Jewish masses’. In addition, Kadets have stated openly that ““Great Russia” ... must gradually devour the weaker cultures’, revealing their pessimistic attitude towards minorities. The Kadets have inadequately defended the interests of the masses, of Jews as ordinary citizens and ‘as an oppressed nation’. **Section III, Submissiveness** (130-33), argues that if Jews do not complain about their difficult situation, it will only deteriorate. It is incorrect to claim that the labour movement has only harmed Jewish interests. Declining to be trampled on will cause your opponents to hate you, but, more importantly, also to respect you. Essentially, even in this, the ‘dark night of our life’, as during the ‘storm years’, only the labour democracy shows the correct path. **Section IV, “Narrow Class Interests”** (133-36), begins by disproving the suggestion that Duma deputies who defend the interests of the workers ignore the interests of non-workers, but its focus soon turns to the question of defence of national interests. The reaction has hindered the efforts of the proletariat to defend national interests, but this can be overcome through greater unity among proletariats of different nations. In sum, only the proletariat, which was ‘not afraid to unmask the true goal of antisemitism’ or to demand a proper investigation into the Beilis Affair, and whose deputies have acted most effectively for Jewish interests in the Duma, can adequately defend the interests of the oppressed of any nation. **Section V, And What Is Now..?** (137-40), criticises electoral opponents of the SD: those who follow a klal yisroel policy, the two Jewish deputies mentioned earlier, the nationalists, Zionists and the Jewish “democrats”.⁵³³ Sliozberg is the ‘koyen-godl of klal yisroelism’, a ‘specialist in shtadlones’ who is known for ‘flirting with the blackest Jewish reaction’.⁵³⁴ The Zionists, who for many years urged Jews to believe that they were unable to live happily among other nations, now try to appear radical and concerned not only about Palestine but about Russia too, and Herr Jabotinsky even

⁵³² Leopol’d Nikolaevich Nisselovich, lawyer, Kadet deputy from Courland (1854-1914). On these two deputies, see Christoph Gassenschmidt, *Jewish Liberal Politics in Tsarist Russia, 1900-1914: The Modernisation of Russian Jewry*, Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1995.

⁵³³ Ellipsis in original.

claims that he is able to uphold rights for Yiddish.⁵³⁵ But the Zionists' opposition to Yiddish is clear from their actions. Aptly, the Jewish "democrats" do not separate Jewish interests from general Russian interests, but 'they keep singing the same klal yisroel song as all the others', and are ultimately ineffectual. In addition, for them, a Jewish deputy must be 'a truly Jewish Jew [an ekht idisher id]', which is a nebulous classification. **Section IV, Our Path** (141-44), confirms that the labour democracy cannot promise to defend the interests of the entire people, only the workers and other oppressed people. Similarly, it does not agree to take a klal yisroel approach or to please capitalists, professionals and the middle class, though there will be some overlap of their demands and those of the workers. The Jewish labour candidates call upon the masses to take action, with the deputies as their envoys and partners. The performance of the SD deputies of previous Duma convocations presages the resolute defence of workers' demands by the Jewish labour deputies of the Fourth Duma. They are not scared by the fact that the SD deputies of the Second Duma are in prison. The history of the Bund is evoked in a recollection that 15 years earlier among the Jewish proletariat 'a separate battalion in the global army of the proletariat' was formed. Since then, the Jewish labour democracy, the 'only consistent fighter for the rights and freedom of the Jewish masses', has not ceased to fight under the old banner, and has achieved many victories. The workers' parties of the different nations do not support voting on national lines but voice 'united slogans', while remaining committed to struggle for the rights of their respective mother tongues. ☺

'For years now, [the Zionists have] taken great pains to persuade the Jewish masses that they should stand with their backs to the entire world; for years now, they have accused the Jewish liberation movement of sacrificing Jewish interests in favour of foreign interests; for years now, they have not tired of weighing and measuring the number of "extra" sacrifices that the Jewish people has made for Russia; for years now, they have laughed off every desire in the Jewish community for political life, for work that relates to the places where we live; for years now, they have happily seized upon every fact of national hatred and national isolation as evidence that an abyss lies between the nations, that one nation must be an enemy to another; for years now, they have called upon the Jews not to struggle against the reaction but to plant saplings in Palestine and buy land there stone by stone. Now they come along with a bit of paper from Helsingfors with radical demands on it. Don't the Zionists laugh at themselves when they remember that

⁵³⁴ Koyen-godl – high priest.

⁵³⁵ Vladimir or Ze'ev Jabotinsky, Revisionist Zionist leader (1880-1940).

page of their history? Didn't they already decide to reject that programme back in Hamburg?' (139; par. 3)

1913

- 160.** Alef-R. 'Di milkhome un der ekonomisher krizis in galitsye [The War and the Economic Crisis in Galicia].' *Der tog* [Vilna], 2, no. 40, 15 Feb. (28) 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin.

- 161.** Alef-R. 'Di milkhome un der ekonomisher krizis in galitsyen [The War and the Economic Crisis in Galicia].' *Der shtern* [Vilna], 1, no. 1, 15 Feb. 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Unattributed in IYP. Copy from NLI.

This fairly short newspaper article 'from our Vienna correspondent', subtitled 'New Decrees. The Protest of the Jewish Businessmen', reports on current concerns of Galician Jews. In Galicia, 'the land of economic antisemitism', equality for Jews is a fiction, as major industries do not employ Jews and 'you must search with a light' to find Jews in high-level professions. Now that war is imminent, Galician Jews expect to 'eat the bitter fruit' of the decisions made in Vienna and St. Petersburg, due to their proximity to the anticipated field of conflict. The panic in Galicia is exacerbated by the antisemitic activity of the banks and the government, and new taxes to cover war costs. In addition, new taxpayer-auditing rights are likely to be enacted. Jewish businessmen consider that these rights constitute 'political terror and economic boycott against Jews'. Their protest has attracted some support, including by deputies who are employing 'the best available tactic for such cases in Austria, obstruction'. Although this is likely to succeed, the Jews will bear the burden of the crisis. ☹

'Meanwhile, however, the political skies are once again full of clouds and in Galicia the crisis is beginning afresh. The trip to Petersburg of Prince Hohenlohe brought no real results and the banks in Galicia have just limited credit again.⁵³⁶

Thus turns the wheel. The nobles battle, and the Jews get sore heads.' (concluding paragraphs)

⁵³⁶ Prince Gottfried von Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst, Austro-Hungarian diplomat, sent to St. Petersburg on 2 February 1913 (1867-1932).

- 162.** ‘Nayes in hilzners protses [New Developments in Hilsner’s Case].’ *Der tog* [Vilna], 2, no. 78, 4 Apr. (17) 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin.

- 163.** Alef-R. ‘Nayes in hilzner’s protses [New Developments in Hilsner’s Case].’ *Der shtern* [Vilna], 1, no. 39, 4 Apr. 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Meir-Alter Gantser?’. Copy from NLI.

This short newspaper article ‘from our Vienna correspondent’ announces that Hilsner’s case is likely to be reviewed, and provides a history of the accusations against ‘the unfortunate’ Hilsner which are familiar to all Jews.⁵³⁷ Hilsner’s death sentence had been commuted to life imprisonment, yet his entire trial was thought to be erroneous, since the judge and jury had been ‘hypnotised by terrible antisemitic agitation’. His supporters eventually found ‘strong evidence’ of his innocence, but the justice ministry endeavoured to ‘abandon the matter in the darkness’ and even confiscated newspapers, which is rare in Austria, unlike ‘somewhere else where...’.⁵³⁸ 🐦

‘The Prague newspaper *Bohemia* turned to Olich, the former magistrate, who had carried out the investigation at the beginning of the “case” in Polná. Olich confirmed that that investigation had found reliable evidence of the true murderer, a suspicious person who had been lurking in the forest at the time. All the evidence had pointed to the distinguishing features of that person, which were completely different to Hilsner’s. But then the antisemitic agitation began, and the investigator, the judge and the evidence took a false path.

It is notable that *Bohemia* was confiscated the same day. The prestige of the court must not be upset, even when it is a matter of the fate of an innocent.’ (col. 2, par. 2-3)

- 164.** Alef-R. ‘A gliklekher indzl [A Happy Island].’ *Der tog* [Vilna], 2, no. 102, 9 May (22) 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin.

- 165.** Alef-R. ‘A gliklikher inzel [A Happy Island].’ *Der shtern* [Vilna], 1, no. 63, 9 May 1913, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Meir-Alter Gantser?’. Copy from NLI.

⁵³⁷ Leopold Hilsner, Jew accused of ritual murder in Polná, Bohemia, and tried in 1899 and 1900 (1874-1928).

⁵³⁸ Ellipsis in original.

This fairly short newspaper article ‘from our Vienna correspondent’ concerns Ada Kaleh.⁵³⁹ A description of the ‘beautiful blue Danube’ flowing through the Iron Gates at the borders of Hungary, Rumania and Serbia is followed by a concise political history of the small island, which was an Ottoman fort for 150 years.⁵⁴⁰ The fortunate inhabitants pay no tax, are not subject to conscription and have access to the best Turkish tobacco. After the Balkan Wars, Ada Kaleh was to be governed by Serbia, but Hungary declared its sovereignty of the island. The Viennese press mocks the concept that in return for its vast war costs Austria would gain nothing but this small island. However, it is better than nothing. 🌀

‘Every year, its inhabitants, around 400 souls, all Muslims, would choose themselves a mudir (judge), who would try them and sentence them in the name of “the Prophet Mohammed and Sultan Abdul-Hamid”’.⁵⁴¹ No taxes were paid because none were demanded.’ (col. 2, par. 2)

1914

166. Alef-R. ‘Vi azoy darf men bay unz shtelen di shulfrage: I. Program fragen [How We Should Stand in Relation to the School Question: I. Policy Questions].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 2 (41?), 9? Jan. (22?) 1914, p. 2? (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article, the first in a series, discusses views within the SD on the schooling question.⁵⁴² The international proletariat’s attitude to this question is fairly unanimous.⁵⁴³ Jewish workers demand that education matters be governed by national-cultural autonomies. Some Russian SDs oppose these demands but this would only influence workers who have ‘not yet met with the national question directly’. The opposing SDs’ demands are outdated, everyone who is not ‘deaf to the voice of life’ will soon share our view. We are also fairly unanimous concerning programmatic

⁵³⁹ Ada Kaleh – island in the Danube, now submerged by dam construction.

⁵⁴⁰ ‘Beautiful blue Danube’ – likely a reference to Johann Strauss’s famous waltz composed in 1866.

⁵⁴¹ Digits in original. Abdul Hamid II, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, deposed in 1909 (1842-1918).

⁵⁴² *Di tsayt* was published weekly in St. Petersburg but produced in Vienna, where Esther worked on it (Falkovich, no. 80, 25 May 1965). Sixty issues appeared before it was threatened with closure in June 1914, renamed *Unzer tsayt*, and published twice weekly (Marten-Finnis 120n338). Moyshe Rafes recalls that *Di tsayt* appeared daily (‘Bundovskaya pechat’).

⁵⁴³ The article specifies the demands of the international proletariat that the school be secular, free of charge and obligatory, that it educate children in their mother tongue, offer eight years of schooling, that primary schools provide the same education to pupils from all walks of life, that secondary schooling continue directly from primary schooling, that teachers be university educated and remunerated no less than gymnasium and university teachers, that pupils receive hot food and learning materials free of charge, that pupils’ health be protected, that school-related decisions not be made ‘bureaucratically’, that parents be involved in decision-making, and that education be free of

questions. The language war has not influenced Jewish workers, who still fight for rights for Yiddish. Tanakh should not be taught in Jewish schools, but poetry and stories from Tanakh could be taught alongside secular materials. Although it would be nice to enable children to read Jewish cultural assets in Hebrew, teaching Hebrew would only occupy time needed to impart knowledge that will be essential in daily life. The main differences of opinion concern tactics. ☞

‘I have heard workers say, “Naturally, our children must not learn Toyre or Khumesh. But Tanakh is Jewish history; children must learn Tanakh.” This is simply a profound misunderstanding. Tanakh is not Jewish history. Tanakh is only a collection of sources on Jewish history, sources persisting from various times, sometimes amended, sometimes only fragmentary. Historical science studies sources, compares them, analyses them, establishes the facts, and tries to explain them. History is written on the basis of such sources.’ (col. 4, par. 2)

167. Alef-R. ‘Vi azoy darf men bay unz shtelen di shulfrage: II. Taktishe frage [How We Should Stand in Relation to the School Question: II. Tactical Questions].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 4 (43), 23 Jan. (5 Feb.) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article, the second in a series, links tactics with the circumstances prevailing during a particular struggle. Comparison is made with the great efforts of German workers on schooling issues. A struggle for schooling must be brought to the various administrative bodies, and activities and literature ‘in a proletarian spirit’ must be made available to children. Sometimes the black reaction becomes dominant in the sphere of national education but the inherent class conflict cannot be forgotten. In Russia, ‘the edifice of primary education is not yet constructed’, work on schooling relates to a future school, unlike in Germany. Schooling efforts in Russia are not always adequate. Some people will be happy with any sort of school. The task of achieving an adequate school will become easier and the class issues more apparent with closer examination of the question. ☞

‘And if advanced workers know nonetheless that not any school will do, that the nature of the school is important, the ideal of the wider masses soon becomes simple, too simple: equip schools with as many seats as there are children in the country. That is the main thing. But that formal ideal is also advanced by the wider peasant masses, and the

‘administrative arbitrariness’. Health protection was not among the demands listed in *Tsu der frage* (147), which additionally stipulated the quality of instruction.

bourgeois intelligentsia, which needs a cultural environment for its activity, and enlightened bourgeois, who know that a population of illiterates makes poor consumers, and even the more farsighted bureaucrats, who know that a country of illiterates pays meagre taxes, and that an army of illiterates lets itself be conquered in wars.’ (col. 2, par. 5-6)

- 168.** Alef-R. ‘Vi azoy darf men shtelen bay unz di shulfrage: III. Taktishe frage (Fortzetsung) [How We Should Stand in Relation to the School Question: III. Tactical Questions (Continuation)].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 5 (44), 30 Jan. (12 Feb.) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This fairly long newspaper article is the third in a series. Jonathan Frankel quotes a passage from it, and part of that passage is used by Naomi Shepherd.⁵⁴⁴ It argues that inter-national unity among workers and leadership of the vanguard of the proletariat are necessary tactics to achieve schooling needs. Illiteracy and darkness are most severe among non-Russian nations, and government russification policies are most evident in the sphere of primary education. Achievements of the ‘free years’ no longer persist. The proletariat of the oppressed nations must stand in the first ranks of struggle because workers suffer the most from oppression and are the mightiest fighters. National oppression creates unity across class boundaries, which damages workers’ class consciousness and weakens their ties to workers of other nations. The struggle for national primary schools is a proletarian class struggle within which each national proletariat struggles for its own schooling needs. Even a suitable school can be a tool of oppression if it is not democratic. Inter-national proletarian cooperation in this struggle will lead to cultural development for minorities, true education in pupils’ mother tongues, compulsion to resolve the problem of harmony among nations, and security of national rights for all, and this concept must be the basis of tactics for this struggle. Jewish workers must participate in this inter-national struggle. But not all Jewish workers understand the need for national-cultural autonomies and national schools using pupils’ mother tongues. They support resolutions for Yiddish but do not spontaneously work for Yiddish and barely perceive that they are oppressed by

⁵⁴⁴ *Prophecy and Politics*, 180; Shepherd 167.

russification measures.⁵⁴⁵ Ultimately, the vanguard's leadership and the masses' participation are essential for the success of all schooling demands. ☞

'Readers will now understand why I have spoken for so long about "others" and not said a word about the Jewish school question specifically. If I maintain that in this sphere the common struggle of the entire Russian proletariat for a truly democratic school has the greatest importance, it is clear that the Jewish school question can be considered only together with the school question in Russia as a whole.' (col. 3, par. 3)

169. Alef-R. 'Vi azoy darf men shtelen bay unz di shulfrage: VI. Di idische arbayter un di folks-shul 1. [How We Should Stand in Relation to the School Question: VI. Jewish Workers and the Jewish Primary School 1.]' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 6 (45?), 6? Feb. (19?) 1914, p. 3? (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article, the fourth in a series, discusses the motivations and duties of Jewish parents. Jewish workers' interest in the school question is evident from the large number of parents who try to enrol their children in school and the educational solutions they find for children who do not get in. But the masses do not understand their right to a Jewish primary school. The school question for most workers revolves around instruction in Tanakh and Hebrew, but it is time to extend this range of concern. Workers will develop consciousness of their schooling needs through struggle for a suitable school. There have been positive developments since the writing of *Tsu der frage* (147). Advanced workers and teachers can lend more support to activities such as creating kindergartens. This will not solve the school problem but nonetheless workers must become more involved in their child's schooling. Thousands of children still go to kheyder, purely for childcare, but parents could group together to pay for other schooling. All schooling providers must endeavour to meet the needs of pupils, publish school information in the press and take more interest in schools because future workers attend them. It is a crime for conscious workers to be disinterested in schooling given the religious instruction in schools. Jewish workers have still other tasks in relation to schooling. ☞

'In my little book *Tsu der frage vegen der idisher folks-shul*, I tried to identify the objective tendencies which will sooner or later bring the Jewish intelligentsia, the Jewish petite bourgeoisie to struggle for Yiddish. Over the past few years, those

⁵⁴⁵ Concerning this passage, Naomi Shepherd comments, 'As early as 1914 [Esther] had complained bitterly that the Bundist plans for Yiddish education received only a lukewarm reception among the Jewish workers, and that they

tendencies have become more distinct. Yiddish is beginning to find a place in Jewish schools, in truth a small one, a modest one, but one which can only grow. The Jewish education language is an increasingly popular cause among part of the bourgeois intelligentsia...' (col. 2, par. 2).

170. 'Vi azoy darf geshtelt veren bay unz di shul-frage: 2. [How We Should Stand in Relation to the School Question: 2.].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 7 (46), 13 Feb. (26) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This fairly long newspaper article, the fifth in a series, reiterates the messages of earlier articles in the series and recounts the government's efforts concerning the schooling question, including the development of a school network. Compulsory primary schooling is scheduled, but Jews still show no interest in schooling. Jewish schools cannot legally be excluded from the planned school network, and a struggle could demand the conversion of schools established by this programme to national schools. Jews are entitled to receive government education funds and must indicate their intention to create separate schools before mixed schools are created instead. If Yiddish schools cannot be created now, are Russian or Russian-Yiddish schools better? It is best to remember that Yiddish schools can be created. The masses are unaware of this important process. Information such as numbers of school-age children must be gathered from around the country and committees formed to discuss schooling issues and advise the Duma. Other questions include whether it would be better to create schools without government involvement. Jewish primary schools will have to compete with government schools, so the demands of the masses must be made known during the creation of government schools. ☺

'The workers must become familiar with the old Duma bill, with its defects; they must formulate the demands of the Russian proletariat concerning schooling and emphasise the special demands of the Yiddish workers, they must prepare themselves for that moment when the SD representatives wage their struggle in the Duma for a real primary school. What will such work, such struggle, provide? Will it bring direct results? We will give one answer to this question: the pressure of the masses, their movement, is never wasted. Sooner or later it leads to victory. But keeping quiet and sleeping certainly does not lead to victory.' (concluding lines)

had less national consciousness than other groups in the Russian Empire' (167).

171. -ST-. 'Shuts der muter! [Protect Mothers!].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], no. 8 (47), 20 Feb. (5 Mar.) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article movingly describes the harsh life of mothers who work in factories or in service, and of their children, and calls upon mothers to demand better government support, explaining the need for the sort of support that mothers receive overseas. Philanthropy only masks 'these terrible wounds' and causes harm. Current government support is minimal and largely inaccessible. Female Jewish workers, like all working women, must demand employment insurance against accidents and maternity, and other entitlements such as 10 weeks' paid maternity leave. The best support would enable mothers to feed their own children, but even this will not eliminate the other factors, caused by capitalism, that damage the health of mothers and endanger the lives of children, such as poor housing. Comprehensive support can only exist under democracy but it must still be demanded now and small improvements may be possible even under capitalism. ☹

'And the child? Hopefully, it can be cared for by an old mother-in-law, a grandmother, the mother's or father's little sister, a hired "nanny" of 8 or 9 years old. Often the child stays with a neighbour (naturally they live in the same room).' (col. 1, par. 3)

172. Alef-R. 'Tsulieb di kinder [For the Children's Sake].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], no. 8 (47), 20 Feb. (5 Mar.) 1914, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article speaks directly to proletarian mothers, arguing that having children is a reason to be involved in the labour movement, not to refrain from involvement. It compares the lives of poor and wealthy children. Proletarians cannot give their children houses or estates but can enable them to become doctors or lawyers, and can give them a great inheritance in the form of the organisation of the working class, which will, for example, eliminate child mortality and create a life 'full of happiness and sunshine'. Our brothers and sisters overseas live under better conditions than us, thanks to the struggle of their parents, and keep fighting to reach the ultimate goal. Proletarian mothers must support their husbands during strike action, encourage them to join unions, subscribe to workers' newspapers, and do the same activities themselves. ☹

'Your children are so beloved and dear to you. You would give the blood from your heart drop by drop to help them. You would cover them with your own body to protect

them from hardship and pain, you would endure the greatest suffering if only to make them strong, to give them an easier, a better fate.

So, proletarian mother, why not help to forge a better future for your children? Why not take part in the work of making your children's life eventually easier than yours?' (2; col. 2, par. 7-8)

173. Alef-R. 'Shmole lozungen [Narrow Slogans].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], no. 9 (48), 27 Feb. (12 Mar.) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article contributes to an intra-party debate about proposed legislation on Jewish restrictions. It argues that a bill abolishing restrictions on Jews would be too narrow. Instead, abolition of restrictions affecting all religions and nations should be legislated. There are restrictions that affect the majority of citizens of Russia. Jews are the most oppressed, 'pariahs among pariahs'. The SD must tell Russia that oppression of Jews oppresses the entire country, and call all oppressed nations to struggle against it together. This is a political, not a legal issue. A bill focussing only on Jews would discourage Russians. This question has a connection with the Beilis Affair, which told the non-Jewish public it was protecting them from 'those cannibals'. The public must be not spectators but fighters for their own bill which secures their rights. A broader bill will provide a decisive conclusion to the Beilis Affair and an introduction to inter-national unity in Russia. ☞

'In addition, let us consider the perspective of a Polish or Tatar worker. Does he suffer in the current national situation? Is he correct to ask the SD faction to defend his rights by means of legislation? What other path is there for the faction than to propose a joint bill that will abolish all restrictions? Should it perhaps propose 130 separate bills, according to the number of nations in Russia?' (col. 4, par. 2)

174. Alef-R. 'Di prikaztshikes velen zikh lernen [The Shop Assistants Will Learn].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], no. 10 (49), 6 Mar. (19) 1914, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This fairly short newspaper article lists 'lessons' that retail assistants have learnt from the recent State Council decision against legislating employment contracts.⁵⁴⁶ The first lesson is that, judging by the support for the bill, times have changed, employees now have a stronger voice. The second lesson is that if they want to be heard by the

government, they will need to speak louder. The third lesson, influenced by Durnovo's 'golden idea' that leniency towards salespeople would soon affect other industries, is about the unity of workers.⁵⁴⁷ They understand, too, that only they themselves can make the government meet their needs. ☞

'Lesson Number Three. "If you do not want that bill to be applied to your servants and agricultural workers in a few years, you must reject the law without considering it," Durnovo said. What does this mean? The rich landowners have an accurate class perception. They know that the sales assistants are proletarians like any others, and that the victories of the sales assistants will ease the struggle of other oppressed proletarians.' (par. 7)

175. Alef-R. 'Zey zenen zikh mishtadl [They Entreat].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 12 (51), 20 Mar. (2 Apr.) 1914, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This fairly short newspaper article discusses a decision by trade and industry representatives to ask the trade minister to consider the problem of arrests of managers of kasses. The decision is hypocritical as manufacturers help to organise the arrests. Workers protest about the arrests in a growing strike movement, thereby effectively teaching employers that the arrests do them more harm than good. ☞

'Bringing all ruling classes to the awareness that yielding to the workers' demands is the only option, the lesser evil, is the labour movement's path to victory. The recent shtadlones of the industrialists is overwhelming proof of this.' (concluding paragraph)

176. Alef-R. 'Bilige skhoyre [Cheap Goods].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 13 (52), 26 Mar. (7 Apr.) 1914, pp. 1-2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns work-related illness, employer responsibility and insurance. It makes demands intended to protect workers' health. ☞

'The Jewish workers who work in the most harmful industries, who fill the match and tobacco factories,... brush factories and tanneries, they know what these demands signify. They will voice those demands loudly and clearly, they will demand loudly: Protect our health and our lives! Protect our labour!' (concluding paragraphs)

⁵⁴⁶ The State Council was imperial Russia's parliamentary upper house. The Duma was the lower house.

⁵⁴⁷ Pëtr Nikolaevich Durnovo, senior government official, right-wing member of the State Council (1845-1915).

177. -ST-. 'Der 25-ten yontev [The 25th Anniversary].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 15 (54), 17 Apr. (30) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This fairly short newspaper article celebrates the anniversary of the formation of the Second International. It recalls prominent socialist thinkers who have since died, who lit the way for millions and whose banner now waves even higher. Similarly honoured are the common activists. There is a solidarity among activists who have died, who live now and who will live in the future. We are unlikely to see the fruit of our efforts, but those who follow us will, and through them we are immortal. We feel the presence of the old fighters especially strongly on this anniversary. ☞

'They live in every great and small deed of the working class. They live in every joy, in every sorrow of the proletariat; they live in the bright eyes of the proletarian child who goes without bread so that his father can pay union fees; who shares his bed with the child of a striking comrade. They will live in all generations that come after us.' (col. 2, par. 2)

178. Alef-R. 'Di arbayer vilen zayn shtark [The Workers Want to Be Strong].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 16 (55), 25 Apr. (8 May) 1914, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article argues that workers derive authority from unity, and uses simple, clear language to encourage them to support the SD faction's bill on the right to unite. This right has a foreign name, freedom of coalition. Currently, workers' gatherings and associations are complicated by the authorities, and Jewish workers suffer most of all because their mother tongue is not permitted and they do not know Russian. By contrast, employer associations are permitted. But nothing can stop workers from organising. The government cannot send hundreds of thousands of people to prison and exile. Steps towards freedom of coalition will ease the general struggle. ☞ 'Nobody but the workers cares about them having real, complete freedom of coalition. Nobody, besides themselves. Only with their force, only with their pressure will they obtain it. But it is a long, hard struggle. Even in Western Europe, in freer political conditions, workers must constantly agitate for freedom of coalition.' (col. 2, par. 7-8)

179. -ST-. 'Vos iz der tumel? An entfder dem khaver libman [What Is All the Fuss About? A Response to Comrade Libman].' *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 16 (55), 25 Apr. (8 May) 1914, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to [Esther (Frumkin)]. Copy from NLI.

This fairly long newspaper article responds to an article in *Di tsayt* about legal work the Bund may engage in. It is unclear what danger Comrade Libman is concerned about.⁵⁴⁸ His yearning for unspecified “old forms” seems to reproduce old “antilegalist” arguments from 1909. He makes the same mistakes as the modern liquidators. In fact, old and new, and legal and illegal activities exist harmoniously together. His argument about the “legal possibility” of electing a Jewish deputy is strange since the value of the Duma lies in other areas. He overstates the significance of the prohibition against speaking Yiddish at meetings. He is correct that fewer legal possibilities exist in the Pale than, say, St. Petersburg. ☞

‘Concerning “old forms”, Comrade Libman does what is called in Russian pushing against open doors. But concerning “legal opportunities”, he has done something worse. Inadvertently, he has written an article not about but against legal opportunities.’
(concluding paragraph)

180. ‘Tsulib di kinder [For the Children’s Sake].’ *Der idisher sotsyalist*
[Chicago/New York], 1, no. 10, 1 May 1914, pp. 8-9 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Likely to be a reprint of **172**.

181. ST. ‘Nokh’n prese-tog [After the Press Day].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 17, 8 May (21) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article reports on an event celebrating the workers’ press. Support for the workers’ press supports general press freedom. The day was marred by factional divisiveness in which newspapers competed for customers instead of cooperating, but this could not ultimately break their unity, even though the “Pravdists” consider their opponents unworthy even to be called “comrade”.⁵⁴⁹ ☞
‘St. Petersburg responded magnificently. Despite the mass arrests and searches, despite all the efforts of the administration, the workers’ press day had a strong presence in the city. Many tens of thousands of copies of sold newspapers, large money collections, assemblies, resolutions. That day, the workers of St. Petersburg said clearly and plainly how dear the workers’ press is to them.’ (col. 2, par. 2)

⁵⁴⁸ Khaver Libman was most likely Peysekh-Libman Hersh, pseudonym ‘P. Libman’, demographer, prolific writer, co-editor of *Di tsayt* (1882-1955); see Zaynvl Diamant, ‘Peysekh-Libman Hersh (Liebmann Hersh),’ *Yiddish Leksikon*, 31 Mar. 2016; and Y. Kharlash, ‘Profesor libman heresh,’ *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 2, 32-40.

182. Alef-R. ‘Falshe perushim [False Explanations].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 17, 8 May (21) 1914, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article outlines the conflict between Lenin’s “Pravdists” and ‘the Latvian Marxists’ and, generally, the split within the SD which caused a corresponding split among SD deputies in the Duma. The Pravdists, who employed many ‘falsifications and distortions’, had made a resolution against the Jewish Marxists’ organisation, and now claim that the Latvians condemn the Bund’s “national cultural autonomy”. In fact, the Latvians are ‘far from Lenin’s primitive position on the national question’ which is itself clearly hostile to national cultural autonomy although the Stockholm conference had validated the Jewish national programme and SD deputies had supported it in the Duma.⁵⁵⁰ Changing one’s programme is understandable, but discrediting the old programme and conference resolutions simply deceives worker-readers. Similar deception is inherent in the Jagiełło affair.⁵⁵¹ The Latvian Marxists must not allow their resolutions to become a tool for factional conflict. ☹

‘The Stockholm Conference left the national question open. Even the new Pravdist “theoretician”, Stalin, knows this and says so in his article on the national question. The conference acknowledged that the party of the Jewish proletariat has the right to promote its national programme until the question is resolved at a conference. The VII conference of the Jewish SD openly declared that the Bundist national programme can be amended only by a Bundist conference. Nonetheless, unification was approved. By approving unification (and Lenin voted for it), the Stockholm Conference said clearly and plainly that the programme of the “B.”, and therefore also its national programme, in no way contradicts the programme of the RSDLP. If even one point contradicted the party programme, unification would be impossible.’ (col. 3, par. 6)

183. Alef-R. ‘In fer’kishef’ten krayz [In an Enchanted Circle].’ *Di tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 2, no. 21 (60), 5 June (18) 1914, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to Esther Frumkin. Copy from NLI.

This medium-length newspaper article explains, in simple terms and using several Hebrew expressions, the Marxist theory of production, in general and as it relates to

⁵⁴⁹ The communist newspaper *Pravda* officially commenced publication in May 1912. At this time, it was issued under the name *Put’ pravdy*, which is used in this and the following article.

⁵⁵⁰ The RSDLP’s Stockholm Conference took place in April 1906.

⁵⁵¹ Eugeniusz Jagiełło [Rn. Yevgeniy Iosifovich Yagello], SD deputy from Warsaw, the party limited his rights because he had been voted in by the Polish Socialist Party–Left and the Bund (1873-1947).

Russia. This information shows that the Ministry of Trade and Industry can never please anyone because agriculture is the basis of all social development. ☹

‘Helpless and lost, the trade minister Timashev stood on the Duma podium, under attack equally from right and from left, from liberals and from extremists, a living embodiment of the wide, crazy contradiction between the real needs of the country and the reactionary noble regime.’⁵⁵² (col. 2, par. 6)

184. A-R. ‘Undzere afgangn [Our Tasks].’ *Profesyoneler leben*, supplement (1) to *Unzer tsayt* [St. Petersburg], 1, no. 4, 3 July (16) 1914, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Not sighted.⁵⁵³ Attributed by Vladimir Levin.⁵⁵⁴

1916

185. Alef-R. ‘Di kinder-kikh [The Children’s Kitchen].’ *Vilner zamelbukh*, edited by Zemach Schabad, vol. 1, Vilna, 1916, pp. 25-28 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther Frumkin?’. Copy from NLI.

According to volume 2, volume 1 was a non-party-aligned ‘cultural and historical book about Jewish life under occupation’.⁵⁵⁵ This medium-length article provides information, including substantial statistics, about the institution which served hundreds of meals daily to children in Vilna from 1914. ☹

‘At the end of Sukes 1914, there was a large meeting of Vilna community activists and representatives of the intelligentsia, during which a number of questions were considered concerning what to do with the homeless people coming to Vilna in large numbers, and with the children of the homeless, who jostle in groups near the cheap kitchen, attract abuse from the poor people and have free rein of the streets.’⁵⁵⁶ (opening paragraph)

⁵⁵² Sergey Ivanovich Timashev, Minister of Trade and Industry 1909-15 (1858-1920).

⁵⁵³ Only one issue of *Dos profesyonele lebn*, a supplement to *Unzer tsayt*, appeared (Marten-Finnis 120n338). It was published in St. Petersburg, which was renamed Petrograd on 1 September 1914.

⁵⁵⁴ Levin 62.

⁵⁵⁵ Zemach Schabad, editor, *Vilner zamelbukh*, vol. 2, Vilna, 1918. The occupation mentioned here is the German occupation of Vilna during the First World War.

⁵⁵⁶ Sukes [Heb. Sukkot, Tabernacles] – harvest festival commemorating part of the biblical Exodus from Egypt.

Following the February Revolution, 1917

1917

- 186.** *Tsu der frage vegen der yudisher folks-shul [On the Question of the Jewish Primary School]*. 2nd ed. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. See other editions (**147** and **187**).

- 187.** Esther. *Tsu der frage vegen der idisher folksshul [On the Question of the Jewish Primary School]*. 3rd ed., No. 11, “Di velt”, Farlag fun “bund”, Petrograd, 1917. 76 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Z. Reisen (144). See earlier editions (**147** and **186**). Elias Schulman notes that this edition does not differ from the previous two.⁵⁵⁷

- 188.** Ester [Frumkin, M.]. *Vos far folksshuln darfn mir hobn: Di shulfrage af der tog-ordnung [What Kind of Primary Schools Should We Have: The School Question on the Agenda]*. Shul-komisye baym Ts.K. “bund”, Di velt, Petrograd, 1917. 15 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Shmeruk and Hertz.⁵⁵⁸

- 189.** ‘Farvos darfn mir nisht keyn keyser [Why We Do Not Need a Tsar].’ *Der veker* [Minsk], 1 Aug. 1917 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Falkovich.⁵⁵⁹ Falkovich writes that this article employs a biblical reference concerning the prophet Samuel.

⁵⁵⁷ Schulman 17n23. However the page numbering he references differs from that in the 1910 edition used during this study. A photo of the book’s cover in *Di geshikhte fun bund* (vol. 3, next to 224) shows revised spelling in the title.

⁵⁵⁸ Chone Shmeruk, editor, *Parsumim yehudiim be-vrit ha-mo’azot: 1917-1960*, Ha-hevrah ha-historit ha-yisra’elit, Jerusalem, 1961, 269. J. S. Hertz, ‘Di tsveyte ruslender revolutsye (1917 un vaytere yorn),’ *Di geshikhte fun bund*, vol. 3, 1966, 135.

⁵⁵⁹ Falkovich, no. 81, 26 May 1965, col. 2. Esther participated in producing *Der veker*, Minsk (1917-25) (Falkovich; Shmeruk 351-52). Moyshe Rafes specifies that she did this work from June 1917 until May 1921, that this newspaper was the Bund’s daily central organ, that during the Polish occupation it moved to Gorny, and then to Moscow, and that it was subsequently closed by the Soviet authorities for attacking the proletarian dictatorship, and replaced by the *Nayer veker* (‘Bundovskaya pechat’). The place of publication of this *veker* is given here as Minsk as a default. Esther worked with A. Litvak on *Der nayer veker* under the name of M. Y. Frumkina-Vikhman (Ester) (Shmeruk 368). There are references to articles published in *Der veker* in August, September and early November, but the earliest copy of this Bund newspaper currently available in library collections is dated 8 November, according to the catalogues of both the YIVO and NYPL. From 1926, *Der veker* was succeeded by *Oktyabr* in a process explained in *Becoming Soviet Jews*, 61-64.

190. Esther. '1897-1917: Bundizm.' *Folks-tsaytung* [Kiev], no. 5, 20 Sept. 1917, p. 1 and subsequent unnumbered page. 2 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly long newspaper article appears in the same issue as the following two items. All three relate to the Bund's twentieth anniversary. This article recalls events since the foundation, including the 'storms and fires' of the 1905 revolution, the war 'with its horrors', and the revolution with its 'first bright joys and its boundless painful sorrows'. Throughout, the Bund was the 'loyal leader, supporter and friend' whose flag, 'riddled with bullet holes, spattered with blood and wrinkled by wind and rain', always waved over the Jewish proletariat. On this anniversary, Jewish workers can look back at their progress and be proud of doing their duty in the struggle for liberation of 'the entire proletariat, of the entirety of humanity'. Now is a tragic time for the entire revolutionary democracy but the workers have faith that all obstacles will be overcome and that their struggle for socialism will succeed. The anniversary gives 'new courage' to look joyfully at the future 'because it is ours!'. The essence of 'Bundism' lies in the diversity among Bundists, who may be "defencists" [oborontses] or "internationalists" towards the war, or Bolsheviks, or other permutations. Before the Bund existed, "agitation" defeated "propaganda" in the activists' argument over strategy, and only after that erroneous path was abandoned in favour of varied work among the masses could the revolutionary vanguard create the Bund, which never deviated from the new path. *Ob agitatsii* became the rulebook [shulkh-orekh] of the Russian SD.⁵⁶⁰ Thus the Bund guided the Russian movement. Its active work among the masses enabled it to defeat such oppositions as *Iskra*-ism, hindering factional conflict. Skhodke meetings connected the Bund's organisational apparatus with the Jewish working masses. That apparatus, which was 'wonderfully adapted to the conditions', still endures despite attempts to weaken and delegitimise it. The conflict between the "liquidators" and "anti-legalists", which shook the Russian party, was resolved easily within the Bund. The Bund will maintain 'a uniform line' which will not stifle any particular views. The essence and 'magic' of the Bund lie in its unity and its 'great nearness to life', which grant it 'great power over minds and hearts' and the capacity to overcome the direst obstacles. ☺

'In the Russian party, the conflict was still burning, while our 8th Conference had already made its resolute and clear response to the question, a response which saw the

⁵⁶⁰ The authorship of *Ob agitatsii* [*On Agitation*] is commonly attributed to the early Bund leader Arkady Kremer (1865-1935), and the participation of Martov is also acknowledged. On Kremer, see *Arkadi: Zamlbukh zum ondenk fun grinder fun "bund", 1865-1935*, Farlag "Unzer tsayt", New York, 1942. Shulkh-orekh [Heb. Shulchan Arukh] –

illegal party apparatus harmoniously complemented by broad, open (both legal and illegal) work in all spheres of activity, around the State Duma, around questions of the Jewish reality, in the open professional and cultural movement, by political campaigns and legal developmental work. Our heymishe “liquidators” never could liquidate our party.⁵⁶¹ (second page; col. 1, par. 3)

191. Esther. ‘Dos shtedtel [The Shtetl].’ *Folks-tsaytung* [Kiev], 20 Sept. 1917, page numbered both 3 and 5 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly short newspaper article honours the revolutionary significance and efforts of shtetls, employing some stirring language. The history of the Bund predominantly occurred in the cities. The shtetls, dependent on information from the cities, lived ‘a reflected life’. Nonetheless, they were important to the Bund and did their duty faithfully, and for shtetl residents the greater difficulty of obtaining party literature, having the chance to hear a speaker or being permitted by parents to go to socialist meetings added to the value and excitement of these activities. If the problems of the shtetl’s political organisations are viewed closely and kindly, they ‘cannot impede the pure source of revolutionary idealism’ that those organisations represented. Whereas in the cities ‘our anniversary’ will be celebrated with speeches and parades, the shtetls will have to use their own resources, and thanks to their love and enthusiasm the ‘sacred spirit will reign there too’. Regards are conveyed to the comrades in the shtetls, as wherever ‘there beats a Bundist heart’, all are part of the same great family. ☞

‘With what concentration, with what zeal they studied every line, every word of the party literature, with what veneration they listened to every word of the visiting speaker! With what devotion the girl of the small shtetl struggled in her father’s house for her right to come home late and to mingle with the socialists, while her urban sister did whatever she wanted to, freely and unimpeded! And that very isolation and remoteness from the large centres fed a boundless idealism, a passionate enthusiasm. The revolutionary storm of the big cities, whose weak echoes reached the shtetl, would fill hearts with a holy shiver, would evoke an infinite rapture for the distant heroes. Nowhere were our martyrs as exalted and idolised as in the far-flung shtetls’ (col. 2, par. 2 - col. 3, par. 1).

code of Jewish law authored by Joseph Caro in the mid-sixteenth century, term used here metaphorically to denote a guiding text.

192. Esther. 'Vegen viglider [On Lullabies].' *Folks-tsaytung* [Kiev], 20 Sept. 1917, p. 10 and subsequent unnumbered page. 2 pages (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This medium-length newspaper article considers how the themes of lullabies changed over time to become revolutionary anthems. Those changes reveal the changing hopes of mothers, reflecting contemporary concerns. Short extracts from lullabies prove that nothing shows as clearly the changes that the Bund has wrought in Jewish life as the themes of lullabies. The article opens on a note of humour, declaring that even lullabies 'have some relevance to us' because lullabies tell 'the history of generations'. In the first example, a child is advised to go to kheyder and learn religious texts and Hebrew in order to ensure his protection from 'evil and sorrow'. In the second example, the child is told that he will grow up to be a great rabbi and all will be jealous of his mother. The child of the third example will have the same future, and his mother will go to ganeydn.⁵⁶² The next child will also learn Toyre and will write religious commentaries, and if the child is a girl the lullaby is adapted so that it is her husband who will honour the family by these scholarly activities, as "Toyre iz di beste skhoyre".⁵⁶³ Eventually, 'new nigunim can be heard in lullabies', as Toyre is not enough to subsist on, and mothers dreaming of a better future for their children sing lullabies about gaining wealth. One example of this type by Goldfaden has become a folksong. Lullabies in Yiddish are sung by the poor, as the wealthy do not rock their own children and would only sing lullabies in Russian, such as "Spi mladenets moy prekrasnyy". The lullabies of the next stage are about families in the overcrowded Pale, in 'bitter poverty', waiting for travel funds from Father in America. The article describes their plight with great sympathy. With a new era come new songs full of 'proud courage and passionate faith', calling the masses to struggle. The mother in these songs too is lonely, her husband has been exiled to Siberia for his revolutionary activity, but children can be proud of such a heroic father, and the mother wants them to follow the same heroic path. Clearly, a significant change has occurred on the Jewish street, the awakening of the Jewish worker, who is not interested in the old values. One new lullaby advises that when your enemy spits in your face, you should spit back at him 'with lead'. When children hear revolutionary songs like these, revolutionary seeds are sown inside them which will sprout later in life. The work of the Bund established the circumstances for the creation

⁵⁶¹ Heymishe – very own, homegrown (pl.).

⁵⁶² Ganeydn – Garden of Eden, heaven.

⁵⁶³ "Toyre iz di beste skhoyre" – 'the Torah is the best merchandise', that is, the best daily pastime.

of these songs. The Bund's anniversary is an opportunity to consider the visible impact of the Bund's work on Jewish life. ☞

“A hero you will be

.....

Gird yourself for war!”⁵⁶⁴

An entire revolution is reflected in the new lullaby. Worlds must have overturned for such notes to start echoing around the Jewish street. And indeed worlds have overturned: the Jewish worker has awakened. The Jewish worker has awakened, straightened his back, freely and proudly raised his head, and loudly and joyously cried, “To the struggle!” Struggle has become the content of his life, his greatest happiness. Not the oylem-habe, nor honour, nor wealth appeal to him. It is of heroic deeds that he dreams.’ (second page, col. 1, par. 6-11)

193. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 21 Sept. 1917 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Schulman.⁵⁶⁵

This newspaper article includes a positive message about the imminent blossoming of Yiddish culture. ☞

‘Now that the working class has reached the road to full development, its cultural aims will be fulfilled. Now the blooming of Yiddish literature, art, and language, and the creation of the new democratic Jewish culture will be truly possible.’

194. ‘Di “kadeten” far un nokh der revolutsye [The Kadets before and after the Revolution].’ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 4, no. 38 (151), 28 Sept. 1917, p. 6 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

195. ‘Opklangen fun der alter heym: Rusland tor nit untergeyn [Echoes from the Old Country: Russia Must Not Decline].’ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 4, no. 40 (153), 12 Oct. 1917, p. 7 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Frumkin, Esther [=Esther, (Frumkin)]’.

⁵⁶⁴ Omission in original.

⁵⁶⁵ Schulman 38. The quoted extract is from this English-language source.

Bolshevism and the dissolution of the Bund, 1917-21

196. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 3 Nov. 1917 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Falkovich.⁵⁶⁶

This newspaper article poetically relates a personal experience of recovering hope. ☞
'...and I was suddenly ashamed by my foolish thoughts, by my despair, by my helplessness, and the eternal song of life sang in my heart....'

197. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 5 Nov. 1917 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Y. A.⁵⁶⁷

This newspaper article expresses the need for non-participation with the Bolsheviks. ☞
'Unity achieved by suppressing the majority is no unity at all.... We cannot limit ourselves to protests. We can and must show resistance by not helping them, by doing nothing for them.'

198. Esther. 'Vayter in keyten [Enchained Again].' *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 121, 8 Nov. 1917, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly short newspaper article expresses shock and dismay at a new resolution which will permanently remove freedom of the press, the 'free word'. Falkovich explains that Esther's reaction derives from her failure to consider the circumstances of the decision.⁵⁶⁸ Autoreferences in the opening paragraphs produce a personal quality. Lenin says that allowing the production of bourgeois newspapers is contrary to socialism. The new resolution has the approval of the soldiers, and 'Trotsky says "The soldiers are with me"'. This approval by "the people" is devastating. A Russian poet called press freedom "the blazing lamp of thought". Many martyrs, including Herzen, fell or suffered for it. The first liberation of the word in 1905 was like the release of caged birds. During 'black times', the free word was re-enchained, but the experience of freedom could not be effaced, and the revolution brought another liberation. Now, 'the free word sits once more in chains'. But it is immortal, it will overcome the new enslavement as it did the old. The concluding words are a rousing, hopeful call for freedom. ☞

⁵⁶⁶ Falkovich, no. 85, 2 June 1965. The quoted extract, including the ellipses, is from this source.

⁵⁶⁷ Y. A., 'Unzer partey prese in rusland,' *Unzer shtime*, Warsaw, Aug. 1918, qtd. in Gitelman 98. The quoted extract, including the ellipsis, is from this English-language source.

⁵⁶⁸ Falkovich, no. 82, 27 May 1965.

‘The freedom of the word is counter-revolutionary! And “the people” applaud. O, that applause! Is it not more terrible than damage by artillery fire to everything, socialism, democracy, freedom, everything that generations have struggled for, everything that rivers of the noblest and dearest blood were spilt for.’ (col. 2, par. 5)

199. Alef.-R. ‘Di klal-yisroel-orves [The Klal Yisroel Guarantee].’ *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 130, 19 Nov. 1917, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Sighted in part. Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly short newspaper article responds to ‘the former Bundist and current democrat’ A. Vayter’s comments about Jewish speculators and revolutionaries, both of whom ‘stick in the craw of the non-Jewish world’.⁵⁶⁹ It likens his views to those of the Jewish Kadets and the Zionists who share a klal yisroel approach whereby ‘all Jews are guarantors for one another’. These views can also be linked with global antisemitism. ‘An intense and merciless struggle is required’ against the foundations of klal yisroel, which, crafted by Jews themselves, is an ‘accursed inheritance’ of hundreds of years of Jewish suffering. As Liber coexisted with Tsereteli and Trotsky coexists with ‘Dzhugashvili (Stalin)’, so Jewish speculators coexist with Georgian speculators.⁵⁷⁰ The Jewish people can have speculators just as they can have diverse political affiliations, and are not obliged to excuse themselves. To say otherwise is to go along with antisemites, which A. Vayter, who ‘gave part of his life to struggling against enslavement of Jews’ would surely not want. ☹

‘Until now, we have been accustomed to encountering, in the bourgeois press ... nothing but attacks on Jewish revolutionaries and laments about the danger they represent to the Jewish people. But concerning Jewish speculators, there has been a diplomatic silence, a stifling of the “secret” that all the birds squark about on all the roofs.’ (col. 1, par. 2)

200. Alef.-R. ‘Frayhayt fun vort [Freedom of the Press].’ *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 136, 26 Nov. 1917, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

⁵⁶⁹ A. Vayter, pseudonym of Ayzik Meyer Devenishski, Bund activist who became predominantly involved in literary work (c.1878-1919); see Avraham Novershtern, ‘Vayter, A.,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 1 Nov. 2010; and J. S. Hertz, ‘Ayzik meir devenishski,’ *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 414-20.

⁵⁷⁰ Mark Liber, pseudonym of Mikhail Isaakovich Goldman, prominent Bund leader (1880-1937); see Mortkhe-Velvl Bernshsteyn, ‘Mark (Mikhail) Liber,’ *Yiddish Leksikon*, 9 Mar. 2017; and Grigory Aronson, ‘Mark liber,’ *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 196-225.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the agreement between the *Novaya Zhizn'* group and the Bolsheviks, who subsequently closed *Novaya zhizn'* even though one of that newspaper's longstanding contributors, Lunacharsky, is a member of the Bolshevik government.⁵⁷¹ It severely criticises the Bolsheviks for this repression and rebukes Lunacharsky for his silence. As in a recent article, it cries, 'Long live the free word!'⁵⁷² The concluding words make an ironic comment on the agreement. ☞

'And Herr Lunacharsky? He stays silent too.

Or not. He does say something. He even says too much. He sings the praises [zingt shire] of the new government. He even calls upon gimnasium students to rebel against their parents and become Bolsheviks. He only stays silent about one thing: about the fact that the newspaper on which he worked until recently and from which he has not yet distanced himself has been stifled by the Bolshevik terror. One might say a thing or two about such a triviality as this.

And the "Novaya zhizn'" group? Well, will the newspaper permanently cease to exist? The name persists and the 'agreement' remains in effect.

Happy people. Happy pursuers of peace.' (concluding paragraphs)

201. Esther. 'Rebi Mendeli toyt [Mendele is Dead].' *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 140, 30 Nov. 1917, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly short newspaper article announces the death of 'our grandfather' Mendele. It compares the tragedy of his passing with that of Peretz (1915) and Sholem Aleichem (1916) while, presumably referring to Mendele's advanced age, likening the event to a ripe fruit falling from a tree at the proper time. All the Jewish political tendencies will claim Mendele simultaneously as their own. We, the workers and socialists have many reasons to make such a claim: he abhorred all types of oppressors and 'slaves to the golden calf' and wrote about them with strong condemnation; he wrote fondly about the weak, oppressed and 'insulted'; he fought strongly against the 'old authorities' and the 'black forces in Jewish life'; he was the grandfather of 'modern literature in Yiddish', the literature which is of greatest significance to the Bund, and 'nobody is as dear to Jewish culture, to Jewish/Yiddish literature, as the Jewish worker'. Only democracy, and primarily the worker's democracy, can justifiably claim Mendele as its own. ☞

⁵⁷¹ *Novaya zhizn'* – SD newspaper (1917-18). Anatoliy Vasil'evich Lunacharskiy, writer, critic, senior Soviet official (1875-1933).

⁵⁷² See 'Vayter in keyten,' **198**.

‘Let the bourgeoisie stand by Mendele’s grave and say, “He is ours!” His poetry is a sharp lash against the wealthy, against those who live off foreign toil. Let the Hebraists too come and say, “He is ours, because Mendele also wrote in Hebrew.” His poetry, how foreign and inimical it is to dead, antidemocratic hebraism! His poetry, what a victory for scorned, detested Yiddish.’ (col. 1, par. 10 - col. 2, par. 2)

1918

202. ‘Kamf un sheynheyt [Struggle and Beauty].’ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 5, no. 7 (171), 15 Feb. 1918, pp. 6-7 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, a ‘notice’ reprinted from *Der veker* [Minsk].

203. ‘In vagon [In the Railroad Car].’ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 5, no. 7 (171), 15 Feb. 1918, pp. 6-7 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, a ‘notice’ reprinted from *Der veker* [Minsk].

204. ‘Farbenkt zikh... [Yearn...].’⁵⁷³ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 5, no. 11 (175), 15 Mar. 1918, p. 7 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, regarding ‘Russian life under Bolshevism’.

205. ‘Fun mayn togbukh [From My Diary].’ [*Der idisher sotsyalist*; formal name:] *Di naye velt* [New York], 5, no. 14 (178), 5 Apr. 1918, pp. 5-6 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Frumkin, Esther [=Esther, (Frumkin)]’, ‘from the Bundist *Veker*’.

206. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 11 Oct. 1918 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Falkovich.⁵⁷⁴

Falkovich quotes from this newspaper article to demonstrate how Esther used literary references, in this case a quotation from Psalms 1:1, in conveying her message. ☞
“Blessed is he... who sits not in the company of scoffers.”

⁵⁷³ Ellipsis in original.

⁵⁷⁴ Falkovich, no. 81, 26 May 1965. The quoted extract, including the ellipsis, is from this source.

1919

207. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 12 Jan. 1919 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gelbard and Shepherd.⁵⁷⁵

Gelbard uses this newspaper article to demonstrate the positive attitude towards Soviet authority of the Bund's Moscow congress of 24-27 December 1918, based on the principle that victory against Bolshevism is victory for international reaction. Despite the change of attitude, the Bund's principles persist. ☞

'We have changed our tactics but not our programme'.

208. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 473, 5 Feb. 1919 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Schulman.⁵⁷⁶

This newspaper article reports on the weak position of Yiddish in schools, compared to Russian. ☞

'From all over we get reports about the difficulties that are encountered in Jewish cultural work. The decree about establishing national departments at the local boards of education are not being enforced. In the provinces, subsidies for Yiddish schools are being refused. The same boards refuse to appoint Yiddish teachers. The local officials are interested in introducing Russian as the language of instruction. Important representatives of the government are issuing special statements that employing the native tongue as the language of instruction is only a transitory medium – and the native tongue is to be used in first grade only. These tendencies of Russification are in evidence everywhere and a struggle must be carried on against them.'

209. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 6 Feb. 1919 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁵⁷⁷

This newspaper article comments on the relatively limited effectiveness of communist activism among Russian Jews, who are predominantly non-proletarian. ☞

'...on the Russian street you can speak of the Soviet regime as being representative of ninety percent of the population ... [but] ... on the Jewish street, the matter is clear: a proletarian minority has to rule over a non-proletarian, albeit poor and toiling, majority. And that is why the Jewish Commissariats and Jewish Sections have that certain flavor of working under the masses, over the masses but not with the masses....'

⁵⁷⁵ Gelbard 73; Shepherd 167. The quoted extract appears in both sources.

⁵⁷⁶ Schulman 65. The quoted extract is from this English-language source.

210. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 17 Feb. 1919 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁵⁷⁸

This newspaper article discusses whether the Bund should take the side of dictatorship of the proletariat or of dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, that is, whether it should ally itself with communism, tending to this view. ☞

‘Dictatorship is genuine only when it bases itself on all workers and oppressed people, when it is the regime of the majority of the people.’

‘[Implementing the principles of the Soviet constitution will bring about] dictatorship *through* democracy. Democracy is dear to us as a *means* to dictatorship.’

211. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 507, qtd. in *Folks-tsaytung* [Kiev], 2 Apr. 1919 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁵⁷⁹

This newspaper article reports on addresses at the 11th Conference of the Bund, confirming the development of factions within the Bund.⁵⁸⁰ It argues for the communist position. ☞

‘We cannot give up power to the bourgeoisie. In this sense we are against democracy ... we are together with the Communists.... The Red Army is our army – its faults, our faults. There is no way back.’

1920

212. Esther. ‘Abraham Valt (Liesin).’ *Der veker* [Minsk], 1920 (Yiddish)

Original article not sighted. Reprinted in *Tsukunft* [New York], 41, no. 2, Mar. 1936, pp. 137-38. Reprint attributed by IYP to ‘Frumkin, Esther [=Esther, (Frumkin)]’. Copy from YIVO Institute.

This medium-length newspaper article has specific autobiographical content. A note by Liesin advises that Esther had had the original article delivered to him.⁵⁸¹ She then knew little of his position towards the communist dictatorship and was trying to make him look “kosher” to the Soviet people. The accusations against him of nationalism were correct.⁵⁸² He had not read Martov’s contemporary brochure, but had since departed

⁵⁷⁷ Gitelman 191. The quoted extract, including ellipses, is from this English-language source. See also Shepherd 167.

⁵⁷⁸ Gitelman 187. The quoted extract is from this English-language source.

⁵⁷⁹ Gitelman 187. The quoted extract, including ellipses, is from this source.

⁵⁸⁰ The Bund’s 11th Conference was held in Minsk in late March 1919.

⁵⁸¹ Avraham Valt (Liesin), editor of the American Yiddish socialist periodical *Tsukunft* from 1913 (1872-1938).

⁵⁸² See similar comments in Liesin’s memoirs (*Geklibene verk*, 275-77), reprinted in *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 255.

from nationalism even further than Martov.⁵⁸³ Esther's article is reprinted for the value of its interesting content. It first announces the news, obtained by chance, of American celebrations of Liesin's twenty-fifth literary anniversary. For five years, while war obstructed contact between America and Russia, a generation had grown up unaware of Liesin. But his poetry will reach Russia eventually, children will learn it by heart and thus come to know the earliest sorrows and hopes of the awakening Jewish workers. If Liesin visited and read his poetry to Jewish workers, he would be able to walk about proudly and freely in places where he was once an "underground man". He is important to Esther since he connected her with the Jewish worker. She had met him in Minsk at the beginning of 1896, when the labour movement was divided into "propagandists", who wanted to continue with educational work, and "agitators", who wanted to make a broader impact.⁵⁸⁴ Esther, then seventeen, and her friend Rosa had known both Valt (Liesin), a propagandist, and the agitators' leader, Pavel Berman.⁵⁸⁵ Rosa would attend Berman's meetings and then tell Esther the new arguments against the propagandists. Esther would put these arguments to Valt, who would respond with 'even worse things' about the agitators, such as Berman's comment that workers can still be good socialists even if they do not know that the world is round.⁵⁸⁶ To Esther, this was a 'terrible heresy [shreklikhe apikorses]' since one could not be a socialist without reading Zobov's *Besedy o prirode*.⁵⁸⁷ In Berman's group, Valt was accused of nationalism. When, on erev Purim, he asked her to write a speech for a workers' gathering, she was honoured, but the requirement for it to prove that Jews are a nation and call for a separate Jewish labour organisation struck her as odd, since the Jewish movement was always part of the general Russian movement, and she wondered whether the accusations of nationalism were correct.⁵⁸⁸ She was unaware that Martov had proposed the same sort of nationalism in his speech 'A Turning-Point in the History of the Jewish Labour Movement', and that the Bund would soon be founded.⁵⁸⁹ Valt made his strongest impact on her through his poetry. Yiddish language and literature had always been part of her life. At fourteen she had tried to write a novel in Yiddish. She knew and loved

⁵⁸³ The brochure mentioned here is likely to be *Ob agitatsii*, see **190**.

⁵⁸⁴ On this divergence, see Mendelsohn, *Class Struggle*, 45ff.

⁵⁸⁵ In fact, Esther did not turn 17 until May 1897. Pavel Berman, Bund leader in Minsk (1873-c.1921); see J. S. H., 'Pavel berman,' *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 241-43.

⁵⁸⁶ Liesin later wrote that Esther describes this issue correctly (*Geklibene verk*, reprinted in *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 262).

⁵⁸⁷ Nikolay Matveevich Zobov, forester, author (1822-73). *Besedy o prirode [Conversations about Nature]*, c. 1894.

⁵⁸⁸ Erev – evening, traditional beginning of a new day. Purim – festival celebrating the ancient redemption of the Jewish people from a murderous foe.

⁵⁸⁹ Martov's speech, 'A Turning Point,' was delivered in Vilna on May Day (the International Day of Labour) 1895 in Russian. The Bund published it in 1900 and it was also published in Yiddish in *Di yidishe sotsyalistishe bavegung biz*

Mendele, Dinezon and Spektor.⁵⁹⁰ Her father would bring home Peretz's *Bletlekh*.⁵⁹¹ He set one of Peretz's poems to music and they would sing it together. But that poem and Peretz's journalistic writing were the only Yiddish literature that appealed to her 'revolutionary spirits'. The true sources of her love for and sense of duty to the people were Nekrasov, the Narodniks and Turgenev.⁵⁹² She did not yet know the first Jewish workers' poetry, such as that of Winchevsky.⁵⁹³ She romantically recalls hearing Valt's poetry, which had an unforgettable effect, despite being unequal to the art of Rosenfeld, Reisen or Nekrasov.⁵⁹⁴ It 'opened up a new world', 'in those poems the soul of the newly awakened Jewish proletariat was speaking and calling to me'. When Valt proposed that she run a workers' circle on political economics, she felt ill-equipped, having only read Kautsky's terribly difficult *Karl Marx' Ökonomische Lehren*.⁵⁹⁵ Valt's encouragement instigated her entry into the movement. After he left for America in 1897, they next met at the Bund's 7th Congress.⁵⁹⁶ He had not changed, though he now dressed "respectably". This newspaper may reach him and remind him of the early days when he 'called the young, Jewish intelligentsia to the Jewish working class' since 'I am one of those whom he called'. ☺

'And here comes Valt with his Jewish revolutionary poems. Beautiful, melodic, truly poetic, passionate poems about struggle, about martyrs and heroes. Here he stands before me, not tall, dressed like a tramp, in his old, tattered, yellow coat which he never seemed to take off, and his blue-blue eyes sparkling. And he reads, he reads his new poem, and I listen, and my heart pounds, and even I don't know what it does to me.' (138; col. 2, par. 2-3)

213. Esther. 'Unzer 12-te konferents [Our 12th Conference].' *Der veker* [Moscow], no. 651, 1 May 1920, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute or NYPL.

der grindung fun "bund": Forshungen, zikhroynes, materyaln, vol. 3, edited by E. Tcherikower et al, Historical Section of the YIVO, Vilna / Paris, 1939, 649-57.

⁵⁹⁰ Yankev Dinezon (1856?-1919) and Mordkhe Spektor (1858-1925), popular Yiddish authors.

⁵⁹¹ Peretz's *Yontev-bletlekh* were anthologies of literature and articles with a socialist leaning, published 1894-96. They provided inspiration for many young radicals (Ruth R. Wisse, *I. L. Peretz and the Making of Modern Jewish Culture*, Seattle, 1991, 41, referenced in Edward Portnoy, 'Purim in Pesach: The Invented Tradition of Passover *Yontef-bletlekh* in the Warsaw Yiddish Press,' *A Club of Their Own: Jewish Humorists and the Contemporary World*, edited by Eli Lederhendler and Gabriel N. Finder, Studies in Contemporary Jewry, vol. XXIX, Oxford UP, 2016, 24).

⁵⁹² The Narodniks – here, the Populists, an early Russian revolutionary movement which focussed on the peasantry.

⁵⁹³ Morris Winchevsky, socialist leader and poet in London and New York, one of the founders of the Yiddish *Forward* newspaper (1856-1932).

⁵⁹⁴ Morris Rosenfeld, Yiddish worker-poet (1862-1923).

⁵⁹⁵ Karl Kautsky, *Karl Marx' Ökonomische Lehren [The Economic Doctrines of Karl Marx]*, 1887.

⁵⁹⁶ The Bund's 7th Congress was held in Lemberg in August-September 1906.

This medium-length newspaper article explains the Bund's new allegiance with communism, whereby it abandoned the line of Mensheviks like Abramovich and joined the global proletariat in a cohesive 'stream' of the Jewish proletariat rather than dissipated droplets.⁵⁹⁷ The decision, made at the recent conference, is intended for the entire organisation, including the areas under occupation.⁵⁹⁸ It is growing in popularity in the Polish Bund and among Jewish workers in formerly Russian areas, for whom the new slogans are like a voice from their own soul. Its opponents face the force of the entire Jewish proletariat. The majority, which remain faithful to the Bund, will focus on their important, sacred tasks, including productive work to improve the economy, and cultural work in a new Jewish socialist culture, based in newly established centres. The war is not yet over, the Western Front is still active, so Jewish workers must carry both their work-tool and a weapon. All these efforts must be governed by a single Jewish Marxist revolutionary organisation within the RCP. Whether the Bund unites with the Fareynikte will be decided by 'the will of the workers' which will force party leaders to choose between old petit-bourgeois nationalist slogans and a united communist front.⁵⁹⁹ Soon all revolutionary Jewish workers will follow the Bund. Meanwhile, 'our Bundism' is unaffected because the Bund will unconditionally retain its autonomy and its anthem. 'Long live our Bund!' Our work for the victory of the social revolution, for the slogans of the Third International and for the 'liberty and happiness of all mankind', will turn the hell suffered by millions into a light-filled ganeydn. Two poetic passages describe the revolutionary and other qualities of the Jewish worker and the future paradise he will bring about, employing a reference to Peretz's story 'Bontshe shvayg'.⁶⁰⁰ 🐦

'The moment is nigh when all dynamic and revolutionary people in the Jewish workers' neighbourhoods will rally around the banner of the Bund, which will lead them, with one united force, with one iron will, with one firm hand, to that sacred battle which the Jewish worker swore to wage from the first day of his awakening.

All forces to that sacred battle, all forces to the great historical tasks, all forces to the sacred work of destruction and the sacred work of construction!'⁶⁰¹ (col. 4, par. 1-2)

214. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], 15 July 1920 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁷ Raphael Abramovich Rein, known as Abramovich, Bundist and Menshevik (1880-1963).

⁵⁹⁸ The Bund's 12th Conference was held in Gomel' from 12-19 April 1920.

⁵⁹⁹ Fareynikte – Fareynikte yidishe sotsyalistishe arbeter partey [United Jewish Socialist Workers Party].

⁶⁰⁰ 'Bontshe shvayg [Bontshe the Silent], 1894.

⁶⁰¹ '...with one firm hand...' – cf. the familiar biblical phrase from Exodus and Psalms, about divine deliverance 'with a firm hand and an outstretched arm....'

Zvi Gitelman associates this newspaper article with Esther, using it to illustrate how ‘Communist Bundists in Belorussia mocked the *Evseksiia* and professed to see a longing among the Sections for a Bund-type organization’ (204), that is, a united, mass organisation that truly understands the Jewish reality created by ‘life itself’. ☞
‘[The “Jewish environment” is replete] with a specifically Jewish clericalism and chauvinism, with an *Agudas Yisroel*, with plain Zionists and *Poalei Tsionists*, with Hebraists, with *Tarbuth* schools, with a EKOPO, OZE, ORT, *Kultur-Lige*, with pogrom victims, with American relatives, with *kheders*, with *yeshivas* – in short, our Jewish microcosm.’

1921

215. ‘Tsu unzer diskusye [About Our Discussion].’ *Der veker* [Minsk], 18 Feb. 1921 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁶⁰³

In this newspaper article, Esther expresses her perspective on the entry of the Bund into the RCP, a move she had seen as ‘a holding operation, designed to preserve a maximum of Bund influence in the Party’ (212). ☞

‘Comrades, what this has cost each of us will perhaps one day inspire an artistic genius to create a great tragedy. But let us rather be silent about this, friends. Let us lock it into our hearts and let us not sully the tragic holiness of our suffering with petty discussions and cries of woe. The discussion must end. The Jewish proletariat must live and be faithful to the oath it has sworn – to carry on the holy struggle until the world is reborn. And we, comrades, we must remain with [the Jewish proletariat] and spin our thread anew.’

216. article in *Der veker* [Minsk], shortly before Extraordinary Conference of Bund, Mar. 1921 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Gitelman.⁶⁰⁴

This newspaper article acknowledges the demise of the Bund while maintaining loyalty to Bundism. Grigory Aronson writes that concepts expressed in this article would later prove to the Bolsheviks that Esther retained Bundist tendencies.⁶⁰⁵ ☞

⁶⁰² Gitelman 204-05. The quoted extract is from this English-language source (205).

⁶⁰³ Gitelman 210-12. The quoted extract is from this English-language source (212). Another extract from this article appears in Zvi Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence: The Jews of Russia and the Soviet Union, 1881 to the Present*, see for example 2nd ed., Indiana UP, 2001, 73.

‘Let it be said clearly and precisely at this, the last moment, that whatever happens to the name of the Bund, to the form of the Bund, whatever the conference should decide, Bundism will live as long as the Jewish proletariat lives, Bundism will live and will be triumphant!’⁶⁰⁶

Soviet government work, 1921-24

217. M. Frumkina. ‘O rabote sredi yevreyskikh rabotnits [On Work among Female Jewish Workers].’ *Kommunistka* [Moscow], no. 10-11, Mar.-Apr. 1921, pp. 34-35 (Russian)

Copy from Slavic Reference Service.

This medium-length article appeared in the periodical of the Department of Women’s Labour of the CC of the RCP.⁶⁰⁷ It outlines the ‘glorious’ revolutionary history of female Jewish workers and the current needs around party work with these women. No educational or organisational work among female Jewish workers has been done by ‘our party’, as the *zhenotdely* predominantly use Russian.⁶⁰⁸ Insistence on the use of Yiddish is labelled nationalism and resisted. The *kasse*, the earliest economic organisation in the Pale, was organised by female Jewish stocking workers in Vilna. In the Jewish labour movement there were female founders and pioneers, martyrs who died for the happiness of future generations, and others who suffered flogging by police. During the pogroms of 1903, ‘hundreds and thousands of women and children of the Jewish poor were raped and tormented’. Women joined new self-defence units, and were killed, wounded or maimed in the course of self-defence against pogromists, police and soldiers. Since those dark days, the October sun has shone, bringing ‘news of emancipation’ to the oppressed, including those with the least rights, Jewish women. The struggle to build a new life must continue joyfully, and the party must draw female Jewish workers and workers’ wives into that task. Means to achieve this include communication in the women’s native language. The entry of the Communist Bund into ‘our party’ can provide new activists for the work with female Jewish workers. Only the RCP can re-

⁶⁰⁴ Gitelman 209-10. The quoted extract is from this English-language source (209).

⁶⁰⁵ Aronson, *Di yidishe problem*, 156.

⁶⁰⁶ This translation is quoted in Bemporad, *Becoming Soviet Jews* (51, 53); and Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence* (73). Loba Levita cites the passage in Hebrew (135).

⁶⁰⁷ The magazine’s editorial committee included Krupskaya, Lenin’s wife.

⁶⁰⁸ *Zhenotdely* – branches of the Soviet Department of Women’s Affairs.

educate female Jewish workers and lead them to the ‘new way’, so that all female Jewish workers may stand under its banner. ❧

‘For [the] purpose [of engaging Jewish women in the continuing struggle], communication with them must only be in their native language, and they must be approached closely after details of their way of life have been ascertained. It must be understood that those few female Jewish workers who speak Russian are not always the most advanced, or the most capable and skillful organisers and agitators among the broad masses of female Jewish workers. From those masses, simple, actively immersed female workers, mothers and housewives must be picked out who can truly gain access to the female workers who are the darkest, most backward, most ignorant and infested with religious and narrow-minded prejudices and affected by bourgeois influence.’ (35; col. 2, par. 1)

218. Esther. ‘In di naye badingungen I. [Under the New Conditions I.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 93, 10 Nov. 1921, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, written following the Fourth All-Russian Conference of the Women’s Departments, reports on the Departments’ work. It outlines the current socioeconomic situation, focussing on women and painting a generally negative picture of conditions under the New Economic Policy.⁶⁰⁹ It was debated whether the Departments need “to be or not to be”, but these discussions should cease.⁶¹⁰ The conference came to the same conclusion. ❧

‘The CC of our party gave its opinion decisively and resolutely. It said “to be”. The new conditions and the growth of the petit-bourgeois impulse lay even greater duties upon organisations required to consolidate the influence of our party among the non-party masses.’ (col. 2, par. 4)

219. Esther. ‘Unzer provints [Our Provinces].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 96, 13 Nov. 1921, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article covers two topics. **The Third International and the Radomyshl’ Rabbi** concerns Rabbi Bentsi Beregovsky and his Yiddish-language

⁶⁰⁹ The Soviet government’s New Economic Policy (NEP), which allowed some private enterprise, was introduced in March 1921.

trial for a range of anti-Soviet activities.⁶¹¹ The article is scornful of the rabbi, who claims to know Marx's theories and support Soviet authority and therefore 'leads everyone by the nose', and of his followers, who could not bear the idea of a rabbi sitting in prison on Rosheshone. The rabbi had boasted that no number of Communist Internationals could close his talmetoyre. **Who Is Guilty** reports on a trial of Peretz's story 'Bontshe shvayg' in Konotop.⁶¹² The accusation centres around the main character's consistent refusal to protest against hardship. Such passivity 'demoralises the public'. The court resolves that Bontshe was a victim of bourgeois society and therefore innocent. But both sides pay too little attention to questions of class ethics. Bontshe may be a victim but he is also a criminal against the working class. ☞

'Accusers and defenders from among the public give their opinions. One considers the class to which Bontshe belonged, the working class, to be guilty: why did the working class stay silent? A second believes the opposite, that, belonging to a class of oppressed people with nothing to lose, Bontshe should have yelled, protested, struggled. He is guilty. A third maintains that the whole society is guilty and must sit on the accused bench.' (3; col. 1, par. 3)

220. Esther. 'Unzer provints [Our Provinces].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 108, 27 Nov. 1921, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article covers two topics. It directly addresses the reader repeatedly. **On Voznesensk Professionals, on Imported Meat and on Other Things** discusses the Soviet structures applied to Jewish professions such as kosher butcher, and perspectives on schisms in kehiles. **Minsk Does Not Need Teachers** ponders the fact that hundreds of vacancies for Jewish teachers have disappeared. ☞

'We naïve Moscow activists noted this and took it as a directive. There had been a great re-evacuation of Jewish refugees, and Jewish institutions in Russian cities were closed. We tried to bring the surplus Jewish teachers down from there. They began to turn up in our offices and ask where they should travel to. The Folkombild's Jewish bureau sent telegrams to our Jewish centres about it.⁶¹³ We were overjoyed and thought this would delight Minsk! All our candidates could be put to good use there!' (3; col. 2, par. 2)

⁶¹⁰ Here we see that Esther employs references not only to ancient and local literature but also to Shakespeare. In addition, this is the earliest item in this bibliography to spell out Hebrew-origin words phonetically and to avoid certain letters in line with Soviet efforts to limit hebraisms in Yiddish.

⁶¹¹ Radomyshl' – city in Zhytomyrs'ka oblast', northern Ukraine.

⁶¹² Konotop – city in Sums'ka oblast', northern Ukraine.

⁶¹³ Folkombild [Rn. Narkompros] – People's Commissariat for Education.

221. Esther. *An entfder di gegners fun yidish: Oystsugn fun esther's broshur 'Tsu der frage vegn der yidisher folks-shul' [A Response to the Opponents of Yiddish: Extracts from Esther's Brochure 'On the Question of the Jewish Primary School']*. No. 2, Serye 'Far Yidish', Farlag 'Kultur', Czernowitz, 1922. 16 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This booklet is part of the 'Far Yidish' series, all entitled *An entfder di gegners fun yidish*, which were published in Czernowitz in 1921 and 1922.⁶¹⁴ It presents extracts from Esther's book *Tsu der frage* (147). The extracts appear without an introduction, comments, or page references. Part of the concluding paragraph (16; par. 5) is cited in translation by David Shneer.⁶¹⁵ Comparison of the text in the original book and the new book reveals some editing, comprising several minor changes to the wording, and revision of the spelling, which conforms closer to the future YIVO standardisation.

222. Ester. *Hirsh Lekert*. Biblyotek "Yung-vald", Moscow, 1922. 39 pages. (Yiddish)
Copy from LOC.

This small book is one of several works by Yiddish writers about Hirsh Lekert, one of the martyrs of the Bund.⁶¹⁶ Written for children, it commemorates the twentieth anniversary of his death.⁶¹⁷ Its cover design, by Nathan Altman, is very simple and dramatic, a woodblock in red and black, recalling the sets for the Soviet Yiddish theatre of the day.⁶¹⁸ The frontispiece is a portrait above lines from 'a revolutionary folksong'.⁶¹⁹ The book comprises six numbered sections. The first part of **Section I** (5-11) depicts the hanging. Before dawn, the desolate Military Field outside Vilna is filled with officials, police and soldiers who nervously fix 'hundreds of indifferent or wicked

⁶¹⁴ The other authors promoted by this series of at least four were Dr Chaim Zhitlovsky (twice) and the Yiddish linguist Nokhem Shtif. There are holdings of these items in various American libraries.

⁶¹⁵ David Shneer, *Yiddish and the Creation of Soviet Jewish Culture*, Cambridge UP, 2004, 5, qtd. in Ruthchild, 'Bringing the Revolution,' 173; and John Lorber, 'Tsum folk vel ikh fun keyver zingen, I Will Sing to the People from the Grave: The Emotions of Protest in the Songs of Dovid Edelstat,' Masters thesis, Vanderbilt University, Mar. 2015, 33. The quoted passage is part of the last paragraph of Section 3 of the original book (65; par. 2). See a translation of the full paragraph at 147.

⁶¹⁶ This book, apparently the same copy as in LOC holdings, is digitised and accessible on archive.org. Hirsh Lekert, Bund activist who shot at the Governor of Vilna and was hanged in punishment (1880-1902). Other works include H. Leivik, *Hirsh Lekert*, 1926 [a play]; Aaron Kushnivo, *Hirsh Lekert*, 1929 [a verse drama]; J. S. Hertz, *Hirsh Lekert*, 1952. Lekert is mentioned in Abraham Sutzkever's poem 'Teacher Mira,' 1943.

⁶¹⁷ Evidence of its design for children include its simple language, particular use of repetition, concluding paragraphs that specifically address young readers, and its publication by a specialist in children's literature. In addition, a report in *Der emes* notes that this 'brochure' is for children ('Partey-lebn,' *Der emes*, 160, 1 Aug. 1922, 3).

⁶¹⁸ Nathan Altman, Russian Jewish painter, set designer and book illustrator (1889-1970).

⁶¹⁹ The same lines, about spitting back at your enemy 'with lead', appear in Esther's article about lullabies (192).

eyes' on the young Jewish worker, who goes to his death with such composure that he appears the 'freest of all'. After his body is buried, the soldiers march away, singing, over the grave, leaving no evidence of it, as if the worker never existed. Twenty years later, Vilna is in enemy hands but its 'brother city' Minsk will do what Vilna cannot. In Minsk's former Cathedral Square, important municipal officials and guests, and 'thousands of Belorussian workers and peasants' gather to remove a monument to the assassinated tsar Alexander II and replace it with one to Hirsh Lekert. In this way, Hirsh Lekert is resurrected and is the ultimate victor.⁶²⁰ **Section II** (12-21) provides a history of the revolutionary movement, the larger background to Hirsh Lekert's story. It explains that Hirsh Lekert gave up his young life for the honour and happiness of the working class, and for this he was despised by tsarist officials but loved by workers, who erected a monument to him on 'holy Soviet ground'. During tsarist times, clerics infected the masses with 'religious venom'. Among the peoples in 'dark captivity' in Russia, Jewish workers 'bore especially heavy chains'. Their wealthy, co-religionist "brethren" exploited them, and their religious leaders deceived them with 'sweet talk' about a klal yisroel and with Zionist claims. Times changed and the workers of Russia began an economic struggle against their oppressors, soon understanding that improvement would require the removal of the autocracy and the capitalist order. Some educated people too could not bear injustice, so they gave up their bourgeois families and lives for the workers and their struggle and 'taught them the truth'. The RSDLP was founded, with the Jewish Bund under its aegis. Social-democratic teachings caused oppressed Jewish workers to begin to raise their heads and unite with their non-Jewish comrades. Their new confidence surprised the police, who spoke scornfully of "Jewish khutspe". Moralising from rabbis and bosses did not quell the "khutspe", and strikes and demonstrations took place. When peasants drove out nobles from their estates, the government responded with 'rivers of blood', but this, like the efforts of Zubatov, did not stifle revolutionary activity.⁶²¹ Workers like Hirsh Lekert would impede arrests and free comrades from police custody en masse. **Section III** (22-28) returns to the early days of economic activism when the Jewish Bund developed from strike kasses. More far-sighted, Comrade Lenin's *Iskra* campaigned against the "economists", demanding a revolutionary political struggle. The Bund adopted this direction, and the ruthlessness of

⁶²⁰ A translation of this passage appears in Bemporad, *Becoming Soviet Jews* (67), which also makes several other references to this book while discussing the transformation of Hirsh Lekert into a Soviet hero. The monument to Hirsh Lekert was removed (Moshe Mishkinsky, 'Lekert, Hirsch,' *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, encyclopedia.com) in 1937 (*Becoming Soviet Jews*, 69, see also 192).

⁶²¹ Sergey Vasil'evich Zubatov, Moscow police administrator who encouraged legal forms of activism in order to subdue the illegal revolutionary movement (1864-1917).

the police encouraged Jewish workers to follow. Events in Vilna around the May 1902 demonstrations included atrocious treatment of arrested demonstrators by Governor von Wahl, who would become Hirsh Lekert's target.⁶²² **Section IV** (29-32) states that von Wahl was wrong to think that Jewish workers would be easily scared. Many people, aggrieved by the treatment of the protesters, longed for revenge against von Wahl, as a 'spontaneous yearning'. The workers planned to assassinate von Wahl, in order to 'wash away the bloody insult with his blood'. The SD refused to participate, but planning proceeded nonetheless. Zubatov learnt of the plans and von Wahl was warned, but on 5 (18) May, Hirsh Lekert managed to shoot him. Although the governor recovered, Hirsh Lekert was hanged. **Section V** (33-36) explores the question of terror against individuals, which is not sanctioned by the SD.⁶²³ The red terror against the bourgeoisie during the transfer of dictatorship to the workers was a different matter. Lekert was no terrorist but a simple man, the 'voice of the masses'. The news of his deed was received by workers in the Pale 'like a ray of light [through the darkness]', and word spread of a new breed of Jewish worker who will 'respond to insult with a weapon in his hand'. Proclamations containing 'prophetic words' called for his memory to live on until the fall of the autocracy, when his premature death for our 'insulted honour' can receive the honour it 'rightly [kosher]' deserves. **Section VI** (37-39) recalls how the government, hoping to scare the workers, employed pogroms such as the one in Kishinöv in 1903, organised by Plehve. Briefly, 'under the spontaneous pressure of the masses', the Bund's 5th Conference endorsed "organised revenge" but *Iskra* and the Bund's Foreign Committee agitated against the decision, which was repealed by the 5th Congress.⁶²⁴ Instead, each Bund organisation formed a "boevoy otryad", to protect gatherings.⁶²⁵ Pogroms were opposed by self-defence, and other government-sponsored violence was met by 'organised struggle of the entire working class'. With the fall of the autocracy, national oppression disappeared, along with separate national labour organisations such as the Bund. 'The prophecy was fulfilled', workers, peasants and Red Army soldiers of all nations revere Hirsh Lekert, who gave his life for the interests of the working class. Young readers may take inspiration from the sacrifice of martyrs like Hirsh Lekert. ☺

⁶²² The journalistic account of these events recalls Esther's articles in *Folks-tsaytung* in 1906-07. Victor Vil'gel'movich von Wahl, military general, Governor of Vilna from October 1901 to September 1902 (1840-1915).

⁶²³ A contradictory perspective on the SD response including related material from *Iskra* is presented in Harold Shukman, 'The Relations between the Jewish Labour Bund and the RSDRP, 1897-1903,' D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 1961, 262.

⁶²⁴ The Bund's 5th Conference took place in August 1902, and its 5th Congress in Zürich in June 1903.

⁶²⁵ Boevoy otryad or "BO" – armed unit.

‘Young workers! If fate happens to lead some of you to perish for communism, you will remember that the blood of those who sacrifice their lives for the working class is not spilt in vain. Others continue their work to the end. Not in vain did the French Communards perish, and not in vain did the thousand martyrs of the Russian revolution perish. Not in vain, too, did Hirsh Lekert perish. May all of these shining individuals inspire you. Learn from them how we must sacrifice our lives for the truth, for the interests of the working class, and for the happiness of future generations. Learn from them to live, to fight, to fall if you must, and, to be victorious!’ (concluding paragraphs)

223. Esther. ‘Ayndrukn fun a val-agitatorin I. [Impressions of an Electoral Campaigner I.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 17, 31 Jan. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)
Not sighted.

224. Esther. ‘Ayndrukn fun a val-agitatorin II. [Impressions of an Electoral Campaigner II.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 18, 1 Feb. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)
Not sighted.

225. Esther. ‘Ayndrukn fun a val-agitatorin III. [Impressions of an Electoral Campaigner III.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 19, 2 Feb. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the third in a series, is a personal account of election work in a far-flung corner unpenetrated by communist light, where backwardness and ignorance reign.⁶²⁶ Esther gives an address and questions people about their opinions. ☺

‘They listen to my address attentively. From the back rows, where the ordinary public stands, uncertain, modest applause is audible. The doctor responds: The speaker wanted to persuade you that your vote is important for all of Moscow, for all of Russia, for the whole world.... You must believe people you know. You must not listen to phrases like “Lenin says not to speak but to act”. The speaker says that if we do not vote for communists, it means we are against them. This is untrue...’ (2; col. 4, par. 6-7).

226. Esther. ‘Ayndrukn fun a val-agitatorin IV. [Impressions of an Electoral Campaigner IV.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 20, 3 Feb. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the fourth in a series, concerns elections at the Brest-Litovsk Hospital, which is reserved for concentration camp inmates. People and surroundings are described. The party campaign office is in an ornate mansion. A girl affirms her intention to become a communist. In several days' work, Esther's group creates a good party cell. ☹

'If only the people who shriek about the dictatorship of the Communist Party, mechanical methods, and electoral fraud could see how the true, free will of the workers is forged in Soviet elections! But they cannot see this, either because they make themselves blind or they were born blind.' (concluding paragraph)

227. M. Frumkin (Ester). 'In der idseksye fun hoytpolitafkler [In the Jewish Section of the CC for Political Education].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 20, 3 Feb. 1922, p. 4 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.⁶²⁷

This short notice announces that cultural institutions such as libraries, Jewish and otherwise, have not adequately provided their contact details to ensure receipt of the newspaper. Institutions must provide these details or delivery will cease. It is essential that institutions, not individuals, obtain the newspaper. ☹

'The responsibility lies with the appropriate local Jewish Sections.

[Signed] Manager of the Jewish Section of Glavpolitprosvet.' (concluding lines)

228. Esther. 'Di hilf fun oysland I. [The Aid from Overseas I.].' *Der emes* [Moscow] (Yiddish)

Not sighted.

229. Esther. 'Di hilf fun oysland II. [The Aid from Overseas II.].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 27, 11 Feb. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the second in a series, concerns foreign aid to Russia. Part of that aid is from Amsterdam and part from a Comintern worker's aid committee.⁶²⁸ Unions and social-democrats gave less than communists in each donor country, for which the organisations' hypocritical, antisoviet leaders are to blame.

⁶²⁶ These elections are likely to be for the All-Russian Congress of Soviets in 1921.

⁶²⁷ Hoytpolitafkler – in Russian, Glavpolitprosvet.

Axelrod's just-published letters to Vandervelde reveal that antisoviet feeling in Bulgaria led to the withholding of bread collected for Russia.⁶²⁹ So-called "socialists" like these have less sympathy than bourgeois philanthropists. Some governments have obstructed aid efforts by communists. Overseas communists collect clothes, toys, etc, and make other aid efforts for Russia. Children help in the work. Russian workers must increase their own efforts to help the hungry of the Volga. ☹

'Yoked, persecuted and vilified from all sides, half driven underground, in constant struggle against the old parties which most of the time bind the hands of the entire apparatus of the professional and cooperative movement, the communist parties fulfill their duty to the Soviet Union, whose sorrows and joys they have shared.' (2; col. 4, par. 3 - 3; col. 1, par. 1)

230. Esther. article in *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 45, 8 Mar. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

The part of this newspaper article that appears on page 2 is a scathing discussion of Zionist efforts to create a Jewish state in Palestine, and the involvement of the Zionist yet antisemitic Lord Northcliffe.⁶³⁰ Its title is 'In der vays-bloyer khurve [In the Blue and White Hovel]'. However, the signed part on page 3 commemorates International Women's Day. It describes the suffering of female Jewish workers under tsarism and during pogroms and wars. Female readers, addressed directly, are urged to devote every effort to struggling against oppression, under the banner of the Third International. ☹

'You, homeless Jewish woman, who have been driven from Grodno and Kovno, from Smorgon' and from Pinsk, from shtetl to shtetl, who have been packed with your little children into wagons and sent off in hunger, suffering and humiliation. You, of whose home, whose little household, the imperialist war did not leave even a stone, whose life has been a hell for years.' (3; col. 2, par. 4)

231. M. Frumkin (Esther). 'Komunistisher mayrev-universitet [Communist University of the West].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 82, 2 Apr. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

⁶²⁸ The International Federation of Trade Unions, which existed between 1919-45, was also called the Amsterdam International since it was founded and based in Amsterdam. See Geert van Goethem, *The Amsterdam International: The World of the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU), 1913-1945*, Ashgate, 2006.

⁶²⁹ Pavel Borisovich Aksel'rod, prominent early Menshevik, opponent of the October Revolution (1850-1928). See Abraham Ascher, *Pavel Axelrod and the Development of Menshevism*, Harvard UP, 1972. Emile Vandervelde, leading Belgian socialist and government official in ministerial and other positions (1866-1938).

⁶³⁰ Alfred Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Northcliffe, newspaper magnate, Director of Propaganda during World War I, visited Palestine shortly before the date of this article (1865-1922).

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article recalls the university's early days and outlines its current structure and timetable, one hard year since its foundation. ☞

'And these largely tired, nervous, predominantly homeless young people, who were largely there by chance, met their obligations. They slept on bare boards, were hungry, had no shoes, clothes or underwear. The disappointment was vast. Right from the beginning, there was an element that wanted to leave the school, transfer to the Sverdlov University or go home.'⁶³¹ (2; col. 2, par. 2)

- 232.** Esther. 'Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer I. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists I.]' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 115, 8 June 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the first in a series, reports on the congress's 'very good' opening session. It lists Esther among the presidium members and recounts her address about the significance of the congress for Jewish cultural activists (teachers) outside Ukraine, the difficulties due to the NEP, the "narrow" goals set and the resulting great achievements. Opposition from the 'Jewish black forces' who slander the Yevsektsiya cannot outweigh the love of the masses. Yekopists were barred from participation in the congress.⁶³² ☞

'The congress opens with the 'Internationale'. After the 'Internationale', the administrator of the Jewish Bureau of the Ukrainian Education Commissariat ... gives an opening address, in which he outlines the tasks of the congress. He proposes greeting the Red Army, which made it possible for Ukraine to undertake peaceful cultural construction, and the Education Commissariat, the leader of communist national education. The proposals are approved with tumultuous applause from the entire hall.' (2; col. 2, par. 5)

- 233.** Esther. 'Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer II. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists II.]' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 119, 13 June 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

⁶³¹ Sverdlov University – the first tertiary party school founded in the USSR. See Chapter 2 of Michael David-Fox, *Revolution of the Mind: Higher Learning among the Bolsheviks, 1918-1929*, Cornell UP, 1997.

⁶³² Yekopists – members of the Yekape (EKP or YKP) Poale Zion, the Jewish Communist Party (Poale Zion), which existed in Russia 1919-22.

This fairly long newspaper article, the second in a series, outlines congress addresses and acknowledges the suffering of places affected by recent pogroms. Cultural work is now underway there. Reactionary elements such as yeshives are also active but the Jewish Bureaus are becoming dominant, despite a shortage of activists. Work in Yiddish does not constitute yiddishism. Unlike in Moscow, repression of clericalism is not possible in Ukraine. Plans are underway for theatrical productions, party schools, dictionaries and grammars. ☞

‘The speaker delineates the policy of the Central Bureau. The Central Bureau is not involved with cultivating yiddishism. We do communist work in Yiddish because the Jewish masses speak Yiddish. It is natural that the work be done in the language spoken by the masses. Naturally, we oppose ignorant internationalism, which is initiated in Ukraine in the form of “international” children’s homes.’ (2; col. 4, par. 3)

- 234.** Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer III. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists III.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 121, 15 June 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the third in a series, outlines congress addresses. In Kiev, the section has only three staff members but a vast responsibility. Achievements have been made in Odessa with minimal resources. Work in Yekaterinoslav, where children speak a mixture of Yiddish and Russian, has been affected by famine. In Podolia, which Soviet power only reached in 1921, a good harvest kept schools operating. Private kultur-liges persist, and the Zionists are strong, supported from abroad.⁶³³ Teachers are training and political education is active. A Jewish theatre lacks only a troupe. All offices underwent staff cuts. ☞

‘Political education work has particularly suffered from the material crisis. The theatre work has been interrupted. There are several drama groups. Also undergoing a crisis is the work of the political and literary groups involving struggle against clericalism. A campaign was made and political trials held.’ (2; col. 1, par. 3)

- 235.** Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer IV. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists IV.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 126, 22 June 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

⁶³³ Kultur-liges [Culture leagues] – Jewish cultural and social organisations; see Hillel Kazovsky, ‘Kultur-lige,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 19 Aug. 2010.

Copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article, the fourth in a series, is subtitled 'Reports from the Field'. In Zhytomyr, clericalism is strong. The situation of schooling is poor, as is the Jewish theatre. Statistics show the small number of educational institutions around Volhynia. The staff of two in Kremenchug was not affected by cuts. 'Spontaneous pressure' by workers successfully reinstated the Jewish school. Engagement is weak, that is, there are few institutions, in the provinces. In Poltava, the non-refugee population speaks Yiddish but uses Ukrainian with children. The small staff cannot manage all the work but maintains high authority. A Zionist administered two schools, using Russian and Hebrew, but has now been ousted. In Chernigov, clericalism is strong, an anti-clerical campaign was made. In Nikolaev, pupils at a Yiddish school who know only Russian but are forced to learn Yiddish will be transferred to Russian schools. Kheyders closed purely because of famine, which also affects work in greater Kherson, to a particularly severe degree. An additional problem, in Donbas, is banditry. Colonies there were destroyed. Zionism is strong, there are several Maccabi groups. There are children's institutions but no teachers. In Kharkov, staff cuts left only one administrator. Among the few institutions there is a Third International club where lectures are heard. Schools are being created to eliminate ignorance. The small Jewish population is increased by famine refugees. Overall, the reports reveal a dearth of activists and no public support, unlike in Minsk, Vitebsk and Gomel'. The general party and Soviet institutions must adopt responsibility for the Jewish work. ☞

'Zhytomyr (Shlosberg). The Volhynia gubernia is very backward, it is full of Hasids, yeshives, rebbes, etc. Clericalism has a firm hold. In the yeshives there are fanatical youths who say they are prepared to "die as martyrs" for their yeshive. In Zhytomyr there are 2 yeshives and 15 kheyders with 300 children.' (opening paragraph)

236. Esther. 'Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer V. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists V.].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 127, 23 June 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the fifth in a series, is subtitled 'Debates about the Reports'. The debates are marked by an absence of opposition, though there are some criticisms and differences of opinion among the communists. Concerning the struggle against clericalism, those who consider that, given the dearth of schools, kheyders should not be repressed, came around to the majority, stricter view.

Concerning the kultur-liges, they contain elements of petit-bourgeois yiddishism, so they must be sure to meet certain communist criteria and not be a tool of ‘our ideological opponents’, or else risk dissolution. The unanimity of the congress shows the success of the past year’s efforts. One of the next tasks is to ‘bring Jewish cultural work closer to inter-national proletarian society’. ☞

‘The main criticisms of the Central Bureau concerned its weak communication with the branches, minimal direction, late information, withholding authority from the branches, all the sort of criticisms which every central bureau hears at every congress, and to which the Ukrainian Central Bureau, given the Ukrainian conditions of the past year, the bad post and communications, the dearth of manpower, etc, can respond appropriately.’ (col. 1, par. 3)

- 237.** Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer VI. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists VI.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 130, 27 June 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the sixth in a series, is subtitled ‘Education Work under NEP Conditions’. It discusses financial matters such as fund allocation for cultural institutions, and affirms the need for ‘connection with the surrounding international proletarian society’, which must include involving local professional associations with school activities. The congress opposes private schools, especially Jewish ones. ☞

‘In the Jewish environment, the private school cannot have the least positive cultural value or even serve as a surrogate for a school. A Jewish private school represents a Zionist clerical school. A separate school in Russian and Hebrew for Russian-speaking Jewish children is a confessional school. This represents a fortress of the blackest reaction and counterrevolution. The Jewish revolutionary cultural activists consider it their duty to make every effort to combat such schools in the Jewish environment.’ (col. 2, par. 3)

- 238.** Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer VII. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists VII.]’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 134, 1 July 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the seventh in a series, is subtitled ‘Social Education’. This topic dominated the congress. The greatest education successes in Ukraine are in this sphere, of which the most crucial elements are orphanages and closed school communes. Orphanages are important in Jewish work because of the number of children orphaned by pogroms. Kiev and Odessa are centres of this work. Teachers there are young and enthusiastic. One such is Comrade Rives from Odessa, who speaks of his school commune.⁶³⁴ He also recounts how the communist group took over the children’s shtetl Lustdorf.⁶³⁵ These efforts are very positive. Contact with neighbouring and fellow organisations must increase. Kiev, which is convinced of the value of the communist approach, takes a different approach to Odessa, where slogans are valued over learning. The children from the Kiev institutions are ‘true Khasids of their rebbes’, who support the Kievan approach and whose vitality demonstrates its effectiveness.⁶³⁶ Both approaches have merit, though the Odessan contains an element of anarchism. A comrade argues that more attention is owed to mass social education, that is, ‘the open institution, the school and the kindergarten’. In Ukraine there are still many Jewish schools which use Russian. The congress resolves that these schools have no right to exist. ☹

‘Odessa begins from organisation for the sake of organisation. In Kiev, organisation is a product of work. The speaker relates the principles of the Kievan work: no large collective, children from different parents, etc. There are no problems with the home. “The home has become dear to the children.”’ (3; col. 2, par. 3-4)

239. Esther. ‘Geshtitst “di likhtikste frayhayts-kempfer” [“The Noblest Freedom-Fighters” Supported].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 144, 13 July 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article comments on Jewish representation in the Polish Sejm, in connection with the “Jewish bloc” in Śliwiński’s short-lived government.⁶³⁷ The Jewish deputies are powerless to defend Jewish interests and oppose antisemitism, they primarily oppose Bolshevism. The article concludes with sarcastic remarks about

⁶³⁴ Sh. Rives was later the author of *Kampf: Politisher alefbeyns far shuln fun sotsyaler dertsiung [Struggle: A Political ABC for Social Education Schools]* (Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1923 and 1925), of which Esther was the editor.

⁶³⁵ Lustdorf, near Odessa, was founded as a German colony.

⁶³⁶ The spelling of ‘Khasids’ here reflects the phonetic Soviet spelling in the original.

⁶³⁷ Artur Śliwiński, Prime Minister of Poland from 28 June to 7 July 1922 (1877-1953).

their competence. Its title refers to a term used by Hirschhorn in reference to some politicians who are in fact supporters of violent antisemitism.⁶³⁸ ☞

‘While Śliwiński was trying to get a majority with all the small groups, he had a chat with the Jewish deputies too. Gruenbaum proposed including in the new government’s declaration a “positive answer” to the “appropriate demands” of the Jews. It appears that the tsarist exclusion laws against Jews have not yet been abolished in Poland. The Jewish deputies demanded that they be abolished now. To those radical revolutionary demands, Śliwiński answered that it is too early to talk about the declaration, and that as yet he has no expertise in such questions.’ (col. 1, par. 8 - col. 2, par. 1)

240. Esther. ‘Der ongrif fun kapital [The Assault of Capital].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 145, 14 July 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article describes the assault of capital upon the workers of the world. There is economic injustice in ‘conquered, ruined Germany’, America, ‘the second pole of the capitalist world’, and England. The workers will prevail. ☞ ‘The workers cannot remain silent. Each day they learn that they must resist the audacious assault of capital. Each day pushes the workers of the whole world along the path that the Comintern shows them, along the path of the united workers’ front. Let the yellow leaders exert themselves. It will not help them.’ (col. 2, par. 5-6)

241. Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer VIII. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists VIII].’ *Der emes* [Moscow] (Yiddish)

Not sighted.

242. Esther. ‘Der ershter alukrainisher tsuzamenfor fun idishe kultur-tuer IX. [The First All-Ukrainian Congress of Jewish Cultural Activists IX].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 148, 18 July 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the ninth and final in this series, lists many reasons for the particular grasp of clericalism in Ukraine. Clericalism has formed a seamless bond with Zionism. Struggle against clericalism in Ukraine, limited to propaganda, is

⁶³⁸ Shmuel Hirschhorn, writer and Sejm member (1876-1942); see Kalman Weiser, ‘Hirschhorn, Samuel,’ *YIVO Encyclopedia*, 12 Aug. 2010.

inadequate. A new work plan involves non-Jewish institutions and workers in the positive part of the anti-clerical work, for example, building new schools for children who currently attend kheyders. This congress is faithful to the Moscow line, unlike the Minsk congress. The Moscow line is outlined. It is opposed by the ‘foreign bourgeoisie and world-socialist press’ led by Sholem Asch, Liesin, and Shmuel Rosenfeld, who oppose Soviet power because of its struggle against Jewish clericalism.⁶³⁹ The congress resolved unanimously that the government must combat the Jewish bourgeoisie and Jewish clericalism ‘with the same resolve with which it struggles against the other bourgeoisies’. Clerics and Zionists now know that efforts against them have increased. The congress’s conclusion became a spontaneous demonstration for the merit of cultural work under communism. ☞

‘In this regard, the Kiev congress had a very great significance. It proved that not only is the communist faction of the congress predominantly in complete agreement with the Moscow line, but non-party school activists too have adopted it very enthusiastically’ (col. 2, par. 4).

243. Esther. ‘Eltere khaveyrim, mer akhtung! [Older Comrades, Pay More Attention!].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 150, 20 July 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article introduces an issue which includes a supplement dedicated to the youth movement. It announces a conference on youth work, which is in a crisis. The NEP has helped workers in large-scale industry, but not those in small industry in much of the former Pale. Many youth are unemployed, and areas affected by the civil war, occupations, evacuations and pogroms do not have the institutions to help them. The work is ‘further complicated by specific Jewish conditions’. Suitable new activists must be engaged. The crisis is passing. But it is ‘bad, very bad’ that older comrades do not help youth more. We, the old, can also learn from the young. The young have the right to have their needs met, their questions answered, for older workers to do as much for them as the bourgeoisie does, to receive warmth and care. ☞ ‘The number of activists doing Jewish work was not large. The young Jewish worker activists have left, and continue to leave, often carrying on their shoulders the entire Soviet work in that region.’ (col. 1, par. 11)

⁶³⁹ Samuel Rosenfeld, journalist, editor of *Der fraynd* [Russia] and *Der tog* [New York] (1869-1943).

- 244.** Esther. ‘Naft [Petroleum].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 151, 21 July 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article argues that in global politics petroleum is as important as human blood. Diplomats and experts are only mouthpieces for ‘petroleum magnates and other capitalists’. Petroleum is the alpha and omega [der alef un der tof] of international conferences like that in Genoa.⁶⁴⁰ The business of large oil companies is considerably intertwined, across state borders. ☞

‘The smell of eau-de-colognes, perfumes, good soap, expensive underwear and fine cigars which surely pervades the salons of The Hague is tainted with the sharp smell of petroleum.’⁶⁴¹ Petroleum is the driving force.’ (col. 1, par. 7)

- 245.** M. Frumkin (Esther). and M. Levitan. ‘Tsu di idische byuroen ba di bildungs-opteylungen, tsu di opteylungen fun kultur-lige [On the Jewish Offices of the Education Departments, On the Departments of the Kultur-lige].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 152, 22 July 1922, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This short notice concerns a lack of books before the new school year. Institutions must send advances on the cost of required books to the Kultur-lige in Moscow, ask local organisations for help, and organise events to fund-raise for the full cost. ☞

‘Desperate voices from various places speak of the impossibility of beginning the academic year with a complete lack of textbooks. On the contrary, in other places where people are showing initiative, they are trying on their own responsibility and with their own limited resources to connect with the foreign market which can to a certain extent satisfy the need for Yiddish textbooks.’ (opening paragraph)

- 246.** Esther. ‘Unzer ongrif vert forgezetst [Our Assault Continues].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 167, 9 Aug. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns current antisoviet activity as discussed at the recent party conference. As Comrade Zinoviev said, the economic backtrack is having a corresponding political effect.⁶⁴² New methods of struggle against ‘the silent attack of the bourgeoisie’ are needed, possibly repressions and certainly greater effort to

⁶⁴⁰ Genoa Conference – meeting of representatives of thirty-four European nations, 10 April to 19 May 1922.

⁶⁴¹ The Hague – venue of the international Hague Conference, 15 June to 19 July 1922.

increase our influence on the workers and toiling masses. Specific work is needed in the Jewish sphere. Jewish communists have a duty to help the party. Zionists, “non-party” students, clerics and Mensheviks must remember that the assault on them continues. ☞ ‘Naturally, we do not renounce repressions, state violence is in the hands of the working class, and it applies it and will apply it fully to its class enemies and their conscious or nonconscious servants.’ (col. 1, par. 6)

247. Esther. ‘Vegn ort fun rusish in der idisher shul [Concerning the Place of Russian in the Yiddish School].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 210, 30 Sept. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article confirms the official line on teaching Russian in Yiddish schools. It outlines the current limited Yiddish educational facilities, which compel children to attend Russian schools. Their poor Russian causes families to resent primary schooling in Yiddish. This issue needs serious consideration. Clearly, using pupils’ mother tongues at all levels is best, so the Yiddish facilities must be improved. Jewish workers must make every effort to help. Jewish workers in Russia must know Russian, the lingua franca here, so it must be taught in Yiddish schools at all levels. Continuing their studies in Russian will not hurt pupils, just as senior students used to cope with studying abroad in French or German. The failure to teach Russian is partly due to yiddishism even in the best schools. ☞

‘Building the Yiddish school commenced from the bottom. It grew together with the children. Every year, higher classes were added. In the past academic year, when there were cuts and reductions, that growth was halted. And this was the year when classes and schools for older children should have opened.’ (col. 1, par. 3-4)

248. Esther. ‘Tserisn di letste fedim [The Last Threads Broken].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 219, 11 Oct. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article effectively farewells the Bund. The last ties to the old life were broken last year when the Bund entered the RCP. The change could have been faster and smoother. The Bund had made great errors. Effort should have been devoted to inter-national, not separate national, organisations. Much can and must be said about the former leaders of the Bund. ‘It seems to me, a former participant in that movement,

⁶⁴² Gershon Apfelbaum (Grigoriy Yevseevich Zinov’ev), senior Soviet politician (1883-1936).

that it was, however, a theoretically false but historically unavoidable path.’ The history of other backward national SD parties shows the effects of national oppression. That oppression also made the Jewish proletariat ‘a reservoir of revolutionary energy’ and drove it to struggle. The situation of Jewish workers caused the errors. Nonetheless, they fought heroically against tsarism and the bourgeoisie, and their fallen are dear to the working class. The Bund no longer exists. The fallen heroes of the Polish Bund would be disgusted to see the Polish Bundists of today. All who fell for the happiness of humanity are ours. Our work fulfills their last wishes. ☺

‘There is no longer a Bund, the workers of all nations have gathered under the banner of the RCP. And it perpetuates and preserves the memory of those who sincerely fell for the cause of the working class.’ (3; col. 4, par. 2)

249. Esther. ‘Yomtev in der oktyabr-shtat I. [A Festival in the October State I].’ *Der emes* [Moscow] (Yiddish)

Not sighted.⁶⁴³

250. Esther. ‘Yomtev in der oktyabr-shtat II. [A Festival in the October State II].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 245, 11 Nov. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the second in a series, recalls the excitement in Petrograd during the first three days of the October Revolution. It describes large crowd scenes and mentions the presence of Clara Zetkin and Lunacharsky.⁶⁴⁴ Esther goes into the Smolny Institute, now the headquarters of the revolution, and is given a responsibility. She and a comrade are greeted very warmly at a factory, even though only a minority of the workers there are communists. All await Lenin’s arrival. ☺

‘Yes, they were like a wonder tale, those three days in Petrograd, and when I try to choose and reflect upon the more important and more notable moments, I see that it is impossible, because everything was important and notable in that three-day symphony, where pride, wonderment, faith, prophecy, human solidarity, heroism, fraternity, intense power and profound affection were interwoven in a chorus which only Beethoven, or the young Wagner, could duplicate.’ (opening paragraph)

⁶⁴³ ‘Yomtev’ is the phonetic spelling on the originals viewed (250 and 251).

⁶⁴⁴ Clara Zetkin, prominent German socialist of the generation preceding Esther’s (1857-1933).

251. Esther. 'Yomtev in der oktyabr-shtat III. [A Festival in the October State III].'
Der emes [Moscow], no. 246, 12 Nov. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article, the third in a series, recounts events that Esther attended. A revolutionary-themed play is performed in the evening. At a solemn graveside ceremony for fallen heroes of all revolutions, Clara Zetkin speaks and gifts a red banner from Leipzig workers, provoking immense applause. Zinoviev speaks movingly. Millions of ghosts of the fallen seem to join in singing 'You Fell Victim'. Outside the Winter Palace, once the fortress of despotism but now a palace for art, the singing of the 'Internationale' shakes the palace windows. The sound of the joyful crowd accompanies Esther to her hotel. A meeting of the Petrograd Soviet is held in the Tauride Palace, which formerly housed the Duma. Esther recalls being there last when Tsereteli gave his famous speech before the Second Duma was dissolved.⁶⁴⁵ Now he is a traitor who lies in the dustbin of history, and the workers and soldiers rule the building. Elated, Esther takes a train back to 'red Moscow'. 🌀

'Aeroplanes fly above. The wind tugs at and tears the wet, red banners. The grass on the graves whispers and sways, and it seems that the fallen are singing from their graves. They are singing, and greeting us, and blessing us, and celebrating our victory, their victory, with us.' (col. 2, par. 4)

252. Esther. 'Tsu der kampanye arum der umparteyisher konferents [On the Campaign around the Non-Party Conference].'
Der emes [Moscow], no. 249, 16 Nov. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article discusses the impact of the NEP, which was initially a catastrophe in the former Pale, where unemployment was rife and recent history pauperised the Jewish masses. Cuts to state employment and services had a detrimental effect, worsened by famine in Ukraine, and the NEP boosted antisoviet activity such as clericalism. Now, however, positive effects are emerging. Antisoviet activity such as non-party conferences will persist but 'the dictatorship is in our hands'. 🌀

'And also in the sphere of cultural work there are serious signs that the crisis is diminishing. The work has decreased in scale, but intensified. The infrastructure of the Jewish education work is complete and, even before the NEP period, was crowned with

⁶⁴⁵ See 123.

higher pedagogical institutions, party schools, and Yiddish sections at general universities.’ (3; col. 1, par. 4)

253. Esther. ‘Di grunt-linye barekhtikt [The Fundamental Line Justified].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 253, 21 Nov. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article discusses Trotsky’s recent brilliant conceptualisation of the communist perspective on the fall of capitalism in the light of global economic recovery, presented at the Comintern’s 4th Congress.⁶⁴⁶ ☞

‘In general, however, the 4th Congress will be able to say with more surety and resolve that what the capitalist world is experiencing now is not a capitalist crisis but the crisis of capitalism. The partial improvement of the economic situation is only a temporary phenomenon which does not change the generally diminishing nature of the overall period. The world economy is going into collapse. Only the proletarian revolution and the transfer of power into the hands of the working class can save it.’ (col. 2, par. 5)

254. Esther. ‘A por verter vegn molyever klub [A Few Words about the Club in Mogilëv].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 261, 30 Nov. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article laments the imminent closure of the Jewish club named after Terman.⁶⁴⁷ It includes personal impressions of Terman. All workers of Mogilëv must make efforts to preserve this club. American workers who remember Terman’s work in America might help too. ☞

‘Comrade Terman stands before my eyes just as I met him, over 20 years ago. A small man, ... with the typical yellow face of a tuberculosis sufferer, with good, majestic eyes. His clothes, his home and his manner spoke of destitution, need, poverty, hunger, and misery, and his entire being displayed an intense energy, devotion, and loyalty to the workers’ cause. How great, heroic and sacred this small, unfamiliar man appeared to me!’ (col. 1, par. 3)

255. Esther. ‘Di lage in daytshland [The Situation in Germany].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 262, 1 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

⁶⁴⁶ The Comintern’s 4th World Congress was held in the USSR in November-December 1922.

This medium-length newspaper article considers the revolutionary prospects for Germany. Although Wirth is the head of state, Stinnes is Germany's actual ruler.⁶⁴⁸ Despite opposition, the revolutionary minority will become the majority. ☞
'The masses incited by the fabkom movement are not yet communist.⁶⁴⁹ They are not yet conscious that a break with "democracy" is necessary, that the essential goal is dictatorship of the working class. But they are already sufficiently revolutionary not to tolerate the bond with the bourgeoisie any longer, to want to arm themselves against the capitalists.' (col. 2, par. 3)

256. Esther. 'Di antvofenungs konferents [The Disarmament Conference].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 263, 2 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article discusses the current conference.⁶⁵⁰ Despite the constant aggression of Russia's capitalist neighbours, agreement is expected about restricting arms to a minimum. Russia's defences will not lessen, however. Our neighbours know that Russia is no danger to them. Unlike this one, the Lausanne conference is about dividing up the spoils of robbery.⁶⁵¹ ☞

'Nonetheless, they came. Because militarism lies like a heavy burden upon their ruined economies. Because before the eyes of the broad masses of their lands, exhausted by militarism, they were unable to decline the simple and clear proposal to work together to ease the burden of armaments.' (col. 1, par. 7 - col. 2, par. 1)

257. Esther. 'Der sharfer shverd fun der revolutsye [The Sharp Sword of the Revolution].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 264, 3 Dec. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article discusses the news that members of the Ryazan' revolutionary tribunal were sentenced to death for bribery. Those low creatures drank the blood of the proletariat, now their own blood will run. All bribe-takers must know this and tremble. Bribery is not uncommon in the cities of the former Pale. Workers there must be vigilant, to help eliminate bribery from the Soviet reality. ☞

⁶⁴⁷ Moyshe Terman, active Bundist propagandist from Mogil'ev (1874-1917); see J. S. H., 'Moyshe terman,' *Doyres bundistn*, vol. 1, 225-27.

⁶⁴⁸ Joseph Wirth, German Chancellor from May 1921 to November 1922 (1879-1956). Hugo Stinnes, major industrialist and press magnate with conservative political interests (1870-1924).

⁶⁴⁹ Fabkom – factory committee.

⁶⁵⁰ This regional international disarmament conference was held in Moscow in December 1922.

⁶⁵¹ The Conference of Lausanne, held to establish a new treaty between the former combatants in the First World War, began in November 1922.

‘People appointed to the highest posts of the revolution, upon whom the working class has laid the duty of supporting and preserving the authority of the working class, in whose hands it has placed the sharp sword of the revolution and whom it has called upon to strictly and mercilessly behead the criminals and enemies of the working class, those people have used their high authority to enrich themselves.’ (col. 1, par. 2)

258. Esther. ‘Dray fertl yor arbet in badingungen fun “nep” [Three Quarters of a Year’s Work under NEP Conditions].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 266, 6 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article was written during elections to the Moscow soviet. Providing growth statistics, it reports on the year’s municipal activity, which may confirm Lenin’s suggestion that the NEP saved the Soviet republic. Conscious workers must know these facts and figures and communicate them to the broad masses. ☞

‘The primary education figures are especially interesting. Under the old regime, Moscow was one of the strongest centres of primary education. In 1913, Moscow schools taught 81 thousand children. This year, they have 115 thousand pupils. In the gubernia, there were 143 thousand children, whereas this year there are 222 thousand. Of the 36 thousand children who applied to enter Moscow schools, only 3,000 were declined. They were children of the non-working element. Of those accepted, 19,000 were workers’ children, 8,000 were children of employees and 5,000 were from the other categories.’ (3; col. 1, par. 4)

259. Esther. ‘Der arbeter-klas shrekt zikh nit [The Working Class Is Not Afraid].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 269, 9 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article discusses the situation in Italy, where bourgeois-sponsored fascist pogromists oppress revolutionary workers and terrorise the land. The new communist self-defence movement is a positive development. ☞

‘But for the bourgeoisie of all lands, for its hired bands, the Somaten in Spain, the Skyddskår in Finland, the Civil Leagues in France and Belgium, the “technical assistance” in Germany, the Ku Klux Klan in America, for all these dark heroes the news of the Turin demonstration resounds like an announcement that death is imminent, that no remedy will help, that no rivers of workers’ blood will be spilt by the global conflagration [sreyfe].’ (col. 2, par. 6)

260. Esther. ‘Arum di moskver valn (Ayndrukn)⁶⁵² [Around the Moscow Elections (Impressions)].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 269, 9 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

In this fairly long newspaper article, the first in a series, Esther recounts her activity during the Moscow soviet elections. Visiting a hat factory in Zamoskvorech’ye, she imagines the decadent behaviour of the building’s pre-revolution owner.⁶⁵³ She describes the changes to the district and the factory. At a meeting of the communist cell, she gives an address about the elections. A proposal that she, a Comintern delegate, be asked to convey a greeting to foreign comrades with an invitation to the factory receives ‘Loud applause. Internationale.’ The importance of electing communists is emphasised. She attends an election meeting at a club, a nicer place than the noodle factory she had visited previously. She gives an address and proposes making Clara Zetkin an honorary member. ‘Loud applause. Adopted unanimously.’ ☞

‘A few mums have brought their children along. They raise their hands during every vote. Their silver voices ring. Kto byl nichem, tot stanet vsem!’⁶⁵⁴ People slowly disperse.

“Who did you vote for, child?” I ask a little creature about 5 years old in a large bonnet. “Whoever I wanted to,” she replies with a smile. And looks at me with her large eyes.’
(concluding paragraphs)

261. Esther. ‘Arum di moskver valn (Eyndrikn) II. [Around the Moscow Elections (Impressions) II.].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 270, 10 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

In this fairly long newspaper article, the second in a series, Esther recounts her experience ‘in reserve’ at the Zamoskvorech’ye soviet, a hive of activity. Amid observations of the scene, where telephone communications about speakers in factories are frantic and numerous young journalists write and submit articles for newspapers, she assesses the relative suitability of different speakers for different events. A procession of thousands of students from the Karl Marx Institute passes by. They have unanimously elected communists. At 8pm, Esther goes off duty and is dismissed. ☞
‘Also interesting is the group of “worker correspondents”. At both tables, by windows, standing, they write their impressions there on the spot. Mostly young workers with

⁶⁵² This spelling of ‘Ayndrukn’ differs notably from ‘Eyndrikn’ in the title of the subsequent articles in this series.

⁶⁵³ Zamoskvorech’ye – area in the centre of Moscow.

black hands, they submit ... their correspondence, written on scraps of paper of various sizes, white, yellow, blue, on receipts, on invoices, on old used pages, written with pencil, with pallid ink...' (2; col. 4, par. 5).

- 262.** Esther. 'Arum di moskver valn (Eyndrikn) III. [Around the Moscow Elections (Impressions) III.]' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 274, 15 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This long newspaper article, the third in a series, concerns Esther's posting to the 'backward' "Red Spindle" factory, formerly Bakhrushin's.⁶⁵⁵ It provides a history of industrialists' philanthropy, and describes the current factory. There is no communist activity there. She gives an address, wondering whether the listeners understand. They seem to warm to her occasionally but do not applaud afterwards. However, they still nominate a communist. ☞

'Yes, they are backward. Yes, they are poisoned with paltry charity from bourgeois philanthropy. Yes, they remain petit-bourgeois. And yet they are with us. And yet the proper proletarian instinct speaks within them, and yet they themselves swap a non-party candidate for a communist. And yet they say that Soviet power is their child.' (concluding paragraph)

- 263.** Esther. 'Neenter tsu di umparteyishe [Closer to the Non-Party-Affiliated]'. *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 275, 16 Dec. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article calls for increased Jewish RCP membership. It argues that communist ideas are firmly integrated into Jewish life, as the recent liquidation of the YKP demonstrates, but party membership is too low. Bund membership in 1917 was vastly higher. Jewish communists have a duty to spread communist ideology, that is, bring in more members. They must also deepen their own ideological commitment by reading Jewish workers' newspapers and Yiddish books. ☞

'The Jewish workers have parted with all old ideologies which reigned over them: with Menshevism, with nationalism, with distrust towards the international proletariat, with nonconscious kinship with Jewish petit-bourgeois. They have pulled out of the spiritual ghetto. They follow the banner of communism.' (col. 1, par. 6)

⁶⁵⁴ Kto byl nichem...! – He who was nothing will become everything!

⁶⁵⁵ Bakhrushin – important Moscow entrepreneurial family, founded theatre museum in ulitsa Bakhrushina, Moscow.

- 264.** Esther. ‘Der marsh fun der revolutsye [The March of the Revolution].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 276, 17 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article comments on marches in England protesting about unemployment, an effect of the global economic crisis. The English bourgeoisie is nervous. These marches are a step in the global march to revolution. ☞

‘If the Bonar Laws and Poincarés are still to consider themselves world rulers, they must keep the dictatorship in their hands.⁶⁵⁶ Deep below digs the mole. Deep below lies dynamite. The earth trembles. Thunder rumbles. The march of the unemployed to London is only one part of the great global march. Thus marches the global revolution!’ (concluding paragraphs)

- 265.** Esther. ‘Der royter direktor [The Red Director].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 277, 19 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns a *Pravda* competition to reward the best ‘red directors’ in workplaces.⁶⁵⁷ There is a related question of Marxist theory. Communists must ensure that the masses are interested in this event. ☞

‘The competition demonstrates once more that life answers that problem positively. It has already paraded before our eyes a whole gallery of workers of both sexes and proletarian intellectuals who guide their factory decisively, who have replaced the former boss and successfully manage in extremely difficult, complicated conditions.’ (col. 2, par. 2)

- 266.** Esther. ‘Lozan [Lausanne].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 278, 20 Dec. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the first in a series and numbered I, concerns the hypocritical demands and greedy claims over Turkey made by the capitalist ‘robber’ nations during the Conference of Lausanne. It outlines the history of English and French dominance over Turkey. ☞

‘The “national minorities” [which the English claim to wish to protect] are first of all European capitalists, with their agents, employees and brokers, who have made

⁶⁵⁶ Andrew Bonar Law, Prime Minister of UK from 23 October 1922 to 22 May 1923 (1858-1923). Raymond Poincaré, Prime Minister of France three times, including 15 January 1922 to 1 June 1924 (1860-1934).

themselves comfortable in Turkey. They are, secondly, the population of the various regions which are especially useful for England, France and other robbers for economic or strategic purposes. “Protecting” them means sitting there and being in charge.’ (col. 2, par. 2)

267. Esther. ‘Lozan [Lausanne].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 279, 21 Dec. 1922, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the second in a series, contains sections II and III. It continues from the previous article, discussing related international and commercial relations. The Lausanne talks have brought Turkey and Russia closer, since Turkey knows that only Russia wants to defend Turkey’s interests despite its bourgeois government. Mensheviks say that Turkey will deceive Russia but in truth Russia does not trust any nationalist parties, only historical development. The author/narrator is less present in these articles. ☹

‘As is well known, the Sèvres treaty could not be maintained for long, the conflict between the interests of France, Italy and England monopolised the time, and the Greco-Turkish War was actually a war between England and France.⁶⁵⁸ We will not discuss this further.’ (opening paragraph)

268. Esther. ‘Dem ondenk fun dekabr-ufshtand [In Memory of the December Uprising].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 280, 22 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article commemorates the seventeenth anniversary of the Moscow Uprising in December 1905. It outlines the events of that time, which were merely a precursor to the events of 1917, and the contemporary revolutionary political activity. Its tone becomes impassioned. ☹

‘In rivers of blood the Moscow Uprising was drowned, and rivers of champagne were spilt by the generals, manufacturers and merchants celebrating their victory and believing that for generations the terrorised worker will warn his children and his childrens’ children not to make uprisings.’ (2; col. 2, par. 2)

⁶⁵⁷ The competition is explained in a later article, **278**.

⁶⁵⁸ Treaty of Sèvres – forerunner to the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. Signed by Allied and Central Powers, partitioning the Ottoman Empire, on 10 August 1920. This Greco-Turkish War (1919-22) concerned Ottoman territory allocated to Greece during the partitioning.

269. Esther. 'Di, vos boygt zikh nit [The One That Does Not Bow Down].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 283, 26 Dec. 1922, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article takes as its theme Kamenev's comment at the 10th Party Congress, about the Soviet republic not bowing its head.⁶⁵⁹ Despite the immense suffering since the revolution, which scared the foreign bourgeoisie, we form a strong, united front at international conferences, since we have the political and moral upper hand. Kamenev quoted Keynes about Russia's unexpected financial stability, which is not at all unexpected according to 'the laws of revolutionary Marxism, the Toyre of the struggling proletariat'. 🐦

'The three-thousand-strong mass of workers, peasants and Red Army soldiers sensed that this short phrase encapsulates our five years of sacrifices and struggle, suffering and sorrow, and that we can already, we may already say this: we are proud and strong. We bow down to nobody.' (col. 1, par. 3)

270. Esther. 'Opgerisene nay-yor-gedanken [Assorted New Year's Thoughts].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 288, 31 Dec. 1922, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article muses about the new year. It likens the working class and the bourgeoisie to two trains, racing along the track of history, with two corresponding attitudes, one enthusiastic like wedding guests and the other tired. We are not yet celebrating but are still dirty from toil, and more rivers of blood will flow. Only future generations will attend the wedding, but in Russia everyone looks young because we are 'the new humanity' looking forward to the 'eternal simkhe of humanity'.⁶⁶⁰ 🐦

'How many unborn souls? How many trampled flowers! How many broken and killed! What a long path of suffering and pain, of searching and disappointments! What a dense fog of false hopes and dreams! An old, tired humanity? An old, tired world?' (2; col. 1, par. 4-5)

1923

271. M. Frumkina (Ester). *Spasayte detey [Save the Children]*. TsK Posledgol VTsIK Glavpolitprosvet, 'Novaya Moskva', Moscow, 1923. 20 pages. (Russian)

⁶⁵⁹ Lev Borisovich Rozenfel'd (Kamenev), senior Soviet government official (1883-1936). The 10th Congress of the RCP took place in Moscow between 8-16 March 1921.

Attributed by Falkovich.⁶⁶¹ Copy from NLR.

This is a small book. Its title page bears two images, a biblical crown of thorns, and a circular print depicting a naked, emaciated and unkempt child, with the corpse of a smaller child nearby, while a pair of adult's bare forearms with palms outstretched extend in a position of helplessness and supplication. The book was published by the state Commission for Battling the Consequences of Famine.⁶⁶² Employing statistics, it reveals the terrible situation of homeless, exploited or neglected children in the USSR, and urges readers to help them. Their homelessness was caused by capitalism and the civil war. Famine affected millions of children, vast numbers perished and many left their homes out of hunger and fear of being alone. Halting the famine was a great victory of 'fraternal solidarity' between diverse groups and aid from workers in capitalist countries. Food aid will still be needed in the coming spring. Many homeless children resort to prostitution, selling cocaine and theft, and may become a generation of criminals. Concerning children who are no longer homeless, readers are addressed directly and official information is provided about insufficiencies in institutions. Despite such shortfalls, living there is better than living on the street, and not all children commit crimes. White Guards and Mensheviks say that the Bolsheviks caused this disaster, but the peasants and workers know that the blame lies with the foreign capitalists who always attacked the workers' republic, and that the Soviet government has always done everything possible 'and even impossible' to save these children.⁶⁶³ The suffering caused by the capitalists must only encourage struggle to annihilate capitalism. The work for children continues and foreign organisations continue to help, but the problem outweighs current efforts. All workers must strive heroically in this battle, always remembering these children and their deceased parents who 'paved with their bodies the path of labour that leads humanity to its emancipation'. The entire country must assume responsibility for homeless children, and for improving childrens' institutions. Readers are addressed directly about efforts required of them. Even capitalist governments acknowledge the merits of Soviet infant welfare services, but more are needed. The work, which cannot succeed completely while the rest of the world remains controlled by capital, will require increased state resources, so even work in industry and finance is work to save the children. Even in its ravaged condition, the Soviet republic has done vastly more for the children of workers than 'wealthy and

⁶⁶⁰ Simkhe – happy occasion such as a wedding.

⁶⁶¹ Falkovich, no. 83.

⁶⁶² Falkovich mentions Esther's work with the 'committee to aid the hungry' in 1922-23 (ibid.).

⁶⁶³ White Guards – anticommunist forces which strove to restore the tsarist monarchy.

cultured' Western countries. Even bourgeois foreigners are delighted to see the columns of children from institutions at proletarian festivals and admit they have nothing similar. We simply need to do more. A final rousing call urges readers to save the children, to enable them to grow up to become good citizens and brave fighters who will avenge the wrongs wrought upon them by the capitalists. ☺

'May those who survive their suffering respond with unquenchable and burning hatred for the workers' enemies. May there emerge from among them terrible avengers against the capitalist order for the deaths of their fathers, brothers, sisters, for their dispersal and torment, for everything that tested their young bodies and souls along their sorrowful journey of life. Let each one of them become a grave-digger of that accursed capitalist order which causes mendicancy, prostitution, child homelessness and other such scourges of humanity, and may they become leading fighters for our victory! Save the children!' (concluding paragraphs)

272. M. Frumkina (Ester). *Doloy ravvinov! (Ocherk anti-religioznoy bor'by sredi yevreyskikh mass) [Down With the Rabbis! (An Outline of the Antireligious War among the Jewish Masses)]*. 1st ed., 'Krasnaya Nov'', Moscow, 1923. 56 pages. (Russian)

Attributed by Z. Reisen.⁶⁶⁴ Copy from YIVO Institute.

This fairly small book concerns the Yevseksiya's efforts against Jewish religious institutions. It seeks to combat antisemitism by reassuring the Russian masses that the Soviet government is making as much effort to combat Jewish religiosity as Russian Orthodoxy. Bentsion Katz writes that although the book is 'hysterical, pathological' it is clearly written with love for the Jewish people.⁶⁶⁵ Liesin compares its aims with the story of Mesha, King of Moab, who gave up his son for a sacrifice to assuage divine wrath.⁶⁶⁶ Both note Esther's readiness to sacrifice the lives of rabbis to achieve her purpose. Their suggestions correspond with Esther's own explanation for her determined work against Jewish religious institutions, namely, less thorough effort in the Jewish sphere will give a bad impression.⁶⁶⁷ While Liesin maintains in his memoirs that this antireligious work reveals Esther's true concern for the Jewish people, his article disapproves of it, as does the reviewer R., who sees the book as an expression of

⁶⁶⁴ Z. Reisen 144.

⁶⁶⁵ B. Katz, 'Di sore-bas-toyvim.'

⁶⁶⁶ 2 Kings 3:27. Abraham Valt (Liesin), 'Di minsker rabonim un esther frumkin,' 11 pages, manuscript in Papers of Abraham Liessin (1872-1938), YIVO Institute archives, Folder 1229, RG 201.

‘social and moral depravity’.⁶⁶⁸ The book’s cover features an angular print in red and black. Large, bold, modern lettering contrasts with a more delicate, old-fashioned depiction of an old, grey-bearded rabbi glancing worriedly out at the reader as he hurries out of his crumbling classical temple with his arms full of religious paraphernalia. The temple and the word ‘Rabbis’ are being struck and destroyed by a dramatic flash of lightning emitting from the word ‘Down’. The book is divided into seven numbered sections. **Section I** (3-4) provides an introduction. The ‘backward masses’ believe that the state attacks Orthodoxy but not Judaism, that the faiths have ‘changed places’, with Judaism now triumphant over Orthodoxy. Counter-revolutionaries exploit this misconception. This book will satisfy Russian readers that ‘both antireligious propaganda and the battle with the influence of the clergy’ are just as energetic in the Jewish sphere. **Section II** (5-11) explains that religion has played as important a part in Jewish history as in Russian history, because oppression of Jews, who have always been used by the church and ruling classes to provoke fanaticism among the masses, strengthened ‘religious and national fanaticism’ among the Jews themselves. There was also class oppression among Jews. All of this oppression distanced Jewish from non-Jewish workers. The revolutions put an end to the oppression, isolation, and religious fanaticism. But Jewish spirituality and the Jewish bourgeoisie still influence the working masses. Advanced Jewish workers must combat this. This struggle is difficult and ‘sometimes even dangerous’, but it will succeed. **Section III** (11-24) informs Russian readers about traditions surrounding the Jewish High Holy Days, and describes some antireligious activities.⁶⁶⁹ The traditional expectation of violent divine retribution for sinful behaviour is paralleled with the violent reality of modern-day pogroms. Comments here, relating to the unforgettable experience of a Yonkiper service, are evidence for Zvi Gitelman, who calls them a ‘somewhat sympathetic discussion’, that Esther sincerely believed that the Yevseksiya’s antireligious activity would benefit Jews.⁶⁷⁰ Examples show Jewish youth brazenly ignoring holiday services in favour of productive work or antireligious demonstrations. These ‘joyful, vibrant children of the revolution’ want to dispel the harmful effects of religion on the masses. Some of their activities are met by religious

⁶⁶⁷ Esther made this explanation to Boris Bogen, who recorded it in his book *Born a Jew*, Macmillan, New York, 1930, 329. There is a passage to the same effect in *Doloy ravvinov!* (4), which is cited in Bernard Maza, *With Fury Poured Out: The Power of the Powerless During the Holocaust*, Shapolsky Publishers, New York, 1989, 68.

⁶⁶⁸ Abraham Valt (Liesin), *Geklibene verk*, reprinted in *Minsk, ir va-em*, vol. 1, 256. R., ‘I. Frumkina (Esther): “Doloy Ravvinov”, Izdatel’stvo “Krasnaya nov”’, Moskva, 1923,’ *Dos fraye vort* [Berlin], 1, Mar. 1923, 33-35.

⁶⁶⁹ A description in this section of a communist demonstration which disrupts a Yonkiper service in Minsk is cited by Bernard Maza (68-69).

⁶⁷⁰ Gitelman 310.

opposition, sometimes violent, but ineffective since ‘the gloom of religion has no greater enemy than joyous laughter and merriment’. Other activities include large-scale communal meals on traditional fast days, and political trials of ‘God, religious festivals, komsomols who attended synagogue or fasted, etc’.⁶⁷¹ **Section IV** (24-41) concerns the battle with Jewish schools. Jews try to retain old traditions in this domain too. In kheyders, the learning materials are ‘either in Biblical Hebrew or Aramaic’, dead languages, and the teachers are usually ignorant people whose only teaching method is physical violence. Lessons take place in deplorable conditions, for long hours, while pupils as young as three ‘sit and rock over the Bible and the Talmud, repeating after the melamed a translation of an incomprehensible, foreign, distant, convoluted, theological text’.⁶⁷² At yeshives, teaching involves esoteric debates over talmudic topics. The pupils, ‘half-starved and dirty’, devote themselves to studying ‘lifeless, paralysed dogma’ and ‘become corrupted by the paltry philanthropy’. Yeshives following the musar system are particularly harmful.⁶⁷³ Their disdain for work is ‘deeply reactionary and antisocial’. A talmetoyre is a kheyder for the poorest children and orphans. The location of kheyders in private homes hinders their conversion into secular schools. Wars and pogroms are a further obstacle. The trial of a kheyder in Gomel’ in January 1921, ending in a death sentence, is recounted in detail. An attempt to sing ‘the Zionist hymn “Our Hope is Not Yet Lost”’ is drowned out by the ‘Internationale’ and thus ‘Hope is lost. Lost once and forever’.⁶⁷⁴ This trial inspires a larger-scale official campaign against the kheyder. Among its activities are conferences which vote to eradicate kheyders.⁶⁷⁵ Melameds appeal against one such decision, and ‘give the brave female delegates no peace’. One kheyder attached to a factory is replaced by a Soviet school with instruction in Yiddish. Overall, the Jewish petite bourgeoisie does not accept the antireligious work. NEP-men and foreign bourgeois fund religious activities. Jewish communists battling clericalism face a ‘united clerical organisation which is supported by all antisoviet elements, even secular ones like Zionists and Mensheviks’. Rabbi Borishansky of Gomel’ encourages open protest against the campaign and is arrested for this ‘persecution of Soviet authority’. Kheyder supporters attempt to use “legal opportunities” to plead their case, including writing to the government, and

⁶⁷¹ Komsomol – Communist Youth League, or a member of the league.

⁶⁷² Talmud – important text containing rabbinical discussions about Jewish law.

⁶⁷³ The Musar religious movement emphasised the importance of personal behaviour, promoting self-examination primarily through meditation and study. Rabbi Yisroel Salanter (1810-83) is held to be the movement’s founder.

⁶⁷⁴ “Our Hope is Not Yet Lost” – presumably ‘Ha-tikvah’, now the national anthem of Israel.

⁶⁷⁵ The conferences’ view on the harmful nature of kheyders, as expressed here, is summarised in Leonid Smilovitsky, ‘Shkola na idish v pervye desyatiletiya sovetskoy vlasti v Belorussii, 1921-1941 gg.’, *Novaya yevreyskaya shkola* [St. Petersburg], no. 11, 2002, n15.

rabbis in Vilna fast. Amid protests from abroad, Maxim Gorky speaks out against the selfless efforts of the Jewish communists.⁶⁷⁶ The battle against the yeshives is particularly difficult because pupils are willing to die for their yeshive. One successful method involves infiltration of yeshives by communist youth who manage to ‘transfer them to productive labour’. Closed yeshives and kheyders relocate or ‘go underground’ but offending melameds and rabbis are sent to concentration camps. Outcries in the foreign press do not embarrass Soviet power, as the death of kheyders and yeshives is the will of the Jewish workers and the entire Russian proletariat. **Section v** (41-49) discusses the day of rest and the official removal of valuables from places of worship. It provides information about the Jewish Sabbath, to explain the issues behind Jewish refusal to work on Saturdays and the establishment of a uniform day of rest for all workers. Having separate days of rest is harmful. Workers and schools are proving amenable to the transfer of the rest-day to Sunday. A strain of workers ‘of varied origin’ is resisting the change. Concerning the question of why few valuables were found in synagogues during the official removal of valuables from places of worship, some of the reasons are historical. Also, synagogue valuables had previously been stolen during wars and pogroms. Officials who try to hide valuables are arrested and tried, Jewish clerics no less than priests. The trials are often conducted in Yiddish. Their large audiences are influenced positively by seeing the authority of the “righteous ones” undermined. The trial of the Minsk rabbi Kapelevich, in August 1921, followed a medieval-style sequence of events ending in violence. The trial made the “teachers” look like ‘wretched night birds caught in the clear light of day’. Zionists intimidate the victims but the proletarian court reveals the truth, and the guilty are sent to concentration camps. Word of this trial spread around the former Pale, gladdening the workers. **Section vi** (49-54) relates in detail the incident which ‘made the most noise in the foreign press’, the Yevseksiya’s ‘occupation’ of several synagogues in Vitebsk for use as cultural institutions and children’s housing. Permission for this occupation was granted by the Jewish Commissariat after several requests in the midst of a severe and growing housing crisis. There was resistance from the congregations until armed units were brought in. Inclusion of the names of the government agencies involved in this matter seems intended to justify the decision. **Section vii** (54-6) explains that this book only gives a meagre account of the antireligious battle. Centuries of oppression have bound Jews to religion, but the revolution loosened those bonds and Jewish workers are

⁶⁷⁶ Maksim Gor’kiy, pseudonym of Aleksey Maksimovich Peshkov, leading Soviet author, political activist (1868-1936). Zvi Gitelman includes a quotation from this section (40) in his discussion of Gorky’s comments (298n180).

freeing themselves of the ‘religious drug’. ‘They want to build the kingdom of God on Earth and not in heaven, and not on their “Jewish street” but together with workers of all languages and nations’. Where prayers were once heard, the new song, its two lines repeated from Section III, now calls for the downfall of the rabbis and priests. ‘With this cheerful cry, sung by our komsomols, we will conclude this book too’. ❧

‘A Soviet party school was set up in the synagogue building. Now, workers’ meetings, lectures and concerts are held there. Where the nationalist formula of the faithful, “Hear O Israel, the Lord is our god, the Lord is one”, could once be heard, now resounds the cry of the international proletariat, “Proletarians of all nations, unite!”⁶⁷⁷ Where, for centuries, doleful, obfuscating and disheartening ancient religious melodies were sung, the military strains of the ‘Internationale’ now resound. Where generation upon generation were stupefied by the opium that is religion, revolutionary youth now forge a new life, learning the truth of Marxism.

Naturally, complaints and deputations flew to Moscow. Naturally, an unprecedented level of persecution erupted in the bourgeois press. But it was all without success. The synagogues remained in the hands of the proletariat. And they never will return to the control of the obscurantists and fanatics.’ (53; par. 3 - 54; par. 2)

273. M. Frumkina (Ester). *Doloy ravvinov! (Ocherk antireligioznoy bor’by sredi yevreyskikh mass)* [Down With the Rabbis! (An Outline of the Antireligious War among the Jewish Masses)]. 2nd ed., ‘Krasnaya Nov’’, Moscow, 1923. 44 pages. (Russian)

Not sighted. Attributed by NLR.

274. Ester. ‘Vi azoy mir hobn amol gelernt marksizm [How We Once Studied Marxism].’ *Libknekhts-dor* [Kharkov], edited by Dovid Monin, no. 1, Jan. 1923, pp. 18-19 (Yiddish)

Attributed by Gitelman.⁶⁷⁸ Copy from YIVO Institute.

This magazine article tells young workers how their predecessors lived in tsarist times, often addressing readers directly. Today’s youth would think those old days were terrible and would find it hard to believe the conditions in which Marxism was studied. A letter from a girl who was a confectionary worker reveals the terrible conditions in which girls and children worked ‘like work-horses, like machines’. Information from a

⁶⁷⁷ “Hear O Israel...” – first words of the Shema, also mentioned in *Tsu der frage*, Section I, Part 5 (147).

⁶⁷⁸ Gitelman 29-30.

locksmith about similarly poor conditions shows that modern conditions are a ganeydn. An educational circle among female workers is recalled personally. Late at night, the already-exhausted women would pay such close attention that they would forget that afterwards there would be a long walk home in deep snow or mud to angry parents and then an early start the next morning for work. These students took great delight in opportunities for learning. Their mothers complained that they were attracted to it “like magnets”.⁶⁷⁹ Possession of a socialist book could lead to months in prison or years in Siberia, not to mention torturous police interrogation about the source of the book. Some comrades were even hanged in connection with such material. But a young worker would stay ‘resolute and proud’ before his tormentor, and tolerate his long prison term better than ‘the tsarist dogs’ expected. For young activists, prison was like a political school where they could encounter experienced comrades and even party leaders, and prisoners would manage to circulate useful books among the cells. Free comrades would risk bringing illegal literature into the prison. Prisoners threw themselves onto new books and fought for contact with prisoners in other cells, in order to study together. They would endure great torments for the right to receive books, paper and ink. Years of struggle and many thousands of deaths led to today’s freedom to live and learn. Young readers are encouraged to compare their own freedom with the difficulties experienced by their ‘elder brothers’, and are challenged to be as bold and resolute as those predecessors who were the ‘builders of the new future’. ❧

‘Young comrades! When you, with the opportunities you now possess, spread that holy fire, that love, that passion for studying Marxism, [consider] that self-sacrifice which your elder brothers invested in their study while weary, in pain, hungry, under the rule of capital and its servants, in underground circles, in captivity!

What do you think, what mighty, great, illustrious builders of the new future, what invincible fighters would have emerged from among you all? Which enemy in the world would you have been able to overcome, which obstacle would you have been able to remove! Go on, dare yourselves!’ (concluding paragraphs)

275. M. Frumkina. ‘Kommunisticheskiy Universitet Natsional’nykh Men’shinstv Zapada [The Communist University of National Minorities of the West].’ *Zhizn’ natsional’nostey*, no. 1, Jan. 1923 (Russian)

⁶⁷⁹ A translation of this part of the article is reproduced in *Jewish Nationality and Soviet Politics*, and part of that extract appears in Shepherd 144; Bemporad, ‘Issues of Gender’; Gitelman, *A Century of Ambivalence*, 17; and Ruthchild, ‘Bringing the Revolution,’ 181. Its first part, depicting the rapt enthusiasm of the students, recalls a similar passage in ‘Dos shtedtel,’ 1917 (191).

Not sighted. Attributed by Julia Köstenberger.⁶⁸⁰

276. article criticising Vladimir Medem shortly after his death

Not sighted. Attributed by Henryk Ehrlich.⁶⁸¹

277. Esther. ‘Nokh amol vegn di volost-konferentsn [Concerning the Volost Conferences Again].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 13, 19 Jan. 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns the need to attract the interest of Jewish workers to their local volost conferences and related women’s conferences. ☞

‘It is not at all important whether one of us tackles Jewish work or general. Comrades who work in the professional movement, the financial and taxation spheres, the cooperatives, education, agitprop and the party cells can all find means and ways to approach the masses in the process of their daily “general” work.’ (col. 4, par. 1)

278. Esther. ‘Di konkurs fun di royte direktorn [The Competition of the Red Directors].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 26, 6 Feb. 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article evaluates the competition announced previously.⁶⁸² The competition showed that the republic has achieved much despite its ordeals. It also led workers to broaden their view of the operation of their factory. Readers are requested to send in current and historical information about their factory for publication. ☞

‘[The competition] showed how, in impossibly difficult conditions, with an economic disaster inherited from tsarism, from imperialist war, and from civil war, the daily web of our economic construction began to weave again. It showed the fonts of joie de vivre, creative impetus and energy that the working class tapped into when it took the dictatorship into its hands.’ (col. 1, par. 3)

279. Esther. ‘Proletarishe kaboles-ponem (Eyndrikn) [Proletarian Welcome (Impressions)].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 62, 21 Mar. 1923, p. 3 (Yiddish)
Copy from NYPL.

⁶⁸⁰ Köstenberger 253n22.

⁶⁸¹ Henryk Ehrlich, ‘Esther Frumkin,’ *Naye folkstsaytung* [Warsaw], no. 283, 3 Dec. 1930, reprinted in *Der veker* [New York], 27 Dec. 1930, 10-11. Vladimir Medem died on 9 January 1923.

⁶⁸² See **265**.

This medium-length newspaper article relates the warm welcome received in Moscow by a group of Polish communists released from prison, led by Comrade Dąbal.⁶⁸³ At a ceremony presided over by Comrade Marchlewski, Esther is among the speakers, representing the Yevseksiya and CUNMW.⁶⁸⁴ She travels with the group to the Kremlin, where they pay respects at Sverdlov's grave.⁶⁸⁵ ☞

'The comrades are taken to a hotel which is expecting them. There they will rest up from their journey. They are touched, happy, invigorated, and refreshed in the wave of affection and warmth, revolutionary courage, and revolutionary faith which surrounds them. Welcome to Soviet Russia, dear comrades!' (concluding paragraphs)

280. 'Kinder-kempfer: Zikhroynes fun a mol [Child Fighters: Memories of Times Gone By].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 1, Apr. 1923, pp. 13-14 (Yiddish)

Not sighted.⁶⁸⁶ Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

281. 'Af lenins veg [In Lenin's Footsteps].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 2-3, May-June 1923, p. 36 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

282. Esther. 'Batsit zikh ernst [Take a Serious Attitude].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 154, 13 July 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article concerns candidacy for enrolment at CUNMW. It particularly focuses on the Yiddish sector, whose graduates, trained for the former Pale, will fill a wide range of administrative roles among the international masses. Candidates must have a profession, be of proletarian or peasant origin, be party members, be healthy, and not bring their wives. Nominations for candidacy must be serious. ☞
'On no account must we be sent comrades simply because they have nowhere to live. That is simply a scandal. We are not a homeless shelter, and comrades who treat us so diminish the prestige of the Yiddish sector and of the entire university.' (col. 2, par. 5)

⁶⁸³ Tomasz Dąbal, Sejm deputy extradited after joining the Polish Communist Party (1890-1937).

⁶⁸⁴ Julian Balthazar Marchlewski [Rn. Yulian Yuzefovich Markhlevskiy], prominent Polish communist, economist, author, rector of CUNMW from its foundation until his demise (1866-1925).

⁶⁸⁵ Yakov Mikhaylovich Sverdlov, senior Soviet government official (1885-1919).

⁶⁸⁶ Shmeruk (356) provides publication details for *Yung-vald*, 'a periodical for young workers': Oysgabe fun tsestral-komitet fun ruslendishn komunistishn yugnt-farband, Tsestral-byuro fun yidishe sektsyes, May-June 1923. Gorbunov dates Esther's participation from 1924. The magazine is advertised in the last pages of *Gey mit lenins veg!* 1925, **306**.

283. Esther. ““Emes-Veker-Kampan” [“Emes Veker Campaign”].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 155, 14 July 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article urges Jewish workers to keep up with Latvian comrades who are building their own airplane to be used in a future war. The Jewish plane should be called “Emes Veker Campaign”. The growing air forces of capitalist countries are a great threat to Russia, we must develop our own “aviaculture” to be ready for an enemy attack. Gathering funding for our plane will take three months, each region and colony can contribute a certain amount, for example, from fines imposed for lateness to meetings. Jewish workers were slow to support the Bolsheviks, let us not be slow now. 🍷

‘Jewish workers naturally participate and must participate most actively in all meetings concerning the air force held by associations, party or union organisations, local newspapers, factories, etc. But, as a drunkard uses every opportunity to make another lekham, so must a worker use every opportunity to do something more for the red air force.’⁶⁸⁷ (col. 2, par. 2)

284. Esther. ‘Nayer lebns-shtayger I. [New Lifestyle I.].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 187, 27 Aug. 1923, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long article, the first in a series, argues that a comment in Trotsky’s *Questions of Lifestyle*, that workers’ swift acceptance of revolutionary principles relates to cultural vacuity, applies more to Russian than to Jewish workers, whose culture was petit-bourgeois yet abundant.⁶⁸⁸ It outlines features of the old Jewish culture and experience, calling for greater unity between the two nations and careful research to determine whether the Jewish workers’ slow path to October eased ‘construction’ for them after October, and to answer other interesting questions. 🍷

‘The universal rest was observed very strictly. That was also a great cultural custom. The Jewish workers were not generally drunkards. There was no festival or simkhe without a “little tipple”, but this was far from drunkenness.’ (col. 4, par. 2)

285. Alef.-R. ‘A nitsokhn fun komintern [A Victory for the Comintern].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 195, 1 Sept. 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)

⁶⁸⁷ Make a lekham – make a toast.

⁶⁸⁸ *Questions of Lifestyle* (also, for example, *Problems of Everyday Life*) [*Voprosy byta*], 1923.

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article concerns the English government's acceptance of Rakovsky as Soviet ambassador.⁶⁸⁹ Clearly, the world can no longer ignore the Soviet Union or isolate it with a "sanitary cordon". ☞

'Comrade Rakovsky [is not permitted to engage in revolutionary activity in England but] has other tasks. He must establish and broaden our public relations with that segment of the English bourgeoisie that has already decided that it is necessary to have relations with the Soviet Union, that feels that it cannot cope without the Soviet Union, and that believes that business is business and although the Bolsheviks are treyf, their gold, their grain, their wood and their flax are kosher.' (col. 1, par. 4)

286. Esther. 'Di yontoyvim fun der tsukunft [The Festivals of the Future].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 196, 2 Sept. 1923, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article predicts that in the future, when there is no more conflict and revolution is a 'historical word', there will still be joyous festivals.

Revolutionary festivals will be transformed into new celebrations. Youth Day must be the most beloved festival because it will endure the longest. ☞

'There will come a time when the last sword will be made into a sickle, the last gun will be put into a historical museum, and the last airplane will have the last bomb-carriage removed and the engine converted for a peaceful passenger ship.' (opening paragraph)

287. Esther. 'Avade shikn! [By All Means Send Them!].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 200, 7 Sept. 1923, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article supports sending girls to train as metalworkers. The same counter-arguments could be, but are not, made about Jews. Let us create a new, unprejudiced work culture. Training women is crucial, professionals must assert this. ☞

'Not only should women not be prevented from training in metal schools, but on the contrary, there should be a campaign to increase their enrolment.... Qualification of women's work, according to the latest theses of the CC of the RCP for Women's Day, is the most important means of combatting unemployment and prostitution. It is also the crucial factor in building the new lifestyle.' (3; col. 3, par. 3)

- 288.** Esther. 'Zibeter noyabr in tiflis [7 November in Tiflis].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 201, 8 Sept. 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article looks ahead to a significant meeting to establish the state's national policy, on the sixth anniversary of the October Revolution. ☞

'And the workers' and peasants' deputies from across the Soviet Union, particularly the Russians, will devise there, in its full magnitude, the national policy of our party, and bring that conception home to the broad masses. And many new threads will be entwined in the golden web of international unity that is woven between the nations of the great state, that has adorned with such splendid blooms the revolutionary battles, the revolutionary construction, of millions.' (col. 2, par. 6)

- 289.** Esther. 'Nayer lebns-shtayger II. [New Lifestyle II.].' *Der emes* [Moscow] (Yiddish)

Not sighted.

- 290.** Esther. 'Nayer lebns-shtayger III. [New Lifestyle III.].' *Der emes* [Moscow] (Yiddish)

Not sighted.

- 291.** Esther. 'Nayer lebns-shtayger IV. [New Lifestyle IV.].' *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 203, 11 Sept. 1923, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article, the fourth in a series, discusses the collective nature of the future communist lifestyle. Individualism still exists, even in conscious workers.

This becomes evident when a healthy worker denies his seat to a pregnant woman.

Some fraternal and moral feelings will only be possible in the future, when struggle has ended. Class, with the RCP as its vanguard, is a bridge between the present and that future. It can overcome individualism. ☞

'Let us consider, for example, the ability to shed blood, revolutionary militarism. It is clear that in future humans, the ability to kill one another will certainly disappear; that the future man will be horrified to imagine how men used to kill other men. But if a worker now, amid the storm of civil war, positioned himself against bloodshed, against the red terror, against revolutionary armies, professing adherence to our ideal of

⁶⁸⁹ Christian Rakovsky (Cristian Racovski), medical doctor, prominent Soviet official (1873-1941).

fraternity, this would mean that that worker was only defending the interests of the bourgeoisie and of the counterrevolution.’ (col. 4, par. 4)

- 292.** Esther. ‘A proyekt fun fareynfakhn dem gubaparat [A Proposal to Simplify the Gubernia Apparatus].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 214, 23 Sept. 1923, p. 1 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article outlines the simplification measures proposed by Comrade Saprnov.⁶⁹⁰ It is an obligation to interest the workers in such matters, and the response of the local executive committees must be determined. ☞

‘Each conscious worker and toiler must understand what an important question this is, both Comrade Lenin in his winter articles and the 12th Congress of our party have determined as one of the central tasks the simplification of the entire state apparatus.’ (col. 1, par. 2)

- 293.** Alef. R. ‘Tsu der frage vegn a idish bukh far idishe arbeter [On the Question of a Jewish Book for Jewish Workers].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 282, 13 Dec. 1923, p. 2 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This medium-length newspaper article concerns publication and sale of Yiddish books. A publishing cooperative must be founded and books distributed through Marxist reading groups, etc. Whether the cooperative could publish non-Marxist material is still under discussion, as is general approval of the cooperative. Time is short. ☞

‘The general sales crisis from which all industry is suffering has affected the book market to an even greater degree. For most publishers, business is not as good as it may seem.... But this absolutely does not reduce the importance of the task of giving Jewish workers a book in Yiddish. Jewish workers have arguably become used to not reading Yiddish books. And this means not reading at all...’ (col. 1, par. 2).

1924

- 294.** Ester. ‘Vegn di noentste afgangn un dem inhalt fun der arbet fun di idseksyes [On Future Tasks and the Content of the Work of the Jewish Sections].’ *A yor*

⁶⁹⁰ Timofey Vladimirovich Saprnov, senior Soviet government official, later headed an ultra-left group within the Opposition (1887-1937).

arbet fun der ruslender komunistisher partey in der idisher svive, Moscow, 1924
(Yiddish)

Sighted in part. Attributed by Schulman.⁶⁹¹

This report assesses work in the sphere of Jewish schooling and makes recommendations. It complains that ‘the Jewish sections often neglected all work in favor of work for the Yiddish school’.⁶⁹²

‘It is necessary to work systematically to see that the Jewish workers and toilers should participate actively in the building of the Yiddish school, to popularize the principles of proletarian education through lectures, exhibits and by calling, often, meetings of the parents.’ (36)

‘It is necessary at the same time to be on the lookout for the emergence of nationalistic, Yiddishist deviations, and not to permit ideologies which are foreign to the proletariat in the Yiddish school.’ (40ff)

295. Ester. Foreword. *Fun yene yorn: Kleyn-bund [About Those Years: The Little Bund]*, by Yankl Levin, Beltrespetshtat, Minsk, 1924, pp. 3-9 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This foreword to a memoir about the Kleyn-bund notes that the book was written for a young audience, and it is clear from its moderate tone and explanations of certain terms that the foreword too anticipates young readers.⁶⁹³ It uses evocative language in places to convey its political messages, expressing approval of the book’s sincerity and its realistic portrayal of the Jewish labour movement with all its merits and flaws. The book’s impoverished rural setting is caused to ‘appear before our eyes like an embodiment of the entire former Jewish Pale’, and the ‘chemical still’ which caused the Jewish labour movement to emerge here is revealed. The movement’s merit was its popular nature. Its fault, which resulted from development in the class-mixed Pale, lay in not clearly demarcating ‘the purely proletarian from the popular, the class from the people, from its lowest strata’. Explanations for the involvement of petit-bourgeois Jewish intellectuals in revolutionary activity focus on the situation of educated youth who found themselves confined to the Pale with limited opportunities despite their qualifications. The book brings to life these class issues, and the economic backwardness of their milieu, in particular concerning economic terror.⁶⁹⁴ The book’s

⁶⁹¹ Schulman 86. The quoted extracts are from this English-language source.

⁶⁹² 33, qtd. in Schulman 86.

⁶⁹³ The book is cited in Jacobs, *Bundist Counterculture*, 33-34.

⁶⁹⁴ Economic terror – violence and damage aimed at obtaining improvements to economic conditions by force.

best quality is its vivid, accurate portrayal of the Jewish proletarian child of the former Pale. Now, just like the Pale and the slavery which engendered them, ‘vacillations and errors’ are in the past, as the Jewish worker ‘has found his true place’ in the RCP.

Today’s youth organisation is the Komsomol, which unites Russian and Jewish children. Soon, squalid villages too will no longer exist in the same form, their streets will be paved and lit by electricity. But the young people who raised the banner of struggle in those streets will not be forgotten. 🌀

‘Comrade Yankl Levin describes things as they were.... We see the sources of all the vacillations and errors, and we see also the sources of the boundless revolutionary courage.

And above all, we see for ourselves, as if alive, the beloved form of the Jewish proletarian child. The pale, lean, Jewish, workers’ children from the former Pale, who grew up in the mud of the streets, hungry, naked and barefoot, but brave, cheerful, merry and playful, who played at revolution and spilt their young blood for it, who stood face to face with the dark authorities and were not afraid of their knouts and bullets, who would throw themselves with pursed lips upon a source of Marxist knowledge, ponder for minutes over a flowering plant or over the movement of the distant stars and at the same time stand in the foremost ranks of the proletarian struggle. These forms are sketched for us by one of them, Comrade Yankl, with simple, uncontrived, but unforgettable strokes. A proletarian heart could not but quiver with love and admiration on recognising those forms.’ (7; par. 6 - 8, par. 3)

296. Ester. ‘Af di shpizn [On Lances].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 5, Jan. 1924, p. 91 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from NLI.

This is the text of a song set to music by Y. Shvedov.⁶⁹⁵ It is a tuneful Soviet march for workers’ children, on the theme of Soviet workers crushing capitalism.

297. Esther. ‘Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul [On the Way to the New School].’ *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 1, Farlag ‘Kultur-lige’, Jan. 1924, pp. 3-6 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from NYPL.

This article introduces a new journal, modelled on the Russian journal with an equivalent name, about building a new, Soviet, Jewish, school system.⁶⁹⁶ In addition to

explaining the journal's aims, it encourages teachers in their 'merciless struggle' in this time of transition and emphasises the need for a communist line in their work. The new school, which will differ from the existing new school, can only be created after the workers' final global victory. Whereas the old school subdued its pupils, the new school will empower them, so authoritarian methods will be mercilessly punished. Pupils' independence is paramount, so learning will be a process of exploration in which pupils do not simply absorb learning material [toyre] passively. In teaching them the Marxist view of the world and society, economics and studies connected with 'the revolutionary reality' will have priority. A single 'system of exploration' will be applied to all subjects concerning human life and nature. There are no guidelines to this task and some errors can be expected. This journal aims to fulfil some of the needs of teachers and organisers. It will do the same work as its Russian counterpart, adapted to the Jewish environment. It must be an accurate mirror of our school's activity. Activists out in the field will need to help in this work. We hope that all education workers and other conscious workers interested in education will help, no matter how far away they are. This work is initiated with confidence that its path to the new school is correct and that this journal will prove worthy of its responsible name. ☺

'Not only the golden rays of the coming time but the blood-red fires of today's global battle too cast their light into the windows of our school. We would be dangerous fantasists, not Marxists, if we shaded the windows of our school with shutters so that the glare from the blaze did not scare the children, if we wanted to lull them with a lovely dream of the coming time, withholding from them the terrible suffering and rivers of blood in which that coming time will be born.' (3; col. 2, par. 3 - 4; col. 1, par. 1)

298. Esther. 'Di sistem fun der idisher folks-bildung [The Jewish Primary Education System].' *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 2, Farlag 'Shul un bukh', Feb. 1924, pp. 6-11 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'. Copy from NYPL.

This article outlines some requirements and decisions concerning Jewish education in RSFSR, Ukraine and Belorussia. It contains two numbered sections. **Section I** (6-10) argues that, although Jewish schools must conform to the education policies of their home republic and the concept of a special plan for Jewish education may be a vestige

⁶⁹⁵ Yakov Zakharovich Shvedov, Soviet poet and songwriter (1905-84), usually wrote lyrics and not music.

⁶⁹⁶ The entry about Esther in the *Bol'shaya Sovetskaya Entsiklopediya* of 1935 notes that she took part in producing a periodical called *Na novykh putiakh* [On New Paths], which may refer to *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* or the Russian version.

of national cultural autonomism, it would be erroneous not to coordinate Jewish education across the three republics. Within each republic, the general plan could be adjusted to the particularities of each national minority. While the workers are the segment of the Jewish people that strives for progress, they are still bound to their 'national environment' with its high proportion of chronic unemployed and unsupported. Many expect to work on the land, and Jewish youth are beginning to enter the factories. With time and effort, such new phenomena will 'fertilise' education work. All non-Russian nations had to start building their schools with limited resources. Despite the best efforts at equality, members of a majority have many more opportunities than minorities. The Jewish minority is in a 'particularly unfavourable situation'. Jewish schools, which serve proletarian and poor families, must compete with schools which use the majority's language. The families using the Jewish schools cannot afford to fund them, and those schools also attract minimal public confidence. However, the weakening of russification as a result of ukrainisation and belorussification, along with the successes of the Jewish school, will attract wider strata of the Jewish population to it. It is not necessary to continue ideological work in relation to Jewish nationalism, clericalism and the influence of NEP-men, or to note the particularities of the Jewish child, that 'nervous heir to a thousand years of urban life and national persecution', as each republic's general line should take such features into account. At the last conference of the education commissariats, delegates made progress on developing an adapted, unified primary education system. The unified system needed by Jewish primary education would use the same pedagogical materials and training as the general system. Special textbooks for individual areas would be an unjustifiable luxury, and academic methods would be uniform, while preserving the fullest freedom of cultural creativity. **Section II** (10-11) discusses education-related decisions of the last Folkombild conference. The preferable education system is that approved by the conference. The system will not include Russian-speaking childcare centres for infants, as it damages a child's psyche to hear different languages at daycare and at home. Centres must use the languages of the children's mothers. Jewish childcare centres for infants are just as important a part of the Jewish education system as Jewish kindergartens. Concerning preschools, children should be aged from three to eight years. It is undecided whether Jewish children should learn a second and third language, and whether there should be special groups for seven year-olds. The network of Jewish kindergartens that survived 'the cuts' should be increased. Funding for kindergartens is scarce, parents could help to create primitive kindergartens at least. The first stage of

schooling consists of four years, and a five-year school for national minorities is approved. Teaching a second language must not add extra hours to the school day, as the length of the school day is based on ‘hygiene and psychological considerations’, and ‘nervous, anaemic and agitated’ Jewish children should not be expected to spend more time at school than others. Reducing instruction about nature, production, etc, would be equally harmful. The solution is to lengthen the whole stage. Schools offering only two or three years of instruction are better than no school at all, but every effort must be made to fund four-year schools. It seems that building primary schools of longer duration is preferable to special schools for the second stage. The Jewish teachers of the second stage can only be trained while they work, training other teachers at the same time. Only some four- or five-year schools will develop ‘naturally’ in this way. Not all children can receive ‘the full norms of education’ due to financial restrictions. ☞

‘The Jewish masses live predominantly in industrially backward areas. Where mechanical industry occupies a certain place, the Jews engage in backward sectors, in craftwork and trade. They are now undergoing a large-scale, painful process of adaptation to the new economic conditions. Life is agitated and unsettled. The healthiest part of the people, the workers, who are more than anyone connected with the international norm and who strive for new lifestyles, are simultaneously connected with their national environment, which has an extremely high proportion of luftmenschen who seek but do not find a way out.⁶⁹⁷ There are immensely large numbers of unemployed, lumpenproletarians, pogrom victims, refugees, and orphans.⁶⁹⁸ There are whole villages with only widows and orphans as their male population has been killed.’ (7; col. 1, par. 5 - col. 2, par. 1)

299. Esther. ‘Di sistem fun der idisher folks-bildung [The Jewish Primary Education System].’ *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 3, Farlag ‘Shul un bukh’, Mar. 1924, pp. 10-15 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from NYPL.

This article is divided into four numbered sections, but the numbering and division of the first two sections have been omitted. It continues from the previous article, on the topic of the second stage of education, with particular relevance to the Jewish environment, giving an overview of the education offered in the three republics, authorities and principles supporting it, and related questions under discussion. It does

⁶⁹⁷ Luftmenschen – people without income.

⁶⁹⁸ Lumpenproletarians – people from the lowest stratum of society, such as criminals and vagrants.

not refrain from mentioning failings. Issues discussed include the duration of schooling, a tendency towards agricultural studies and their usefulness in our colonies, orphanages, children's villages [kindershtetlekh], vocational training institutions, providing instruction in Yiddish in separate sectors until completely separate institutions can be created, teacher training secondary schools, the creation of more institutions for preparing Jewish workers for university, the important role of workers' clubs in Jewish life and the future importance of reading rooms, education for adults with little or no literacy, and institutions for political education. ❧

'We must create a special secondary school for preparing instructors for schools for working class youth. In places where there are such schools, it is extremely useful to pose the question of a Jewish section. The Jewish sections in some universities are the origins of the universities that we have. These are all only weak, very weak beginnings. As far as training teachers with higher qualifications is concerned, it is absolutely essential to concentrate all efforts and build at least one of the sections as a real, Jewish division, based on the sectors of the Communist University of the West. The Jewish sector of that university pertains to the political education system, but realistically it is the highest level that our Jewish education work has attained so far. Especially in the social sciences, this sector is, in its programme, its methods and the qualification of its teachers, an actual university.' (14; col. 1, par. 2 - col. 2, par. 1)

300. 'Marksizm un leninizm [Marxism and Leninism].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 6, Mar. 1924, pp. 116-17 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

301. 'Marksizm un leninizm [Marxism and Leninism].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 7, May-June 1924, pp. 149-50 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

302. 'Marksizm un leninizm [Marxism and Leninism].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 8, July-Aug. 1924, pp. 180-81 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

303. 'Marksizm un leninizm [Marxism and Leninism].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 9, Oct. 1924, pp. 204-05 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

304. 'Vos hert zikh in england? [What's New in England?].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 11, Dec. 1924, pp. 256-57 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

305. Ester. article in *Der emes*, no. 279, reprinted in *Af di vegn tsu der nayer shul* [Moscow], no. 8, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Dec. 1924, pp. 45-47 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This issue reports on the First All-Union Jewish Cultural Conference.⁶⁹⁹ Among her conference contributions, Esther participated in debates on social education. Instead of printing her address, the journal reprints this medium-length article, which argues that an adequate school cannot be created in the 'cemetery' environment of the dying shtetl. The significant non-productive element in the shtetl differentiates it from the village, but there is nonetheless a growing productive element, and new sprouts of life must be utilised. The shtetl can become a cultural centre for neighbouring Jewish agricultural collectives. Artisanal production persists in backward regions, allowing 'a field for initiative'. A shtetl which is the administrative centre of a volost can and must also be its cultural centre, the location of the library, electrical station, technical school, agricultural museum, cooperative centre, etc, serving the villages. Achieving this would be a long, but not utopian, task. And the school itself can play a role in the modernisation process. Shtetl communists must focus on conglomeration with the villages because the shtetl's future lies there. ☞

'The shtetl school can be the pioneer of intensive agriculture, the initiator of new artisanal industry. It can play an important role in cultural service for the village. To become a centre for the surrounding village region, to serve it, to be linked with it and manage agricultural, communal and cultural tasks together, these are the prospects for the new shtetl.' (47; par. 4-5)

1925

306. Ester. *Gey mit lenins veg! [Follow in Lenin's Footsteps!]*. Farlag 'Yunge gvardye', Moscow, 1925. 61 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This is a fairly small book for young people. Published in the year following Lenin's death, it aims to foster in its young readers adulation of Lenin and a basic understanding of Marxist principles, employing many quotations from Lenin. It consists of eleven named and numbered chapters. **Chapter I, Everyone Must Know Il'ich's Instructions** (5-6), opens with a recollection of the time of Lenin's death, when each person felt 'a thousand times worse than if their own father had died'. Wishing to do something for Lenin, everyone decided to strive to complete the work he began, by following in his footsteps and fulfilling his instructions. This would keep him all the more with us, guiding us. But, one must know what the instructions are and how to follow them. **Chapter II, Be Loyal to the Working Class** (7-12), explains that the young reader is 'a son' of the working class and must always work for it. Differences between capitalist and Soviet labour are outlined, emphasising the related role of the working class and its revolutionary role. Lenin dedicated his life to 'your class', as teacher, fighter and friend. He said, 'Be ever ready to give up your life to the last drop of blood for the interests of your class'. The struggle before and since October, and future battles, are sketched. Be alert against your class enemies, the bourgeoisie and 'their servants, the Mensheviks, SRs, Zionists, Young Zionists, etc'.⁷⁰⁰ Jewish workers are very susceptible to petit-bourgeois influence. To resist this influence, separate from your parents if necessary. Proletarian discipline requires thinking always of the collective. If something aids the victory of the working class it is a good thing. Something that obstructs that victory is bad. **Chapter III, Learn Leninism** (13-18), emphasises the importance of knowledge of Leninism, which teaches how the working class can destroy capitalism and build communism. Every young worker must study Marxism-Leninism, in order to 'go with open eyes into the great struggle' and become conscious, capable builders of the new world. Marx based his doctrine on 'a firm foundation of human knowledge acquired under capitalism' by the most thorough research. Young people need a general

⁶⁹⁹ This conference was held from 25 November to 2 December 1924.

⁷⁰⁰ Young Zionists (Tseire tsien) – socialist political party established in Poland in 1903.

education, to be able to express their ideas. They need knowledge of natural science, which is the basis for understanding production, avoiding ‘religious darkness’ and comprehending Marx’s doctrine, knowledge of Marx’s theories, and of recent history including revolutionary and Soviet history. ‘In short, everyone should know a great deal’. Lenin always worked and studied hard, trying to solve the question of the exploitation of man by man, and becoming ‘the greatest expert on Marxism and the most highly educated man of his time’. Young workers must follow Lenin’s instruction about studying, and not waste time with dancing, empty chatter, inappropriate films or lazing in bed. Instead of wasting money on tobacco or snacks, they should buy one of Lenin’s books. **Chapter IV, Follow Lenin’s Party** (19-24), explains the importance of supporting the RCP (Bolsheviks). Every young worker must read the Yiddish books about Lenin’s struggle to lead the party and keep it on the true path. Lenin defeated opponents of revolutionary Marxism and was in conflict with Comrade Trotsky until 1917. He built his party for the working class, who gave it their loyalty and love. ‘Iron discipline’ was crucial within the party. Such complaints about party discipline as “the struggle for freedom is like living in a barracks” issue either from enemies of the working class or from deluded people unaware that these are bourgeois ideas of our enemies. You are still too young to join the party, but since it is the leader of your class it is also your leader. You must ‘learn with it, look at it, go after it, follow it’, and accustom yourself to its iron discipline and to the self-sacrifice and loyalty it demands, and do everything possible to assist it. Much ignorance persists, and NEP-men and Zionists influence the masses. Your assistance can involve writing to a newspaper or starting a branch of MOPR.⁷⁰¹ Learn the history of the labour movement in your hometown, about the Kleyn-bund that helped the senior organisation, the 17 Komsomols killed by the Whites in Odessa during the Civil War, and the many children who fought to defend the revolution. Learn about other countries, where young workers courageously fight ‘the black dogs of capital’. Learn from the ‘old, battle-hardened comrades’ how to serve the working class, fight its enemies and build a new world, ‘and prepare yourself for your turn’. **Chapter V, In the Ranks of Lenin’s Komsomol** (25-26), urges readers to join the Komsomol. This organisation gives its members a communist education and helps them to acquire good qualifications, along with other practical benefits. Young workers always held great significance for Lenin. During the war, when most workers had forgotten their fraternal bonds with other nations, Lenin was delighted to find internationalists among the young workers. He was very interested

⁷⁰¹ MOPR – Russian acronym of International Red Aid, which supported communist political prisoners (1922-47).

in the Komsomol organisation, since the younger generation will build communism in the future and will 'see the communist society'. Lenin's instruction to you is to learn how to build communism. Do so amongst the 'best component of the proletarian youth'.

Chapter VI, You Are a Link in Lenin's Chain. Always Be Ready! (26-28), portrays the children's communist organisations as 'a great, iron-strong chain of Lenin's generations'. For the youngest there is the October Children's group, then the Pioneers or Spartacists, then the Komsomol. The children younger than you are Lenin's grandchildren, you must care for, teach and organise them. Young workers must care for homeless children, by helping Soviet welfare agencies, working among the children, and joining the organisation Children's Friends. Il'ich had no children of his own, the children of the poor and oppressed were his children. In 1918-19, the worst years of hunger and need, he decreed that the best foods must be reserved for children. He loved chatting and playing with children. One of his instructions is to look after the children of the working class, and homeless children. **Chapter VII, Preserve the Bond with the Peasantry** (28-33), urges readers to work for unity between workers and peasants. Workers, a minority in Russia, could not have made or defended the revolution without the peasants' support. 'Union with the villages' is one of Lenin's most important instructions, and young Jewish workers must be particularly attentive to it since they are urban. There are Jewish peasants, either former colonists or 'new Jewish farmers', who need help in their work and in social and educational areas. Young urban workers can also help by raising funds, working overtime and buying books with the extra pay, writing newspapers for a village, and getting involved with zemotdely and cooperatives.⁷⁰² Electrification was important to Lenin. The Komsomols of Mogilëv worked hard to educate poor villagers about the concept of electrification. They stole light bulbs from the church, sold their own possessions to raise funds, and set up a 'pavilion of electrotechnics'. The symbol of Soviet authority expresses the union of workers (hammer) and peasants (sickle) which made the workers victorious in Russia and will make them victorious over the whole world. **Chapter VIII, Be Loyal to Soviet Authority** (33-44), concerns serving the state Lenin founded. The workers of Russia are free, and the peasants acquired the land, thanks to the October Revolution led by Comrade Lenin and the subsequent establishment of the dictatorship of the working class. The history of this period reminds us how much blood, sacrifice and toil has been invested in the USSR. The state is Lenin's legacy, especially to the young people, who will 'bring our struggle to its end'. Whoever wishes to follow Lenin's instructions will

⁷⁰² Zemotdely – branches of the Soviet Department of Agricultural Affairs.

defend the Soviet state like his own eyes. Foreign countries are still our enemies, always ready to attack us. Be ready even to sacrifice your life for the Soviet state, in the Red Army or Red Navy. You will need physical strength. Develop your tolerance to the cold, to cold water and fresh air. Do gymnastics and active sports. Do not weaken your nerves by smoking, drinking beer, lazing in bed, sexual overactivity and masturbation. 'Remember, you do not belong to yourself, you belong to the working class, you belong to Lenin'. Lenin always exercised, bathed in icy mountain rivers, skated, ran, walked a lot, and did not smoke. This enabled him to endure his 'fearful work' and many privations. **Chapter IX, Help to Build the Soviet Economy** (44-50), explains the low economic situation of the Soviet state and outlines attitudes which will improve it. Soviet industry is still largely undeveloped and most of the population will only accept communism through understanding that the collective economy 'pays better' than the private. Lenin taught that development of industry and technology was the means to bring the socialist economy to the villages, and he was particularly concerned about electrification. Progress towards communism requires accumulated asset wealth. Nonconscious workers think that being required to produce surplus goods is exploitation, but conscious workers know better. Remember Lenin's instruction to build the economy. Learn from the conscious workers, and be a model to other workers. If you are a Komsomol or a Pioneer, do not act superior to other comrades, your enemy is the bourgeoisie, not other workers. Never behave in a way that you would be ashamed for Lenin to know of. Fulfill all your work and study responsibilities as thoroughly as Lenin did his. In your work, be the first to agree to the most difficult work, a true Leninist. **Chapter X, Under the Banners of the Third Communist International!** (50-57), introduces readers to this international organisation and its pre-history, demanding their loyalty to it. Jewish nationalists like the Young Zionists and Zionist-Socialists still 'sing a song about klal yisroel, about the special interests of the Jewish proletariat, about how only in our "own land" in Palestine will the Jewish people find their home and be freed from "goles"'. The old nationalist Jewish labour movement was worse. Separate organisations like the Bund taught the workers to distrust non-Jews, devising national programmes which were 'essentially bourgeois' and which 'divided the strengths of the working class'. Il'ich wrote that Jews should not have a separate party but Jewish workers only heeded him after the October Revolution. Now, the best members of the separatist parties have joined the RCP, and their youth organisations have merged with the Komsomol. Every young Jewish worker must know this history, to 'avoid its errors, to stay deaf to the nationalist sermons [drosches] of the Zionists'. The

communist parties of every country are united in the Third Communist International. Other international organisations include KIM.⁷⁰³ They fulfill Marx's slogan, "Proletarians of all lands, unite!". The First International, created by Karl Marx, was too weak and collapsed. The Second International was taken over by Mensheviks, compromise-makers and nationalists, who in 1914 sided with the bourgeoisie over attitudes to the war. Lenin saw that a truly revolutionary Third International was needed. He lives through it now. Every young worker must stand under its banner and that of their KIM, and show their complete loyalty to Marx's slogan of unity. **Chapter XI, Keep Lenin Forever in Your Head and in Your Heart** (57-60), reviews Lenin's instructions. Additionally, when choosing a course of action, readers must choose that which best suits the interests of the working class 'and its party', and must consider what Lenin would say about their choice. They must devote themselves to the working class as Lenin did. Now that all the workers and exploited of the world are loyal to 'our Lenin', 'has your heart and your mind opened and let him in? What do you think?' The book concludes in a chorus of praise for Comrade Lenin. ☺

'Those of you who do not die a heroic death prior to the victory of the working class will eventually come to Lenin in heaven [getselt] where he rests quietly and awaits you, and you will tell him that capital has been stifled throughout the world, that over all the major cities of the world his banner, Lenin's banner of communism, is waving. The international Soviet republic which he prophesied has come to pass. You will say to him, "Our dear, devoted one! With your weapon we have won the victory, we have won. You have won, Comrade Lenin."

And from the whole world, from the north and the south, from the east and the west, the thunderous cry of hundreds of millions of people will reach him: "You have won, Comrade Lenin!"' (concluding paragraphs)

307. Ester. *Lenin un zayn arbet [Lenin and His Work]*. 1st ed., Tsentraler Felker-Farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1925. 271 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Printed in two other editions: 1925 (**308**), 1926 (**325**).⁷⁰⁴

308. Ester. *Lenin un zayn arbet [Lenin and His Work]*. 2nd ed., Tsentraler Felker-Farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow-Leningrad, 1925. 271 or 274 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Printed in two other editions: 1925 (**307**), 1926 (**325**).

⁷⁰³ KIM – Communist Youth International, the international organisation for Komsomols.

- 309.** Esther. 'Af der ernvakh bay lenin's orn [Guarding Lenin's Coffin].' *Lenin: Ilustrirt zamlbukh*, edited by Shakhno Epstein, Farlag "Frayhayt", New York, 1925, pp. 12-14 (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.⁷⁰⁵

This article in a memorial book for Lenin describes the author's personal experience of performing the honourable duty of guarding Lenin's coffin. The book's contributors include major figures in the Soviet leadership and in Soviet Jewish literature. Hebrew-origin words are not spelt out phonetically as in Soviet Yiddish, but this book contains a peculiarity in that the wrong letters appear in many places. The article, which contains many autoreferences, explains the political structure that led Esther to have this opportunity. It describes the mood of the city that morning, the scene in the 'guard room' as Bela Kun organises the change of the guard, and, dramatically, the body itself.⁷⁰⁶ The author/narrator shares her feelings over the course of the experience and her sense of representing all Jewish workers and communicating the final greetings between them and their leader. When her turn finishes, she stays in the room to look around properly. She mentally asks Lenin what she should say to the Jewish workers. The reply is that she should tell them to follow in his footsteps. The Jewish workers in Poland and America 'will all, to the last man, come to Lenin!' ☞

'The ten minutes fly by like a short dream. Bela Kun now directs four new comrades. Again the human stream is halted. I give up my place to the new guard and quickly have another look at the beloved familiar face. One moment and the dream flies by. But I can stay in the room and look from afar. From above, quiet music can be heard. The solemn tones of Chopin's Funeral March fill the room. The lights of the great chandeliers twinkle through the black crêpe. The banners and the flames bend down from above towards Lenin's head.

That head is now the radiant summit of the mountain to which the hearts of millions and millions from all corners of the world are now drawn.' (13; col. 2, par. 3-5)

- 310.** Ester. Foreword. *Politalefbeys farn komyugist [A Political ABC for Komsomols]*, by Sh. Golubitsky, A. Yerusalimsky, Y. Lezman, Tsentraler Farlag far di Felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1925, pp. 3-4 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL or YIVO Institute.

⁷⁰⁴ A review of this book by Tsvi Fridland appears in *Der emes*, no. 68, 25 Mar. 1925, 3. It praises the book, calling Esther a 'brilliant stylist', while very politely noting several errors.

⁷⁰⁵ Many of the Yiddish materials on archive.org are also in the National Yiddish Book Center's digital library within yiddishbookcenter.org, but this publication is not.

Esther was the editor of this 186-page book.⁷⁰⁷ References within the book to *Gey mit lenins veg!* (306) and *Lenin un zayn arbet* (307 or 308) indicate publication chronology. The book's content is not alphabetised, the 'ABC' in the title indicates that the book contains fundamental information. Its content is very similar to that of *Gey mit lenins veg!* Its section on the Bund is a concise history depicting the Bund as largely Menshevist, pro-Liquidator, not truly Marxist, anti-Bolshevik, and headed by intellectuals and 'petit-bourgeois opportunists too scared to stand up to the moods of the masses'. The book is intended for use in Komsomol educational circles. The foreword is short and unenthusiastic. Its most positive comment is that the book should be useful since there are no others like it in Yiddish. It notes that the book is likely to have flaws and be out of date, given its political content, and should therefore only be used together with the latest official decrees. As it contains 'concentrated material', relevant literature should also be read. The foreword concludes with the information that the three authors split up the subject matter between them and it is clear that each approached the work in his own way, but this is 'no great evil' and it was not found necessary to rectify it. ☹

'A person who restricts himself to mechanical repetition of the contents of this book will always be at a remove from reality. Therefore everyone who uses a book like this must remember that the decisions of party, Komsomol and soviet meetings and conferences, the most important decrees of recent months, etc, must serve as supplementary material to this book. This book is being published in July 1925. The circle leaders and the teachers who will hold it in their hands in September or October must take into consideration the party, Komsomol and soviet news that will develop after the month of July. The newspaper and the youth journal must be used as a complement to the book.' (3; par. 2)

311. Ester. 'Lenins gebot: Tsu di masn! [Lenin's Commandment: To the Masses!].'
Der emes [Moscow], no. 17, 21 Jan. 1925, pp. 2-3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly long newspaper article maintains that despite Lenin's view on the need for the party to oppose the moods of the masses as after the 1905 revolution and during the imperialist war, he had enormous faith in the masses. This argument is supported by many quotations from Lenin's works. ☹

⁷⁰⁶ Bela Kun, important Hungarian communist leader (1886-1938).

⁷⁰⁷ Unlike the writer of the foreword, the editor is named 'M. Frumkin (Ester)'.

‘This unification of theoretical perspective and of faith in the masses, of closeness to the masses, is one of the most important and significant signs of Leninism, as one of the most important of Lenin’s commandments is: Closer to the masses, with the masses, by the masses to the definitive victory of communism.’ (concluding paragraph)

- 312.** Alef. R. ‘Bibliografye: A. tyumenev. Di geshikhte fun arbet [Bibliography: A. Tyumenev. The History of Labour].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 26, 1 Feb. 1925, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article reviews a Yiddish edition of this political economy textbook.⁷⁰⁸ The book is insufficiently theoretical. It is not structured like modern works on political economy and does not mention the Soviet system. It could be a useful textbook on cultural history but still contains flaws in this regard. Overall, there are better books on political economy. The good translation into Yiddish improves the book, though some terminological choices could be disputed. Let us hope that other textbooks will soon be translated, for the benefit of the workers. ☺

‘There is a sort of rule that due to the terrible poverty of the Yiddish book trade every new Yiddish book must be celebrated, especially if the book has a certain value and can fill a void, as in this case. However it must not be forgotten that this poverty of ours forces us to be great choosers and to ensure, especially with translations, that we devote our efforts to the best material available in other languages.’ (opening paragraph)

- 313.** B. Alef-R. ‘Teater un kino: Der “goylem” in “habima” [Theatre and Film: Habima’s *The Golem*].’ *Der emes* [Moscow], no. 68, 25 Mar. 1925, p. 3 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This fairly short newspaper article reviews the Hebrew theatre’s production, finding it poor, and explaining that the theatre has no connection with the masses. It disapproves of the “Jewish rococo” style of the sets and costumes, of the director’s ‘impotence’, and of the performance of most of the cast. It is a wonder that this theatre still exists. ☺

‘However, we are very surprised that in Moscow, in the eighth year after October, that a large group of young people, formerly talented, could devote themselves to such a dead

⁷⁰⁸ Aleksandr Il’ich Tyumenev, prominent Marxist historian (1880-1959). The Russian text of the reviewed book, *Istoriya truda: Kratkoe rukovodstvo politicheskoy ekonomii* (1922), is available on archive.org (Tyumenev, Istoriia).

cause as a Hebrew-language theatre which could only be a charity cause for bourgeois Zionists or, more correctly, Zionist bourgeois.’ (concluding paragraph)

- 314.** Ester. ‘Vegn tkhum un vegn andere zakhn [About the Pale and about Other Things].’ *Pyoner* [Moscow], no. 3, Shul un bukh, Apr. 1925, pp. 14-16 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This is a long article in a magazine for the children’s Pioneer organisation.⁷⁰⁹ It outlines the difficult conditions of Jewish life in tsarist Russia and explains that repression of Jews was part of the government’s efforts to keep all the masses of Russia ignorant and therefore placid. The government insisted that minorities were the enemies of Russians, and the Jews ‘the most harmful’. Jews had “‘killed Christ”, “Jews drink Christians’ blood”, “Jews steal small children from Christians, to use their blood for making matza”’. ‘Every pre-Peysekh’, brutal, state-supported attacks were planned against Jewish people, homes and businesses.⁷¹⁰ Poor Jews suffered most of all. Schools and courts used only Russian, so many Jews could hardly understand their lessons and legal trials. For some time there was no Yiddish theatre, and actors had to pretend they were speaking German. During the Great War, Jews accused of spying for Germany were deported from border areas, causing homelessness. Real equal rights for nations were not implemented until the October Revolution. ☹

‘Have you ever heard the word “Pale [tkhum]”? I am sure you have not. Have you ever heard about special laws for Jews? Can you imagine that a Jew could be forbidden to do something simply because he is a Jew?

You are astonished, it doesn’t make sense to you. Did you think that Jews and non-Jews were always equal?’ (14; par. 1-2)

- 315.** ‘Leninizm oder trotskizm [Leninism or Trotskyism].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 1 (12), Jan. 1925 - no. 4 (15), Apr.-May 1925, pp. 5-8 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

- 316.** Ester. ‘Der ferter alfarbandisher konferents fun komyug – Der rede fun kh. stalin afn efenung [The Fourth All-Union Conference of the Komsomol: Comrade

⁷⁰⁹ A junior organisation to the Komsomol, for children aged nine to fourteen, see **306**, Chapter VI. Esther participated in producing this magazine. See Shmeruk; advertisement on second-to-last page of *Gey mit lenins veg!* 1925; details in *Pyoner* itself e.g. no. 3, Apr. 1925.

Stalin's Opening Address].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 6 (17), June-July 1925?
(Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed in *Der veker* [Minsk], no. 144 (1279), 30 June 1925, 4.

317. ‘Tsvey stabilizatsyes [Two Stabilisations].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 6 (17),
June-July 1925, pp. 11-13 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

318. ‘A shmues vegn khine [A Chat About China].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 7 (18),
July-Aug. 1925, pp. 6-8 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

319. ‘Dos shtetl haynt un a mol [The Shtetl Then and Now].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow],
no. 9 (20), Sept.-Oct. 1925, pp. 14-16 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, ‘a political discussion’.

320. ‘Dos shtetl haynt un a mol [The Shtetl Then and Now].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow],
no. 10 (21), Oct.-Nov. 1925, pp. 15-17 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, ‘a political discussion’.

321. ‘Shtetl un dorf [Shtetl and Village].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 11-12 (22-23),
Nov.-Dec. 1925, pp. 18-19 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’, ‘a political discussion’.

322. Ester. ‘Di ershte ruslendische revolutsye [The First Russian Revolution].’ *Pyoner*
[Moscow], no. 8, Shul un bukh, 1925 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed in following article.

323. Ester. ‘Di ershte ruslendische revolutsye: Erev der revolutsye [The First Russian
Revolution: On the Eve of the Revolution].’ *Pyoner* [Moscow], no. 9-10, Shul
un bukh, Dec. 1925, pp. 11, 14 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

⁷¹⁰ Peysekh – one of the three harvest festivals, commemorates the biblical departure of the Israelites from Egypt, often coincides with Easter. During the week-long festival, unleavened bread (matza) is eaten.

This medium-length article for children provides a history of the revolution of 1905. It is labelled 'First article' but a note indicates that it continues from No. 8, the previous issue. Accompanied by a revolutionary image captioned 'On the Barricades' by G. Vladimirov, it consists of two numbered sections.⁷¹¹ **Section VI** describes the dissatisfaction in Russia on the eve of the revolution. All groups – peasants, intellectuals, students, bourgeois, and even some nobles – felt oppressed by the government, and resented this. The bourgeoisie also wanted full control. In other countries, the bourgeoisie was the revolutionary class, whereas the working class of Russia was already strong. The bourgeoisie of Russia, expecting the working class to overthrow the tsar and the capitalist order, divided its loyalties between the monarchy and the revolution, the urban petit-bourgeois siding with the revolution. **Section VII** continues the historical account. Concurrently as the revolution became inevitable, the government developed imperialist aims and occupied part of China, provoking war with Japan. This war increased discontentment in Russia. Revolutionary organisation commenced within the armed forces and the petite bourgeoisie, and 'the petit-bourgeois SR organisation' employed terrorism. Capitulating, the government announced reforms but they were inadequate and the revolutionary movement only continued to grow. ☹

'But the working masses themselves were barely conscious or organised, and the peasant masses were very dark and politically nonconscious. They had intense faith in the tsar. They ascribed their sorrows and suffering to the nobles alone. There were even cases of peasants thinking revolutionary newspapers were written by the tsar. They believed that the tsar was for the people, that taking land from the nobles was fulfilling the tsar's will. They made a revolution without knowing that they were revolutionaries.'

(11; par. 4)

1926

- 324.** M. Frumkin (Ester), translator with Y. Tsipkin. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band VI, tayl 1: Der proletaryat ba der makht [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume VI, Part 1: The Proletariat in Power]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1926. 319 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.

⁷¹¹ 'The Barricades of Presnya [Barrikady na Presne],' 1905. Ivan Alekseevich Vladimirov, realist artist (1870-1947).

This is a collection of translations of writings and speeches by Lenin, presented chronologically and bound with Volume VI, Part 2 ('Der proletaryat ba der makht, 1919-1920') and Volume VI, Part 3 ('Di kinderkrankhayt fun "linkshaft" in komunizm'). 📖

'Comrades! The workers' and peasants' revolution, which the Bolsheviks have always said is necessary, has taken place.

What is the significance of this workers' and peasants' revolution? Above all, the significance of this revolution lies in the fact that we will have a Soviet government, our own organ of power, without any participation by the bourgeoisie. The oppressed masses themselves form this authority. The old state apparatus will be uprooted and a new administrative apparatus will be created in the form of Soviet organisations.'

('About the October Revolution,' 27 Oct. 1917, 5)

325. Ester. *Lenin un zayn arbet [Lenin and His Work]*. 2nd ed., Lenin-Biblyotek, Series No. 4, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1926. 271 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from LOC.

This book is a political biography of Lenin which includes a lot of historical information.⁷¹² It was printed in two other editions: 1925 (**307**), 1925 (**308**).⁷¹³ It consists of 36 named and numbered sections, and the forewords to this and the first edition. The first section provides background information, the next 34 describe episodes in Lenin's life in chronological order, and the final section is entitled 'After Lenin'. Theoretical information is presented here in a much less simplistic way than in Esther's publications for children. Elye Falkovich wrote an overview and assessment of this work, particularly noting its critical attitude to the Bund. He notes that it imparts 'Lenin's statements concerning the Bund's error-ridden assertions and tales' and Lenin's 'proofs that the propaganda for national-cultural autonomy is "promotion of refined nationalism"'. He says that the book was influential, helping readers 'free themselves of a range of nationalistic prejudices' and other benefits appropriate to Soviet values. He mentions the book's 'lively, popular style', the terminological and biographical explanations it includes, the beneficial opportunity it afforded its author to review her own opinions, and that over time it had not lost its freshness but was still 'filled with the

⁷¹² This item is not examined thoroughly here, due to its length.

⁷¹³ Although this book is marked 'second edition', some say it is in fact the third edition (Shmeruk; Schipper; Mishkinsky). It was also published as part of the translated *Oysgeveylte verk [Collected Works]* of Lenin, bound with Volume VI, Part 3 ('Di kinderkrankhayt fun "linkshaft" in komunizm'), and *Di parizer komune*.

hot breath with which Esther wrote it, her words captured from her creative tension and from her party resolve'.⁷¹⁴ The **foreword to the first edition** (3-6), explains that the book aims to bring Jewish workers even closer to Lenin. It is not a history of the RCP, although Lenin's life story is closely linked with that history. A precursor to the anticipated Yiddish-language collected works of Lenin, it is intended for 'more developed' adult workers. Most Jewish workers have no 'pre-revolutionary Bolshevik memories'. Their movement was anti-Leninist, and though they are now conscious of that early error, they may need more knowledge about RCP history than Russian workers, whose vanguard was allied to Bolshevism earlier. Lenin said that four years post the October Revolution have more significance than forty years prior. This book should thus focus more on the recent period, but its readers will already know about that time, from Yiddish editions of Lenin's works and from their own experience, whereas the earlier period is basically foreign to them. It is the duty of every conscious worker to keep studying the history of the revolutionary period, Lenin's writings, and the rules in Stalin's book *Foundations of Leninism*.⁷¹⁵ The author will be very pleased if the present book helps Jewish workers to become closer to Lenin, from whom they were so distant for many years. The **foreword to the second edition** (iii-v) is dated April 1926. It outlines the faults of the first edition and the amendments in the new edition. As 'Lenin's work continues', there is always new material to add to a history of his work. Also, newly discovered documents have shed new light on historical events, so this information must be included in the history. Other additions include updates about Trotskyism and Lenin's struggle against it, about the errors of Zinoviev and Kamenev and the "New Opposition" in October 1917, and about the NEP. Information about the roots of Leninism was adjusted to conform to Comrade Stalin's brilliant formulation, and the definition of Leninism as 'Marxism in the epoch of the social revolution', which could be read to mean that there was no Leninism prior to 1914, was replaced by Comrade Stalin's 'classic definition'. The first edition was written in a rush and for this edition, too, there was no time to check for errors thoroughly, as the author was so heavily "laden" with responsibilities, but it seems to be up-to-date and free of errors, and any necessary changes can be made to the third edition if one is required. ☺

'Amalgamation was the fearful spectre with which the leaders of the Bund terrified the Bundist masses, appealing to their backwardness; the organisational principle of the Bund became an idol to which people sacrificed everything. That organisational

⁷¹⁴ Falkovich, no. 83, n. d. (1965).

⁷¹⁵ Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism [Ob osnovakh leninizma]*, 1924.

principle developed into a principle of federation, that is, into a theory about an independent political party for the Jewish proletariat. The theory was built upon a deep distrust of international class consciousness, of the class solidarity of the all-Russian proletariat, a distrust of its strengths.... Naturally Lenin and the *Iskra* could in no way accept that it would be abnormal for Jewish workers to join not the Bund but the international SD organisations directly.’ (73; par. 3-4)

- 326.** M. Frumkina (Esther). ‘Deti-bortsy [Child Fighters].’ *Molodëzh’ v 1905 godu*, edited by A. Kirov, Molodaya gvardiya, Moscow-Leningrad, 1926, pp. 89-95 (Russian)

Attributed by Gorbunov. Copy from neb.rf.

This article is in a collection apparently for young readers and dedicated to the activities of youth during the 1905 Revolution. The article concerns the Kleyn-bund. Some similar content appeared in an article in *Folks-tsaytung* in 1907: recollections of the meeting in the synagogue where lights illuminate excited young faces, of Avram Himelshteyn and the epitaph made for him by his young comrades, and of the young comrades of Warsaw who stood firm when a shot was fired during their demonstration.⁷¹⁶ The present account includes some updates. For example, where ‘the earth absorbed [Avram Himelshteyn’s] blood, a Komsomol club arose’. The article is subtitled ‘From [Her] Memoirs’ and contains many autoreferences. It emphasises the important role played by youth in the Bund. The author’s clearest recollection from those days is of the ‘young faces’. Children younger than 17 were barred from the movement but some followed older siblings who ‘went to birzhes, read and brought home literature, joined “battle units”, carried weapons, etc’.⁷¹⁷ In response to attempts to stop them participating, they formed their own organisation, the “Kleyn-bund [Malyy Bund]”, girls soon winning the right to admission. Its many, well organised and disciplined divisions throughout the Pale endeavoured to assist the senior organisation, by breaking windows of bosses who refused to yield to strikes, watching out for police during the adults’ meetings, etc. They enjoyed the danger. But there were casualties. Children were among those who perished for the ‘happiness of future generations’. They died as fighters, not victims, and we will carry their memory with us during ‘future battles for future victories!’ ☺

⁷¹⁶ See 37. Judging by its title, there may also be some related material in a more recent article, ‘Kinder-kempfer: Zikhroynes fun a mol,’ *Yung-vald*, 1923 (280).

⁷¹⁷ Birzhe – meeting in a public place, acted as a dispute tribunal between workers and bosses (90n2).

‘The times were difficult, with shootings and assaults. To keep the children out of danger, constant attempts were made to keep them out of “birzhes” and demonstrations. But all those efforts failed. A demonstration could be kept secret from the most experienced spies, but not from the “Kleyn-bund”. Usually the masses did not know in advance exactly where a demonstration would be held. They would assemble in various prearranged places and only then find out where to go. But, uninvited and unsolicited, the kids would appear there as if from out of the ground.’ (92; par. 3)

327. ‘Tsi kon men oysboyen sotsyalizm in eyn land? [Is It Possible to Build Socialism in One Country?].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 1 (24), Jan. 1926, pp. 5-7 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

328. ‘Tsi kon men oysboyen sotsyalizm in eyn land? [Is It Possible to Build Socialism in One Country?].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 2 (25), Feb. 1926, pp. 9-10 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

329. ‘Undzer ekonomishe struktur [Our Economic Structure].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 3 (26), Mar. 1926, pp. 14-16 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

330. ‘Undzer ekonomishe struktur [Our Economic Structure].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 4 (27), Apr. 1926, pp. 8-10 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

331. ‘Undzer virtshaftlekhe lage [Our Economic Situation].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 5 (28), May 1926, pp. 6-9 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

1927

332. M. Frumkina (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band VII, tayl 1: Der proletaryat ba der makht 1921* [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): *Collected Works, Volume VII, Part 1: The Proletariat in Power 1921*]. Lenin-

biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1927. 212 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.

This is a collection of translations of writings and speeches by Lenin, presented chronologically and bound with Volume VII, Part 2 ('Der proletaryat ba der makht 1922'); Volume VIII, Part 1 ('Natsyonale un idishe frage: Biz der imperyalistishe milkhome') and Volume VIII, Part 2 ('Natsyonale un idishe frage: Fun onhoyb imperyalistishe milkhome'). ☞

'In sum, in Trotsky's and Bukharin's theses there is a whole array of theoretical errors.⁷¹⁸ Much that is incorrect in principle. Politically, the entire approach to the matter is completely tactless. Comrade Trotsky's "theses" are politically harmful. His policy is, overall, a policy of bureaucratic tugging at the trade unions. And our Party Congress, I am certain, will condemn and reject that policy.' ('On Professional Unions, the Fleeting Moment and the Error of Comrade Trotsky,' 20; par. 4).

333. M. Frumkina (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band VII, tayl 2: Der proletaryat ba der makht 1922 [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume VII, Part 2: The Proletariat in Power 1922]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1927. 148 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.

This is a collection of translations of writings and speeches by Lenin, presented chronologically and bound with Volume VII, Part 1 ('Der proletaryat ba der makht 1921'); Volume VIII, Part 1 ('Natsyonale un idishe frage: Biz der imperyalistishe milkhome') and Volume VIII, Part 2 ('Natsyonale un idishe frage: Fun onhoyb imperyalistishe milkhome'). ☞

'The condition of our state apparatus is so sad, not to say disgusting, that we must first give serious thought to just how to combat its defects, remembering that those defects have their roots in the past which although overthrown is however not yet outlived, has not reached the stage of a culture that has withdrawn into the distant past. I am raising the issue of culture because in such matters something can be considered achieved only if it has become part of culture, of one's way of life, one's habits. And for us, it can be said that the good features of our social structure have not been thoroughly thought out, understood, or taken to heart...' ('Better Fewer, But Better,' 125; par. 2).

- 334.** Ester, translator. ‘Mutik, khaveyrim [Bravely, Comrades].’ *Naye lider: muzikalisher zamlbukh*, edited by Y. Bakst and M. Gnesin, Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1927, pp. 20-21 (lyrics) and 86 (music) (Yiddish)
Copy from NLI Music Library.

This marching song is a translation of the Russian ‘Smelo, tovarishchi, v nogu [Comrades, Let’s Bravely March]’ by Leonid Radin. It appears in a book of new songs, in the Second Part, Section VI, Revolutionary Labour Movement. The song’s title derives from its first words. Its lyrics unite the singers, in their common history of slavery, hunger and revolutionary achievement, their common future of liberty, and their common obligation to continue fearlessly the battle under the red banner.

- 335.** Ester. *Gey mit lenins veg* (abridged version). *Tsu leninen: Far kinder [To Lenin: For Children]*, edited by Arn Helmond and M. Bernshteyn, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1927, pp. 289-314 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by Shmeruk.⁷¹⁹

- 336.** ‘Frag fun teorye af der XV partey-konferents [Theoretical Questions at the XV Party Congress].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], no. 1 (35), Jan. 1927 - no. 3 (37), Mar. 1927 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

- 337.** Ester. ‘Di ordntlekhe afgang fun unzer sektor [The Regular Tasks of Our Sector].’ *Mayrevnik* [Moscow], no. 1, June 1927, pp. 2-5 (Yiddish)

Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’. Copy from NLI.

This article, in the first issue of the journal of the Jewish/Yiddish sector of CUNMW, assesses the sector, discussing first merits then areas for improvement. It is one of the university’s oldest and strongest sectors. It always has good teachers. Most students are Soviet and know Russian. It benefits from the greater quantity of Yiddish editions of Lenin’s works. Jewish party work is especially difficult now, there are many social issues to resolve, and the Jewish sector is expected to provide solutions. Its students are encouraged not to limit themselves to areas of Jewish population. Following the method of dialectical materialism is essential, and Leninism will overcome both inter-national and internal difficulties. The sector must devote more attention to theoretical work and

⁷¹⁸ Nikolay Ivanovich Bukharin, senior Soviet government official (1888-1938).

⁷¹⁹ Shmeruk 231.

to study of ‘the Jewish reality’. But this must not distract us from practical work, including efforts in physical culture and shooting. We hope for future growth according to the party line. ☞

‘But, in calling for strengthened theoretical work, we want first to protect ourselves from errors which are more harmful in the Jewish sector than in others. We are something of an “am-haseyfer”.⁷²⁰ Some of our comrades only like books and disdain practical work, especially organisational work in factories and work in Russian villages.’ (5; par. 2)

338. ‘Tsen yor [Ten Years].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], 5, no. 10 (44), Oct. 1927, pp. 3-6 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

339. ‘Der veg tsu oktober [The Way to October].’ *Di royte velt* [Kharkov / Kiev], 4, no. 10-11, Oct. 1927, pp. 131-70 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

340. ‘Tsen yor [Ten Years].’ *Yung-vald* [Moscow], 5, no. 11-12 (45), Nov.-Dec. 1927, pp. 8-10 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

341. ‘Der fuftsnter tsuzamenfor un di afgangn fun undzere studentn [The Fifteenth Congress and the Tasks of Our Students].’ *Mayrevnik* [Moscow], no. 2, Dec. 1927, pp. 2-4 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to ‘Esther (Frumkin)’.

1928

342. Ester. *Oktyabr-revolutsye [The October Revolution]*. Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1928. 331 pages. (Yiddish)

Partial copy from LOC.

This book is Esther’s longest authored work.⁷²¹ It is a Stalinist history for Jewish readers, with a stronger focus on economic information than Esther’s other histories. Its

⁷²⁰ Am-haseyfer [Heb. Am ha-sefer] – people of the book.

⁷²¹ This item is not reviewed examined here, due to its length.

simple language suggests it could be for children. It consists of twelve named and numbered chapters and an epilogue: **Chapter I, The Imperialist War; Chapter II, What Lenin Said about the War and the Revolution; Chapter III, Tsarist Russia: Entangled in the Net of Imperialism; Chapter IV, The Strengths of the Revolution; Chapter V, Russia in the War; Chapter VI, The Fall of the Autocracy; Chapter VII, The Dual Monarchy; Chapter VIII, Lenin's Slogans; Chapter IX, The Compromise-Makers: A Veil for the Imperialists; Chapter X, The Struggle for Power; Chapter XI, The Bolsheviks Take the Lead of the Working Class and Plan the Armed Uprising; Chapter XII, The October Uprising. The Working Class Establishes Its Dictatorship; Epilogue, The October Revolution and the Jewish Workers.** ☞

‘The petit-bourgeois Jewish socialists considered the October uprising a misfortune and an insanity. They succeeded in preventing the majority of workers who were organised in their ranks from participating in the uprising. The path to October for the Jewish workers was longer and more difficult than for the non-Jewish workers.

But the October uprising was considered an insanity and a misfortune also by some individual Bolsheviks, like Zinoviev and Kamenev. They gave their opinion openly and fought against the uprising.

Soon, they changed their minds, and their errors were held to be accidental.

It turned out, however, that these were not accidental errors. In recent years, Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev have returned to their positions on October, to the positions of not believing in the possibility of building socialism in Russia, of pessimistically underestimating the strengths and capabilities of the working class, and of overestimating the strength of the bourgeoisie. They have adopted the platform of Comrade Trotsky, who, despite his active role in the October uprising, sentenced the dictatorship of the proletariat to collapse if it did not obtain the government support of the working class of the aforementioned capitalist countries. Together, they now lead a struggle against Leninism, against Lenin's theory of revolution, against Lenin's party, and against the entire legacy of October.

In truth, the Trotskyist Opposition expresses the same petit-bourgeois vacillations which were expressed during the October uprising by the tactics of the Jewish socialist parties on one side and Comrades Zinoviev and Kamenev on the other.

And when the slogans of the Opposition resound in certain circles of the Jewish petite-bourgeoisie and in groups of backward Jewish workers and employees who have not yet abandoned the vestiges of Bundism and of petit-bourgeois-ism in general, and when

they are sanctioned by the “Yekape Poale Zion”, this is proof of how far the Trotskyists are from the working class and how much closer to the bourgeoisie.

But, it is clear that the Jewish working class overall has found its path to October, so that it will never stray from it again. Today, the strikebreakers of October will meet the same iron resistance in the Jewish workforce as in the entire working class of the country.’ (concluding paragraphs)

343. Ester. *XV tsuzamenfor fun Al. K. P. (b.): Vegn der opozitsye [The XV Congress of the AUCP(b): About the Opposition]*. Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1928. 88 pages. (Yiddish)

Attributed by Shmeruk.⁷²² Copy from HCL.

This small book, which conveys the resolutions of the recent congress, essentially presents Stalin’s position against the group of senior government officials who opposed him. A publisher’s note explains that Esther wrote the book in Russian for translation into other languages and that poor health prevented her from preparing the Yiddish translation, which another translator made under her supervision. It is divided into twelve numbered sections. **Section I** (3-11) outlines the history of the Opposition which, for example, made incorrect assertions against the CC, was involved in antiparty activities and formed an oppositional bloc with Trotsky. **Section II** (12-18) continues the history, using some sarcasm. A passage from Trotsky’s conference address ridicules the Opposition, and a letter from a regional official complains about ‘khutspedik’ anti-Leninist statements made by a ‘shlimazldik’ Oppositionist visiting speaker which provoked a violent response from the peasant audience.⁷²³ Ultimately, Oppositionists were expelled from the party and its senior committees. A negative public attitude to the Opposition is discernible. **Section III** (18-29) concerns Trotsky, his Menshevik and anti-Leninist past, and his anti-Leninist theory of permanent revolution. Articles by Zinoviev and Kamenev criticise Trotsky. The three have a convoluted joint history. They and their supporters are the mouthpiece of petit-bourgeois ideology. **Section IV** (29-33) considers the Opposition’s foreign bourgeois supporters, such as Ruth Fischer, and their slander against the USSR.⁷²⁴ It also criticises some of Trotsky’s positions on the First World War and defence of the revolution, revealing the ‘essentially antirevolutionary nature of the Trotskyist Opposition’. **Section V** (33-41) shows that information presented at the congress outweighed the so-called evidence of the Oppositionists, ‘and

⁷²² Shmeruk 56.

⁷²³ Khutspedik – audacious. Shlimazldik – unfortunate, unsuccessful.

we will not concern ourselves with dragging them out of the rubbish bin'. The Oppositionists' tendencies to vacillation and unprincipledness can be seen in their changing attitudes to various topical issues. Several quotations show how divergent the Opposition is from the Party. Yet, the first principle of party membership is acceptance of the party's programme. **Section VI** (41-51) presents Oppositionist deviations mentioned in Stalin's congress address. The central issue is Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution.⁷²⁵ The Opposition 'called Lenin's theory about the possible victory of socialism in one land heretical [apikorsish]'. Trotsky similarly accused the Soviet state under Stalin of 'Thermidorianism'.⁷²⁶ The assertions by the Oppositionist Beloborodov against the Stalinist government constitute 'a little more than Thermidor,... [rather] 18 Brumaire'.⁷²⁷ The Oppositionist attitude to the question of the bloc of workers and medium peasants is '100 percent old Trotskyism, which corresponds to the old position of the Second International on the peasant question'. Further deviations concern the appropriate attitude of communists towards colonial revolutions, and the tactic of a united front in the global labour movement. Overall, they constitute a system of divergence from the party line. **Section VII** (51-59) concerns the Opposition's deviation on national policy. Vaganyan's book *O natsional'noy kul'ture* contested the party's national policy, and Zinoviev was its 'herald'.⁷²⁸ According to Zinoviev, Stalin's statement about culture that is proletarian in content and national in form owes more to Otto Bauer than to Leninism, but in fact Stalin's statement matches Lenin's concept exactly. Ikramov proved that the Opposition, not Stalin, deviates from Lenin's teaching on this issue.⁷²⁹ Stalin showed that Zinoviev opposes the development of national culture in the USSR and supports colonialism. Views which Lenin opposed resemble Zinoviev's today. The Oppositionists, who support 'all insulted deviationists and nationalists', make accusations of antisemitism, colonialism, "unprincipledness", and antiinternationalism, while themselves warming to antisemites and chauvinists. Soviet national policy upholds the fraternal bond between the nations. The Oppositionists seek to paralyse its 'extreme revolutionising effect on the entire colonial

⁷²⁴ Ruth Fischer, important figure in the Austrian and German communist parties, critic of Stalin (1895-1961).

⁷²⁵ Trotsky's theory, which placed importance on socialist revolutions outside Russia, stood in opposition to Stalin's theory of 'socialism in one country'.

⁷²⁶ 'Thermidorianism', which is the subject of a long explanatory footnote, refers to the period during the history of the French Revolution when a coup during the month of Thermidor led to the replacement of Robespierre's government by a new regime which may have displayed some similarities to pre-revolutionary rule. Trotsky's basis for calling the Stalinist state Thermidorian was complex, see his article 'Thermidorianism and Bonapartism,' 1931.

⁷²⁷ Aleksander Georgievich Beloborodov, senior Soviet official (1891-1938). See the reference to Napoleon's coup on 18 Brumaire in Esther's Duma reportage, **122**.

⁷²⁸ Vagarshak Arutyunovich Ter-Vaganyan, member of the Left Opposition, journalist and author, one of the sixteen victims of the first Moscow show trial (1893-1936). *O natsional'noy kul'ture [On National Culture]*, 1927.

⁷²⁹ Akmal Ikramovich Ikramov, the First Secretary of the CP of Uzbekistan 1929-37 (1898-1938).

and semi-colonial West'. **Section VIII** (59-63) reveals the hypocrisy of the Opposition's activities. It is a 'crazy contradiction' for the Oppositionists to claim to support the party's programme without renouncing their views, and 'blatant hypocrisy' for them to claim to support Lenin's principles of party structure while denouncing the party structure established 'on Leninist foundations'. Such attempts to mask their 'Trotskyist-Menshevist position' do not fool the workers. Many Opposition activities are illegal. Their bourgeois intellectual associates have connections with conspirators. The 'Black Hundred-ist antisemitic groups' support the Opposition, as their antisoviet slogans indicate. **Section IX** (63-68) concerns the Opposition's activity at the congress, amid lack of public support, decreasing membership and internal disunity. The Oppositionists did not renounce their views but signed mendacious statements including a declaration of their commitment to the party programme. Kamenev's address included 'the same old song', claiming that Lenin would not have insisted on conformity of opinion, but Kirov disproved this claim.⁷³⁰ A congress resolution condemned the Opposition and explained the expulsions. **Section X** (69-76) concerns responses to the resolution. The special commission on the Opposition issue announced that it would defer to the decisions of the congress, that it rejects the idea of forming a second party, and that the Opposition must cease to exist. The Opposition split into Zinovievists and Trotskyists but the congress upheld the prior expulsions, forbade the Opposition's views and proposed more expulsions. Smilga announced that the Opposition's views will live on.⁷³¹ Following this 'declaration of war', the expulsion motion passed unanimously. The Zinovievists and some Sapronovists capitulated but were not re-admitted to the party. This is sensible, considering their past actions. Before re-admittance, they must pass a 'test' confirming that they renounce their errors. **Section XI** (77-80) presents some comments from within the party. It recalls Lenin's 'prophetic [neviishe] words' about Zinoviev's and Kamenev's 'strikebreaking and desertion' in 1917, pointing out their resonance in the light of current events. Closing the congress, Rykov noted that one of its achievements was to eradicate all remaining traces of Menshevism within the party.⁷³² If former Oppositionists return to the party, measures must be in place to prevent problems like those of the past two years, and guard against the possibility of destruction of our work. There will be no further debates. Rykov's comments encapsulate the will of the party perfectly. **Section XII** (80-88) considers future tasks,

⁷³⁰ Sergey Mironovich Kostrikov (Kirov), senior Soviet government official, state repression increased following his assassination (1886-1934).

⁷³¹ Ivars Smilga, Bolshevik revolutionary and military leader, Oppositionist (1892-1938).

⁷³² Aleksey Ivanovich Rykov, senior Soviet official (1881-1938).

and Jewish issues. The Opposition emerged from the dissatisfaction of bourgeois unable to succeed financially. The congress therefore resolved to intensify the struggle ‘on the ideological and cultural front’. This will have particular significance for national affairs where, due to the legacy of tsarist policy and the brutality of the White Guards, there are numerous problems. In the Jewish environment, there are still luftmentshen, ‘who even themselves do not know what they live off’, and such ‘ghosts of the oylem-hatoye’ as peddlers and brokers, but also many urban bourgeois among whom persist old petit-bourgeois ideologies such as Bundism.⁷³³ The Jewish bourgeoisie tries to influence the masses, through the besmedresh, charities, and Zionist propaganda.⁷³⁴ Their children, ‘purged from the universities, unable to “become established”, barred from the Komsomol’, are vulnerable to antisoviet ideas, so the Opposition had particular influence among them. The attempts of the “third force” to spread propaganda among Jews must be stopped, as must ‘all hopes ... of warming their dinner on the mud-fire of the Opposition’.⁷³⁵ Communist Jews must help to eradicate the Opposition and the legacy of pessimism. The workers of all oppressed nations will throw off the demagoguery of the Trotskyist Opposition as the all-union working class has already done, and will carry socialist construction ‘to the end’ under the leadership of the working class and the Leninist party. ☺

‘Otto Bauer, now one of the most eminent theoreticians of the Second International, once wrote a book about the national question in which he defended the so-called national-personal autonomy. That theory is completely foreign to Marxism, it defended the existence of bourgeois Austria, abandoned the class interests of the proletariat to its national interests, allowed the possibility of a radical solution to the national question by means of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and beckoned the working class towards national dissociation.’ (52n)

344. Ester. ‘Tsu lenins yortsayt [On the Anniversary of Lenin’s Death].’ *Pyoner* [Moscow], no. 1 (35), Jan. 1928, pp. 2-5 (Yiddish)

Copy from NYPL.

This long magazine article for children is illustrated with images of Lenin. The first image shows Lenin smiling with Stalin. The article explains the distinctiveness of Lenin, whose face watches knowingly from every wall and is recognisable even to

⁷³³ Oylem-hatoye [Heb. olam ha-tohu] – ‘world in which souls of the dead must wander until they atone for a misdeed and thereby earn their place in heaven’ (Beinfeld 464).

⁷³⁴ Besmedresh – synagogue and house of study.

⁷³⁵ The “third force” – the bourgeoisie. See Stalin’s speech, ‘The Trotskyist Opposition Then and Now,’ Oct. 1927.

small children, and the important work he did in his lifetime, and provides associated historical details. Unlike Esther's earlier histories, it does not mention the Bund by name, or identify the Jews as the most oppressed group of tsarist times or the worst-affected by the war, advising instead that 'the sufferings of the Russian workers, soldiers and peasants were especially severe'. ❧

'The Mensheviks struggled against Lenin's ideas. They encouraged the working class to go with the bourgeoisie. They believed that the bourgeoisie was revolutionary and that it should not be repelled. They did not understand Lenin's teaching about the leadership of the proletariat, about the bond with the peasantry, or about the revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the working class and of the peasantry. Trotsky was also a Menshevik at that time, but of a slightly different sort.

At that time [between 1905-17], the working class was not unanimous. Part of it followed the Bolsheviks, part of it the Mensheviks, others the SRs, and still others nationalist parties which prioritised Jewish, Polish, etc interests. A fractured, divided working class had difficulty in leading the peasantry.' (3)

345. 'Der fuftsnter tsuzamenfor fun A.I.K.P.(b.) [The Fifteenth Congress of the AUCP(b)].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], 5, no. 1 (46), Jan. 1928, pp. 5-11 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

346. 'Der fuftsnter tsuzamenfor fun A.I.K.P.(b.) [The Fifteenth Congress of the AUCP(b)].' *Yung-vald* [Moscow], 5, no. 2 (47), Feb. 1928, pp. 5-8 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

347. 'Undzer feter aroysloz [Our Fourth Graduating Class].' *Mayrevnik* [Moscow], no. 3, May 1928, pp. 1-3 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

348. 'Tsi zaynen mir makrev dos lernen tsulib der praktisher arbet [Are We Sacrificing Learning for the Sake of Practical Work].' *Mayrevnik* [Moscow], no. 3, May 1928, pp. 20-24 (Yiddish)
Not sighted. Attributed by IYP to 'Esther (Frumkin)'.

1929

- 349.** M. Frumkin (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band III, tayl 1: Yorn fun der kontrrevolutsye, 1908-1911 [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume III, Part 1: The Years of Counterrevolution, 1908-1911]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler farlag far di felker fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1929. 256 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Bound with Volume III, Part 2.

1930

- 350.** M. Frumkin (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band III, tayl 2: Nayer ufshtayg [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume III, Part 2: New Uprising]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1930. 230 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Bound with Volume III, Part 1.

- 351.** M. Frumkin (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band III, tayl 2: Nayer ufshtayg [N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume III, Part 2: New Uprising]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow, 1930. 231 pages. (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Bound with Volume I, Part 2 (*Vos darf men tun?*).

- 352.** M. Frumkin (Ester). Foreword. *Yidn in F.S.S.R.: Atlas fun kartogramen un dyagramen [Jews in the USSR: An Atlas of Maps and Diagrams]*, by A. Brakhman and Y. Zhiv, Tsentraler felker-farlag fun F.S.S.R., Moscow / Kharkov / Minsk, 1930, pp. 3-4 (Yiddish)

Copy from YIVO Institute.

This foreword explains the academic aims of CUNMW, including its Jewish sector which produced this atlas. It makes repeated reference to the sector's lack of adequate research materials and notes the general poverty of Jewish studies in the USSR.

Notably, the text employs a new term, *faranene* [existing (plural)], and Russian-style use of a dash. Although the university's sectors are really institutions of political education rather than science, the dearth of materials has led the Jewish sector to produce its own, such as the present 'modest' book, the preparation of which gave students valuable practical experience of data collection and use, and graphical presentation, and which could also be used in other institutions and for self-study. ☞

‘The present atlas is the first work of the statistics and economics department, produced by students from the lower courses under the direction of the teacher of economic geography, Comrade Zhiv.⁷³⁶ This atlas must be considered a first modest attempt, a sort of preliminary to a larger work. Its significance lies less in the materials than in their graphical presentation. The most important material, which sheds light on the social structure of the Jewish masses, was largely already prepared, only part of it was newly collected from primary sources and is published here for the first time. The anticipated work, which is now being prepared in the department, contains a much larger proportion of independent research and promises to present new, original material.’ (4; par. 4)

1932

- 353.** M. Frumkin (Ester), translator. *N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Oysgeveylte verk, band I, tayl 1: In kamf far der hegemonye funem proletaryat, 1897-1903* [*N. Lenin (V. Ulyanov): Collected Works, Volume I, Part 1: During the Struggle for the Hegemony of the Proletariat, 1897-1903*]. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Farlag “Emes”, Moscow, 1932. 192 pages. (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.

Bound with Volume I, Part 2. ☞

‘– that in particular the full unity of the Jewish and non-Jewish proletariat is especially necessary to the successful struggle against antisemitism, that vile product of the racial separatism and national hatred which is driven by the government and the exploiting classes;

– that the full amalgamation of the SD organisations of the Jewish and non-Jewish proletariat can in no way constrain the independence of our Jewish comrades in conducting propaganda and agitation in one language or another, in distributing literature corresponding to the needs of a given local or national movement, or in using such slogans for agitation and direct political struggle which would be an application and development of the general and fundamental principles of the SD programme on full equal rights and on full freedom of speech, national culture, etc etc.’⁷³⁷ (‘Draft Resolution about the Place of the Bund in the Party,’ 1927, 173)

⁷³⁶ Y. Zhiv, Soviet Yiddish academic; see Zaynvl Diamant, ‘Y. Zhiv,’ *Yiddish Leksikon*, 11 Sept. 2016.

⁷³⁷ The original text was written in 1903 but published in 1927.

354. M. Frumkin (Ester), translator. *Lenin: Oysgeveylte verk, band I, tayl 3: A trot foroys, tsvey trit tsurik, 1904 [Lenin: Collected Works, Volume I, Part 3: One Step Forwards, Two Steps Back]*. Lenin-biblyotek, Series No. 1, Farlag “Emes”, Moscow, 1932 (Yiddish)

Not sighted. Bound with Volume I, Part 1; Volume V, Part 3; and Volume V, Part 2.

1933

355. M. Frumkin (Ester), translator with others. *Lenin: Oysgeveylte verk, in zeks bender: Band I [Lenin: Collected Works, in Six Volumes: Volume I]*, edited by V. Adoratsky et al, Lenin Institute of CC of ACP(b), Farlag “Emes”, Moscow, 1933 (Yiddish)

Partial copy from archive.org (from page 476 only).

In this volume, Esther was responsible for the following translations:

- *The Growth of Capitalism in Russia: The Process of the Formation of a Home Market for Large-Scale Industry* (83-262).
- ‘Draft Programme of the Social-Democratic Party and Statement of the Social-Democrats of Russia’ (348-76).
- ‘Notice from the Editors of *Iskra*’ (411-16).
- ‘The Most Important Tasks of Our Movement’ (417-23).
- ‘Where Should We Start?’ (423-31).
- ‘Report on the Party Rules,’ from speeches at Second Congress of RSDLP (780).
- ‘Second Speech in the Discussion on the Party Rules,’ from speeches at Second Congress of RSDLP (780-84).
- ‘Why I Resigned from the Editorial Board of *Iskra*: A Letter to the Editors of *Iskra*’ (802-10).
- *One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: The Crisis in Our Party*, extracts (824-89). ☞
‘That the party wants peace and positive work can hardly be doubted. But such articles as “Our Congress” hinder the achievement of peace, by raising hints and fragments of questions which are incomprehensible and cannot be comprehensible if all the upheavals of the divergence are not completely revealed, and by casting the fault of a foreign circle onto our practical centre,* which is engaged in the difficult work of practically unifying the party and which has in any case encountered and still encounters too many obstacles in the path of implementing centralism. The Russian committees are waging a struggle against the disorganizational activity and the boycott

by the minority which obstruct all the work. Resolutions to this effect have already been sent out by the committees of St. Petersburg, Moscow, Nizhegorod, Tver', Odessa, Tula, and by the Northern League.⁷³⁸

* CC – Eds.' ('Why I Resigned from the Editorial Board of *Iskra*,' 808)

1934

356. M. Frumkin (Ester), translator with others. *Lenin: Oysgeveylte verk, in zeks bender: Band III, 1914-1917 [Lenin: Collected Works, in six volumes: Volume III, 1914-1917]*, edited by V. Adoratsky et al, Lenin Institute of CC of ACP(b), Farlag "Emes", Moscow, 1934 (Yiddish)

Copy from archive.org.

In this volume, Esther was responsible for the following translations:

- 'To the Workers, Soldiers and Peasants,' from the Second All-Russian Conference of the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, 7-8 Nov. (25-26 Oct.) 1917 (719-20).
- 'The Address on Peace of 8 November (26 October),' as above (720).
- 'The Decree on Peace,' as above (721-25).
- 'Draft Regulations on Workers' Control' (730-32).
- 'On the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks): Comrades Kamenev, Zinoviev, Ryazanov and Larin' (732-33).
- 'On the Central Committee of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (Bolsheviks): To All Members of the Party and All Working Classes of Russia' (733-38).
- 'To the Public' (738-40).
- 'Address on the Agrarian Question of 27 (14) November 1917 at the Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of Peasants' Deputies: Newspaper Report' (740-42).
- 'Theses on the Constituent Assembly' (766-71).
- 'Draft Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploiting People' (771-74).
- 'Speech on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly to the All-Russia Central Executive Committee on 19 (6) January 1918' (774-78).
- 'Draft Decree on the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly' (779-81).
- 'On the Fourth Anniversary of the October Revolution' (820-29).
- 'About Our Revolution: Concerning P. Sukhanov's Memoirs' (830-34). 🐼

⁷³⁸ Nizhegorod – Nizhniy Novgorod.

‘Recently I have been leafing through Sukhanov’s memoirs about the revolution.’⁷³⁹ One particularly conspicuous feature is the pedantry of all our petit-bourgeois democrats, which is just the same among all the heroes of the II International. It goes without saying that they are extraordinarily cowardly, that even the best of them sustain themselves with precautions when it is a matter of the slightest departure from the German model, and there is no need to mention that attribute of all petit-bourgeois democrats that they displayed clearly enough throughout the revolution, their blatant slavish imitation of the past.’ (‘About Our Revolution: Concerning P. Sukhanov’s Memoirs,’ 830; par. 1)

357. Frumkina. ‘Ver hot mayn hentshke gefunen [Who Found My Glove].’ *Lenin un di kinder: Kinstlerishe zamlung far kinder*, edited by Kh. Nodel, Melukhe-farlag far di natsyonale minderhaytn in USRR, Kharkov / Kiev, 1934, p. 34 (Yiddish)
Copy from archive.org.

This is a one-page contribution to a collection of memoirs, prose and poetry about Lenin for children. Esther’s piece rapturously relates, in the first person, a first encounter with Lenin, at the Kremlin on a frosty day. He was cold because the fur coat he was wearing was not very warm. She was staring at him, trying to remember why he looked so familiar. He smiled at her and she went away, still thinking, but soon heard him call out that she had dropped her glove. She went back to get it from him, and heard his companion call him by name. The encounter delighted her. 🍷

“‘Vladimir Ilich,” I repeated. “Vladimir Ilich Lenin,” the words sparkled in my mind, and I was so pleased that Vladimir Ilich had smiled at me and touched my glove. I put the glove on my hand and hid the hand inside my fur coat.’ (34; par. 2)



⁷³⁹ Nikolay Nikolaevich Sukhanov, revolutionary, party activist, author (1882-1940). His *Zapiski o revolyutsii* [*Memoirs of the Revolution*] was published in seven volumes (1919-23); see Israel Getzler, *Nikolai Sukhanov: Chronicler of the Russian Revolution*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

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Appendices

List of abbreviations

CC	Central Committee
CUNMW	Communist University of the National Minorities of the West
HCL	Harvard College Library
IYP	The Hebrew University of Jerusalem's online Index to Yiddish Periodicals
LOC	Library of Congress
NLI	National Library of Israel
NLR	National Library of Russia
NYPL	New York Public Library
RCP(b)	Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks)
RSDLP	Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party
YIVO	YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, founded in Vilna in 1925, now housed at the Center for Jewish History, New York

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- Alexander II, the Liberator-tsar who emancipated the peasantry, assassinated by the revolutionary organisation Narodnaya volya (1818-81). **88, 222.**
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- Bennet, William Stiles, Congressman from New York, visited Vilna during a fact-finding mission concerning immigration to US (1870-1962). **128**.
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- Chanin, Nathan (Nokhem Khanin), dynamic socialist activist, editor of *Forverts* [New York] (c.1885-1965). *Esther Frumkin*.
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- Dubnow, S. M. (Semën Markovich Dubnov), eminent Russian Jewish historian and theorist (1860-1941). *Esther Frumkin*, **1**.
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- Falkovich, Elye or Eli, Yiddish linguist, academic and war hero, Esther’s student at CUNMW, published a series of articles about her in *Folks-shtime* [Warsaw], 1965 (1898-1979). *passim*.
- Fëdorov, Georgiy Georgievich, Menshevik deputy from Kiev, served on state expenditure and national education committees (1878-1938). **87**.
- Filosofov, Dmitriy Aleksandrovich, Minister of Trade and Industry until his sudden death in December 1907 (1861-1907). **81**.
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- Frumkin, Boris Markovich (B. Gornberg or Gorenberg), active Bundist speaker and author, survived into the 1930s (1872-1939?). *Esther Frumkin*.
- Gerus, Longin or Loggin Fëdorovich, teacher, SD deputy from Kuban, said to be still teaching English in 1950 (1876-?). **78, 89, 109**.
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- Litvakov, Moyshe, journalist, author, leader of Fareynikte political party of 1917-19, editor of *Der emes* [Moscow], 'a leading theorist of Jewish national Marxism' ('Litvakov, Moyshe,' *YIVO Encyclopedia*) (1875/80-1939). *Esther Frumkin*.
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- Maklakov, Vasiliy Alekseevich, lawyer, prominent Kadet deputy, part of the defence team of Mendel Beilis (1869-1957). **78, 91, 104, 120, 159**.
- Mandel'berg, Viktor (Avigdor) Yevseevich, doctor, SD (Menshevik) deputy from Irkutsk, after dissolution escaped to Finland, in 1917 briefly returned to Russia before emigrating to Palestine (1869-1944). **101, 104, 105, 114**.
- Marchlewski, Julian Balthazar [Rn. Yulian Yuzefovich Markhlevskiy], prominent Polish communist, economist, author, Rector of CUNMW from its foundation until his demise (1866-1925). **279**.
- Martov, L., see Tsederbaum.

- Medem, Vladimir, highly respected Bund leader and theoretician (1879-1923). *Esther Frumkin*, **42, 142, 143**.
- Meller-Zakomel'skiy, Baron Aleksandr Nikolaevich, infantry general and member of the State Council (1844-1928). **101**.
- Mel'nik, Varfolomey Minich, peasant, non-party deputy from Minsk (1867-1907?). **86, 107**.
- Mel'shin, see Yakubovich.
- Mendele, see Abramovich.
- Mickiewicz, Adam, Polish national poet, writer, political activist (1798-1855). **154**.
- Mikhaylyuk, Ivan Andreevich, Right non-party deputy from Kiev (1861-1913?). **98**.
- Milyukov, Pavel Nikolaevich, Kadet leader, Foreign Minister in provisional government in 1917 (1859-1943). **85, 109**.
- Moroz, Prokhor Semënovich, Trudovik deputy from Podolia (1861-?). **98**.
- Muromtsev, Sergey Andreevich, Chair of the First Duma (1850-1910). **66**.
- Mushenko, Ivan Naumovich, mining engineer, SR deputy from Kursk (1871-1950). **118**.
- Myakotin, Venedikt Aleksandrovich, historian, writer, co-founder of the Popular Socialists' party (1867-1937). **112**.
- Nabokov, Vladimir Dmitrievich, jurist and writer, leader in the Kadet party, deputy in the First Duma, attended Second Duma sessions presumably as an observer or commentator (1869-1922). **123**.
- Nalivkin, Vladimir Petrovich, army officer, ethnographer, teacher, Menshevik deputy from Tashkent (1852-1918). **95**.
- Nechitaylo, Semën Vasil'evich, Trudovik deputy from Kiev (1862-1907?). **109**.
- Nekrasov, Nikolay Alekseevich, realist poet, publisher (1821-78). **147, 212**.
- Nesterov, Anton Yakovlevich, tradesman, SD deputy from the Don Host Oblast' (1879-?). **99**.
- Niemojewski, Andrzej, Polish political activist, writer (1864-1921). **154**.
- Nisselovich, Leopold Nikolaevich, lawyer, Kadet deputy from Courland (1854-1914). **159**.
- Nol'de, Baron Emmanuil Yul'evich, member of the State Council, deputy for the Viceroy of the Caucasus Viceroyalty (1854-1909). **117**.

- Nomberg, Hersh Dovid, writer and journalist, participant in the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference (1876-1927). *Esther Frumkin*, **142**.
- Nordau, Max, doctor, co-founder of the World Zionist Organisation with Herzl (1849-1923). **141**.
- Northcliffe, see Harmsworth.
- Oppenheimer, Franz, German Jewish sociologist, political economist (1864-1943). **141**.
- Osten-Sacken, Count or Baron N. D., 'Okhrana colonel' (Ascher, *P. A. Stolypin*, 183). **69, 122, 125**.
- Ozol, Ivan Petrovich, businessman and accountant, SD deputy from Riga, later emigrated to USA (1878-1968). **97, 101, 110**.
- Pavlov, Vladimir Petrovich, military general, Prosecutor-General of Russia, assassinated by an SR sailor in connection with the law establishing military field courts (1851-1906). **43, 80**.
- Pazhitnov, Konstantin Alekseevich, economist (1879-1964). **155**.
- Pepłowski, Edward, Koło deputy from Piotrków gubernia (1880-1960). **81**.
- Peretz, Yitskhok Leybush (Isaac Leib), author, playwright, participant in the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference (1852-1915). *Esther Frumkin*, **134, 147, 201, 212, 213, 219**.
- Pergament, Osip Yakovlevich, lawyer, writer, Kadet deputy from Odessa (1868-1909). **97, 98, 99, 101, 110, 111, 112**.
- Peshkov, Aleksey Maksimovich (Maksim Gor'kiy, Maxim Gorky), leading Soviet author and political activist (1868-1936). *Esther Frumkin*, **272**.
- Petrochenko, Fëdor Ignat'evich, non-party peasant deputy from Vitebsk (1875-1918?). **92**.
- Petrov, Grigoriy Spiridonovich, Orthodox priest, writer, public figure, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1866-1925). **109**.
- Plehve, Vyacheslav von, director of the imperial police, Minister of the Interior, assassinated by SRs (1846-1904). **4, 222**.
- Poincaré, Raymond, Prime Minister of France three times, including 15 January 1922 to 1 June 1924 (1860-1934). **264**.
- Pokrovskiy, Ivan Petrovich, doctor, SD deputy from Kuban, known in the Duma as 'the second Pokrovsky' (1872-1963). **157**.
- Povylius, Antanas [Rn. Anton Mateushevich Povilyus], SD deputy from Kovno (Kaunas) (1871-1961). **106, 109**.

- Poznanskiy, Nikolay Nikolaevich, barrister, non-party deputy from Kharkov (1868-1926?). **110.**
- Purishkevich, Vladimir Mitrofanovich, highly visible right-wing politician, Right deputy from Bessarabia in the Second Duma (1870-1920). **46, 75, 77, 80, 83, 84, 88, 90, 92, 97, 99, 105, 107, 122, 145.**
- Pushkin, Aleksandr Sergeevich, great Russian writer (1799-1837). **88.**
- P'yanykh, Ivan Yemel'yanovich, peasant, SR deputy from Kursk (1863?-1929). **86.**
- Rabinovich, Solomon Naumovich (Sholem Aleichem), classic Yiddish author (1859-1916). *Esther Frumkin*, **201.**
- Rafes, Moyshe, prominent Bundist, later senior official in the Soviet Ukrainian government (1883-1942). **150, 159, 166, 189.**
- Rakhmiel, see Vaynshteyn.
- Rakovsky, Christian (Cristian Racovski), medical doctor, prominent Soviet official (1873-1941). **285.**
- Rediger (also, Roediger), Aleksandr Fëdorovich, Minister of War from July 1905 to March 1909 (1853-1920). **104.**
- Reisen, Abraham, writer, poet, editor, participant in the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference (1876-1953) *Esther Frumkin, Bibliographic conclusions*, **146, 212.**
- Renner, Karl, Austrian leader and political theorist (1870-1950). **139, 143, 145.**
- Reyn, Georgiy Yermolaevich, doctor, Octobrist deputy from Volhynia, later professor of medicine in Bulgaria (1854-1942). **108.**
- Rodichev, Fëdor Izmaylovich, lawyer, co-founder of the Kadets' party (1854-1933). **75, 77, 93, 109, 110, 117.**
- Rosenfeld, Morris, Yiddish worker-poet (1862-1923). **212.**
- Rosenfeld, Samuel (Shmuel), journalist, editor of *Der fraynd* (Russia) and *Der tog* (New York) (1869-1943). **242.**
- Rozenfel'd, Lev Borisovich (Kamenev), senior Soviet government official (1883-1936). **269, 325, 342, 343.**
- Rykov, Aleksey Ivanovich, senior Soviet government official (1881-1938). **343.**
- Sakhno, Vasiliy Grigor'evich, SD deputy from Kiev, after dissolution denied membership of the SD faction at his trial and was acquitted (1864-?). **90.**
- Saltykov, Sergey Nikolaevich, writer, SD deputy from Vyatka (1874-1937). **105.**

- Sapronov, Timofey Vladimirovich, senior Soviet government official, later headed an ultra-left group within the Opposition (1887-1937). **292**.
- Sayko, Yefim Antonovich, Trudovik deputy from Poltava (1879-?). **88**.
- Shvarts (Schwartz), Aleksandr Nikolaevich, Minister of 'National Enlightenment' 1908-10 (1848-1915). **140, 146**.
- Semënov, Averkiy Ivanovich, Trudovik deputy from Podolia (Ukraine) (1857-?). **98**.
- Shakespeare, William, great English playwright and poet (1564-1616). **218**.
- Shapiro, Yakov Nokhimovich, Zionist Kadet deputy from Courland (1865-?). **94, 99**.
- Shcheglovitov, Ivan Grigor'evich, Minister of Justice 1906-15, Duma secretary in early 1917 (1861-1918). **101, 104, 111, 120, 140, 143**.
- Shcherbyna, Fedir Andriyovych, writer, academic, public figure, PS deputy from Kuban Oblast' (1849-1936). **83**.
- Shimanskiy, Ivan Adamovich, non-party peasant deputy from Minsk (1872-1938). **92**.
- Shingarëv, Andrey Ivanovich, doctor, publicist, Kadet deputy from Voronezh, minister in 1917 governments (1869-1918). **88**.
- Shoymor, or Shomer, pseudonym of Nokhem Meyer Shaykevich, writer of popular Yiddish novels, criticised by Sholem Aleichem (c. 1849-1905). **147**.
- Shtif, Nokhem, linguist, political and cultural activist, author (1879-1933). **221**.
- Shul'gin, Vasilii Vital'evich, Right deputy from Volhynia, later spent twenty years in the Soviet gulag (1878-1976). **78, 86, 88, 91, 109, 110, 118**.
- Shvedov, Yakov Zakharovich, Soviet poet, songwriter (1905-84). **296**.
- Sigov, Pavel Sergeevich, teacher, SR deputy from Perm (1865-1937). **81**.
- Sinadino, Panteleymon Viktorovich, Right deputy from Bessarabia (1875-1941). **79, 92, 117, 143**.
- Sliozberg, Genrikh, liberal lawyer, Attainer, model of nationalism and klal yisroel policy in Esther's later articles (1863-1937). **146, 159**.
- Śliwiński, Artur, Prime Minister of Poland from 28 June to 7 July 1922 (1877-1953). **239**.
- Smilga, Ivars, Bolshevik revolutionary, military leader, Oppositionist (1892-1938). **343**.
- Sozonov, Yegor Sergeevich, SR activist who participated in the assassination of Plehve in 1904 (1879-1910). **92**.

- Sozonovich, Ivan Petrovich, literature professor at Warsaw University, Octobrist deputy from Mogilëv, Right deputy and Secretary in Third Duma (1855-1923). **107.**
- Spektor, Mordkhe, popular Yiddish author (1858-1925). **212.**
- Spiridonova, Mariya Aleksandrovna, SR activist who shot an official, publicly complained of being physically abused while under arrest (1884-1941). **92.**
- Springer, Rudolf, see Renner.
- Stakhovich, Mikhail Aleksandrovich, leader of the Party of Peaceful Renovation, later Governor-General of Finland (1861-1923). **94.**
- Stalin, see Dzhugashvili.
- Stenbok-Fermor (Stenbock-Fermor), Vladimir Vasil'evich, agronomist, Right deputy from Kherson (1866-1950). **92.**
- Stinnes, Hugo, major industrialist, press magnate with political interests (1870-1924). **255.**
- Stolypin, Pëtr Arkad'evich, Prime Minister and Interior Minister of Russia 1906-11 (1862-1911). **11, 22, 25, 29, 50, 65, 68, 69, 70, 72, 74, 75, 79, 80, 96, 109, 118.**
- Strauss, Johann, Austrian composer famous for his waltzes (1825-99). **165.**
- Struve, Pëtr Bergardovich, writer, political and economic theorist, Kadet deputy from St. Petersburg (1870-1944). **87, 92, 103.**
- Sukhanov, Nikolay Nikolaevich, revolutionary, party activist, author (1882-1940). **356.**
- Sverdlov, Yakov Mikhailovich, senior Soviet government official (1885-1919). **279.**
- Svyatopolk-Mirskiy, Prince Dmitriy Nikolaevich, Right deputy from Bessarabia (1874-1950). **82, 86, 88.**
- Tatarinov, Fëdor Vasil'evich, Kadet deputy from Orël (1860-1933). **96.**
- Taube, Baron Aleksandr Aleksandrovich, military general (1864-1919). **92.**
- Ter-Vaganyan, Vagarshak Arutyunovich, member of the Left Opposition, journalist and author, among the victims of the first Moscow show trial (1893-1936). **343.**
- Terman, Moyshe, active Bundist propagandist from Mogilëv (1874-1917). **254.**
- Teslenko, Nikolay Vasil'evich, lawyer, Kadet deputy from Moscow (1870-1942). **78, 88.**
- Tigranyan, Sirakan Faddeevich, teacher of philosophy, Dashnak deputy from Yerevan (1875-1935). **107.**

- Tikhvinskiy, Fëdor Vasil'evich, priest, member of the peasant union, independent left-wing deputy (1861-?). **78, 120.**
- Timashev, Sergey Ivanovich, Minister of Trade and Industry 1909-15 (1858-1920). **183.**
- Tolstoy, Count Lev (Leo) Nikolaevich, great Russian writer and moralist (1828-1910). **2, 39, 88.**
- Treimanis-Zvārgulis, Edvards, Latvian actor, poet, satirist, Kadet deputy from Livonia (1866-1950). **99.**
- Trotsky, see Bronshteyn.
- Tsederbaum, Yuliy Osipovich (L. Martov), leader of the Menshevik faction of the Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party (1873-1923). **42, 212.**
- Tsereteli, Irakli, SD deputy, later minister in the provisional government and member of the Georgian constituent assembly (1881-1959). **72, 82, 91, 109, 118, 123, 124, 130, 199, 251.**
- Turgenev, Ivan Sergeevich, major Russian writer of fiction (1818-83). **86, 212.**
- Tyumenev, Aleksandr Il'ich, prominent Marxist historian (1880-1959). **312**
- Ulyanov, Vladimir Il'ich (Lenin), major Russian revolutionary leader and Soviet head of state (1870-1924). *Esther Frumkin*, **42, 182, 198, 222, 225, 250, 258, 292, 300, 301, 302, 303, 306, 307, 308, 309, 311, 315, 325, 337, 342, 343, 344, 349, 350, 351, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357.**
- Urusov, Prince Aleksandr Petrovich, 'ultra-Right' Octobrist deputy from Tula (1850-1914). **96.**
- Uspenskiy, Viktor Petrovich, doctor, SR deputy from Ryazan' (1869-1919). **92.**
- Valt, Abraham (Liesin), Bundist, poet, editor of *Di tsukunft* [New York] (1872-1938). *Esther Frumkin, Bibliographic conclusions*, **212, 242.**
- Vandervelde, Emile, leading Belgian socialist and government official in ministerial and other positions (1866-1938). **229.**
- Varun-Sekret, Sergey Timofeevich, Octobrist deputy from Kherson (1868-1962). **109.**
- Vasil'chikov, Prince Boris Aleksandrovich, senior government official (1860-1931). **82.**
- Vasyutin, Fëdor Kuz'mich, Trudovik deputy from Kharkov (1877-?). **109.**
- Vaynshteyn, Aron (Rakhmiel or Yerakhmiel), teacher, member of the Bund CC from 1917, senior communist official in Belorussia, arrested after speaking publicly in support of Esther after her arrest (1877-1938). *Esther Frumkin.*
- Vayter, A., see Devenishski.

- Vinaver, Maksim Moiseevich, lawyer, co-founder of the Kadets and Attainers' parties (1863-1926). **144, 159.**
- Vladimirov, Ivan Alekseevich, realist artist (1870-1947). **323.**
- Vostorgov, Ioann (Ivan) Ivanovich, Orthodox protoiereus (priest), member of the Union of the Russian People. **43.**
- Wagner, Richard, German composer and conductor (1813-83). **250.**
- Wahl, Victor Vil'gel'movich von, military general, Governor of Vilna from October 1901 to September 1902 (1840-1915). **222.**
- Wiener, Leo, linguist, translator, lecturer in Slavic Studies at Harvard University (1862-1939). **147.**
- Wilhelm, Crown Prince of Germany (1882-1951). **146.**
- Winchevsky, Morris, socialist leader and poet in London and New York, co-founder of the Yiddish *Forward* newspaper (1856-1932). **212.**
- Wirth, Joseph, German Chancellor from May 1921 to November 1922 (1879-1956). **255.**
- Witte, Count Sergey Yul'evich, high-level Russian government figure, participated in producing the October Manifesto of 17 October 1905 (1849-1915). **14.**
- Wolffsohn, David, prominent early Zionist, senior office-holder in the World Zionist Congress (1856-1914). **141.**
- Yakubovich (Mel'shin), Pëtr Filippovich, writer, revolutionary (1860-1911). **92.**
- Yerakhmiel, see Vaynshteyn.
- Yevlogiy (Eulogius), member of the Second and Third Dumas from the Orthodox population of Lublin and Siedlce gubernias 1907-12, Bishop of Chełm 1912-14 (1868-1946). **78, 98, 157.**
- Yevreinov, Vladimir Vyacheslavovich, SR deputy from Astrakhan (1873-1935?). **92.**
- Zasulich, Vera Ivanovna, prominent early Russian Marxist (1849-1919). **95.**
- Zaytsev, Mikhail Gerasimovich, doctor, deputy from Vyatka (1864-1909). **83.**
- Zeitlin, Hillel, mystical and journalistic writer in Warsaw (1871-1942). **146, 154.**
- Zeltser, see Grosser.
- Zetkin, Clara, prominent German socialist of the generation preceding Esther's (1857-1933). **250, 251, 260.**
- Zhidelëv, Nikolay Andreevich, SD deputy from Vladimir (1880-1950). **75.**

Zhitlovsky, Chaim, philosopher, writer, literary critic, participant in the Czernowitz Yiddish Language Conference (1865-1943). *Esther Frumkin*, **135, 221**.

Zhiv, Y., Soviet Yiddish academic. **352**.

Zinoviev (Zinov'ev), see Apfelbaum.

Zobov, Nikolay Matveevich, forester, author (1822-73). **212**.

Zola, Emile, French writer, public figure (1840-1902). **142**.

Zubatov, Sergey Vasil'evich, Moscow police administrator who encouraged legal forms of activism in order to subdue the revolutionary movement (1864-1917). **222**.

Zurabov, Arshak Gerasimovich, Menshevik SD deputy from Tblisi (1873-1920). **87, 103, 107, 117, 122**.

Glossary

Ada Kaleh – island in the Danube, ultimately submerged by dam construction.

Administrative language – language or languages used by government bodies.

Akatuy – mining settlement for political criminals, part of the Nerchinsk katorga system in Zabaykal'ya [Transbaikalia].

Alef – first letter of the Hebrew and Yiddish alphabets, must be accompanied by a vowel symbol in order to carry vowel sound. In this dissertation it is rendered as 'Alef' if used as an initial without an accompanying vowel.

Alefbeys – ABC, by extension basic principles.

Alt-nayland – old new land, Zionist novel by Theodore Herzl (*Altneuland*, 1902).

Am-haseyfer [Heb. Am ha-sefer] – people of the book.

Anschauung method – pedagogical method developed by the educational theorist Johann Pestalozzi in the nineteenth century, placed major emphasis on practical experience.

Arbkanfesn – ritual undergarment worn by religious Jewish males.

Archiereus – bishop in the Orthodox Church.

Attainer – delegate from the Union for the Attainment of Full Rights for the Jewish People in Russia party.

Autonomism – movement favouring Jewish self-rule in the Diaspora, rejecting assimilation.

Besmedresh – synagogue and house of study.

Birzhe – meeting in a public place, acted as a dispute tribunal between workers and bosses (326, 90n2).

Black Hundred – Russian nationalist and antisemitic movement often associated with pogrom violence. Often called ‘Black Hundreds’.

Black reaction, or ‘the reaction’ – period of particularly severe government activity against insurgency, generally dated 1907-14.

Boevoy otryad or “BO” – armed unit.

Bohemia – western area of the modern Czech Republic made up of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia.

Break Shabes – defy the laws of Shabes.

Bukovina – multi-ethnic region now in Ukraine and Romania, location of Czernowitz.

Bund – Der algemeyner yidisher arbeter-bund in lite, poylen un rusland [The General League of Jewish Workers in Lithuania/Belorussia, Poland and Russia], founded in Vilna in 1897, dissolved in Russia in the years following the October Revolution of 1917 but endured overseas.

Communist University of the National Minorities of the West [CUNMW, Rn. KUNMZ, Ysh. Mayrevke or Mayrev-universitet] – university for preparation of party activists, organised in linguistic sectors. Esther was a senior administrator there throughout its existence (1921-36).

Curia – electoral districts (Austria).

Dalet – fourth letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Dashnaktsutyun – Armenian nationalist party.

‘Di shvue’ – Bund anthem, written by S. An-sky in 1902.

Druzhiniki – civilian police.

Economic terror – violence and damage aimed at obtaining improvements to economic conditions by force.

Erev – evening, traditional beginning of a new day.

Esriv-vearbe – the twenty-four books of the Jewish Bible (Beinfeld and Bochner, 448).

Fabkom – factory committee.

Fareynikte – Fareynikte yidishe sotsyalistishe arbeter partey [United Jewish Socialist Workers Party].

Folkombild [Rn. Narkompros] – People’s Commissariat for Education.

Fraynd, Der – Yiddish daily newspaper founded in St. Petersburg in 1903.

Folks-bildung – national (culturally specific) primary-level education.

Galicia – region straddling the border of modern-day Poland and Ukraine.

Ganeydn – Garden of Eden, heaven

Gegenwartsarbeit [work in the present] – extension of the Zionists’ focus to political and cultural activity in Russia.

Gehenem – hell.

Genoa Conference – meeting of representatives of thirty-four European nations, 10 April to 19 May 1922.

Geule [Heb. ge’ulah] – redemption.

Giml – third letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Gimnasium – ‘A high school with an emphasis on the humanities’ (*Prophecy and Politics*, xv).

Glavpolitprosvet – see Hoytpolitafkler.

Gold-sack – collective reference to wealthy capitalists.

Goles [Heb. galut] – Jewish Diaspora, outside the Holy Land.

Goles-arbayt – work in the Diaspora, synonymical to Gegenwartsarbeit.

Gubernia – administrative governorate within the Russian Empire.

Hague Conference – international conference, 15 June to 19 July 1922.

Halevay! – if only!

Ha-melitz – Hebrew newspaper founded in Odessa in 1860.

Handwerksordnung – German law governing artisanal trades.

Helsingfors Program – political platform devised at the All-Russian Zionist Congress held in Helsingfors (now Helsinki) in 1906.

Heymish – very own, homegrown.

High Holy Days – major festivals Rosheshone and Yonkiper.

Hoytpolitafkler [Rn. Glavpolitprosvet] – Soviet Central Committee for Political Education.

Inorodtsy – legal category applied to particular non-Russian ethnic groups.

Inter-national – ‘among nations’ rather than ‘among countries’.

Iskra – newspaper of the RSDLP, closely associated with Lenin (1900-05).

Ivrit be-ivrit – Hebrew taught in Hebrew, the Direct Method (Schulman 4).

Kadets – centrist political party of the Constitutional Democrats.

Kampf – periodical produced by the Austrian Social-Democratic Party.

Kapoyres – repentance ritual, transferring sins to an item which is then donated.

Kashe – difficult question.

Kasse – workers’ security fund.

Kehile – ‘The umbrella organisation of the Jewish community in a given place, responsible for charity and other common interests’ (*Prophecy and Politics*, xvii).

Khanike – midwinter festival of light celebrating both a miracle that occurred in the Temple during the period of the Maccabean Revolt and the revolt itself.

Kheyder – religious primary school.

Khumesh – Pentateuch, first five books of the Bible.

Khutspe – audacity, impudence.

Khutspedik – audacious.

KIM – Communist Youth International, the international organisation for Komsomols.

Kishinëv – Chişinău, Moldova.

Klal yisroel – ‘politics based on the idea of Jewish unity as against the politics of the class struggle’ (*Prophecy and Politics*, xvii).

Kleyn-bund – Little Bund, the Bundist youth organisation.

Koło – Polish nationalist party.

Komsomol – Communist Youth League, or a member of the League.

Kosher – acceptable by Jewish dietary law.

Kovno – Kaunas, Lithuania.

Koyen-godl – high priest.

Kultur-lige – Jewish cultural and social organisation.

Kutaisi gubernia – governorate covering much of western Georgia.

Lausanne Conference – conference to establish a new treaty between the former combatants in the First World War, opened in November 1922.

Lekhaim, Make a – make a toast.

Lemberg – L'viv, Ukraine.

Lite – Yiddish name for the northwestern area of the Russian Empire, incorporating Lithuania and also part of Belorussia.

Łódź – city in central Poland, formerly a major textile-producer and site of economic protest.

Luftmenschen – people without income.

Lumpenproletarians – people from the lowest stratum of society such as criminals and vagrants.

Maccabi – Zionist sports movement.

Maskil – adherent of the Haskole [Haskalah, Jewish Enlightenment] movement which, for example, supported the study of secular subjects.

Mazltov – congratulations.

Melamed – teacher in a kheyder.

Meshiekh – the Messiah.

Meyvn – expert.

Mefitsey haskole – Society for the Dissemination of Enlightenment among the Jews of Russia [Ysh. Mefitsey haskole, Rn. OPE], 1863-1929. Other renderings in English include 'Society for Promotion of Culture among the Jews of Russia'.

Mir – pre-revolutionary peasant community structure.

Mitsve – good deed with religious merit, or commandment.

Mobile elements – people who are not settled in a particular locale.

MOPR – Russian acronym of International Red Aid, which supported communist political prisoners (1922-47).

Moscow Uprising – important event of the 1905 revolution.

Musar – religious movement emphasising the importance of personal behaviour, promoting self-examination primarily through meditation and study. Rabbi Yisroel Salanter (1810-83) is held to be the movement's founder.

Nakaz – mandate from constituents, or royal decree.

Narkompros, see Folkombild.

Narodniks – in the Second Duma, a coalition from the Trudovik, NS [Popular Socialist] and SR parties. Elsewhere, the Populists, an early Russian revolutionary movement which focussed on the peasantry

Narym – one of the main places of internal exile for political prisoners in Russia.

National-cultural autonomy – administrative system whereby each nation governs its own education and culture, with legislative power, funded by the government or internally. Also, the associated governing body.

New Economic Policy (NEP) – temporary Soviet government policy allowing some private enterprise, introduced in March 1921.

Neyrtomed [Heb. ner tamid, eternal light] – traditional synagogue fixture.

Nigunim – Jewish, often Hasidic, melodies.

Nikolaevsky soldier – metaphorically, a person with little education or connection with their cultural heritage.

Novaya zhizn' – SD newspaper, its contributors included Lunacharsky and Gorky (1917-18).

Novoe vremya – pro-government newspaper published in St. Petersburg (1868-1917).

Novyy voskhod – Russian Jewish intellectual journal aligned with the principles of the Mefitsey haskole (1910-15).

October Manifesto – manifesto promising political reforms, issued by Tsar Nicholas II during the revolution of 1905.

Octobrists – moderate monarchist party.

Okhrana – tsarist secret police.

Oylem-habe [Heb. ha-olam ha-ba] – world to come.

Oylem-hatoye [Heb. ha-olam ha-tohu] – 'world in which souls of the dead must wander until they atone for a misdeed and thereby earn their place in heaven' (Beinfeld 464).

Peaceful Renovation Party – liberal breakaway party from the Octobrists, formed in 1906.

Peysekh – harvest festival commemorating the biblical departure of the Israelites from Egypt, often coincides with Easter.

Pidyones – payments for advice.

Pintele yid, dos – the essence of a Jew, intimate attachment to Judaism (Beinfeld and Bochner 493).

Pioneers – junior organisation to the Komsomol, for children aged nine to fourteen.

Poale Zion [Ysh. Poyle-t sien or Paletsien] – Russian Zionist party founded by Ber Borochoy in 1906.

Popular Socialists [Rn. NSP] – neo-populist party founded in 1906.

Predvorilka – presumably the Shpalerka remand prison at 25 Shpalernaya ulitsa.

Purim – festival celebrating the ancient redemption of the Jewish people from a murderous foe.

Purim-shpileray – buffoonery similar to that of actors performing in a specific genre of theatrical presentation of the story associated with Purim.

Razsvet – Russian Zionist newspaper published in St. Petersburg 1907-11 (*YIVO Encyclopedia*).

Reaction – see Black reaction.

Rebbe – leader of a community belonging to the Hasidic movement, which arose in Poland-Lithuania in the eighteenth century.

Reboyne-sheloyem – God, lord of the world.

Rech' – pre-revolutionary daily newspaper of the Kadets.

Rosheshone [Heb. Rosh ha-Shanah] – Jewish new year, major festival.

Rossiya – tsarist government newspaper.

Russkie vedomosti – liberal Russian newspaper (1863-1918).

Sambatyon – river discussed in rabbinic literature, said to stop flowing every Sabbath.

SD – Social-Democracy, either social-democratic movement as a whole or the RSDLP (Russian Social-Democratic Labour Party).

Sèvres Treaty – forerunner to the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923. Signed on 10 August 1920 by the Allied and Central Powers, partitioning the Ottoman Empire.

Shabes [Heb. Shabbat] – Jewish Sabbath.

Shema – important prayer recited every morning and evening.

Shlimazldik – unfortunate, unsuccessful.

Shtadlones – submissive petitioning to the authorities on behalf of Jewish communities, by derivation any submissive behaviour by Jewish leadership.

Shtetl – market town (Gitelman).

Shulkhn-orekh [Heb. Shulḥan Arukh] – code of Jewish law authored by Joseph Caro in the mid-sixteenth century. Metaphorically, a guiding text.

Simkhe – happy occasion such as a wedding.

Sing Hallel – Hallel is a collection of psalms of praise; to sing Hallel is to praise.

Skhodke [Rn. skhodka] – group of party activists, generally organised by profession (326, 90n1).

Socialist-Zionist party – often known as SS, founded in 1905.

SRs – Socialist-Revolutionaries’ political party.

State Council – imperial Russia’s parliamentary upper house. (The Duma was the lower house.)

Sukes [Heb. Sukkot; Tabernacles] – harvest festival commemorating part of the biblical Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt.

Sverdlov University – the first tertiary party school founded in the USSR.

Talmetoyre [Heb. Talmud-Torah] – ‘community schools organized for the children of the poor, where no tuition fee was charged. Special permits were required for organizing these schools, in which secular subjects were taught, whose charters required that Russian should be the language of instruction. Jewish subjects, such as Bible, were permitted to be taught in Yiddish. The Talmud Torah differed from the ḥadorim by introducing secular, nonreligious subjects’ (Schulman 3).

Talmud – important text containing rabbinical discussions about Jewish law.

Tanakh – the Old Testament.

Tashlekh – repentance ritual of casting off sins into running water.

Territorialism – movement for a Jewish homeland not necessarily in Palestine.

“Third force” – the bourgeoisie.

Tof – final letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

Toyre [Heb. Torah] – the first five books of the Bible. Metaphorically, a philosophical or theoretical system.

Treyf – unacceptable by Jewish dietary law.

Trudoviks – moderate labour party.

Tsadek (pl. tsadikim) – saintly man.

Tsdoke pushke – charity moneybox.

Tsitses – tassels on arbekanfesn, endowed with ritual significance.

Ukase – official decree with legislative enforcement.

Union of 17 October, see Octobrists.

Union of the Russian People – right-wing, nationalist organisation.

Uchënyy yevrey – Learned Jew, adviser on Jewish affairs.

Uyezd – secondary-level administrative subdivision of the Russian Empire.

Vedomstvo – administrative agency.

Vilna – Vilnius, capital of Lithuania.

Volost – administrative subdivision of tsarist Russia, smaller than an uyezd. Following the peasants’ emancipation, a self-governed unit.

‘Warszawianka’ – the Song of Warsaw, a popular revolutionary hymn.

White Guards – anticommunist forces which strove to restore the tsarist monarchy.

Wolny Głos – socialist newspaper published in Warsaw.

Wonder tales – stories with an element of the supernatural, like those of Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav (1772-1810).

Yekopists – members of Yekape [EKP or YKP] Poale Zion, the Jewish Communist Party (Poale Zion), which existed in Russia from 1919-22.

Yeshive – school for study of Jewish religious texts, or rabbinical seminary.

Yevreyskiy Mir – monthly Russian-Jewish literary and scientific anthology, published in St. Petersburg, 1909-11.

Yevsektsiya – common name for the Central Bureau of the Jewish Sections of the RCP.

Yidishkayt – Jewish identity and culture.

YKP, see Yekopists.

Yonkiper [Heb. Yom Kippur] – Day of Atonement, major festival.

Yontevdik – festive.

Yontoyvim – festivals.

Yortsayt – anniversary of a death.

‘You Fell Victim to a Fateful Struggle’ – funeral dirge of the Russian revolutionary movement, written in 1878.

Young Zionists [Tseire tsien] – socialist political party established in Poland in 1903.

Zamoskvorech’ye – area in the centre of Moscow.

Zemotdel – branch of the Soviet Department of Agricultural Affairs.

Zemsky nachalnik [zemskiy nachal’nik] – local administrator of high authority.

Zemstvos – district councils.

Zhenotdel – branch of the Soviet Department of Women’s Affairs.

Zmires – Shabes [Shabbat, Sabbath] songs.

