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CHAVA ROSENFARB'S YIDDISH MONTREAL¹

Introduction

I write in Yiddish because it was the language of my home in Poland, it was the language of my childhood and my community; it was the language I knew like the map of my own heart. So I wrote my novels in Yiddish out of a sense of loyalty to the vanished world of my youth, out of a sense of obligation to a world that no longer existed.

Little did I realize that in a few short years, Yiddish itself would no longer exist— at least not as I knew it, not as a living and breathing language of day-to-day life. To lose one's language is an unspeakably painful thing, especially for a writer. Writing is always a lonely profession, but the Yiddish writer's loneliness has an additional dimension. Her readership has perished. Her language has gone up with the smoke of the crematoria. She creates in a vacuum, almost without a readership, out of fidelity to a vanished language; as if to prove that Nazism did not succeed in extinguishing that language's last breath, and that it is still alive.²

These words are taken from Chava Rosenfarb's 2006 convocation address held at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta over half a century after her arrival in Canada. They are a far cry from the experiences of Yiddish that Rosenfarb shared with a large and vibrant community of Yiddish literati in Montreal. When Chava Rosenfarb arrived in Montreal in winter of 1950, she

was a young Yiddish poet who had survived the Lodz Ghetto as well as the Auschwitz, Sasel and Bergen Belsen camps and subsequently lived as a Displaced Person in Belgium. Born in 1923, Rosenfarb was raised in a leftist-oriented Yiddish home where she was encouraged to write. A poet since childhood, Rosenfarb was integrated into the literary circle of the Lodz Ghetto when renowned poet Simkhe-Bunem Shayevitsh became her mentor. Although she lost all of her poems during the selection process at Auschwitz, she was able to reconstitute many from memory and published her first book of poetry in London in 1947.³ Once in Montreal Rosenfarb joined an extended literary “family,” and would go on to become one of the world’s most important Yiddish novelists and prose writers of the post-Holocaust period.

Much has been written about Yiddish culture in Montreal, in particular during the vibrant immigrant period spanning 1900 through the end of the Second World War.⁴ However, far less has been written about new expressions of Yiddish culture in the post-Holocaust period, when the language faced a sharp decline in numbers of speakers.⁵ Anita Norich posits that Yiddish cultural production was far from dormant in America during the Second World War,⁶ and recent scholarship is indicating that Yiddish culture flourished in the displaced persons camps after the Holocaust.⁷ As Jeffrey Shandler argues, the annihilation of roughly half of the world’s Yiddish speakers and the decimation of a centuries-old Yiddish heartland in the Nazi Holocaust brought about a fundamental reorientation of Yiddish culture, which had historically been rooted in Europe, to newer immigrant centres, particularly those in America; it also placed Yiddish into the realm of the “postvernacular,” where the symbolic meaning of the language came to outweigh its communicative functions.⁸ What were the experiences of Yiddish writers who survived the Holocaust in a city like Montreal as it moved from a minor to a major centre of Yiddish culture on the world stage even as the dynamics of language use shifted?

This paper will examine Rosenfarb's experiences of Yiddish Montreal, her home until 1998 and where she authored her major prose works. It will posit that the city's active Yiddish milieu nurtured her literary career by placing her in a literary community of fellow literati even as the language faced a declining readership outside. While she was among the best known of the Yiddish writers in the city, she was by no means a lone writer carrying the torch for a language and culture that was vanishing. Rather, she formed part of an active and dedicated group of creators and supporters of Yiddish literature for whom the culture represented a forward-looking expression of Jewish identity. This paper argues that in post-Holocaust Montreal, writing in Yiddish did not occur in a "vacuum" as a memorial to a destroyed Yiddish civilization; rather, it took place within a committed fellowship of writers and readers.

Yiddish Montreal

Montreal's existing Yiddish cultural milieu provided fertile soil for Rosenfarb and other post-War arrivals. With a Jewish population of 85,000, the metropolis absorbed some 15,000 of 35,000 Holocaust survivors that came to Canada between 1947 and 1956, the largest number of any Canadian city.⁹ These newcomers took on active roles in Montreal's existing Jewish institutions as well as creating their own.¹⁰ Many were drawn into the city's extensive Yiddish infrastructure: a network of secular Jewish schools that taught the language; a Jewish Public Library that offered extensive Yiddish programming and served as a centre for Yiddish culture; a daily newspaper, the *Keneder Adler* (Canadian Jewish Eagle) and other opportunities for publication; and emerging amateur Yiddish theatre. The original founders of these institutions had come with waves of mass immigration in the opening decades of the twentieth century that brought to Canada a core Jewish intelligentsia for whom secular Yiddish culture held high value. Among the Montreal leadership were poets Ida Maza and J.I. Segal; journalist and literary critic H.M. Caiserman; musicologist and *Keneder Adler*

editor Israel Rabinovitch; and pedagogues Shloime Wiseman and Yaakov Zipper. By Rosenfarb's arrival, the Yiddish literary community had also come to include Yiddish writers with established international reputations who settled in Montreal during and after the Holocaust, notably essayist and poet Melekh Ravitch (pen name of Zekharye Khone Bergner, arrived 1941) and poet Rokhl Korn (arrived 1948). It was further augmented by later arrivals such as poet and prosewriter Mordecai Husid (arrived 1950) and novelist Yehuda Elberg (arrived 1956 via New York). Montreal also marked a site of fruitful exchange with other Yiddish hubs, notably nearby New York City, in the form of guest performances, lecture tours, and reciprocal visits.

Even as English displaced Yiddish as the Canadian Jewish lingua franca, with Yiddish mother tongue statistics declining from a high of 96% in 1931 (99% in Quebec) to 51% in 1951,¹¹ the post-Holocaust arrivals bolstered and enriched the Yiddish milieu. For example, Melekh Ravitch became a catalyst in Montreal's Yiddish cultural life, notably in the areas of literature and education. A core member of the pre-War Warsaw Yiddish literary scene as well as secretary of that city's Yiddish writers' union, Ravitch's activism in Montreal, which included reviving the People's University under the auspices of the Jewish Public Library as well as creating a local Yiddish writer's union, helped to shape Montreal into a major centre of Yiddish literary life in the 1940s and beyond.

For the newcomers, as for earlier generations of Yiddish-speaking immigrants, Canada formed a site of infinite possibilities for Jewish cultural revitalization. David Roskies has characterized pre-War Yiddish Montreal as a "utopian venture" whereby a group of "lay intellectuals" forged a maximalist, future-oriented culture of *yiddishkayt*¹² as a basis for Jewish continuity.¹³ An ideological underpinning of "*doikayt* (hereness)"—the formation of an enduring local branch of a transnational Yiddish civilization—was sharpened by the losses of the Holocaust and collective efforts to both preserve and renew. In her 2007 essay, "Canadian Yiddish Writers,"

Rosenfarb depicts the shared outlook of the Canadian Yiddish literary community, most of which was comprised of poets:

[O]ur Canadian Yiddish poets came to see in Canada a kind of merged landscape of their lost home and a better place to live. They saw in Canada the land that gave them the opportunity to cry out their despair over the Holocaust; and in this pristine land of the future, they shyly planted the hope for a new, better life. They saw in Canada a corner of the world where they could renew their communal life, but as they once knew it at home and in its more modern freer, more tolerant present reality. Here they could dream of a welcoming future, where they could live wherever they pleased and however their pleased.¹⁴

Rosenfarb's Montreal

Rosenfarb encountered Montreal in a raging blizzard in February of 1950, when she disembarked from a train at Windsor Station to a royal welcome from a contingent of local Yiddish literati led by Melekh Ravitch. Rosenfarb later recalled, “[H]e wore white socks, he was very neat and he had his style of dressing. I didn’t know him. He introduced himself and I was astonished that such a personality came to greet me. And he shook my hand and lifted my hand too his mouth and planted a kiss on my hand. And this was maybe the first kiss I got from a gentleman... But he was sort of chivalrous... it was because I was a survivor, a young writer, it was a very good feeling. I was very moved because it was a snowstorm and they weren’t young at that time any more.”¹⁵ According to Chava’s daughter, Goldie Morgentaler, the episode entered family lore: “Ravitch’s kissing her hand made a big impression on her. She wasn’t used to that kind of gentlemanly treatment.”¹⁶

In Yiddish Montreal, Rosenfarb was treated as a celebrity: “All the Yiddish writers wanted to meet me. Some came from New York.”¹⁷ Rosenfarb offers the following account of an event held in her honour soon after her arrival:

I was six months pregnant, and here the Jewish community organized a reception for me in the Workmen's Circle... And I with my big belly went up on the stage. It was unusual but also very symbolic. Here I am, a survivor from the camps, a young poet and a pregnant woman. So I got a terrific reception. So this was my beginning, a very happy beginning in Montreal. I was very happy here for many years.¹⁸

In her 2001 CBC documentary, "The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb," Elaine Kalman Naves observed: "To the established Yiddish writers of the Montreal community the 27 year-old pregnant Chava who arrived in 1950 represented hope and renewal."¹⁹ In the maelstrom of the Holocaust, Yiddish cultural activists in the New World sought to rebuild the remnants of a decimated civilization. Thus, during the same period, three year's after Rosenfarb's arrival, the Yiddish milieu rejoiced when Aaron Krishtalka, a young Montreal-born Yiddish poet and student of the secular Morris Winchevsky School, published his first book of verse at age thirteen. As a young Yiddish writer, Rosenfarb represented a viable hope for a vigorous future for Yiddish literature, despite massive losses. Sherry Simon posits that the Montreal Yiddish community was "hoping to receive intellectual nourishment from her "as a "previous remnant" of a destroyed European civilization that remained only in offshoot form."²⁰

It was practical considerations that initially drew Rosenfarb to Montreal, specifically in the guise of her publisher. Her volume of poetry, *Di balade fun nekhtikn vald*, caught the eye of longtime Montreal cultural activist, Harry (Hersh) Hershman, founder of the city's first Yiddish bookstore in 1903 and, at that time, local representative of the *Forverts* [New York Yiddish daily *Forward*]. Hershman was "taken with" Rosenfarb's book and undertook the local publication of a second edition in 1948.²¹ Hershman subsequently sponsored Rosenfarb and her husband, Henry Morgentaler to come to Montreal, paying for their voyage and acting as "patron."²² He maintained a close

relationship with the family, and Goldie Morgentaler recalls calling him “*zayde* [grandfather]” as a young child.²³

Despite her warm welcome, Rosenfarb initially experienced difficulty adjusting to life in Montreal. The city appeared muddy and drab, and Chava and Henry found it difficult to eke out a living; both took odd jobs to make ends meet, he as a shipper and she in garment factories. Rosenfarb was dismissed from several positions, including one typing out English mailing addresses for the Jewish Public Library that had been given to her by Melekh Ravitch; “I didn’t know English and Mr Ravitch fired me. And then I cried, he saw me crying, and that was traumatic.”²⁴ The family’s situation gradually improved, and, in the end, what resonates most strongly in Rosenfarb’s recollections of Montreal is the richness of its Yiddish cultural life.

Over fifty years after arriving in the city, Rosenfarb recalls her integration into Montreal’s Yiddish milieu:

Upon my arrival in Montreal in 1950, I found a bustling Yiddish social life. Without ever having to wait until I learned English properly, I could read the *Keneder Adler* every day, and so keep up-to-date with world and Canadian news events. Harry Hershman, my Montreal publisher, who made it possible for me to emigrate to Canada, supplied me with Yiddish literary periodicals, which kept me informed about Yiddish cultural life both here and abroad. He took me to the Folk University at the Jewish Public Library, which was the centre for Yiddish cultural life in the city. I visited the Peretz schools and the Folk Shule and became a student at the Yiddish teacher’s seminary.

I could count more than forty Yiddish writers living in Canada in the years just after my arrival in this country, writers of international reputation, recognized all over the Yiddish-speaking world, as well as more marginal writers, so-called Sunday scribblers—or “*graphomanes*”—as they were dubbed in Poland. There was an active

writers' union in Montreal, which I was invited to join. There were constant public lectures on literary topics.²⁵

Rosenfarb tapped into a rich literary milieu that comprised both formal and informal components. In the former, alongside the Jewish Public Library and secular Jewish schools, were Yiddish publications that showcased works by local Yiddish writers. By the 1950s, Montreal was home to one of the world's few remaining Yiddish dailies as well as post-War literary journals such as *Montrealer heftn: shrift far literatur* (Montreal Notebooks: Journal of Literature),²⁶ with Rosenfarb among their contributors. In tandem with these institutions was a network of less formal mechanisms for promoting Yiddish literary activity. Rosenfarb paints the following picture of this social and cultural milieu:

The Library was on Esplanade, across from the Mountain. But we met on the Mountain, the writers went there and discussed all kinds of literary topics, we sat there on the benches. Then we also met in a private home. There was the poet Ida Maze, and Ida Maze was sort of a motherly type. ... In her home, this was the literary salon. She used to prepare a cherry drink, a cherry wine, and once I asked her for another glass of wine, and she walked around among the people and said, Oh, that Chava, can she drink! Well we didn't drink much but we were drunk with poetry and literature, oh these were wonderful times, these were really wonderful times. I was the youngest and I soaked up this creative atmosphere. There was J.I. Segal, a great poet, there was Ravitch, there was a group maybe of 30-40 people. We sort of got together. We met at the library too. At that time, the Library was a second home to us. It was an atmosphere that I thrived in. There was a kind of special friendship between the writers, something as if we were family in a certain way. Just by being a writer, you felt related to that other person who was a writer too. But really

writers don't have much in common. So what that you write and I write, but our mental world, our mental state is not the same. Doesn't have to be the same, we are not really related, we don't have to be related. But Jewish writers were different. There was this feeling of relatedness, as if we were family.

Rosenfarb describes the sense of community and mutual support that existed among the city's writers:

We read to each other and we read each other's work. And of course we offered our books to each other, and there was a sort of communal friendship among the writers. Which is very unusual. It wasn't a union, it was a family. I don't know. It may be the idea of Jewish literature and the atmosphere of creating in strange surroundings. It's like being on an island where people feel very close to each other, that's how we felt.

In a sense, Yiddish culture in the post-Holocaust period *was* an island, cut off from its decimated European mainland. Yiddish writers banded together to share resources and be as productive as possible: it was not unusual for the more prolific writers like N.J. Gotlib or M.M. Shaffir to publish a dozen books or more over their careers, even as their readership declined. At the same time, Rosenfarb recalls a Montreal literary milieu that was multifaceted and diverse: "There were many, many writers. And we were close to each other. Within that large group there were smaller groups, you know how it is."²⁷ However, in contrast to the interwar period, when ideological divisions situated writers in different camps, writers increasingly banded together for collaborative ventures in the post-Holocaust period.

At the same time, Montreal maintained strong connections with writers in other Yiddish cultural hubs. Rosenfarb recalls, "Not in vain was it called 'the Jerusalem of North America.' Take the Jewish Public Library! It was the *centre*, the vital nerve of Yiddish life in North America, not just in Canada.

And the *great* Yiddish writers from New York used to come to Montreal. I met them all, here in Montreal.”²⁸ Montreal marked the destination for a cadre of renowned Yiddish literary visitors, as Rosenfarb recounts:

There were visits by the great Yiddish writers from abroad. Here I met Abraham Raisen, H. Leivik, Opatoshu, Bialosticki, Itzik Manger, Israel Joshua Singer, and his brother Bashevis. They came to give public lectures and were fêted at private parties. They joined us for promenades on the Mountain, and came along on excursions to the Yiddish literary chalet in Ste-Agathe in the Laurentians.²⁹

These illustrious guests were integrated into the local Yiddish milieu, even if only temporarily. For example, Goldie Morgentaler relates that while she was growing up, Manger as well as Bashevis were guests in their home.³⁰

In a fundamental way, the Montreal Yiddish milieu offered continuity with the Yiddish Lodz of Rosenfarb’s youth, both for Rosenfarb and her children. A vast majority of Lodz’s 250,000 Jews were Yiddish-speaking, and although Rosenfarb was very familiar with Polish language and literature through her schooling, she recalls growing up in a strongly Jewish environment: “And then we had of course a daily newspaper, everything in Yiddish. And all the world literature was translated into Yiddish. A very active life.”³¹ The child of working class, leftist parents, Rosenfarb completed her elementary school education at the Medem School, an institution run by the Bund (the Jewish Socialist party), which was very active promoting leftist ideology as well as Yiddish culture in Lodz. There she received a secular Jewish education largely in Yiddish. According to Henry Morgentaler, a fellow student, in this progressive and non-authoritarian school, “You were taught in Yiddish, we were taught Yiddish literature and all the subjects were in Yiddish, except Polish which of course was the language of the country.”³² In sharp contrast to the assimilationalist Polish high school that

Rosenfarb later attended, the Bundist school imbued in her a strong sense of pride in Jewish peoplehood, and a strong love for Yiddish.³³ She would go on to teach in the Yiddish Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring schools in Brussels as well as Montreal. While significantly smaller in size, the Montreal of Rosenfarb's time housed a network of secular Jewish all-day schools where Yiddish formed a core component of the curriculum. Although of a labour Zionist and not Bundist orientation (the two factions were strong rivals during Rosenfarb's student days), Montreal's Peretz Shule (Peretz School) and Yidishe folkshule (Jewish People's School) shared similar pedagogical approaches as well as Yiddish curricular content, with an emphasis on secular Jewish culture and peoplehood. Goldie Morgentaler, who would become Rosenfarb's translator, grew up surrounded by Yiddish and has written that being a Montrealer, where Yiddish was institutionalized and supported culturally and organizationally, "played a part in [her] retaining the language."³⁴ She recalls the impact of the Jewish People's School on her own life: "Among other things, it ensured that I would not forget Yiddish, that I would have a solid grounding in Jewish culture and history and that I would forever after strongly identify as a Jew, albeit a secular one. It is hard to exaggerate the influence that JPS [the Jewish People's School] had on my life."³⁵

Montreal also left its mark on Rosenfarb's fiction. Like much of Yiddish literature penned in Canada, the locus of Rosenfarb's novels is Europe. However, Canada plays a role in her short fiction, which was published in the Yiddish literary journal *Di Goldene Keyt* beginning in the 1980s: according to Goldie Morgentaler, "[S]he has done this by effecting a synthesis between her primary theme of the holocaust and the Canadian milieu in which she finds herself, so that Canada becomes in these stories the land of the postscript, the country in which the survivors of the holocaust play out the tragedy's last act."³⁶ Montreal plays a pivotal role in Rosenfarb's collection of short stories published in English translation as *Survivors*.³⁷ For example, in the novella, "Edgia's Revenge," where the city

marks the site of complex entanglements among Holocaust survivors, Montreal's physical landscape plays a central role both in plot and as symbol, notably its characteristic winding outdoor staircases, and the cross on Mount Royal that is visible throughout the city.³⁸

Concluding remarks

Rosenfarb expressed acute self-awareness of being among the world's last living writers to emerge from Yiddish Europe, and among the very last to experience Montreal's Yiddish literary milieu. After describing the rich communal atmosphere of Yiddish literary Montreal in a 1998 interview with Elaine Kalman Naves, she remarked: "It was sad to me when I was left the last one in Montreal. I find it very sad, as if I would have a new sense of lost. As if I had lost again something very precious. Why this happened? It was nature. Natural causes."³⁹ She writes poetically about her sense of loss in the closing remarks of her essay on Canadian Yiddish writers:

But now the sky has darkened in the garden of Canadian Yiddish creativity, just as it has darkened all over the world... There are no more Yiddish periodicals, or Yiddish daily newspaper. The Jewish Public Library is no longer the Yiddish public library. In the span of fifty-seven years since my arrival, a desert has replaced the forest...

While Rosenfarb remained confident that the literature produced by Canadian Yiddish writers will endure, she concluded:

Yet it fills me with nostalgia and, yes, with grief, to cast my mind back to the images of my Canadian literary past. These memories make me aware of how dim the lights have grown in the garden of Yiddish literary creativity. We have lost almost all the dreamers who sat with us by the waters of the St. Lawrence River and who never hung up their harps on the weeping willows, but instead transformed our alienation into a home of

unimagined beauty and welcome. Now they themselves have become the weeping willows.”⁴⁰

Rosenfarb formed part of a lush but short-lived flowering of post-War Yiddish literary creativity in its Canadian hub of Montreal. This milieu nurtured her as a writer and provided her with a wider cultural context for her work. It allowed her to write in Yiddish within a communal setting even as that language's reading public was shrinking away; in a sense, this milieu offered insulation from the precarious reality of Yiddish in a secular world. Sherry Simon asserts that Rosenfarb's “tenacious—and increasingly isolated—attachment to the Yiddish language motivated by a commitment to Yiddish as a vehicle of memory” was “not a typical stance in the postwar years, and it meant that Rosenfarb knew that she would be a writer read primarily in translation.”⁴¹ However, for much of her literary career, Rosenfarb formed part of a wide and active circle of Yiddish literati in Montreal with transnational connections who continued to write in the language that came most naturally to them within an extended family of fellow writers. As late as the mid-1990s Rosenfarb expressed being a Yiddish writer as “the real me. Writing in another language is like putting on a dress which is not my own and walking around in it.”⁴² Montreal's Yiddish literary milieu normalized Rosenfarb's ongoing commitment to writing in Yiddish for almost half a century by offering a robust, albeit shrinking, community of readers and fellow Yiddish writers. The particular convergence of Yiddish cultural figures in Montreal allowed a group of writers to continue to create in Yiddish without it appearing anomalous or automatically imbued with symbolic meaning. Rosenfarb's convocation address cited at the beginning of this study, delivered on the Canadian Prairies—her home from 2003 to her death—restated an abiding commitment to Yiddish. However, with Rosenfarb far removed from any Yiddish milieu in both time and space, Yiddish was characterized as a “doomed language.”⁴³ In contrast, in post-Holocaust Montreal, Yiddish did not, to cite Rosenfarb's words, go “up with the smoke of the

crematoria,” and she did not create “in a vacuum, almost without a readership, out of fidelity to a vanished language.” In fact, as Dovid Katz’s 2004 study, *Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish*, asserts, it is only recently that Montreal has ceded its place as a major centre of what he terms “Yiddish masters”:

For anyone to whom modern Yiddish, and its literature and culture are dear, the most bitterly painful time is the present. The secondary Holocaust blow is hitting hard and is coming to its devastating climax. The last secular Yiddish *masters*—writers, teachers, cultural organizers, scholars, journalists, performers, artists and so on, who came to intellectual or cultural maturity in pre-Holocaust Eastern Europe, are disappearing daily. In mid-2003, Montreal, for example, was still on the conceptual map of high-end secular Yiddish culture because of the presence of great prose writer Yehuda Elberg (born in Poland in 1912); the untiring, inspirational organizer of Yiddish cultural institutions and events, Sara Rosenfeld (born in Poland in 1920); and the fabled founder of Canada’s Yiddish theatre, Dora Wasserman (born in Ukraine in 1919). By mid-2004, they were all gone. It is rather unfair to complain to God (or to doctors) when people in their eighties and nineties who have lived through a lot come to the end of life in peace surrounded by loved ones. By later 2004, Montreal, with no disrespect to its many enduring Yiddish resources (far outstripping many cities with much larger Jewish populations), had fallen off the map as a center boasting major living masters.⁴⁴

Rosenfarb and a dynamic cohort of like minds were able to pursue their creative callings in Yiddish for decades despite being uprooted from the European Yiddish heartland. They published widely and garnered prestigious international awards. They could not predict that, ultimately most would remain little known outside of the Yiddish world for much of

their careers and accessible to most readers only via translation out of the language.⁴⁵ This would become increasingly evident by the 1970s. It is this perhaps no coincidence that Montreal has been a leader in translation projects out of Yiddish into both English and French.⁴⁶ Montreal offered a refuge and sanctuary to Yiddish writers displaced by upheaval. In a sense, Yiddish Montreal has been its own “tree of life.”

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Endnotes

¹ I would like to thank Goldie Morgentaler for answering my questions for this paper and Elaine Kalman Naves, who generously provided access to transcripts of her interviews with Chava Rosenfarb as well as scripts for the CBC *Ideas* documentary, "The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb," which first aired Feb. 6 and Feb. 13, 2001.

² Rosenfarb, Convocation Address.

³ *Di balade fun nekhtikn vald* (London: Moishe Oved, 1947).

⁴ See, for example, the essays in Anctil, Ravvin, and Simon, eds., *Traduire le Montreal Yiddish/New Readings of Yiddish Montreal* and Robinson, Anctil, Butovsky, eds., *An Everyday Miracle: Yiddish Culture in Montreal*; Margolis, *Jewish Roots, Canadian Soil*.

⁵ On declining Yiddish use, see Leo Davids's essay in this volume.

⁶ Norich, *Discovering Exile: Yiddish and Jewish American Culture During the Holocaust*.

⁷ See, for example, Isaacs, "Yiddish in the Aftermath: Speech Community and Cultural Continuity in Displaced Persons Camps"; Tamar Lewinsky, "Dangling Roots? Yiddish Language and Culture in the German Diaspora"; Myers Feinstein, "Re-imagining the Unimaginable: Theater, Memory, and Rehabilitation in the Displaced Persons Camps."

⁸ Shandler, "Imagining Yiddishland."

⁹ Franklin Bialystok, e-mail to the author, June 18, 2009. Montreal's total population at that time had just surpassed the million mark.

¹⁰ Giberovitch, "The Contributions of Holocaust Survivors to Montreal Jewish Communal Life."

¹¹ Davids, "Yiddish in Canada: Picture and Prospects," 155.

¹² The term "yiddishkayt," alternately rendered *yidishkayt* or

yiddishkeit, refers to the full scope Ashkenaz civilization or culture, and/or its heritage.

¹³ Roskies, “Yiddish in Montreal: The Utopian Experiment.”

¹⁴ Rosenfarb, “Canadian Yiddish Writers,” 17.

¹⁵ Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998.

¹⁶ Goldie Morgentaler, e-mail message to author, May 14, 2010.

¹⁷ “Chava Rosenfarb Writes in Yiddish, Her Mother Tongue.” UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, 2006.

¹⁸ Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998.

¹⁹ Naves, “The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb,” CBC *Ideas* documentary, script draft 9 Programme 2, 10-11.

²⁰ Simon, “Bifurcations: Yiddish Turned to French,” 90.

²¹ In order to make it “special,” he added Rosenfarb’s post-liberation concentration camp diary and illustrations by Montreal painter, Malchi. Elaine Kalman Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998. The volume appeared as *Di balade fun nekhtiken vald un andere lider/ Fragmentn fun a tog-bukh* [Fragments of a Diary] (Montreal: H. Hershman, 1948).

²² Naves, “The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb,” CBC *Ideas* documentary, script draft 9 Programme 2, 7.

²³ Goldie Morgentaler, e-mail message to author, May 14, 2010.

²⁴ Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998.

²⁵ Rosenfarb, “Canadian Yiddish Writers,” 11.

²⁶ Three issues of *Montrealer heftn: shrift far literatur* (Montreal Notebooks: Journal of Literature), were edited by N.Y. Gotlib with M.M. Shaffir and A. Sh. Shkolnikov between 1955 and 1958. Contributors included: N.Y. Gotlib, M.M. Shaffir, A.Sh. Shkolnikov, Ida Maza, Shabse Perl, and J.I. Segal, Melech Ravitch, Rokhl Korn, Peretz Miranski.

²⁷ Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998.

²⁸ Naves, “Keeping the Flame Alight,” 58.

²⁹ Rosenfarb, “Canadian Yiddish Writers,” 11-12.

³⁰ Goldie Morgentaler, e-mail message to author, May 14, 2010.

³¹ Naves, "Keeping the Flame Alight," 62.

³² Naves, "The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb," CBC *Ideas* documentary, script draft 4, Programme 1, 11.

³³ Naves, "The Tree of Life: A Portrait of Chava Rosenfarb," CBC *Ideas* documentary, script draft 4, Programme 1, 16-18.

³⁴ Morgentaler, "Yiddish Montreal Lost and Regained," 104.

³⁵ Goldie Morgentaler, e-mail message to author, January 16, 2010.

³⁶ Morgentaler, "Land of the postscript," 169.

³⁷ Rosenfarb, *Survivors*.

³⁸ Morgentaler, "Land of the postscript," 174-175.

³⁹ Naves, Chava Rosenfarb interview, Tape 1 (transcript), August 25, 1998.

⁴⁰ Rosenfarb, "Canadian Yiddish Writers," 17-18.

⁴¹ Simon, "Bifurcations: Yiddish Turned to French," 93.

⁴² Naves, "Keeping the Flame Alight," 66.

⁴³ Rosenfarb, Convocation Address.

⁴⁴ Katz, *Words On Fire*, 349.

⁴⁵ See Naves, "Keeping the Flame Alight," Simon, "'Bifurcations: Yiddish Turned to French.'"

⁴⁶ See Margolis, "Yiddish Translation in Canada: A Litmus Test for Continuity."