

August 18, 1980

Dear Dr. Cohen,

I use these two enclosures to bring you up to date on personal and professional developments. I fully realize that you have other things on your mind, but perhaps a momentary distraction might not be so bad.

PROOFTEXTS, I suppose, should occupy center stage. Our financial base has now been secured and we have sent the first issue off to the printers. As it happens, Yiddish will be over-represented in this inaugural issue, but far be it from me to complain. In a way, launching the journal is like giving birth, in that Alan and I will be "on call" for the rest of our tenure, with constant deadlines to meet. We haven't as yet been inundated with manuscripts. Perhaps this will come with time.

My writing is progressing slowly. Even though I've chosen to focus on responses to catastrophe in the modern period, I still have to define the nature of traditional response, and the modern period itself is exceedingly complex. Working with the Yiddish and Hebrew materials together feels like I'm putting Humpty together again and is a source of great satisfaction. The deadline of February 15 turns out to be an impossibility. I hope university presses are accustomed to delays.

In terms of teaching, this will be a year of consolidation. I hope to be active in the academic review of level III and IV courses in the Rabbinical School which Ismar is coordinating. I shall also be involved in the undergraduate seminar that Ivan has masterminded, in whatever form it takes. We should all be as rejuvenated as he after our sabbatical leave!

As for the two offprints, one is a bibliography that I prepared in 1973, my first piece of scholarship, not without its flaws. The second I send you not on my account but on Sutzkever's. A man of such stature, the foremost living Yiddish poet and the standard bearer of Jewish excellence, ought somehow to be honored by our institution. Would you consider his name for an honorary degree in 1981?

Yours truly,

David G. Roskies