

3080 Broadway
New York, NY 10027
November 2, 1990

Dr. Jerry Hochbaum
Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture
15 East 26th Street
New York, NY 10010

Dear Dr. Hochbaum,

Among the many miracles wrought for Israel of late is the emergence of Soviet Jewry from its enslavement. Here and there a few individuals have appeared, miraculously unscathed, who can help rebuild the foundations of Jewish culture after seventy years of systematic destruction. Michael Krutikov of Moscow is one such individual. He is not charismatic, yet there is something prophetic about his high seriousness, his dedication to learn everything there is to learn about the cultural legacy of Russian Jewry. He has already mastered Yiddish, spoken and written. His English is fluent, his Hebrew -- improving. His knowledge of Russian literature (prose and poetry) is profound. I know of no one else, in fact, young or old, who can encompass the full trilingual range of Jewish self-expression in Russia and the Soviet Union. (A recent essay of his on the Soviet-Hebrew poet Hayyim Lensky draws on parallels and possible influences from Pushkin, Annensky and other modern Russian poets; see enclosed.)

Krutikov is now coming to America to pursue a doctorate under my supervision. It is still too early to speak of a dissertation topic, since he still has prerequisites and at least two years of course work to complete. But knowing Krutikov, I can see him pouring through archives as soon as he gets here, or tutoring, or helping me in my own research, for that matter. In short, any investment we make in this man will pay extraordinary dividends, not only in the short run, but for the future course of Jewish scholarship. I hope the Memorial Foundation will join with the Seminary in underwriting Krutikov's graduate training.

Sincerely,

David G. Roskies
Professor
Dept. of Jewish Literature

cc. Ismar Schorsch, Shaye Cohen
enc.