

# *Yiddish Publishing Activities in the Weimar Republic, 1920–1933*

BY LEO AND RENATE FUKS

The evil winds of poverty, persecution, war and revolution had driven a larger number of Eastern fugitives over the borders of the German Empire after 1880. Their German co-religionists were far from happy to receive them for more than one reason. Apart from the financial strain on the German-Jewish welfare institutions there was a general hidden fear among German Jews that the appearance of unassimilated and recognisable Jews who spoke a language of their own would jeopardise their own rather precarious position as German citizens.<sup>1</sup> This fear was expressed in the open disdain and animosity with which the German Jews received their Eastern European brethren. The greater part of the German-Jewish relief and welfare organisations which supported the immigrants aimed at getting them away to the Americas and even further as quickly as possible.<sup>2</sup>

The German Ministry of the Interior also tried to prevent the mass-immigration and transmigration of the Eastern European Jews. In two decrees, of 20th September 1904 and of 26th February 1905, the Minister of the Interior ordered that only those with normal tickets from German shipping companies and a minimum capital of 400 Reichsmark per person and an additional 100 Reichsmark for each child were permitted to pass through German territory and

<sup>1</sup>The attitude of German Jewry towards the Jews of Eastern Europe has been described by S. Adler-Rudel in his book *Ostjuden in Deutschland 1880–1940. Zugleich eine Geschichte der Organisationen, die sie betreuten*, Tübingen 1959 (Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts 1); Steven E. Aschheim, *Brothers and Strangers. The Eastern European Jew in German and German Jewish Consciousness, 1800–1923*, Madison 1982; and *idem*, 'Eastern Jews, German Jews and Germany's Ostpolitik in the First World War', in *LBI Year Book XXVIII* (1983); and most recently by Trude Maurer, *Ostjuden in Deutschland 1918–1933*, Hamburg 1986 (Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden, Band XII); and *idem*, 'Ausländische Juden in Deutschland, 1933–1939', in *Die Juden im Nationalsozialistischen Deutschland/The Jews in Nazi Germany 1933–1943*, herausgegeben von Arnold Paucker mit Sylvia Gilchrist und Barbara Suchy, Tübingen 1986 (Schriftenreihe wissenschaftlicher Abhandlungen des Leo Baeck Instituts 45). In the final section of her book, pp. 741–759, Trude Maurer evaluates the rather negative opinions many historians hold on German-Jewish solidarity with the poor and persecuted Jews of Eastern Europe. She defends the German-Jewish community because of the financial assistance it rendered to Eastern Jews. A.o. see also the essays of Jack Wertheimer in *LBI Year Books XXVI, XXVII* and *XXVIII*, and now *idem*, *Unwelcome Strangers. East European Jews in Imperial Germany*, Oxford 1987.

<sup>2</sup>In 1901 the *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden* was founded to help the emigrants from the East during their transmigration through Germany.

stay overnight. Russian subjects had also to present a valid passport. Those who did not fulfil these requirements were liable to be arrested and sent back over the German border. The same fate awaited those who managed to stay illegally in the German Empire.<sup>3</sup>

In spite of all these measures more than two million Eastern European Jews left their homes between 1880 and 1914, and most of them took their leave of Europe by way of Germany.<sup>4</sup> Some of the fugitives remained in Germany in spite of all the obstructions which were placed in their path. They managed to get a foothold in one German city or another and a slow process of acculturation started which succeeded when their children were educated at German schools. But the Eastern European Jews who stayed in Germany remained attached to their own Yiddish language and culture. They found a welcome in the Yiddish cultural clubs which were founded by Eastern European Jews who were living legally in Germany. These were mainly students who attended German universities and training colleges. They lived a life of their own and had few contacts with German-Jewish and non-Jewish students.<sup>5</sup> The influx of Eastern European fugitives in their clubs reinforced their cultural connections with Yiddish cultural life and letters.

As were all Jewish aliens in Germany, the Eastern European Jews were compelled to become paying members of the German-Jewish congregations, even if they never made any use of their institutions. By 1912 the number of legal and illegal Eastern European immigrants had increased so much that they started to demand full rights of membership which had hitherto been denied to them. After a fierce struggle which had to be settled by the German authorities, the Eastern European Jews were granted equal rights in the German-Jewish congregations in 1914.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of the generally negative attitude of German Jews towards Eastern European Jews there were groups which had more positive views on the values of Eastern European Jewish culture. From 1901 onwards, the periodical *Ost und West*, with its editor Leo Winz, regularly published translations from Yiddish literary works. The *Jüdischer Verlag*, founded in Berlin by Martin Buber in 1902, pursued the same editorial policy, but with a leaning towards Zionism. Zionist students, especially those organised in the club *Jung Juda*, espoused the cause of the Eastern European Jews in Germany, visited their literary clubs and lectured there.<sup>7</sup>

At the outbreak of the First World War there were about 90,000 Eastern European Jews in the German Empire. Those who were Austro-Hungarian subjects were enlisted in the German army, the Russian subjects were driven into

<sup>3</sup>Adler-Rudel, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>5</sup>The Eastern European Jewish students in Germany numbered about 400 in 1908-1909. Adler-Rudel, *ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 28.

<sup>7</sup>Gershom Scholem remembers the veneration the members of his Zionist youth movement had for Yiddish culture. G. Scholem, *Von Berlin nach Jerusalem. Jugenderinnerungen*, Frankfurt a. Main 1977, p. 62.

internment camps. No compensation whatsoever was given to families for the loss of a livelihood which the men had built up with so much trouble. The greater part of the Eastern European Jews in Germany suddenly became completely destitute.<sup>8</sup>

Though the political propaganda of the German and Austrian occupying forces in the East reiterated on all occasions that their armies had come to bring freedom and justice to the Jews and other oppressed national minorities in the Russian Empire, the reality appeared to be quite the contrary. It was the economic policy of the German administration which tried to squeeze out as much wealth as possible, to requisition as many goods as they could lay their hands on from the occupied territories. Complete industries, most of which were Jewish property, were dismantled and sent to Germany, like the textile factories of Lodz. The Polish and Jewish workers lost their jobs without any form of compensation. Jewish workers were requisitioned for forced labour, partly in Germany.<sup>9</sup> But private German firms also enlisted Jewish workers in Poland to replace the Germans who served in the army. About 17,000 Jewish forced labourers were sent from Poland and other occupied territories to Germany and about the same amount came by themselves, enlisted or looking for jobs.<sup>10</sup>

Wherever they came to in Germany, the Jewish workers organised their own societies, mostly in the form of literary clubs, like the *Peretz Verein* in Berlin. Salman Schocken, owner of a chain of department stores in Germany and a noted philanthropist and very active Zionist, tried to alleviate the lot of the inmates of the internment camps and organised the distribution of Yiddish books and periodicals for them.<sup>11</sup> His was the driving force behind many Jewish cultural and social initiatives to help the Eastern European Jews. He also financed the monthly periodical, *Der Jude*, which Martin Buber founded in 1915, and corresponded with Franz Rosenzweig who served in the German army in the East about the possibilities of the new *Akademie für Wissenschaft des Judentums* which Rosenzweig wanted to establish.<sup>12</sup>

During the First World War a change in the attitude towards Eastern European Jews and their culture can be seen amongst part of German Jewry. Many German-Jewish soldiers had become acquainted with the Jewish population in the occupied territories in the East. They had found a warm welcome in Jewish homes, in contrast to that which Eastern European Jews had so often experienced when in Germany. German-Jewish soldiers began to appreciate the interesting and many-faceted Jewish culture which was hidden behind the façade of the typically Eastern European Jewish way of life, that of dress and speech which at first sight had so repelled them. Some scholars such as

<sup>8</sup>Adler-Rudel, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>9</sup>Zosa Szajkowski, 'East European Jewish Workers in Germany during World War I', *Salo Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume*, II, Jerusalem 1974, pp. 895-896. (See also the essays of Szajkowski in *LBI Year Books IX and X*.)

<sup>10</sup>Szajkowski, *loc. cit.*, p. 908; Maurer, *op. cit.*, p. 38 gives an estimated total of 30,000.

<sup>11</sup>Volker Dahm, *Das jüdische Buch im Dritten Reich*, II, Frankfurt a. Main 1981, columns 407-408.

<sup>12</sup>Dahm, *op. cit.*, column 409.

Rosenzweig began to understand in the East the need for re-orientation towards Jewish learning for the German Jews.\*

In the first part of the war a German victory seemed certain and German-Jewish leaders and the German authorities envisaged with apprehension the consequences of a new political development in the East after a complete defeat of the Russian Empire. They shared a great fear of uncontrollable large-scale Jewish immigration into German territory and held a very negative opinion of Eastern European Jews. The German authorities were influenced by the wave of antisemitism which was prevalent in the country during the war and the Jewish leaders feared even more animosity when the "real" Jews would appear in great numbers. The *Hilfsverein der deutschen Juden*, which distributed American relief funds in German-occupied territories, worked together with the German authorities, sometimes even to the detriment of the Jews in need. A largely Zionist society, the *Komitee für den Osten*, was founded in 1914 and the organisations sharply conflicted in their views on the Jews of the Eastern territories and what should become of them during and after the war.<sup>13</sup>

Towards the end of the war, from April 1918 onwards the German authorities tried to get rid of the Eastern European workers within their territory. The brutal methods they employed mirrored the virulently antisemitic atmosphere in Germany at that time, when the realisation had come that the war was lost.<sup>14</sup> Because of the chaotic situation in Eastern Europe after the outbreak of the Russian Revolution at the end of 1917, the efforts of the German authorities were of no avail. In spite of all official measures the numbers of Eastern European fugitives, Jewish as well as non-Jewish, swelled greatly after the peace-settlement of 1919. In the aftermath of the civil war following the Russian Revolution and with the difficulties for the Jews in the newly created independent Eastern states, new waves of fugitives came to Germany. Among them were quite a few intellectuals, writers, poets and artists who gave new impetus to the intellectual life of the already existing Yiddish cultural clubs. The urgent political problems of the day were hotly discussed also and political organisation among the Eastern European Jews became stronger. The Jewish Socialist Party, the *Bund*, and the Socialist-Zionist Party, *Poale Zion*, were the leading factions, but the clubs had to avoid official political activities as they were distrustfully watched by the German police.<sup>15</sup>

In 1919, the Eastern European Jews in Germany founded a federation of all their organisations called the *Bund ostjüdischer Vereine* which became the *Verband der Ostjuden in Deutschland* after a reorganisation in 1920. From then on the life of the Eastern European Jews in Germany slowly settled down. Primary schools and supplementary Yiddish courses were organised and the cultural life in the clubs began to attract German Jews too and even some interested non-Jews. A Union of Eastern Jewish artists, the *Ostjüdischer Künstlerbund*, founded in 1920,

\*See also the contribution by Rivka Horwitz, 'Voices of Opposition to the First World War among Jewish Thinkers', in this volume of the Year Book, esp. pp. 252-253 - (Ed.).

<sup>13</sup>Szajkowski, *loc. cit.*, p. 888.

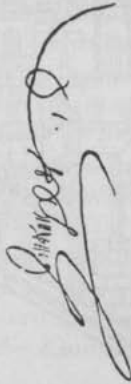
<sup>14</sup>Szajkowski, *ibid.*, pp. 888 ff.

<sup>15</sup>Maurer, *op. cit.*, pp. 39 ff.



Cover, vignette and tail-piece of the Yiddish Magazine of Art and Letters, 'Milgroym', Berlin 1923  
Designed by El Lissitzky

# מענדעלעלע מוכר-ספרים



לוי קאסער

1836—1936

בערלין, 1. יאנואר 1936

Cover of A. M. Stenzel's 'Mendele Mocher-Sforim'

# חודש-זשורנאל

## אינהאלט:

- י קרינאווי: די נייע אינוואדירונגס מעגליכייטן אין פאליטישע (דעם דער 'סימסער עייה')
- א דיוטור: די פאדענט אביענדאציע-פאליטיק (א אייניקע באשפרייטונג צו דער אינוואדירונגס פאליטיק פון די פאראייניגטע שטאטן)
- יעקב לעווינסקי: מענדאציע און קאליאציע-פראקטן צוריק מיט הונדערט יאר — II
- א טשעריקאווער: דער יידישער אימגראנט אין לאנדאן אין די טשעריקאווער
- די טשעריקאווער: דעם איינעם א קינדער-ביכל, וואס דערוואקסענע דארטן לייענען
- מענטשן, וואס זיינען הסקר: צווייטן לעבן און מיט א מענטשליכער דאקטרינע
- א גארמאציע: זייער אינטענציעס און רעזולטאט (א בייט פון באריין)
- II דער 'סאטישא' צענדליקעס: און יאר 1936 (די ארבעט און די אינטעלי-לעבער)

בערלין

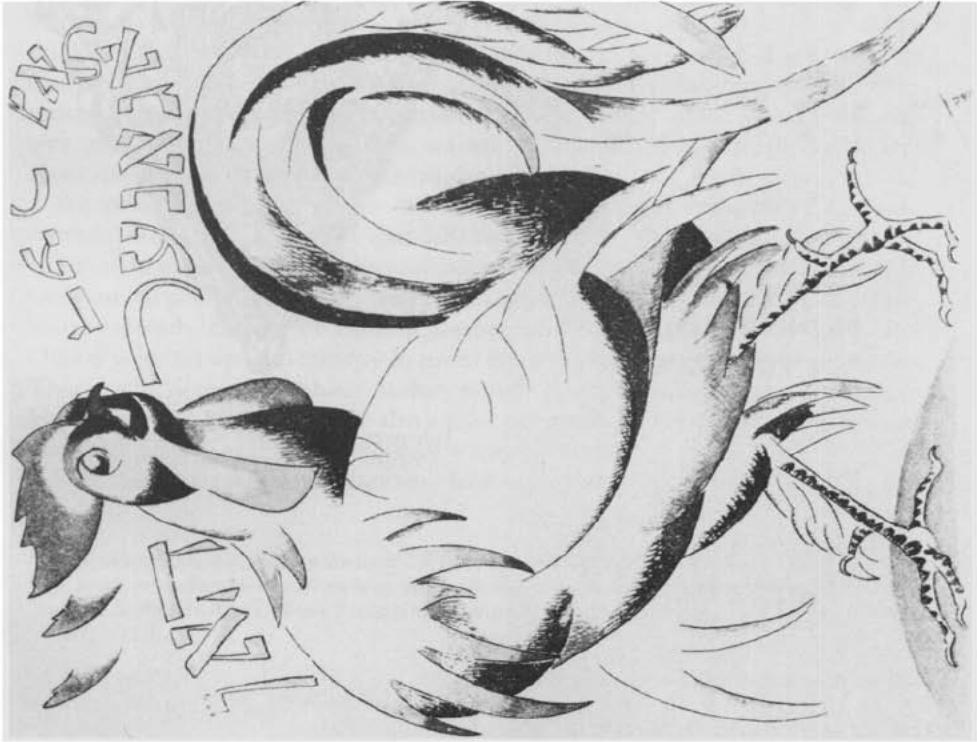
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אפריל 1928

5-טער יארגאנג

ארויסגעגעבן פון עמיגרציע-פארבאנד, 'עמיגרירעקט' אונטער דער רעדאקציע פון א. טשעריקאווער און די טשעריקאווער

Cover of 'Di jidische emigratsye', Berlin 1928



נמנו במלך  
 דע גאלגאנער  
 נא געטרי טוט  
 אלע מוח  
 עי נמנא דאט  
 קולאנער  
 א פו דרוב  
 ארימאנער וו  
 דאט דאס טאנע  
 טענע לאנד

און דע טעאלער  
 גאלגאנער  
 דאט אונקעלעאט  
 וו טשאנ  
 אונדע דרעלנדיג  
 דע פוער  
 טענע א פונקטעל  
 גאלגאנער  
 פו גאלגאנער און  
 און קולנעלעאט  
 און קולנעלעאט

טוט גרא  
 דאט א פאנ  
 פו דו גאלגאנער

Frontispiece and page from P. Markish's 'Der galaganer hon', Berlin 1922  
 Designed by Israhel Tchaikov



אריאג. יאסעקא. בערלין.

בער באַלעכאָווערס

זיכרונות

אַריוסגעגעבן מיט אַריוספיר  
 און דערקלערונגען פֿון  
 ד"ר מ. ווישניצער

בלל-פאַרלאַג  
 בערלין, 1922-תרט"ב

K L A L - V E R L A G  
 BERLIN SW 68 / MARKGRAFENSTRASSE 73



Above and below right:  
 Title-page and tail-piece of 'Mekhires Yosef'  
 Edited by M. Weinreich, Berlin 1923  
 Designed by Joseph Tchaikov

Left:  
 Title-page of Ber Belokhower's 'Zikhroynes'  
 Berlin 1922



provided studios for artists, organised exhibitions, concerts and theatrical performances. There were many contacts with Russian artists and intellectuals who had fled to Germany for the same reasons as the Jews. In the Berlin *Romanisches Café* and in the Russian cultural club *Heim der Künste* which was situated on the first floor of the *Café Leon*, Russian artists, writers and poets hotly debated new currents in the world of art. Among them were many Jews who were also preoccupied by visions of a new and *avant-garde* Jewish art. They included Lasar (El) Lissitzky, Joseph Tchaikov, Nathan Altmann, Issachar Ber Ryback and Leon Zack, to cite only a few. The Eastern European artists and writers took part in the atmosphere of feverish searching for new forms of intellectual and artistic life which was so typical for life in the Berlin émigré-circles of the time. The apogee of all artistic activities was the first Russian Art Exhibition which was organised in Berlin in 1922 in the Galerie Von Diemen, Unter den Linden. The exhibition was a great success and was the talk of the day in intellectual Berlin.<sup>16</sup>

For a few years, from 1920 until 1925, Berlin became the centre of a short-lived but throbbing Yiddish cultural microcosmos which soon radiated to and influenced most of the Yiddish-speaking world. It did not only draw Yiddish writers, artists and scholars to Berlin, but also exported books and publications, printed in Germany, all over the globe.

Notwithstanding the political and economic difficulties in Eastern Europe caused by civil wars and the instability of the newly created states, the pent-up cultural energy of the Jews burst out in a host of Yiddish writings by young and talented poets and novelists. For the first time the *Bund* and other political parties organised a network of secular schools for girls and boys in Eastern Europe. There was a great demand for Yiddish schoolbooks for primary and secondary schools. These books were difficult to produce in Eastern Europe with its completely destroyed economy. At that time the first Yiddish publishing houses moved from Eastern Europe to Germany. There were Yiddish writers, translators and artists, an eager public waited and longed for Yiddish books and Germany provided excellent possibilities.

We need not elucidate here the causes of the steady inflation of German currency from 1920 onwards. This inflation enabled Yiddish publishing houses, which paid in foreign currency, to make use of the excellent printing facilities in Germany at prices which were lower than anywhere else. Some of the publishing houses already existed in Eastern Europe and moved temporarily to Berlin. Others were set up in Germany to profit from the extraordinary circumstances. There were some publishing houses which also published works of modern Hebrew writers and there were also a few exclusively Hebrew publishing houses. But their history and output deserve a special study.\*

One of the first publishing houses which started its work in Berlin in 1921, was

<sup>16</sup>E. Steneberg, *Russische Kunst in Berlin, 1919-1932*, Berlin 1969, pp. 18-19.

\*See however an interim contribution to this topic, the essay by Elias Hurwicz, 'Shay Ish Hurwitz and the Berlin He-Athid. When Berlin was a Centre of Hebrew Literature', in *LBI Year Book XII* (1967) - (Ed.).

the *Farlag Yidish*. It came from Kovno (Kaunas) in Lithuania. Its output consisted of several small works and a new series called *Folksbibliotek* of which at least six numbers were published. The translation into Yiddish of Martin Buber's *Reden über das Judentum* testifies to the interest in German-Jewish culture in spite of the many adverse experiences of Eastern Jews in Germany.

The German *Weltverlag* which was founded by Alvin Löwenthal in 1919, specialised in Jewish literature. In 1921, Alexander (Ahron) Eliasberg who was a great lover of Yiddish literature, became its director. In that year too he published four Yiddish books, three of which were translations from the German.

A completely new Yiddish publishing house was *Wostok* (Russian: the East). It started production in Dresden in 1921, but the firm moved to Berlin in the same year. We have not been able to find any data on this new firm, as to whether it was in some way a continuation of an existing firm in Eastern Europe. Neither do we know if the firm was financed by Western European institutions or individuals. Eliah Olshvanger,<sup>17</sup> an experienced and many-sided physician and publicist, was its director. The firm's Berlin address was Spandauer Brücke 2, and its books were printed in Leipzig, at the establishments of W. Drugulin, B. J. Teubner and Spamer. The major part of *Wostok's* publications consisted of the much-needed Yiddish textbooks for the new Jewish schools in Eastern Europe. Olshvanger and the Yiddish scholar Max Weinreich translated many textbooks of history, geometry, geography, physics and biology from the German. *Wostok* also published Yiddish literary works, among them the collected works (in six volumes) of David Bergelson, one of the most important modern Yiddish writers of the time, two books of Shemarya Gorelik and one work of the young and talented Yiddish poet Moshe Kulbak. Nahum Shtif, historian, literary critic and linguist, is represented with a work on the pogroms in the Ukraine in 1919. *Wostok* also published Max Weinreich's first pioneering work on the history of Old Yiddish literature. All these writers and scholars lived in Berlin at the time their works were published. The *Wostok* books were very well produced and some of them were illustrated by Eastern European Jewish artists who also lived in Berlin by that time, like Joseph Tchaikov, El Lissitzky and Issachar Ber Ryback. *Wostok* introduced a completely new feature in Yiddish book-publishing: the aesthetic element. Hitherto badly printed books on cheap paper had been the general rule, which was understandable because the Yiddish reading public had not the means to buy beautiful and expensive books. But *Wostok*, and the other Yiddish publishing houses in Berlin, too, could profit from the extraordinary circumstances of the inflation in Germany to publish artistically designed books with illustrations by the *avant-garde* of modern artists for very low prices.

<sup>17</sup>He was born in Grajev (Poland) and died in New York, 1952. After studying medicine in Würzburg and Berlin at the beginning of the century, he practised as a physician and wrote articles for Russian periodicals. During the First World War he lived in Wilna and founded a Yiddish daily paper, *Di letste nays*, in 1917, when the ban on Yiddish publications in Russia was lifted. In 1919 he fled from the counter-revolution to Berlin and became director of the publishing house, *Wostok*. He was also one of the directors of the organisation for medical care among Russian Jews (OSE) (see below note 22) and translated several popular medical treatises into Yiddish. Adler-Rudel, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

In 1921 another important Yiddish publishing house started its activities in Berlin. It was the *Klal-Farlag*, a continuation of the *Folks-Farlag* of Kiev. Its director, Zeev Wolf Latzki-Bertoldi<sup>18</sup> continued his work in Berlin. He was most probably financed by the important German publishing firm *Ullstein*, but we have not been able to find data about the financial background. *Klal-Farlag's* Berlin address was Markgrafenstrasse 73 and it had its own printing office. In 1922, the firm published more than fifty numbers of a series of small paperbacks, called *Klal-Bibliotek*, consisting of original Yiddish texts and translations. Another series of historical works for children called *Historishe Yugent Bibliotek* was also started. Original literary works and the much-needed Yiddish school-books were published as well. In 1923, the output of the firm dwindled and in 1924 only one periodical was published.

The *Klal-Farlag* had been of great importance for the export of Yiddish books from Germany. The small, cheap paperbacks must have been a great success with the readers of Yiddish abroad. The firm, like many other Yiddish publishing houses in Germany, advertised their publications in the bibliographical journal *Di Bikhervelt* which made its appearance in Warsaw in 1921.<sup>19</sup> But on the dust-jackets of the books the firm also announced forthcoming publications, as in No. 33 of the *Klal-Bibliotek*: “. . . In the series *Klal-Bikher* we will give larger literary works, original [Yiddish] and translations from the best authors . . .”.

*Rimon* Jewish Art and Literature Publishing Company, Berlin-London, was an international and multi-faceted publishing house. Its Berlin address was Hohenstaufenstrasse 43. The firm was directed by Mark and Rahel Wischnitzer.<sup>20</sup> *Rimon* produced the most beautiful and interesting journal of Jewish art that ever appeared and the like of which had never before been published for Jewish readers. The Hebrew edition of the journal was called *Rimon* and a Yiddish one appeared under the name of *Milgroym*. These journals differed in content in the literary department. While the Yiddish edition was devoted to problems of Yiddish literature, the Hebrew edition was devoted to modern Hebrew literature. But several richly illustrated articles on modern Jewish art appeared in both journals. In *Milgroym* and *Rimon* artists like Marc Chagall and

<sup>18</sup>He was born in Kiev in 1881 and died in Tel-Aviv in 1940. He studied in Berlin from 1901 until 1903 and became an active member of the Eastern Jewish student club. Back in Russia, he was illegally engaged in the Poale-Zionist movement. Apart from his literary work he was also director of *Emigdirekt*, an international Committee for Jewish emigration which was founded in Prague in 1921. Adler-Rudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 105-106.

<sup>19</sup>*Bikhervelt. Kritish bibliografisher zhurnal*. Dershaynt ale tsvey khadoshim in Varshe. Farlag Kultur-Lige. Eight issues of the journal appeared in 1922 and 1923. In 1928 the journal reappeared in a different form in Warsaw.

<sup>20</sup>1882-1955. He was a well-known Jewish historian and communal worker. He originated from Galicia and studied in Vienna and Berlin. In 1919 he lived in London and there probably organised the financial aspects of the *Rimon* publishing house. From 1921 until 1937 he was deeply engaged in all kinds of welfare work for Eastern European Jews. After 1933 he concentrated on the problems of emigration of Jews from Nazi Germany.

His wife Rahel Bernstein was born in Minsk in 1892 and was a well-known historian of Jewish art. After the liquidation of the *Rimon* publishing house Mark and Rahel Wischnitzer worked for the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* in Berlin. They emigrated to Paris in 1938 and went to the United States in 1941.

El Lissitzky expounded their views on Jewish art and illustrated their own and other people's essays. In the literary section of *Milgroym* many interesting *avant-garde* theories on modern Yiddish literature were discussed.<sup>21</sup> Though it was announced that the journal would appear every two months, only six issues were published between 1922 and 1924. The journal can be considered the highlight of Yiddish publication in Germany, combining the talent of the writers and artists with the technical know-how and skill of German printing.

*Rimon* also published works of Jewish interest in Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian and English. Their only Yiddish publication which did not appear in translation was M. Kleinman's edition of the stories of the *hasidic* rabbi Nahman of Bratslav.

In 1922 and 1923 two smaller publishing houses in Berlin presented interesting and important works. The *Yidisher Kultur Farlag* specialised in translation, mainly from the German. The *Yidisher Literarischer Farlag* published original literary works along with eye-witness accounts of the recent historical events in Russia. Occasional Yiddish publications, periodicals and pamphlets appeared, voicing the opinions of every group and party among the Eastern European Jews in Germany. Among these occasional publications is one Yiddish book published by the *Stybel-Verlag*, financed by a rich Russian leather-merchant who also had books printed in Copenhagen. The *Yalkut Farlag* and the Hebrew publishing house *Moriah* later moved to Palestine.

Several Jewish welfare institutions like the OSE<sup>22</sup> published series of popular medical treatises and pamphlets on child-care and general health between 1922 and at least until 1927. Also, the ORT<sup>23</sup> regularly issued bulletins and pamphlets.

After 1925 the number of Yiddish publications in Germany rapidly diminished. Some periodicals and occasional pamphlets of international Jewish organisations were published, mostly in relation to the problems of emigration and re-emigration of the Eastern European Jews. The German political climate with its growth of National Socialism and organised antisemitism made Eastern European Jews aware that Germany was no longer a safe place. After 1929 they began to look for better places to live in. An exception was the Yiddish writer and poet A. N. Stenzel who managed to remain in Germany until 1938. He was a friend of Else Lasker-Schüler, the well-known German-Jewish poet. She tried to help him with money and goods which she begged from admirers for him and for other destitute authors. Stenzel lived with his German friend, a courageous woman, until he emigrated to London.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Arthur Tilo Alt, 'The Berlin *Milgroym* group and Modernism', *Yiddish. A Quarterly Journal devoted to Yiddish and Yiddish Literature*, VI, 1 (1985), p. 33.

<sup>22</sup> OSE (*Obtschestwo Sdrauwoochranenija Ewrejew = Gesellschaft für den Schutz der Gesundheit der Juden*) was founded in 1912 and did excellent work during the First World War. It became a world-wide international organisation for the protection of the health of the Jewish communities.

<sup>23</sup> ORT (*Obtschestwo remeslennowo i semledeltscheskowo truda sredi jewrejew w Rossii = Gesellschaft zur Förderung des Handwerks und der Landwirtschaft unter den Juden*) was founded in Russia in 1880 to provide professional and agricultural training for the impoverished Russian Jews. Like OSE it became after the war, in 1920, an international organisation. The director of the German branch was A. Singalowsky.

<sup>24</sup> Ruth Wolf, *Prins Joessoef van Thebe. Leven en werk van Else Lasker-Schüler*, The Hague 1986, pp. 90 ff.

The feverish cultural life of the Berlin Eastern Jewish centre ended as suddenly as it had begun. The greater part of the Yiddish writers, artists and scholars either went back to Poland and the Soviet Union or found their way to Paris, London and the United States. The fate of those who went back to Eastern Europe is known only too well. They fell victim either to the policy of extermination of the Nazi invaders or the violent repression of Yiddish culture in the Soviet Union after 1938; the writers, their works and their public vanished in the war and the wanton destruction of human beings and their culture.

Nevertheless the influence of the Berlin cultural scene was a lasting one. Its spirit of an international *avant-garde* enriched Yiddish literature in all its centres. Berlin was also the cradle of scholarly study of Yiddish language and literature and the history of the Jews in Eastern Europe. During a conference in Berlin in 1925, the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research was founded. Wilna, which was then part of the Polish Republic, was to be the headquarters of the organisation, with branches in Berlin, Warsaw and New York. An international network of friends would provide the funds for research and publications. The Berlin branch of YIVO was directed by Elijah Tcherikover, with the cooperation of the famous Jewish historian Simon Dubnow. Jakob Lestschinsky was the head of the department of economics and statistics of the Jewish community in Berlin. The Eastern Jewish Historical Archives in Berlin published material on the persecution of the Jews in the Ukraine and Belorussia during the Revolution and the wars of 1917–1921.

In the years of intense cultural life relations with the German Jews gradually became somewhat less strained. The Zionist movement especially strove to unite German and Eastern European Jews for the common goal. But a full acceptance of the Eastern Jews by the German Jews never took place. We will give here only two instances out of many to illustrate this. When the first issue of the German-Jewish bibliophile journal *Soncino-Blätter* was issued in 1925,<sup>25</sup> an extensive bibliography was published of books which had appeared between 1920 and 1925 on Jewish subjects. There were three divisions: Judaica, Hebraica and Palestine (pp. 115–149). No mention whatsoever is made in this bibliography of the Yiddish publications in Germany. Even the English books of the *Rimon* Publishing House are not listed.

An international press exhibition called *Pressa* was organised in Cologne from May until October 1928. Among the national exhibits the Catholic, Protestant and Jewish religions were also represented, in separate pavilions. In the Jewish pavilion, the *Jüdische Sonderschau der Pressa*, one of the four rooms was reserved for the Yiddish press. Tcherikover, director of the economic and statistical department of the Berlin branch of YIVO, had insisted that among the exhibits of the German-Jewish press the Yiddish periodicals which were then published in Germany were also to be shown. This would have been a token of solidarity amongst all Jews who lived in Germany at a time of growing antisemitism. But the German-Jewish organising committee, with its chairman Max I. Boden-

<sup>25</sup>*Soncino-Blätter, Beiträge zur Kunde des jüdischen Buches*. Published by the *Soncino-Gesellschaft der Freunde des jüdischen Buches*, edited by Hermann Meyer.

heimer, refused Tcherikover's request. In a very critical article on the exhibition of the Jewish press Tcherikover reproached the committee for wilful neglect and contempt.<sup>26</sup>

A Dutch visitor to the exhibition, L. Hirschel, librarian of the *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana* in Amsterdam, was favourably impressed by the *Jüdische Sonderschau*. He published an enthusiastic account of his visit in the leading Jewish weekly in Holland<sup>27</sup> in which he expressed his amazement at the amount of Yiddish periodicals which were published all over the world. It remains a remarkable fact that neither in the official catalogue of the exhibition nor in the separate brochure which was published for the occasion of the *Jüdische Sonderschau* is there even a mention to be found of the Yiddish press in Germany.<sup>28</sup>

Even the bitter experiences of German persecution and destruction of the European Jews in the Second World War have not put an end to the old prejudices against Yiddish language and literature. It is symptomatic that Margaret T. Edelheim-Muehsam in her first survey on the German-Jewish press written some thirty years ago for the Year Book of the Leo Baeck Institute stated simply that the "number of Yiddish periodicals published in Germany now and then was small and their circulation negligible . . .".<sup>29</sup> The short but very important interlude of Yiddish culture in Germany deserves a better treatment than this, the more so because there are so very few people left to speak up for these vanished Yiddish authors and their public.

<sup>26</sup>E. Tcherikover, 'Di yidische prese-oysstetung in keln', *Bikhervelt* I, 4 (July 1928), pp. 39-45.

<sup>27</sup>L. Hirschel, 'De Joodsche pers in de Pressa te Keulen', *De Vrijdagavond, Joodsch Weekblad* V, 14 (6th-13th July 1928), pp. 214-217; 227-230 (with illustrations).

<sup>28</sup>In the library of the *Internationales Zeitungsmuseum der Stadt Aachen* the catalogue of the exhibition, *Katalog der Pressa 1928* is extant. On pp. 249 and 250 there are particulars on the Jewish part of the exhibition. In the brochure *Festschrift zur jüdischen Sonderschau der Pressa 1928*, Cologne 1928, 82 pp., there is no mention whatsoever of Yiddish periodicals.

<sup>29</sup>Margaret T. Edelheim-Muehsam, 'The Jewish Press in Germany', in *LBI Year Book I* (1956), pp. 163-164.

## Bibliography

The preparation of a bibliography of Yiddish books and periodicals, published and printed in Germany, presents great difficulties. Students in the field have been seriously hampered by the fact that “. . . Yiddish literature (in its broadest sense comprising all publication activities in the Yiddish language) suffers from an intense case of bibliographical neglect. No national bibliography has devoted itself exclusively to ‘Yiddica’ . . . The field of Yiddish is, in brief, distinguished more for its *lacunae* than for its concrete achievements . . .” as has been aptly remarked a few years ago.<sup>30</sup>

The tentative list we present here can, therefore, only be considered as a first attempt which we sincerely hope will be supplemented. The list is based on announcements in the Yiddish bibliographical journal *Bikhervelt*. We could only make use of six issues, dating from January 1922 until April 1923. The last two issues were not available, either in Europe or in the United States. Added to these data are bibliographical references in the biographies of Yiddish authors in the *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur* (New York 1956–1968), advertisements of recent and forthcoming publications on the dust jackets of the Yiddish publications and information gathered from literature and letters of the period.

We have not been able to see the greater part of the listed books and periodicals and, therefore, could not check dates, number of pages and other information. Yiddish books are very scarce in European libraries and when present mostly catalogued together with Hebrew books. Looking for Yiddish publications of our period was a difficult and unrewarding task. We hope that this deficient list will be the start for the collecting of conclusive data on this important period in modern Yiddish literature, before every trace of it has vanished.

The spelling of the names of the authors is according to that of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem 1972). Authors who are not given there and Yiddish texts are rendered according to the transliteration-rules for Yiddish, laid down in Volume I, Index, p. 91.

1919

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1920

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VERLAG JUDÄA, BERLIN

3. *Der idisher khurbn in ukrayne*. Materialn un dokumentn redagirt un bearbet fun Leon Chasanowich, ix, 108 pp.

Financed by the Scandinavian Jewish Relief Committee for the Jewish victims of the pogroms in the Ukraine.

<sup>30</sup>Zachary M. Baker, ‘Bibliographic Research and Organization of Yiddish Literature. Some Problems and Prospects’, *Yiddish. A Quarterly Journal devoted to Yiddish and Yiddish Literature*, IV, 2 (1980), p. 21.

JÜDISCHER VERLAG, BERLIN

4. KAUFMANN, Frits Mordechai, *Die schönsten Lieder der Ostjuden*. 47 ausgewählte Volkslieder. Yidd. texts with German translation.

1921

FARLAG YIDISH, KOVNO-BERLIN

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JÜDISCHER VERLAG

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1922

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26. MARX, Karl, *Der birgerkrig in frankraykh*. Mit a hakdome fun F. Engels. Yidish fun J. L. Berman, 58 pp.

FARLAG YIDISH, BERLIN

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138. RYBAK, Issochor Ber, *Mayn khoreve heym. A gedekhenish*, 31 litografyes.

WOSTOK, BERLIN

139. ABRAMOVITCH, Raphael L. and Abraham Menes, *Dos leyenbukh tsu der geshikhte fun yisroel*, I, 120 pp. with ill.

140. MARTOV, Julius (pseud. of Iulii Osipovich Tsederbaum), *Zikhroynes fun a sotsial-demokrat*, I. Ibergeztst fun rusish, 185 pp. The Russian work also appeared in 1923.

141. WEINREICH, Max, *Mekhiras yosef*. Dos iz aroysgenumen fun sefer "Tam vejoshor" un fun andere sform, vos in zey shteyn geshribn vunderlikhe maysim.

142. WEINREICH, Max, *Shtaplen*. Fir etiudn tsu der yidisher shprakhwisnshaft un literaturgeshikhte, ii, 260 pp., with ill.

YALKUT, BERLIN

143. SHNEUR, Zalman, *Ahin. Shriftn fun a selbstmerder*, 192 pp.

WITHOUT NAME OF PUBLISHER, BERLIN

144. BERGELSON, David, *Mayse-bikhl*. With ill. by Lasar Segall.

1923-1924

FARLAG - YIDISHER LITERARISHER, BERLIN

145. BRENER, Yosef Hayim, *Arum a pintele*. Ibergezt. [fun hebr.] B. Slutski, 204 pp.

146. FAYGENBERG, Rahel, *Untern hamer* (Ukraine - Odeser gegent 1918-1920).

147. HANOVER, Nathan Note, *Yeven metsulo*. Ibergezt. fun Wolf Latzki-Bertoldi.

148. KELLERMANN, Bernhard, *Dos gesheinish*. Iberz. [fun daytsh].

149. MAYSE *Gedoyle min uman veukraine*. Bashreybung fun Gontes tsaytn. Mit a hakhdoma un derklerungen fun S. Dubnow.

150. ZAMBLIKHER, I: *In der tkufe fun der revolutsye*; II: *Pinkes ukrayne*.

1924

FARLAG - YIDISHER LITERARISHER, BERLIN

151. MUKDONI, A. (pseud. of Alexander Kapel), *Der sibirer gehinem*. Zikhroynes un iberlebenishn.

152. REVUTSKI, Abraham, *In di shvere teg oyf ukkraine*. Zikhroynes fun a yidishn minister, 318 pp.

KLAL-FARLAG, BERLIN

153. BRIL, Hirsh, *Oyf der shvel*. Dramatishe verk, 100 pp.

MENES FARLAG, LEIPZIG

154. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Lider un gedikhtn*, 8 pp.

Published in a series of works by young writers and artists.

J. STYBEL, BERLIN

155. BERDITSHEVSKI, Micha Joseph, *Yidishe ksovim fun a vaytn korev*.

WOSTOK, BERLIN

156. HATSKELES, Helene, *Di erd un di velt*, I, 133 pp., with ill.

157. KULBAK, Moshe, *Moshiah ben efrayim*, 132 pp.

YIVO, ECONOMIC-STATISTICAL DEPARTMENT, BERLIN

158. BRUTZKUS, Boris Ber, *Yidishe demografye, statistik un ekonomye*. Tsuzamen mit Jacob Lestchinsky un Jacob Segal, 4 vols.

1925

FARLAG "DOS FRAYE VORT", BERLIN

159. ROSIN, A. (pseud. Ben-Adir), *In khaos fun lebn un denken*, 190 pp.

RENAISSANCE, BERLIN

160. GUTMAN, Rosa, *Far gor dem noentn*. Lider, 24 pp.

## SHEMESH FARLAG, LEIPZIG

161. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Un du bist got*, 92 pp.

WITHOUT NAME OF PUBLISHER

162. EINHORN, David, *Gesamelte lider*.163. LESTSCHINSKY, Jacob, *Der emes vegn di yidn in rusland*, 64 pp.

1926

ORT, BERLIN

164. BRUTZKUS, Boris Ber, *Di yidische landvirtschaft in mizrokh-eyrope, ir geshikhtlikhher oyfkum un untergang zint der velt-milkhome*, 116 pp.

EMIGDIREKT, BERLIN

165. LATZKI-BERTOLDI, Wolf, *Di aynwanderung in di yidische yishuvim in dorem-amerike*, 48 pp.

1927

EMIGDIREKT - HIAS, BERLIN

166. LESTSCHINSKY, Jacob, *Di yidische vanderungen far di letste 25 yor*, 88 pp.

G. KAHAN, DANZIG

167. KIRSHBAUM, Jacob, *Geshikhte fun di yidn in Dantsig, 1310-1920*, 89 pp.

OSE, BERLIN

This international Jewish welfare organisation published several pamphlets with information on matters of illness and health, especially meant as guidance for emigration to the Americas. We have only been able to trace publications between 1922 and 1927, several of which cannot be given an exact date. The series of pamphlets is called *Folksbibliotek*: the organisation was financed, for the greater part, by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

168. MELEKH, *Kop-tsoraas* (parkh). Stsenes fun lebn.169. NEUSTAEDTER, A., *Di trakhome*. Iberarb. in yidish fun D. A. Fridman.170. OLSHVANGER, Eliah, *Tuberkulos*. Mit a forvort fun profesor Michaelis.171. OLSHVANGER, Eliah, *Venerishe krankheytn*. Mit bilder.172. POLIANSKI, A., *A bikhl far yidische mames*. Mit 15 bilder, 2nd edn.173. RESE, K., *Gesunte tseyen*. Autorisirte iberzetsung A. Olgravida (?).174. ROSENTHAL, L., *Ale yedies vos der emigrant darf visn un a bazunder kapitel vegn farhitn dos gezunt*, 220 pp.175. ROSENTHAL, L., *Klepige krankheytn*.176. TUGENDREICH, Gustaf, *Dertsung funem kleynkind*. Autorisirte iberzetsung fun A. Olgravida (?), 54 pp.

1928

EMIGDIREKT, BERLIN

177. LESTSCHINSKY, Jacob, *Di antwicklung fun idishn folk far di letste 100 yor*, 325 pp.

1929

EMIGDIREKT, BERLIN

178. LESTSCHINSKY, Jacob, *Di onheybn fun der emigratsye un kolonizatsye bay yidn in 19th yorhundert*, 72 pp.

KAUFMANN, FRANKFURT a. MAIN

179. PAPPENHEIM, Bertha, *Alerley geshikhtn*. Mayse-bukh.

1931-1936

WITHOUT NAME OF PUBLISHER

180. LESTSCHINSKY, Jacob, *Di yidn in poynln*, 152 pp. (1931).181. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *In dorser vald baym yam*, 28 pp. (1933).182. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Tate-sonetn* (1934).183. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Mayn fishersdorf*, 31 pp. (1935).

184. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Funderwaytns*, 78 pp. (1935).  
 185. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Fun der heym*, 78 pp. (1936).  
 186. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Tsvishn himl un erd*, 80 pp. (1936).  
 187. STENZEL, Abraham Nahum, *Mendele Moykher Sforim*, 10 pp. (1936).

## PERIODICALS

The periodicals presented even more difficulties than the books. Sometimes only single issues are known and it is not possible to determine the date the periodicals were published and the number of issues. There must have been many more periodicals than could be listed here.

## 1921 BERLIN

188. BAVEGUNG [*Unzer*]. Organ fun di yidishe sotsial demokratishe arbeter organizatsyes in daytshland. Editor: Karl Greger. Published every two weeks. Existed until 1924.  
 189. MIZRAKH-YUD [*Der*]. Yudishes vokhnblat. Tsentralorgan fun farband fun di mizрах-yudn in daytshland. Editor: Joseph Lin. Published every week.

## 1922 BERLIN

190. BIULETIN. [Published by] Tsentral-farvaltung fun farband ORT.  
 191. ERDARBET. Aroysgegebn fun der tsentral-farvaltung fun farband ORT. Editor: A. Singalowsky. Published every month.  
 192. FOLKS-GEZUNT. Aroysgegebn fun OSE. Published every month, existed until 1924, or probably longer.  
 193. KAMF [*Der*]. Monatshrift farn poale-tzionistishn gedank. Editor: Abraham Revutski.  
 194. TRIBUNE [*Di*]. Social, political and literary monthly, edited by M. Grosman.  
 195. VEG [*Der*]. Zhurnal far fragn fun yidisher emigratsye un kolonizatsye, aroysgegebn funem yidishn arbeter emigratsye farband.

## 1923 BERLIN

196. ALBATROS. Zeitschrift für neue Dichtung und Graphik. Schriftleiter Uri Zvi Greenberg. Nrs. 3-4. The first two issues of this important *avant-garde* journal appeared in Warsaw 1922.  
 197. BLETER *far yidishe demografie, statistik un khronik*. Edited by B. Brutzkus, J. Lestschinsky and J. Segal. Five issues were published, the edition stopped in 1924.  
 198. VORT [*Dos fraye*]. Organ fun umophengikn sotsialistishn gedank. Editor: Ben-Adir (Pseud. of Abraham Rosin). Published every two weeks.

## 1924 BERLIN

199. HEYMISH. Klal-Bleter far unterhalt un visn.

## 1925 LEIPZIG

200. LEBN [*Undzer*].  
 201. SHABES-OYBS. Zhurnal far literatur un humor.

## 1926 BERLIN

202. IN SHPAN. Edited by David Bergelson and D. Czarny.

## 1928-1929 BERLIN

203. VIRTSHAFT *un lebn*. Published by ORT, appeared every two months.

## WITHOUT DATE, BERLIN

204. ARKHIV *funem yidishn sotsialist*.