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THE LAWRENCE MARWICK COLLECTION OF COPYRIGHTED YIDDISH PLAYS AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS: INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

by Zachary M. Baker

Background

This bibliography of one of the largest and most significant extant collections of Yiddish plays sheds light on the vibrant popular culture of Jewish immigrants to the United States. The more than 1,290 plays included here were first identified by the late Dr. Lawrence Marwick, Head of the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress, on the basis of entries located in published registers of *Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States*. After Dr. Marwick's death in 1981, his successor, Myron M. Weinstein, supervised the compilation of a preliminary catalog of the copyrighted Yiddish plays and arranged for their physical transfer from the United States Copyright Office to the Hebraic Section. Subsequently, at the initiative of Mrs. Claire Marwick and at the request of Dr. Michael Grunberger, Head of the Hebraic Section since 1986, I agreed to prepare the annotated bibliography of the collection that now bears her late husband's name. A companion project resulted in the published bibliography of Yiddish sheet music, by Irene Heskes: *Yiddish American Popular Songs, 1895-1950: A Catalog Based on the Lawrence Marwick Roster of Copyright Entries* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1992).

Of the many aspects of Jewish immigrant culture, the Yiddish theater is among the most amply documented. Numerous books on the subject have been published in Yiddish and English, and the Yiddish daily press, through its reviews and advertisements, offers a continuous chronicle of productions mounted on the stages of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, and other cities where Yiddish plays were performed. For the purposes of this bibliography, the essential reference work has been Zalmen Zylbercweig's *Lexicon of the Yiddish Theatre*, published in six volumes from 1931 to 1969 (page proofs also exist for portions of a seventh, unpublished volume). The Zylbercweig *Lexicon* includes entries for several thousand performers, composers, producers, directors, and authors. These entries contain a wealth of information pertaining to the plays with which their subjects were associated, such as production dates and venues, cast lists, and the names of many other individuals responsible for their staging. Most of the annotations appearing in this bibliography are derived from information included in the Zylbercweig *Lexicon*, which testifies to its extraordinary documentary value.

The Yiddish Theater in America: Brief Overview¹

The modern Yiddish theater emerged in 1876, when the poet and songwriter Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908) produced his first musical in a Iasi, Romania tavern. Just six years later, at the dawn of mass immigration in 1882, a Yiddish theatrical troupe arrived in New York. By the 1890s, the American Yiddish theater had become a popular and well established entertainment medium. During this "heroic era," historical operettas and melodramas by Goldfaden, "Professor" Moshe Hurwitz and Joseph Latteiner (Lateiner) competed with the more realistic dramas of Jacob Gordin, and the actors Boris Thomashefsky, David Kessler, Kenny Lipzin, Bertha Kalisch, and Jacob P. Adler achieved their enduring status as stars of the Yiddish stage.

¹See Edna Nahshon's accompanying introduction, "The Yiddish Theater in America," beginning on page xiii, for a more extensive treatment of this subject.

America was thus a major Yiddish theatrical center virtually from the genre's inception. Unlike Russia, the U.S. government never banned performances in that language, and the pogroms, revolutionary ferment, and warfare that so afflicted Jews in Eastern Europe served only to enhance America's role as a magnet for actors, composers, and Yiddish theater people in general. Yiddish plays were performed not only in theaters on New York's "Yiddish Rialto" (located until the First World War on the Bowery, and thereafter on Second Avenue), but in the city's outer boroughs and in the "provinces" as well. The non-New York venues to some degree served as testing grounds for plays that eventually ended up on the Lower East Side; just as frequently, though, a successful New York run would be followed by a touring production that visited dozens of cities across the United States and Canada.²

Plays were not expected to have long runs. As contemporary newspaper advertisements attest, they were often scheduled for only three or four performances (although they could of course be extended or revived later on, in response to popular demand). For that reason, prompters played almost as important a role in a theatrical presentation as did its director, producer, composer, and actors (indeed, Zylbercweig's *Lexicon* often notes that certain playwrights or actors also served as prompters).

The Yiddish theater was—and remains—a musical medium. The most serious of melodramas were usually accompanied by orchestral overtures and interludes and by songs and dances. This reflects the origins of modern Yiddish performance in the balladeer tradition of the mid-19th century Broder Singers and in the operetta format chosen by their influential successor, Abraham Goldfaden. The scripts in the Marwick collection do not, however, include the music that was written to accompany them. Many of the songs that formed an integral part of these plays and operettas are, however, cited in Irene Heskes's bibliography, *Yiddish American Popular Songs*.

A visit to the theater was for many Yiddish-speaking immigrants a welcome release from the workaday world, and at the same time it reflected the social and political issues that confronted them. A notorious example of this is represented by Harry Kalmanowitz's play *Geburth kontrol, oder, Rassen zelbstmord* [*Birth Control, or, Racial Suicide*], performed at New York's National Roof Garden on July 21-23, 1916, and clearly inspired by the controversy surrounding Margaret Sanger's advocacy of birth control. Other plays touch upon such topical concerns as Prohibition, gangsterism, prostitution, and sweatshop hardships. The Yiddish theater—like the Yiddish press—clearly served immigrants as an Americanizing medium.

The American Yiddish theater did not enjoy a single heyday or "golden age"; rather, it developed and flourished over a half century, beginning around 1890 and waning circa 1940. During the early years, lurid melodramas competed with plays inspired by more realistic Russian, English, and Scandinavian models. (Yiddish translations of the works of Chekhov, Shakespeare, Ibsen, and Strindberg were published and widely read during the 1890s and 1900s.) A striving toward a more self-consciously artistic theater became evident during and after World War I. The 1920s and 1930s were the era not only of "kitchen melodramas" (stage equivalents—and antecedents—of radio soap operas), but also of the Yiddish Art Theater, the Folksbine, and the avant-garde Artef.³

The Yiddish stage in America eventually fell victim to an array of social, cultural, and economic forces that caused its precipitous decline, reflected in this bibliography by a sharp diminution of copyrighted Yiddish scripts after 1940. First, the imposition of strict quotas affecting immigration from southern and eastern Europe caused the mass influx of Yiddish-speaking Jews virtually to cease after 1924. Second, the Great Depression, combined with restrictive trade union rules, also acted as a brake on

²According to Edna Nahshon, "In 1927... there were 24 Yiddish theaters across America, 11 of them in New York, 4 in Chicago, and 1 each in Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Newark, and St. Louis. Some 10 years later... it was estimated that 1.75 million tickets to Yiddish shows were sold in New York City alone." See her accompanying introduction, page xiii.

³For more extensive treatments of the American Yiddish theater, see David S. Lifson, *The Yiddish Theatre in America* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1965), and Nahma Sandrow, *Vagabond Stars: A World History of Yiddish Theater* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977). For a history of the Artef, see Edna Nahshon, *Yiddish Proletarian Theatre: The Art and Politics of the Artef, 1925-1940* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998).

the commercial and artistic viability of the Yiddish theater. Finally, the growing competition posed by radio, motion pictures, and (ultimately) television was an additional factor hastening the decline of the Yiddish theater. In 2004 there were only two regular Yiddish theatrical venues remaining in North America: the Folksbine in New York City, and Montreal's Yiddish Drama Group.

Children and grandchildren of immigrants for the most part sought out their entertainment in English. Indeed, a number of prominent Yiddish performers themselves “graduated” to the English-language stage and screen. Among the best-known examples were Stella Adler (daughter of Jacob P. Adler and promoter of the Method school of acting), Joseph Buloff (who played the role of Ali Hakim in the original Broadway production of *Oklahoma*), and Muni Weisenfreund (who, as Paul Muni, starred in numerous Hollywood films). Lulla Adler Rosenfeld has published two books by and about her grandfather, Jacob P. Adler⁴, and the composer and conductor Michael Tilson Thomas is the president of The Thomashefsky Project, an ambitious undertaking that was established to record and preserve the theatrical achievements of his grandparents, Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky.

In addition, since the 1970s there has been a renewed interest in popular Yiddish culture. The “klezmer revival,” for example, has led to a proliferation of musical ensembles that draw their inspiration from Eastern European Jewish musical styles. Yiddish-oriented cultural and educational retreats sponsored by such organizations as the Workmen's Circle, the National Yiddish Book Center, and affiliates of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs have showcased the Yiddish theatrical tradition. Yiddish film festivals (including, most notably, one sponsored by New York's Museum of Modern Art in the early 1990s) have played an important role in introducing present-day audiences to some of the greatest stars of the Yiddish stage—especially those actors whose careers began during and after World War I—and to the classic Yiddish theatrical repertory. The widespread availability of many Yiddish films on videocassette (and, most recently, the preservation of old Yiddish radio broadcasts) helps to ensure that the important performance tradition to which the scripts in the Marwick Collection belong will remain accessible for generations to come.

Scope of the Marwick Collection

Due to copyright regulations in effect until 1909, the early decades of the American Yiddish theater are sparsely represented in the Marwick Collection, by a mere 70 copyright entries—and by no scripts at all. The reason for this is explained in the introduction to the 1870-1916 published index of copyrighted dramas:

Under the legislation in force from July 8, 1870 to July 1, 1909, it was customary to file the title-page of the drama in advance of the deposit of copies and subsequently deposit the copies. The result has been that a great many titles were filed for registration which were not followed by the deposit of copies. This was especially so in the case of dramas, and it is estimated that in more than 20,000 cases, while the title has been recorded, no copies have been received.... By the copyright act of 1909, the preliminary deposit of the title-page was abolished and registration has only been possible upon the deposit of the dramatic work, two copies in the case of a published drama and one manuscript copy in the case of an unpublished play...⁵

The absence of scripts dating from before 1909 is the most serious lacuna of the Marwick Collection. Published versions of many of the better-known dramas and operettas from that period do exist (some, but not all of these are included here), but the vast majority never appeared in print and scripts for them were never registered for copyright. Of the 70 pre-1909 Yiddish plays that were

⁴Lulla Rosenfeld, *Bright Start of Exile: Jacob Adler and the Yiddish Theatre* (New York: Crowell, 1977), and 2nd, revised edition: *The Yiddish Theatre and Jacob P. Adler* (New York: Shapolsky Publishers, 1988); Jacob P. Adler, *A Life on the Stage: A Memoir*, translated, edited, and with commentary by Lulla Rosenfeld; with an introduction by Stella Adler (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1999).

⁵*Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870-1916*, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1916), p. i.

copyrighted but not deposited, scripts for about 20 have been located in the Sholem Perlmutter Collection of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research Archives (New York), and are described in this bibliography. YIVO's Perlmutter Collection, which includes 1,400 play titles (many of which are represented by multiple—and variant—scripts), is comparable in size to the Marwick Collection but is broader in its chronological coverage and, in contrast to the Marwick Collection, almost exclusively composed of plays that are known to have been produced.⁶

Close to 95% of the plays listed in this bibliography, then, date from July 1, 1909 to December 31, 1950, and the overwhelming majority of entries for these plays are represented by actual scripts (a small number of scripts for Yiddish plays identified in the copyright register volumes and the Copyright Office files could not be located). The largest number of scripts were copyrighted between 1909 and 1940, with the 1920s representing the most productive decade for this collection.

These plays fall into three major categories:

(1) **Mass-produced comedies, melodramas, and operettas**, most of which are known to have been publicly staged. While widely (and on purely artistic grounds, justifiably) denigrated by critics as *shund*, or trash, these form the overwhelming majority of Yiddish plays that were actually performed. For this reason alone, the plays in the Marwick Collection merit closer study.

(2) **Plays with self-consciously artistic intentions.** The decade after World War I was a time of cultural ferment, as evidenced by the emergence of Maurice Schwartz's Yiddish Art Theater. Schwartz and other directors of this period staged plays of acknowledged literary merit, culminating in I. J. Singer's great popular success, *Yoshe Kalb*, represented in the Marwick Collection both by Schwartz's adaptation and by Singer's own version.

(3) **Plays written and deposited for vanity purposes.** A significant minority of scripts in the Marwick Collection are by unknown amateurs. It is uncertain whether many of these were actually performed.

A small number of radio scripts and film screenplays are also included in the Marwick Collection, together with Yiddish translations of plays originally written in other languages. Most of the scripts recorded in this bibliography are in manuscript, typescript, or hectograph (mimeo) format. Some published plays are also included, having been noted in the published copyright registers and indexes. These, however, represent but a small proportion of the overall corpus of published dramas in Yiddish.

Despite the limited literary value of most of these plays, and notwithstanding the sensationalism (motivated by a desire for commercial success) that is a common feature of so many of them, they now stand as one of the most striking documentary legacies of a milieu that has disappeared. For that reason, the Library of Congress has selected 77 Yiddish play scripts for inclusion in its "American Memory" web site, as part of a digitized collection that incorporates audiovisual and textual media dealing with many facets of American culture and history.⁷

⁶The degree of overlap between the Perlmutter and Marwick Collections is surprisingly small. To take the cases of two prolific playwrights represented in both collections, of 104 total titles by Harry Kalmanowitz, only 15 are shared by the two collections; of 78 plays by Isidor Solotorefsky, only five are also held in common. Other important collections of unpublished Yiddish plays are found at the American Jewish Historical Society (the Molly Picon Collection), Brown University (the Harris Collection), Harvard University (the Joseph Buloff Collection), the New York Public Library (the Boris Thomashefsky Collection), and YIVO (the Maurice Schwartz and Jacob Mestel Collections). As of 2001, the largest and most important Yiddish theatrical collection remaining in private hands was that of the Hebrew Actors Union, comprising Yiddish play scripts, theatrical documents, memorabilia, and photographs. Sources for Yiddish films include the National Center for Jewish Film (at Brandeis University), the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, and Ergo Media (a commercial distributor, in Teaneck, NJ).

⁷*American Memory: The American Variety Stage: Vaudeville and Popular Entertainment, 1870-1920: Yiddish-Language Playscripts* (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/vshtml/vsyid.html>).

The Authors

The most prolific authors represented in the Marwick Collection are journeymen who are almost forgotten today. Among these are Abraham Blum, Louis Freiman, Isidor Friedman, the impresario Max Gabel, Michael Goldberg, Harry Kalmanowitz, William Siegel (who remained active into the 1950s), and Isidor Solotorefsky. A comparison can perhaps be drawn between these authors' works and those of present-day television writers whose scripts are similarly mass-produced, with an impact that by and large is ephemeral. Moreover, these authors did not choose to copyright all or even a majority of their plays.⁸

This was also the case with the more famous playwrights whose works are included here. Writers such as Abraham Goldfaden, Joseph Latteiner, and Jacob Gordin are comparatively under-represented in the Marwick Collection—in part because the bulk of their works were written and produced before the revised copyright deposit regulations went into effect in 1909, and in part (one conjectures) because they or their producers deliberately chose to copyright only those plays that achieved some degree of commercial success. (Even this precaution, however, did not prevent the publication of pirated versions of Yiddish plays, particularly in the years before World War I, with printers in Cracow and Warsaw serving as the most egregious offenders in this practice.) Peretz Hirshbein's most famous drama, *Grine felder* [*Green Fields*], is represented here only by an excerpt, *Tsvey shtet* [*Two Cities*], and the most celebrated of all Yiddish plays, *Tsvishn tsvey veltn—Der dibek* [*Between Two Worlds—The Dybbuk*], by Sh. An-ski (Shloyme-Zaynvl Rapoport), is not represented in the Marwick Collection at all. (However, a popular lampoon of An-ski's play, *Mit'n koyekh fun dibek* [*With the Power of the Dybbuk*], by Menahem Kipnis, is included here.) This attests to the predominantly American provenance of the Marwick Collection's scripts; most plays are by authors who resided in the United States at the time that they were written and copyrighted.

The impact of the change in copyright regulations in 1909, requiring deposit of copyrighted scripts, is evidenced by the fact that one of the most popular Yiddish plays ever performed, Boris Thomashefsky's *Dos pintele yid* [*The Essential Jew*], is represented in the Marwick Collection only by a published copyright register entry—dated June 24, 1909 (i. e., just **seven days** before the new regulations went into effect!)—and not by a script. Substitute scripts for *Dos pintele yid* were found in YIVO's Perlmutter Collection and are noted within the entry for this play.⁹

Statistical Profile

A tentative statistical profile of the Marwick Collection yields the following data:

- ✧ 464 principal authors (excluding co-authors) are represented in the collection.
- ✧ Of these, 434 are **Yiddish** authors (94%) and the remaining 30 authors (6%) wrote in other languages.
- ✧ 241 principal authors are noted in the Zylbercweig **and** other Yiddish bio-bibliographical lexicons. In other words, 52% of all principal authors and 56% of all principal **Yiddish** authors are recorded in these reference sources.
- ✧ 186 principal authors are noted in the Zylbercweig *Lexicon* alone, accounting for 40% of all principal authors and 43% of all principal **Yiddish** authors.
- ✧ Of the more than 1,290 plays listed in this bibliography, information on productions is given for 321, or roughly 25% of all titles. In most cases, this information is derived from the Zylbercweig *Lexicon*. How many of the remaining plays were actually performed is not certain.

⁸As pointed out in footnote 6, above, the prolific authors Harry Kalmanowitz and Isidor Solotorefsky—whose plays were frequently performed—registered only a tiny number of their scripts for copyright.

⁹Since the compilation of this bibliography, the Boris Thomashefsky Collection, which is housed in The New York Public Library's Dorot Jewish Division, has been cataloged, rendering it possible to provide citations for two substitute scripts for the play *Der Yeshive-bokher*. According to Zylbercweig, that play—whose authorship is ascribed to Thomashefsky in the copyright register—was actually written by Isidor Solotorefsky (Zolotarevski), and that is also how it is cataloged by NYPL.

Much statistical analysis on this collection remains to be done.

Format of the Bibliography

A note about romanization: The bibliography observes the rules established by the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research for the transcription of Yiddish.¹⁰ These rules are at slight variance with Library of Congress practices. The differences between the two romanization systems are most apparent in the following cases:

- ✧ Words employing the letter [ח] (*kh* in YIVO transcription; *h* in LC romanization), e. g., *kholem*, and not *holem* [חלום], for “dream.”
- ✧ Words employing the letter combination [זש] (*zh* in YIVO transcription; *zsh* in LC romanization), e.g., *zburnal*, and not *zshurnal* [זשורנאל], for “journal.”
- ✧ Yiddish words of Hebrew/Aramaic (*loshn-koyses*) derivation are translated as provided for by the *Modern English-Yiddish, Yiddish-English Dictionary*, e.g., *milkhome*, as opposed to *milhomeh* [מלחמה], for “war.”

Bibliographical description: Because this is a bibliography largely of unpublished manuscripts and typescripts, a decision has been made to describe them as they are, warts and all, and not as the bibliographer might wish them to be. (Many of the manuscripts were not actually penned by the authors, but instead were transcribed by copyists—a common practice in the pre-xerographic age.) Misspellings of titles are not corrected within the entries themselves, although alternate spellings do appear in the index alongside the original titles. Bibliographical entries include the following elements:

- ✧ **Principal author’s name.** Whenever possible, name headings employ forms established by the Library of Congress, as verified in the YIVO Library’s Yiddish authority file.¹¹ The YIVO file notes LC headings established before the mid-1980s; consequently some name headings appearing in this bibliography diverge from newer forms established for the online Name Authority File (NAF). In cases where no LC forms were found for authors’ names, the headings are based on spellings found in the printed copyright registers or in the scripts themselves. Cross-references are provided from alternate spellings to a single established form of each name.
- ✧ **Yiddish title**, in the Hebrew alphabet. (In a very small number of cases, no Hebrew-alphabet titles are available.) In cases where more than one title appears under an author’s name these are arranged alphabetically according to their **Yiddish** (and not romanized) spellings.
- ✧ **Transcribed (romanized) title, subtitle, author statement.** This information appears within square brackets, and transcriptions based on standards established by YIVO are used.
- ✧ **Alternate transcribed (romanized) and English bibliographical information.** Where bracketed, this information is taken from outside of the script at hand, e.g., from the published copyright registers; otherwise, the source for the information is the title page, added title page, cover, and/or colophon of the script.
- ✧ **Pagination and format**, e.g., manuscript, typescript, carbon, hectograph (i.e., mimeo), published.
- ✧ **Copyright register number** (usually D for Drama, followed by several digits; prefix A is normally used for published works). This information was found either in printed volumes of

¹⁰See the table on p. xxi of Uriel Weinreich’s *Modern English-Yiddish, Yiddish-English Dictionary* (New York: YIVO Institute for Jewish Research; McGraw-Hill, 1968).

¹¹That authority file is reproduced in vol. 5 of the *Yiddish Catalog and Authority File of the YIVO Library*, edited by Zachary M. Baker and Bella Hass Weinberg (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1990).

Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States or on photocopied cards containing copyright entries, which were supplied by the Hebraic Section of the Library of Congress.

- ✧ **Copyright date, copyright holder, and city of copyright holder.** The source for this is the photocopied card file of copyright entries, which comprises the preliminary catalog of the collection.
- ✧ **Notes:**
 - ◆ **Production data**, usually for New York premiere performances; other venues are also sometimes included.
 - ◆ **Bibliographical notes:**
 - Sources of information on the play.
 - Published editions (including contents).
 - Added title-page and colophon information (e. g., dates and places noted within the scripts, names of copyists, authors' dedications).
 - ◆ **Miscellaneous information.**

Indexing

This bibliography includes three **indexes**:

- 1) **Yiddish titles** (in the Hebrew alphabet).
- 2) **Transcribed (romanized) titles and English titles.**
- 3) **Personal names**, including secondary authors, actors, composers, directors, producers, copyists, copyright holders (when these differ from the principal authors).

How the Bibliography Was Compiled

Production of this bibliography has been a collective effort. After the master list of plays was created by the Hebraic Section's staff, the scripts were paged from the Copyright Office and the collection was assembled in the bookstacks of the Library of Congress. Working from the master list, I consulted a number of reference sources and prepared annotations. The next stage involved firsthand examination of the scripts, for the purpose of providing accurate bibliographical descriptions. This was accomplished, under my supervision, by Bonnie Sohn. Following this, information on each play was entered into a Nota Bene Ibid.-Plus bibliographical database, with assistance from Elaine Silver, a computer consultant who devised the entry form and indexing specifications. Finally, William F. (Fred) Hoffman put the bibliography into camera-ready form.

Acknowledgments

This project could not have been realized without the cooperation offered by many individuals. Thanks are due, in the first instance, to Mrs. Claire Marwick, for enabling this bibliographical monument to her late husband, Dr. Lawrence Marwick (the longtime head of the Hebraic Section of the African and Middle East Division at the Library of Congress), to be produced. Mrs. Marwick is also to be thanked for her tremendous patience in seeing this project through.

The staff of the Hebraic Section at the Library of Congress was also instrumental in making this bibliography possible. Dr. Marwick's successors as Heads of that Section, the late Myron M. Weinstein and Dr. Michael Grunberger, worked hard toward ensuring that the texts of these early 20th century Yiddish American plays will be preserved by the Library of Congress (alongside the Washington Haggadah and the Library's many Hebrew incunabula) and made accessible to readers. Other Hebraic Section staff who have been of enormous assistance to me throughout this project are Dr. Peggy K. Pearlstein and Sharon Horowitz.

Indispensable assistance was rendered by my co-compiler, Bonnie Sohn, a retired librarian, Washington resident, and native Yiddish speaker with theatrical connections (her late brother, Zvee Scooler, was a prominent Yiddish actor), who pored through over one thousand scripts during the course of a little over a year, preparing detailed and accurate bibliographical descriptions of each item. It was a stroke of great good fortune that in the nation's capital there resided this Yiddish-speaking librarian with strong familial ties to the Yiddish theater, who was able to spare the time to participate in the project.

It was at Dr. Michael Grunberger's suggestion that this bibliography utilize the Nota Bene Ibid.-Plus program—truly sage advice—but without the training provided by my computer consultant, Elaine Silver, and without her creative solutions to practical problems, I would have been totally at sea. While converting the DOS-based text into camera-ready copy, Fred Hoffman re-alphabetized hundreds of entries and he also performed a positively yeoman-like service by keying in thousands of index terms and matching them to individual entry numbers appearing in the bibliography. Fred's painstaking attentions and his inventiveness have played a major role in turning a mass of bibliographical data into a **book**.

Colleagues at various libraries and archives with significant collections of unpublished Yiddish plays have offered their advice and assistance. These include: Marek Web, Fruma Mohrer, and Leo Greenbaum, of the YIVO Archives (custodian of the Jacob Mestel, Sholem Perlmutter, and Maurice Schwartz Collections); Dr. Leonard S. Gold, Norman Gechlik, Michael Terry, and Faith Jones, of the New York Public Library's Jewish Division (where the Boris Thomashefsky Papers are housed); and Dr. Charles Berlin, Head of the Judaica Department of Harvard College Library (keeper of the Joseph Buloff Archives). Thanks, too, to my former colleagues in the YIVO Library—the late Dina Abramowicz, Stanley Bergman, Dr. Bella Hass Weinberg, and Herbert Lazarus—for their patience and assistance during the protracted gestation of this bibliography. I am also grateful to the librarians of the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, at Lincoln Center, for permitting me to peruse the Library's set of the published copyright register volumes during various stages of the project. Finally, I would like to thank Linda Steinberg, Director of the Thomashefsky Project, and Ron Robboy, lead researcher for that Project, for their assistance with regard to several plays associated with Boris and Bessie Thomashefsky.

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THE YIDDISH THEATER IN AMERICA: A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

by

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[This article originally appeared as the entry "Theater, Yiddish" in *Jewish American History and Culture: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Jack Fischel and Sanford Pinsker (New York, Garland, 1992.)

The Yiddish theater was the great cultural passion of the immigrant Jewish community in the United States. It was the theater, Harold Clurman noted in 1968 that "even more than the synagogue or the lodge, became the meeting place and the forum of the Jewish community in America between 1888 and the early 1920s."

The Yiddish theater was a new phenomenon in Jewish life. It came into being in 1876 in Iasi, Romania, and arrived in New York six years later. This novel form of entertainment quickly took hold; within less than a decade, New York turned into the undisputed world capital of the Yiddish stage. Supported by a constantly growing Yiddish-speaking immigrant population (nearly 3.5 million Jews settled in the United States between 1881 and 1925), the New York Yiddish rialto was brimming with energy. It produced celebrated stars, generated a wealth of dramatic material, and presented a rich spectrum of productions ranging from sentimental melodramas and quasi-historical operettas to sophisticated experiments inspired by the latest trends of the European, particularly the Russian, stage.

Although always in the hands of private entrepreneurs, the American Yiddish theater was a genuine people's institution insofar as its appeal was not limited to any one socioeconomic group. It was attended by rich and poor, educated and illiterate, observant and free-thinking. Statistical data attests to its popularity. In 1927, two years after mass immigration had reached a virtual halt, there were 24 Yiddish theaters across America, 11 of them in New York, 4 in Chicago, 3 in Philadelphia, and 1 each in Baltimore, Boston, Cleveland, Detroit, Los Angeles, Newark, and St. Louis. Some 10 years later, during the 1937-1938 season, when the Yiddish theater in America was well past its prime, it was estimated that 1.75 million tickets to Yiddish shows were sold in New York City alone. Such sales meant that every Yiddish-speaking adult in the city saw an average of more than three Yiddish shows per year, an impressive figure unmatched by any other ethnic group in America.

In order to understand the development of the Yiddish theater in the United States, however, it is imperative to consider its East European roots. Professional entertainment, even on a modest scale, was introduced into Jewish life only after secularization and urbanization had begun to change traditional Jewish life. Music was the only performing art for which Jews could boast of having skilled personnel. Music also provoked the least protest because of its nonrepresentational character. Hence, it was only natural that the earliest modern Jewish performers were itinerant minstrels. The first such group, the Broder Zinger, originated, as its name indicates, in the Polish town of Brody. By the mid-nineteenth century, its members began to travel across the towns and villages of Eastern Europe, presenting their comic songs and ballads to working-class audiences. As this kind of entertainment became popular, the number of such musicians increased. Some began to introduce bits of dialogue and to use some makeup and props to add continuity and dramatic flavor to their musical numbers.

These rudimentary theatrics finally evolved into a cohesive, albeit crude, performance in 1876, when Abraham Goldfaden (1840-1908), a Russian intellectual known for his popular tunes and lyrics, joined forces with Israel Gradner, a Broder singer performing in a Jassy tavern on the eve of the Russo-Turkish War. Goldfaden imposed a simple dramatic framework on Gradner's musical material and created a genre that has been compared to Italian *commedia dell'arte* because it combined a fixed scenario with improvised dialogue and stage business. The successful Goldfaden enlarged the troupe and began to produce full-fledged musical plays, some of which—*The Witch* (1879), *The Two Kuni Lemls* (1880)

and *Sbulamitb* (1880)—have become classics of the Jewish stage and have been frequently revived in the original as well as in Hebrew and English translations. Known as the Father of the Yiddish Theater, Goldfaden was a man of many talents who produced, wrote, composed, directed, and designed the sets of his own productions. However, in a world of wandering troupes with little regard for copyright laws, he also suffered from his own phenomenal success: actors who were initiated into the stage by him, including Gradner, frequently opted to leave the master's majestic rule and to found their own competing traveling companies whose main repertoire consisted of Goldfaden's original plays.

In 1883, following the assassination of Czar Alexander II, the Russian government proclaimed a series of anti-Jewish laws, including the prohibition of Yiddish theatrical productions, throughout the Russian empire. Because anti-Semitism and the depressed economic conditions that afflicted Jewish communities in other East European countries were not conducive to theatrical activity, the young actors and fledgling playwrights of the new Yiddish stage joined the great migration to the West. London became the new, though temporary, center of the Yiddish stage.

Unfortunately, the poor immigrant community of the East End could not support this influx of Jewish thespians. The latter were also hampered by the fierce opposition of the Anglo-Jewish establishment and by the strict fire-safety rules of the municipal authorities. The freedom to flourish without such constraints was to be found in the Golden Land, particularly in New York, soon to become the largest Jewish urban center in the world.

It was, perhaps, the good fortune of Leon and Miron Golubok and their troupe to have left Russia and to have been stranded in London in 1882, before the influx of better-known actors began. They were also lucky to have a brother, Abe Golubok, who had already settled in New York. The American Golubok and a co-worker in the same cigar factory, an ambitious youth named Boris Thomashefsky (1868/1866?–1939) persuaded Frank Wolf, the proprietor of a downtown saloon, to become the first Yiddish impresario and to finance the importation of the Golubok troupe to New York. The company, consisting of four men and two women, arrived in the city in the summer of 1882. On August 12, assisted by local talent and featuring the young Thomashefsky, the actors premiered with Goldfaden's popular musical, *The Witch*. The performance at Turn Hall, 66 East Fourth Street, started late and ended in disaster. Thomashefsky, who some years later became a matinee idol of the Yiddish theater, offered in his memoirs (1935) a glamorized version of the event, including attempted sabotage by uptown German Jews. It seems, however, that the performance left no imprint on the life of the community, and its importance is primarily that of an historic first.

Toward the end of 1882, the group signed a lease to play weekends at the Old Bowery Garden, a narrow beer hall with a small stage usually devoted to American vaudeville. The Yiddish shows were presented regularly on Friday nights and Saturday matinees, offering mostly Goldfaden's popular operettas and the early plays written by Nahum Meir Shaikewitz (Shomer) (1849–1905), one of the first Yiddish playwrights to utilize Goldfaden's formula, though with considerably less talent. The company also presented two plays written by one of its actors, Israel Barsky, whose business card identified him as "Tailor, actor and playwright. Author of *The Spanish Inquisition*. Pants altered and pressed." It is interesting to note that in the absence of a centralized rabbinate, there was no opposition to performances conducted on Saturday; even Orthodox spectators frequented the theater on that day. However, no stage business that could be regarded as a violation of the holy day took place on stage: sealed envelopes arrived miraculously open, cigarettes were not lit, and all lights were turned on in advance before the performance began.

In 1883, plagued by financial problems and personal feuds, the company split into two theater groups. The Goluboks and their people stayed at the Old Bowery Garden, and Thomashefsky, joined by his two sisters and his entrepreneurial father, Pesach, leased the National, a theater on the Bowery near Grand Street. Neither fared well; the arrival in 1883 of a professional group from London, one with nine experienced actors as well as its own playwright, forced the Goluboks to move to Chicago and the Thomashefskys had to retreat for the next three years to Philadelphia.

In 1886, another major company that boasted some of the most brilliant stars of the Yiddish theater arrived in New York. Among the newcomers were comedian Sigmund Mogulesco (1858–1914)

and the dramatic actors David Kessler (1860–1920) and Sigmund Feinman (1862–1909). A year later Jacob P. Adler (1855–1926) and Kenny Lipzin (1856–1918) left for New York, as did Abraham Goldfaden, who hoped to capitalize on his fame and to take the town by storm. Failing in their attempts, Adler and Goldfaden returned to Europe. Adler was invited back to New York in 1890; he became the greatest dramatic actor of the Yiddish stage. Goldfaden returned to New York in 1902, a somewhat pathetic figure whose livelihood depended on the regular support of Thomashefsky and Adler. In 1907, shortly before his death, the old master was vindicated when his play, *Ben Ami*, produced by Thomashefsky, proved to be one of the hits of the season.

The fierce competition between the early two companies created a heavy demand for new scripts. Two prolific dramatists who virtually monopolized the young Yiddish stage were Joseph Latteiner (1853—1935) and “professor” Moshe Hurwitz (1884—1910). Latteiner, who originally came to the United States in 1884 as the prompter of the Karp-Silberman company, wrote some 150 plays. Hurwitz was equally prolific; he had arrived with the Romanian troupe in 1887 and served as its dramatist.

Latteiner and Hurwitz specialized in quasi-historical extravaganzas, heart-wrenching melodramas, and *tsaytbilder*, spectacles depicting recent events of national or sensational significance. Their plays, a hodgepodge of tragedy, comedy, music, and spectacle, were filled with plagiarized scenes and historical inaccuracies. Nonetheless, on stage they offered the immigrants an escape from their drab existence and an entry into a magical world of glamour, turbulence, passion, and fantasy.

The scripts were mostly derivative. They either Judaized classic and current dramas, like Shakespeare’s or Ibsen’s, or padded original plots with scenes lifted from other sources. It is significant that nearly every play included some traditional religious ritual, such as the lighting of the Sabbath candles, a wedding ceremony, or the recitation of a well-known prayer. The theatrical enactment of these traditional rituals touched the community’s nostalgic nerve, its collective yearning for the Old Country and the life it had left behind. These scenes remained an integral part of the Yiddish theater well into the 1930s.

The actors who performed in these early plays delivered their lines in *daytshmerish*, a Germanized Yiddish deemed more eloquent and more suitable to the stage. Their acting style was operatic, namely, broad, intense, with an energetic display of temperament. Often working with an unfinished script and learning a new part every two weeks, the actors took the liberty of improvising, introducing lines from other plays, and interpolating song-and-dance numbers that bore no relation to the plot.

The Yiddish stars soon became the royalty of the Lower East Side. They elicited a unique sort of adoration, and the characters they played were a major topic of discussion and controversy. This popular sentiment reached fanatic proportions with the *patriyotn*, avid fans of a specific star who regularly crowded the gallery, clapping their hands enthusiastically at whatever their favorite star did or said. It has been suggested that these devotees continued the tradition of the Hasidic followers crowding at their rabbi’s court.

The grandeur of the stage was not reflected in the auditorium, whose atmosphere resembled that of an outdoor marketplace: peddlers promoted their wares, and spectators chewed apples, shelled peanuts, and popped bottles of soda both during and after the intermission.

The burgeoning intellectual circles looked down at the theaters as circuses and labeled their plays *shund*, mainly trash. Influenced by the new European theater, they wanted their Yiddish Shaw and Ibsen. Jacob Gordin (1853–1909), a Russified intellectual with no previous ties to the Yiddish stage, became their torchbearer and idol. Gordin came to the United States in 1891 with the *Am Olam* movement, which had been greatly influenced by the ideas of Tolstoyan socialism. He accidentally met Jacob P. Adler, who voiced his dissatisfaction with the repertoire of the Yiddish theater. Adler was looking for plays of greater literary value; not a song-and-dance man, he sought strong dramatic roles. Gordin wrote his first play, *Siberia*, for Adler. Its 1891 premiere marked the beginning of a new phase in the history of the Yiddish theater.

Gordin rejected escapist spectacles in favor of a realistic mode, the prevailing style of the European stage. He had serious literary aspirations and fought bitterly with actors to convince them to deliver his lines as written, and to omit their customary “shticks” and improvisations.

Gordin's plays, which did away with *daytshmerish* and which employed a more natural language, were successes. Gordin was recognized as an innovator and as the leading playwright of the Yiddish theater. His 18-year career was named the Gordin Era, also known as the Golden Epoch of the Yiddish theater in America.

Gordin, a social activist and former teacher, utilized the stage as a didactic forum. In his plays, playlets, and translations, he focused on issues relevant to American Jewish life. In *The Jewish King Lear* (1892) and *Mirele Efros* (1898), he tackled the painful subject of intergenerational estrangement; in *God, Man and the Devil* (1900), he criticized the manic pursuit of the almighty dollar; in *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1902), he dealt with the subject of women's emancipation. Gordin's plays, essentially domestic melodramas, became classics of the Yiddish theater and are still periodically revived.

One of the greatest playwrights of the later Yiddish stage, David Pinski, noted that Gordin did not write plays, but parts. Indeed, the more ambitious actors of the early Yiddish stage quickly recognized Gordin's plays as effective star vehicles and were often eager to perform in them. Four actors were closely associated with Gordin's repertoire: Jacob P. Adler, the most revered dramatic actor of his generation; David Kessler, who excelled in portraying simple characters; Kenny Lipzin, nicknamed the Yiddish Eleonora Duse; and Bertha Kalisch, a romantic prima donna.

Gordin's success encouraged more Yiddish writers to devote their energy to the theater. Leon Kobrin (1872–1946) tried to follow in Gordin's footsteps and wrote the first plays that offered a realistic portrayal of Jewish life in America. His 20 plays were full of melodrama and vaudevillian elements, yet were instrumental as a stepping stone for the introduction of meritorious literary plays.

Following the successful reception of Gordin's and Kobrin's plays, the star managers began to produce a more gutsy repertoire. Adler and Kessler staged plays by Sholem Asch; Adler and Thomashefsky produced plays by Sholem Aleichem; and Bertha Kalisch introduced I. L. Peretz's plays to the American Yiddish stage.

According to historian Moses Rischin, the four major Yiddish theaters—the Thalia, the Windsor, the People's, and the Grand—presented 1,100 performances annually during the turn of the century, for an estimated audience of 2 million patrons. The theaters, all in the Bowery area, were a far cry from the modest halls of the 1880s. The Thalia was a 3,000-seat house devoted to more literary plays; it often featured David Kessler and Kenny Lipzin. The Grand, managed by Jacob Adler, was the second house devoted to so-called “better theater.” Specifically built for Yiddish shows, it opened in 1903 and seated 2,000. The Windsor opened in 1893. With 3,500 seats, it was the largest playhouse devoted to popular plays, particularly those by Hurwitz. The People's had a 2,500-seat capacity and was leased by Thomashefsky in 1900. It housed the greatest Yiddish hit of its day, Thomashefsky's *Dos Pintele Yid* (The Jewish Essence, 1907), a magnificent spectacle that ran for an entire season and was seen by tens of thousands of people.

The four theaters employed a repertory system, which meant that various plays from their repertoire were presented during the week, usually to theater parties. To attract a mid-week audience, they offered “benefits,” i. e., discount sale of an entire performance to volunteer organizations. The organization, in turn, sold the tickets to their members at full price, and the particular charitable and/or social cause benefited from the proceeds.

The theaters' current hits were presented on the weekend at regular box office prices, ranging from 25 cents to \$1. Hutchins Hopgood noted in 1902 that many who earned \$10 per week were willing to spend half of their income on the theater, virtually the only amusement available to the immigrant Yiddish-speaking Jew.

Like its English-language counterpart, Yiddish theater enjoyed an economic boom during World War I. Money poured into the box office, and the theaters offered increasingly lavish shows, often at the expense of the more literary repertoire whose popularity was waning after Gordin's death. After the United States entered the war, the Yiddish stage was full of patriotic musicals, with such titles as *Jewish War Brides*, *Orphans of the World*, and *Jewish Martyrs of America*.

The prosperity, on the one hand, and the decline of the Bowery area, on the other, led to the formation of a new Yiddish theater district on Second Avenue. On the avenue, between Houston and

Fourteenth streets, stood the Yiddish flagship theaters and related businesses, such as music, flower, and photography stores, costume houses, and several restaurants and cafes, the most famous of which was the Cafe Royal, the legendary meeting place of the theatrical crowd. The first Yiddish theaters to open on this “Yiddish Broadway” were the Second Avenue Theater (1911), a 1,986-seat house built especially for David Kessler, and the National (1912), a 2,000-seat house built for Thomashefsky. Both were elegant theaters that cost nearly \$1 million each. The opening ceremonies of these playhouses were important social events attended by an array of dignitaries, including the mayor of New York. The last two theaters to open on the avenue were completed in 1926—Maurice Schwartz’s 1,236-seat Yiddish Art Theater, and the Public, a 1,752-seat house. Both were elegant structures that attested to the social mobility of their patrons.

Second Avenue was synonymous with the great stars of the popular theater of the 1920s and 1930s. The first lady of the musical stage was Molly Picon, introduced to American audiences in 1923 as “the greatest sensation from Europe.” Other big names in musical comedy were Menasha Skulnik, Herman Yablokoff, Aaron Lebedeff, Ludwig Satz, and Michael Michalesko. Jennie Goldstein was the queen of Yiddish melodramatic musical spectacles.

Despite the enormous popularity of these stars, the postwar period was associated, first and foremost, with the art theater movement. The movement, in turn, was brought about by the young, relatively un-Americanized post-1905 immigrants, many of whom were radicals with a serious relation to culture, particularly to literature and drama. Many of these culturally oriented workers had become familiar in Russia with amateur dramatic groups whose goal was to improve the folksy ways of the Yiddish theater. Out of this tradition emerged the semiprofessional troupe, established in 1905 by Peretz Hirshbein. It is credited as the first art theater of the Yiddish stage.

Upon their arrival in America, many young immigrants joined amateur dramatic clubs. Soon the clubs proliferated, and in 1917, they tried unsuccessfully to form an umbrella organization. One of the major clubs in this “better theater” movement was New York’s Hebrew Dramatic League, which, in 1915, became the drama section of the Workmen’s Circle fraternal organization. The league changed its name to *Fraye Yidishe Folksbine* (the Free Yiddish People’s Stage). Its first production was Ibsen’s *Enemy of the People*. In 1918, the Folksbine produced *Green Fields* by Peretz Hirshbein. The production’s success went beyond expectation, and some regard its premiere as marking the birth of the Yiddish art theater. Inadvertently, the production also served as a touchstone, and it proved to Maurice Schwartz (1890–1960), who had recently opened his Irving Place Theater, the existence of new audiences who were looking for a new sort of theater.

In existence to this day, the Folksbine maintains its amateur status, though since 1925 it has also collaborated with professional directors, designers, and choreographers and actors of the Yiddish stage, the latter appearing occasionally as guest stars. The company is devoted primarily to literary drama, regularly presenting one major production per year. It has staged numerous Yiddish classics by I. L. Peretz, Sholem Asch, Abraham Goldfaden and Sholem Aleichem, and in its early years also produced translations of plays by Maxim Gorky, Eugene O’Neill and Upton Sinclair. In response to changing needs, the Folksbine has added in recent years simultaneous translations in English and Russian.

Maurice Schwartz, producer, director, actor, and occasional playwright, was a powerhouse of a man who, more than anyone else, defined the shape of the artistic Yiddish theater in America during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1918, the young Schwartz took over the Irving Place Theater, hired Jacob Ben-Ami, the finest young actor of the Yiddish stage, and other known actors such as Celia Adler and Bertha Gersten. Schwartz was persuaded by Ben-Ami, a serious actor committed to the principles of the modern European theater, to offer a modest production of Hirshbein’s play *Forsaken Nook*. The 1918 production made theatrical history. The play and its mode of production were a complete reversal of the customary bravura of the Yiddish stage. Simple and modest, it was captivating in its tenderness.

The Yiddish Art Theater replaced traditional Yiddish acting with Stanislavsky’s psychological realism. It was not, however, committed to one particular theatrical style. Schwartz was not a theatrical thinker, but he was greatly interested in new theatrical forms. In the 1920s he was willing to risk box-

office proceeds to produce lavish modernistic shows, such as the constructivist production of Goldfaden's *The Tenth Commandment* (1926), designed by Boris Aronson.

The Yiddish Art Theater's greatest success was *Yoshe Kalb* (1932), a dramatization of I. J. Singer's popular novel. The enormous success of this domestic melodrama had an adverse impact on the future of the theater. Playing for an entire season, it destroyed the theater's repertory system and made Schwartz eager to cash in on its reputation by touring extensively. The Yiddish Art Theater that returned to New York in the late 1930s did not regain its adventurous spirit, though it continued to be considered New York's primary Yiddish theater.

Among other innovative and noteworthy theaters of the period was the Unzer Teater (Our Theater), which opened in 1925 in a small Bronx playhouse. Playwrights David Pinski, Peretz Hirshbein, and H. Leivick were involved in its formation, but the group could not maintain itself economically for more than one season. The Shildkraut Theater, organized a year later, was forced to close for a similar reason. The 1930s saw more of the same phenomena—groups formed, presented one or two noteworthy productions, and then disbanded for lack of financial resources.

The one small art theater that thrived during the 1930s was the Artef Theater. Originally a group of amateurs affiliated with the American Yiddish Communist movement, the Artef was greatly influenced by the Russian avant-garde of the 1920s. Directed by Benno Schneider, possibly the best and most innovative director working on the American Yiddish stage, the Artef developed a unique style characterized by a measure of stylization and genuine ensemble work. The Artef gradually professionalized itself and, in 1934, moved to a small Broadway house, far removed from the downtown Yiddish rialto. Despite its successful shows and community-based support, the Artef suspended operation in 1937 for lack of funds. It reopened for the 1938–1939 season, after which it closed permanently.

It was the tragic misfortune of the Yiddish theater in America that during the 1930s, when it reached its highest artistic level, it was losing its hold on the masses. The decline in attendance was an irreversible process. Jewish immigration to the United States was at an all-time low, averaging 7,000 per year. The foreign-born became more acculturated, and as the number of American-born Jews increased, Yiddish gradually and consistently lost its status as the primary language of the American Jewish community.

The Yiddish theater continued to hang on. As the theater season became increasingly short and as the elegant playhouses were abandoned, the actors, aging with their audiences, began to tour the Jewish communities around the world, and became a twentieth-century variation of the itinerant players of the century before. By the 1960s the Yiddish theater was no longer a viable phenomenon, and sporadic efforts to revive it tended to be amateurish and short-lived. The curtain had come down on a major chapter in Jewish creativity.

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YIDDISH PLAYS FROM THE LAWRENCE MARWICK COLLECTION

Compiled by Zachary M. Baker

ABRAHMS, Ida

1. יעדערמאָן

[*Yedermann: allegorische drame in vier akten*, fon A. D. Aleksander (Ben Tsvi)] = *Jederman = Every-husband: allegory in 4 acts and a prologue*, by I. Abrahms.]

30 p. (typescript)

D 55423

© Sept. 7, 1920; Ida Abrahms, Chicago.

No Roman information on script; source for English title: Copyright register.

ADELMAN, Max, see GENDELMAN, Max J.

ADLER, Bernard

2. די פרוי אָן אַ מאַמע

[*Di Froy on a mame: a bild fun nokh der milkbome, in vier akten*, fun Be-Ad] = *Malchuma iz gehenna* = War is hell: a farce comedy in 4 acts, by Bernard Adler.

52 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 77803

© Dec. 4, 1926; Harry Fienberg, Brooklyn.

ADLER, Hyman

3. דער צושמעטערטער לאַמפּ

[*Der Tsushmeterter lamp, oder, Iden ohn a heym*, fun L. Ried; adaptir [sic] in idish fun Hayman Adler] = *Jews without a home* (Yiddish version), by Hyman Adler; based upon the original English play *The Shattered lamp*

[2], 48, 33, 24 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 60074

© Nov. 8, 1938; Hyman Adler, New York.

ADLER, Jacob, 1877-1974 (B. Kovner), see KOVNER, B.

ADLER, Jacob P., 1855-1926

4. [Die Jüdische Ghetto in New York: melodrama in 4 acts, by J. P. Adler and B. Thomashefsky.]

1899: 70262

© Oct. 28, 1899; Jacob P. Adler and B. Thomashefsky, New York.

Produced: 1899-1900 season; Yiddish title: [Di Yidische geto] = די יידישע געטאָ

Sources: Zylbercweig 2: 815 (under Thomashefsky).

Script not examined; source for bibliographical information: Copyright register.

5. די יידישע גאַסן-קינדער

[*Die Yiddische gassen kinder: entnommen von Russischen*, by Jacob P. Adler.]

69214

© Nov. 28, 1898; Adler & Edelstein, New York.

Script not examined; source for bibliographical information: Copyright register.

ADLER, Julius

6. דאָרפֿישע ליבע

[*Dorfishe libe: muzikalische pyese in 3 akten*, fun Yulyus Adler (Yud Alef) = *Country love: a musical comedy in 3 acts*, by J. Adler.]

44 p. (typescript)

D 62442

© Oct. 10, 1922; Julius Adler, Brooklyn.

Produced: Sept. 8, 1922, Liberty Theater (music: Peretz Sandler).

Sources: Zylbercweig 1: 12.

No Roman information on script; source for English title: Copyright register.

7. דער טאָוואַרישטש

[*Der Tovarishstsh: muzikal-komedye in 3 akten*, fun Yulyus Adler; muzik fun Sholem Sekunde.]

54 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 62443

© Oct. 10, 1922; Julius Adler, Brooklyn.

ADLER, Sara

8. אַ טייל פֿון סאַראַ אַדלערס לעבענס געשיכטע

[*A Teyl fun Sara Adlers lebens geschikhte (in eyn akt)*, geshribn fun Sara Adler aleyn = *A Leaf from Sara Adler's biography*.]

[1], 12 p.

D 55131

© Feb. 10, 1938; Sara Adler, Now York.

No Roman information on script; source for English title: Copyright register.

ADLER, Yulyus, see ADLER, Julius

ADLER-KOVNER, Isaac, see KOVNER, B.

AIDLINE-TROMMER, Elbert

9. סוירקיוליישאָן

[*Soyrkyuleyshon: a bild in eyn akt*, fun Elbert Eydlin-Trommer] = *Circulation: a comedy in one act*, by Elbert Aidline-Trommer.

25 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 60730

© May 6, 1922; Elbert Aidline-Trommer, Brooklyn.

Stamp on title page: "American-Yiddish Publicity & Typewriting Bureau, 216 East 14 St., N.Y."

AKSELRAD, Nell, see AXELRAD, Nell

**ALEICHEM, Sholem, see SHOLEM
ALEICHEM, 1859-1916**

ALEKSANDER, A. D., see ABRAHMS, Ida

**ALEYKHEM, Sholem, see SHOLEM
ALEICHEM, 1859-1916**

ALMI, A., 1892-1963

10. די רויטע יידעלעך

[*Di Roite yidelekh = Di Roite yiddelekh = The Red skinned little Jews: a musical play in four scenes with prologue and epilogue.*]

D 94731

© Aug. 25, 1945; Elias Sheps (A. Almi, pseud.), New York.

Script not examined; source for bibliographical information: Copyright register.

ALTSITZER, Ida

11. אומזיסט איז די האַפֿנונג

[*Umsizt iz di hofnung: drama in 4 akten un 5 stsenes, fun Ayda Oltsittser = Umsinst ist die Hoffnung.*]

[1], 40 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 50913

© Dec. 26, 1918; Ida Altsitzer, Yonkers, NY.

No Roman information on script; source for alternate title: Copyright register.

**ANDRE, Marek, see ARNSTEIN, Marc,
1879-1942 or 1943**

ANDREEV, Leonid Nikolaevich, 1871-1919

12. דער אַשמדאָי

[*Der Ashmeday: in 7 bilder, fun Leonid Andreyev; oytorizirte ibersetsung in idish fun M. Katts = Ashmedei: tragedy in 7 scenes, by Leonid Andreiev; authorized translation by M. Katz.*] New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., 1910.

130 p.

D 22739

PG 3452.A73Y5

© Sept. 1, 1910, Nov. 12, 1910; Herman Bernstein, New York.

Produced: Nov. 15, 1910, Liptzin Theater (starring: Keni Liptzin and Morris Moshkovitch). Revived by Maurice Schwartz and produced Feb. 8, 1923, Yiddish Art Theater, as *Anatema*.

Sources: Zylbercweig 4: 2931-2942 (under Katz). Work not examined; source for bibliographical information: Copyright register.

13. געזאַמעלטע דראַמען

[*Gezamelte dramen / Leonid Andreyev. Nyu York: Mayzel et Ko.*], 1911.]

95, 118, 92 p. (published)

A 297180

PJ 5182.R9A52

© Sept. 10, 1911, Sept. 26, 1911; Maisel & Co., New York.

Contents: [*Dos Leben fun'm mensben, yudish fun Varshe un Lapin. — Kenig hunger, yudish fun Olgin. — Di Teg fun unzer leben, yudish fun M. Katts.*]

Di Teg fun unzer leben produced 1910.

Zylbercweig 4: 2936 (under Katz).

Romanized bibliographical information in Copyright register: *Gesammelte dramen*, von Leonid Andreev.

**ANDREIEV, Leonid, see ANDREEV,
Leonid Nikolaevich, 1871-1919**

**ANDREYEV, Leonid, see ANDREEV,
Leonid Nikolaevich, 1871-1919**

**ANDRZEJ, MAREK, see ARNSTEIN, Marc,
1879-1942 or 1943**

ANGEL, Nathan

14. קהל'שע ברויט

[*Kool'she broyt: drama in 3 akten un 12 bilder, fun Revrend N. Angel = Koblishe broit: a drama in 3 acts.*]

[2], 73 p. (typescript)

D 42707

© May 12, 1936; Nathan Angel, Oswego, NY.

No Roman information on script; source for alternate romanization of title: Copyright register.

15. דעם רבינ'ס קללה

[*Dem Rebn's klolle: drama in 3 akten un 6 bilder, fun Revrend N. Angel = Dem Rabin's kallah [sic]: a play in 3 acts.*]

[1], 59, [1] p. (carbon of typescript)

D. unpub. 1519

© July 3, 1929; Nathan Angel, Brooklyn, N. Y.

No Roman information on script; sources for alternate romanization of title: Copyright register.

AREM, Schloime

16. עלטערן'ס שולד

[*Eltern's shuld: drama in 3 akten / Shloyme Arem = The Parents' fault: drama in 3 acts.*]

[2], 42 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 63990

© March 19, 1923; Schloime Arem, New York.

No Roman information on script; source for English title: Copyright register.

ARENHTEYN, Mark, see ARNSTEIN, Marc, 1879-1942 or 1943

ARENSTEIN, Mark, see ARNSTEIN, Marc, 1879-1942 or 1943

ARNSHTEYN, Mark, see ARNSTEIN, Marc, 1879-1942 or 1943

ARNSTEIN, Marc, 1879-1942 or 1943

17. אַ אידישע טאָכטער

[*A Idische tochter: drama fin idishen leben in poylen, fin Mark Arenshiteyn*] = *A Jewish daughter, or A Child of Israel: a play in 3 acts*, by Mark Arnstein.

[1], 98 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 36317

© March 11, 1914; Max Arnstein, New York.

First performed in Polish, in Łódź (ca. 1910-1911), under the title *Noemi*. Produced as *A Idische tochter* in New York, Dec. 31, 1913; Lobel Theater (starring: Malvina Lobel, Morris Moshkovitch, Maurice Schwartz). Also produced at Dos Naye Teater, May 6, 1920, under the title *Di Khsidische tochter*.

Sources: Zylberweig 1: 98-102; 5: 4420-4425.

[“Spetsyel geshrieben fir Madam Malvine Lobel.”]

18. האַשע די יתומה

[*Khashe di yesoyme: a drame in 4 akten*, loyt Yankev Gordin; oyfsnay baarbayt fun Mark Arnshteyn (Andzhey Marek) = *Chashe die yosoime*, by Mark Arenstein (i. e., Andrzej Marek); according to Jacob Gordin.]

[2], 43 p. (typescript)

D 57805

© July 5, 1938; Andrzej Marek, Warsaw, Poland.

Zylberweig 1: 453.

No Roman information on script; source for alternate romanization of title and author: Copyright register.

Published as *Di Yesoyme* (New York: 1903) and *Khashe di yesoyme* (Warsaw: 1907).

19. דעם טיוועלס בריק

[*Dem Tayvels brik: a frehlikhe drame in fir aktn*, adoptirt fun Mark Arnshteyn (Andre Marek) = *Dem Teifel's brik = The Devil's bridge: a drama in 4 acts*, by Mark Arnstein (Andre Merek) [sic].]

[3], 116 p. (carbon of typescript)

D 81299

© Oct. 10, 1927; Martin Marck, Boston.

No Roman information on script; source for alternate romanized title and English biographical information: Copyright register.

On colophon: [“Otvotsk-Varshe, 9.6.27.”]

20. פאַר דער התונה

[*Far der kbasene: muzikalische tragi komedye mit gezang in 3 akten, mit a prolog un epilog*, fun Mark Orenshiteyn = *Before the wedding: musical tragi-comedy in 3 acts*, by Mark Arnstein.]

1 vol. (unpaged; typescript)

D 54128

© March 25, 1920; Mazda Amusement Corporation, New York.

Produced: April 3, 1920; People's Theater (producer: Max Rosenthal; with Bessie Thomashefsky).

Sources: Zylberweig 1: 98-102; 5: 4430.

No Roman information on script; source for English title: Copyright register.

ARTSYBASHEV, Mikhail Petrovich, 1878-1927

21. אייפערזוכט

[*Eyferzucht: drama in 4 akten un 5 bilder*, fun M. Artsibashev; iberzetzt fun A. Naumov] = *Jealousy = Revnost: drama in 4 acts and 5 scenes*, by M. Arzibasheff; translated into Yiddish by Abram Naumoff.

1 vol. (unpaged; manuscript)

D 35819

© Jan. 28, 1914; Latest Theatre Co., Inc., New York.

Produced: Feb. 27, 1914; Kessler's Second Avenue Theater (David Kessler, producer).

Sources: *Leksikon* 6: 123 (under Naumoff); Zylberweig 4: 3668 (attributes the translation to Mark Schweid).

Also published in New York, 1914.

Date on colophon: Jan. 7, 1914.

22. דאָס געזעץ פֿון ווילדען

[*Dos Gezets fun vilden: drame in 4 akten*, fun M.

