

Introduction

SALOMEA PERL AND YIDDISH FICTION BY WOMEN

by Justin Cammy

“Don’t think that I’ve always been a merchant-woman. My husband, may he live and be well, was once a well-off, wealthy man . . .” So begins “The Canvas” (1910), Salomea Perl’s last published Yiddish story, with a voice that is at once conversational, anxious, and defensive. The reader soon learns that Perl’s narrator is childless, a theme that reappears in several of her stories as a way to address the broader crisis of continuity that consumed Polish Jewry on the cusp of modernization. That her narrator is also the younger partner in an arranged marriage to a widower she does not desire adds to the tale’s critique of a traditional Jewish world in which the dreams of women (and men) are stifled by communal expectations and the gendered norms of traditional society. Perl’s stories are intimate psychological portraits and socio-economic sketches of a time when one’s fate, especially as a woman, was determined through marriage. Yet “The Canvas” can also be read as a story about the birth of the woman artist in a world controlled by men. Though the narrator claims she was silent when it came to her ability to resist an arranged marriage, she confesses her rare talent as an embroiderer. Though “in my house I felt like a stranger, like a prisoner, like someone bought and sold,” when in a room of her own “what the eye saw, the hand soon reproduced . . . I understood how to select colors as does a painter; under my hands the canvas came alive . . .” Perhaps Perl’s narrator, at once silenced by the market forces of marriage but creatively productive when left to herself (her embroidered curtain for the ark containing the Torah scrolls was proudly displayed in the synagogue) is symptomatic of

the broader fate of Yiddish women writers, not only in her own time but even, until very recently, in translation.

Not much is known about Salomea Perl (1869–19??), save for several newspaper articles and brief entries in two major lexicons of Yiddish literature.¹ She was born in the town of Łomża (now Poland) and raised in the larger city of Lublin, where Jews constituted almost half the population. Her father, Kalman-Avigdor Perla, was a Hebraist and *maskil* (an adherent of the Jewish enlightenment), best known for his book *Oytser loshn khakhomim* (*A Treasury of Rabbinic Sayings*, 1900). As was common in Yiddish-language biographical dictionaries, no information was provided about her mother. Perl attended a privately-run *maskilic* school in Lublin, which prioritized educating young women in local Polish culture and preparing them for a professional career. Perl later continued her education at the University of Geneva, and in Paris and London.² Though some fin-de-siècle Jewish women in Poland enrolled in European universities (mainly those living in larger cities who were already culturally assimilated and whose families had the means to support them), most still led relatively traditional lives in Poland's small Jewish market towns (*shtetlekh*) or found themselves part of an increasingly politicized urban working

1. Avrom Reyzen, "Di idisher literatur un ir shefer," *Tsukunft* (New York, 1920), pp. 649–51; A. Margolin, "Barimte froyen in der idisher geshikhte: Salomea Perl," *Idisher kuryer* (Chicago), Dec 21, 1923; "Zalmen Reyzen, *Leksikon fun der yidisher literatur, prese, un filologye*, v. 2 (Vilne, 1929), 932–933; *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur*, v. 7 (New York, 1968), 184–185. The *Leksikon fun der nayer yidisher literatur* mistakenly lists Perl's death as 1916, even though her name and address (Królewska 31) appear as late as 1939 in the Warsaw telephone directory.

2. The University of Geneva has no enrollment or graduation records for "Salomea" Perl, even though Reyzen's *Leksikon* entry mentions her attendance. The university did register a "Sara Perl" in the winter and summer semesters of 1898. Since Reyzen's entry was published during Perl's lifetime it is more probable than not that she enrolled under this name and provided him with this biographical information.

class. By the time Salomea Perl finally settled in Warsaw, she was adept enough in languages to support herself professionally as a translator, a skill that might explain her creative ability to interpret the traditional world of provincial Jews even though she was already at a physical and cultural remove from it.

Perl relied on her talents as a translator and language teacher to support herself. Intermittent advertisements for her services ran in the local Polish press, including *Kurjer Warszawski* (1910), *Przegląd Poranny*, (1916, 1918), and *Nasz Przegląd* (1927, 1930). These advertisements also suggest that Perl spent periods away from Warsaw. For instance, in 1908 *Nowa Gazeta* announced that she had returned from Paris and was now living at Ceglana 8 (only a few houses down from Y.L. Peretz, whose apartment at Ceglana 1 was a pilgrimage site for aspiring Yiddish writers); in 1918, after World War I, *Przegląd Poranny* informed readers that she was again back in town, this time at Królewska 31; and in 1927 *Nasz Przegląd* announced that Perl had returned to provide translation and correspondence services from that same Warsaw address. Though we have not yet discovered any Yiddish stories published after 1910, information regarding her translation services appeared well into the 1930s, suggesting that her name and skills were respected in Polish-Jewish circles, even if she had long since disappeared from the Yiddish-language press.³

Though Warsaw was the largest Jewish city in Europe and a major center for the development and dissemination of modern Yiddish literature and the Yiddish press, Perl's fictional debut was not in Yiddish but in the Polish-language Jewish magazine *Izraelita*, where seventeen installments of her *Z pamiętnika młodej żydówki* (*From the Diary of a Young Jewish Woman*, later published in book form) appeared in 1895. Perl's "Lea," "Reb Cyduk's Grandson," and "For Bread: A Portrait of Jewish Poverty" appeared in the same Polish-language periodical in

3. With appreciation to Piotr Nazaruk for providing information about Salomea Perl in the Polish-language press.

the years that followed. The Polish literary scholar and critic Piotr Chmielowski also published her story “Wiezien” (Prisoner) in his journal *Ateneum*. It was not unusual for Jewish writers to first try their hand in other languages that were deemed to hold more status (Polish, Russian, or Hebrew) before finding their way back to Yiddish, and Yiddish literature is punctuated by writers who wrote at different points in their careers in more than one language. Y. L. Peretz, the Yiddish prose master and essayist, was undoubtedly familiar with the Polish installments that constituted Perl’s *Diary of a Young Jewish Woman*, in which the daughter of a traditional family is initiated into contemporary ideas through her friendship with an assimilated young Jewish woman who moves to the neighborhood. The early 1890s were known as Peretz’s radical period, marked by stinging critiques of traditional Jewish ways of thinking and social structures. Part of this critique included his taking up the cause of women in such stories as “Mendl Braynes” (1891) and “A Woman’s Rage” (1893). Perl’s interest in situating her art amidst Jewish poverty where she might challenge sentimental myths of Jewish family and social life, and the psychological realism of her stories must have impressed Peretz, who invited her to contribute to his journal *Yontev bletlekh* (Holiday Pages). Three of her stories (“Childless,” “Seeking Bread,” and “The Theater”) appeared in the pages of Peretz’s self-styled radical magazine in 1895/1896. Since it was Peretz who brought Perl into the realm of Yiddish literature, Avrom Reyzen later refers to her as one of Peretz’s “converts.”⁴ Though Peretz made it his business to encourage younger writers to publish in Yiddish in order to expand the breadth of this young literature, he could also break a writer’s career. A disagreement with Peretz, combined with trouble in Perl’s personal life and illness, significantly stymied her Yiddish writing in the years that followed. Over the next decade-and-a-half only four more stories appeared in

4. With thanks to Shalom Leaf for pointing out in private correspondence that Reyzen’s use of the term “convert” could refer both to Perl’s move from Polish to Yiddish fiction *and* to her spiritual turn to concern with the fate of the Jewish masses. See Reyzen, “Di idisher literatur un ir shefer,” 649.

the Yiddish press in the literary biweekly *Der yud* (“Potki with the Eyebrows,” 1901), in the Jewish affairs weekly *Yudishe folks-tsaytung* (“Khaykl Latnik,” 1903), in the periodical *Der fraynd* (“Tsipke,” 1903), and in *Der shtral* (“The Canvas,” 1910). Perl seemingly was written out of Yiddish literary history, save for the occasional biographical notation. She wrote to the Polish paper *Nasz Przegląd* in 1928 to remind readers that her name had been excluded from the list of contributors to *Der fraynd* on the occasion of its 25th anniversary: “...for the sake of accuracy, exactness, and my own self-interest as a writer I am compelled to point out that I was also a co-worker of that St. Petersburg newspaper, which published my original work ‘Tsipke’ in two large installments.”

The publication of Salomea Perl in Yiddish between 1895–1910 was part of a growing (but still relatively limited) trend among the male gatekeepers of Yiddish literature to provide room to women writers in the Yiddish press and miscellanies. Stories by women were a way to advertise the progressive credentials of male editors and their publications, open their pages to new perspectives, and potentially enlarge their readerships. For instance, Mordkhe Spektor’s literary miscellany *Der hoyz-fraynt* (*The Home Companion*) published three women writers (including his first wife Beyle Fridberg, who wrote under the pseudonym Izabella) beginning in 1888. When Spektor published Salomea Perl in the *Yudishe folks-tsaytung* (*The Jewish People’s Newspaper*) in 1903, it also included a new section on “The World of Women” which focused on practical advice. *Der yud* (*The Jew*) published three short stories by Rokhl Brokhes in 1899 and 1901, in addition to one by Perl in 1901. Yente Serdatzky’s first short story appeared in Warsaw’s *Der veg* (*The Path*) in 1905. Several years before inviting Salomea Perl to contribute to his *Yontev bletlekh*, Peretz published a novella by Izabella in 1901 in his literary miscellany *Di yidishe bibliotek* (*The Jewish Library*). Perl was thus part of an opportune moment in which the growth of Yiddish newspapers and journals expanded opportunities for women writers. If it was previously assumed that there were fewer Yiddish women prose writers than men because men were far more likely to have the time to devote to their professional literary development,

released as they were from the social expectations of domestic responsibilities and motherhood, we must revise this narrative to add that the competitive fears of male writers and the resistance of male editors significantly affected the visibility of Yiddish women writers. Most of their writing would remain in the pages of the Yiddish press, much less accessible to future generations of Yiddish readers and its eventual translators.⁵

It is worth remembering that the same small group of male editors who published Perl were themselves navigating their own internalized stigmas about the relationship between Yiddish and femininity that could potentially threaten the status of this emerging literature. If Yiddish literature was meant to serve as evidence that the Jews possessed a modern national culture deserving of respect, a psychosexual fear of emasculation undoubtedly led them to keep women writers from garnering too much influence, lest their own reputations as writers fall into disrepute. For instance, S. Y. Abramovitsh, one of the founders of modern Yiddish literature, confesses in the late 1880s in “Notes for My Literary Biography” to his initial shame when turning from Hebrew to Yiddish, which he refers to as an “outcast woman” and “dejected daughter.” Around the same time, Sholem Aleichem invented a genealogy for Yiddish literature that traced its origins back only to Abramovitsh as its “grandfather,” completely marginalizing any possibility of matrilineal descent or acknowledgment of the

5. See Nurit Orchan, “Yiddish: Women’s Participation in Eastern European Yiddish Press (1862–1903).” *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia* (online).

For recent scholarly discourse on this topic, see Avraham Novershtern, “Yiddish Women Writers,” YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (July 13 and 20, 2021, online, in Yiddish); Anita Norich and Karolina Szymaniak, “Women Writers in Yiddish Literature,” YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (July 22, 2021, online, in Yiddish); Faith Jones, “How to Suppress Yiddish Women’s Writing.” *In geveb* (May 2022, online); Rachel Rubinstein, “‘Oyb m’zukunft gefint men’: Translating a Literature Hiding in Plain Sight,” in *Reframing Jewish American Literary History Through Women’s Writing*, eds. Annie Atura Bushnell, Lori Harrison-Kahan, Ashley Walters (Wayne State UP, 2023).

relationship between several centuries of earlier Yiddish literature and women readers. Indeed, his most famous hero Tevye repeatedly insists that he is “not a woman” as he struggles to navigate the challenges of his independent daughters. Perceptions of Yiddish as associated with femininity were deeply rooted and a source of considerable anxiety. Several of the historic names for Yiddish, including *mame-loshn* (mother-tongue) and *Zhargon* (Jargon) continued to underscore Yiddish as the language of the domestic sphere and as something less than a fully realized language. Yiddish carried significantly less prestige than either Hebrew or Aramaic, the traditional languages of Jewish religious text, scholarship, and intellectualism that were considered the preserve of rabbis and their male students. Yiddish also lacked the classical roots of Hebrew, which itself was competing with Yiddish for recognition as the language of the Jewish people in an age of national awakening. Yiddish and Hebrew existed, as Naomi Seidman argues, within a sexual-linguistic system.⁶ Indeed, when Yiddish literature first began to flourish in the early modern period, several of its best-selling books were specifically marketed to women readers. *The Brantshpigl* (*Burning Mirror*, 1596) was an ethical tract on how to live a virtuous existence; the *Mayse-bukh* (1602) was a collection of stories drawn from biblical and homiletic literature; and the *Tsene-rene* (1622), often called “The Women’s Bible,” was a Yiddish adaptation and interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. Each of these texts was immensely popular and supported women in their spiritual lives. The same period also saw the emergence of *Tkhines*, supplicatory prayers written both by men and women, that developed a spiritual language for women navigating their religious obligations and experiences as Jewish women. (The publication in 1896 of Glückel of Hameln’s Yiddish memoirs from 1691–1719 further solidified assumptions that the origins of Yiddish literature were deeply entangled with the experience of Jewish women.) That some early modern Yiddish texts also carried the

6. Naomi Seidman, *A Marriage Made in Heaven: The Sexual Politics of Hebrew and Yiddish* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 1.

note that they were intended “for women, or for men who are like women” contributed to a gendered reading of the origins of Yiddish literature as overly influenced by the needs of those who could not navigate complex religious texts or questions, except in translation. These assumptions ignored the fact that many other Yiddish works from this time (codexes, complete translations of Biblical books and epics, Yiddish translations of the Passover Haggadah, collections of folktales and fables, knightly romances) were consumed eagerly both by women and men. When those writers attempting to build a modern a Yiddish literature first came on the scene in the nineteenth century they had to contend with the fact that the market for Yiddish books had already socialized some to associate Yiddish with women readers, and in the latter half of the century sentimental penny-romances only added to the assumption that Yiddish was stamped by mass culture. Shmuel Charney historicized this gendered interpretation of Yiddish literary origins in his essay “Yiddish Literature and the Woman Reader” (1913), suggesting that it needed to be neutralized lest it affect the reputation of the new, secular Yiddish literature going forward. By contrast, Arn Glants’s “Culture and Woman” (1915) urged male writers to swallow their pride and recognize that Yiddish literature risked becoming overly monotonous and hyper-intellectual if it did not nurture more women’s voices. Such arguments risked falling into essentialist readings of the function and nature of literature written by women, leading several later Yiddish writers to either resist the very category of woman writer (Kadya Molodovsky, “A Few Words About Women Poets,” 1936) or dismiss its relative importance in their own artistic self-understanding, as when Chava Rosenfarb suggested that her alienation stemmed from her isolation as a post-Holocaust Yiddish writer, not as a woman: “I am not consciously aware of being [a woman] when I write; rather, I am conscious of being some kind of extrasexual, or bisexual creature. What mystifies me in human nature is precisely that which defies gender . . .”⁷

The publication here of seven Yiddish stories by Salomea Perl is

7. Chava Rosenfarb, “Feminism and Yiddish Literature: A Personal Approach,” in *Gender and Text in Modern Hebrew and Yiddish Literature*, eds. Naomi

not only important because it marks the rediscovery of a forgotten Yiddish writer. It also allows us to consider her unsentimental portraits of a Jewish world in transition. Her stories reveal deep class divisions and the prevalence of Jewish poverty. She investigates how the religious values that guided everyday life often lacked compassion for lived experience. Perl explores the social and cultural ruptures caused by internal migration from small towns to big cities, and new manifestations of secular Jewish identity associated with modern life. At the same time, for every frayed relationship between a husband and wife or a daughter shunning her father, Perl's fiction also reveals unassuming acts of self-sacrifice and modesty. For every abandonment of religious obligation in favor of the seductions of the secular-modern world there remain those who are content to carry on lives of modest observance. For every Jew like the "Warsaw Zionist" Mendl, whose son was a "gobbler of non-Kosher food" and who paraded around town in his shorter fashionable gaberdine "like an actor in a Purim costume," there are those like Potki with the Eyebrows who preserves his dignity by refusing to tolerate the stinginess of those householders who would deny him his meager weekly wages earned by knocking on their wooden shutters to wake them for morning prayers. For every attempt to open up the mysteries of new culture-scapes now available to Jews ("The Theater") there is an ethnographic eye for the traditional geography of Jewish life in small towns "laid out like a hamantasch with three corners. In the middle of the town stood the synagogue; on the left end was the bathhouse, and on the right end the poorhouse." And what about Rivke, the poor woman who rushes off to the rabbi to inquire about whether a slaughtered hen meets the appropriate standard for kosher consumption, displacing her far greater anxiety about the fact that she and her husband are approaching their tenth year of marriage without a child, after which he could be obliged to provide her with a writ of divorce ("Childless")? Perl is equally masterful at capturing the rhythms of spoken Yiddish, the internal

Sokoloff, Anne Lapidus Lerner, Anita Norich (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1992), 217–226.

thoughts of her characters, and the idiom of epistolary exchange. The letters between Genendl and Mikhoel in "Seeking Bread" reveal a wife's longing for an absent husband, a husband's desperate search for work in the big city, and ultimately the ways in which loneliness and alienation consume the individual. There is a touching moment in the first letter from Genendl in which we learn that since she does not know how to write, she has to pour out her most intimate worries about her husband to a local man, who then composes the letter on her behalf and attaches a short greeting of his own. Genendl's isolation often leads her to include information that may be news in a small town ("Sore-Rivke has big troubles – her goat died on her"; "a cow gored Reb Shloyemele the rabbinic judge") but not particularly useful to a husband attempting to navigate a new life in the city, as revealed in his responses to her ("it's very hard here," "it is so congested that sometimes people are simply crushed," "I don't know any Polish," "it is not the way I thought it would be . . ."). Genendl's worries about ending up an abandoned wife were her husband to take off for America to build a new life there are well documented in Jewish social history, and a window into the terror women felt when their husbands left home in search of economic opportunity. The last letter Genendl receives is from an acquaintance of her husband informing her that he has been beaten in the street by a local watchman and that he is in a charity hospital. Its bleakness is almost overwhelming.

If Perl has an ear for the Yiddish voice and the eye of an ethnographer, her stories also reveal a keen ability to fully realize the inner lives of characters in only a few pages. For instance, so much humiliation is contained in the different registers of Tsipke's dismissive clucks: her husband's abandonment of her the day after their wedding, the abuse she suffers as a servant for the butcher and his wife, the ridicule directed at her by the town wedding jester. Ultimately, her humanity is restored by a "soft cluck" that overcomes years of social isolation when a young man confesses his desire for her by the well. The slight change in register of a simple sound announces the possibility that she finally has found the human compassion that long eluded her. Such a story forced readers then, as now, to rethink our assumptions of Jewish communal solidarity.

Perl's stories reveal a writer who both influenced her better-known contemporaries like Sholem Aleichem and Peretz, and also intervened in the ways they fictionalized women's experiences. Jessica Kirzane observes that the speaker of Perl's "Childless" anticipates Sholem Aleichem's famous monologue "The Pot," only without the garrulousness that extends into misogyny when a male author writes in a woman's voice.⁸ Similarly, the exchange of letters between a starving husband and wife in Perl's "Seeking Bread" appeared shortly after Sholem Aleichem's first letters between Menakhem-Mendl and Sheyna-Sheyndl were published; Perl offers a much grimmer portrait of Jewish poverty than Sholem Aleichem's attempts to create comedy out of the competing desires between the male luftmentsh who goes off to the city in pursuit of his dreams and his practical wife who has been left behind to quote her mother's folk sayings and manage the household. If Sholem Aleichem builds on pre-existing gendered typologies, Perl deconstructs them. Anna Gonschor suggests that Perl also was very much in dialogue with Peretz, revisiting several of his classic stories from a woman's perspective. For instance, what is "Tsipke" other than a reimagining of "Bontshe the Silent" in which Tsipke's suffering challenges Peretz's morality tale by demonstrating the ways in which this woman has been shamed and silenced by her community? And what comparisons might be made between "Tsipke" and Peretz's "Sholem-bayis" (Domestic Harmony) in which traditional conceptualizations of the Jewish woman as a footstool to her husband are challenged by a world where there does not seem to be either divine justice or communal solidarity?⁹ What these stories reveal is that Perl was not only reading Sholem Aleichem and Peretz, but being read by them.

Ruth Murphy's translations get to the essence of Perl's artistry by recognizing that literary translation is also an act of cultural

8. Jessica Kirzane, "Sewn with the Tiniest of Pearls." *In geveb* (February 2021, online).

9. Anna Gonschor in "Salomea Perl and Yiddish Women Prose Writers," YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (May 25, 2021, online).

interpretation. She invites the reader into Yiddish life on its own terms, refusing to translate certain terms and preserving Yiddish speech patterns that remind us that we are guests in another world. Murphy's choices never fetishize Yiddish speakers as exotic, but rather expand the imaginative possibilities of English.

Finally, the publication of Salomea Perl must be read within the broader context of recent translations of Yiddish prose into English. Women writers were significantly under-represented in all of the major anthologies of Yiddish fiction in translation that appeared before the turn of the twenty-first century. Since anthologies not only create a canon but also a genealogy of influence, their absence led several generations of readers to assume that women had played only a marginal role in twentieth century Yiddish writing, this despite the fact that lexicons of Yiddish literature include many entries for women writers. It is only in the last twenty-five years, with the general rise in feminist scholarship and the expansion of literary canons to include marginalized voices, that the first anthologies of Yiddish women fiction writers appeared in English translation, establishing an important counter-canon that has significantly shifted our understanding of the contours of modern Yiddish literature.¹⁰ These include *Found Treasures: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers* (1994), *Beautiful as the Moon, Radiant as the Stars: Jewish Women in Yiddish Stories* (2003), *Arguing with the Storm: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers* (2007), and *The Exile Book of Yiddish Women Writers* (2013). Moreover, in 2017 *Pakn Treger: The Magazine of the Yiddish Book Center* dedicated its yearly translation issue to Yiddish women writers. Building on the popularity of Glückel of Hameln's *Yiddish Memoirs* (most recently reissued in 2019), interest in the social and political history of Yiddish-speaking women also led to the publication of several translations of Yiddish memoirs by women, including Puah Rakovksy's *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman* (2001) and Hinde Bergner's *On Long Winter Nights:*

10. Irena Klepfisz, "Queens of Contradiction: A Feminist Introduction to Yiddish Women Writers," in *Found Treasures: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*, eds. Frieda Forman, Ethel Raicus, Sarah Silberstein Swartz, Margie Wolfe (Toronto: Second Story Press, 1994), 21–62.

Memoirs of a Jewish Family in a Galician Township (2005). Translated volumes of stories or novels by individual women fiction writers have also appeared with increasing frequency in recent years. The publication of Chava Rosenfarb's *Tree of Life* (1985), *Bociany* (2000), *Of Lodz and Love* (2000), and *Survivors* (1976, 2004) owes a great deal to the encouragement of her daughter, the scholar and translator Goldie Morgentaler. Esther Singer Kreitman's novel *Deborah* was first translated and published by her son Maurice Carr in 1946 (and republished in 1954 and 1983), before The Feminist Press provided it with new exposure in 2004 and 2009 as *The Dance of Demons*. However, Kreitman's publication cannot be disentangled from the fact that she was the sister of Yiddish writers Israel Joshua Singer and Isaac Bashevis Singer (the only Yiddish writer to have been awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature). The publication of Kreitman's *Blitz and Other Stories* (2004) and *Diamonds* (2009) certainly benefited from the desire to expand our knowledge of this literary family. More recent years have seen an exciting burst of translation of Yiddish women's fiction, including Kadya Molodovsky's *A House with Seven Stories* (2006), Rokhl Faygenberg's *Strange Ways* (2007), Blume Lempel's *Oedipus in Brooklyn and Other Stories* (2016), Yente Mash's *On the Landing* (2018), Kadya Molodovsky's *A Jewish Refugee in New York* (2019), Miriam Karpilove's *Diary of a Lonely Girl* (2020) and *Judith* (2022), Fradl Shtok's *From the Jewish Provinces* (2021), Ida Maze's *Dineh* (2022), and Chana Blankshteyn's *Fear and Other Stories* (2022), to name a few. This bilingual edition of Salomea Perl is part of this ongoing critical intervention, and an opportunity to rediscover a treasure from the turn-of-the-century Yiddish press in Warsaw.

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Justin Cammy is Professor of Jewish Studies and World Literatures at Smith College.