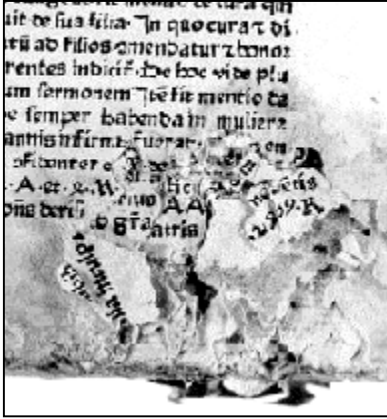


Outer Envelope Teaser Copy & Illustration



It's your heritage and your history that's crumbling.

Act now to save Yiddish culture!

INSIDE: Your FREE Yiddish culture bookmark.

Return Envelope Teaser Copy (if desired)

In script

*I'll save the pages of our culture from
the ravages of time, neglect and nature!*

**The twentieth century
brought its destruction and
the end of a civilization.**

**The people of the shtetl
took up permanent abode in the
literature created about them.**

– Joachim Neugroschel



Tei'er Freind,

They're all gone now ... the shtetls of Poland ... the towns of the Pale of Settlement ... the vibrant Jewish communities of Warsaw, Vilna and Kiev. Your forebears swept away by pogroms, The Holocaust, or Stalin's firing squads.

But their memory lingers ... in thousands of stories, novels and plays ... in the Yizkor books of almost 700 destroyed Jewish communities ... and in the Yiddish books rescued by the National Yiddish Book Center, a priceless repository of your Jewish identity and mine.

The Book Center holds the great literature that chronicles our earliest encounters with the modern world, as well as the everyday writing that's so elemental to our culture: cookbooks, writings on the affairs of the day, books of devotion, even the still popular romance novel.

With the partnership of passionate people, who deeply care about the heritage you and I share, the Book Center has saved more than 1.5-million Yiddish volumes in its 25-year history.

But the Book Center's work is far from over. This essential institution needs your support today. So many books and periodicals are lost ... rapidly crumbling ... scattered all around the world. You and I must act quickly to rescue these treasures before it's too late.

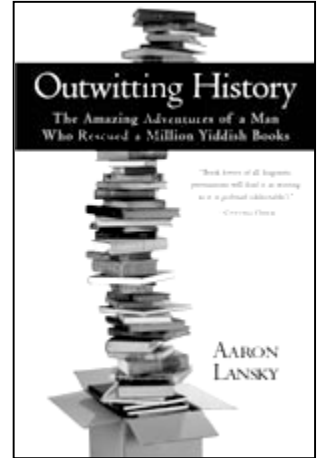
I ask you to join our cause today. Your history and mine is deteriorating before our eyes.

Will you become a member of the National Yiddish Book Center for a tax-deductible donation of just \$36 a year?

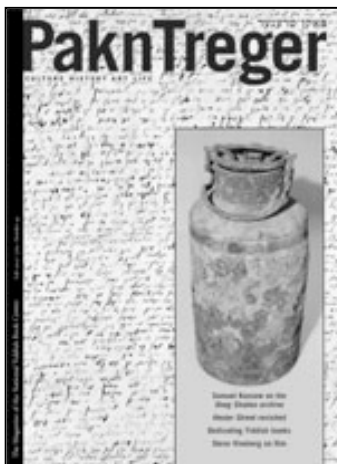
If you really feel strongly about the Book Center's mission – and I surely hope you do – would you even consider becoming a Supporter Member at \$54 or a Patron Member at \$180?

Please continue ...

If you give \$50 or more, I'll send you a free copy of my book, *Outwitting History*. But whatever membership level you choose, you'll enjoy wonderful benefits as a member of the Book Center.



- ★ You'll get special discounts on Yiddish and English books and music.
- ★ You'll receive invitations to intriguing events at our architecturally distinctive headquarters in Amherst, Massachusetts.
- ★ You'll be treated as a special guest whenever you visit this modern-day shtetl, featuring superb exhibits and America's finest, English-language Jewish bookstore.
- ★ Your subscription to the award-winning Pakn Treger magazine begins as soon as you become a member.



In the pages of this critically acclaimed English language journal, Yiddish literature and culture come to life – not just for scholars, but for you and me as we sit in our easy chairs in the evening.

True, joining the National Yiddish Book Center is more than a mitzvah; you get something for your investment in our heritage. But the most crucial reasons to join the Book Center involve rescuing the literature and energizing Jewish culture for future generations.

Your gift places you at the side of our staff and volunteers as they travel from Brooklyn to Mexico City ... from Cuba to Zimbabwe ... wherever Jews settled during the 19th and 20th centuries.

Every single week, these dedicated workers find and preserve hundreds of additional volumes. Who can possibly describe the invaluable service they provide to you and to me – to our children and our great grandchildren!

But to keep their indispensable work going, these fervent men and women *must* have your partnership.

I know, few people have the time and the skills to scour the nation and the world, looking for the lost work of Jewish writers. But really, I'm not asking you to do this difficult, demanding work yourself.

What I ask is your loyalty to the dedicated volunteers and staff who serve as your emissaries to history.

Please, read on ...

They face such a daunting challenge – one they cannot meet without your needed help. As the title of my book suggests, every day they strive to outwit history. In their work, time is the enemy, as you can well imagine – time abetted by the destructive forces of nature and neglect.

That's why your partnership in the struggle to preserve Yiddish literature is so urgently needed now!

We cannot save Yiddish culture alone ... not without resources that can only come from people like you who see *and understand* the need to preserve the literary heritage that is uniquely ours.

But it's not only about us ... about you and me as Jews. After founding the National Yiddish Book Center 25 years ago, I became increasingly aware of something I only suspected.

There's a great hunger for the literature our culture has produced. And I'm delighted to report that this hunger is not just among Jews.

We must fan the flames of this interest. The broad implications for Jews in American culture are obvious. Here at the Book Center, we strive daily to meet an ever-growing demand from college students and libraries for Yiddish literature.

Let me fill you in on just a couple of the things we're doing to fulfill this and many other aspects of our mission at the Book Center.

We're working in partnership with the Fund for Translation of Jewish Literature and Yale University Press to translate the best Yiddish novels, plays, and stories into English.

When you become a member, you'll support this work, making it possible for a wider audience to access the wonderful works in which Jewish memory and culture reside.

You'll also help younger Jews reclaim a culture they once rejected through some innovative programs that the Book Center has developed:

- ★ Highly competitive Summer Internships for college students at our Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts.
- ★ Digitized copies of every Yiddish page (more than 3.2 million of them) in our collection, allowing us to supply brand-new, computer-generated reprints on demand.
- ★ A very popular Summer Program in Yiddish Culture.

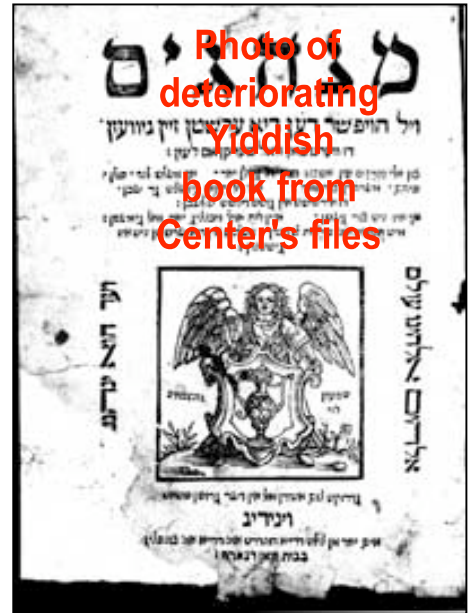


Photo of deteriorating Yiddish book from Center's files

Over, please ...

And don't overlook the bookmark I enclosed. I sent this free gift with no obligation to help you remember – and celebrate – the heritage you and I share with one another. As you read your favorite books, I hope the bookmarks will remind you of Yiddish literature and our rescue mission.

Today, while you're thinking about how important you are to that mission, join me with your tax-deductible contribution of \$36 ... or \$54 ... or, if possible, \$180.

I'll begin your subscription to *Pakn Treger* right away, so you can start enjoying this remarkable publication with the very next issue. Don't forget about the substantial discounts on Jewish books and music in Yiddish and in English!

And remember, once again: for any contribution of \$50 or more – greatly appreciated – you'll receive a special "Member's Edition" copy of my book, *Outwitting History*. Join me and other *Zamlers*, as we rescue millions more priceless Yiddish books!

Can I count on you?

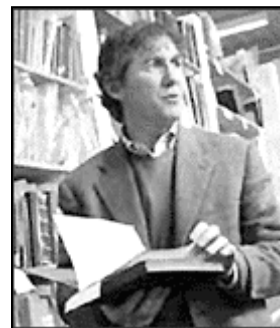
A reply envelope is already enclosed. Just send us your tax-deductible check or credit card number with the form I've supplied. We'll sign you up as a member.

We can't rebuild the shtetls. But Jewish literature – the past and the future of our people – can be preserved. Please join our effort through your membership gift today!

Mit a sheynem dank!

Aaron

Aaron Lansky,
President



P.S. Your contribution today will make a huge difference: rescuing even more endangered books ... translating Yiddish into English ... engaging more young people in Jewish life and culture ... keeping Yiddish alive for generations to come.

Bookmark – Front

**“The very essence of literature is the war between emotion
and intellect, between life and death.” – Isaac Bashevis Singer**

Bookmark – Back

National Yiddish Book Center

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1021 West Street

Amherst, MA 01002-3375

413-256-4900

www.yiddishbookcenter.org

Response Form – Front

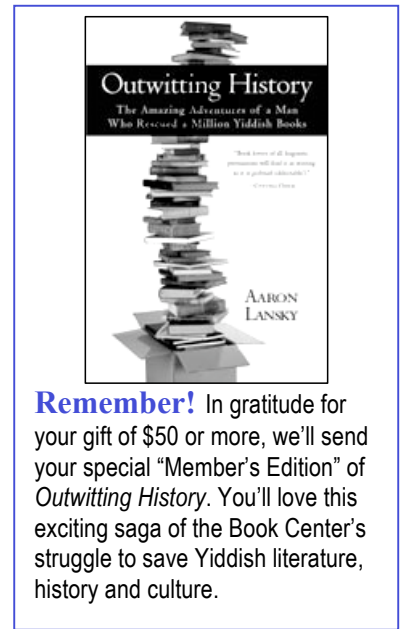
MEMBERSHIP ENROLLMENT FORM

YES, Aaron! I'll help you save our culture before it's too late!

- \$36 Member** Here's my gift \$36 for one year's membership!
- \$54 Supporter** My gift of \$54 goes one step further to save our Yiddish literature and culture.
- \$180 Patron** I accept the Patron Member challenge. My \$180 gift reflects my commitment to the Book Center's essential mission.
- \$_____ Gift** Here's my donation to our National Yiddish Book Center.

[title] [first name] [I] [last name]
[address line #1]
[address line #2]
[city], [state] [zip]

To make your gift by credit card,
use the back of this form.



To facilitate your membership ... and get *Pakn Treger* magazine as soon as possible, ... return this form with your gift of \$36 or more today!

Response Form – Back

[Credit Card form]

Yiddish Fact Insert

This could be printed on the front and back of a card that would slip into the envelope as an inexpensive addition to the package that people would be tempted to keep and would include the Book Center's address and contact information.

Fast Facts about Yiddish!

Here you go! In just a couple of minutes, you can learn enough about Yiddish to amaze your friends.

- The Yiddish language is only a thousand or so years old; but, during that time, it was the language of three quarters of the world's Jews!
- Many elements of Yiddish – words, phrases, idioms, and embedded historical references – are much older than the language itself.
- Some 500 Yiddish words can be found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
- For many people, Yiddish literature became a kind of portable homeland.
- In the Old World, where women weren't allowed to study Talmudic arguments or read Hebrew books, there was no prohibition on Yiddish. So the language gave Jewish women freedom to enjoy literature, theater and song.
- The name of Noah's great grandson, Ashkenaz, was bestowed on the German-speaking area of Central Europe that gave rise to Yiddish. Hence the Yiddish-speaking Jews of Europe came to be known as the Ashkenazim.
- About 90% of America's Jews trace their ancestry to European Yiddish culture.
- Yiddish is still spoken by 4 million Jews all over the world, especially in Argentina, France, Canada, Israel, Mexico, Romania and the United States.
- As early as the 12th century, Jewish minstrels wandering through Germany were reciting Yiddish translations of Gentile verse romances.

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