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THE FORGOTTEN HASIDIM: RABBIS AND REBBES IN PREWAR CANADA¹

Introduction

Jewish historiography of the pre-Second World War era typically underplays the significance of Orthodox life on the shores of North America.² With respect to Hasidic³ history, those few scholars who do not simply ignore the Hasidic leadership in pre-1940s North America deny its very existence entirely. They aver that Hasidic rebbes and rabbis only came to North America after the Holocaust. Jenna Weissman Joselit makes no mention of prewar Hasidic institutions or leaders in *New York's Jewish Jews: The Orthodox Community in the Interwar Years*. She makes mention only of “postwar Hasidification of Williamsburg.”⁴ Save for a brief reference to the presence in the United States of two low-status rebbes in the prewar period, there is little mention of the Hasidic community in Jeffrey Gurock’s *American Jewish Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective*.⁵ Samuel Heilman completely ignores prewar immigration and institution building by both the Hasidic and non-Hasidic community of North America in explaining the origins of contemporary Haredi communities.⁶

In perhaps the most egregious denial of Hasidic emigration outside of eastern Europe, Jacques Gutwirth states that Hasidic rebbes were so reluctant to have their followers travel away from the shtetlach, that prior to World War II, not only were there no Hasidic settlements in North America, but “except for one case, there were no hassidic settlements anywhere in western Europe: none in Paris, in Brussels, in

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Amsterdam, or in London, for example. The one exception was Antwerp, in Belgium, where several hassidic groups were established in the 1920s and 1930s.”⁷ This statement is categorically wrong not only with respect to central and western Europe⁸ and the United States, but also with respect to Canada.

Even among those who acknowledge a prewar Hasidic infrastructure in the United States, details and references are so scant as to imply that these were merely faint traces of Hasidic life. For example, in a very brief passage, George Kranzler notes that during the late 1920s and 1930s, some Polish and Galician Hasidim moved into Williamsburg along with, or perhaps following, some “small-stature” rebbes.⁹ In his study of *landsmanshaftn* in New York City, Daniel Soyer has two small references to Hasidim in New York in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁰ Only Jerome Mintz offers any significant information on some rebbes who came to America prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, dedicating two chapters to the experience of these groups, although his focus is mainly on the postwar immigrants.¹¹

As sparse as the literature is with respect to the United States experience in the pre-World War II era, even less has been written on the Canadian Hasidic community during the same era. The two earliest works on Canadian-Jewish history, those of B. G. Sack and Abraham Rhinewine, make no mention of Hasidism.¹² Stuart Rosenberg offers but brief mention of rebbes in pre-World War I Canada.¹³ In commenting on the prewar status of the community, William Shaffir’s work on Lubavitcher Hasidim in Montreal offers only one observation: “Before 1941, there were a few Lubavitcher chassidim and Lubavitch sympathizers in Montreal.” (To be fair, however, it must be stated that the focus of this work is on the postwar era.)¹⁴ Jacques Gutwirth, who has conducted considerable research on the history of the Belzer community of Montreal, remarks that the Hasidic community grew out of those who came between 1941 and 1952.¹⁵ Although Tzvi Rabinowicz acknowledges that there were a few Hasidim in Montreal

before the war, he underplays the importance of the prewar community while highlighting the size and growth of the post-Holocaust groups.¹⁶

Even “insider” literature ignores the early foundations of Canadian Hasidic life. For example, in a 1996 commemorative journal published by the Belzer community of Montreal, the account of the local Hasidic community traces its origins to the nine Lubavitchers who arrived in 1941, and makes no mention of any Hasidic infrastructure or community before that year.¹⁷ The only significant scholarly exception to this rule of neglect is the work of Ira Robinson, but apart from his research into Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg, a Hasidic rabbi of Poland who emigrated to Toronto and then Montreal, Robinson focuses on the US scene.¹⁸

The lack of attention paid to it by scholars and insiders notwithstanding, Hasidic life in prewar Canada, was vibrant, varied, and geographically diverse, although not as extensive as today’s. There was, moreover, no lack of Hasidic leadership, including a number of learned and important rebbes and rabbis. In fact, there was a Hasidic presence in Canada as far back as the beginning of the mass immigration period. Hasidic leaders, moreover, typically married within other Hasidic families, mimicking the European custom and creating local dynasties.¹⁹ Also, many of the different Canadian Hasidic rabbis trace their antecedents to the same European dynasties, namely the Twerskys of Chernobyl or the Horowitz-Rubin dynasty of Ropshitz-Olesk.²⁰ The presence of family in Canada was a contributing factor in the decision to emigrate in the prewar period, which as Robinson observes, was not usual in the Hasidic world.²¹ There is also evidence that Hasidic rebbes—such as the Lubavitcher, and others—visited their followers in North America prior to World War II.²²

Contemporaneous Evidence

Writing his memoirs about the early 1900s and 1910s, Israel Medres, a European-born, Montreal-based Yiddish journalist, wrote:

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Orthodox Jews, including Hasidim, also became active in founding new congregations. Among the older immigrants brought here by their children were Hasidim, who in the small towns of Eastern Europe, were followers of Hasidic rabbis and had prayed in small Hasidic synagogues... they banded together to found small synagogues where the atmosphere and style of prayer more or less resembled the Hasidic synagogues of Eastern Europe.²³

In another work, Medres refers to the religious doctrines and traditions that linked the immigrants with their eastern European homeland. Since the majority of the Jewish immigrants to Canada of that time came from predominantly Hasidic areas, we can safely assume that some of these traditions and doctrines were Hasidic in nature.²⁴

On 13 December 1915, the *Canadian Jewish Chronicle* listed all the delegates who attended the first Canadian Jewish Conference. One of these delegates represented a Hasidic synagogue, Congregation Habad of Toronto. Another delegate, Paul Levi, is listed as the representative for the Libavitzer [sic] Congregation. Despite the unusual spelling, it is likely that Mr. Levi represented a Lubavitch Hasidic congregation, thus dating Chabad in Canada to at least as early as 1915.²⁵

Lubavitcher Hasidism was also represented in Montreal during this era. In the *Keneder Odler*, on 16 December 1931, the obituary of a Reb Menashe Lavut, who is referred to as the founder and leader of Anshei Chabad, a Lubavitcher group in Montreal, appeared. A second and lengthier obituary notes that he had been in Montreal since the 1905 Russian Revolution and was the son of Rabbi Avraham David Lavut, chief of the rabbinical court (*av bet din*) of Nikolayev for several decades. Lavut was known as a Lubavitcher Hasid who, “familiar with Old Country ways,” founded the *bes medresh* (study hall/synagogue), Nusach Ha’Ari.²⁶ Another contemporaneous piece of evidence of early Hasidic life is an advertisement in the *Keneder Odler* of 9 September 1931, where “Rabbi Pinchas

Soltzstein *Shlita*, grandson of the Holy Baal Shem Tov of Medzibodz,” is selling High Holiday seats at his synagogue located at 74 Duluth Street East in Montreal. The announcement concluded, that “in the merit of the Rebbe *Shlita* and the Holy Baal Shem Tov, may we all have a good and blessed year and a *ksiva vichasima tova* [good inscription in the Book of Life].” While the title of rebbe in this instance may have been a case of self-aggrandizement, it reflects an identification with Hasidism.

The arrival of the Makarover rebbe, Rabbi Shmuel Abba Twersky, in Winnipeg in 1927 was noted in the local Yiddish paper. The author of this small notice observed that the rebbe was greeted by “several hundred Hasidim.”²⁷ Perhaps this was an exaggeration, but we can assume from it that there was a significant core of Hasidic Jews in Winnipeg in the 1920s. In fact, one year earlier, the same newspaper announced the upcoming visit of Rabbi Hanoch Henoah Twersky of Chicago, whose sister and brother in law, Rabbi Asher and Mrs. Hannah Rochel Zilberstein lived in Winnipeg. A *kabbolos ponim* (welcoming) was to be organized by “his [Twersky’s] Hasidim” in Winnipeg.²⁸

Two other contemporaneous sources offer evidence of prewar Hasidic life, and of the disapproval of Hasidic ways by other Jews. The first is from an 1884 report on the Jews of Montreal published in the European *Haskalah* (Enlightenment) journal, *Hamelitz*. The author, Yosef Eliyahu Bernstein, offers the following observation of a group of Russian immigrants founding a congregation called Gemilus Hasodim shel Anshe Russia. Bernstein focuses on the Hasidic customs of the congregation, evidence of Hasidic life in Montreal even before the turn of the twentieth century. He notes that

they constitute a disturbing factor in the eyes of many of our brethren because they pray according to the *nusah sefarad*, and they have begun to go according to the ways and customs of the Hasidim. They [the other Jews in Montreal] are most afraid that the malignant leprosy of *hasidut*

will spread on the soil of this land, and that they will thus ruin the reputation of the children of Israel in the eyes of the inhabitants of the land.²⁹

This citation is significant, because it pushes the date of the Hasidic presence in Canada. If some members of the Montreal Jewish community had already organized a Hasidic congregation by 1884, then clearly the Hasidic presence in Canada dates to the very beginning of the eastern European immigration to North America, well over fifty years prior to 1941, the date generally given as the beginning of Hasidic life in Montreal—the arrival of the “Lubavitcher Nine.”

The second reference comes from the 17 June 1914 edition of the *Keneder Odler*. In this issue and a following one, Reuven Brainin, a Hebrew scholar and journalist, reports on the visit of the Radovitzer rebbe to Montreal. The Radovitzer, who is never named, but referred to as a “grandchild” (*a chasidisher einikel*),³⁰ came to Montreal to visit with his followers in the spring of 1914. The article does not clarify whether the Radovitzer was visiting from Europe on a speaking tour, or had already emigrated to North America. While Brainin states at the beginning of the article that he did not know that Montreal had a significant Hasidic community, he later admits to having attended the services out of interest, and there seeing the synagogue “packed ... *kop oyf kop*.”³¹ Although the intent of Brainin’s articles is to ridicule the Radovitzer, they nonetheless provide evidence of a Hasidic population in Montreal in the pre-First World War era.³²

Hasidic life during this era was not limited to the main population centres, but could also be found in the smallest Canadian-Jewish communities. A young couple, Shlomo Estrin (1865-1932) and Mariasha Lipkov, the former from a prominent Lubavitcher family, came to Canada from Russia in 1910. They homesteaded until 1916, then spent several years in Calgary and finally settled in Edmonton in 1920. Contemporary photos show Estrin in traditional garb.³³

An even more unlikely example can be found in the obituary for Mr. Eliakim ben Getzel Segal in the Saskatoon section

of the 31 March 1931 issue of *Dos Yiddishe Vort* (the Yiddish section of the *Winnipeg Israelite Press*). Segal was a devoted and enthusiastic Tolner Hasid, who came to the farming colony at Edenbridge, Saskatchewan to join his son around 1907. Previously he had lived in London and before that in Uman in the Ukraine, presumably during the 1905 Revolution. Despite “being exiled among Litvaks [Lithuanian Jews]—young Litvaks at that!”³⁴ Segal tried to keep alive the old ways from home, which the correspondent frequently refers to as Hasidic.³⁵

Hasidic Leadership in Pre-1940s Canada

Rabbi Moshe Langner of Kozowa-Strettin (1878-1945) can be considered the “godfather” of Canadian Hasidism since most Canadian Hasidic leaders either followed him to Canada or married into his family. He was born in Brotchin, Galicia to Rabbi Yehuda Tzvi and Gittel Leah of Strettin. He married the daughter of Rabbi Shalom Babad and served as a rebbe in several places in Galicia, including Lvov and Kozowa. After his father’s death in 1907, he became the Strettiner rebbe in Strettin itself, and in 1920, he settled in Toronto,³⁶ where he served as spiritual leader of the Kiever, Shaarei Tzedec, and the First Narayever Congregations. In 1925, his oldest son, Mordechai (1897-1948), was chosen as rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel and served there until his death. The next oldest son, Shlomo (1900—1973) came to Toronto in 1923 and served as rabbi in several synagogues including Anshe Galitzia and Rodfei Shalom.³⁷ After Moshe’s death, the position of the rebbe of Strettin-Toronto was filled by Mordechai and after his death by Shlomo, who served as rebbe for almost thirty years. The Langners’ other children were Yitzchak Isaac (1906-1980), Tzipporah, and Sarah. On 27 February 1945, an announcement in the local Yiddish press notes that the “*Admor*³⁸ *HaTzaddik* Reb Moshe Langner, Shlita, the Strettiner Rebbe,” is back in town and “invites the community to stop by his home at 42 Cecil Street, corner Huron for a joyous Purim celebration.”³⁹ Not only did Langner and his two sons serve as rebbes in

Toronto, but both of his daughters married Hasidic leaders, one a rebbe of the Twersky family, another a scion of the Olesk, Ropshitz, and Belz dynasties; his grandchildren served in rabbinic positions in New York.

Langner's daughter, Tzipporah, married Yohanan Twersky of Talnoye (1906-1981) in 1929, and the couple settled in Montreal in 1934, where Twersky opened a Tolner *bes medresh* called Kehal Hasidim Kehilas David, at 4817 Esplanade Street, considered a centre of Torah in the city.⁴⁰ Called "an example of an old Hasidic synagogue (*kloiz*) where European- and American-born, young and old are to be found,"⁴¹ the Tolner rebbe's synagogue was also host to two weekly *tishn*—the communal Sabbath meals conducted by the rebbe—on Friday night and Saturday afternoon (*shalosh seudos*).⁴² On his mother's side, Twersky was a descendant of the dynasties of Ruzhin and Apt.⁴³ On his father's side, he was a direct descendant of the renowned Menachem Nachum Twersky of Chernobyl (the father of Reb Mottele Chernobyler). Yohanan Twersky was born in Tulchin (Talnoye) to his father, the Tolner rebbe, David Mordechai Twersky, a fourth generation descendant of Reb Mottele Chernobyler. David Mordechai was among the first Hasidic rebbes to immigrate to the United States. He settled in New York in 1912, and was later followed by his brothers, Moshe Tzvi and Meshullam Zalman, both of whom settled in Philadelphia. The latter subsequently moved on to Boston.⁴⁴ Yohanan Twersky studied in the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary in New York for five years, and then moved to Palestine for several years, returning to North America to marry. The couple lived in New York at first, where Twersky served as rabbi. A member of the Agudas Harabbonim (the New York-based council of eastern European rabbis),⁴⁵ he was known for helping refugees who managed to escape war-torn Europe. In the 1950s, he left Montreal for Israel, where he established a *bes medresh* and *kollel* in Jerusalem. One son, Israel Mordechai, succeeded him in Israel, while another lives in the US.⁴⁶

Moshe Langner's other daughter, Sarah, married Rabbi David Flaum in 1922. Born in Krotchin, Galicia, in 1896, Flaum was the son of Yitzchak Flaum, a descendant of the Hasidic dynasties of Belz, Lutzk and Olesk, and Esther Rubin of the Rimanover and Ropshitzer dynasties. He served as rebbe to the Strettiner Hasidim of Boberik and left for Canada in 1920.⁴⁷ In Montreal, he established the *Ahavas David bes medresh* for Torah and Hasidus, and "gathered around him the Hasidim who had emigrated to that city."⁴⁸ Devoted to instilling Hasidic values, and a highly influential personage in strengthening religious life in the city, he earned the title of *Admor* of Montreal and was considered one of the most important Hasidic leaders of Canada. He died in Montreal in 1971 and was buried in Israel.⁴⁹

Perhaps Flaum's significance to Montreal is that he was one of, if not the first, Hasidic rabbi to settle there. His only contemporary was Reb Yudel Rosenberg, who had come to Montreal three years before Flaum. Rosenberg, however, had been called to Montreal to head a small group of congregations and to represent them in the community, especially regarding kosher meat production and supervision. Flaum, on the other hand, was involved with inculcating Hasidic values on the personal level. While both considered themselves rebbes, Rosenberg inherited his rabbinic position from a non-Hasidic rabbi, Simon Glazer, while Flaum functioned more as a spiritual leader. Rosenberg's career—especially his struggle for power and authority in the Montreal Jewish Community Council—seems to have left him little time to cultivate a following of Hasidim, and his career rather paralleled that of Montreal's non-Hasidic rabbis. Finally, it is not clear if Rosenberg ever really had any Hasidic followers in Montreal, while several sources tell us that Flaum definitely served as rebbe in Europe and in Montreal.⁵⁰ This may help to explain why Flaum received the title, *Admor* of Montreal, over his better-known colleague.⁵¹

Flaum's children merit mention here, as well as their father. His son, Shalom, who married Baila Etel, the daughter of the Turka-Strettiner rebbe, Rabbi Yechiel Michal Brandwein,

moved to New York, where he established himself as the Strettiner rebbe. A renowned Torah scholar, he had served as head of a yeshiva for many years.⁵² His sister married her cousin, Rabbi David Rokeach (1898-1971), the son of Rabbi Avraham Yaakov Rokeach of Hovanov, a direct descendant of Eleazar Rokeach, the father of the founder of the Belzer dynasty.⁵³ David Rokeach was born in Belz, served as a rabbi in Lvov, came to Montreal after the Holocaust, and finally settled in New York.⁵⁴

Besides the Tolner rebbe in Montreal, another Twersky came to Canada in the interwar years, Rabbi Abba Avraham Shmuel Twersky (aka Shmuel Abba), the Makarover rebbe (1888-1947). Shmuel Abba's parents were Moshe Mordechai Twersky, a direct descendant of the Chernobyler dynasty who served as rabbi in Berditchev and Kiev, and the daughter of Rabbi Yehoshua Rokeach of Belz. A fourth cousin to the father of Yohanan Twersky of Montreal, Shmuel Abba married his first cousin, the daughter of his father's brother, David Twersky of Kiev.⁵⁵ He succeeded his father as rebbe in Berditchev and later settled in Riga, presumably after the pogroms of the Ukranian civil war. Although Makarov had been a large Hasidic centre, the pogroms provided the impetus for many of the Hasidim to emigrate, a number to Winnipeg, which in 1927 became home to their rebbe and where he died.⁵⁶ According to his obituary, Shmuel Abba Twersky kept out of communal strife and opened his home as a *bes medresh* where he sowed the seeds of Hasidism. He had many friends and Hasidim both in Canada and the US. He was survived by his daughter Tzipporah in Winnipeg, and his son, Yitzchak Yaakov, the principal of the Talmud Torah (Hebrew School) in Halifax, and two grandchildren. Shmuel Abba's imminent arrival in Winnipeg following two years of negotiations was covered by the local Yiddish press: "Our city of Winnipeg, which only recently, some thirty or forty years earlier, could not claim a lively Jewish community, has grown so much in a short time, that we can consider bringing a Hasidic rebbe here."⁵⁷ The announcement called on the commu-

nity to greet the rebbe upon his arrival in a few weeks time and estimated that 80 to 90 percent of Winnipeg's Jews came from a Hasidic background or a Hasidic-dominated shtetl.⁵⁸

Not all the Hasidic rabbis in prewar Canada were linked to the Langner or Twersky clan. Two who were not are Elimelech Tzanger and Naftali Tzvi Horowitz. Tzanger may have been one of those Hasidic rabbis that Solomon Poll refers to as *shtikel-rebbes*⁵⁹—lower-stature rebbes. He was born in Zanz (Nowy Sacz) in 1880 and studied under Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, the Bobover rebbe. In 1903, he married Frieda, the daughter of Yitzchak Rotenberg, another Bobover Hasid, and moved to Krakow, where he functioned as a rebbe. In Canada, he was called the *Admor* of Krakow, a misleading title conferred perhaps because many Hasidim saw Canada as so bereft of true Hasidic life that even a low-status rebbe there deserved an important title. Following the advice of the then-Bobover rebbe, Shlomo's son, Ben Zion, Tzanger moved to Montreal in 1935 to serve as a rebbe for all Galician Hasidim there. He established the Shaar David Congregation, which serves the Bobover community of Montreal to this day and was particularly involved in promoting the observance of *taharas hamispacha* (laws of family purity). He died in 1960 and was buried in Jerusalem.⁶⁰

There is an illuminating, if indirect, reference to Tzanger in the Belz commemorative journal. The author of the journal notes in passing that in the early post-World War II years, some Satmar Hasidim prayed in the *shtibl* of the Krakower rebbe who is identified only as Rabbi Moshe Yehoshua Tzanger's father. Mention is made of neither the elder Tzanger's name nor the prewar foundations of the Hasidic community upon which the Belzer group built after the Holocaust. The omission reinforced the inaccurate assumption that Hasidic life in Montreal began only in the 1940s.⁶¹

Naftali Tzvi Horowitz was another lesser known Hasidic rabbi who called Canada home. Although he was a descendant of the Ropshitzer dynasty, like the Flaums, they

were not blood relatives,⁶² although they were connected. Little information about Horowitz is available, other than that he came to Toronto from Krakow and is credited with being the first *admor* in Toronto.⁶³

Another rabbi who deserves mention here is Rabbi Yeshaya Halevi Horowitz (1883-1978), who served as head of the rabbinical court in Winnipeg from 1923 to 1953, when he returned to Israel where he had been born. Although Horowitz's credentials are not like those of the other rebbes discussed here, he was of Hasidic descent. He attended non-Hasidic yeshivas and was ordained by several scholars, including Rabbi David Willowski, the Ridbaz of Slutsk, a renowned Lithuanian (non-Hasidic) rabbi, and Sephardic scholars in the United States. Although neither he nor his father, Asher Yechezkel, were formally referred to as rebbes, his father was considered deserving of the title. "Several *tzaddikim* [Hasidic rebbes] wanted to ordain him [Asher Yechezkel] as *admor*, but he wouldn't agree."⁶⁴ Thus, the elder Horowitz was seen by contemporaries as essentially rebbe material. Further, the family's antecedents show strong Hasidic lineage, including among others, Rabbi Aaron the Great of Karlin, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Lubavitch, the third Lubavitcher rebbe, and Rabbi Chaim Chayka of Amdura—all of Lithuania, which may explain the connection to non-Hasidic Lithuanian rabbis. Before coming to Winnipeg, where he was named Chief Rabbi of Western Canada, the younger Horowitz served as a rabbi for Lubavitch synagogues in Safed and New York as well as writing Lubavitch texts.⁶⁵ Thus, as I noted earlier, while it is difficult to categorize Horowitz, he clearly brought Hasidic—specifically Lubavitcher—ideas and influence to interwar Canada.

Since marrying into reputable families with a pedigree was important for Hasidim, and since there were few such families in North America and bringing brides from Europe was not always financially feasible or legal, intermarriage within the preeminent North American families was commonplace. For example, as noted above, the son of Rabbi David Flaum of

Montreal, Shalom, the Strettiner rebbe of New York, married the daughter of another Strettiner rebbe, Rabbi Yechiel Michal Brandwein of Turka-Strettin (1871-1939) who was at that time living in America.⁶⁶ Rabbi Brandwein's other daughters also married into Hasidic families, one to Pinchas David Horowitz, the Bostoner rebbe, and the other to David Twersky of Skver, while Rabbi Flaum's daughter married her own first cousin.

The integration of Hasidim into pre-existing communities has been an issue of research in eastern European Jewish history. Although it falls beyond the scope of this paper, a brief mention and suggestion for further research in this area is appropriate. Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern writes that one strategy Hasidic leaders used to gain influence during the early nineteenth century in the Ukraine was to infiltrate secondary Jewish institutions, such as *hevras*⁶⁷ and slowly introduce Hasidic customs. Raphael Mahler argues that this evolution frequently proceeded through the auspices of the *ba'al tefila* (prayer-leader) who slowly introduced Hasidic customs and liturgy until they became accepted as the norm.⁶⁸ Petrovsky-Shtern argues that a reciprocal arrangement obtained. These *hevras* were searching for inspiring and innovative leadership, while the Hasidim were looking for opportunities to achieve social and communal authority.⁶⁹ Due to a dearth of opportunities in North America, most immigrant rabbis accepted any available clerical position.⁷⁰ When examining Hasidic rabbinic careers in Canada, one should nevertheless keep Petrovsky-Shtern's hypothesis in mind. As the immigrant Orthodox community was organizing and stabilizing itself, it is not inconceivable that the Hasidic segment would have aspirations to some community authority as they had had in Galicia and the Ukraine earlier.

To Stay or Go?

Is it possible to generalize about the Hasidic rabbis who emigrated before the Holocaust and those who did not? Social, professional, and geopolitical factors need to be considered. Social factors refer to social environment value judgements

related to emigration. Professional factors refer to issues related to employment. Geopolitical issues are those that arose from the unrest endemic to parts of eastern Europe in the years before, during, and after the Great War.

Leaving for America was strongly discouraged in certain European religious circles. Rabbi Israel Meir Kagan, known as the *Chafetz Chaim*, who lived in Lithuania, for example, wrote that “the true way, and the most proper one, for him who wishes to merit before the Holy One, blessed is He, is to make all effort not to settle in” America.⁷¹ During a 1900 visit to America, Rabbi Willowski of Slutzk referred to the United States as a “*trefa* [impure] land where even the stones are impure.”⁷² An example from the Hasidic world comes from Israel Friedman, the son of Rabbi Mordechai Shlomo Friedman, the Boyaner rebbe, who was among the early rebbes to come to America in 1926. Recalling the emotional atmosphere during the family’s departure from Europe, Friedman says, “everyone felt ... they were going to the wild reaches of America where *Yiddishkayt* was very poor. In general it was felt how could they leave Europe?”⁷³ Thus, for many Orthodox Jews, social and communal attitudes discouraged emigration. Even to entertain the possibility of emigration required at least a social or familial environment that, contrary to predominant Orthodox opinion, did not demonize emigration.

Within the families discussed in this paper there was the social support that regarded emigration as positive or, at least, necessary. As well, many of the rabbinic immigrants to Canada had some family connections in North America or came following other family members. To cite just two examples: Rabbi Shlomo Langner joined his father in Toronto, and Abba Shmuel Twersky came from a family who were Hasidic pioneers in America. Besides the three Twersky brothers previously mentioned who settled on the East Coast in the 1910s and 20s, Rabbi Yitzchak Twersky of Skver settled in Harlem and then the Bronx in 1926, and Rabbi Yaakov Yitzchak Twersky of Makarov, who was a first cousin to Shmuel Abba of Winnipeg, settled in Chicago in

1926. Two other Twerskys arrived in the US in 1924.⁷⁴ Thus, family connections or contacts in the New World and encouragement from other family members were facilitating factors in the construction of a Canadian Hasidic community.

Professional concerns often played a role among early Orthodox emigrants. In fact, as Robinson observes, choosing a rabbinical career in Europe was frequently the last choice a young man made, after failing at other career options.⁷⁵ Often, those same failures or close variants led to emigration. Kimmy Caplan posits several reasons why a rabbi might have emigrated during this time. Besides having frequent opportunities to increase their income, the average salary of Orthodox rabbis in America was higher than that of their European counterparts.⁷⁶ He notes further that as eastern European Orthodox communities diminished in size, there was a consequent decrease in available important—and presumably well-paying—rabbinical positions.⁷⁷ Robinson provides the example of Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg who was unable to establish himself as a significant Hasidic rebbe in Lodz in the 1910s, and who decided to emigrate to Canada.⁷⁸ Some of the Hasidic rabbis in this paper emigrated because of concern about an overabundance of Hasidic rebbes and a dearth of communities seeking leaders; some rabbis were not successful in Europe, and decided to try their luck in America.⁷⁹ On the other hand, it must be remembered that some of the early rebbes to come to America, such as the Boyaner, came because they were called by their American followers. Other émigrés, it must be noted, such as Rabbi Flaum and Rabbi Langner, were not known to have had problems in gathering followers, one of the significant sources of economic support for Hasidic leaders.

Finally, geopolitical factors also contributed to increased emigration. With the exception of Yudel Rosenberg, every one of the rebbes discussed in this paper came from eastern Galicia or the Ukraine. By the time that most of them left, in the early 1920s, they had suffered the destruction and dislocation of the First World War, the Russian Revolution and the rise of Stalin,

the Ukrainian civil war and the pogroms that ensued. As Robinson notes, because of the ravages of World War I, many rebbes went to live in larger cities in central and eastern Europe. Prior to the war, higher-status rebbes typically lived in smaller cities. This initial step of moving to the larger centres eased the transition to North America.⁸⁰

To highlight the complexity of the decision to emigrate, one may cite the experience of two early immigrants to New York: the Kopishnitzer rebbe, a descendant of the Apter Rav, and the Boyaner rebbe, a descendant of Ruzhin, whose inter-married families shared common geographical space in Europe.⁸¹ Both came to the United States as a result of the dislocation of World War I, before the Holocaust, and after a sojourn in Vienna. And in both cases, their families actively encouraged them to emigrate.⁸²

There is another possible factor involved in the emigration patterns, namely the extent to which the particular doctrines of each group influenced the decision to emigrate. In other words, were some groups more opposed ideologically and others more neutral to the idea of emigration to North America? The breadth of this question falls outside the purview of this paper, although a reference should be made to the *Jewish Communal Register of New York City* of 1918 in which Isaac Even addresses the status of the Hasidic community. Although he acknowledges the presence of several Hasidic rebbes and over one hundred Hasidic synagogues in New York City, he suggests that ideology and custom may have influenced some rebbes rather than others to emigrate. “The Russian Chassidim, the followers of the Tschernobler and Sadagorer *Zadikim*, have shown a great tendency to modern dress and modern manners, even in the old country.”⁸³ Even is here articulating the idea that openness to modernity was a condition for pre-Holocaust emigration.

Conclusion

Why has prewar Hasidic emigration to North America been ignored? This question must be addressed in two separate

responses, because both academics and insiders have neglected prewar Hasidic immigration. Robinson has addressed some of the reasons why neglect has been commonplace among academic scholars: historiographers of that era have emphasized change, evolution, and cosmopolitanism, and they saw the future as belonging to the secular and more “modern” Jews.⁸⁴ Heilman and Friedman argue that transformation was a vital trend in Jewish society of the time, marginalizing Orthodoxy, in general, and Hasidism, in particular. As they put it, “the future became more important than the past, and change rather than stability became the hallmark of existence.”⁸⁵ Alan Mittleman notes that, “Until recently, modern social science overlooked or marginalized the category of tradition out of deep bias. Studies of modernization often had a normative agenda. Modernization acquired a teleological, evolutionary value. Tradition became an impediment which modernizing societies needed to overcome.”⁸⁶ Further complicating the problem is that Hasidim tended not to take advantage of the written word as a form in which to promote their narrative, and were frequently ignored in the literary works of non-religious Jewish writers. Besides being scorned, few observers of the era seriously contemplated that the movement would survive in America.⁸⁷

But what about the neglect that comes from inside the community? First and perhaps most obviously, the postwar arrivals, such as Satmar, Belz, Vishnitz, Tosh, and others, predominate in leadership, numbers, and renown, and it is not surprising that they promote their own narratives. Second, other than Skver Hasidim, who are also descendants of the Twerskys, none of the postwar groups has much connection with the prewar arrivals. Third, the postwar groups, with the exception of Lubavitch, are typically more insular, more Haredi, and more rejecting of secular society and education than those who came earlier.

One consequence of the increasing insularity of Haredi Jewry is intellectual conformity, which, among other things, has led to a singularly focused history—namely, the glorification of the Old World. The maintenance of community insularity in the

metropolises of the New World as a beleaguered minority has led to a focus on the history of small, Jewish market towns as the Hasidic Eden.⁸⁸ “Nostalgia and meticulous reconstruction were the hallmarks of the successful transplantation of post-Holocaust Haredism.”⁸⁹ In this worldview, there is little respect for the innovativeness of those rebbes who came to the New World prior to the Holocaust.⁹⁰ The latter are seen to have given up in the struggle to maintain the heart and soul of Hasidism—the shtetl. In fact, they abandoned it for America. As Even remarks in his 1918 article on Hasidic life in New York City:

Some maintain that true Chassidim never existed here. Coming to America means essentially some sort of compromise with the new surroundings. True Chassidism, on the other hand, knows no compromise. The real Chassid, therefore, never risks his soul, and stays at home. Those who do are not true Chassidim.⁹¹

The destruction of the idealized life of the shtetl with its simplicity, piety, autonomy, and purity has led to its romanticization.⁹² Further, postwar Haredi conformity emphasizes one and only one myth—the one that best exemplifies contemporary Haredi values. Historical accuracy is irrelevant.⁹³

This idealization of the shtetl and, even more, of the shtetl leaders (i.e., the rebbes), can be viewed as a type of hagiography in the long tradition of Hasidic hagiography, in which, as scholars have shown, the accuracy of the details is less critical than the message the story is meant to relate.⁹⁴ One can argue that those prewar immigrant rebbes, because they left the supposedly idyllic world before the very last minute, do not match the idealized image that contemporary Hasidim wish to reinforce. As Robinson writes:

There is no doubt that many of the published Hasidic tales of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were stories which evoked in their readers a nostalgia for a past which even then must have seemed long ago and far away ...

however, it was not merely nostalgia that is being demonstrated in these tales. Hasidism, like Eastern European Jewry as a whole, was in a state of transition as it sought to reconcile itself to the realities of a modern world from which there was ultimately no escape.⁹⁵

The greatest idealization, then, is of those who left only under extreme duress. The greatest hero was the one who remained in the shtetl until his life was threatened, the martyr or almost-martyr. If such is the case, then it seems clear that in the long run, the contemporary Hasidic community is likely to emphasize the myth of those who left after the war over that of those who left before. And thus historiography becomes subordinate to social and religious morale. Heilman notes that it was inevitable that people would question the Hasidic choice of remaining in Europe until they were trapped in the Holocaust. Such questioning can lead, as it has, not to doubt, but rather to the reinforcement of those very values that have come under fire. To overcome doubt, not only is the decision to remain justified, but the life that was lost becomes idealized in order to rationalize the decision to remain in Europe.⁹⁶ As Robinson notes, hagiography is often the result of social crisis.⁹⁷

In this context, it is interesting to note that even after the Holocaust, some rebbes, such as the Belzer, remained reluctant to allow their followers to emigrate to America, and because of difficult socioeconomic conditions in Israel, he did not encourage his followers to join him there either. Rather, he supported the growth of the community in Antwerp, still considered to have a European, and hence Hasidic, flair. Only after the outbreak of the Korean War and resulting fears of another world war, did the Belzer Hasidim in Antwerp begin to consider emigration from Europe.⁹⁸

In this paper, I have challenged the accepted historiography that Hasidic life in Canada began only with the arrival of nine Lubavitcher Hasidim in 1941. As the evidence shows, Hasidic life in pre-World War II Canada was vibrant and

diverse. It existed in larger and smaller Canadian Jewish communities, and it boasted significant and well-reputed leaders. By 1939, Hasidim had lived in Canada for several generations and developed their own dynastic infrastructure. While I have addressed the issue of the type of Hasidic leader who might have emigrated during this time and why such personages have been neglected in the literature, much research remains to be done on Jewish emigration patterns and on immigrant Orthodoxy during this period.

Appendix A: Family Tree of Select Canadian Hasidic Rabbis

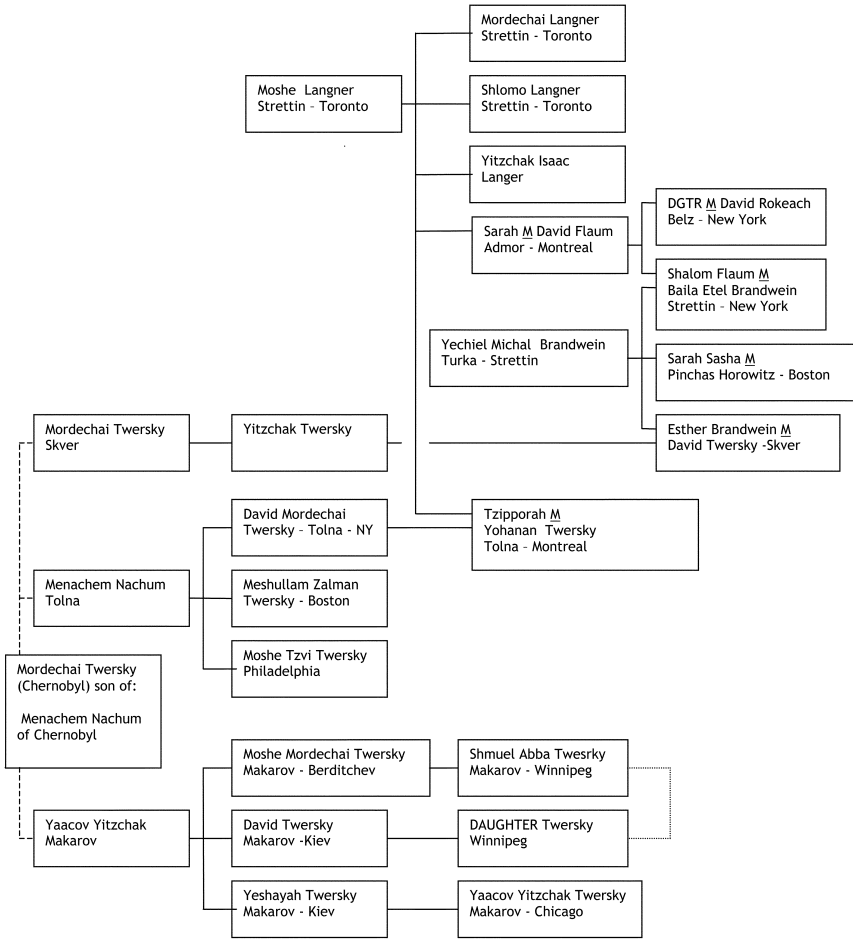


Figure 1 Genealogical diagram of some Hasidic rabbis of pre-Second World War Canada. Omitted are those Hasidic rabbis of the era who are not related to the families depicted herein. Space restrictions have also resulted in truncating some of the extended familial connections, such that siblings and children have not consistently been listed if there is no Canadian connection.

Legend:	
Single generation	—
Marriage (M)	—M—
Multiple generations	- - - -

NOTES

¹ I would like to thank my supervisor, Ira Robinson, for his ever-helpful support, comments, and encouragement. I am also indebted to Eiran Harris, archivist at the Jewish Public Library in Montreal, for his indefatigable efforts and constant attention. His familiarity with the Canadian Jewish press has been a source of many of the documents that I used in this paper and his devotion to Canadian Jewish history has facilitated my research. My thanks also to Janice Rosen and H el ene Lavall e of Canadian Jewish Congress National Archives, Irma Penn of the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada, Winnipeg, and Ellen Scheinberg, Director, Ontario Jewish Archives, Toronto.

² Jenna Weissman Joselit articulates this point in “What Happened to New York’s ‘Jewish Jews’?: Moses Rischin’s *The Promised City Revisited*” in *American Jewish History* 73 (December 1983): 163-72. A similar critique can be applied to other works, such as Irving Howe’s *World of our Fathers: The Journey of the East European Jews to America and the Life They Found and Made* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976). Noted exceptions are Moshe D. Sherman, “Struggle for Legitimacy: The Orthodox Rabbinate in Mid-Nineteenth Century America,” *Jewish History* 10 (1996): 63-74; and Stephen Speisman, *The Jews of Toronto: A History to 1937* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979).

³ It is important to note that among contemporary Jews and non-Jews the word, Hasid, has often been used as a generic term for adherents of traditional Jewish Orthodoxy. Within this paper and the sources cited, however, the term Hasid or Hasidic refers specifically and uniquely to the formal Hasidic movement—the religious revival movement that began in eighteenth century Ukraine with Israel Baal Shem Tov and that is characterized by deference to charismatic leadership, the belief in daily union with the Divine, and a distinct liturgy, all of which set Hasidim apart from other traditionalist or Orthodox Jews.

⁴ Joselit, *New York’s Jewish Jews: The Orthodox Community in the Interwar Years* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 18.

⁵ Gurock, *American Jewish Orthodoxy in Historical Perspective* (New York: Ktav, 1996).

⁶ Heilman, *Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry* (New York: Schocken, 1992), pp. 30-33.

⁷ Jacques Gutwirth, "Hassidism and Urban Life," *Jewish Journal of Sociology* 38 (1996): 107.

⁸ See for example, Harry Rabinowicz, *A World Apart: The Story of the Chasidim in Britain* (London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1997). Also, the sixth Lubavitcher rebbe arrived in the US in 1940, while his successor was in Paris. The Shatzer rebbe, Joel Moskovitch, who came to Montreal in 1948, arrived in London in 1930 (Eli Gottesman, *Who's Who in Canadian Jewry* [Montreal: Jewish Institute of Higher Research, Central Rabbinical Seminary of Canada, 1965], p. 120), and a number of rebbes fled to Vienna during and after World War I.

⁹ George Kranzler, *Williamsburg: A Jewish Community in Transition* (New York: Feldheim, 1961), p. 18.

¹⁰ Daniel Soyer, *Jewish Immigrant Associations and American Identity in New York, 1880—1939* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), pp. 116, 149.

¹¹ Jerome R. Mintz, *Hasidic People: A Place in the New World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992).

¹² Benjamin G. Sack, *History of the Jews in Canada: From the Earliest Beginnings to the Present Day* (Montreal: Canadian Jewish Congress, 1945); Abraham Rhinewine, *Der Yid in Kanada: Fun der Frantzoyszisher Periyode biz der Moderner Tzayt* [Yiddish] (Toronto: Canada Press, 1925).

¹³ Stuart E. Rosenberg, *The Jewish Community in Canada, Volume II: In the Midst of Freedom* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1971), p. 59.

¹⁴ William Shaffir, *Life in a Religious Community: The Lubavitcher Chassidim in Montreal* (Montreal: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston of Canada, 1974), p. 12.

¹⁵ Jacques Gutwirth, "Hassidim et Judaïcité à Montréal," *Recherches Sociographiques* 14 (1973): 291. In 1941, a group of nine Lubavitcher Hasidim arrived in Montreal via Shanghai and Kobe. The postwar group to which Gutwirth refers began with Hasidic survivors who came to Montreal beginning in 1949 on the advice of the Klausenberger rebbe who was instrumental in helping establish a school and *shtibl* for the burgeoning Montreal community, appropriately called, *Reishis Chochma*—Beginning of Wisdom.

¹⁶ Tzvi M. Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia of Hasidism* (Northvale, NJ: Aronson, 1996), pp. 323-24.

¹⁷ *Chagigas Chanukas Habayis: Talmud Toyre Dichasidei Belz—Montreal* [Yiddish] (Montreal, 5 Elul 5757 [1996]), non-paginated.

¹⁸ See for example Ira Robinson, “The First Hasidic Rabbis in North America,” *American Jewish Archives*, 44 (1992): 500-15; idem, “An Identification and a Correction,” *American Jewish Archives* 47 (1995): 331-32; idem, “Kabbalist and Communal Leader: Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg and the Canadian Jewish Community,” *Canadian Jewish Studies* 1 (1993): 41-58.

¹⁹ Lineage, called *yichus* in Yiddish, is a vital factor in a rebbe’s authority. As the position of rebbe is inherited, heredity is a factor in a rebbe’s power, and ancestry is seen as indicative of piety. Thus, rebbes—and ultimately all Hasidim—attempt to marry into families with appropriate ancestry. (Cf. Jerome R. Mintz, *Legends of the Hasidim: An Introduction to Hasidic Culture and Oral Tradition in the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), p. 89; idem, *Hasidic People*, pp. 3, 11.

²⁰ A greater number of prestigious ancestors confers higher status, hence the common practice of identifying pedigrees, especially for rebbes. In a 2 November 1927 article in the New York, Yiddish-language newspaper, *Der Tog*, it is noted that one way of distinguishing true rebbes from impostors is that the former all share the same holy pedigree. “All the *gezets* (family lines) are in the end only one *geze* because they [true rebbes] are all connected through marriage.” I thank Ira Robinson for providing me with this important reference.

²¹ Robinson, “The First Hasidic Rabbis,” p. 512.

²² Cf. Janet S. Belcove-Shalin, “Introduction,” her edited volume, *New World Hasidim: Ethnographic Studies of Hasidic Jews in America* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995), pp. 8-9.

²³ Israel Medres, *Montreal of Yesterday: Jewish Life in Montreal 1900-1920*, tr. Vivian Felsen (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2000), pp. 81-82.

²⁴ Israel Medres, *Between the Wars: Canadian Jews in Transition* (Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2003), p. 147.

²⁵ *Canadian Jewish Chronicle*, 3 December 1915, p. 3.

²⁶ Mordechai Ginsburg, *Keneder Odler*, 22 December 1931. Nusah Ha’Ari was the liturgy adopted by Chabad. Yitzchak Alfasi notes in *Hahasidut midor ledor* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Machon Da’at Yosef, 1995), p. 465, that the elder Lavut was one of the outstanding students of Menachem Mendel and Shmuel of Lubavitch. He lived in Nikolayev in 1875 and is cred-

ited with several publications including, most significantly, *Shaar Hakollel*, which provides sources for the comments in the prayerbook of Shneur Zalman of Liadi, the founder of Chabad Hasidism.

²⁷ *Dos Yiddishe Vort*, 23 December 1927.

²⁸ *Dos Yiddishe Vort*, 12 March 1926.

²⁹ Y. E. Bernstein, *The Jews in Canada (North America): An Eastern European View of the Montreal Jewish Community in 1884*, Canadian Jewish Studies Chapbook Series No. 1, tr. Ira Robinson (Montreal: Hungry I Books, 2004), p. 18.

³⁰ This term refers to anyone who claims some genealogical link to an important Hasidic ancestor, but not direct enough to detail the relationship, hence the generic term “grandchild.”

³¹ Literally, “heads over heads.” Reuven Brainin, “Der einekel,” *Keneder Odler*, 14, 18 June 1914. An English translation of these two articles is available in David Rome, *The Canadian Story of Reuben Brainin, Part 2* (Montreal: National Archives Canadian Jewish Archives, 1996), pp. 33-37.

³² Although Brainin offers few biographical details of the Radovitzer rebbe, we can almost certainly establish his identity. Alfasi lists three rabbis in Radovitz, which was about 60 kilometres north of Lvov: Rabbi Alter Yosef Hager (1820—1879), his son Moshe (1840—1902), and the latter’s son, Israel (1876—1940). The first two rebbes of Radovitz moved to Israel, in 1873 and 1897, respectively, and in each case the son took over responsibilities in Radovitz. Thus, Israel took over in Radovitz in 1897 for his father, while the latter was still alive. In 1913, rather than following his antecedents to Israel, he came to the US. Being the only Radovitzer rebbe alive in 1914, the time of the Montreal visit, the rebbe in question had to be Rabbi Israel Hager of Radovitz, then living in the United States. (Robinson, “An Identification and a Correction,” p. 331; Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, pp. 222-25; idem, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, s.v. “Ishim” (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 2000), p. 541; Meir Wunder, *Me’orei Galitzia: Encyclopedia of Galician Rabbis and Scholars*, Vol. II [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Institute for Commemoration of Galician Jewry, 1982), p. 53. The first Radovitzer rebbe, Rabbi Alter Yosef, was a brother to the first Vishnitzer rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Vishnitz. They were sons of Chaim of Kossov. (Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, p. 110).

³³ Bernie Estrin, “Rav Ariyeh Yehuda Leib Estrin: The Chief Rabbi of Shedrin,” *Heritage: The Journal of the Jewish Archives and Historical Society of Edmonton and Northern Alberta* 7 (2005): 4.

³⁴ *Dos Yiddishe Vort*, 31 March 1931, p. 6.

³⁵ Edenbridge had been conceived of by a group of Yiddishist, socialist Lithuanians who had originally emigrated to South Africa. (Irving Abella, *A Coat of Many Colours: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada* [Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys, 1990], pp. 96-97).

³⁶ Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia*, p. 277; Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, pp. 348-50; Gottesman, *Who’s Who*, p. 100.

³⁷ Oscar Z. Rand, *Toldoth Anshe Shem*, Vol. I (New York: Toldoth Anshe Shem, Inc., 1950), pp. 68-69.

³⁸ Admor, an acronym for *Adonenu, Morenu, Virabbenu* (Our master, our teacher, and our rabbi), is an honorific used uniquely for Hasidic rebbes.

³⁹ *Der Yiddisher Zhournal*, 27 February 1945.

⁴⁰ Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia*, pp. 510-11; Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, pp. 93-94; *The Montreal Synagogue Finder: A Guide to Synagogues Past and Present* (Montreal: Canadian Jewish Congress National Archives, 2002), p. 150; Sara F. Tauben, “Aspirations and Adaptations: Immigrant Synagogues of Montreal, 1880s-1945,” unpublished Masters’ Thesis, Concordia University, 2004, p. 151.

⁴¹ *Keneder Odler*, 24 January 1937, p. 7.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Rand, *Toldoth*, p. 54.

⁴⁴ Robinson, “The First Hasidic Rabbis in North America,” pp. 504-05.

⁴⁵ Rand, *Toldoth*, p. 54.

⁴⁶ Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia*, p. 511; Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, p. 133.

⁴⁷ Meir Wunder, *Me’orei Galitzia: Encyclopedia of Galician Rabbis and Scholars*, Vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Institute for Commemoration of Galician Jewry, 1990), pp. 97-98; Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia*, p. 130.

⁴⁸ Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, pp. 481-82.

⁴⁹ Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, p. 481; Rand, *Toldoth*, pp. 99-100; Wunder, *Me’orei Galitzia*, Vol. 4 [Hebrew], pp. 97-98.

⁵⁰ Anecdotal reference from Conrad and Miriam Cohen suggests that individuals from as far as Ontario travelled to Montreal to seek blessings

and guidance from Rabbi Flaum.

⁵¹ For insight into Rosenberg's time in Montreal, see Ira Robinson, *Rabbis and Their Community: Studies in the Eastern European Orthodox Rabbinate in Montreal, 1896-1930* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, forthcoming); idem, "The Foundation Documents of the Jewish Community Council of Montreal," *Jewish Political Studies Review* 8 (1996): 69-86; idem, "The First Hasidic Rabbis in North America"; idem, "Kabbalist and Communal Leader."

⁵² Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, p. 481; Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, vol. 4, p. 98; Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, p. 158.

⁵³ Rand, *Toldoth*, p. 130.

⁵⁴ Rabinowicz, *Encyclopedia*, p. 405; Yitzchak Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, p. 486; Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, vol. 4, p. 864.

⁵⁵ Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, pp. 122, 130.

⁵⁶ *Der Yid*, 8 July 2005, Section B, pp. 50, 52.

⁵⁷ *Dos Yiddishe Vort*, 9 December 1927, p. 8.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Solomon Poll, *The Hasidic Community of Williamsburg: A Study in the Sociology of Religion* (New York: Schocken, 1969), pp. 62-69.

⁶⁰ Rand, *Toldoth*, p. 106; Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, Vol. 4, pp. 406-07; Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, p. 490.

⁶¹ *Chagigas Chanukas Habayis*, non-paginated.

⁶² The first Ropshitzer rebbe was Naftali Tzvi Horowitz, who passed the mantle of leadership to his son in law, Asher Yeshaya Rubin, among whose descendants was David Flaum. The Ropshitzer's son, who became rebbe in the town of Linsk, is the ancestor of the Rabbi Horowitz discussed here.

⁶³ Alfasi, *Hahasidut midor ledor*, p. 134; Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, vol. 2, p. 300.

⁶⁴ Rand, *Toldoth*, p. 30.

⁶⁵ Ibid; Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, vol. 2, pp. 247-49.

⁶⁶ Wunder, *Me'orei Galitzia*, vol. 4, p. 98. Brandwein came to Boston in 1925 and from there moved to New York. (Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, pp. 201-02)

⁶⁷ Synagogues founded by a group or association. Some of these associations were religious confraternities, and others corporate proto-unions.

⁶⁸ Raphael Mahler, *Hasidism and the Jewish Enlightenment: Their Confrontation in Galicia and Poland in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1985), p. 25.

⁶⁹ Yohanan Petrovsky-Shtern, "Hasidism, Havurot, and the Jewish Street," in *Jewish Social Studies* 10 (2004): 23-25.

⁷⁰ See for example, Kimmy Caplan, "In God We Trust: Salaries and Income of American Orthodox Rabbis, 1881-1924," *American Jewish History* 86 (1998): 77-106.

⁷¹ Israel Meir Hacohen, *The Dispersed of Israel* (New York: Torah Chofetz Chaim Publications, 1951), p. 316.

⁷² Aaron Rothkoff, *Bernard Revel: Builder of American Jewish Orthodoxy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972), p. 4.

⁷³ Mintz, *Hasidic People*, p. 15.

⁷⁴ Rand, *Toldoth*, pp. 54-55.

⁷⁵ Robinson, *Rabbis and Their Community*, p. 28.

⁷⁶ Caplan, "In God We Trust," pp. 98, 103. Although Caplan notes that the financial situation was not identical for Hasidic rebbes, some of whom may have had other sources of economic and communal support, certainly some Hasidic rebbes and rabbis suffered from the same problems that affected their non-Hasidic counterparts.

⁷⁷ Kimmy Caplan, "The Concerns of an Immigrant Rabbi: The Life and Sermons of Rabbi Moshe Shimon Sivitz," *Polin* 11 (1998): 195.

⁷⁸ Ira Robinson, "The Tarler Rebbe of Lodz and his Medical Practice: Towards a History of Hasidic Life in Pre-First World War Poland," *Polin* 11 (1998): 54-55.

⁷⁹ The Radovitzer rebbe, Rabbi Israel Hager, was reputed to have had few Hasidim in Radovitz, when he took over from his father. This lack of communal prestige and consequent reduced income may well have contributed to his decision to leave Europe prior to World War I, which, among Hasidic leaders, was an even less likely time to emigrate than during the interwar years (Alfasi, *Entzyklopedia lahasidut*, p. 541).

⁸⁰ Ira Robinson, "Anshe Sfarad: The Creation of the First Hasidic Congregations in North America," unpublished paper presented at the Conference of Jewish Immigration to America, University of Western Ontario, March, 2005.

⁸¹ Mintz, *Hasidic People*, p. 73.

⁸² The Boyaner rebbe had no option to return to Boyan after the war—it had been razed, although he could, and did, want to remain in Vienna. It was the Tchortkover rebbe, the doyen of the Ruzhiner descendants, who encouraged him to emigrate to serve the community in the US. (Mintz, *Hasidic People*, pp. 14-15).

⁸³ Isaac Even, “Chassidim in the New World,” *Jewish Communal Register of New York City, 1917-1918* (New York, 1918), p. 346. I am indebted to Ira Robinson for this reference.

⁸⁴ Robinson, *Rabbis and Their Communities*, pp. 10-12.

⁸⁵ Samuel C. Heilman and Menachem Friedman, “Religious Fundamentalism and Religious Jews: The Case of the Haredim,” in *Fundamentalisms Observed*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 199.

⁸⁶ Alan L. Mittleman, *The Politics of Torah: The Jewish Political Tradition and the Founding of Agudat Israel* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1996), p. 22.

⁸⁷ Robinson, “Anshe Sfarad,” pp. 3-7.

⁸⁸ Soyer, pp. 12-13; David G. Roskies. *The Jewish Search for a Usable Past* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 41-44.

⁸⁹ David Landau, *Piety and Power: The World of Jewish Fundamentalism* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1993), p. 333.

⁹⁰ Scholars, such as Haym Soloveitchik and Charles Selengut, argue that the rupture caused by emigration, dislocation, and ultimately the Holocaust led to a decrease in communal influence in favour of the reified and monolithic authority of leadership which has resulted in a high degree of social and religious conformity. (Cf. Charles Selengut, “By Torah Alone: Yeshiva Fundamentalism in Jewish Life,” in *Accounting for Fundamentalisms: The Dynamic Character of Movements*, eds. Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994], pp. 236-63); Haym Soloveitchik, “Rupture and Reconstruction: The Transformation of Contemporary Orthodoxy,” *Tradition* 28 (summer 1994): 64-130.

⁹¹ Even, p. 345.

⁹² Scholars, such as Menachem Friedman, argue that, ironically, the contemporary, separatist way of life advocated by many Haredi ideologists is

only possible in the modern, North American metropolis and could not have existed in the shtetl, where because of size and interdependence, communal secessionism was far less possible. (Menachem Friedman, "Haredim Confront the Modern City," *Studies in Contemporary Jewry*, 2 [1986]: 91.)

⁹³ Friedman has noted, specifically regarding ritual practice, that uniformity is so important, that it supports rejecting differing customs of the older generation. Even the Chafetz Chaim's daughter reports that her sons would not use their grandfather's *Kiddush* cup, because it does not hold a minimum requirement of wine according to contemporary standards. (Menachem Friedman, "The Lost Kiddush Cup: Changes in Ashkenazic Haredi Culture: A Tradition in Crisis," in *The Uses of Tradition: Jewish Continuity in the Modern Era*, ed. Jack Wertheimer [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992], pp. 175-83).

⁹⁴ See for example, Ira Robinson, "Literary Forgery and Hasidic Judaism: The Case of Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg," in *Judaism* 40 (1991): 61-78.

⁹⁵ Ira Robinson, "The Zaddik as Hero in Hasidic Hagiography," in *Crisis and Reaction: The Hero in Jewish History*, ed. Menachem Mor (Omaha, NB: Creighton University Press, 1995, 93-103), p. 99. Robinson and others make the point, of course that the so-called idyllic shtetl life had disappeared long before the Nazi Holocaust.

⁹⁶ Heilman, pp. 32-33.

⁹⁷ Ira Robinson, "Hasidic Hagiography and Jewish Modernity," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, eds. Elisheva Carlebach, John M. Efron, and David N. Myers (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 1998, 405-412), p. 405.

⁹⁸ Jacques Gutwirth, "The Structure of a Hassidic Community in Montreal," in *The Jewish Journal of Sociology* 14 (1972): 45-46.