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A CANADIAN-BORN HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR: IDENTITY AND CONTINUITY

Introduction

On March 2, 1946, the Canadian troopship *Aquitania* arrived in Halifax, carrying military personnel who had served in Europe. A sole Holocaust survivor, 21-year-old civilian Jennie Lifschitz, was among those disembarking that day.² This young woman was not an immigrant. In fact, the Canadian government was to bar the immigration of survivors until an Order in Council, implemented in May, 1946 – over two months after Jennie’s arrival – allowed Canadians to sponsor first-degree relatives.³ Rather, like her fellow passengers, Jennie was returning home. The March 4, 1946 edition of the *Montreal Gazette* commented on her return: “One of the strangest cases of repatriation was unfolded Saturday with the arrival in Halifax of Montreal-born Jennie Lifshitz [sic]...to be welcomed by her father, Abraham Lifshitz, who had not seen his daughter for more than 20 years.”⁴

This paper analyses the life of Jennie Lifschitz, who was probably the only Canadian-born Holocaust survivor. After outlining her birth in Canada, her youth in Latvia, and her experiences during the Holocaust, I will examine her post-war years, focussing on her reintegration into Canadian life and her standing in regard to the Jewish communities of Montreal and Vancouver. In the case of a repatriated Canadian-born survivor, the usual models

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of integration are insufficient. As we shall see, an analysis of Jennie's life from the perspective of multiple identity theory provides a better fit for her unique personal circumstances.

Most models of immigrant acculturation are predicated on the two following assumptions: firstly, a clear distinction can be drawn between immigrants and their host communities; and secondly, immigrants can be either integrated or not integrated into their host communities. While a few researchers outright reject the concept of integration – sociologist Morton Weinfeld, for example, argues that “Adult immigrants...almost *never* integrate into the host society. [Rather, they integrate] into their smaller-sized community of origin, not Canada as a whole”⁵ – most researchers agree that integration (however defined) is possible, differing only on the extent to which a given group or individual can be considered integrated. A more sophisticated model of acculturation, proposed by psychologist John W. Berry, allows for finer distinctions to be made on the basis of immigrants' behaviour and the attitudes of both heritage and dominant groups. In Berry's model, immigrants are classified as *integrated*, *assimilated*, *separated*, or *marginalized*.⁶ But even this model assumes clear distinctions between immigrants and host communities, and though the classification system is more finely articulated, the model still assumes that immigrants fit into one or the other of the four categories.

Similar assumptions and arguments drive the discussion of the integration of Holocaust survivors into Canadian post-war society, some arguing that survivors were not integrated, others that they were. For example, Gerald Tulchinsky and Frank Bialystok, both historians, argue that many Holocaust survivors were not well integrated into their host communities in Canada.⁷ Historian Irving Abella, along with Bialystok have emphasized the “schism between the established community...and the survivors [which was] evident in the separation of neighbourhoods, in communal organizations, and...in the articulation of ethnic identification.”⁸ Author Jean Gerber, on the other hand, argues that survivors in Vancouver were, in fact, well integrated into

their host community by Abella and Bialystok's three criteria.⁹

Notwithstanding the usual academic differences in terms of methodology, theory, and analysis, a simple but profound mismatch arises when we attempt to apply the usual models of integration to Jennie Lifschitz's situation. Owing to Jennie's unique identity as a Canadian by birth, a female, working-class Jewish Latvian by upbringing, and a repatriated Holocaust survivor, the groups to which she belonged and those from which she was excluded are difficult, even impossible, to pin down. Depending on the situation, her heritage group has been variously defined, by herself and others, as Canadian (according to her birthplace), Jewish (according to her ethnicity), Latvian (according to the land of her upbringing), and even Soviet (the Soviets occupied Latvia for a year before the Nazi invasion of World War II). Furthermore, once returned to Canada, Jennie situated herself variously in regards to at least two dominant groups: Canadian/mainstream Jewish, or Canadian in general. Thus the usual categories of heritage and dominant groups are blurred in Jennie's case, and her memberships in and exclusions from these groups necessarily depended on context.

The models of immigrant acculturation that scholars have offered not only impose categories on individuals, but, more seriously, can be argued to reflect the stereotypical views and even prejudices of host communities, which, broadly speaking, consider immigrants as generally "other," often ignoring important differences between groups and individuals, and rarely taking into account how immigrants see themselves. As Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway put it, "the very complexity of individualized identity is often simplified by a limited range of sociocultural categories."¹⁰ A moment's reflection will tell us that not all immigrants – not even all Holocaust survivors – can be contained within a single category, as they reflect various cultural, social, and political backgrounds. Even labels like Austrian, Polish, German, and so forth, ignore the political realities of Europe's shifting borders. Non-fiction author Daniel Mendelsohn, for example, recounts a joke about "a man who's

born in Austria, goes to school in Poland, gets married in Germany, has children in the Soviet Union, and dies in Ukraine. Through all that...*he never left his village!*"¹¹

A more promising theoretical approach to Jennie's unique situation (and others who, like the subject of Mendelsohn's joke, elude simple classification) is provided by the concept of multiple identities. The idea, according to psychologist Gary S. Gregg, originated with Plato, who postulated a tripartite theory of the psyche, which Freud developed into his own model of id, ego, and superego.¹² Freud's ideas, according to Gregg, were extended by William James, who argued that people have multiple selves reflecting the groups to which they belong,¹³ and were further developed in social psychologist Henri Tajfel's theory of social identity, defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from their knowledge of their membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership."¹⁴ The notion that people's sense of identity can change, sometimes drastically, depending on their social environment has been explored by social psychologists. Perhaps most dramatically in psychologist Philip Zimbardo's famous "Stanford Prison" study, in which students, assigned at random to the roles of prisoner or guard in a behaviour experiment, assumed their roles to such an extent that the experiment had to be terminated early.¹⁵

Multiple identity theory, which has been applied not only in psychology, but in cultural, ethnic, and immigration studies, suggests "the self-motivated, self-aware, and self-determined integration of self-richness and self-contradiction."¹⁶ In his survey of the history of multiple identity, Gregg cites a body of work that, when taken together, posits that ethnic minorities can shift between "cultural frames," identifying with their own or the dominant culture depending on context, and assuming the (sometimes contradictory) values of either culture.¹⁷

In a similar vein, interdisciplinary scholar Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett rejects acculturation models based on the premise of a one-way trajectory from old-world identity

to assimilation, especially critiquing the related concept of the marginalized immigrant, “that unhealthy creature caught between two cultures.”¹⁸ She argues that boundaries between ethnic groups are not fixed, but are “socially constructed and situated, constantly negotiated; they are multiple and complex.”¹⁹ In other words, according to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, ethnic identity arises from immigrants’ understanding of their relationships within groups and acknowledges that an individual may belong to multiple groups simultaneously. Ethnic identity also depends on the individual’s attitudes towards out-groups, which likewise vary according to context.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett furthermore acknowledges the importance of continuity, seeing it as an active process by which immigrants (or their descendants) retain valuable connections with their previous identity, sometimes adapting beliefs or behaviours to their new lives. Morton Weinfeld, analysing Jewish immigrants in Montreal, similarly notes that “by and large, adult immigrants to Canada...retain one foot firmly planted in the old country,”²⁰ while the scholar of social work Myra Giberovitch points out that “many Holocaust survivors have remained spiritually connected to their roots...transmitting their cultural heritage and establishing a continuity with the world of their ancestors.”²¹ Psychologist Natan Kellermann adds that pre-war personality traits, occupation, and cultural and religious background also influence how survivors adapted to their post-war lives and roles.²²

In the case of Jennie Lifschitz, a Canadian-born survivor, the usual models of assimilation, which assume clear distinctions between immigrant and dominant groups, and which further assume that immigrants can be classified along some sort of continuum of integration, provide a poor fit. The more flexible framework of multiple identity theory implies that, depending on the requirements of the situation, Jennie could draw on numerous identities, among them Canadian, Jewish, and Latvian. This is not to say that her personality was fragmented, as her various identities were united by a sense of

continuity with her past life in Canada, Latvia, and during the Holocaust, which instilled in her lifelong personal values of hard work, self-sufficiency, and social equity.

Birth in Montreal and Life in Europe to 1946²³

Jennie's father, Abraham Lifschitz, arrived in Montreal from Liepaja, Latvia, in February 1921.²⁴ A year later, his wife Paula arrived at Ellis Island with their infant son Ruben.²⁵ The couple's two daughters were born in Montreal: Dora in 1922,²⁶ and Jennie on July 8, 1924.²⁷

Four months after Jennie's birth, her parents separated. We cannot be sure of the details, but according to Paula, "At the end of 1924 my husband persuaded me to return with my three children to Libau [Liepaja] under the pretext that times were very hard for him and that he will join me in Libau after a while...He purchased tickets for me and my children and we sailed per SS *Regina*."²⁸ They left Montreal in November 1924.²⁹

A year later, Paula seems to have regretted her departure. In December 1925, writing from Liepaja, she petitioned the Canadian Immigration Officer in Riga: "as my children were born in Canada, it is my desire that they remain Canadian citizens, and should be educated in Canada, as they are entitled...I hope that the respective Canadian Authorities will exert all their efforts in order to induce my husband to furnish me with sufficient funds to cover my transportation and that of my children to Canada."³⁰ A series of letters in the Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee (CJCCC) file in which Paula's letter appears describes several attempts to locate Abraham, after which the search was apparently abandoned.

In Liepaja, Paula and the children lived in poverty. Because Paula had to work, the family was broken up. The infant Jennie and her brother Ruben were initially placed in an orphanage. An aunt cared for Dora. Paula moved in with her mother, Malka Blumberg, the two of them sharing a two-room apartment.³¹ As an adult, Dora described her early life: "it is

only now, looking back, I realize how poor we were. We slept on beds made of straw. We had a goat in the yard. We never knew any different, everyone was poor.”³²

In 1931, Abraham sent for his two older children, who returned to Montreal,³³ leaving six-year-old Jennie with her family in Liepaja.

Jennie was forced into early independence. When Jennie was twelve years old, Paula remarried and moved to Telšiai, Lithuania.³⁴ Although Jennie visited her mother by train, and they spoke occasionally by phone, she lost her mother’s emotional and financial support.³⁵ Jennie, now living with her grandmother, Malka, recalled often being hungry, and, from a very young age, working after school for payment in food or cash. Shortly after her mother’s remarriage, Jennie wrote to the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) in Riga, seeking support from her father. Abraham claimed to have sent a total of \$15 in two payments.³⁶ Whether or not Jennie received the money is unclear.

Although Jennie followed the expected forms of cultural and religious observance, attending Hebrew school where, she said, she received good grades, she was not particularly studious. In later years, she recalled her lessons in poetry and music, but also described, with equal enjoyment, smuggling romantic novels into class. She was a member of Hashomer Hatzair, a left-wing Zionist youth group with a mission “to encourage emigration to Palestine and to defend the interests of the proletariat.”³⁷ She had a boyfriend,³⁸ and she recalled that during the 1940-41 Soviet occupation of Latvia, she would sneak out to dance with the Russian soldiers.

After a weeklong battle with Soviet forces, the German army entered Liepaja on June 29, 1941.³⁹ Within the week, the Nazi commandant issued a set of anti-Jewish edicts,⁴⁰ and Liepaja’s Jews were forced into labour details. Jennie worked for the Marine Nachrichten Mittelbetrieb (Marine News Media Operations), a private home for officers and soldiers, where she performed household tasks such as cooking, washing clothes,

and chopping wood.⁴¹ “The first year,” she stated, “it was worse than living in the ghetto. We could not lock our doors, and they came and took people and shot them.”⁴²

The killing of Liepaja’s Jews began with a mass murder of two to three hundred on July 4.⁴³ Later that month, Jennie’s cousin, Lipman Levin, was hanged as a Communist sympathizer,⁴⁴ and Jennie’s uncle Hessel was shot.⁴⁵ Hessel’s family moved in with Jennie and her grandmother.⁴⁶ That winter, mass arrests took place the night of December 13.⁴⁷ Latvian policemen came to Malka’s apartment and arrested the entire family, aside from Jennie and her fourteen-year-old cousin Bella. The policemen returned the next morning for the girls, bringing them to the prison where those previously arrested had been held.⁴⁸ Rita Bogdanova, Bella’s daughter, relates her mother’s story: “When [Bella] saw a heap of dresses and shoes, big and little in the yard of the prison, she realized at once where the family was...At the same moment the chief of the prison Krastinsh, who was [Bella’s] neighbour at Sofijas Street, passed by... The chief...called two policemen and directed them to bring this girl home safe, so that no hair falls from her head. So [Bella and Jennie] came back to [Malka’s] house, empty forever, as orphans.”⁴⁹

Jennie’s relatives were shot on the dunes of Skede, a few kilometres outside the city, in a three-day massacre during which most of Liepaja’s Jewish population was murdered.⁵⁰ Jennie, only just seventeen, took charge of her helpless cousin Bella, who was barely able to boil a pot of water, wondering “Why does it move? Why is there smoke?”⁵¹ The two girls lived together in Malka’s apartment until their forced relocation to the Liepaja ghetto in June 1942.

The ghetto comprised a block of houses enclosed by barbed wire.⁵² Jennie recalls: “We were about eight hundred and sixteen Jewish people all together. They gave us twelve old homes, some of them big, some small, all we were allowed for each person was a bed.”⁵³ Nine families lived in Jennie’s apartment. She, Bella, and a married couple slept in one room:

“They had one bed and [Bella and I] had the other... We went outside to work⁵⁴ and once a week on Sundays we had to wash the sidewalk.”⁵⁵

Life in the Liepaja ghetto has been described as “brutal to tolerable.”⁵⁶ Although there were beatings – as Jennie recalled, “We had to line up in the street in Libau Square, and every morning they would pick us out and beat us for no reason at all”⁵⁷ – the commandant, Kerschner, was relatively lax, turning a blind eye to food smuggling, and there were relatively few deaths.⁵⁸ Since Jennie’s job at the Marine Nachrichten Mittelbetrieb included cooking, we can assume that whenever possible, she too smuggled food into the ghetto.

In October 1943, the Liepaja ghetto was liquidated. Its inhabitants were transported in freight cars to Kaiserwald, a suburb of Riga, Latvia, where a concentration camp, enclosed with barbed wire and surrounded with watchtowers, had been established.⁵⁹ On arrival, Jennie related, “first thing when we came in we had to stand outside and undress completely. They cut our hair and took everything away and took us in a room and there were German doctors and then they herded us through for a shower... One side was women and the other side was men.”⁶⁰ Here, Jennie’s Canadian birth certificate was confiscated. Ella Hirschorn, who had lived with Jennie in the Liepaja ghetto and was transported with her to Kaiserwald, declared: “I was present... when the SS troops took away the Canadian Birth Certificate of... Jennie Lifschitz, and I saw the said Birth Certificate on that occasion and... prior to this time.”⁶¹

In March 1944, Jennie and other workers were transferred to one of Kaiserwald’s affiliate camps, the Deutsche Reichsbahn camp in Riga. There she was confined in barracks surrounded by barbed wire and forced into slave labour on the railroad.⁶² On her first day in Kaiserwald, Jennie met her future husband, Sender Mines,⁶³ although she did not recall speaking to him there.⁶⁴

In August 1944, with the Soviet front approaching Riga,⁶⁵ Kaiserwald’s survivors were transported to concentration camp

Stutthof, near Danzig (now Gdansk) on the ship Bremerhafen.⁶⁶ Jennie recalled, “Between the 6th and 9th of August we were on a boat without food or anything to drink or eat...We got [to Stutthof] on the 9th of August.”⁶⁷ On arrival, prisoners were registered, assigned numbers, and issued camp clothing and wooden shoes.⁶⁸ Jennie became prisoner number 56164.⁶⁹

Conditions in Stutthof were harsh, worsened by severe overcrowding. Due to the overcrowding, there was not enough work available, and there were frequent selections for execution.⁷⁰ Shortly after her arrival, Jennie herself was selected. As she was waiting her turn before the gas chamber, there was an announcement: workers were needed for the newly-opened Reichsbahn labour camp in Stolpe.⁷¹ Jennie volunteered: “On 26 August 1944, I was sent to Stolp-Pomeran Labor Camp to work for the German Railroad...Our group was taken away to Stolp-Pomeran from a line-up in front of the gas chamber at Stutthof.”⁷² Six months later, as a result of the Soviet Army’s January winter offensive, the Stolpe camp was evacuated.⁷³ When Jennie and other evacuees were returned to Stutthof in March 1945,⁷⁴ they confronted utter chaos. A typhoid epidemic had broken out, daily killing up to 2.5% of the camp’s inmates.⁷⁵ Jennie herself contracted typhoid:⁷⁶ “I got liberated [while] I was sick,” she recalled.⁷⁷

On April 25, 1945,⁷⁸ Stutthof’s last inmates were evacuated. On April 27,⁷⁹ after a two-day forced march, prisoners were loaded onto barges, which were drawn by tugs to Neustadt, Germany, arriving May 2.⁸⁰ At 3:00 the following afternoon, after an aerial bombardment of the harbour, during which many camp survivors were killed,⁸¹ British troops entered Neustadt.⁸² Jennie summed up, “About thirty-two Jews survived from the barge I was on...On 3 May, 1945, we arrived in Neustadt, Schlesweig-Holstein, where we were liberated by the British army.”⁸³

The British army acted quickly to provide survivors with housing and medical care.⁸⁴ Jennie was hospitalized in the Landes Krankenhaus⁸⁵ from May to June, suffering from malnutrition, angina, bronchitis,⁸⁶ typhoid, and scabies.⁸⁷

When she began to recover, the question arose of where she should go. Various Jewish committees had been organized, and young people were departing for Palestine under the auspices of “Alijat Noar.”⁸⁸ Jennie considered going, but was over the age limit by one year. She lied on her application to appear younger, but, as she later recalled, miscalculated and made herself an additional year older, ruining her chances.

Another possibility remained: to return to Canada. But given her lack of papers and her European languages and background, no one believed she was Canadian. She recalled telling an official she was from Canada, to be told no, she must be from Kandava, a town in Latvia.⁸⁹

Sometime that summer, Jennie told her story to a nurse attached to the British Army of Occupation. The nurse wrote to JIAS in Montreal, who made the necessary contacts and arrangements to confirm the story and enable Jennie’s return.⁹⁰ Events moved quickly. Jennie’s DP Registration Record, issued July 1945, recognized her nationality as Canadian.⁹¹ Her repatriation was authorized on September 17, 1945.⁹²

Jennie arrived in the British port of Hull on February 4, 1946.⁹³ She spent three weeks in London (“as a guest of Her Majesty,” she joked in later years), where she received her Canadian Certificate of Identity, issued by the Department of External Affairs in lieu of a national passport, for transit to Canada. She sailed on February 25, 1946,⁹⁴ arriving in Halifax on March 2 as an official “returned Canadian.”⁹⁵ As she later stated, “I didn’t come back as a DP. But I was *repatriated*.”⁹⁶

Return to Canada

The relationships between Holocaust survivors, established Jewish communities, and general Canadian society involve various aspects of cultural identity and intergroup attitudes. In the case of Jennie Lifschitz, a Canadian-born survivor who received few benefits from her Canadian relatives and none from the Canadian government until 1945, these relationships are even more complex. Returning to Montreal as a virtual

stranger, Jennie's sense of her own cultural identity must have been tangled and often contradictory.

Perhaps the most unusual factor in Jennie's introduction to Canadian life is that she arrived ahead of other survivors. The Order in Council admitting first-degree relatives was not implemented until May 1946.⁹⁷ The first survivors admitted under the Orphans' Plan arrived in September 1947, and the first admitted under the Workers' Project arrived in March 1948.⁹⁸ Services to survivors later provided by the Canadian government and the established Jewish community did not exist when Jennie arrived, and she was thrown on her family's resources.

Jennie's first challenge was poor health. She was treated for scabies and "a nervous and run down condition" in April 1946.⁹⁹ She had an enlarged heart and a murmur, and even after she began working in a bakery in November 1946, she stated, "I still suffered from my legs, from standing for so many hours."¹⁰⁰ Some months later, her father hired her to work in one of his restaurants. She recalled, "I worked for my father's restaurant and could sit down when I needed to, another employer wouldn't put up with that."¹⁰¹ With her father's help, Jennie's career advanced rapidly. By 1952 she was a shareholder in one of her father's restaurants in Montreal. She also owned outright a small grocery-restaurant in the summer resort of Val Morin.¹⁰²

Although Jennie's family provided her with work and housing, they were unable to help her cope with psychological traumas resulting not only from the Holocaust, but from the multiple losses and dislocations of her pre-war life. Recalling her initial attitude to her Canadian family, who had experienced relative comfort and safety before and during the war years, Jennie explained, "I didn't just have a chip on my shoulder. I had two boulders – one on each shoulder."¹⁰³ Jennie's daughter Paula recalls her asking, "If he [Abraham] could afford to get my brother and sister out, why didn't he get me out?" adding, "She was resentful."¹⁰⁴

To add to Jennie's resentment, she was occasionally insulted by her family's misguided (if well-meant) attempts

to teach their “bumpkin” relative big-city ways, including the use of the toilet. She bitterly recalled a cousin reproaching her: “You think YOU had it bad during the war – we couldn’t even buy nylons!” Frank Bialystok cites such incidents and misunderstandings, by no means uncommon, as leading to survivors’ feeling rejected and estranged from the Canadian community,¹⁰⁵ and Jennie’s initial attitudes accord with the findings of researchers who have argued that many survivors were not well integrated into their host communities.¹⁰⁶ In Montreal, Jennie did not join a synagogue or any other Jewish organizations, and she had few or no Jewish friends.¹⁰⁷ Instead, she threw her energies into her job, working “very long hours.”¹⁰⁸

A year after her arrival in Montreal, Jennie became the single mother of a daughter. The child was placed in a foster home outside Montreal, and while Jennie and Abraham supported and visited her, her existence remained a closely guarded secret, even from the rest of the family, a situation that surely must have increased Jennie’s sense of isolation from both her family and the larger community.

In early 1952, Jennie proposed marriage to Sender Mines, a fellow survivor of Kaiserwald and Stutthof, who had arrived in Canada that January.¹⁰⁹ Sender recalled, “When we went out for a couple of weeks after she met me... I accompanied her home and it was about 12:00 o’clock midnight and she was asking me if I would marry a woman with a child.”¹¹⁰ Sender agreed, but a serious obstacle arose in the person of his first wife, Chaja, from whom he had been separated early in the war. Unknown to Sender, Chaja had survived, remarried, and immigrated to Montreal with her second husband in 1949.¹¹¹ When Jennie proposed, Sender was virtually penniless, so Jennie made the necessary payments to detectives, lawyers, and a rabbi, plus additional funds for Chaja to agree to a Jewish divorce: in total, almost \$1500.¹¹² Sender and Chaja’s civil divorce was finalized on March 31, 1953.¹¹³ That month, Jennie and Sender signed a marriage contract confirming that “the parties shall be separate as to property and they shall not be responsible for each others’ debts.” Furthermore, Sender was

to pay Jennie \$10,000 during their marriage, furnish and maintain their home, and support her and their children.¹¹⁴

If Jennie's early attempts to manage her family, her community, and her unwed motherhood were novel and problematic, they also suggest a certain self-sufficiency. Jennie had been forced into independence very young. She had repeatedly endured the trauma of childhood separation from her father, mother, and siblings, and during the Holocaust she had survived the murders of almost all her Latvian relatives. In consequence, Jennie put little stock in the ability of family to nurture or protect her. In that context, not only her decision, but her strenuous efforts to marry Sender Mines in 1951 seems surprising. She certainly did not marry him for his money or the security money could provide, as he worked in a shoe factory for a meagre \$27 a week, substantially less than she earned herself.¹¹⁵ And while love likely played a role, it was probably not the only motivating factor.

According to Paula, Jennie's daughter, her reasons for marriage were diverse. First, Sender provided a connection to Jennie's European past: "She met [Sender] in one of the labour camps, so she was familiar with him."¹¹⁶ A second factor was pragmatism. In order to separate from her Montreal family, Jennie would need to find a father for her child; the alternative was penury, which, given Jennie's poverty-stricken childhood, she was unwilling to accept. According to Paula, "Nobody [else] wanted to marry Mom with a child...She decided it was better to marry Dad than to go on welfare."¹¹⁷ Certainly there was an element of self-interest in the couple's marriage contract, which stipulated not only that Jennie would retain her own private property, but that Sender, over and above maintaining the home and supporting her and their children, would pay her \$10,000 outright. The terms of Jennie's marriage contract imply that she was not expecting support from her family or aid agencies; rather, she was drawing on her personal attributes of independence, strength of will, and unsentimental hard-headedness to map out her future.

Jennie and Sender were married twice: first in a synagogue on March 22, 1953,¹¹⁸ and, shortly after Sender's divorce from Chaja, in a civil wedding on June 9, 1953.¹¹⁹ Within the year, Jennie, her daughter, and her husband were on their way to Vancouver, "as far away from Montreal as I could get without falling in the ocean," she joked later. They arrived on February 18, 1954.¹²⁰

A few days after their move to Vancouver, Jennie and Sender went to the Jewish Community Centre for help finding work and housing. They were turned down. As Jennie recalled, "All they told us was to go back to where we came from, that there was no jobs and we should live in Montreal. There is [sic] enough Jews as it is here in Vancouver."¹²¹ Thrown on their own resources and unable to find an apartment due to Vancouver's pervasive "no children allowed" rental policies, the couple went into a real estate office to discuss a house purchase. They settled on a house in Vancouver's West End, and, only eight days after their arrival, signed an interim purchase agreement.¹²² Jennie paid with money she had brought from Montreal, and the family moved in.¹²³ Sender began work in a shoe factory, and Jennie ran her home as a rooming house, the family living in the one bedroom that was not occupied by tenants.¹²⁴ Jennie kept the accounts and paid the mortgage.¹²⁵

In August 1955, Sender adopted Jennie's daughter,¹²⁶ and that October the couple had another daughter. In June 1956, Jennie bought a restaurant, which she and Sender, having quit his factory job, operated until 1958.¹²⁷ In 1959, a son was born, and a year later, Jennie purchased a second restaurant.¹²⁸ This time, Sender, who had recently inherited some money, was able to make a substantial financial contribution.¹²⁹

After Jennie's repatriation in 1946, she did not integrate well into Montreal's local Jewish community, as we have already seen. Despite her initial successes in terms of family, home, and career, the same was true in Vancouver. While Gerber has maintained that survivors in Vancouver were well-integrated according to the criteria of shared neighbourhoods,

community organizations, and expressions of ethnic identification,¹³⁰ Jennie was even less integrated into Vancouver's Jewish community than Montreal's according to these three standards.

First, Jennie and her family did not make their home in the predominantly Jewish areas of the city. Perhaps practicality was key to Jennie's decision to buy in the largely non-Jewish West End. It was also difficult to rent an apartment with a child. Buying a house and running it as a rooming house was an attractive alternative to paid employment for women.¹³¹ Jennie had been assured by an enthusiastic real estate agent, "You can never lose in the West End. You are always going to get your money back."¹³² But if Jennie had wanted to live near the established Jewish community and its institutions, she surely could have found a way to do so, as she had arrived from Montreal far from penniless. However, after her initial rebuff by the Vancouver Jewish Community Centre, she sought no further assistance. Instead, only eight days after her arrival in Vancouver, she signed a contract on a house in the West End, some distance from Vancouver's established Jewish neighbourhoods.

Second, Jennie had few ties with the Vancouver Jewish community. She never joined a synagogue or other mainstream associations; she did not keep kosher; she did not observe Sabbath or other holidays; she made no special efforts to cultivate Jewish friends.¹³³ Her children attended neighbourhood schools, where they were usually the only Jewish pupils. Jennie's sole connection to the Vancouver Jewish community was the Peretz School, which she and her family joined in 1964: at that time, the only local Jewish organization to promote Yiddish and secularism, with a membership that was predominantly left-wing and non-religious.¹³⁴ The Peretz School was far from a mainstream organization, however, especially after 1952, when, influenced by American cold-war anti-communism, the wider community began to criticize it as Communist, anti-religious, and anti-Zionist.¹³⁵

Finally, Jennie's participation in expressions of ethnic identification was limited, centring on the Peretz School, which,

in the late 1960s, introduced a secular Seder service commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.¹³⁶ Jennie and her family participated in this event for many years, in preference to the annual Kristallnacht Lecture and Commemoration, organized in the 1970s,¹³⁷ which continues to serve the mainstream Jewish community.¹³⁸

By the mid-1960s, Jennie and Sender were no longer getting along, and in July 1967, Jennie left the family home.¹³⁹ The restaurant was sold immediately afterwards.¹⁴⁰ In October 1969, Jennie successfully sued Sender for sole title to the family home.¹⁴¹ A year later, Sender unsuccessfully appealed the court's decision.¹⁴² The couple lived apart, Jennie supporting herself by various restaurant and housecleaning jobs, until their divorce in August 1981, a year before Sender's death.¹⁴³

Jennie remarried in September 1984.¹⁴⁴ Her second husband, Jack Phillips, was a long-time labour activist and journalist for the *Canadian Tribune*, and Jennie lived with him in Prague and Moscow from 1981 to 1986. She and Jack made several trips to Riga, to visit Bella, the cousin she had not seen since they were separated in the camps. Sadly, however, Jennie was not able to visit Liepaja, where she had grown up.¹⁴⁵ Under the Communist regime, Liepaja was a major military port that was closed to foreigners, and Jennie, as a Canadian citizen, was not allowed.

Compensation

On July 16, 1953, Jennie filed a Statement of Claim to the Canadian War Claims Commission,¹⁴⁶ a body operating from 1952 to 1969 "with a focus on claims for damage or loss in theatres of war anywhere in the world by Canadian citizens or corporate entities."¹⁴⁷ On March 4, 1955, a hearing to determine the claim was held in Vancouver.¹⁴⁸ This hearing, presided over by Deputy Commissioner Justice H. I. Bird, involved an extensive interview with Jennie to confirm her Canadian citizenship and experiences in Europe.¹⁴⁹ The interview was supported by witness affidavits and documentation attesting to Jennie's

personal history and her state of health after liberation. On March 21, 1955, in his ruling on Jennie's case, Bird confirmed her status as a "natural-born Canadian citizen under the provisions of Section 4(1) (a) of the Canadian Citizenship Act," her maltreatment in concentration camps, and her ill-health resulting in the loss of remunerative employment.¹⁵⁰ The \$2455.99 award was issued on May 31, 1955.¹⁵¹ Jennie put the money into the mortgage on her house, allowing it to be paid off "about three and a half years after it was bought."¹⁵²

Jennie was not compensated as a Holocaust survivor, as she herself was aware: "To the best of my knowledge, the Canadian government has provided no specific programs whatsoever with respect to indemnifying Holocaust survivors. With respect to the Canada War Claims Commission payment... I received indemnification not as a Jewish survivor of the Holocaust *per se*, but as a Canadian prisoner of war."¹⁵³

Fifty-five years after Jennie's liberation, she finally received compensation as a survivor. In 2001, she applied under the Claims Conference Program for Former Slave and Forced Laborers, receiving a one-time payment of about \$10,000 in 2003.¹⁵⁴ Around the same time, Jennie applied for a monthly pension under the Article 2 Fund. This claim was delayed for some months, due to her Canadian birth and citizenship. Eventually, the lawyer filing on her behalf established that Jennie had been a Soviet citizen in 1940, and was thus eligible for compensation under Article 2.¹⁵⁵ Jennie explained, "In 1940, when I was 16 years old, Soviet forces occupied Latvia and gave all Latvian citizens Soviet passports. I was told that when I reached the age of 18, I would become a Soviet citizen and would be given a Soviet passport. In the meantime, I was on my mother's Soviet passport [although] I never relinquished my Canadian citizenship."¹⁵⁶

Jennie's application under Article 2 was approved in October 2004.¹⁵⁷ She was unable to enjoy her small monthly stipend. The month she received her first payment, she was hospitalized for a vascular condition, and her health deteriorated rapidly. Jennie died in Vancouver on August 9, 2005.

Multiple Identities

As we have seen, the usual models of acculturation cannot account for the experiences of a Canadian-born, repatriated Holocaust survivor. In Montreal, Jennie integrated neither into her extended family nor her ethnic sub-community (however defined). Nor, despite her citizenship, did she integrate into the dominant French or Anglo Canadian culture, as her ethnicity, values, and language excluded her from many aspects of those societies, which were, in the years following her arrival, openly anti-Semitic and conservative in many respects.¹⁵⁸ Many models, including Berry's, define immigrants who fit neither into their heritage culture nor the dominant culture as *marginalized*.¹⁵⁹ This label at first seems applicable to Jennie, who was virtually estranged from her Montreal family; only weakly integrated with the Jewish communities of Montreal and Vancouver; and separated from the broader Canadian community by virtue of her ethnicity and European background. On the other hand, a label as negative as "marginalized" does not seem apt for a woman who owned and operated a rooming house and several restaurants, having purchased them with her own earnings, all while raising a young family. In fact, according to Weinfeld, immigrants who support themselves and obey the law should be considered successfully integrated,¹⁶⁰ a statement that casts further doubts on Jennie's marginalized status.

In addition to the problem of classification, the usual models of acculturation, which assume clear distinctions between immigrant and dominant groups, are confounded in Jennie's case: as a newcomer (in terms of her unfamiliarity with Canadian customs and languages) who had nevertheless been a Canadian citizen from birth, she was simultaneously a member of both groups. Here we must turn to multiple identity theory, which assumes neither impermeable boundaries between groups nor fixed classifications schemes, and which instead emphasizes individuals' own attitudes and ability to construct identity according to social context and a sense of continuity with previous experiences and values. Multiple identity theory, which,

as seen above, has been applied in various disciplines, including immigration studies, provides a framework that is flexible enough to help us understand Jennie's situation.

During a legal proceeding in 1970, the following exchange took place between Jennie and her lawyer:

Lawyer: "You are what nationality?"

Jennie: "Jewish."

Lawyer: "No, nationality?"

Jennie: "Canadian, of course."¹⁶¹

Perhaps we should not read too much into a single comment, but Jennie's response to her lawyer's question illustrates her self-concept as both Jewish and Canadian (possibly in that order). But unlike other survivors, Jennie's sense of herself as a Canadian encompassed her pre-war life. From childhood, Jennie knew that her father lived in Canada and that she herself had been born there. When she was six years old, her siblings returned to Canada, and when she was thirteen, she wrote at least one letter seeking financial support from her father in Montreal.¹⁶² She had a Canadian birth certificate, which was confiscated in the Kaiserwald camp,¹⁶³ and, during her recovery in Neustadt, she told various individuals she was Canadian, which eventually led to her repatriation. Her elder daughter, Paula, recalled, "She was proud of being Canadian...She liked being Canadian because after the war they brought her home... and also they gave her [compensation] money."¹⁶⁴

Likewise, Jennie was always intensely conscious of her Jewish identity, despite her lack of religious belief and her conflicted relationships with her family and the mainstream Jewish community. "She was proud of being Jewish...[Being] Jewish was more important [than being Canadian], though she wasn't a religious Jew. She always said, 'Culturally, I'm a Jew.'"¹⁶⁵ Jennie spoke Yiddish in the home, visited her daughter's elementary school to confront an "anti-Semitic" teacher (who turned out to be Jewish herself), sent her children to Peretz School for a secular Jewish education,¹⁶⁶ and raised them to be proud of their Jewishness.

Jennie's understanding of her ethnic identity was flexible, allowing for diverse conceptions of herself and various out-groups. At times, even Jewish individuals and organizations fell into the concept of "other." For example, at no time in her life in Canada was she known to seek social or spiritual support through a synagogue, nor did she encourage her children to do so. Her daughter Paula recalled, "I went to a synagogue once and she asked me why I went there."¹⁶⁷ Neither did Jennie feel comfortable associating with Vancouver's Jewish Community Centre: "They weren't her people. She actually said that: 'they're not our people.'"¹⁶⁸

Jennie's Jewish identity also encompassed her experiences as a survivor, but her expression of that facet of identity was largely unexpressed outside the context of home and family.¹⁶⁹ Even to family members she spoke little, and her recollections were dispassionate, never including descriptions of pain or fear. Her daughter Paula recalls, "It was more anecdotal, and she always put kind of a funny twist to it...She spoke objectively, little stories about situations: 'When I was really hungry, we went and pulled up turnips from the garden.'"¹⁷⁰ Jennie's account of her Holocaust experiences, written in Yiddish soon after her arrival in Montreal, comprises only a short list of dates, places, and names.¹⁷¹ Apart from her husband Sender, she had no particular friends or associates who were survivors, and aside from the yearly Holocaust memorial at the Peretz School, she generally kept her recollections and thoughts to herself. In this, she behaved like many other survivors in the immediate post-war years, who, as Bialystok, Tulchinsky, and others have described, tended to suppress their experiences for fear of rejection or disbelief by the established community.¹⁷² As late as 1970, when, during a legal proceeding on an unrelated matter, documents from the Canadian War Claims Commission were entered into evidence, Jennie's response to the offer of their return was "I don't want to see them again."¹⁷³

Continuity: European Life and Values

As we have seen, researchers from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, including Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Weinfeld, Giberovitch, and Kellerman, acknowledge that many immigrants retain valuable aspects of their cultural heritage. Many of Jennie's post-repatriation decisions seem motivated by memories and values acquired during her Latvian childhood. It is perhaps in this context that we can understand Jennie's decision, shortly after arriving in Vancouver, to buy a house in the West End, some distance from the city's Jewish neighbourhoods. Although both practicality and an element of wounded pride after her rejection by the Vancouver Jewish Community Centre probably played a part, another factor may have been the West End's similarity to Liepaja, her childhood home. Like Liepaja, the West End in the 1950s comprised about a square mile of wooden houses and walk-up apartment buildings. Both were peninsulas surrounded by fresh and salt water, both had busy working harbours and their related industries, and both contained expanses of parkland and beaches, which were popular tourist destinations. Jennie and Sender shopped on "Robsonstrasse," as Robson Street was known for its German shops and restaurants. To Jennie, even this would have recalled her youth, as German culture and language played an important role in the lives of Liepaja's Jews,¹⁷⁴ and many members of Jennie's family spoke German.¹⁷⁵ Though it is now impossible to establish whether the resemblance between her previous and her new home prompted Jennie to settle in the West End, it is tempting to believe that the physical and social similarities were important to her. As her daughter Paula explained after having visited Liepaja and noting the resemblance between the two places, "Mom felt comfortable in the West End, it felt familiar to her...it was a connection to the past."¹⁷⁶

A connection to Jennie's Latvian past may explain not only her choice of neighbourhood, but also her political orientation, since Liepaja was "a proletarian and a leftist town."¹⁷⁷ While not all Liepaja's Jews were drawn towards socialism, many were. Jennie recalled that a cousin of hers was hanged as

a communist in 1941,¹⁷⁸ and, according to the family, another cousin, Abraham Levin, survived the war in the Soviet Army. Jennie herself was a member of Hashomer Hatzair, a socialist youth group.

Jennie and Sender joined the Communist Party shortly after moving to Vancouver. Her daughter Paula recalled, “She was a Communist – very left wing... Mom and Dad used to go to Communist Party meetings. They were both card-carrying members.”¹⁷⁹ In fact, Jennie and Sender discovered the Peretz School through the Party, joining in 1964 because “the kids were getting older, and she wanted to give them a good left-wing upbringing... I think she liked the fact that it was Jewish, but [left-wing values] were more important to her.”¹⁸⁰ Jennie’s identification as a Communist and as a member of Peretz (which was not a Communist organization, but embraced members’ various political and religious backgrounds),¹⁸¹ while fulfilling social and other needs, distanced her not only from the dominant Canadian culture during the 1950s and 60s, but also from the Jewish mainstream: “If you went to Peretz School, you were sort of ostracized.”¹⁸²

Another link between Jennie’s European childhood and her Canadian life was work. Jennie recalled working at the age of nine to buy food. After the occupation of Liepaja, she worked for the Nazi invaders, and she endured slave labour in the camps. On returning to Canada, she resumed work as soon as possible, first in a bakery, then in her father’s restaurant, and then in her own two restaurants. After moving to Vancouver, Jennie operated her family home as a rooming house while working eighteen-hour days in her restaurant and raising three children. Her entrepreneurship and willingness to work long hours were astonishing, especially during those decades of stay-at-home motherhood, but perhaps not surprising in the context of her past experiences: “Men and women who had... escaped crematoria, remained alive in the midst of starvation or survived death squads and forced labour had little fear of starting a business.”¹⁸³ Work sustained Jennie throughout most

of her life. As her daughter Paula recalled, when asked about her mother's early social life in Canada, "I think basically she just worked."¹⁸⁴

Conclusion

Jennie's ability to draw on multiple identities, together with the values of hard work and independence acquired in Europe, allowed her a degree of success in Canadian life. As a Canadian, she was eligible for compensation under the War Claims Commission, a benefit not available to other survivors. The opportunity to apply for compensation was a mixed blessing, as Jennie disliked applying a monetary value to suffering and murder. As she stated in a letter to the Commission, "which ever amount I would [claim for] still wouldn't be enough for the suffering that I lived through."¹⁸⁵ Yet Jennie's pragmatism overruled her objections. Years later, her daughter Paula recalled, "She called it blood money, but she took it because her family needed a house to live. She swallowed her pride...and she put it all into the house."¹⁸⁶

On the other hand, Jennie's identification as a Jew and a socialist, together with her strong sense of independence, resulted in a degree of self-imposed isolation, with consequences for herself and her family. Her decision to live in Vancouver's West End meant that her children attended school there, often as the only Jewish students. Jennie transmitted her sense of ethnic pride to her children, but they sometimes felt isolated among their non-Jewish peers and bewildered when their parents encouraged them to make Jewish friends or refused permission to join neighbourhood youth groups, which met on church premises. After Jennie and her family joined the Peretz School in the mid 1960's, some of this social isolation was mitigated, but Peretz, being left wing and secular, was hardly mainstream, and was sometimes the target of misunderstandings and animosity from the larger Jewish community. Politically, Jennie and Sender kept their membership in the Communist Party secret (with good reason), telling their older daughter Paula only after she had grown up

and left home.¹⁸⁷ Jennie's dedication to hard work, while to her family's benefit, was another isolating factor, as her long hours in her restaurants meant she rarely socialized or spent time with her children. Even Jennie's purchase of her Vancouver home, while benefitting her family, was partly motivated by her own needs, as she revealed after suing Sender for ownership of the house in which he and the two younger children were then living: "I always had in mind if I buy something, in the end it is always mine, doesn't matter who lives in it in the meantime."¹⁸⁸

While Jennie's identity as a Canadian enabled her compensation by the War Claims Commission, her Canadian citizenship before and during the Holocaust worked against her when, in 2003, she applied for compensation under Article 2. She acquired an additional identity when the lawyer filing on her behalf established that she had been a Soviet citizen in 1940, and was therefore eligible for compensation under that program.¹⁸⁹ Ironically, Jennie's temporary Soviet citizenship had not helped her twenty years previously, when, living in the USSR, she had wished to visit her childhood city of Liepaja and was refused – as a Canadian foreigner.¹⁹⁰

As a Jewish woman born in Canada, raised in Latvia, and repatriated after the Holocaust, Jennie Lifschitz was a person with multiple identities, some of which she could – and did – consciously assume or discard when doing so suited her purpose. In positioning herself variously as Canadian, Jewish, and once, briefly, as a Soviet, and by carrying forward into her new life values acquired in her European past, she was able, despite some setbacks, to achieve various personal and professional goals, including independence, membership in the communities of her choice, and some measure of compensation for her suffering during the Holocaust.

Endnotes

¹ I am Jennie Lifschitz's daughter. Growing up, I was always aware that my mother's personal history as both a Montreal-born Canadian and a Holocaust survivor made her, and also our family, unique. Some of my earli-

est memories involve questions of identity: Where was my mother “really” from: Montreal or Latvia? Were we Canadian, Jewish, or both – and if both, which came first? What were our “real” names? (We all had a choice of several, each with alternative spellings and pronunciations.) This paper, and the process of research and travel that preceded it, is an attempt to answer such questions, and, more generally, to situate my mother’s life into the wider context of post-Holocaust Canadian history. I would like to thank Langara College, which provided funding for this paper, and those individuals who offered critiques, advice, and information.

² Immigration Identification Card, War Claims Branch, Claims Files, RG 117, vol. 507, file no. BDZ 2663, File “Lifschitz, Jennie (Miss),” Library and Archives Canada.

³ Irving Abella and Harold Troper, *None is Too Many: Canada and the Jews of Europe 1933-1948* (New York: Random House, 1982), 243-44.

⁴ Charles J. Lazarus, “Daughter Returns to Father Here After 20 Years and Nazi Terror,” *Montreal Gazette*, 4 March, 1946.

⁵ Morton Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else...But Different: The Paradoxical Success of Canadian Jews* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2001), 70.

⁶ John W. Berry, “A Psychology of Immigration,” *Journal of Social Issues* 57 (2001): 620.

⁷ Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada’s Jews: A People’s Journey* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 404-405; Franklin Bialystok, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* (Montreal: McGill-Queens UP, 2000), Chapters 2-3.

⁸ Irving Abella and Frank Bialystok, “Canada,” in *The World Reacts to the Holocaust*, ed. David S. Wyman (Baltimore and London, 1996), 768.

⁹ Jean Gerber, “Opening the Door: Immigration and Integration of Holocaust Survivors in Vancouver, 1947-1970,” *Canadian Jewish Studies* 4-5 (1996-7): 82.

¹⁰ Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway, “The Challenges of Multiple Identity” in *Navigating Multiple Identities*, ed. Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway (New York: Oxford UP, 2012), 3.

¹¹ Daniel Mendelsohn, *The Lost* (New York: Harper, 2007), 43.

¹² Gary S. Gregg, “Multiple Identities and Their Organization,”

in *Navigating Multiple Identities: Race, Gender, Culture, Nationality, and Roles*, eds. Ruthellen Josselson and Michele Harway (New York: Oxford University Press), 15-16.

¹³ Ibid., 16-17.

¹⁴ Henri Tajfel, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981): 255.

¹⁵ Craig Haney, Curtis Banks, and Philip Zimbardo, "A Study of Prisoners and Guards in a Simulated Prison," *Naval Research Reviews* (September 1973): 1-17, <http://www.zimbardo.com/downloads/1973%20A%20Study%20of%20Prisoners%20and%20Guards,%20Naval%20Research%20Reviews.pdf>.

¹⁶ Josselson and Harway, "The Challenges of Multiple Identity," 4.

¹⁷ Gregg, "Multiple Identities and Their Organization," 14.

¹⁸ Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, "The Folk Culture of Jewish Immigrant Communities," in *The Jews of North America*, ed. Moses Rischin (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1987), 87.

¹⁹ Ibid., 89.

²⁰ Morton Weinfeld, "The Integration of Jewish Immigrants in Montreal: Models and Dilemmas of Ethnic Match," in *Still Moving: Recent Jewish Migration in Comparative Perspective*, eds. Daniel Judah Elezar and Morton Weinfeld (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2000), 285.

²¹ Myra Giberovitch, "The Contributions of Holocaust Survivors to Montreal Jewish Communal Life," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 26 (1994): 74.

²² Natan P. F. Kellermann, "Diagnosis of Holocaust Survivors and their Children," *Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences* 36 (1999): 56.

²³ For more details on Jennie's life, please contact the author.

²⁴ Letter from Jennie Lifschitz to War Claims Commissioner, 25 May, 1953; Letter from P. Theriault to Mr. J. R. Collette, 29 May, 1953, Library and Archives Canada.

²⁵ Record for Paula Lifschitz, New York Passenger Lists 1820-1957, *Ancestry.com*. 2013.

²⁶ Letter (unsigned) from General Manager of JIAS Montreal to Mr. Simon Matussewitz, Manager JIAS, Libau, Latvia, 13 December, 1926, *JIAS-CA-Box 13, file 2986, Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives*, Montreal.

²⁷ Birth Certificate for Jennie Lifschitz, issued 23 Aug. 1979 [reproduction of original], Mines Collection, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

²⁸ Paula Lifschitz, Letter to Canadian Immigration Officer, Riga [Latvia], 15 December, 1925, JIAS-CA-Box 13 file 2986, Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives, Montreal.

²⁹ Record for Paula Lifshitz [sic], UK Incoming Passenger Lists, 1878-1960, *Ancestry.com*. 2013.

³⁰ Paula Lifschitz, Letter to Canadian Immigration Officer.

³¹ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview with Michael Mines, ca. 2002.

³² Dora Rosenberg (née Lifschitz), interview with Paula Reid, n.d.

³³ Record for Ruvins Lifshitz [sic], Immigration Records 1925-1935, Library and Archives Canada 2013.

³⁴ There is uncertainty as to whether or not Paula's second marriage was legal, as it is unclear whether she ever legally divorced Abraham.

³⁵ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

³⁶ Letters between HIAS Riga and JIAS Montreal, 1937-1939, JIAS-CA-Box 82, file 20922. Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives, Montreal. Jennie's letter is not in the file.

³⁷ Gal Beckerman, *When They Come For Us, We'll Be Gone: The Epic Struggle to Save Soviet Jewry* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2010), 18.

³⁸ Bella Bogdanova (née Blumberg), personal interview, July 2008.

³⁹ Andrew Ezergailis, "The Killings in the Cities: Liepaja," in *Jews in Liepaja, Latvia: A Memorial Book*, ed. Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis (Burlingame CA: Anders Press, 2001), 3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁴¹ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

⁴² Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, War Claims Branch, Claims Files, RG 117, vol. 507, file no. BDZ 2663, File "Lifschitz, Jennie (Miss)," Library and Archives Canada.

⁴³ Ezergailis, "The Killings in the Cities," 7.

⁴⁴ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview; Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis, eds, "7060 Liepaja Jews and Their Fate, 1941-1945" in *Jews in Liepaja, Latvia, 1941-45: A Memorial Book* (Anders Press: Burlingame, CA, 2001), 127.

⁴⁵ Rita Bogdanova, “Reminiscences of Liepaja,” *Shtetl Memories*, Latvia Special Interest Group, 2013.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ezergailis, “The Killings in the Cities,” 8.

⁴⁸ Rita Bogdanova, “Reminiscences.”

⁴⁹ Ibid. Jennie recalled and retold the same story.

⁵⁰ Ezergailis, “The Killings in the Cities,” 7.

⁵¹ Bella Bogdanova (née Blumberg), personal interview July 2007.

⁵² Ezergailis, “The Killings in the Cities,” 12.

⁵³ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁴ During her time in the ghetto, Jennie continued working at the Marine Nachrichten Mittelbetrieb.

⁵⁵ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁶ Ezergailis, “The Killings in the Cities,” 12.

⁵⁷ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁵⁸ “Libau – Liepaja,” in *Encyclopedia of Jewish Communities in Latvia and Estonia*, trans. Dov Levin. Translation of “Libau – Liepaja,” in *Pinkas Hakehillot Latvia v’Estonia* (Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 1988), 183-84, [Access date.] http://www.jewishgen.org/Yizkor/Pinkas_latvia/lat_00170.html.

⁵⁹ Solomon Feigerson, “The Tragic Fate of Liepaja Jews,” in *Jews in Liepaja, Latvia, 1941-45: A Memorial Book*, ed. Edward Anders and Juris Dubrovskis (Burlingame CA: Anders Press, 2001), 21.

⁶⁰ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶¹ Testimony of Ella Hirschorn, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶² Affidavit of Lea Markuse, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶³ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

⁶⁴ *Appeal Book: Court of Appeal, On Appeal from the Supreme Court of British Columbia, from the Judgment of the Honourable Mr. Justice Gould, Pronounced on the 2nd Day of October, A.D. 1970, and Entered on the 15th Day of October, A.D. 1970, Between Sender Mines, Appellant (Defendant) and Jennie Mines, Respondent (Plaintiff)* (Vancouver: Official Court Reporters, 1970), 28 and 50.

⁶⁵ Feigerson, “The Tragic Fate of Liepaja Jews,” 23; Max Kaufmann, “Part 3: The Kaiserwald Concentration Camp in Riga,” in *Churbn Lettland: The Destruction of the Jews of Latvia*. museumoffamilyhistory.com. 2013.

⁶⁶ Kaufmann, sec. XXII and sec. J, “Reich Railroad.”

⁶⁷ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁶⁸ Janina Grabowska-Chalka, *Stutthof Guide: Historical Information* (Gdansk-Sztutowo: Stutthof Museum, 2004), 50-51.

⁶⁹ Häftlings-Personal-Karte for Jennie Lifschitz, Aug 9, 1944, Stutthof Museum Archive; Identity Card/Ausweis No. 95, issued by Jewish Committee, Neustadt, 6 November, 1945, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁰ Danuta Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews in Stutthof Concentration Camp, 1939-1945* (Gdansk: Stutthof Museum in Sztutowo, 2004), 122-3.

⁷¹ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

⁷² Jennie Mines [née Lifschitz], "Statement by Jennie Mines whose Maiden Name was Jennie Lifschitz," Letter to Janina Grabowska, Museum Stutthof, 18 June 1985, Mines Collection, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

⁷³ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 222.

⁷⁴ Affidavit of Lea Markuse, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁵ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 129.

⁷⁶ Affidavit of Lea Markuse, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁷ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁷⁸ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 287. Jennie gives the date of evacuation as April 22 (Form F: Statement Concerning Claim for Maltreatment, re. Question 6, Library and Archives Canada). This discrepancy is not at all surprising in view of her illness, the absence of calendars, and the passage of time between the event and her writing of it. Generally speaking, her recollections of times, numbers, and events were astonishingly close to the findings of later researchers.

⁷⁹ The date is according to Grabowska-Chalka. According to Jennie, the date was either April 24 (Mines [née Lifschitz], "Statement.") or April 25 (Form F: Statement Concerning Claim for Maltreatment, re. Question 6, Library and Archives Canada).

⁸⁰ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 289.

⁸¹ For a detailed account of these events, see Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 288-89.

⁸² Grabowska-Chalka, *Stutthof Guide*, 123.

⁸³ Mines [née Lifschitz], "Statement."

⁸⁴ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 292.

⁸⁵ Affidavit of Lea Markuse, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸⁶ Letter from der Direktor des Landeskrankenhauses, Neustadt in Holstein, 6 November, 1954, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸⁷ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

⁸⁸ Drywa, *The Extermination of Jews*, 302. *Alijat Noar*, or *Youth Aliyah*, was an organization that rescued Jewish youth and arranged for their resettlement in Palestine.

⁸⁹ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

⁹⁰ Lazarus, "Daughter Returns," 20.

⁹¹ A. E. F. D .P., Registration Record for Jenny Lifschütz [sic], International Tracing Service (ITS) Collection, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

⁹² Certificate of Identity, No. 128, 5 February, 1946, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ National Registration Temporary Identity Card for Jennie Lifschitz, Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

⁹⁵ Immigration Identification Card for Miss J. Lifschitz, Library and Archives Canada.

⁹⁶ Letter from Jennie Lifschitz to War Claims Commissioner, Library and Archives Canada. Emphasis hers.

⁹⁷ Abella and Troper, *None is Too Many*, 243.

⁹⁸ Franklin Bialystok, *Delayed Impact: The Holocaust and the Canadian Jewish Community* (Montreal: McGill-Queens UP, 2000), 53.

⁹⁹ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰² *Appeal Book*, 27.

¹⁰³ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], personal interview.

¹⁰⁴ Paula Mines in discussion with the author, 3 March, 2013.

¹⁰⁵ Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 80-82.

¹⁰⁶ For example, Gerald Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008), 404-405; and Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, chapters 2 and 3.

¹⁰⁷ Paula Mines.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ *Appeal Book*, 86.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹¹¹ Babikier, Nochim, JIAS Montreal Client Card, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) Fonds No. 10037, Series R, File 2-1909, Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives, Montreal.

¹¹² *Appeal Book*, 29.

¹¹³ Canada, Parliament, Senate, *Journals of the Senate of Canada 97* (1952) (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1952).

¹¹⁴ *Appeal Book*, 117-19. The original document is in the Mines Collection, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre Archive. The amount was never paid.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 159.

¹¹⁶ Paula Mines.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁸ Misha Kraskyn, "In the Matter of a Marriage Between Sender Mines and Jennie Lifschitz," Toronto, 29 February, 1972. Mines family.

¹¹⁹ Judgment by Way of Decree Absolute, In the Supreme Court of British Columbia, between Jennie Mines, Petitioner, and Sender Mines, Respondent, 27 August, 1981. Mines family.

¹²⁰ *Appeal Book*, 32.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 64.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 64; Exhibit 6.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 55.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 92, 95.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹³⁰ Gerber, "Opening the Door," 82.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹³² *Appeal Book*, 64.

¹³³ Paula Mines.

¹³⁴ Faith Jones, "Between Suspicion and Censure: Attitudes Towards the Jewish Left in Postwar Vancouver," *Canadian Jewish Studies* 6 (1998): 1, 3.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 16.

¹³⁶ Barbara Shober, "Holocaust Commemoration in Vancouver, B.C., 1943-1975" (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 2001), 120.

¹³⁷ Gerber, "Opening the Door," 80.

¹³⁸ Jones, "Between Suspicion and Censure," 19.

¹³⁹ *Appeal Book*, 48.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 115.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴² Ibid., 159-63.

¹⁴³ Judgment by Way of Decree Absolute.

¹⁴⁴ Certificate of Marriage, Mines family.

¹⁴⁵ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], Letter, 10 November, 1982. Mines family.

¹⁴⁶ Statement of Claim, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁴⁷ International Claims series related to the War Claims Commission, the Foreign Claims Commissions and the Custodian of Foreign Property [textual record], Scope and content, Library and Archives Canada. 2013.

¹⁴⁸ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁴⁹ Letter from P. Theriault to Gordon Dowding, 12 October, 1954, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁵⁰ Case No. 2452, 4 March, 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁵¹ Letter from G. G. Beckett to Jennie Mines [née Lifschitz], 31 May 1955, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁵² *Appeal Book*, 41, 49.

¹⁵³ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], Statutory Declaration. The War Claim Commission's final report was published in 1970, and Jennie's claim merited inclusion in the volume. In 1972, an article in the *Vancouver Sun* also briefly described Jennie's case (Garry Fairbairn, "Tragedies of War Hidden in Report," *Vancouver Sun* 27 May, 1972), Mines Collection, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre Archive.

¹⁵⁴ Letter from Elaine Schnall, Program Director, Claims Conference, to Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], 26 June 2003; and Letter from Bettina Seifert, Program Director, Claims Conference, to Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], 6 May 2003. Mines family.

¹⁵⁵ Michael Mines (barrister and solicitor) in discussion with the author, November 2011.

¹⁵⁶ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], Statutory Declaration in the Matter of an Application for Benefits under the Claims Conference Article 2 Fund, 9 June, 2004. Mines family, Vancouver.

¹⁵⁷ Letter (unsigned) from Claims Conference to Jennie Phillips, October 2004. Mines family.

¹⁵⁸ Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else*, 319.

¹⁵⁹ Berry, "A Psychology of Immigration," 621.

¹⁶⁰ Weinfeld, *Like Everyone Else*, 70.

¹⁶¹ *Appeal Book*, 28.

¹⁶² Letters between HIAS Riga and JIAS Montreal.

¹⁶³ Testimony of Ella Hirschorn, Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁶⁴ Paula Mines.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Gallia Chud in discussion with the author, 7 November, 2011.

¹⁶⁷ Paula Mines.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ The silence of many survivors has been noted by scholars, especially after the 1979 publication of Helen Epstein's *Children of the Holocaust*.

¹⁷⁰ Paula Mines.

¹⁷¹ Memoir of Jennie Lifschitz ("Monarch" notebook), Mines Collection, Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre.

¹⁷² See Bialystok, *Delayed Impact*, 80-83, and Tulchinsky, *Canada's Jews*, 404-5.

¹⁷³ *Appeal Book*, 41.

¹⁷⁴ "Liepaja." *YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe* (YIVO, 2010). Prior to World War II, the city was generally known by its German name, Libau.

¹⁷⁵ A photograph of the tomb of Jennie's grandfather, Mosche Lifschitz, clearly shows a bilingual inscription in Hebrew and German. Mines family.

¹⁷⁶ Paula Mines.

¹⁷⁷ Ezergailis, "The Killings in the Cities," 1.

¹⁷⁸ Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], Personal interview.

¹⁷⁹ Paula Mines.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹Jones, "Between Suspicion and Censure," 16-17.

¹⁸²Paula Mines.

¹⁸³Gerber, "Opening the Door," 73.

¹⁸⁴Paula Mines.

¹⁸⁵Letter from Jennie Lifschitz to P. Theriault, 2 August, 1953,
Library and Archives Canada.

¹⁸⁶Paula Mines.

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸*Appeal Book*, 77.

¹⁸⁹Michael Mines.

¹⁹⁰Jennie Phillips [née Lifschitz], Letter, 10 November, 1982.

