

YIVO

INSTITUTE FOR JEWISH RESEARCH
יִדִישער וויסנשאַפֿטלעכער אינסטיטוט-יִוואַ

“Every person in every generation must regard themselves as having personally been freed from Egypt...”

Passover Haggadah

Dear Friend:

Peysekh 2004/5764

This year we celebrate 350 years of Jewish life in America – certainly a major milestone in our history as a people! And *Peysekh* is the perfect time to consider our 5764 years of Jewish history – the many countries where we have lived, the tyrants we have survived, and the unique contributions we have made to civilization worldwide.

“Remember when we were slaves in Egypt...” Each year we retell the story of our escape from slavery to freedom, and we are challenged to remember, to pass on our history – the stories of our lives and our communities – to the next generations. This is our solemn obligation.

As Jews around the globe break the *matzo*, explain the *Seder* tray, read the *haggadah*, sing, and eat together, mine is one of millions of households celebrating our survival.

YIVO is here to serve you and your children. Please join us – with your support we will be able to continue to ingather the artifacts and books of Jewish life, find new ways and programs to involve our Jewish youth, and tell our story in all its complexity, *me’dor le’dor*.

To give you a taste of the richness of the 1550 major collections at YIVO, I am enclosing “*From the Unique Collections of YIVO: The HIAS Migration Archive*,” which describes one of the world’s most comprehensive resources on the history of Jewish immigration: the heroic struggles, tribulations and successes of beginning Jewish life anew in “foreign lands.” This archive is not only a treasure trove of precious information about American Jewish immigrants, and many who went to Israel, but also about Jewish life in Eastern Europe. These stories are our stories.

“Every person in every generation must regard themselves as having personally been freed from Egypt...” With your help, YIVO will continue to chart a new path, reaching out to the young and binding them to our culture – preserving our past, and celebrating our history and survival as a Jewish community.

Good things continue to happen at YIVO! Each year 14 endowed research fellowships are awarded to new and emerging scholars; the YIVO Library and Archives serve the public daily, fielding thousands of questions by telephone, letter and email on the widest range of topics; the Public Programs and Distinguished Lecture Series offer films, lecturers, colloquia, and exhibitions.

(over please)



Passover Haggadah, New York (ca. 1944).



*Bessie Baumfeld Thomasbefsky,
Yiddish/English actress and contralto
(ca. 1930).*



*Jewish orphans prepare for their
journey to Palestine,
Nachod, Czechoslovakia (1946).*



Yiddish/English playwrights Rose Sbomer Bachelis and Abram Sbomer (her brother) visit Coney Island with friends (July 1911).



Passover Seder with parents and family of Alic Carrick, New York (late 1920s).



First Passover in America, New York (March 28, 1953).



Jewish children leaving for Palestine, Toulouse (June, 1945).

YIVO also sponsors innovative projects like the *Educational Program on Yiddish Culture (EPYC)* curriculum for high schools, and *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. We need friends like you to support our painstaking work, helping us to ensure that the Migration Archive and other unique collections are safe here and easily accessible.

YIVO is a place to honor and remember both the good times and the terrible times. YIVO is also the place to create new avenues of Jewish study and research.

We trace our past through memories of places, persons, and events. As the last Jewish generations to grow up in Eastern Europe are aging – especially those who survived the ravages of the Holocaust – we need to honor their experiences, their losses, their successes and the communities they built. They survived a modern Pharaoh, and experienced the wonder of going from slavery to freedom.

I would be proud to have you as a new partner in our work. Please join us and become part of this vibrant organization. Take time now to make your most generous gift to YIVO – whether \$500, \$360, \$180, \$54 or another amount. Every contribution is very much appreciated and needed!

Together we can accomplish miracles. We need your help now. Together we ensure that our children and grandchildren do not forget that our people were here, and are here, and that we matter. Your support is crucial!

I hope you will join the YIVO family this *Peysekh*. From all of us at YIVO, I wish you a *kosbern un freylekhn Peysekh!*

Sincerely,

Bruce Slovin
Chair
YIVO Board of Directors

PS: Please consider honoring a loved one through a fellowship or endowment at YIVO. Call us at 212-294-8293 to discuss these and other naming opportunities.

PPS: A matching gift from your company can double or triple your contribution – please call if you have any questions about how this can be done.

Please remember YIVO in your will.