

# וועגן קולטור-קיום

on cultural survival

אלן אַקערסאָן?

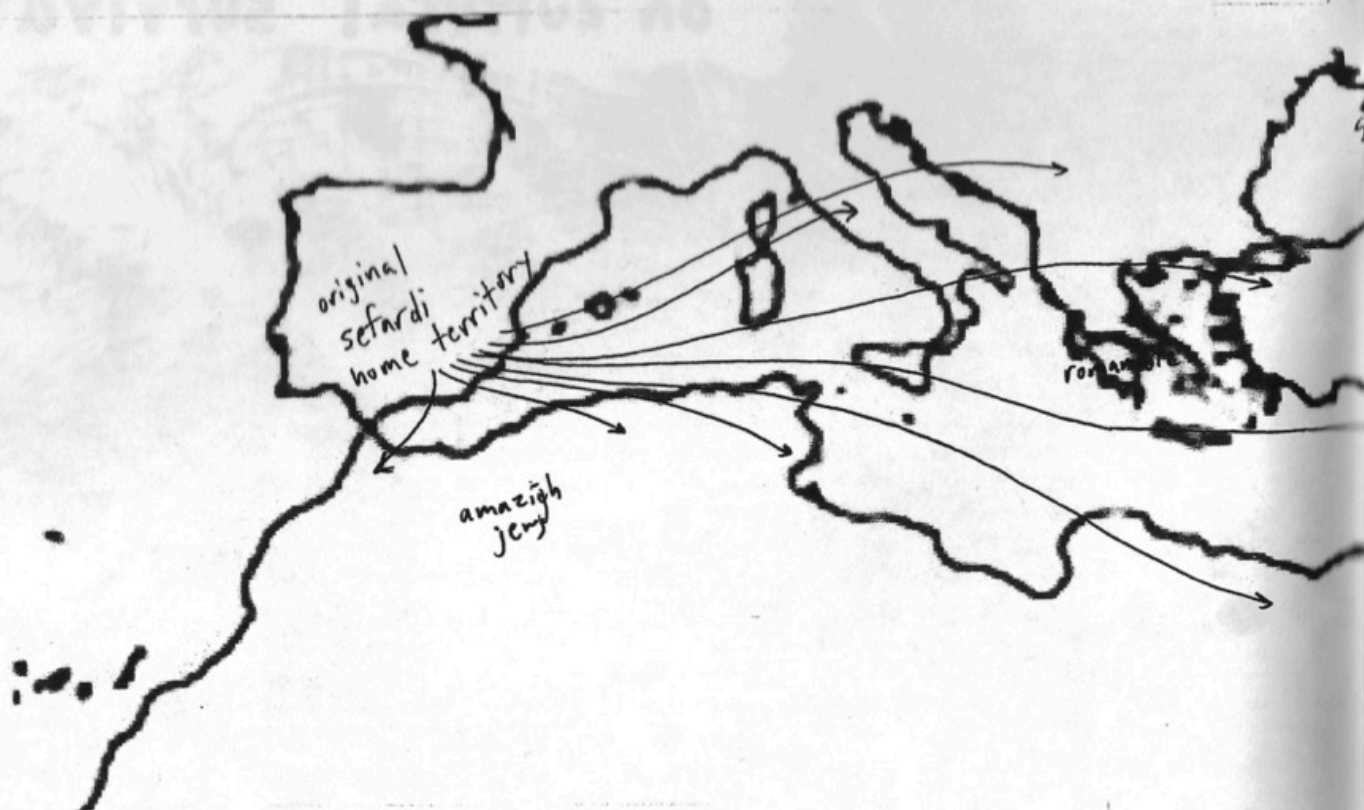
אלן פֿייסאָן?

אלן שטאַנצאָן אױף קױלן

אַק גײט זאָנאַק גלײַ?

this zine uses examples from my own yiddish culture  
created by jewish communities in eastern europe

examples could come from any other jewish culture  
some are marked on this map; many others are not

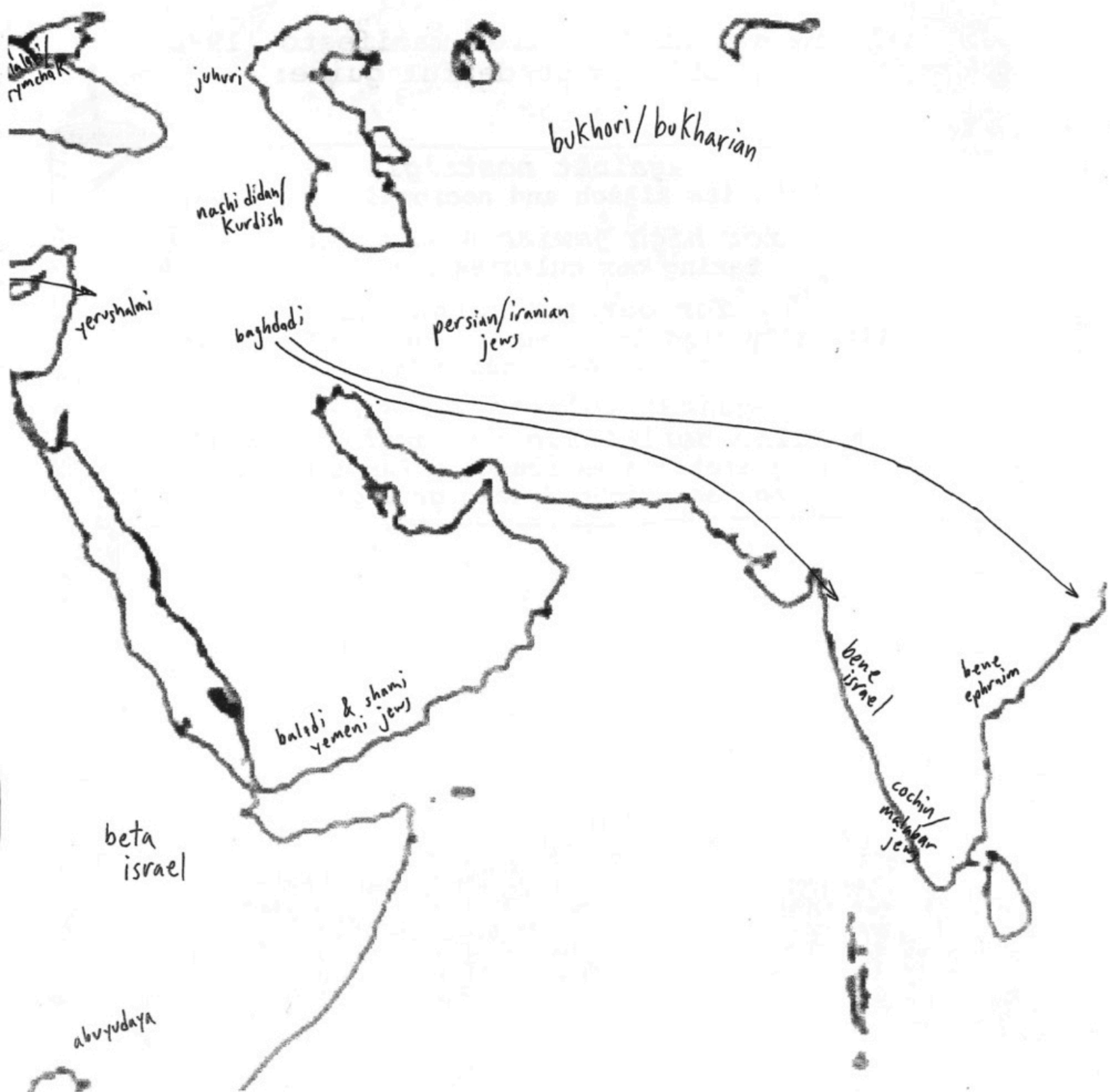


if we care about jewish cultures  
in all their vibrantly varied  
diversely diasporic forms

we need to cultivate them  
in all their living specificities

and defend them against those  
who would prefer that they disappear

i use yiddishland as my reference point  
because it is where my own roots rest  
and where i ground my own cultural work



cultivating our cultures means

alicia svigals' klezmer manifesto (1998)  
is still a wonderful guide:

against nostalgia  
in both its kitsch and necrophile versions  
for high jewish self-esteem  
taking our cultures seriously  
for our own languages  
literally (yiddish, ladino, judeo-arabic...)  
as well as metaphorically  
against folk-fetishism and  
a false definition of 'authenticity'  
using archives as source & inspiration,  
not as a deep-freeze or a prison

KlezKanada welcomes in shabes



with a backwards procession  
singing & playing a nign from stanigesti  
that jenny romaine began teaching in 2001  
after she learned it from itzik gotterman  
who learned it from arye-leibush laish.

# learning them & making them new

jewlia eisenberg's "the ginzburg geography"  
traces the worlds of natalia & leone ginzburg  
through their writings, italian partisan songs,  
and italian jewish nuskh.



celia dropkin's modernist poetry  
can be heard in benjy fox-rosen's new musical settings  
read in new translations by faith jones, jennifer kromet, & samuel solomon  
and downloaded from the yiddish book center for free.

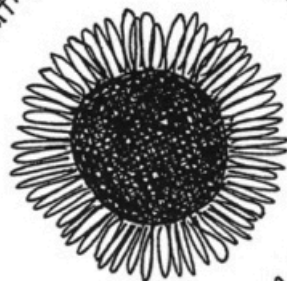


aurora levin morales' textile diptych rhymes  
of her syrian/palestinian jewish family.

and at  
anti-fascist  
demonstrations in  
new york city, young  
jews sing against state  
violence with words they  
learned from the Aftselakhis  
Spectacle Committee and Jews For  
Racial & Economic Justice:

וואס איז די געזונט  
פאר די פאליס, 1905-סטיל  
און  
אין די און  
לובלין'ס און-נאזי און-תהם.

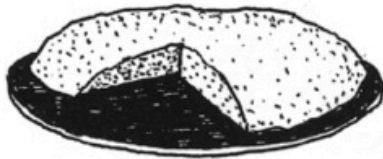
pomegranates with sunflowers and her family's  
crashed shettl of israelovka with the crashed palestinian town of  
samuy ych dipt



defending our cultures means  
knowing who wants them gone

knowing who wants to reduce

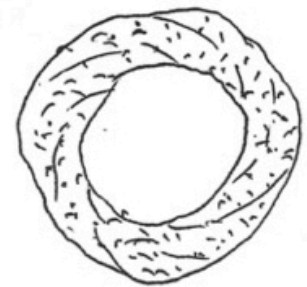
mamaliga



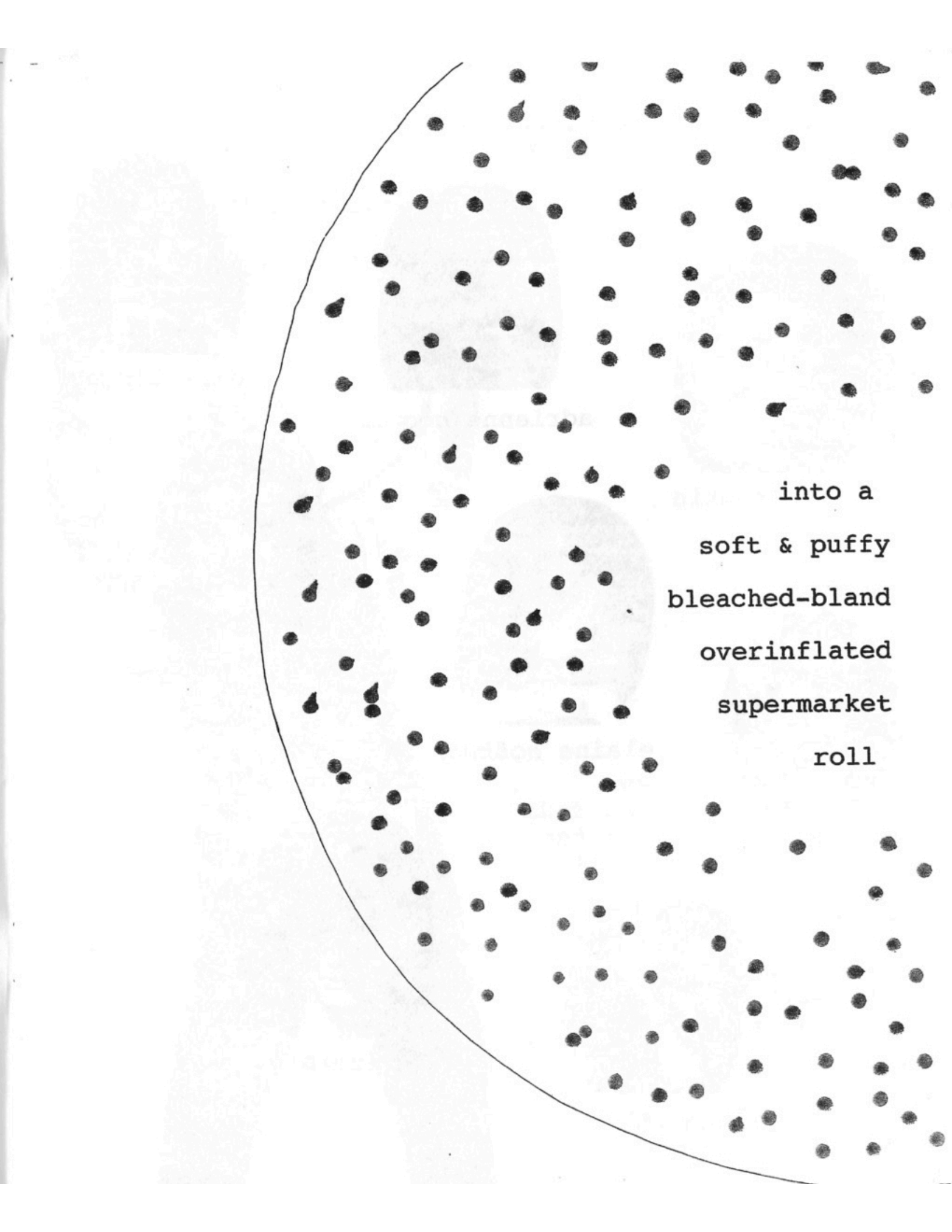
shchav



new york bagels



montréal bagels



into a  
soft & puffy  
bleached-bland  
overinflated  
supermarket  
roll

knowing who wants to drown out



celia dropkin



adrienne cooper



dine libkes



elaine hoffman watts



muriel rukeyser



naftule brandwein



kip hanrahan



invincible

with one  
novelty number  
featuring the famous  
uncle tevye



knowing who  
wants to tell us  
that these caricatures  
and tokenizations are  
all that's left alive  
after 1,000 years  
of our history

and everything else  
is only worth keeping  
freezedried in a museum

if at all

knowing who describes our culture like this:



"long since dead... in a state of decay"

leo pinkser, 1882



"degenerated in intellectual  
and physical misery"

max nordau, 1897



"jewish original creativity, whether  
in the realm of ideas or... daily life  
and action is impossible... even reason  
cannot shine... outside the holy land"

abraham kook, 1910-30



"neither normal nor healthy"  
"ugly objectively, ugly in the  
scientific sense... ugly as all  
superfluous or exaggerated efforts"

ze'ev jabotinsky (1930s)



"spiritual, cultural and intellectual  
dependence... affects every limb  
and nerve of the body"

david ben gurion, 1944

ה'תרצ"ז  
"a life [unable to] develop in a natural way, to bring its powers to play in every department of human culture"

אהד הא-אם, 1897

ה'תרצ"ח  
"without a living culture... unnatural, defective, splintered... an inanimate existence... having no living source of spontaneous vitality"

אהרן דאָויד גורדון, 1920

ה'תש"ב  
"our character is distorted in many ways, that we are out of joint"

מרטין בובער, 1942

ה'תש"ח  
a life unable to be "lived out fully as a complete civilization"

מורדכי קאפלאן, 1948

ה'תשס"ג  
"the Jewish fundamentalism of the Diaspora hijacked [zionism's] principles and substituted a fanatical claim to the land rooted in a profound racism"

סוזאנא העשל, 2003

mainline

labor

progressive

religious

reconstructionist

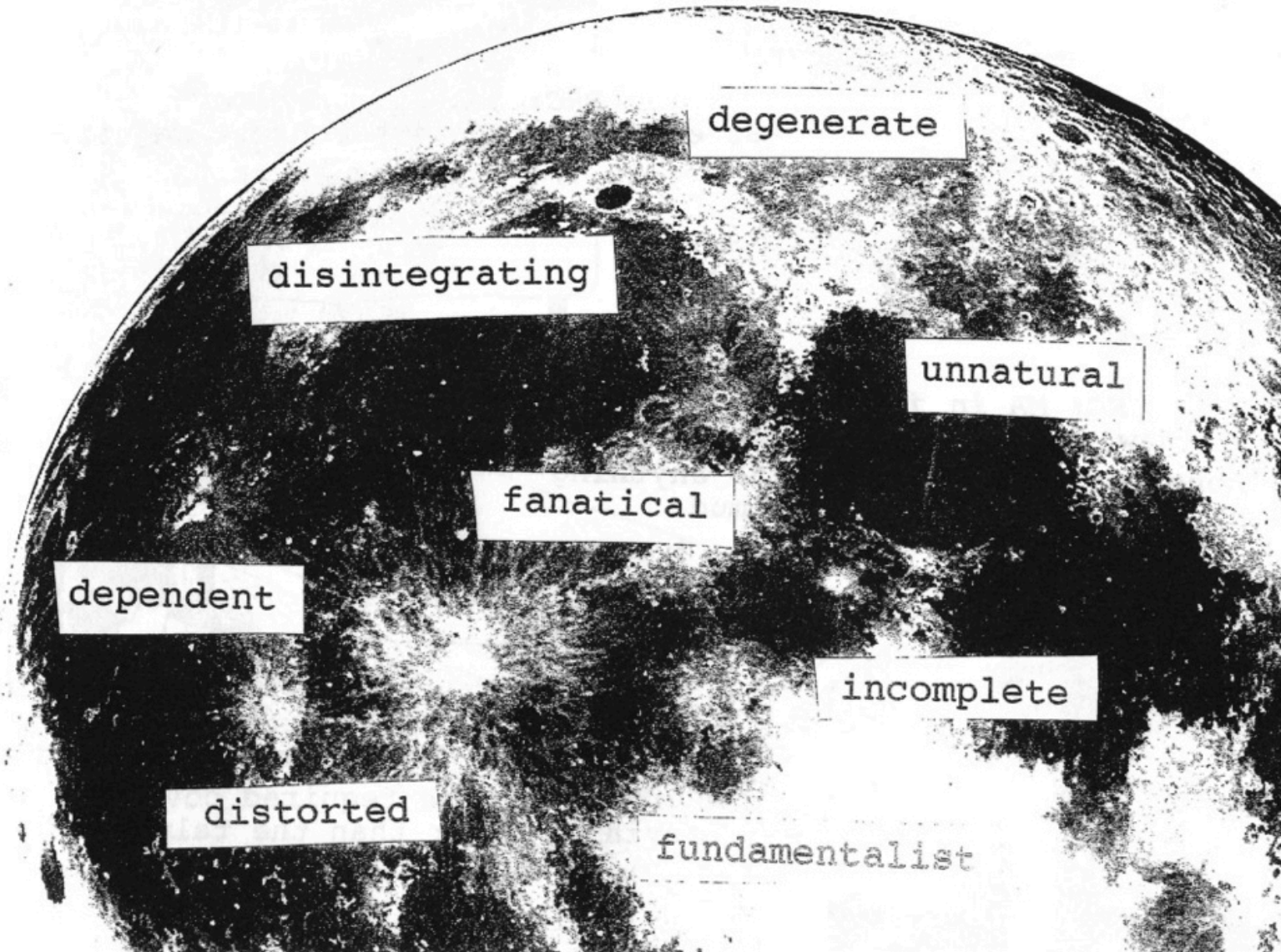
revisionist

feminist

post-

every branch of the zionist movement agrees

our  
jewish  
cultures  
are



degenerate

disintegrating

unnatural

fanatical

dependent

incomplete

distorted

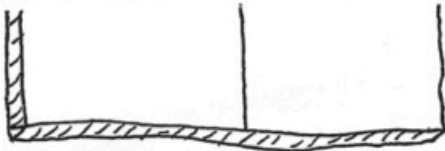
fundamentalist

and their institutions pursue  
the liquidation of the diaspora  
- *shlilat hagalut* -

by erasing our histories from their curricula



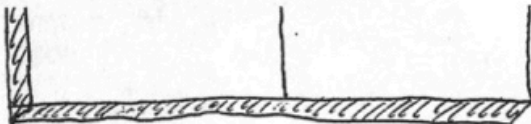
HUC: MA in jewish education  
19 jewish content courses required  
5 covering anything  
later than the talmud



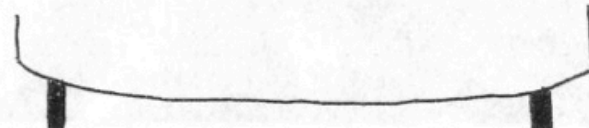
RRC: rabbinic program  
80 credits of jewish content required  
20 1/4 covering anything  
later than the talmud



RRC: MA in jewish studies  
12 jewish content courses required  
none required to deal with anything  
later than the talmud



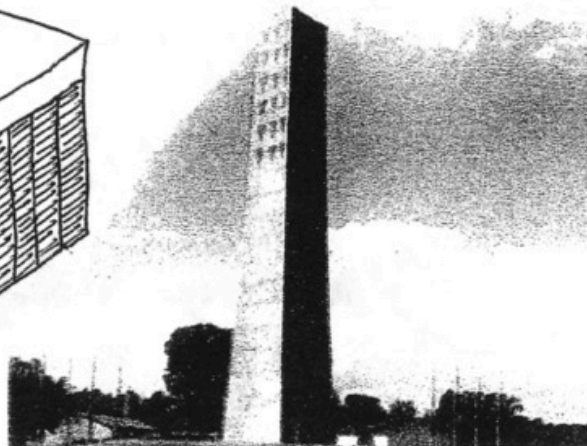
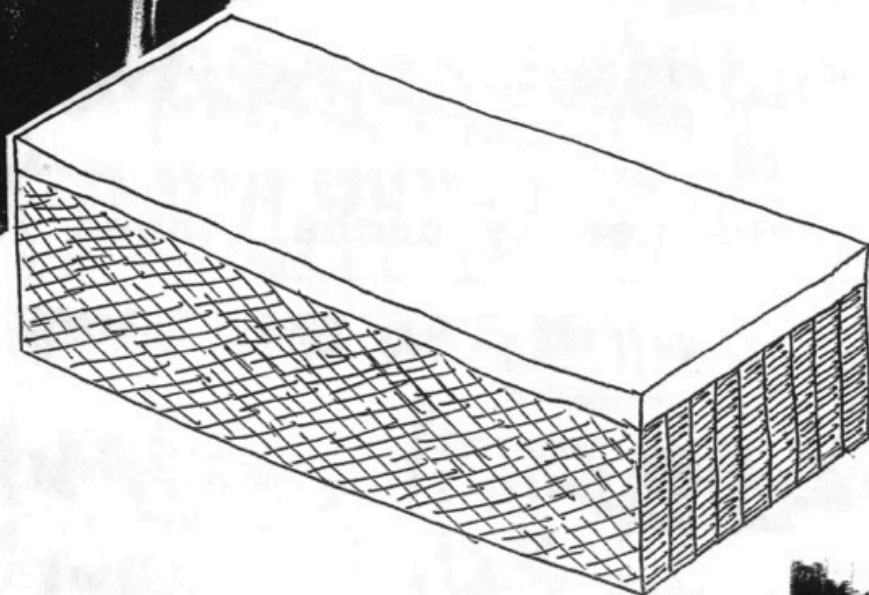
YU: MA in jewish studies  
180 credits of jewish content offered  
66 offered; none required covering  
anything later than the talmud



they teach that  
nothing much happened  
between the talmud and today

except herzl and hitler

and even there they replace  
histories of resistance  
with lies about  
"sheep to the slaughter"



the difference between  
a sterilization program  
and an extermination  
is about 80 years

zionism has been nearly unchallenged for 70

keep jewish cultures alive.

**cultivate them. defend them.**

**end zionism.**

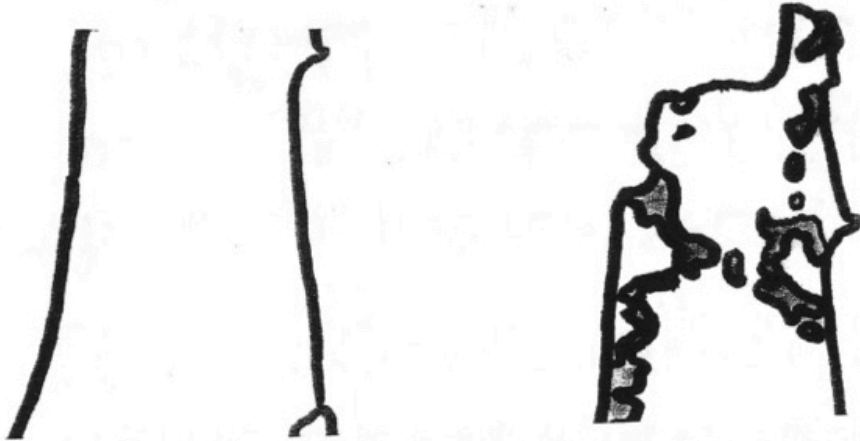
# אויב מיר ווילן, סײַז נישט קיין חלום

if we will it, it is no dream

p.s.

but what about israel?  
i hear you cry.

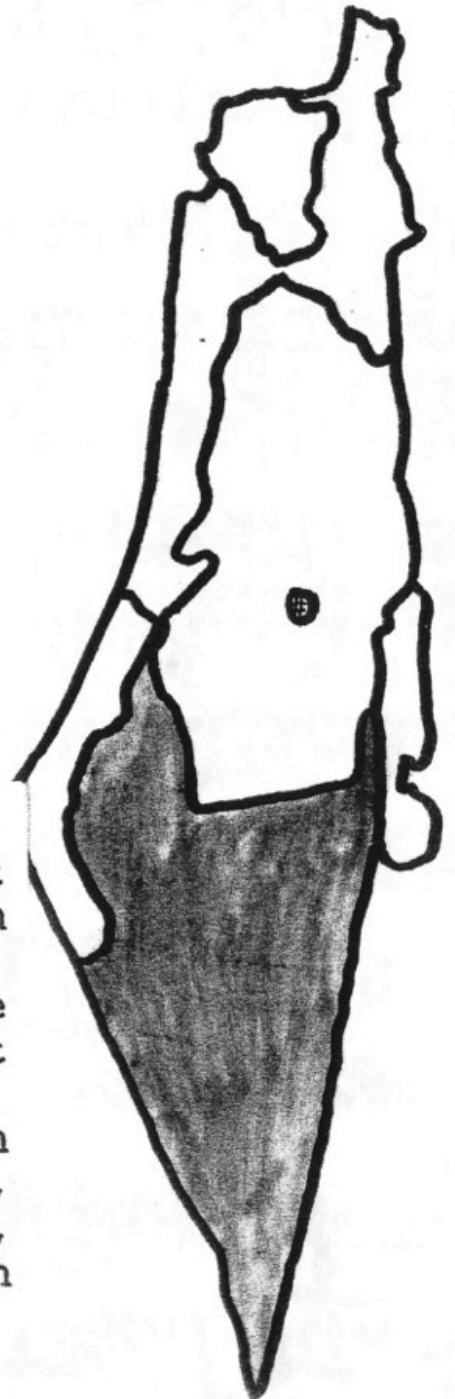
what about it?



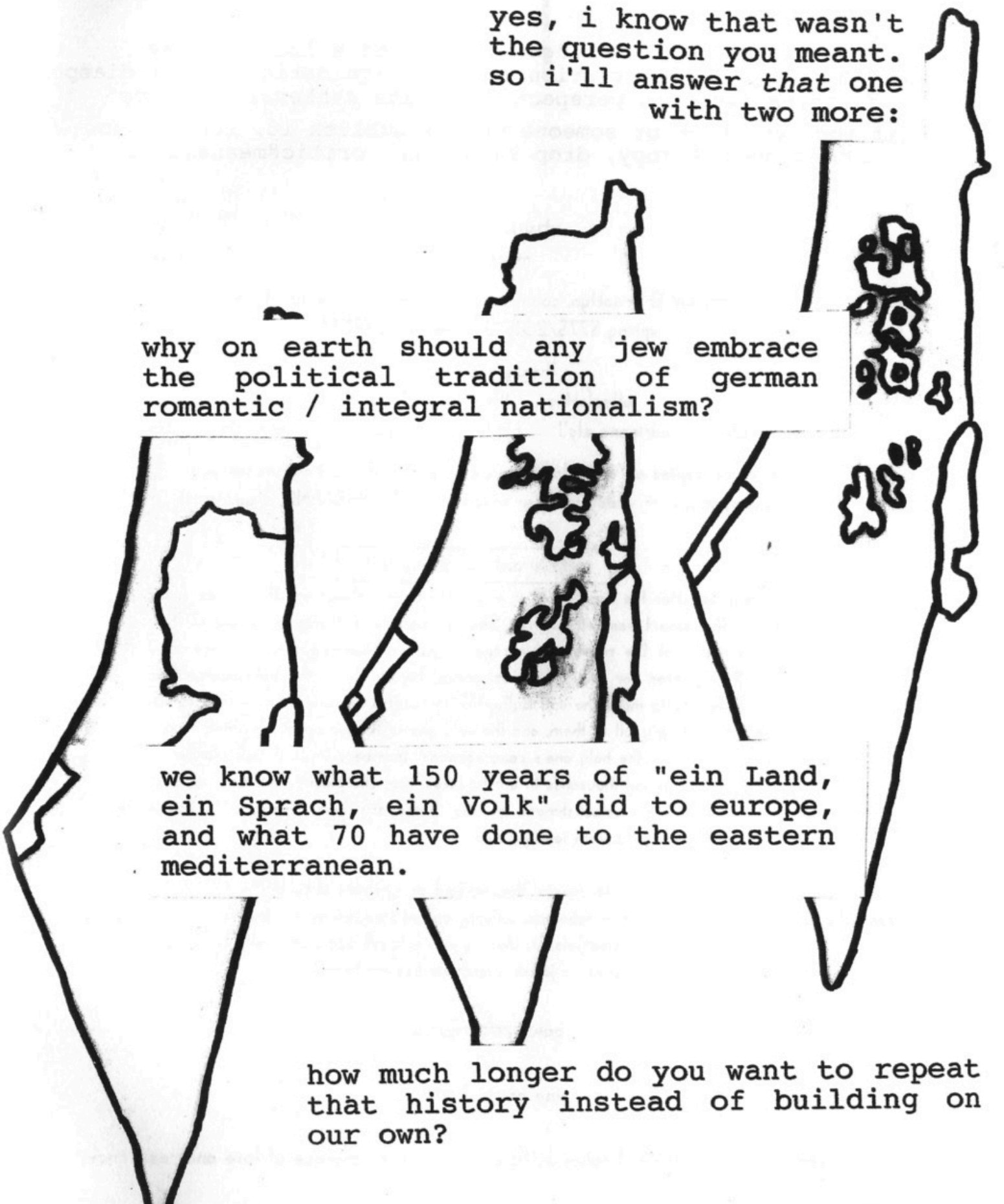
many diasporic jewish cultures  
are alive and well there -  
especially those of the sefardi,  
maghrebi, mashreqi, yemeni, and  
other asian & african communities  
that make up the majority of the  
israeli jewish population.

and the parts of "mainstream"  
israeli jewish culture that  
aren't simply lifted from  
palestinian, syrian, lebanese,  
or balkan traditions can now be  
their own addition to the list  
of jewish diasporic cultures.

a new palestinian jewish  
culture to join the yerushalmi,  
safed sefardi, safed mustarabi,  
and other long-standing jewish  
cultures of palestine.



yes, i know that wasn't  
the question you meant.  
so i'll answer *that* one  
with two more:



why on earth should any jew embrace  
the political tradition of german  
romantic / integral nationalism?

we know what 150 years of "ein Land,  
ein Sprach, ein Volk" did to europe,  
and what 70 have done to the eastern  
mediterranean.

how much longer do you want to repeat  
that history instead of building on  
our own?

this zine is an abridged version of a longer essay  
on jewish cultural preservation and the liquidation of the diaspora  
"zionism from the perspective of its ashkenazi victims"  
if you can think of someone who'll publish it, let me know  
if you want a copy, drop me a line: critic@meansof.org

ראזעלע rozele  
made this

montreal & brooklyn, colonized kanien'keha:ka & lenape land  
spring 5775/2015 & winter 5778/2017

thanks and love:

aftselakhis the council קוויט  
jenny killer adrienne zts"l beyle zts"l גינח זטס"ל גינח זטס"ל &c

for more copies or/and information, contact rozele: critic@meansof.org  
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שארית קרח shearith korakh

tradition tells us: after the slave revolt in egypt, the former slaves and their allies wound up adrift in the desert east of the Red Sea. as moyshe and aron consolidated their power as 'leaders' of the revolt and escape, a group challenged their self-appointed rulership. the speaker for the rebellious group, korakh, used the religious/political language of the day to make the anti-authoritarian case: "you have gone too far! for all the community are holy, all of them, and the holy one is in their midst. why then do you raise yourselves above the holy one's congregation?" [numbers 16:3]. it took murderous divine interventions, killing thousands in earthquakes, fire, and plague, to crush the anti-hierarchical revolt. the establishment of the hereditary high priesthood followed, institutionalizing the b'nei amram family's rule.

'shearith korakh' means 'the remnant or survivors of korakh'  
those who follow in the tradition of that rebellion, insisting on full freedom as we struggle, revolt, and escape  
this series prints zines, pamphlets, &c dealing with political, social and cultural topics  
of interest to jewish anarchists and our friends

galut גלות golus  
exile

zine project ת#five

for a vibrant jewish anarchist rebel culture & the embrace of love and resistance