

Biography of Frume Halpern from *Arguing with the Storm: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*, edited by Rhea Tregobov. Toronto: Sumach Press, 2007. P. 99

Frume Halpern was born in 1888 and immigrated to the United States in 1905. She was known as a proletarian writer, because, like the protagonist in *Blessed Hands*, she worked as a masseuse, but also because her writing is informed by her commitment to left-wing political causes. The stories are also infused with a profound and nuanced psychological insight into the moral and ethical dilemmas her working-class protagonists experience. Although Halpern's stories were published for over forty years in the left-wing daily newspaper *Morgn frayhehy* [Morning Freedom] and, in later years, in the literary quarterly *Zamlungen* [Collections], as well as in numerous anthologies, her first collection of short stories, *Gebentshte hent* [Blessed Hands], did not appear until 1963. Halpern was by then in her mid-seventies *Gebentshte hent* was published by a committee of prominent writers determined that Halpern's work not "languish in newspapers," as they noted in the preface to the book. Halpern died in New York in 1996 at the age of seventy-eight.