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## *The Book of Klezmer*

In his book Yale Strom refers to it as *The History of Klezmer*, *The Music of Klezmer* and *The Folklore of Klezmer*. Any one of the three could be a treatise in its own right. In a remarkable way these are intertwined so that klezmer music is set in the backdrop of the times, people and the major events. This is not an easy task—especially when it is done so well.

Time is broken down into four periods:

- Fun David Ha-Melekh biz Duvid der Klezmer,
- Fun der Haskole biz Dem Khurbn,
- Klezmer in der Naye Velt: 1880-1960
- Fun Zev biz Zorn: Di Bale-Kulturiks

Forty-four historical photographs are included. These old photos are gems in themselves. They include a kapelye (band) klezmerim (musicians) and Roms (Gypsies). Gypsy (Rom) music and klezmer music are intertwined.

There are three appendices:

- Klezmer Zikhroynes—in di Yizker Bikher—Klezmer Memories in the Memorial Books—Strom notes that there were 600 published when actually it is closer to 1,000.
- Klezmer Loshn—Klezmer slang—There are 477 words that Strom defines. These were used among the klezmerim when they did not want others to know what was being said. For example, a *pintatshke* was a rich woman, *lazhe* meant ugly and a *strakhan* was a soldier.
- Klezmer Nigunim—Klezmer Tunes—Strom includes eleven melodies that he collected in his field research in Central and Eastern Europe.

Finally, there is an excellent glossary, an extensive bibliography, a discography (a list of musical recordings) and the index.

Strom, Yale, *The Book of Klezmer*, A Cappella Books, Chicago, Illinois, 2002, 381 pages, ISBN1-55652-445-5

Yale has produced 8 Klezmer CDs, published 6 photo-documentary books and made 3 documentary films. He is very active on the lecture circuit, and can be reached at: Yitztyco@aol.com

## Searching for Yiddish on the Internet

Half of our readers do not have e-mail or are able to delve into the rich resources via the Internet. If you have searched for **Yiddish Newsletter** on the major search engines, you found that *Der Bay* came up #1 on most of them. If you have seen the web site, you will understand why it has this rating. In previous articles note was made of the 21 major sections and hundreds of links, but it is the long list of other great sites you are missing if you do not have access to the Information Highway. It is impossible to discuss all listed sites. Here are a few you must visit.

On the Yiddish Links page of *Der Bay's* web site all of the wonderful Yiddish sites are only a click away.

- Ari Davidow and his Klezmer Shack
- Der Bavebter Yid by Rafoyel Finkel
- Der Yidisher Tam Tam from Paris is superb
- Di Velt fun Yidish by Leonard Prager from Israel
- Kadimah is Australia's major site
- The League for Yiddish publishes Afn Shvel
- Mendele is the premiere international Yiddish forum
- Mark David's Understnding Yiddish Info. Processing
- Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture
- National Center for Jewish Film at Brandeis
- Onkelos Yiddish translated works
- Yiddish Voice Radio is definitely worth visiting
- Arele from Mexico is the site of Frida de Cielak
- Avivele Yiddish Page is another excellent site for links
- Der LufTeater is a Multilanguage site
- Boulder Yiddish Vinkl has an excellent site & newsletter
- The Freedman's Yiddish Song Archives/Database

The major Yiddish institutions and publications have websites linked at *Der Bay's* Yiddish Links. They are so obvious that it wasn't necessary to list them above. A partial list is: YIVO, NYBC, Forward, & Yiddishkayt LA.

*Tsum Punkt*, the excellent newsletter of Yiddish of Greater Washington and *Dos Bletl* of the Toronto FOY are the 2 top club newsletters. Other sources are also available. They are listed on *Der Bay's* site, and are easy to spot, for the URL (Uniform Resource Locator) address starts with www (World Wide Web).

One online activity is the briv-fraynd unit of *Der Bay*. This is like a virtual shtetl, for you can have instant contact all over the world. Applicants are sent a *reshime* (list) of 10 or more names of people with whom to write. A few wish to write in hardcopy, but the majority like the advantage of the quick turn-around time of e-mail.

## Yiddish Teachers List Online

by Lori Cahan-Simon <l\_cahan@staff.chuh.org>

I want to let the *Der Bay* readers know about a great resource for all Yiddish teachers. We have a community at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/yiddishteachers> which consists of lerers un lererins from around the world, including the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Europe and Australia.

This is a place for Yiddish teachers of all levels to share resources and support each other: materials, ideas, songs, questions and answers. We have the ability to create a repository of lesson plans to share, photos, databases and much more. Already we have a few plays by Sylvia Schildt, based on the Khelm Khakhomim, a database of children's songs as featured in the Shifre Shtern-Krishtalka curriculum, and a few other goodies.

Our community is so scattered that we needed a forum to be able to communicate with one another. If you are a Yiddish teacher and wish to join us, or if you know someone that you could make aware of this opportunity, please contact me either at: L\_Cahan@staff.chuh.org or you can directly subscribe at:

[yiddishteachers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:yiddishteachers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

## Waikato Jewish Studies Seminar

by Dr Norman Simms, nsimms@waikato.ac.nz

This is a preliminary notice of the 11th biennial Waikato Jewish Studies Seminar in Hamilton, New Zealand for 21-24 August 2003. We want to alert overseas scholars and artists, so that they can plan for the Seminar.

People in Europe, North and South America, Israel and Australia need a longer time to arrange for a trip to New Zealand, and possibly, to link it to a tour of New Zealand and other parts of the South Pacific. We are able to help with some hospitality available from members of the Waikato Jewish Association, and pointers towards planning longer stays.

The WJSS will fall into three main areas, and you are invited to indicate which you are most interested in—and you can decide on more than one, of course.

1. Academic and Scholarly Papers. We would like to see more emphasis on Sephardic and Oriental culture, and papers that deal with Jews outside the English-speaking world, especially Latin America.
2. Artistic and Cultural Performances. We hope there will be concerts, exhibits, readings, performances, workshops and other aspects of Jewish creativity.
3. Local Topics and Discussions. We must deal with Holocaust Denial, anti-Israeli propaganda in the media, and closure of the Israeli Embassy in Wellington. We seek advice on having a Jewish atmosphere and education in a community that is very small and isolated.

Please contact us as soon as possible. The registration fee will be \$100 per person for the full Seminar. Dates and details are subject to negotiation and change.

Dr Norman Simms, Post Office Box 1198 Hamilton New Zealand, Post Office Box 1198 Hamilton New Zealand Seminar Co-Ordinator

## Oysbesserungen (Corrections)

by Dovid Kunigis" <dovid@gctech.net>

Vi a gevezener Yiddish lehrer, ken ikh nit durkhlozn di gelegnhayt tsum farrikhtn oder korigirn a toes oder a shlekhte iberzetsung.

Es handlt zikh vegn dem kolumn:

*Yiddish in the Automobile Showroom*

I hope Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe, will forgive me.

- 3rd line—I dislike the bargaining process, should be: *Ikh hob faynt zikh tsum dingen* (handlen, means to trade)
- 6th line—Can I get a printout of the sticker price? darf zayn—"Ken ikh bakumen a kopie fun dem prayz tsetl?"
- 16th line—I want to see the manager. (besser iz) — "Ikh vil zen dem farvalter oder, dem balehbos. "

*Der Bay*, serves as a learning tool. It's necessary that the proper Yiddish is used, whenever we teach or impart information. Mit derekh erez, Dovid Kunigis.

## The Civilizing of Bobkes

What does *bobkes* mean? Did you say *beans* or *nothing*? When a disagreement arose, your editor went to the dictionaries. Weinreich surprisingly omitted it. Galvin & Tamarkin defines it as a *meaningless amount, a trifle*.. Coldoff defines it as *beans, nothing or (nuts!)*.

This created a dilemma for your editor, for he remembers that as a boy on the farm it referred to animal fecal matter in the form of spheres, as that of a goat that produces small pellets.

This needed further research. Harkavy's Complete Dictionary, Yid-Eng, Eng-Yid says *stercus, sheep's dung*. Even as a farm boy I had never heard of *stercus* so the unabridged dictionary was checked, but it was not there. This made the mystery even deeper.

The next step was to go to the OED (Oxford English Dictionary). There it was. It is Latin for dung and further gave the word *stercory* meaning *excrement or filth*.

Further research brought up the term *buffalo chips*. These are the solid waste matter of the American Bison. The Plains Indians collected the dried chips and burned them for heat. It is said that they were very smoky, but the Plains Indians had no trees to burn.

Yes, the common meaning today means a little nothing—*bobkes*, you have come a long way.

## A Wonderful Reader

From Manya Bertram

Like so many other of your readers and ardent fans, although we have never met, I feel that you are almost one of the family. You do come into our home with every issue of *Der Bay*! I wish you and your family a Gut Yontif and a gliklekh New Year.

Today I saw Yiddish World Remembrances on our Educational TV station and although it featured Poland, Lithuania and some Hungary, it nevertheless made me feel that I also was looking at Kishinev, the shtetl, of my mother and her family. For some strange reason I said aloud, "Fishl would love this" as if we had discussed the old Country on some occasion, when, in fact, I do not even know from whence your forebears came!

Thank s over and over again for the pleasure, the information and the knowledge your publication brings.

## Food for the Soul: Celebration of Yiddishkayt in Los Angeles

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6<sup>th</sup> **Family Festival** – klezmer music, storytelling, Yiddish lessons– Skirball Cultural Ctr, 11 am-4:30 pm.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8<sup>th</sup> **Jonathan Gold**, critic— about **Jewish Delis in LA** with a panel of LA deli owners. Univ of Judaism, 2 pm—Yiddish songwriter **Josh Waletzky, Jeff Warschauer, Deborah Strauss, New Yiddish Songs**. Skirball, 8 pm.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9<sup>th</sup> **Josh Waletzky** lecture **Laughter in Yiddish Songs**. Skirball, 2 pm—Esn! **Songs From The Kitchen, Adrienne Cooper, Lorin Sklamberg, & Frank London**. Univ. of Judaism, 8 pm.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup> **Yale Strom**, award-winning director of **L'Chayim, Comrade Stalin**, panel. Univ. of Judaism, 2:00 pm. **L'Chayim, Comrade Stalin**, film, Birobidzhan– capital of Russian Jewish Autonomous Region, Skirball, 8 pm

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 11<sup>th</sup> **Zmiros Shabbes** – Performance by **Frank London, Lorin Sklamberg, & Marilyn Lerner**, 8:30 pm. **David Krakauer's** klezmer & jazz songs with **Klezmer Madness**. The Knitting Factory, 7:30 pm.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12<sup>th</sup> **Havdole** followed by a **Cabaret** with **Marilyn Lerner** and **David Wall**. They put traditional Yiddish poetry to contemporary jazz. University of Judaism, 7:30 pm.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13<sup>th</sup> **Yiddish Soul**— **Stu Brotman, Adrienne Cooper, Marilyn Lerner, Frank London, Lorin Sklamberg**

Information: Ph 323-692-8151 or [www.yiddishkaytla.org](http://www.yiddishkaytla.org)

## Celebrate Yiddish In America

By Michelle Greenberg 212-1889-6800 ext. 301, e-mail: [Michelle@clrcle.org](mailto:Michelle@clrcle.org)

A Gala Concert Honoring the Centennial of The Arbeter Ring Wed., Nov. 6, 2002 at 7:30pm Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St., NYC

Join Mandy Patinkin, Theodore Bikel, Lainie Kazan, Bruce Abler, Tovah Feldshuh, The Klezmatics and other major entertainers from stage, screen and TV In paying tribute to Yiddish —our language and culture, and to The Arbeter Ring, which has been a central address for preserving and nurturing our secular Yiddish culture. Funds raised will support the growth of cultural, educational, and community programs of The Workmen's Circle/ Arbeter Ring.

Honorees are:

- BERNARD NUSSBAUM, Former While Hoose Counsel, Sr. Partner, Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen.
- HAROLD OSTROFF, Former General Manager of the Forward Association, former President of The Workmen's Circle/ Arbeter Ring.
- JUDITH VLADECK, Labor Atty., Sr. Partner, Vladeck, Waldmen, Elias & Engelhard, PC.

For reservations, and information about sponsorship, contact Michelle Greenberg (212)1889-6800 ext. 301, [Michelle@clrcle.org](mailto:Michelle@clrcle.org) Tickets: \$250,\$100,\$50,\$36

## An Interesting Opinion

by Stan Freeman

Dear Fishl: I have been peripherally aware of the YIVO orthography, but I confess the need for it has escaped me (I say this without having given it much thought). It seems to me that using Hebrew letters for Yiddish words does demand exact spelling, but the point of transliteration is to make the Yiddish words available to the English reader. If this is true, then the more intuitively the reader can decipher them, the better. This, of course, assumes that we are catering only to speakers of English. The others will have to struggle a bit to recognize their own vowel sounds in such an orthography—but probably no more than the English speakers have to struggle with the YIVO orthography.

If one were looking for accuracy with a historical background, one might opt for the German spelling (shayn = schoen) but none of us do that because, apart from our reluctance to have that much to do with Germans, the pronunciation would not be immediately obvious. My transliterations in the glossary on my web site are meant to give immediately recognizable symbols to speakers of English who, after all are the majority of those I am hoping to reach. I'd be interested in your thoughts on this. Perhaps you have a previous article on the subject to which you could refer me. Mit freindshaft (or frayndshaft if that sounds more friendly),

## Jewish Cultural Writing Contest Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture

Douglas Konecky of San Francisco, California won First Prize for his entry, "Jewish Dinner Music". He received \$1000 and publication of his entry in Pakn Treger, the magazine of the National Yiddish Book Center.

Second prize of \$400 plus publication went to Susan Messer of Oak Park, Illinois for, "Torah Studies", and third prize of \$200 plus publication went to Natalie Wexler of Washington, D.C. for "Norman in Yiddishland". Honorable mentions went to Laura Wine Paster of Walnut Creek, California for "My Little Cup" and Shirley Adelman of Erdenheim, PA for "My Mother's Eyes".

The contest is an effort by the Center for Yiddish to promote the growth of creative writing on secular Jewish cultural issues. Submissions of previously unpublished non-fiction or short stories will be accepted in either English or Yiddish. Judging is by members of leading Jewish publications and the Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture. The next deadline is March 31, 2003.

This year's theme is: Crossing The Cultural Divide: How Jewish Culture Can Promote Cross-Cultural Understanding. For contest rules and an application, eligible entrants should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Center for Yiddish Culture Writing Contest, P.O. Box 14-0820, Coral Gables, Florida, 33114, or download them from the Center's website, [www.yiddishculture.org](http://www.yiddishculture.org) (This year's winning entries as well as previous winning entries are posted there.) Please mention where you heard about the contest when requesting applications.

Dora Teitelboim Center for Yiddish Culture, Jewish Cultural Writing Contest, P.O. Box 14-0820, Coral Gables FL 33114. 305-774-9244. Liz Weintraub, Program Director. [www.yiddishculture.org](http://www.yiddishculture.org). e-mail: [liz@yiddishculture.org](mailto:liz@yiddishculture.org)

## Continuing Education at YIVO - Fall 2002

From: Yankl Salant <ysalant@yivo.cjh.org>

Translating Yiddish Texts: Theory and Practice  
10 sessions. Mondays, 6:30-8:30pm 10/14-12/16

Instructor: Dr. Irena Klepfisz, Barnard College  
This course will address issues in the translation of Yiddish prose and poetry. Students will review translations of Yiddish texts, translate Yiddish texts and translate one for class critique. Classes are conducted in English.

### Intermediate Yiddish I

12 sessions. Tuesdays, 6:30-8pm. 10/1-12/17  
Instructor: Reyzl Kalifowicz-Waletzky, YIVO  
Prerequisite: Equivalent of chapters 1-20 of College Yiddish  
This course covers lessons 20-30 in College Yiddish. Students are given written assignments and dictations in class. After completion of the textbook, students work with short modern prose texts to supplement their vocabulary. Classes are conducted entirely in Yiddish. Course continues in spring as Intermediate Yiddish II.

### Advanced Yiddish I

12 sessions, 6:30-8pm, Weds, 10/2/02-1/8/03; Tues, 12/24  
Instructor: Dr. Paul (Hershl) Glasser, Associate Dean, YIVO  
This course builds fluency in spoken and written Yiddish. Students read high-level texts, and write on assigned topics. Emphasis will be on appropriate grammar and on fine-tuning usage and phrasing. Classes are conducted entirely in Yiddish. Continues in spring as Advanced Yiddish II.

New at YIVO: 3 Mini-Courses!

Murdered Spring: an Intro. to Soviet Yiddish Poetry  
3 sessions. Thursdays, 6:30-8pm. 10/17, 10/24, 10/31

Instructor: Nikolai Borodulin, YIVO  
This is an introduction to the study of Soviet Yiddish poetry. It includes an attempt to define Soviet Yiddish poetry and its poets, the various stages of Soviet Yiddish poetry, and an analysis of some of the works of Dovid Hofshiteyn, Perets Markish, Shmuel Halkin, Izi Kharik and Itsik Fefer. All readings and discussions are in Yiddish.

Litvak? Galitsyaner?: Exploring Yiddish Dialects

3 sessions. Thursdays, 6:30-8pm. 11/7, 11/14, 11/21  
Instructor: Dr. Paul (Hershl) Glasser, Assoc. Dean, YIVO  
It is an introduction to Yiddish dialects, with emphasis on differences in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and customs. Mention will be made of dialects in emigration and what is really behind the "Litvak-Galitsyaner" demarcation. All readings and discussions are in English.

From Subways to Skyscrapers: NY in Yiddish Poetry  
3 sessions. Thursdays, 6:30-8pm. 12/5, 12/12, 12/19

Instructor: Alisa Braun, University of Michigan  
Explore images of NYC in early 20th century Yiddish poetry. In poets as Moyshe-Leyb Halpern, Aaron Leyeles, H. Leivik and Berish Weinstein, we will discover a range of responses, from optimism and expectation, to the disillusionment of the harsh realities of urban life. All readings and discussions are in English.

Write to: Fall Classes YIVO Institute  
15 W. 16th St., NY, NY 10011-6301 or call 212-294-6154.

## A Leyen Krayz in Cape Town

Belling, V, Veronica, veronica@uctlib.uct.ac.za

We have been reading quite a lot about Durban lately in *Der Bay* and would like to tell your readers about what is going on in Cape Town.

Although once there was an active Yiddish Kultur Federatsye in Cape Town, for many years Cape Town has been a cultural wilderness as far as Yiddish is concerned. There was a revival in the early 1980's with Yiddish classes being offered in the extra-mural program of the University of Cape Town, inspired by the then Professor of Hebrew, Simon Hopkins, a gifted linguist, an Arabic and Hebrew specialist, who taught himself Yiddish and collected Yiddish books. However after a year these classes petered out with teachers emigrating and people not being keen to go out at night.

In the mid 1980's a Yiddish Book Rescue project was undertaken in Cape Town and volunteers joined Aaron Lansky's band of zamlers worldwide. However not much was done about keeping the language alive. Informal Yiddish groups existed sporadically but they were only interested in conversation and hearing a Yiddish vits, and not on reading or writing.

We formed our Leyen Krayz in 1998. We are today six of us who meet regularly on Saturday afternoon to read and speak Yiddish. Of our group Lilian Dubb, completed two years of the Oxford Summer Program. She participated in the very first year of its inception. She also initiated the Book Rescue Project in Cape Town. I completed the Beginners, Intermediate and Advanced Levels of the Weinreich Yiddish Summer Program in New York, only 2 years ago. I am the Jewish Studies Librarian at the University of Cape Town.

Besides myself all the members of our group spoke Yiddish at home to varying degrees. I am the only one who had no Yiddish, other than hearing my mother speak to her sisters. My father never spoke Yiddish. In the past four years we have gone through College Yiddish and now are working on Dr Shechter's Yiddish Tsvey. Over the years we have read stories from Peretz, his poem *Monish*, several stories by Moshe Nadir, chapters from Grade's *Di Mames Shabosim*, a favourite of South African Jews who mostly came from Lithuania, and articles from the *Forverts* by Miriam Hoffman and Leah Shlosman. Our favourite undoubtedly remains Sholem Aleichem. We have read chapters from the first volume of 'Motl Peysi dem hazens' and are now working steadily through the second volume, 'In Amerike' which is an absolute delight. His impressions and his humour remain fresh to this day.

I think we all find our Leyen Krayz, which is also accompanied by a very handsome 'kibed', a highlight. It brings back memories and nostalgia of days gone by. We feel that we are the last of the Mohicans, the last who still have that living connection with *Der heym*. And through *Der Bay* we know that we are not alone.

Mit hartsikn vintshn far a gliklekhn un gezunt naye yor, mit sholem, mazel un brokhes.

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