

# Der Bay

## The International Anglo-Yiddish Newsletter

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October 2004

Vol. XIV No. 8

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### Vos tut zich in Minneapolis?

The Ninth International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) Conference will be held here in Minneapolis on Thursday, June 2nd to Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The conference closes at noon on Sunday, but we shall offer an optional tour of Minneapolis, and St. Paul with a visit to the Sabes JCC to see the Jewish Historical Society. One tour will stop at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts to see the Judaica Collection. Come early or stay a few days after the conference. The Doubletree Hotel will honor the convention rates.

Minnesota has 90,000 miles of shoreline, more than California, Florida, and Hawaii combined. We are called the *State of 10,000 Lakes*. We have a beautiful chain of lakes and parkways right here in the city. Free nightly concerts are offered at the Lake Harriet bandshell during the summer.

The Mississippi River winds its way through the city. Learn about the early days of *The Flour Capital of the World* at the Mill City Museum which opened in 2003. Also located near the river on the University of Minnesota campus is the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum. This stainless steel building, designed by internationally acclaimed architect Frank Gehry, presents contemporary issues in art and cultures and admission is free.

The Minneapolis Institute of Art houses more than 100,000 works of art spanning 5000 years of world history. The Walker Art Gallery is currently adding more space for its collections of 20th Century American and international art. Right across the street from the Walker is the largest sculpture garden in the country and worth a visit and leisurely stroll.

Are you a shopper? There's no sales tax on clothing in Minnesota. We have a pedestrian friendly Nicollet Mall downtown. There is upscale shopping in Edina or at the wonderful shops at the Galleria near the Southdale Mall. Our hotel is located near the

Ridgedale Mall in St. Louis Park. The complimentary shuttle at the hotel will drive you to any spot within a five-mile radius of the hotel. We have the Uptown area in south Minneapolis with funky boutiques, nightlife, restaurants, and great people watching. Oh, don't forget, the Mall of America in Bloomington. It has hundreds of shops, an inside amusement park, and many eateries. If you wish to attend a Friday night service at a Shul—no problem, the shuttle will take you and pick you up.

The hotel is minutes away from the nation's largest award winning regional theatre, The Guthrie. The Hennepin Avenue Theatre District downtown stages Broadway shows and other performances at the Historic State Theatre, the Orpheum, and the Pantages Theatres. The Twin Cities is home of the nations largest and most distinguished theater for youth and family—The Children's Theater Company.

These are just a few of the attractions in Minneapolis. Our sister city and state capitol, St. Paul, also has the very fine Ordway Theatre and an excellent science and children's museum.

Bring your bathing suit. The Doubletree Hotel has an indoor pool and exercise room. Breakfast and dinner will be served at the conference. For lunch breaks, there is a restaurant at the hotel, or for Asian or Indian food, a Dairy Queen, a light subway sandwich, bagels or burgers, they are within walking distance--half block to a block from the hotel.

If you have any questions or special needs that we can address, please let us know ahead of time and we'll try to accommodate you. Next month you'll learn about our exciting theme and tribute publication.

Yiddish Vinkl chair is Roz Baker at: 612-377-5456.  
Publicity chair, Annalee Odessky at:  
annalee26@aol.com or 952-544-5423.

## *Voice of the Piotrkow Survivors*

Editor: Ben Giladi

In our October-November issue I have included your piece *Chelm on Two Levels*. The readers will like it. Some of our readers also receive your publication.

If any of your readers came from Piotrkow or are interested in the locale they may wish to subscribe to *The Voice*. Actually there are three Piotrkows in Poland. The one I write about is Piotrkow Tryb., by far the largest and most important historically of the three. The current issue is number 136 and the issues date back to 1967. The issues have many photographs and sketches, and contain letters and articles in English, Yiddish, Hebrew and Polish. Also I edited *A Tale of One City: Piotrkow Trybunalski*.

Ben Giladi

Ph: 718-263-8158 or write to:

135-30 82<sup>nd</sup> Ave.,

Kew Gardesn, NY 11453

## **Amcha Yiddishkreiz**

Name of Group: Amcha Yiddishkreiz

City: Jerusalem, Israel

Meeting Day: Every Tuesday

Meeting Time: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Contact Phone Number: (Ruthie)+972-2-6717657

Amcha is the Israeli Center for Psychosocial Support for Holocaust Survivors and their Families. Our small (about 12 regular participants) Yiddishkreiz is open to the general public as well, but most of the participants are survivors or the second generation. This colors the atmosphere of our meetings, which tend to nostalgia. Visitors/tourists occasionally drop in and this usually sparks a discussion of dialects, accents, and "how we used to say that in our home."

## **Request for Chayale**

Harry Cornbleet [hcornbleet@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hcornbleet@sbcglobal.net)

I was referred to you by an e-mail correspondent (H. Rubin) on a Yiddish listserv. I am involved with a project for the Judah Magnes Museum in Berkeley, CA which is developing a slide show on the subject of the Yiddish theater. We are looking for information on how to find brief summaries of the plots of the following Yiddish plays:

The Mashiach Kumt with music by J. Rumshinsky  
The Tzadik's Mishpacha by Ludwig Satz  
The Green Millionaire by Abraham Shomer  
Oy is Dus a Maydel by Jacob Kalich

The person who sent me the e-mail message suggested that I talk to Chayele Ash, and said that you could help me get in touch with her. I would appreciate if you could tell me how I could get in contact with her (or relay this message to her and ask her to call me). My Telephone number is (408) 255-6572 Thank you very much.

## **An Editor's Woes**

It is amazing how often something said in jest is really true. There is no dearth of errors that an editor makes, but a Yiddish editor—hu, ha! First we Jews are people of the book and so are very learned. This makes the editor's task even more trying.

A baseball player makes an error, a tailor slips up—so what? Even an author can have a second edition and correct all the errors, but a newspaper can only put out an apology and use the fancy *errata*—hu, ha. So what are some of the problems?

**Battle of the afs and the oyfs.**

**Disagreement of the shtumer alef and melapim vov.**

**Use of the STANDARD KH or the layman's CH.**

**Use of Romanization versus Hebrew/Yiddish fonts.**

There are plenty of *shouldas* like numbering the pages and saddle stapling the sheets which are absolutely right, but what of some of the other problems? How are they being handled?

- Increasing the print size from a size 10 font to an 11.
- Using blocked instead of indented paragraphs and spacing them.
- Changing to 60 lb. white paper instead of 20 lb. Cream.

Stephen Dowling was the first to suggest these changes, and your editor is very appreciative. Of course he has made other suggestions that your editor has not gotten around to implementing.:-)

## **Happyville**

On the next page is a wonderful story of a bygone era. This reminds your editor of when his family lived on a poultry breeding farm near Flemington NJ.

The information came from an "Interview of Al Rothman, 1982, recorded by Carol Morrison, daughter of Al's sister, Sara Rothman Rosenblatt. 2 Ida (Arline) Knowlton (1902-2003). Arnold Shankman, "Happyville, the Forgotten Colony," *American Jewish Archives* 30 (April 1978): 3-19. Author of *From Se/ma to Sorrow, The Lij' and Death of Viola Liuzzo* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998). Shankman.

## *Happyville: A Kibbutz Grows in Aiken, Georgia*

by Marcia Savin Ph: 718-852-2867 E-mail: msavin2@earthlink.net

"We had 2,300 acres between a village, Montmorenci, and Aiken, South Carolina. We grew watermelon, cotton, corn, even grapes. Had our own pond. Let the water out once a year. We'd walk in and pick up pike, catfish, sunfish, smelt. Have a fish fry. We dammed the stream to power our cotton gin and sawmill. Lots of trees, lumber to sell. It was called Happyville."

I was listening to a 1982 tape of uncle Al Rothman, then 84, describing life in 1907—he was 9. The story fascinated me. My grandparents, Morris and Bertha, aged 39 and 30, Morris's brother, and 8 other families started a communal farm down South. **Newly arrived from Eastern Europe, Yiddish-speaking socialists, they left the NY sweatshops for a dream.**

"One neighbor helped us," said Al. "One-Arm Taylor. Lost the arm in the War." *The Civil War!* "I'd say, how do you plant this and he'd answer. My dad wasn't a farmer. I don't think any of them was."

But Al described crops, a gin, lumber .... Why, in under three years, did it fail? "Some of the farmers," he said, "made it so terrible for us. Couldn't ship our lumber. No flatcars, no shipping. Because of how we treated the coloreds. We called them 'Mister Smith, Mister Jones.' When we'd go to town, we'd get flour or chewing tobacco they needed. That was one reason we had to leave."

I had many questions but this was 2003. Al was dead. How about his younger sister Ida, still alive and sharp at 100" Would she recall back to ages three to six?

"We had a tenant farmer's house . . ." Ida reminisced. "No door. Two rooms. My father was a nonbeliever but my mother was kosher. Not one bite of meat touched her mouth there. She washed clothes at the stream, hitting a rock. Tied a sack around my neck and told me to pick cotton. One family-One-Arm Taylor's-had us for lunch. Oh, what a beautiful house, with servants. So much food!"

They were also friends with a freed slave. "She took me to her home and showed me pictures on the walls. All from newspapers. Of one man. My father said, "That's Mr. Lincoln."

I wanted to know more but Montmorenci wasn't even in my atlas. I googled "Happyville." A few sentences. "Montmorenci." Bingo! Annie's Inn. A beautiful restored 1820s house. I *had* to go. Owner Scottie Ruark said, "You'll need a car. There's nothing here, just a gas station. Not even a restaurant. Everything's in Aiken."

My research was going nowhere. I called the College of Charleston. Harlan Greene knew of Happyville! He sent Arnold Shankman's definitive article. Someone gave me Doris Baumgarten's name. "Happyville?" she said. "My pet project! I'll help." My friend Mary Stanton joined me. Doris was our indispensable chauffeur, guide, and resource in Aiken.

I hoped to learn about a trial Al described. At age nine, he was the star witness. He explained, "This farmer let his pigs come and root up our crops. My dad shooed them-there was six-in the barn and locked it. He wanted to get paid for the damage.

"The owner came over... told my dad to let them out. My dad wouldn't. My dad was standing by a tree stump. It held an ax to split wood. The man brought something out. My mother started screaming. She thought it was a knife or gun and dragged Dad into the house. The guy got the ax, chopped the lock off, and let his pigs out.

"We went to court about it. The judge says to me, 'You know what happens to little boys who tell lies?' I said, 'Yes, they go to hell. The devil gets them.'" Young Al testified and the judge awarded my grandfather six dollars-one for each pig. "We won!" my aunt chortled at age 100. "We won!"

Amazingly, they did. On the word of a child. The child of Jewish outsiders and socialists. Did the neighbors cheer, or did they resent it? The Aiken library held no clue. What I did find was: "Aiken Colony Is a Success," *Aiken Journal*, August 13, 1907. "Happyville colony is remarkable ...." Notices proudly invited the public to patronize the new cotton gin and saw mill. A year later, it was over.

Ida's explanation: "My father worked dawn to dusk behind a plow. He wanted to prove they could make a go of it. The others dressed up and went to town. It made him so mad."

**Shankman blames bad weather, internal dissension, lack of skills, poor soil, debt. He says that intellectuals, who staged Yiddish plays and had Tolstoy in their library, "would have longed for a richer cultural and social life." Nowhere did I read that treating blacks as equals led to a boycott of the colony's goods.** But then, no colonists were interviewed—none stayed to tell the tale.

Happyville didn't last long, but *failure* seems the wrong word.

## The New Season—The New Year

This is the beginning of another leap on behalf of all of our efforts to spread the lore and language of Yiddish. *Der Bay* is doing its part—how can you help and help your group?

Yes, I shall ask you to check the address label to see if it has been a year since you last helped to support our work. If you have done so, may this be the chance to truly express appreciation and wish you all a Healthy New Year. If it will be Healthy, it will be Happy.

Ever so slowly our readers are becoming computer literate. It has grown from ten percent to over half. In some cases the *eyniklekh* (just out of pampers) are leading the way. In some cases it has been the free access, and in others laudable efforts have been made to develop websites.

Whether you are a *Der Bay* newsletter reader or one who also visits *Der Bay's* reader-friendly website, you are urged to spread the word about the website. It is the reason why it is so important to support *Der Bay*. There is no advertising in either case. All support comes from contributions to this newsletter.

Let us list some of the advantages of reading *Der Bay* in the hardcopy, and the many wonderful features of the website. Here are the many wonderful features of the website.

- **Der internatsyonaler kalendar**
- **Briv fraynd (pen-pals)**
- **28 word lists in transliteration & English**
- **Listing of Major Events—worldwide**
- **List of Klezmer groups**
- **List of translators and caveats**
- **List of many Yiddish Links**
- **List of many other Jewish sites**
- **List of IAYC member clubs**
- **Der Bay's international network (TYN)**
- **Information for any club at the Klub Korner**
- **Extensive list of presenters and performers**
- **Yiddish for the disabled**
- **List of 250 Yiddish song titles and first lines**
- **List of Yiddish publications**
- **List of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**
- **Oystsugen fun briv in der redaktsye**
- **Transliterated skits for club meetings**
- **FREE publicity even if you do not contribute.**

Check your name and/or group's name to see if you are properly listed with your email/website. Let's hear from you. Send your listing of events, write a letter to the editor and/or write an article.

## Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club

Lilke Mejzner, Pres. 310-275-8455

The Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club, a non-partisan organization was organized in 1926 and chartered by the State of California as a non-profit organization. It is affiliated with the Jewish Community Federation of Los Angeles. Its purpose is to promote and encourage language and culture in the community and supports other national and international agencies which share its mission.

The Club meets from October to mid-June on Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m., at the Institute of Jewish Education, 8339 W. Third St., Los Angeles in the Library on the second floor. Our programs include lectures, primarily in Yiddish, about every aspect of Jewish and contemporary issues as they relate to Jewish life in the U.S., Israel, and around the world. In the course of its 75+ years of existence, it has been the quasi-official host to nearly all the world famous Yiddish novelists, poets, dramatists, and lecturers. We are also blessed with much local talent who contribute enthusiastically to our programs. From time to time speakers are invited to speak in English to accommodate those whose fluency in Yiddish is not great. Each evening's presentation is followed by refreshments and an opportunity to socialize and immerse oneself in spoken Yiddish.

Since 1946 the Club has published the *Heshbon* semi-annually. It is a literary and cultural journal which is currently under the able editorship of poet Moshe Shkliar and features poetry, essays, book reviews, and commentary on major events in the Jewish community by writers from around the world. It also reports on the activities of the Club.

A collection of approximately five-thousand volumes of Yiddish books and journals dating from 1900 is available for the use by the membership.

The Club is supported by paid membership and volunteer assistance. Donations and bequests also contribute to our support. Annual membership is \$36.00 per person, and there is a nominal admission fee for non-members.

We invite you to join us. Here are a few of the advantages.

Free or reduced admission to programs.  
An unparalleled opportunity to hear the spoken Yiddish word  
A relaxed friendly *hey mish* atmosphere

# *In der velt fun bale-khay, fun Miriam Hoffman Part I*

## *IN THE WORLD OF LIVING CREATURES*

Transliterated & translated by Troim Katz Handler

Y: Ver zogt az yidn hobn nit gehat tsu ton mit gots bruim, mit khayes?

E: WHO SAYS JEWS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH GOD'S CREATURES, WITH ANIMALS?

Y: Men darf nor a bleter ton in yidishn folklor, ken men ful vern mit a velt mit lebedike bashefenishn in der luft, af der yaboshe, un in di vasern.

E: ONE HAS ONLY TO LEAF THROUGH JEWISH FOLKLORE, FILLED WITH LIVING CREATURES IN THE AIR, ON THE LAND AND IN THE WATERS.

Y: Kh'darf nisht geyn vayt: ikh aleyn hob oysgehodevet, tsuzamen mit mayne tsvey zindelekh, hint, kets, tsherepakhes, krolikes, a shtekhldikn yozshik, a grine salamandre, un tropishe fishlekh.

E: I DON'T HAVE TO GO FAR. I MYSELF HAVE RAISED, TOGETHER WITH MY TWO LITTLE SONS, DOGS, CATS, TURTLES, RABBITS, A PORCUPINE, A GREEN SALAMANDER AND TROPICAL FISH.

Y: Meyle, dos vos di khayes zaynen aroys mit gantse beyner, nokh dem vi di kinder hobn zikh mit zey gespravet; iz oykh a nes.

E: NEVER MIND THAT THE ANIMALS CAME OUT WITH ALL THEIR BONES INTACT AFTER THE CHILDREN "TOOK CARE OF THEM" IS ALSO A MIRACLE.

Y: Nor der koter hot undz emesdik bavizn vos a yidishe katz ken, be'eys mir hobn gelebt in yisroyel.

E: ONLY THE TOM CAT TRULY SHOWED US WHAT A JEWISH CAT CAN DO, WHILE WE WERE LIVING IN ISRAEL.

Y: Zet oys az di yisroyeldike luft makht nisht bloyz klug nor bashenkt ire bashefenishn mit a kamfs-gayst, khutspe, un a gefil fun hefker petrishke.

E: IT SEEMS THE ISRAELI AIR MAKES ONE NOT ONLY CLEVER BUT ALSO IMBUES ONE WITH A CAMPAIGN SPIRIT, KHUTSPE, AND A FEELING OF INDEPENDENT WILD OATS.

Y: Ikh zog dos antkegn undzer kats.

E: I'M SAYING THIS ABOUT OUR CAT.

Y: Ven m'hot im arayngenumen in shtub, iz er geven a veykh volbaleml, a hopsedik un lebedik shpiltsayg.

E: WHEN WE TOOK HIM INTO OUR HOUSE, HE WAS A SOFT, WOOLY, BALL, A JUMPING AND LIVELY TOY.

Y: Mir hobn es a nomen gegeben KIZSHYU un geredt dertsu bloyz yidish.

E: WE NAMED HIM KIZSHYU AND SPOKE TO HIM ONLY YIDDISH.

Y: S'iz nisht avek keyn khoydesh, hot zikh dos baleml farvandlt in a soldat.

E: LESS THAN A MONTH LATER THE LITTLE BALL TURNED INTO A SOLDIER.

Y: Der koter hot zikh arumgeyogt tog un nakht vi af a shlakhtfeld, aruf un arop fun beymer un dekher, arayn un aroys fun mist-kestlekh, gemakht kozshlkes arum rizike hint-sobakes, un, der iker, terorizirt andere kets.

E: THIS TOM CAT CHASED AROUND DAY AND NIGHT AS IF ON A BATTLEFIELD, UP AND DOWN TREES AND ROOFTOPS, IN AND OUT OF GARBAGE PAILS, DID SOMERSAULTS AROUND HUGE HOUND DOGS, AND, ABOVE ALL HE DID WAS TO TERRORIZE OTHER CATS.

Y: Biz eyn mol, in der fri, iz er aheym gekumen on an oyg.

E: UNTIL ONE FINE MORNING, HE CAME HOME WITHOUT AN EYE.

Y: Hot men af im ongeshrign:

E: SO WE HOLLERED AT HIM:

Y: "S'taytsh, vi past es far a yidisher kats azoy zikh uftsufirn? Nokh alemen, kumst dokh aroys fun an onshtendik hoyz."

E: "HOW COME? IS IT RESPECTABLE FOR A JEWISH CAT TO BEHAVE LIKE THIS? AFTER ALL, YOU COME FROM A RESPECTABLE HOUSE."

Y: Ober s'iz im in eyn oyer arayn, fun tsveytn aroys.

E: BUT IT WENT INTO ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER.

Y: Vos an emes hot er afn tsveytn tog ongevoynr beyde oyern, un mit a vokh shpeter iz er kam gekumen tsu loyfn hinkendik af a fus mit a tsefliktn ek.

E: IN TRUTH, THE NEXT DAY HE LOST BOTH EARS; AND A WEEK LATER HE CAME RUNNING, LIMPING ON ONE FOOT AND WITH A PLUCKED TAIL.

Y: Volt ir dokh gemeynt, az er vet shoynt aynlign?  
E: YOU WOULD THINK THAT HE WOULD STAY PUT?

Y: A nekhtiker tog!  
E: NO WAY!

Y: Der koter hot zikh azoy lang arumgeyogt biz er iz aheymgekumen a tsebalter un a tsekaliyetsheter, zikh avekgeleygt in gortn, un geshtorbn.

E: THE TOM CAT CHASED AROUND SO LONG THAT HE CAME HOME SWOLLEN AND ALL CUT UP; AND HE LAY DOWN IN THE GARDEN AND DIED.

Y: Hobn di kinder oysgegrob'n a grub lebn hoyz, im bagrob'n mit trern in di oygn, un af zayn keyver a vays-bloye fon mitn oyfshrit: "Do lig't KIZSHYU, a yidishe kats."

E: SO THE CHILDREN DUG A HOLE NEAR THE HOUSE, BURIED HIM WITH TEARS IN THEIR EYES, AND PLACED A WHITE-BLUE FLAG ON HIS GRAVE WITH THE INSCRIPTION, "HERE LIES KIZSHYU, A JEWISH CAT."

Y: Mer hobn mir kn kets nisht gehalten.  
E: AFTER THAT WE NO LONGER KEPT CATS.

Y: Vayzt zikh aroys, az yidn hobn gehalten shtub-khayes, gepilnevet oyfes, un gekhovet bheymes.

E: IT TURNS OUT THAT JEWS KEPT HOUSE-ANIMALS, PAMPERED POULTRY, AND RAISED COWS.

Y: S'iz geven gor a yidishe mide fun tsar bale-khayem.  
E: THERE WAS ACTUALLY A JEWISH TRAIT TO TREAT ANIMALS KINDLY.

Y: Punkt azoy vi di yidn hobn toyznter yor gelebt zayt bay zayt mit eysevs kinder, azoy

hobn zey oykh nisht oysgemitn di velt fun got's bashefenishn.

E: JUST AS JEWS FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS HAVE LIVED SIDE BY SIDE WITH ESAU'S CHILDREN, THEY ALSO DID NOT AVOID THE WORLD OF GOD'S CREATURES.

Y: Iz di luft geven ful mitn krey fun a hon, mitn biln fun a hunt, mitn miyoken fun a kats, mit meken un beken un tsvitshen un griltsn—mit eyn vort, di shtume velt fun di bale-khay iz gornisht geven azoy shtum vi m'hot es undz ayngeredt.

E: SO THE AIR WAS FILLED WITH THE CROWING OF A ROOSTER, WITH THE BARKING OF A DOG, WITH THE MEOWING OF A CAT, WITH M-E-KEN AND B-E-KEN AND CRICKET SOUNDS; IN A WORD, THE QUIET WORLD OF ANIMALS WAS NOT ALWAYS AS QUIET, AS WE HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE.

Y: Yidn hobn arum di bale-khay ufgeshtelt a rakhvesdikn folklor, fun kishef-mayses un shrek-ibergloybenishn, zabobones, zgules, un opshprekhenishn.

E: JEWS HAVE ESTABLISHED A BROAD FOLKLORE AROUND THIS CONCERN FOR ANIMALS, ABOUT STORIES AND FEARFUL SUPERSTITIONS, NOTIONS, REMEDIES, AND EXORCISMS.

Y: Der iker hot men zikh geshrokn farn gilgleshome.

E: THEY MAINLY FEARED THE TRANSMIGRATION OF THE SOUL INTO THE BODY OF ANOTHER CREATURE.

Y: Iz lomir af a minut a tap ton dem deyfek fun folks-gloybn un toyem-zayn fun der velt fun di bale-khay—nusekh shtetl.

E: SO LET US FOR A MOMENT TAKE THE PULSE OF FOLK BELIEFS AND SAVOR THE WORLD OF CONCERN FOR ANIMALS—IN THE STYLE OF THE SHTETL.

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This is the first of three parts to be published in *Der Bay*. Save this, so you will have the series. The author, Miriam Hoffman, teaches at Columbia University. The translator and transliterator, Troim Katz Handler is an author, lecturer and IAYC board member. She and Frank live in Florida and New Jersey. They can be reached at: troim@webtv.net

## *In der velt fun bale-khay, fun Miriam Hoffman Part II*

### *IN THE WORLD OF LIVING CREATURES*

Transliterated & translated by Troim Katz Handler

Y: Shtelt aykh for di freyd ven es vet geboyrn a yingele, eyn kleynikayt, a zokher bYisroyel!  
E: IMAGINE THE JOY AT THE BIRTH OF A LITTLE BOY—NO SMALL MATTER—A MALE FOR THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL!

Y: Af der vant flegt men tsehengen di shir-hamayles.  
E: ON THE WALL THEY USED TO HANG THE PSALMS.

Y: M'hot getsitert un geflatert ibern nay-geboyre nem oyfele; gehit es fun di lapen fun Lilisn, di malke fun di nisht-gute.  
E: THEY TREMBLED AND HOVERED OVER THE NEWLY-BORN INFANT; PROTECTED IT FROM THE PAWS OF LILITH, THE FEMALE DEMON, THE QUEEN OF EVIL.

Y: Derfar hot men im ongeton a royt bendele un opgeshprokhn an ayen-hore: Tfu! Tfu! Tfu! S'zol im kholile gornisht shatn.  
E: THEY THEREFORE TIED A RED RIBBON ON THE INFANT AND UTTERED AN AYEN-HORE AGAINST THE EVIL EYE: TFU! TFU! TFU! MAY NOTHING, HEAVEN FORBID, HARM HIM.

Y: Dervayl hot men ongeton dem "khosn bokher" in meydlshe kleyder un gelozt vaksn zayne lekelekh; un alts af tsu fardreyen di yoytsres baym sotn.  
E: THEY DRESSED THE LITTLE FELLOW IN GIRLS' CLOTHING AND LET HIS CURLS GROW—TO CONFUSE SATAN.

Y: Ven s'iz gekumen di tsayt tsu leygn dos kind in vigele, flegt men koydem ahin araynleygn a kats un bshas-mayse aynroymen in oyer: "Her zikh tsu, du ketsisher moyekh! Megst zayn di kapore far ot dem oyfele un aldos shlekhts vos s'iz im bashert zol oysgeyn tsu dayn kop."  
E: WHEN IT CAME TIME TO LAY THE CHILD IN THE CRADLE, THEY FIRST PUT IN A CAT AND WHISPERED INTO ITS EAR, "LISTEN, YOU CAT'S BRAIN, MAY YOU BE THE SCAPEGOAT FOR THIS INFANT; AND EVERYTHING BAD DESTINED FOR HIM SHOULD END UP ON YOUR HEAD."  
Y: Ersht nokh der tseremonye hobn zikh tate-mame geleygt shlofn mit a ruikn kop.  
E: ONLY AFTER THIS CEREMONY HAD OCCURRED WOULD THE PARENTS GO TO SLEEP IN PEACE.

Y: An ander bayshpil hot tsu ton mit a ferd.  
E: Another example has to do with horses.

Y: A balegole tsi a milkhiker iz geven mitn ferdl a guter Bruder.  
E: A COACHMAN OR A DAIRYMAN WAS A GOOD BUDDY TO HIS HORSE.

Y: M'hot zikh dermit oysgetaynet vi mit an altn, gutn fraynd.  
E: YOU WOULD UNLOAD YOUR FRUSTRATIONS AS YOU WOULD WITH AN OLD, GOOD FRIEND.

Y: Ot, lemoshl, az m'hot gefirt a kapelye tsu a khasene, hot men dem ferdl ongezogt—"Mitn rekhtn fus foroys, in a mazdikar sho."  
E: FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU DROVE A BAND TO PLAY AT A WEDDING, YOU WOULD TELL THE HORSE "RIGHT FOOT FIRST FOR A LUCKY HOUR."

Y: Oyb, lehavdl, m'hot gefirt a mes tsu kvure fun eyn shtot in der tsveyter, hot men ayngeroymt dem ferd in oyer: Du first a bar-menen."  
E: IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, YOU WERE DRIVING A DEAD PERSON TO THE CEMETERY FROM ONE CITY TO THE NEXT, YOU WOULD WHISPER INTO THE HORSE'S EAR, "YOU ARE CARRYING A CORPSE."

Y: Dos ferd hot tsugesheklt mitn kop vi es volt farshtanen.  
E: THE HORSE WOULD SHAKE HIS HEAD AS IF HE UNDERSTOOD.

Y: Mit hiner un hener, hot men zikh gemuzt rekhenen.  
E: AS FOR HENS AND ROOSTERS, YOU HAD TO TAKE THEM SERIOUSLY.

Y: S'iz arumgegangen a shmue az oyb a hon shteyt af eyn fus un halt eyn oyg tsugemakht, iz es a simen az got zitst oybn un tsornt untu.  
E: A RUMOR WENT AROUND THAT IF A ROOSTER STANDS ON ONE FOOT AND KEEPS ONE EYE CLOSED, IT IS A SIGN THAT GOD IS SITTING ABOVE AND IS FURIOUS BELOW.

Y: Geloybt tsu got vos lang hot der hon nisht gekent shteyn in der poze.  
E: PRAISE GOD THAT THE ROOSTER COULD NOT HOLD THAT POSITION VERY LONG.

Y: Vos hobn yidn geton ven zey hobn gevolt zayn zikher az fun ale eyer veln zikh oyspikn hiner on a hezik un on shodn?  
E: WHAT DID JEWS DO WHEN THEY WANTED TO BE SURE THAT ALL CHICKS WOULD HATCH WITHOUT DAMAGE AND WITHOUT HARM?

Y: Hot men azoy oysmarkirt, m'zol zetsn di kvokes af di eyer zuntik, mitog-tsayt, punkt ven di goyim geyen aroys fun kloyster.

E: ONE WOULD THEN PLAN TO PUT ALL THE SITTING HENS ON THE EGGS SUNDAY, NOONTIME, JUST AS THE GENTILES WERE LEAVING THE CHURCH.

Y: Meynt ir dokh az di goyim hobn nisht gekhapt dos fortl?

E: DO YOU THINK THAT THE GENTILES DIDN'T CATCH ON TO THIS TRICK?

Y: Zey hobn gezetst zeyere kvokes af di eyer shabes, ven di yidn flegn geyn fun shul.

E: THEY PLACED THEIR SITTING HENS ON THEIR EGGS SHABES, AS THE JEWS WERE COMING FROM SHUL.

Y: Mir redn fun a tsayt ven keyn moderne vunder-refuyes zaynen nokh nisht geven, un di kholasn hobn arumgevoyevet af vos di velt shteyt.

E: WE ARE SPEAKING OF A TIME WHEN MODERN WONDER MEDICINES WERE NOT YET IN EXISTENCE AND, UNOBSTRUCTED, DISEASES SPREAD QUICKLY.

Y: A kranker iz demolt geven af got's barot.

E: A SICK PERSON WAS THEN IN GOD'S HANDS.

Y: M'hot ober fort nisht gelozt a khoyle-mesukn glat azoy oysgeyn vi a likht.

E: HOWEVER, ONE DID NOT ALLOW A DANGEROUSLY SICK PERSON TO SIMPLY DIE AND PASS AWAY LIKE A CANDLE.

Y: Hot men ayngerisn veltn im gezunt tsu makhn.

E: THEY TRIED EVERYTHING ON EARTH TO MAKE HIM WELL.

Y: M'hot prubirt alerley potrades, kraytekhtser, un opshprekhenishn.

E: THEY TRIED ALL KINDS OF DELICIOUS FOODS, HERBS, AND EXORCISMS.

Y: M'hot gebundn a hun un zi aruntergeleygt untern bet fun krankn—dos hindl zol zayn far im di kapore.

E: THEY WOULD BIND A CHICKEN AND PLACE HER UNDER THE BED OF THE SICK PERSON SO THAT THE CHICKEN WOULD BE THE SCAPEGOAT.

Y: Oyb ober s'hot geholfn vi a toytn bankes, hot men gerufn an opshprekherke,

E: BUT IF IT HELPED AS MUCH AS CUPPING HELPS A DEAD PERSON, THEY WOULD CALL IN A SOOTHSAYER.

Y: Di skeyne iz gekumen ongelodn mit di letste heyl-mitlen: a meser, a kam, a zip, a zok, un amol a rod fun a vogn.

E: THE OLD WOMAN WOULD COME, LADEN WITH THE LATEST CURE-ALLS: A KNIFE, A COMB, A SIEVE, A SOCK, AND SOMETIMES A WHEEL FROM A WAGON.

Y: Zibn mol hot zi zikh gevashn di hent, gebrokh'n piskes, getsoygn bay di ojern, opgeshnitn di negl in a labn veykh broyt, un gegebn dos tsu esn a shvartsn hunt.

E: SEVEN TIMES SHE WASHED HER HANDS, HURLED INSULTS, PULLED HER EARS, CUT THE NAILS OF HER LEFT HAND, KNEADED THE NAILS INTO A LOAF OF WHITE BREAD, AND FED IT TO A BLACK DOG.

Y: Zi hot oykh ibergeton dos hemd fun krankn af der linker zayt un gezogt derbay a shprukh.

E: SHE ALSO TURNED THE SHIRT OF THE SICK PERSON INSIDE OUT AND UTTERED AN INCANTATION.

Y: Gleybt mir, s'iz geven kemat azoy gut vi penitsilin.

E: BELIEVE ME, IT WAS ALMOST AS GOOD AS PENICILLIN.

Y: S'iz nor a shod vos s'iz undz nisht farblibn kn statistik af vifl di opshprekhenishn hobn geholfn.

E: IT'S ONLY A SHAME THAT WE WERE NOT LEFT STATISTICS TO SHOW HOW MUCH THESE INCANTATIONS HELPED.

Y: Yidn zaynen nisht geven keyn panibrat mit hint.

E: JEWS WERE NOT PALS WITH DOGS.

Y: Dos darf ikh aykh nisht zogn.

E: I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT.

Y: Az a Yidish kind hot bagegnt a hunt in gas, hot er im aroysgeshtekt dray faygn un im bazungen mit aza borekh abo:

E: WHEN A JEWISH CHILD MET A DOG IN THE STREET, HE HELD OUT THREE FINGERS AND GREETED HIM LIKE THIS:

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This is the second of three parts to be published in *Der Bay*. Save it, and be sure to get the last one. The author, Miriam Hoffman teaches at Columbia University in New York City. The translator as well as the transliterator, Troim Katz Handler, is an author, IAYC board member and a well-known lecturer. Troim and her husband Frank spend their summers near Cranbury, New Jersey and winters in West Palm Beach, Florida. Troim can be contacted at: troim@webtv.net

# *In der velt fun bale-khay, fun Miriam Hoffman Part III*

## *IN THE WORLD OF LIVING CREATURES*

**Transliterated & Translated by Troim Katz Handler**

Y: "Hunt, hunt, du bist eysevs hunt. Ikh bin yankevs kind. Oyb du vest mikh baysn, vet kumen a beyzer tayvl un vet dikh tseraysn."

E: "DOG, DOG, YOU ARE ESAU'S DOG. I AM JACOB'S CHILD. IF YOU BITE ME, AN ANGRY DEVIL WILL COME AND TEAR YOU APART."

Y: Nu, mit aza shprukh un mit a grobn shtekn in hant iz a yidish kind geven gut bavornt kegn beyze hint.

E: WELL, WITH SUCH AN INCANTATION AND A THICK STICK, A JEWISH CHILD WAS PROTECTED AGAINST DOGS.

Y: Ober nisht ale hint zaynen arumgegangen mit taynes tsu der velt.

E: BUT NOT ALL DOGS WENT AROUND ANGRY WITH THE WORLD.

Y: Farkert, ven m'hot derzen a hunt gut oyfgeleygt un tsugelozn, hot men farshtanen; S'iz a simen az eliyohu hanovi gefint zikh in shtot.

E: ON THE CONTRARY, WHEN THEY SAW A RELAXED AND AFFECTIONATE DOG, THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT IT WAS A SIGN THAT ELIJAH THE PROPHET WAS IN TOWN.

Y: Mit kets, zet ir, iz geven shoyan an ander mayse.

E: WITH CATS, YOU SEE, IT WAS DIFFERENT.

Y: Kets hobn farhit di shtub kegn shtshures un mayz.

E: CATS PROTECTED THE HOUSE AGAINST RATS AND MICE.

Y: Nor vi tsugebundn di kats zol hobn geven tsum hoyzgezind, hot men zi say vi gerufn *falshe kats*.

E: BUT NO MATTER HOW ATTACHED THE CAT WAS TO THE HOUSEHOLD, IT WAS CALLED FALSE CAT JUST THE SAME.

Y: Az a shvartse kats iz farlofn emetsn dem veg, hot men gevust tsu nemen dray trit af tsurik.

E: WHEN A BLACK CAT CROSSED SOMEONE'S PATH, ONE KNEW TO TAKE THREE STEPS BACK.

Y: Az a kats hot zikh gevashn, hot men gevust az es kumen gest.

E: WHEN A CAT WASHED ITSELF, ONE EXPECTED GUESTS.

Y: Ven m'git a trakht af tsurik, az yidishe kinder in shtetl zaynen oysgekumen on kompyuters, on videotashmes, televiziyes, telefonen, khapt azsh on a tsiter.

E: WHEN YOU THINK BACK, THAT JEWISH CHILDREN IN THE SHTETL GOT ALONG

WITHOUT COMPUTERS, WITHOUT VIDEO-TAPES, TELEVISION, TELEPHONES, YOU ARE SEIZED BY A SHUDDER.

Y: Onshot dem hobn zey zikh geshpilt mit zshabkes, zumerfeyglekh, shpinen, un zshukes.

E: INSTEAD THEY PLAYED WITH FROGS, BUTTERFLIES, SPIDERS, AND BUGS.

Y: S'hot getrofn, az kleynvarg hobn a zshabkele tsekvetsht oder tsemeyest, hot men getsitert eymes-moves m'zol zikh kholile nisht aropredn fun hartsn farn reboyne-shel-oylem.

E: SOMETIMES IT HAPPENED THAT CHILDREN SQUASHED OR KILLED A LITTLE FROG; THEY WERE MORTALLY SCARED THAT A COMPLAINT WOULD BE FILED IN HEAVEN—THAT THEY MIGHT HEAR FROM THE LORD ABOVE.

Y: M'hot gegleybt az got baviligt zshabes dem koyekh fun kloles.

E: THEY BELIEVED THAT GOD ENDOWED FROGS WITH THE ABILITY TO CURSE,

Y: Un oyb s'iz geshen epes shlekhts mitn kind, oder mit zayn tate-mame, iz geven a simen az dos zshabkele hot im farsholtn.

E: AND IF SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED TO THE CHILD OR WITH HIS PARENTS, IT WAS A SIGN THAT THE LITTLE FROG HAD CURSED HIM.

Y: Az m'hot nisht vilndik oyfgetrofn af a zshabke, hot men glaykh gemuzt zogn: "*Zalts in di oygn—fefer in der noz.*"

E: IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY STEPPED ON A FROG, ONE IMMEDIATELY HAD TO SAY, "SALT IN YOUR EYES—PEPPER IN YOUR NOSE."

Y: Loyt ale simonim, hobn zshabkes farrmogt magishe koykhes.

E: ACCORDING TO ALL SIGNS, FROGS POSSESSED MAGICAL POWERS.

Y: Ver es hot geshribn mit kotsheres un lopetes un gekholemt fun a sheyner hantshrift, hot men im gerotn er zol onrirn a zshabe.

E: IF SOMEONE HAD A POOR HANDWRITING AND DREAMED OF BEAUTIFUL PENMANSHIP, HE WAS ADVISED TO TOUCH A FROG.

Y: Tsi dos hot take geholfn, vet shoyan blaybn an eybiker sod.

E: WHETHER OR NOT IT HELPED WILL REMAIN AN ETERNAL SECRET.

Y: Faran a zshukele vos m'ruft im bay undz, *moyshe raboynes kiyele* oder *meshiyekhl*.

E: THERE IS A WINGED INSECT WE CALL MOSES' LITTLE COW OR LITTLE MESSIAH.

Y: Ot dos fliyendike zshukele tor men bshum oyfn nisht ton kn shlekhts.

E: ONE MAY NOT HARM THIS FLYING INSECT ON ANY ACCOUNT.

Y: M'zogt az dos kepele fun dem dzshet-propelerdikn zshukele endlt vi tsvey tropns vaser tsum ferdele vos af im vet meshiyekhl kumen tsu raytn.

E: THEY SAY THAT THE LITTLE HEAD OF THIS JET-PROPELLED INSECT, A LADYBUG, RESEMBLES LIKE TWO DROPS OF WATER THE HORSE ON WHICH THE MESSIAH WILL COME RIDING.

Y: Dos bafli glte zshukele kumt take onzogn vegn der geule.

E: THIS WINGED INSECT WILL COME TO ANNOUNCE THE COMING OF THE MESSIAH.

Y: Az m'vil davke visn vegn sof fun di teg, darf men khapn dos MESHIKHL un shnel ibertseyln vifl pintelekh er farmogt af zayne fligelekh.

E: IF ONE TRULY WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT THE END OF DAYS, ONE HAS TO CATCH THIS LITTLE MESSIAH AND QUICKLY COUNT THE DOTS ON ITS LITTLE WINGS.

Y: Yedes pintele iz a yor; un loyt dem ksheshbn veyst men genoy, ven meshiekh vet kumen.

E: EVERY DOT IS A YEAR, AND, ACCORDING TO THE CALCULATION, ONE CAN TELL EXACTLY WHEN MESSIAH WILL COME

Y: Ot hot ir a tropn in yam funem raykhn yidishn folklor vos hot tsu ton mit lebedike bruim mit vemen mir teyln di yaboshe.

E: HERE YOU HAVE A DROP IN THE SEA OF RICH JEWISH FOLKLORE, WHICH HAS TO DO WITH THE LIVING CREATURES WITH WHICH WE SHARE THE LAND.

Y: Haynt. hot men gemakht fun di fir-fisike, svishsthendike, poyzedike bashefenishn a groysce industriye.

E: TODAY WE MAKE OF THESE FOUR-FOOTED, WHISTLING, CRAWLING CREATURES A GREAT INDUSTRY.

Y: A khutz shpayz, puts-salonen un heyl-mitlen, batsirt men di hayntike shtub-khayes mit regnmantelekh, shirems, kaloshn, oyringlekh, un shnirlekh kreln.

E: BESIDES FOOD, BEAUTY PARLORS, AND MEDICATIONS, WE ADORN TODAY'S HOUSE

PETS WITH RAINCOATS, UMBRELLAS, GALOSHES, EARRINGS, AND NECKLACES.

Y: Volt ir dokh gezogt az di khayes zaynen gliklekh.

E: YOU'D SAY THAT THE ANIMALS WERE HAPPY.

Y: A nekhtiker tog!

E: NO WAY!

Y: Zey muzn nebekh opkholyen gantsene teg in di farhakte shtiber, zeen nit di likhtike shayn far di oygn azoy groys vi der tog iz.

E: THEY MUST SPEND WHOLE DAYS IN CLOSED HOUSES AND DON'T SEE SUNSHINE.

Y: Hot dokh shoyn mayn soldatske kats gehat dos gan-eydn af der velt.

E: SO MY BRAVE CAT ENJOYED PARADISE ON EARTH.

Y: Zi hot gelebt vi a frayer foygl un gehat a gliklekh toyt.

E: HE LIVED AS FREE AS A BIRD AND ENJOYED A HAPPY DEATH.

Y: Dos partsef-ponim fun di yidishe bale-khay hot zikh in gantsn gebitn.

E: THE FACE OF JEWISH CONCERN FOR ANIMALS HAS CHANGED COMPLETELY.

Y: Haynt zaynen zey oder khutspedik un hefker, oder zey zaynen oysgeputst in esik un in honik vi yentl tsum get.

E: TODAY THEY ARE EITHER BRAZEN OR WILD OR DRESSED UP IN VINEGAR AND HONEY LIKE YENTL GOING FOR HER DIVORCE.

Y: Nu, ikh ze shoyn, az ikh vel muzn aroysgeyn khapn moyshe raboynes kiyele, ibertseyln di flekelekh af zayne fligl, un prubirn oysrekehnen ven meshiyekhl vet kumen.

E: WELL, I SEE THAT I HAVE TO GO OUT TO CATCH A LADYBUG, MOYSHE RABEYNUS LITTLE COW, COUNT THE DOTS ON THE WINGS AND TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHEN MESSIAH WILL COME.

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This is the last of three parts to be published in *Der Bay*. The author, Miriam Hoffman, has taught Yiddish at Columbia University for over ten years. She was born in Lodz and came to the United States in 1949. A dozen of her plays have been staged, including *Songs of Paradise*, produced by the late Joseph Papp. Other plays have toured Amsterdam, Regensburg, Zurich, Munich, and Warsaw. She has published children's books and is known for her column in the *Forverts*. In May of 2005, she will be on the faculty of a Yiddish Teachers' Institute at Vilnius University, Lithuania.