Yiddish Yiddish Yiddish

The Golden Gate to the World-Wide Yiddish Community
Voice of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs

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Yiddish is the language of Ashkenazic Jewry. The Yiddish language, literature, poetry, theater and music have a rich heritage. Our mission is to foster the preservation of the Yiddish language (mame-loshn) and the associated Yiddish culture, music, theater, literature and poetry via the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC).

Specialties of Der Bay:

1) Der internatsyonaler kalendar has Yiddish events
2) Lists: Yiddish Teachers, Yiddish Clubs, Performers, Klezmer Bands
3) Caveats for translators and a list of Translators
4) Free locator services
5) The Yiddish Network (TYN) with contacts in 34 countries
6) International Assoc. of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) and Conferences
7) Links to great Yiddish sites and other Jewish sites
8) International Pen Pal (briv fraynd) over 385 participants
9) Clearinghouse: Major U.S. & Canadian Yiddish Events
10) Information on Romanized (transliterated) Yiddish material
11) Yiddish for the disabled

E-mail Philip "Fishl" Kutner

http://www.derbay.org
Welcome To Der Bay’s Bar Mitsve Celebration

The cover shows the homepage of Der Bay’s website. It is only a part of the story of the newsletter that today celebrates its bar mitsve. This issue is a brief attempt to highlight activities and news of the Yiddish community from January 1991 until today.

Within the many lists that have been compiled and continuously updated, are the elite of the Yiddish community—worldwide. It is to them, the living, and those with Zellig Bach, Yosl Mlotek, Will Stern, Hy Kaplan, Walter Artzt Stanley Bunyan, Fred Ellin and Joseph Grinspan, etc., whose friendship, knowledge and encouragement, are responsible for much of Der Bay’s success. Any major omission is a serious error. Please let us know and accept our apology for any omissions.

Ari Davidow was our first computer guru. At that time Ari was busy in San Francisco. It was before his move back East and establishment of a premiere klezmer website. Today, Tomasz Pado fills the bill. Next are Layah Laks, Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter, Itche Goldberg, Chayale Ash-Furman, Frida de Cielak. Noyekh Miller, Mark David, Josif Vaisman, Oscar Antell, Sylvia Schiltz, Yale Strom, Henry Sapoznik, Baila Pransky, Helen Schechtman, and Sid Resnick.

We honor Arbeter Ring—the only U.S. fraternal organization that fosters Yiddish survival. In its ranks are friends of Der Bay; Stephen Dowling, Chava Lapin, Shelley Shapiro, Israel Kugler, Pysakh Fiszman, Dr. Barney Zumoff, Ruvn Millman, Marilyn Cagin, Chana Mlotek, Mike Katz, the Mandels, the Pincuses, Leon Levitt, the Rotkins, and Eric Gordon.

In its early years Der Bay was influential in the founding of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC). All of its officers and board members have been among Der Bay’s greatest supporters. This unique group of hard working, unselfish, lovers of Yiddish work as a team without any remuneration. They have become dear personal friends of Sally and your editor. The IAYC has grown and flourished in eight conferences throughout the United States and Canada. Now the IAYC is a vibrant organization and Der Bay is proud to be a major source of information.

Many feature writers have adorned the pages of Der Bay. They have run a series of articles on a particular theme and enriched its contents. Among them have been: Ed Goldman whose 15 Romanized (transliterated) comic, bible scenes are still very popular and requested for club programs.

In a scholarly vein, Gella and Shikl Fishman had a year of contributions. Today they contribute on archives Gella founded at Stanford University.

Currently Kitty Katz, photojournalist and writer has contributed stories about Jewish New York. Israel Kugler’s series on The American Yiddish Theater: Origins & History is just concluding. Also in this issue is the second of five installments of Pascal Curin’s, History of the Jewish Community in Alsace and Lorraine.

Eli Katz, Louis Fridhandler and Kay Goodman had exciting articles. Fellow ex-chicken-plucker, and dear friend, Mendy Fliegler has sent in original poetry. Van Wallach did reviews of Jewish videos.

The Major and long-time contributors were published in earlier issues. You are the stalwarts who helped to support Der Bay, and many wrote articles, reported on events for der internatsyonaler kalender and are contacts for The Yiddish Network (TYN).

Los Angeles has; Archie Barkan, Portia Rose, Mel Rogow, Chic Wolk, Lilke Majsner, John Rauch, Hale Porter, Sid Weinstein, Hershl Hartman, the Bialises, Dr. Sarah Moskovitz, & Chassie Margolis.

Toronto is another area of wonderful friendships. Other than IAYC Board members they are; Henny & Nachum Reinhartz, Marv & Eda Zimler-Schiff, the Bermans, Aron Fainer, Helen Smolkin, Gerry Kane, Richard Bassett, Miriam Beckerman, Nathan Garnick, Shirley Kumove, Faye Kellerstein, the Lustgartens, (the 2 Glorias!) and Phil Givens, o’h’.

Yiddish of Greater Washington is one of the prominent Yiddish Groups. It has sponsored two IAYC conferences. Our IAYC president is from this group. The too long list includes; Hilda Rubin, Motl Rosenbush, Marcia Gruss Levinsohn, Sid Vernier, Sonia Fuentes, Jonathan Sunshine and Rae Meltzer.

Overseas contacts visiting our home include: Jack Halpern (Japan), Jack Wiegman (the Netherlands), Dov Noy (Israel), and Norman Sims (New Zealand).

Credit goes to Peninsula JCC’s Judy Edelson and 0 who offered the Yiddish Club a free meeting room, and in the very early years paid for Der Bay. Without its aid Der Bay wouldn’t exist.

Der Bay encourages all groups to support great-all-Yiddish publications, and organizations like YIVO, NYBC, Folkbiene, Yugntruf, League for Yiddish, KlezKamp, Yidishkayt LA, Charlotte & Chicago JCC Institutes, W.C. JCE, L.A. Yiddish Intensive, Circle of Yiddish Clubs, and many overseas. Der Bay isn’t a scholarly journal. There are wonderful ones edited by scholars. Der Bay is a place to learn who, what, where & when of the groups, meetings, performances, people, and publications in the Yiddish Kingdom.

It’s past history—you are only as good as today’s game and your value is only what you can do in the future. What does the future hold? Der Bay is unique in that it does what no other group continues to do—the briv fraynd program, der internatsyonaler kalendar, the resource for Romanized (transliterated) material, the compilation of lists of Yiddish teachers, translators and Yiddish clubs. Although Der Bay has a great Klezmer list, Ari Davidson is the leader.

These 13 years were a time of personal growth and rewards from many contacts. My pupils have been a rich source of stimulus and friendships. May they continue to inspire me for many years to come.
The American Yiddish Theater: Origins & History—Part V
by Israel Kugler

Peretz Hirshbein (1881-1949)

He wrote of rural Lithuanian Jewish life. In *Grine Felder* a Jewish farmer hires Levi Yitzkhok to tutor his sons. The daughter Tsine tries to prevent him from taking a job with a nearby farmer and wins Levi’s hand. Other plays include—*Der Shmidt’s Tekhter* and the *Puste Kretshme.*

Ansky (1863-1920)

Ansky’s *Der Dybbuk* was one of the most popular Yiddish plays, put on also in English and Hebrew. It deals with exorcism of a spirit in the bride’s betrothed who dies and afflicts the bride to a rich suitor.

Maurice Schwartz (1890-1960)

After moving from Irving Place to the original Madison Square Garden, Schwartz amassed funds to build his own theater on Second Avenue and 12th Street. Its greatest successes included J.J. Singer’s *Yoshe Kalb.* The actresses were Bina Abramovitch, Jennie Goldstein, Celia Adler and Berta Gersten. The actors were Jacob Ben-Ami, Lazar Freed, Maurice Schwartz, Muni Weisenfreund (Paul Muni), David Opatashu, and Joseph Buloff.

The Vilne Troupe

This company was made famous by the avant-garde production of the *Dybbuk* in Vilne (Yerushelayim di Lite). Led by Leyb Kadison, his daughter, Luba and her husband Joseph Buloff, his company achieved worldwide recognition. It arrived in New York in the late 20’s and was pulled in many directions by rival companies. After Muni Weisenfreund left Schwartz’s Yiddish Art Theater, Buloff took his place acting in such classics as *Three Cities* by Sholem Asch, J.J. Singer’s *Yoshe Kalb* and *The Brothers Ashkenazi.* Buloff’s ability as an actor resulted in his joining the English stage where he appeared as the Greek landlord in *My Sister Eileen,* the peddler in *Oklahoma,* and in Arthur Miller’s *The Price.* He also acted in a Yiddish version of Miller’s *Death of a Salesman.* He held one man shows with readings from Chekhov and delightful humorous pieces by Lutsky (*A Piece of Paper Driven by the Wind,* and *A Pot of Bubbling Soup*).

Yiddish Comedy

Yiddish comedy was an important phase of Yiddish theater, but some of it descended to *Shund.* Ludwig Satz, Aaron Lebedeff, and Peysakh Burstein were outstanding followers after Sigmund Mogulescu in using mime—a variety of vocal expression, facial plasticity and body language to caricature a character. Last in this male line was Menashe Skulnik—the perfect player of Shlemil and Shmendrik. The diminutive Molly Picon stands out all by herself, in her ability to sing, dance, turn cartwheels, and sparkle as a gymnast. All of the comedians were capable of acting more serious roles if called upon.

ARTEF

ARTEF was the partisan politicalization of Yiddish theater. It is the acronym for a group tied to the Jewish sector of the American Communist Party. Existing in the glow of the Moscow Art Theater of Stanislavsky and the great Yiddish actor-producer Shlomo Mikhoels (murdered by Stalin along with Soviet Yiddish writers) ARTEF drew a following under the direction of Benno Schneider. Yiddish plays had expressionistic staging and adapted some standard Yiddish plays with a party-line twist. Many Broadway actors came to ARTEF performances. David Opatashu got his start there and appeared in movies and on Broadway. Jules Dassin who was associated with the Greek actress Merlina Mercuri also was a product of ARTEF.

Musical Theater

Molly Picon wrote, “To the musical theater were attracted a retinue of composers and lyricists whose compositions were counted by thousands. They included such giants as Joseph Rumshinsky, Sholem Secunda, Alexander Olshansky, Abraham Ellstein, Illya Trilling, Yasha Kreitzberg. I would include the lyricists Anshei Schorr, Isadore Lillian, Morris Rund, Nuchum Stutchkoff, Jacob Jacobs, Khayim Tauber, Israel Rosenberg and the outstanding poets, Itzik Manger, Mani Leyb, Avrom Reisen, Aaron Tzeitlin, Khayim Nachman Bialik, Nakhum Yud, Wolf Younin.” *(Special Note: During the Great Depression Sholem Secunda sold his song *Bei (Bay) Mir Bistu Sheyn* for fifteen dollars!)*

Dance

Many Yiddish theater offerings had choreographed dance developed by Binyumin Zemach, Felix Fybush and Pearl Lang. Pearl Lang, is a graduate of the Chicago Workmen’s Circle Shuln. She was part of Martha Graham’s ensemble. Pearl now has her own dance group with recitals often having Jewish themes.
Yiddish Theater Today

Despite growing numbers of Yiddish vinklen, Yiddish courses at universities and at the Workmen's Circle, and well-attended outdoor Yiddish festivals, the Yiddish theater leads a tenuous existence. The Folksbiene, the oldest continuous Yiddish theater in the world, began in 1915 with amateur actresses and actors performing after a day in the shops. Once housed in the auditorium of the Forward building on East 55th Street. Since the fire there, it has had three seasons with Minna Bern and Shifre Lehrer, the veteran performers as well as some newcomers. The 2002 season featured Yentl, a play based on a story of I. Bashevis Singer. The current season’s offering is a comedy by Leon Kobrin, Di Nekst-Dorike (The Lady Next Door) of temptation and longing in the dark abyss of nostalgic oblivion.

It is hoped that the Folksbiene (theater), The Forward (Yiddish, English, Russian editions) and the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring (main headquarters) will locate in a well-planned setting for all three kindred organizations. It is worthy of note that The Folksbiene has a program for youngsters, Kids and Yiddish organized by Joanne Borts, star of the stage who went to shule and now teaches the kids some basic Yiddish elements. There are also staged readings by veteran Yiddish actors, David Rogow, Shifre Lehrer & Minna Bern.

I end with a dream and hope for the future—Zukunft. The Folksbiene must dare to flourish by incorporating:

- A Chorus and Chorale;
- A Dance program in association with Pearl Lang;
- A troupe appearing in urban centers across the United States, possibly even in Central and South America;
- A contest for new plays in Yiddish to showcase the continued survival of this art form;
- A dramatic training program for new Yiddish performers;
- A Klezmer program.

I am sure that lovers of the Yiddish language and Yiddish culture will help make this dream a reality. Other ethnic groups have successful theaters—Repertorio Espagnol and The Irish Repertory are examples. Yiddish has survived so very many obituaries. Nobel Laureate, Isaac Bashevis Singer, predicted that Yiddish would continue. As for the Yiddish theater as an expression of Yiddish culture, it is too important a part of historic Jewishness to disappear into the dark abyss of nostalgic oblivion.

Books

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Lifson, David S., The Yiddish Theater in America, N.Y., Yoseloff, 1965
Miller, James, The Detroit Yiddish Theater, 1920-1937, Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 1967
Schildkraut, Joseph, My Father and I, N.Y., Viking, 1959
Warermbud, Norman H., Great Songs of the Yiddish Theater, N.Y., Quadrangle, 1975
Yablokoff, Herman, Der Payatz; Around the World with Yiddish Theater, Silver Spring, MD, Bartleby Press, 1995 (Yablokoff for many years was the head of the Hebrew Actors Union, organized years before Actors Equity.)

Dr. Israel Kugler is Professor Emeritus in Social Science, The City University of New York. He graduated from Eastman shul and Mittlshul of the Workmen’s Circle. He was President of the Workmen’s Circle from 1980-84 and is now on its National Executive Board. At City College he was the Organizer of the Yipsels (Young Peoples Socialist League). He organized unions of college and university faculty as an officer of the United Federation of Teachers, President of the United Federation of College Teachers.

Editor’s Note: This is the fifth and final column in this series. Dr. Israel Kugler’s dedication to the Folksbiene has been a passion. We hope that Zalmen Mlotek’s efforts to expand Yiddish Theater will continue to be successful.
14th - 15th centuries continued
Jews were alternatively driven out and called back, but were definitively expelled by Duke René II in 1477 because they were falsely accused of supporting the enemy (Burgundy). The next official permission for Jews to settle in Lorraine didn't occur until the beginning of the 18th century.

Consequently, there was a recurring gap in the Jewish presence:
* In Metz from the 13th to the 16th centuries.
* In Lorraine from the 15th to the 18th centuries.
* In Alsace from the 14th to the 16th centuries.

This doesn't mean that there was a complete absence of Jews in these regions, but the main Jewish communities of that time lived in the larger cities. In these less densely populated regions they were more visible, and thus, in a way more vulnerable. A few isolated Jews were scattered throughout the region in these provinces, but it was obvious that very little of the European Jewish population was living in Alsace during these periods.

16th century
In Alsace, the urban communities of the big cities, as previously mentioned, disappeared without a trace along with their accompanying architectural heritage. Only a part of the synagogue of Bergheim, the former center of the Alsatian Rabbinate, still remains today to recall the Jewish past prior to the 17th century in this region.

In Metz the situation changed abruptly when the city became French, or under a French protectorate in 1552. Ten years later, the Jews were officially allowed to settle in Metz again. For many the French attitude may seem contradictory to Jews in the main kingdom. But in fact, France needed the Jews to finance the numerous regiments that were garrisoned at Metz, known as the most fortified garrison town of France on foreign soil and close to the Holy Roman Empire, its main enemy. Consequently, the end justified the means.

Moreover it was in the 16th century that the word "ghetto" for Venetian foundry gave its name to all urban Jewish neighborhoods in Europe, which were bordered and sealed off from the Christian sections. Metz and Strasbourg adopted this ghetto system, and referred to Pope Paul IV's decree in 1555 that ordered numerous discriminatory rules against Jews. Only 24 Jewish households were allowed to live in Metz at this time.

About 160 families lived in villages in the 16th century in Alsace. Jews in Lorraine and Alsace were always in transit, or on the alert. It's contrary, Metz has remained a center and a reference point for Jewish life in Northern Lorraine, just as Nancy and Lunéville have for Southern Lorraine. Many went to Germany, then Middle and Eastern Europe. This is a typical aspect of Jewish history in Alsace, because it was a border region. There was movement between West and East, right and left side of the Rhine River. Everyone tried his luck there. Eastern European Jews came to Alsace and Metz, and Alsatian Jews went to Poland or Lithuania.

17th century
In 1614, the Governor of the three Lorraine Dioceses under French protectorate (Metz, Toul and Verdun) authorized 58 Jewish households in each city. In the following centuries, the ghetto borders didn't change even though the population had steadily increased. Insalubrious conditions and overcrowding didn't make life easy for the Jewish sector of the region's population. In the mid 17th century, Alsace and Lorraine had to be repopulated after the bloody Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) where everyone, regardless of their religion, might have been a victim of the gratuitous violence that took place in a disorganized and anarchic war.

At the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, France won the vicariate over the dioceses Metz, Toul and Verdun, but the Dukedom of Lorraine remained a part of the Holy Roman Empire as an autonomous region from 1542. Lorraine looked like a puzzle.

In Alsace, the Sundgau, a part of the Austrian Hapsburg Empire in the south, and the Decapole (10 autonomous Alsatian cities with their territories), became French. In 1681, Strasbourg and its dependences were annexed to the absolutist France within the framework of Louis XIV's reunion politics. Only Mulhouse remained in the Helvetica Confederation for some decades to come.

The Alsatian territories were relatively spared from the subsequent armed conflicts that followed the Thirty Year's War. Louis XIV attempted a Pacific invasion of the Rhine border region. Conversely, the Dukedom Lorraine still remained occupied by the French Army for several decades following the Treaty of Westphalia, and continued to suffer the consequences of several wars against Spain. With the Pyrenean Treaty of 1659, France became more hegemonic and laid claim to several thrones and
territories around the main country. Louis XIV desired to achieve the "natural borders" of the French hexagon. In treaty after treaty, Lorraine tried to break away from Louis XIV's clutches.

Finally, at the Peace Treaty of Rijswijk in 1697, the Dukedom Lorraine once again became autonomous and could begin the repopulation of its territory to which the successive conflicts had laid waste. This explains why Jews first returned to Lorraine beginning in the 18th century. It's important not to confuse the Dukedom with the three Lorraine dioceses that unofficially became French in 1552, and then officially in 1648. As previously emphasized, the French crown needed the Jews for their own purposes, especially in the garrison town of Metz.

Contrary to the situation in Metz where the services of the Jews were needed, France granted the local Alsatian authorities, for the first time, the rights to determine the fate of the local Jewish inhabitants. However, the centralized French government urged the Alsatian authorities to understand that all Jews should be expelled from Alsace, just as all other Jews that France had driven out since the 14th century. But since the annexed Alsatian territories resisted the expulsion of Jews, France granted them their previous privileges, among them, the right to shelter Jewish families from expulsion. Thus, the Alsatian rural Jewry remained stable, or even increased in size.

From 1650 onwards, numerous Jews came to Alsace from neighboring German territories beyond the Rhine, such as Baden, Swabia, or Rhineland. This played a major role in the formation of the 2nd generation of Alsatian Jewry, and particularly in the phonetics of the local Yiddish-Daytsh dialect, which is an Alemannic-sounding language in comparison with other Yiddish dialects. It goes without saying that the immigration of German Jews to the neighboring regions of Alsace and Lorraine corresponds to war and destitution in the countries from which they came.

Louis XIV decided out of pique to put the Palatinate to fire and sword. It has already been stressed that Alsace, as a border region, experienced the conflict between France and Germany. This king tolerated Jews in the new annexed Alsace, while that same monarch laid waste to the nearby German regions and obviously set about persecuting the Jews. These machiavellian contradictions didn't make any difference to the absolutist Louis XIV and Cardinal Mazarin who would stop at nothing to get what they wanted, particularly to crush the Hapsburg Empire which had been a traditional enemy for centuries. What's more, this was already the case with Louis XIII and especially Cardinal Richelieu who used the reasons of State as a dreadful weapon.

At the culmination of the 17th century, the Alsatian Jewish population had grown rapidly concurrent with the Christian population. In 1689, the Intendant De la Grange took a census of 525 families (2/3 in Lower Alsace and 1/3 in Upper Alsace) the majority of whom lived in the countryside. Eight years later there were 738 Jewish families, and 1,269 families of record by 1716. The Alsatian Jewish population grew tremendously over the course of the 18th century.

18th century in Alsace
This century was a transitional period for the Jews on French soil. This doesn't imply that everything became better and easier, or that the coming and going of Jewish families in exile definitively stopped in the 18th Century. One of the most established, reputable, and wealthy Jewish settlements in all of Europe existed in Frankfurt, then in 1711 a large fire destroyed almost the entire neighborhood resulting in the emigration of those that lost everything. During the Succession War for the Spanish Throne (1701-1714), the Palatinate had been adversely affected by the war.

In 1750 there were 2,585 Jewish families in Alsace, which represents 103 percent more families than there had been in 1716. Then in 1784, Louis XVI ordered another census and the results were surprising: there were 210 percent more Jewish families than at the beginning of the century. This census revealed a total of 3,942 families or 19,624 souls.

On the eve of the French Revolution in 1789 there were over a 150 Jewish communities in Alsace. The oldest ones had been established earlier in the 17th Century, and the more recent ones from 1750 onwards. Initially, three rabbis were appointed for Upper Alsace, and four were appointed for Lower Alsace. The Bishop of Strasbourg, the Count of Hanau-Lichtenberg, and the reigning nobility appointed their own rabbis. Little by little, a few persons of the Jewish faith held important official positions either because of their influence, or their fortune. The local authorities considered these officials responsible for the relations between the Jewish population and themselves.

On September 27th 1791 the Constituent Assembly decreed that Jews become French nationals and receive civic rights like every other citizen. All special taxes assessed on Jews were abolished. Jews were allowed to have professions, to acquire buildings, to dwell or marry wherever and whenever they pleased.
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If you’ve been blessed, Please send a LITTLE extra — Date on the label shows when you last contributed.

Networking is having other people help you get what you want. Der Bay is a great networking tool. Use it to publicize, ask for info, locate someone/something. Be sure we have your change of address.

14-15) Oystsugen fun briv in der redaktsye—39
AZ, Freeman; CANADA, Falk; CA, Barkan, Frankel, Goodman, Hock, Kuperstein, Kutner, Sabath, Sterlin, Wolzinger; DC, Helzner, DE, Goodman; FL, Dreher, Perlstein; FRANCE, Medem Bibliothèque; GA, Szczupak; GERMANY, Aptroot; GREECE, Etz Hayyim; ISRAEL, Sandak; ITALY, Levitan; MA, David; MI, Dworkin, Schein; MS, Albritton; NC, Kavadlo; NJ, Berlin, Grinspan; NY, Grand, Jiminez, Ross; OH, Abrams, Dudwick; PA, Freedman, Selden; POLAND, Folwarczny; SPAIN, Carlow; SWEDEN, Schulman; THE NETHERLANDS, Bruyn

16) Inhalt—In This Issue

Der Bay
Editor: Philip "Fishl" Kutner
1128 Tanglewood Way
San Mateo, CA 94403

Return Service Requested
Dear Fishl,

Thanks for your contribution to the campaign to have Yiddish on the commemorative plaques in Lodz. We received a copy of the fax that the municipal authorities sent to the Forward. You will probably want to reproduce it in Der Bay. Just shows you what collective effort can achieve. We consider it a victory for Yiddish.

To Mr. J. J. Goldberg, Editor Forward

Dear Sir,

I would like to inform you that plaques commemorating the Litzmannstadt Ghetto will include Yiddish text, along with words in Polish, English and Hebrew. They will be translated into Yiddish by the YIVO Institute.

I will be very grateful if you publish this information in your newspaper. I do hope it will silence the rumours and assure the Holocaust Survivors about our respect toward them and all those who perished in the Litzmannstadt Ghetto.

Faithfully yours,

Jaroslaw Nowak

Director, Office of Promotion, Tourism and Foreign Co-operation
The City of Lodz

We are very happy about this official statement.

Henia & Nochem Reinhartz Toronto, Canada
her.nor@sympatico.ca

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Ideas for Yiddish Club Meetings

Everyone should participate in every meeting — even if they only make the coffee!

People want non-threatening activities. Some are self-conscious, and feel they would be embarrassed because their Yiddish is limited. Having dictionaries or lists available in Yiddish and transliteration is comforting. Der Bay’s website has 28 word lists, and any can be downloaded free and reproduced.

One use can be to have the members write a short letter in Yiddish and then in English to a grandchild or a friend. Then you might ask, only those who would like to share their letters, to read them.

IAYC has had sessions on suggested Yiddish club activities. Our hosts for the next IAYC Conference in Minneapolis, Mike & Roz Baker, again will have a session on club programs.

Der Bay will continue to publish great ideas for Yiddish clubs. If your club has had an unusual experience with a novel way of making meetings exciting, please send it in.

We have had excellent results with Toronto’s Friends of Yiddish, Dos Bletl’s column, Kokhle. Recipes are in Yiddish & English. First we read the Yiddish and go over the new words. Then comes the fun. Some of the better bakers then get into a discussion about the merits of the recipe. The major conversation hovers around the amount of the ingredients. Often we hear, “me shit arayn a bisl mer, oder vintsiker.”
Center for Jewish Culture & Creativity

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Telephone: 323-658-5824 • Fax 323-658-5826
Email: mtarbult@aol.com www.JewishCreativity.org

Congratulations on Der Bay’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah milestone. May you and the wellspring of Jewish culture continue to go from strength to strength. Enclosed is an additional contribution towards the continuation of your important work. The Center for Jewish Culture and Creativity is also continuing its work to draw attention to the contribution of Yiddish culture to contemporary Jewish life.

Our affiliated Israeli filmmakers Dan Katzir & Ravit Markus are working on a documentary about the Yiddish theatre and its influence on current dramatic creativity in Hebrew and English. Our creative artist Yale Strom is creating a play about an archetypical prewar Klezmer musician Yiske Labushnik compiled by Yale from research into the memorial books of communities destroyed during the Holocaust.

The Center commissioned Yale Strom to compose and write in Yiddish to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. Yale’s most recent film Klezmer on Fish Street about the Europeans efforts to attract tourists by offering virtual Yiddish culture in places where real Jews are now extinct has begun to make the festival rounds and will soon premiere in theatres across America.

We welcome contributions to help us continue to develop creative projects to broaden the horizons of Jewish culture and the ongoing Jewish contribution to universal civilization. We encourage your readers to view our website www.jewishcreativity.org

The Center for Jewish Culture & Creativity was founded in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1990 by leading Israeli & North American artists, scholars & entrepreneurs who recognized that creative talent is a major resource of the Jewish people and that persons gifted with these attributes should be identified, mobilized and bonded by the Center into an activist movement devoted to sustaining Jewish identity and continuity.

The Center was established as a non-profit educational institution in the United States and Israel. It is guided by a distinguished Educational and Artistic Advisory Council. It is headquartered in Los Angeles, California but functions as a global fellowship of creative and performing artists, scholars and benefactors committed to the dynamic national Jewish culture envisioned by the Zionist philosopher Ahad Ha’am.

To preclude the fossilization of Jewish culture, the Center stimulates and facilitates the creation of new cultural works from a Jewish perspective and disseminates the resulting artistic expression in respected public venues, thereby broadening the horizons of Jewish culture and ensuring a Jewish contribution to universal civilization.

The Center is neither a building nor primarily a funder, but the vibrant hub of an international league of successful Jewish artists & scholars, who receive comradeship and opportunities. While maintaining strategic relations with many institutions, the Center is independent & embraces the spirit of K’lal Israel (One Jewish People).

Irving Berlin's White Xmas af yidish
by Al Grand <savoyid@optonline.net>

I attended a 3-day Bing Crosby conference at Hofstra University (Bing Crosby & American Culture). At one of the panels dealing with Irving Berlin’s White Xmas panelist Irving Saposnik read a paper entitled A Jewish Xmas With Bing Crosby & Irving Berlin. Linda Emmett, daughter of Irving Berlin, was one of the discussants. After the discussion I asked Ms. Emmett how deeply her father was involved with Yiddish.

She said that Berlin was fluent in Yiddish and that she remembers that, as a child, she would hear him hold full conversations in Yiddish with relatives who recently arrived in the U.S. from Europe.

Assuming that Berlin knew that Isaac Bashevis Singer grew up in the Polish shtetl of Bilgorey I was impelled to write a Yiddish version of White Xmas as Berlin himself may have written it. Here is Berlin’s original lyric followed by my Yiddish version:

I’m dreaming of a white Xmas
Just like the ones I used to know.
Where the treetops glisten,
And children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow.
I’m dreaming of a white Xmas
With every Xmas card I write.
May your days be merry and bright.
And may all your Xmases be white.

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Ikh kholem fun a vaysn yontef
Pinkt vi in shtetl Bilgorey,
Vë di beymer blishtshen
Un kinder kvitsn
Ven zey hulmen in der shney.
Ikh kholem fun a vaysn yontef
Ven ikh genden in langer tsayt
Zol zayn simkhes un gute nayes,
Un zol yontef brengen shneyen vays.
History of the Jewish Community in Alsace and Lorraine: Part III
by Pascal Curin

18th Century continued
New urban communities were created in Strasbourg and Colmar that attracted the rural dwellers closer to the thriving cities. Tightly knit orthodox communities faded, as social and religious discriminations began to disappear and individual civil liberties increased. The transition to a less religious, more integrated city dweller took place very gradually. The majority of the Alsatian Jews remained faithful to their tradition, although they slowly left their ghettos to set up residency among their Christian neighbors. In the late 18th Century, some Jews became well off thanks to their business acumen, industrial activity, or a flourishing trade, but most still engaged in the old traditional jobs that had been associated with the Jews. For example, Alsatian Jews up until the late 19th century were cattle dealers or hawkers. The most common imagery of Alsatian Judaism is represented by one of these jobs. Alsatian Jews dealt in real estate, acting negotiating the purchase or sale between farmers and administration, merchants and customers.

The less well off acted as touts, namely people who are used by others as facilitators, or to spread useful information about diverse opportunities (marriages, sales, family events, etc). Hawkers had intermediary places, or non-Jewish pied-à-terre, such as farms or inns where they got eggs and bread to eat, and a pan on which the inscription "kosher" was chalked, was often set-aside for use whenever they were passing through.

Most historians believe that Alsatian Jewry remained very rural, and seldom developed an intellectual aristocracy, there were exceptions of course. They put down roots in the Alsatian provinces and developed a real sense of belonging over time to a larger cultural community. In comparison, the wealthy urban Jews still could experience anti-Semitism and the ill effects of ignorance. The country Jews could show more solidarity with the Goyim. Their houses were open and their way of life less mysterious. Depending on the village, Jews were viewed as trustworthy and took steps to obtain something for the Bravi Goyim.

Shtetls didn’t exist in Alsace like in Eastern Europe, but small Jewish communities were referred to as Kelle. Jews spoke Yiddish-Daytsh at home, Galeres-Daytsh with the Alsatians, and of course Goyemlikh with non-Jewish people in the street. Cattle dealers spoke in their own unique jargon that they simply called Loshen among themselves.

In most Sephardic areas, which included Southern France, and some Ashkenazim areas, like Holland and Metz in Lorraine, social freedom of Jews led to true political emancipation, unlike what happened in Alsace. Until the beginning of the 19th Century, the Jews that remained were semi-proletarian and were conservative and less cultured. The events after the French Revolution in 1789 showed how Frenchmen and French Jews in the South looked on Alsatian Jewry, and in part the rural communities of Lorraine. In a way it was not new in Europe during the period of the Enlightenment, and later with the wave of assimilation in Germany.

Disagreements arose within the European Jewish community. It divided Jews East and West, reform and orthodox, among others. Alsatian Jews had affinities with the conservative side. This was not surprising since the immigration from Eastern Europe never stopped until the 19th Century, unlike Southern Sephardim communities that did not assimilate any persecuted traditional Jewish emigrants from Eastern Europe. The South and East of France were not on equal terms.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was enacted on August 27th 1789. The first difference between Southern and Eastern Jews from the point of view of Paris began with the register of grievances in which every French citizen could say his opinion about his life and problems of his country. Jews of Eastern France could not participate in the writing of these registers, unlike the Sephardim of South-Western France.

The well-known Abbot Grégoire fought for the rights of Eastern Jews. He was disturbed by the poverty of most Jews in Alsace-Lorraine. Like the Abbot, a prominent Strasbourg figure, Cerf Berr, represented the Jews of the eastern provinces and pleaded their case at the National Assembly on August 31st 1789. Berr-Isaac-Berr, representing Lorraine Jews, also spoke to obtain equal Human Rights for Eastern Jews. There was a resurgence of anti-Jewish violence and pogroms. The Sephardim (Bordeaux, Bayonne, Provence) felt disadvantaged by being lumped with Ashkenazim of Eastern France because of their image, and the prejudices about them in Paris. Sephardim could enjoy a better social position and economical success if distanced from Ashkenazim. They were well integrated, and less conservative than the Alsatian communities where newcomers from Eastern and Central Europe were traditional in rituals and clothing habits.
The Sephardim only requested rights of citizenship for themselves, and were awarded them January 28th 1790, eight months before all other Jews. Of course, South-Western Jews were less numerous than the Ashkenazim (about 5,000 versus 39,000). The risk associated with this decision was small for the powers in the capital. Thus, the Jews of Metz felt encouraged to apply for the same civil rights as the Sephardim, thinking they too were an integrated urban community, but their efforts were in vain. All so-called German Jews had to wait for their emancipation until September of 1791. However, this event was the real Revolution for Jewish history worldwide, especially in the cities as Jews took the required civic oath of citizenship.

A wave of patriotism swept over the Jewish communities; the newly emancipated Jews wanted to be good Frenchmen, even at the risk of seeming overzealous. Even Ashkenazim considered France the best host country for Jews in exile. Berr-Isaac-Berr, forever a traditionalist, said that Jews should show, "the patriotism that lies dormant in our hearts" in order to be appreciated by Frenchmen. Unfortunately, the Terror Period (1793-1794) was a ghastly interlude where all religions were victims of anarchy and arbitrary discrimination. Jewish communities experienced vandalism, confiscation of religious artifacts, questionable taxes, and fussy harassments about barbs, scarves, and other specific articles of traditional clothing.

After the Terror Period, mentalities changed gradually, but effectively. In the synagogues, people commented on political events and celebrated victories and other commemorations. Little by little, Jews emerged in positions of responsibility and prestige in professional fields like education, law, medicine, and the sciences. At the same time, the ideas of the Jewish Enlightenment (Haskala) also grew progressively in the minds of other Frenchmen, particularly in the cities.

The country Jews of Alsace remained faithful longer to the traditions and were less resistant to the old rules and regulations of the basic communities. In the 18th Century, the Jewish Religion was still disorganized and suffered the effects of not having a centralized and coordinated religious community. On the opposite side, some traditional Jews didn't see any problem in being responsible for their own community because they could continue to live in the manner in which they were accustomed.

The Jewries of Alsace and Lorraine ranked 2nd in all of Europe for subscriptions to the magazine, Ha-Meassef (from 1786 to 1811) originating in Berlin, the main center of the Haskala in Germany where it was first edited in 1784. They shared the values of Moses Mendelssohn. At last they expressed interest in the new ideas of the Meassefim, who wanted to spread the values of the socialite Berlin Jews throughout Eastern France, in contrast to the conservative masses of Eastern Europe. The Alsatian Jewish population didn't totally agree with the Haskala in the countryside. The majority was torn between two opposite ideas, and for them the debate might have been premature after the new emancipation of 1791. Everything happened quickly.

The Alsatian Jewry was deeply rooted in the rural culture of Alsace where it was possible to live as a traditional Jew without experiencing any acute discrimination. The country Jews of Alsace were a bit behind the times, or in a way, they simply needed more time than their socialite co-religionists coming from other regions where social emancipation had already become a reality.

Alsace attracted many immigrants from Eastern Europe that were obviously different from the Alsatian Jewry. Eastern European Jews came to France to live in a democracy, in the first nation on the continent that granted Jews full citizenship and civic rights. They didn't know what to expect from the French nation, and especially the Napoleonic code that had a higher goal. They wanted Jews from other regions to give up their traditional, seemingly too religious way of life and particularly down play outwardly visible forms of traditional Jewish practices that made it appear to others as a mysterious and exclusive world with its own rules and language.

The centralized power after the Revolution basically pursued the aim to spread the idea of one single republican, secular French, with common values in spirit and behavior, independent of religion and/or ethnic group. Therefore, the State didn't exclusively set about to persecute Jews at that time, but they still formed an obvious, recognizable community. The Ministry of the Interior mentioned taking necessary measures, "...to mix the French race and the Jewish race together."

The new Napoleonic politics also aimed at creating a revised Judaism that would be more compatible with the new civil code. This new more modern Judaism could then be progressively assimilated into mainstream France. Napoleon wanted France to serve as an example for the rest of Europe. France desired to lead the way for other nations that aimed at creating new, more holistic policies for all their constituents. Most nations of the world at this time had to first put a stop to feudalism in general, and especially to the typical tangle of old, non-adapted regulations in every field, including Judaism.
The Role of Yiddish Networking

The dictionary states that a network is a system of interrelated objects. It is a net of intertwined items. Another term that might be added is interdependent. The key is the prefix, inter, meaning between or among.

Networks have been used for honorable and vicious purposes. The Underground Railroad refers to the network of safe havens for slaves escaping from the South in their journey North to freedom. The Mafia and KKK are examples of the opposite type.

Yiddish is an intangible item like love and hate. Like all languages and cultures it is a creation of people. We can hear it, we can speak it, we can write it, but it has no physical form—it can only manifest itself by our creation.

Most Yiddish is created by and for Jews. Thus the networking by definition will be between and among Jews. There must be a pool of Jews from which we can draw. Goleš created a set of situations and has required new solutions. The greater the assimilation the greater is the need to form a pool. The Jewish neighborhood, community or ghetto is torn apart and the individuals scattered. Israel, the ultra orthodox and the Hasidim have the major Jewish locales today. Recreating this network today has become easier with the almost universal acceptance of the personal computer—Mendele is only one example.

How can networking help? Cooperation is the basis of success. If I help you, I expect you will help me. It may not be an equal exchange. Nor does it mean an instant exchange. Nor does it mean a like exchange. It means that at some time or some place you will do something for someone, and it may not even be me. There is the old tale about a beggar who was given a sum of money. The beggar was told that if he had a change in fortune to pass it on to another person in need and tell him to do the same. Thus that initial good deed might keep on the chain of good deeds.

How can YOU help and be helped by networking Yiddish contacts? For klezmer group leaders, Yiddish club leaders, Yiddish teachers, translators, performers, lecturers and conference promoters it is obvious. The more people with whom you can spread your message, the greater is your possible success—irrespective of whether it is in the form of money, prestige or self-satisfaction.

However, most of us are not klezmer musicians or fit in any of the categories in the previous paragraph. We are just Yiddish libhobers. We want to see Yiddish not only survive, but to flourish. We would love to be able to speak Yiddish fluently, hear Yiddish regularly, if possible read the Yiddish masters like Sholom Aleichem, Mendel and Peretz in the original and maybe even learn how to write the letters in Yiddish/Hebrew.

For Yiddish leaders the key is advertising. The problem is that money is at a premium. Thus the best advertisements are the free ones. Word of mouth is free, but how do you get the word out there? Advertisements cost money. Here are three simple suggestions for not paying for advertising. It works for Der Bay and will for other publications as well.

- Have an article published. Exciting and unusual human-interest stories are always a sure bet. If you can have a photo inserted, it makes it even better. In the larger publications you might even get paid for it.
- Write a letter to the editor. Most publications have such a column. In Der Bay it is very popular ever since Oystsubn fun brivo in der redaktsye was started.
- The simplest and yet effective way is to have listings in the Calendar of Events. Der Bay’s Der internatsyonaler kalendar is both in the hardcopy and on the website. And it is free—even if the person is not a financial supporter.

For many of us Yiddish is a love, but we are not talented, or trained, or physically able, or financially able, or have the time to be very active in the Yiddish world. What can we do to enjoy and foster Yiddish?

- Join a major Yiddish organization,
- Subscribe to a Yiddish publication,
- Buy a Yiddish book or cassette/CD,
- Attend and join a Yiddish club,
- Attend a Yiddish conference, Yiddish institute, Yiddish convention or a Yiddish lecture. There are daylong, weekends, weeklong and summer programs to suit your needs. Der Bay lists these.
- Maybe write to a briv fraynd (pen-pal)
- Tell your children, grandchildren or in local schools, stories about Yiddish culture.

Networking is an outreach program. The greater the outreach, the greater the rewards in whatever forms the rewards take. Purposely the whole area of cyberspace has been kept for the end. The computer is a tool for anyone, but it is especially the friend of the disabled. Most of us are disabled in one way or another. It could be physically, socially, financially, etc. The computer does not reject YOU for being blind, deaf, infirm or obese. If you have not visited Der Bay’s acclaimed website, it is at www.derbay.org and it is free 24/7.
KLEZMERQUERQUE 2004

A Southwestern celebration of Klezmer music and dance into the 21st century: featuring a weekend of concerts, dance parties, classes and lectures on the music and dance of Eastern European Jewish Folk, February 20-22, 2004. This year’s featured performer is Margot Leverett, virtuoso Klezmer clarinetist and saxophonist. Presented by Congregation Nahalat Shalom in Albuquerque, New Mexico

Friday, February 20th 6:30 pm: Freylekhe Shabbes featuring a 'danced' Kabbalat Shabbat service followed by a potluck vegetarian dinner (7:00) and dancing to live Klezmer music (7:30) with ABQ’s own: Rebbe’s Orkestra, and our featured guest performer Margot Leverett. Yiddish dances lead by Rikud dance troupe and Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb.

Saturday, February 21st
10am-11:30am: Yiddish dance class and video presentation with Rikud dancers.
11:45am-12:15pm: Klezmer class—Margot Leverett
12:30pm -1:30pm: Saturday afternoon lunch and lecture presented by Albuquerque Academy teachers Stuart Lipkowitz and Danny Packer. A powerpoint presentation of the culture of East European Jewish life, family, work, community, immigration, etc.
2:00-3:30pm: Music class - Margot or dance class – Rikud, choose one.
7:00pm: Dance party with Margot Leverett accompanied by the 18-plus piece intergenerational Nahalat Shalom Community Klezmer Band and Saturday students. Dances lead by Rikud and student dancers.

Sunday, February 22nd
12:00 -1:30pm - Event price: $60 for 2 parties, lunch/presentation and 4 classes payed before Friday evening Feb 20th.
Individual classes and events can be paid for at time of class/event. Discounts for students, seniors, and fixed /low income - please inquire. Lodging: Hotels and B&B’s within 1/2 to 2miles - call /e-mail coordinator for info. Close to Historic Old Town, museums and Rio Grande Nature Center and trails.
Ski areas: Sandia Peak (40 mins. from ABQ), Santa Fe (1.5 hrs.), Taos, Angelfire & Red River (2.5-3.5 hrs.)

All events held at: Nahalat Shalom, 3606 Rio Grande Blvd. NW (between Candelaria & Griegos), ABQ, NM
Mailing Address: PO Box 40723, Albuquerque, NM 87196-0723 Phone: 505-343-8227, <http://www.nahalatshalom.org/>
Event coordinator: Beth Cohen, E-mail: cohenedmunds@netzero.net Phone: 505-243-6276

Yiddish South of the Border
A Book Review

Alan Astro is Professor of Modern Language and Literature at Trinity University in San Antonio, Texas. He has written the 17th book to be published by the University of New Mexico Press in their series, Jewish Latin America. Yiddish South of the Border is a mixture of writings, including short stories, poems, and excerpts from memoirs, novels, journalism, and stage dramas in Latin America.

Ilan Stavans, series editor wrote the very informative introduction. He points out the fallacy that most Latin American Jews are Sephardim. Arriving chiefly from Eastern Europe from 1880 and most of the 20th century, they settled in all 27 countries, but mainly Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Uruguay.

Latin American Yiddish literature is greater and more varied than most imagine it would be. Despite its long life and widespread presence, the Latin American influence, linguistically and culturally in Yiddish writing, has been neglected by scholars. Yiddish South of the Border is the first ever anthology of Latin American Yiddish works into translated English.

The center Yiddish in Latin America is at YIVO in Buenos Aires. YIVO was the victim of a terrorist bombing and its collection is being replenished. Today, Avraham Lichtenbaum (The Yiddish Network contact) is its director. He follows the wonderful work of the great Shmuel Rozhanski, z”l.

Astro selected 36 examples from 8 countries and they are all translated into English—many of which he has done. They range from 2-12 pages in length with the mode being 4 and all but 5 being less than 8 pages in length. They are excellent for Yiddish group readings and discussions.

The first is an excerpt of a memoir by Mordechai Alpersohn (the Jewish Robinson Crusoe) entitled, Of Pimps, Prostitutes, and Other Seducers. It is a fascinating account of newly arrived immigrants to Buenos Aires and their experience in going an agricultural settlement funded by Baron Hirsch.

Others are; Argentinean, Peretz Hirshbein Builders of a Jewish Future, Cuban, Aaron Zeitlin The Gallego, and Brazil, Rosa Palatnik, An Engagement Dinner.

Astro, Alan, Yiddish South of the Border, U of NM Press, 224 pp. ISBN 0-8263-2348-0 $24.95
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For more information Phone: 505-277-0655,
fax: 505-277-9270, or email: asutton@unm.edu
The King of Lampedusa
by Joan D. Levin <jdlevin@bright.net>

During the darkest days of the London Blitz during WWll, many hearts were brightened by news that an RAF pilot, low on fuel, had made a forced landing on an Italian island called Lampedusa. The local people, believing the downed airman to be the first wave of a British strike force, signed surrender documents before fueling his plane and sending him on his way.

The story dominated the mainstream British press, but it went far beyond that, because this pilot was Jewish. A London, Yiddish newspapers journalist, S. J. Harendorf, wrote a play, a fictional account based on this story. The King of Lampedusa, became one of the greatest successes of London Yiddish theater history. Even high-ranking British officials came to see it, and there were rumors that Churchill himself was going to attend a performance.

The King of Lampedusa finds a Jewish family of modest means from London's East End, suddenly thrown into the spotlight as the plot develops into a fantastic tale of a brave Jewish lad becoming the king of an Italian island. The comedy unfolds as we meet the hero’s philosophical father, his excited mother, his faithful sweetheart, her newly rich family the Allrightniks who have moved from the East End to the suburbs, and other relations, neighborhood characters and hangers on, each with an idea about how the new monarch should conduct his reign.

One fabulous scene consists of a dream sequence set in the imagined palace, a Jewish palace. How were such stage sets assembled during wartime? For this scene, a dry goods company that had sustained severe smoke damage donated gold lame cloth that could no longer be sold, to create a credible palace.

Yiddish Communities Fund


The Yiddish Communities Fund grants stipends of $1,000 to those who want to move closer to other Yiddish speakers. Applicants should be willing to speak Yiddish daily and to help found Yiddish-speaking communities where they live. Student status is not required, and one may live anywhere, as long as it is near other Yiddish speakers.

Though the final deadline is July 1, 2004, applications are on a rolling basis, so it is an advantage to apply as soon as possible.

Information about the Fund, relevant conditions, and application forms are on our Web site, www.yugntruf.org. Scroll to near the bottom of the front page and click on Yiddish Communities Fund.
Yiddish at College Hillels

We wish to foster Yiddish among the younger generations. If you have a child, grandchild or even a great grandchild who is applying to colleges, look at the Hillel website that shows colleges which are listed in the Yiddish search at their website. The general URL is: [http://www.hillel.org/](http://www.hillel.org/)
You will find there:

Find a Hillel:

Local Hillels
Regional Centers
Hillel’s International Center
Hillel in Israel & the former Soviet Union

Information For:

Prospective Students and Parents
JCSC Supervisors

Resources:

Soref Initiative for Emerging Campuses
Grants
Program Exchange
Partner Agencies
Ask a Rabbi
Jewish Resources
How to Guides
Media Files
Support Hillel
Jewish Campus Service Corps
Hillel’s Birthright Israel Trip

Yiddish is Listed at:

- Illinois Wesleyan University
- Baltimore Hebrew University
- California Institute of Technology
- Columbia University and Barnard College
- Hampshire College
- Haverford College
- Hebrew University—Israel
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies
- McGill University—Canada
- Mount Holyoke College
- Ohio State University
- Tufts University
- Union College
- University of Connecticut
- University of Hartford
- University of Maryland, College Park
- University of Massachusetts, Amherst
- University of Michigan
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Virginia
- Yale University

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Miami Beach Exhibit
by David Weintraub, Excerpted from yiddishteachers@yahoogroups.com online list

We hope to create a landmark exhibition that would celebrate the Yiddish cultural legacy of Miami Beach of the 1950s-1980s. Miami had the longest running Yiddish vaudeville in the world, hosted several Yiddish radio programs, had a vibrant Yiddish choral history and much more.

We hope to create a time machine that would bring audiences back to when Yiddish theater and vaudeville was at its height, choruses performed on Ocean Drive and Jacob Schachter ran the American Jewish Hour on radio stations. We seek:

1) Archival materials, memories, pictures, etc concerning this era. If you were part of this period, we wish to interview you. Please forward me this information or pass this e-mail on.
2) The exhibit is planned to begin Spring 2005 in Miami Beach, and then to travel around the country.

We would appreciate help in bringing this exhibition to a venue near you. We need people to contact their local museums, JCCs, etc for space. It may require about 1000 square feet, but its traveling component could be less. With the exhibit will be performances of live programming, documentaries, photographs, memorabilia and contemporary art that meditates on the American tendency to create throwaway art to replace the vibrant cultural and religious-based legacies left from many ethnic groups who came here.

Contact me at [director@yiddishculture.org](mailto:director@yiddishculture.org) to discuss the program more fully.

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Raquel Siano Leisorek Shraybt


Iedn montik bainajt treft zij di 2te grupe in p’rivate haizer, mir shmuesn un leinen in idish oder mir diskutirn politik, mir zeen idishe bilder, ale mol iz do vegn vos tzu redn, mir trefn zij iberhoipt tzu hern un redn idish.

*Ij gib noj op idishe lektzies grade iunge mentshn vos zainen farinteresirt in undzer idisher kultur.*
It’s Time to Plan Your Summer Yiddish Studies Program

Each year there is an outpouring of Summer Yiddish Programs in the United States, Canada, Israel, England, France, Russia and Lithuania that include; Courses, Institutes, Seminars, etc.

Inside this issue are several of them. Each one is unique in offerings and many are in unusual settings. A complete listing is found on Der Bay’s website under major events. Listings include: dates, contact person, phone number and e-mail address. These are updated regularly.

The unique learning situations this summer include:

• KlezCalifornia 6/20-25, 04
• YIVO 6/28-8/6, 04
• Workmen’s Circle JCE
• IAJGS, Jerusalem 7/4-9, 04
• JMI Yid. Summer Sch., London 8/1-6, 04
• KlezFest 2004, London 8/8-12, 04
• KlezKanada 8/24-29, 04
• Yugntuﬁ’s Yiddish Vokh 8/25-31, 04
• Charlotte Yiddish Institute 8/26-9/2, 04

Of course there are the regular programs that meet in the fall and winter. Some are:

• Klezmerquerque Feb 20-22, 04
• Vilna July 28-Aug. 26
• Ashkenaz Sept. 4-6, 04
• JCC Chicago Yiddish Institute Oct 14-17, 04
• KlezKamp Dec. 26-31, 04
• Winter Yiddish Intensive: L.A. TBA
• NYBC Year Around
• Yidishkayt LA Year Around

It is Time to Check, and Update Your Der Bay Status

First, our readers fall into two major groups—those who do, and those who don’t. Naturally, I am speaking about cyberspace. Among our folks it is about half and half. This is up from three years ago when only a third were computer literate.

For everyone, look at the address label. It shows when you last were generous in assisting Der Bay. If your editor did not thank you, please realize how important you are. If it has been a while, please help. Also, if you move, please let us know. Der Bay is not forwarded, for there is a return service request. This is costly, but it is best for being sure we know where you are.

If you do not have access to the computer, please write or call with info about events—club announcements, gigs, lectures, films etc.

If you are online, start with the homepage, check to see if your club, klezmer group, translator or performer status has the updated information.

Second, check the calendar to see if your events are listed correctly. The website is updated almost every day and often several times a day.

Third, if you or your group is not listed, remember that there is no charge to be listed—even if one is not a supporter of Der Bay.

Fourth, you or someone you know may wish to have a match with a Yiddish pen-pal.
Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
by Bert Stratton

Yiddishe Cup has invented a new genre: neo-Borscht Belt klezmer comedy. This recording will be an ethnic-humor album for people who aren't ethnic anymore! The band will time-travel back to the days when tough Jews, wearing shiny shoes, sold shoes—about 1958.

When Yiddishe Cup started, 15 years ago, there were still plenty greatest generation men alive. The archetype was an entrepreneur, no college degree. Like this gentleman:

"Can you play the song 'A Dudele'?" the elderly man asked. Sorry, we didn't know the tune. The man returned to the bandstand a few minutes later. "Have you learned it in the last five minutes?"

Then he said, "I'm Mrs. Katz, the pickle man." (As in Mrs. Katz Pickles, a local brand.)

I ended the small-talk with "Take it easy." He said, "Take it easy? That's what's wrong with America!"

That's the sound -- tough and endearing -- we're going for on the new album. (To be released July 1, if not sooner. Details later.)

ONE MORE GOSSIP

Most unusual "gig" of 2003 . . .

Me on solo clarinet, for no audience, in the chapel at St. Dominic Hospital, Jackson, Mississippi.

A nun walked by and asked if I needed help. Yes!

My wife, Alice, was undergoing emergency surgery -- on our vacation, no less. The doc said to her, "Ma'am, you are knockin' at heaven's do-or."

The operation went well. In the recovery room, the nurses asked Alice if she wanted a visit from the "sisters" (nuns). I said no for Alice, but afterward Alice said she would have liked that.

It turned that out every rabbi in town came to see her, though. That's two. Both were women. So Alice got the Jewish nuns. Why Mississippi for vacation? My mother is from Yazoo City, Miss. Maybe that's why Yiddishe Cup has a harmonica on some tunes.

Bert Stratton Yiddishe Cup Klezmer Band
Cleveland 216-932-3586
http://www.yiddishecup.com

Dictionary of Yiddish Chemical Terms?
by Morrie Feller

I was poking through some stuff I have in a carton in my garage, and I came across the prototype of a dictionary of chemical terms in Yiddish.

In 1996 Dr Steven Cohen, a professor of chemistry at Rutgers University, started to compile a dictionary of Yiddish chemical terms. To assist him he recruited assistant editors who knew Yiddish and chemistry, or had a technical background. There were four associate editors. I was one, Leybl Botwinik, Robert Goldenberg, and Mendy Fliegler who was described as an American engineer who edited the Yiddish language booklet accompanying the Yiddish-Language 30 cassette tape.

Did you know about this activity by Mendy? By the way, I think Cohen was never able to get a publisher to print his dictionary.

The Vinkl in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
by Dink Holzman

Everything in Milwaukee is fine except for our typical Milwaukee weather. I am informing you about the progress of our Congregation Shalom Yiddish Vinki. The enthusiasm has been fantastic. Our November meeting was a shmoozing session. For two hours we had members getting up in front of the group and singing songs they learned from their mame/tate and the zeyde/bube.

Some members read poetry and others had a good kibbitz with a joke. The most gratifying thing for me that over three years of meeting, more people are feeling more at ease standing in front of the group and speaking a bisl mameloshn. We don't care if it is 100% Yiddish or 50/50 Yiddish/English. The important thing is that they are speaking Yiddish.

In December we had one of our finest meetings—our Chanukah celebration. The tish, thanks to Simmy Libber-Mitz and Ruth Silberman was decked out with with a menorah, Chanukah cookies, strudel and rugalehs. Es gezunterheyt and everyone did. Prof. Loudin, from the Univ. of Wisconsin, was a guest lecturer. He presented a droshe entitled Yiddish in America, and the response from the audience was overwhelming. Over 100 members and guests attended. When you talk to Paul Meirood he will tell you about this fine program The meeting closed with singing Dermonugen (Auld Lang Syne—of course in Yiddish) We have wonderful plans for future meetings. As the enthusiasm continues to grow, my task is made easier. That's what is happening in Milwaukee!!
Napoleonic Era continued

Acknowledging that not all new regulations of the Napoleonic Era were the best or ethically impartial, the integration of the French Jews as full nationals couldn’t be achieved without making concessions to the values of the new Republic. Thus, the Jews of Eastern France had to make more concessions than others to break from the pre-Revolutionary period. This was due to their recent past coinciding with destitution, war, and diverse discriminations, contrary to the less numerous Sephardim in the South and West who could have shown a little more sense of cohesion as co-religionists sharing the same destiny. On the contrary, Alsatian Jews felt different from the Ashkenazim rituals from beyond the Rhine. They turned to the West and called themselves the Medinat Elzouss, divided in Galil Elyon for Upper Alsace, and Galil Tahton for Lower Alsace.

At the beginning of the 19th Century Napoleon understood the urgent necessity to regulate the religious life of the Jewish community. Numerous Jewish notables also hoped for the same official regulations as the Catholic and Protestant faiths under the control of the Ministry of Cults. Napoleon’s aim was also to fight against usury, all the more so as the anti-Semite press began to become virulent over this topic. The Minister of Justice was quoted in 1805 saying that, "...those men [Alsatian Jews] whose French nationality hasn’t made better Frenchmen of them continue to lend at excessively high rates." This statement really referred to all usurers, Jew and non-Jew alike, but was taken to as if it was directed solely at Jews.

Subsequently, the State Council decreed that every deed would have to be authenticated and it would be obligatory to be witnessed by non-Jews. Napoleon hoped for a general regulation and ordered a meeting in Paris with Jewish leaders chosen, "among rabbis, real estate owners and other Jews whose probity and enlightenment set them apart from all others." This decree concerned all eastern communities and those beyond the German border along the Rhine. The Emperor wanted them to define a commonly accepted legal interest rate and at the same time the meeting provided him with an opportunity to mention all existing contentions, as well as other topical issues of concern.

There were meetings between the Napoleonic Administration and Jewish leaders between 1806 and 1808. The results were not always in favor of the Jewish community. The "Despicable Decree" was kept for 10 years, and forbade Jews to be replaced by anybody when they were drawn for military service, contrary to what every Christian could do. Regarding loans, the tribunal could annul or reduce debts owed to Jews, and Town Hall (City Hall) could issue revocable licenses to Jewish lenders. The Despicable Decree lasted ten years and ended in 1818. It’s significant to note that Sephardim Jews of Landes and Gironde were exempted from this decree. Other communities also requested exemption, among them Metz, which saw themselves as similar to southwestern Jews.

There is no intent to discredit the Sephardim due to their more facile personal development during the emancipation period; through them it’s easier to realize how the State and the French people considered German Jews in Eastern France. In any way, they serve as a distorting mirror reflecting the partiality and insincerity of the decision-makers in Paris. For instance, a few months later, Napoleon exempted Paris as well as several southwestern regions from the Despicable Decree, probably due to their strong influence on national commerce.

In 1810, the last to be exempted were in South-Eastern France (Sephardim) and one community in the Ashkenazim Lorraine, the Vosges. To sum up, 68 communities representing a Jewish population of 13,370 were exempted in 1811, while 48 communities representing 65,439 were subjected to the Despicable Decree for a decade. An impartial observer can objectively wonder why the regulations demonstrated evidence of double standards, even though the majority of French Jews resided in Alsace and Lorraine. There was obvious discrimination against Ashkenazim whose derogatory image during this period was in disfavor with the administration in Paris.

Alsace and Lorraine were partly foreign in the spirit of the age, unlike southwestern regions. Economic success lead to better social freedom for Southern Jews which helped them to be well treated by the authorities. From 1806, the State Council called for measures against Jews that had immigrated. Eastern communities were concerned for they welcomed emigrants from the East. In Paris, the government displayed a bias against certain types of Jews that it considered incompatible with a progressive secular republic. The government lumped all French Jewish together, and only saw a Jewish people, not to say race. It seemed to judge by appearances.
Some decrees during the years between 1806 and 1808 focused attention on other important points. First of all, the documents of the Assembly of Notables used for the first time the term “Israelite” instead of Jew, and the administration became accustomed to speaking of the Culte Israelite, which in the new revolutionary vocabulary meant the Jewish Religion. This is being pointed out to avoid confusion of the two different meanings of cult in French and English. Secondly, from 1807 onwards, the Alsatian Jews were divided into two Consistories; Strasbourg for Lower Alsace, and Wintzenheim (later Colmar) for Upper Alsace. The Consistory and its Grand Rabbi appointed rabbis, officiates, shohatim, mohalim, as well as the chief administrators of synagogues. All consistories were under the control of a Central Consistory, initially established with three Grand Rabbis and later under the control of a single Grand Rabbi. This post still exists today and is entitled, Grand Rabbi of France.

Thirdly, Napoleon convened the so-called Grand Sanhedrin in order to make doctrinal decisions and to adapt the Israelite Religion into the republican nondenominational legislation. He called upon Jewish notables from all over Europe to assist him with achieving this goal. Among them, was the first Grand Rabbi of the Central Consistory (1778), David Sintzheim. He came from Trier, but taught in Bischheim, near Strasbourg. He was rather orthodox and in contact with the main Eastern Jewish centers, especially Bratislava. He undoubtedly represented the Alsatian Jewish masses very well because of their commitment to traditions, and Jewish rules were still fixed in their minds.

Beginning in 1806, the Jewish representatives were asked, "to make of Jews useful citizens, to conciliate their faith with all Frenchmen's duties and to dispel all criticisms that could have been made before." The Consistories and the Grand Rabbis were expensive for the flocks, their role was not only doctrinal but also administrative, and they also had to insist on the sacred nature of military service, to encourage prayers in favor of the Emperor, and to accept civil marriages without necessarily having the rabbi's blessing. Fortunately, Louis-Philippe decreed in 1831 that rabbis and officiates would get their salary from the State in the same manner as priests of both prevailing Christian faiths. This evolution led to a considerable development of the Alsatian communities in the late 19th Century.

There were numerous decrees ordered between 1806 and 1808, most important was the Imperial Decree of July 20th of 1808 regarding the civil status of all Jews in France. Contrary to the Sephardim in the South who commonly had nicknames or Christian names as patronymics that were passed down from father to son, the Ashkenazim didn't have stable patronymics for the French administration prior to the 19th Century. This once again emphasized the traditional way of thinking in the rural communities of Eastern France. The standardization of the Jews' patronymic status became a necessity in order to accelerate the integration process into the Republic. Eastern Jews named their children according to their ancestral custom: they used the name of an illustrious figure of the Bible or Talmud, and often added the (deceased) father or grandfather's name. This practice confounded the administration, since father and son did not systematically share the same name, and similitude gave the impression of incoherence. However, little by little, it became common to add a middle name to the religious name; the middle name gradually became a patronymic for greater convenience. Among them were religious functions such as Cohen, Kahn, Katz or Levi, then names of origin such as Wormser, Elsasser, Deutsch or Schwab, then professions such as Metzger, Melamed, and Baumann; and finally, similar to Christian patronymics, nicknames based on looks and appearances, such as Klein, Schwartz, Lipmann or Weiss.

When the Alsatian Jews had to register their legal patronymic July 20th 1808, confusion reigned both in the administration and the Jewish families. The level of calm depended on the officer's benevolence to specific patronymic customs. Not all officials could speak the Alsatian dialect, which is relatively close to the local Yiddish dialect. Depending upon the officer in charge, some names were forbidden, while other names ended up being imposed. For greater convenience, some officials, such as in Paris, generalized the rule of the first name, which had not to be religious. In other regions, Jews could become the object of derision when funny names were imposed upon them. It's also significant to note that often Jews could only write their name using the Hebrew alphabet, contrary to the urban Jews of Metz and the Sephardim of the South where there were registers in French language.

The local phonetics complicated things, and the transcription from the Hebrew was not codified for all registry offices. Commonly known names like Isaac, Isaac, or Mardochée couldn't be recognized behind the Alsatian forms Scheie, Itzig and Marx. Registry officers generally employed three rules: 1) imitate the consonance, Ascher became Anchel, Abraham, Avrom, or Fromm; 2) translate names such as Baruch to Benedict, Hayyim to Vidal, Shalom to Friedmann; and 3) use the translation of the equivalent symbolism in the Jewish tradition like the lion of Judas becoming Loeb, Lion, Loew, or Nephtali to Hirsch or Cerf, and Benjamin to Wolff.
Are There Stupid Yiddish Questions?

Why do we ask a question? Either because we do not know, or we want to find out if the other person knows the answer. In the first case we hope to be better informed while in the second we are in some form of superior position (as a teacher), or use it as a put down.

There are no stupid questions—only stupid answers.

We have heard someone start with, “This is a stupid question…” Actually, one might say that only stupid people ask stupid questions—perhaps, but I doubt it.

There are no stupid people—only people who do stupid things.

I have met those who have:
• less formal education,
• traveled less
• experienced less
• possessed less
• cared less
• volunteered less

However;

• Everyone knows someone I do not know.
• Everyone has been somewhere at a given time when I was not there.
• Everyone can do something that I am not able to do.
• Everyone possesses something that I do not have.

As an amateur storyteller (NAPPS), I often am asked to tell a story about unusual people, places and things. The art of weaving a story is a skill, and one can become quite adept at it. However, there were occasions when questions were so profound that I stood there humbled by the child who asked them.

1) Would you please tell me why my daddy and mommy argue all the time?
2) Why don’t daddy and mommy love me?

Are the above stupid questions? I don’t think so. What are your answers to the following questions?

Who Should Care About Yiddish Survival?
Why Should I Foster the Yiddish Culture?
In What Yiddish Activities Should I Participate?
Where Are There Yiddish Meetings?
When Should I Attend a Yiddish Meeting?
How Do I Help Others Get Interested in Yiddish?

Yiddish is Alive & Well in Melbourne
Suzanne Faigan sfaigan@mandelbaum.usyd.edu.au

Ikh hob gute nayes beshas yidish in melburn oystralye. Great news!! I’d love to share it with you. While Yiddish was reintroduced as an elective in the largest Jewish secondary school (Mount Scopus College) some 4 years ago, interest amongst students increased steadily. From a year 8 class in 1999 Yiddish is now offered in year 8, 9 and 10. Kids were clammering for Yiddish to become a VCE subject. This means a subject that is offered in years 11 and 12 and is graded such that it is part of a score for university entrance.

VCE standing gives national recognition of a subject. That Yiddish was not a VCE subject meant many kids chose French or Japanese as a language choice. Still despite this, interest had increased was such that for next year 2004 I have 38 kids who have chosen to do Yiddish in year 8. Two classes for the first time!!! I am Overwhelmed to say the least!!

Here’s a little background to Yiddish in Melbourne in the educational institutions. As many of you know in Melbourne we have a primary (elementary) school called Sholem Aleichem College very much a Workmen’s Circle type school that only goes to year 6 where Yiddish is the main (LOTE) Language other than English. Yiddish is also taught in years 8 and 9 as an elective to small classes in Yavneh College a Modern Orthodox school.

The King David School has a small group of committed students (ex Sholem Aleichem College students) who meet after school and are responsible for producing the wonderful Yunge Gvardia e-mag.

Yiddish at University level has been offered at Sydney University for a number of years now under the tutelage of our own Jennifer Dowling, and in Melbourne at Monash University for a few years under the brilliant Danielle Charak (who was indeed my own teacher many years ago and is still my mentor). So we have had Primary and Tertiary levels. What has been lacking is the VCE or Matric standing at secondary level. Even under previous systems when previous attempts have been made even in previous decades this has eluded us.

There have been many people working behind the scenes trying to make this happen particularly Bobbi Zylberman and Charles Slucki. I am very delighted to inform you that two days ago the recognized educational boards and committees have accepted Yiddish as a VCE subject!! We are thrilled and overwhelmed. The road ahead of us is full of hard work. Nevertheless, Yiddish is alive and well in Melbourne.
Intensive Yiddish Course

The Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, in cooperation with the 2004 Indiana University Summer Workshop in Slavic, East European and Central Asian Languages, announces an intensive language course, Yiddish for Holocaust Research, to take place at Indiana University from June 28 to August 6, 2004.

The course is open to students and scholars from accredited institutions of higher education with an interest in acquiring a reading knowledge of Yiddish to access Jewish source documents and perspectives on the Holocaust and to better understand the Yiddish-speaking Jewish communities of Europe. The course is equivalent to a full year of college language instruction. The Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies offers programs in Holocaust research and teaching. Information regarding other Center programs is available at www.ushmm.org.

The course will focus on grammar and reading skills for use in research. Brukhe Lang Caplan, who has taught Yiddish at JTS and YIVO, will teach the course. Ms. Caplan is pursuing her doctorate at Columbia University. In addition to intensive language instruction there will be a weekly seminar on the Holocaust and Yiddish history and culture.

The program’s sponsors will cover the cost of the course, books and single-occupancy housing. Successful applicants will receive a meal allowance, and will have access to Indiana University’s library, athletics and Internet access through the University’s computer and email system. Travel costs to and from Indiana University-Bloomington and incidentals are the participant’s responsibility. Participants are required to attend all six weeks of the course.

Applications must include a resume, a short statement of the candidate’s specific interest in Holocaust studies and Yiddish, and a supporting letter from an academic advisor, department chair, or dean that addresses the candidate’s qualifications, objectives for attending the course, and any institutional support provided. Applications must be postmarked no later than March 23, 2004. Applications should be sent to:

Dr. Ann Millin
Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies
U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW Washington, DC 20024-2150
(Fax: 202-479-9726; E-mail: amillin@ushmm.org). Candidates will be notified of the results of the application process by April 10.

ITCHE GOLDBERG: 100th Birthday

Isaiah (Shike) Gellman

You will recall that beginning on October 15, 2003 we wrote to 325 of you regarding our plans to honor Itche Goldberg’s 100th birthday and his over 80 years of dedicated service to, and love of, the Yiddish language, culture and education in two ways. First we undertook to raise $100,000 within the next two years to fund his continued work, and second to organize a fitting celebration of his 100th birthday on April 25, 2004. This is our progress report to you on where we stand on both these activities.

Raising $100,000 for Itche’s Continued Work

You will be glad to learn that you have already contributed $20,000 to this effort. As of January 15, 2004 one hundred of you have sent us checks ranging from $25 to $5000 each. It is our immediate goal to be able to report to Itche at his birthday celebration that we have raised $50,000. This letter is therefore a reminder to those who have not yet sent in checks to do so at the earliest opportunity.

Plans for the 100th Birthday Luncheon Celebration

Our committee has completed arrangements at Congregation Habonim on West 66th Street near Lincoln Center to hold this celebration on Sunday April 25, 2004 between 1:00 and 4:00 PM. A fitting program is being organized along with a tasty meal. A world-wide honorary committee of sponsors has been organized, drawn from Itche’s peers and co-workers in Israel, Lithuania, Canada and here at home. The program will reflect and recapitulate over 80 years of Itche’s activities starting in Warsaw, Poland and continuing on in Canada and in the United States. Chaver Abraham Sutskever has agreed to serve as honorary chairman, and his bagrisung and others will be read to the banquet attendees.

You will shortly receive the formal invitation to attend and purchase tickets to the luncheon. Several door prizes will be awarded to ticket purchasers and a commemorative souvenir journal will also be distributed to all purchasers.

There will be no collection made at the luncheon and we therefore again ask you to send your fund contributions, made out to:

Zhitlovsky Center for Yiddish Culture,
c/o Isaiah Geilman
7 East 35th Street, #14F,
New York, NY 10016
(tel: 212-686-1448) e-mail: lolagell@nyc.rr.com
Amish & Yiddish

In Der Bay—why? At first glance this would seem like a strange combination. However, there are many similarities between East European Jews of the shtetl and the Chassidim, and this sect of the Pennsylvania Dutch.

First, the title Dutch came about when they came to Philadelphia the immigration inspectors mistook the word Deutsch for Dutch. They were actually Germans and Swiss who came in the 17th and 18th centuries. They are a subgroup of the Anabaptists as are the Mennonites. Their origin goes back to the Protestant Reformation. This article plans to show the many similarities between Chassidic Jews and the Amish.

• Both Yiddish and Amish have their roots in German. The Amish speak with a dialect having its roots in High German.

• Both groups have been persecuted and had to flee. We all know of the Spanish Inquisition and the many other examples. Catholics and Protestants murdered early Anabaptists as heretics.

• Most Chassdim are multi-lingual. They speak Yiddish in the home, Hebrew in their prayers and English in their secular contacts. Most Amish are trilingual. They speak a dialect of German called Pennsylvania Dutch at home; they use High German at their worship services; and they learn English at school. They speak English when they deal with anyone who is not Amish.

• The male Chassidim wear distinctive black clothes and the women longer dresses and a shaytl. The boys have peyes. Amish women wear dresses made from solid-colored fabric with long sleeves and a full skirt. The dresses are covered with a cape and apron and are fastened with snaps. They never cut their hair, which is worn in a bun. Their heads are covered with a white prayer shawl if they are married and a black one if they are single. Men wear dark-colored suits, coats without lapels, trousers with suspenders, solid-colored shirts, black socks and shoes, and black or straw broad-brimmed hats. They do not have mustaches, but they grow beards after they marry.

• Arranged marriages is common among the Chassidim. Chaperoned dating, if any is the norm. Among the Amish there is a strict code of pre-marital behavior. Bundling is the process by which a couple gets to know each other. In the evening the pair is wrapped separately and tightly in blankets next to each other.

Martha Visits South Africa

by Martha Mednick

I have been to and returned from South Africa and am finally over jet lag. It is far away. I want to thank you for the Yiddish contacts you sent. It worked out very well. I met Robyn Sassen in Johannesburg. She has been trying to study Yiddish but has no one else to work with, so it’s hard. I hope to stay in touch.

I also had a lovely tea with Veronica Belling and Lillian Dubb. That was in Capetown and we had quite a bit to talk about. I learned a great deal about the Jewish community from them and from visits to the Jewish Museum and the Holocaust memorial there. So thank you again.

Please note my correct email address. It is incorrect in the February issue of Der Bay. Martha T Mednick, Washington, D.C., e-mail marthm@earthlink.net

fun Lina Tulper

Kh’vil dertseln vegn mir a bisele. Ikh lern zikh in universitet Belgorod (Ruslen), bin shtudentke fun fakultet far romanishe un germanishe filologie (daytsh+english). Ikh hob ongeheybt Yiddish tsu lern zelbstshtendik in Kharkov (Ukraine), yayl kh’hob nit keyn meglikhkayt tsu lernen Yiddish do in Belgorod, hot men nit keyn kathedre oder fahgebit. Ikh bin keyn Kharkov (iber di grenets mit Ukraine 2 azeyger mit bus) gekumen, un dortn in yidishem tsenter Beyt-Dan zaynen geven faran di limudim, un mayne lererke in yiddish iz Shaulamit Lopatnik (talmidke fun Mordekhay Yushkovsky). In Beyt-Dan hob ikh gelernt yiddish 9 hoydoshim, nakhdem ikh hob bakumen an ayladung fun M. Yushkovsky tsu dem zeminar in Poyln in Jadwisin. Nakhdem hob ikh gehat a diplom, yayl ikh hob glernt ot azoy tov in der 3 grupe.

Ist hob ayntsike in der geshikhte undzer universitet fargeleygt di arbet in gebit fun Yiddish, un inderemesn visenshaftlikher rat fun der kathedre hot bashtetigt mayne arbet.

Oyf daytsh heyst dos tema fun mayne arbet vi Die Herrkunft des Jiddischen und seine Zusammenwirkung mit den germanischen, romanischen, slawischen und semistischen Sprachen. Ikh forsh oys di yiddish dialektn, inernemen in andere shprakhn, avade als vegn mameloshn, az bay lingvistik bay Jiddishkayt.

Ikh for keyn Daytshlent un shtudir in Duesseldorf-Uni yiddish. Prof. Marion Aptroot hot mir an ayladung opgeshikt un far mir iz es viktik, yayl ikh vil apgeb zn mit Yiddish-visenshaft.
**Plutsemdiker Regn**
fun Gitl Schaechter-Viswanath

Aroys a nay bikhl yidishe lider! Ir kent leynen veygn mayn nay bikhl yidishe poezye (mit englischer iberzetsung fin Jeffrey Shandler un Sholem Berger, un mit a hakdume fin Sheva Zucker), afn vayterdikn vebzayt!

www.suddenrain.org

The latest book of Yiddish poetry is out! You may have already heard that I've just published a book of my Yiddish poems (with English translation by Jeffrey Shandler and Zackary Berger, and with an introduction by Sheva Zucker).

Check the following website for more info:

www.suddenrain.org

(Editor's Note) There will be an example of this remarkable poetry in the next issue.

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**Two Australian Yiddish Groups**

Australian Friends of Yiddish (AFOY)
Advanced Reading Group
(Reading knowledge of Yiddish required) every second Monday, 2pm, at Pres. Goodridge's shtrub.
Phone Sydney 9692 5290, afoy2003@yahoo.com

Australian Friends of Yiddish (AFOY)
Conversation Group
Every Wednesday (during uni holidays), 2pm at Mandelbaum House.
(No previous knowledge required)
Phone Sydney 9692 5290, afoy2003@yahoo.com

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**Yiddish Classes**

This upcoming season, the Congress for Jewish Culture will offer an Intermediate Yiddish I course, taught by Reyzl Kalifowitz-Waletzky. Classes will be held at the Atran Center for Jewish Culture, 25 East 21st Street (between Park Ave. & Broadway), 1st floor on Monday nights (6:30-7:45), February 23-May 10th, 2004.

The course will be taught mostly in Yiddish. Students should be familiar with chapters 1-19 of Uriel Weinreich's College Yiddish. The concentration will be on further improvement of the four basic language skills: reading, writing, speaking and oral comprehension. The materials will cover chapters 20-30 of College Yiddish, plus other supplementary sources. The cost is $220.00.

Please contact Shane Baker at 212-505-8040, or via e-mail at kongres@earthlink.net

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**Yiddish en ALSACE—Yiddish in Alsace**

Third Yiddish Summer University

Yiddish Language Courses - 3 levels:
9:00 - 12:30
Reading, Writing, Conversation.

- Second level: Natalia Krynicka (Maison de la Culture Yiddish - Paris)
  Grammar, reading easy Yiddish texts

- Third Level: Dr. Joseph Sherman (Oriental Institute Oxford)
  Legend of the Jewish Pope in the Yiddish Literature

Workshops: (15:00 - 17:00)
Yiddish Theatre (Rafaël Goldwaser)
Yiddish Songs (Astrid Ruff)
Klezmer Dance (H. D. Zilberberg)
Cultural Events: 20:00

- Conferences, theatre and music shows, klezmer dance, films, sightseeing in Strasbourg and discovery of local rural Jewish heritage (Sunday)

Registration
Full fees: 360 Euros
Student fees: 260 Euros
A list of hotels and youth hostels, and kosher restaurants will be available.

Contact:
Tél: 00 33 3 88 41 07 24 00 33 3 88 49 99
e-mail: rafael.goldwaser@wanadoo.fr
Send deposit of 150 euros by cheque or money order with the application before June 15 2004

Théâtre en lAir Der LufTeater
c/o Rafaël Goldwaser
24, rue Haute
67100 Strasbourg
FRANCE

**Australian Friends of Yiddish (AFOY) Interdisciplinary Conference**

Yidish mitn kop arop: Yiddish in the Southern Hemisphere, University of Sydney, 11th - 13th July 2004 The conference theme is: Yiddish Language and Culture in the Southern Hemisphere.

Dr Jennifer Dowling, Lecturer in Yiddish Dept. of Jewish Studies (A14) SEAMELS University Of Sydney, NSW 2006 AISTRALIA
Enquiries: Ph. (02) 9351 6670 or (02) 9692 5200 or e-mail jennifer.dowling@arts.usyd.edu.au
Der Yidisher Briv-Fraynd Klub

The Yidisher briv-fraynd Klub is a world-wide Yidisher pen-pals club with over 390 in:

Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, England, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay

Also in the following states in the United States: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, NC, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, and WI.

To select your pen pals, please reply to this short questionnaire:

1. Full name:  
2. Age level: around the 's:  
3. E-mail address:  
4. Hobbies:  
5. My Yiddish level: Low, Middle, High  
6. I wish a pen-pal who is: Low, Middle, High  
7. Select: E-mail (blitz-brivlekh), in transliteration or, written by (regular-mail), mit yidishe oysyes.

You must include your address:

Street: City, State, ZIP, Country:

E-mail address:
You may go to the website for this questionnaire.

Reply in Yiddish.
Send to: Dayner Yidisher fraynd:
Philip "Fishl" Kutner

Make checks for chai ($18) payable to Der Bay.
If you've been blessed, Please send a LITTLE extra —
Date on the label shows when you last contributed.

Networking is having other people help you get what you want. Der Bay is a great networking tool. Use it to publicize, ask for info, locate someone/something. Be sure we have your change of address.

Der Bay
Editor: Philip "Fishl" Kutner
1128 Tanglewood Way
San Mateo, CA 94403

Return Service Requested
New Directions

With a new masthead Der Bay is chartering new waters. It continues to be the primary source of listings for events in der internatsyonaler kalendar. The website has the complete listing for over a month ahead and is divided into regions.

Der Bay continues to compile lists of Yiddish teachers, Yiddish clubs (shmueskrayz, leyenkrayz and shraybkrayz), klezmer groups (second only to Ari Davidow’s Klezmer Shack) Yiddish teachers, translators as well as the largest Yiddish pen-pal group. Likewise it is the voice of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs.

With the increase in size, there has come the addition of several series. They have included; photojournalist Kitty Katz series on Jews of New York, Dr. Israel Kugler’s series on the Yiddish theater and Pascal Curin’s erudite series on The History of the Jewish Community in Alsace and Lorraine.

There has been a very noticeable increase in the number of books and CDs sent in for review as well as articles and series. The selection of items to be inserted in Der Bay is simplified, for no poor review will be used. If a publication or CD is not worth purchasing, why bother you with the details. Since no paid ads have ever been published in Der Bay, there is no need to be beholden to anyone. This is the reason why your editor relies so much on your continued support.

Last month there was a detailed article on the front page entitled It is Time to Check, and Update Your Der Bay Status. It is critical that you update your e-mail address and URL (if applicable). As more and more of us go online it has become the preferred method of communication. It obviates the necessity of retyping. When you send in your annual contribution, you will receive a thank by e-mail as verification—in lieu of a receipt.

Chelm Stories

Several original Chelm Stories have been published in Der Bay. We are increasing their number and are open to other original ones.

In this issue Our Yiddish Club (that’s its name), which is located in Yenemsville, has decided to visit Chelm. This is no small matter, for the logistics are formidable. If you have never visited Chelm, Poland, you cannot possibly imagine the myriad details needing attention.

Perhaps your Yiddish Club is similar to Our Yiddish Club. We have a large number of men and women who have special medical, transportation and dietary needs. Follow the research and actual contacts made with the Chelm mayor and all the other people in Chelm who need to be contacted so that we shall be prepared for any emergency.

You really should look at a map of Poland and locate Chelm near the Eastern border and near Lublin. For those with access to Mapquest on your computer and able to do a search on Google, you will find that getting information about Chelm is not simple.

Among the problems complicating the situation and making the planning task more difficult is the falling value of the American dollar. At the time of this writing the exchange rate is about three zloty to the dollar. While there are coins with smaller denominations like the groshen, it is almost impossible to get anything for less than a zloty.

Your editor will be very appreciative to anyone who has visited the area and has appropriate information. We plan on taking Lot, the Polish national airlines to Warsaw and then take the train to Chelm. We were originally going to fly into Lublin, but the runways are not paved. The railway is not very comfortable, but with our group, it would cost too much to take a limousine.
**Yiddish Names for Birds and Animals**

Book Review by Joan Levin jdlevin@bright.net

The author is Harold “Hirsh” Perloff, a dedicated Yiddish student and producer of the film *Mame Loshn; Kinder Loshn* about the history of Yiddish in Israel—its early suppression and current renaissance. (They showed it at Miriam Koral’s UCLA event in December). This book, however, is something entirely different, and picks up on another of Hirsh’s interests—bird watching!

I wasn’t sure how to transliterate bel-khi where the khi is khes-yud. Please fix this according to your style. I’m giving you the names as they appear on the cover, even though he does animals & birds in different order in English & Yiddish.

This book was quite an interesting undertaking, and Hirsh is such a super fellow—and with that film he has done much for Yiddish too! He’s truly a mentsh!

Attention all you bird watchers and naturalists—get out your life lists and prepare to add some notes! Hirsh Perloff has written *Yiddish Names for Birds and Animals* ("bel-khay un foygl nemen oyf yidish.”) a comprehensive list of Yiddish names for hundreds of species of birds, animals—and trees as well!

Hirsh Perloff, a Londoner and bird hobbyist, began this project in connection with his Yidish Krayz some years ago. Here he presents voluminous listings of European and North American birds, each with its common English name, Latin name, and Yiddish name. The book includes detailed drawings of the various parts of the exterior anatomy of the bird, labeled in English and Yiddish.

The shorter section on the other animals mammals, (amphibians, reptiles) similarly lists common English, Latin and Yiddish names. There is also a listing of tree names with English and Yiddish names.

Mr. Perloff acknowledges some of the difficulties in taxonomic nomenclature (including frequent revisions of Latin names) and briefly discusses this, and his sources and methods, in an introduction.

As a reference book, *Yiddish Names for Birds and Animals* would be especially useful in libraries as well as for writers and bird-watchers. We can thank Mr. Perloff for undertaking this great task that will add to the richness of contemporary Yiddish usage.


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**Windows on a Jewish World**

Edited by Dr. Norman Simms

Proceedings of the 11th Annual Waikato Jewish Studies Seminar, 2003, Hamilton, New Zealand:

Contents

- Sarah Shieff, *Golem of Exile in Michael Chabon’s The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay*
- Hannah Brodsky, *Russian Jews in Today’s Germany: in No Man’s Land*
- Maite Ojeda-Mata *Spanish and Jewish? A Historical Anthropological Approach to Franco’s Spain and the Shoah*
- Douglas Pratt, *Muslim-Jewish Relations: Islamic Paradigms*
- Norman Simms, *Jewish Childrearing in Pre-Modern Times*
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**Jewish Australia Online Network**

by Aura Levin Lipski, Publisher

The months ahead are busy with exciting Jewish events around Australia—festivals, concerts, workshops, seminars and exhibitions, as well as visiting Israeli writers, musicians and politicians.

Just click on to the new Events page on Jewish Australia.com It introduces user-friendly formats for keeping up with what’s on, and for helping you to place your event on our website.

We list events in Australia—city by city. They are placed in chronological order. That helps readers check their dates when they travel interstate or visit Australia.

A new Search facility helps you to locate events by an organization’s name. To keep up with what’s going on around Australia: Shimon Peres in Perth, a Singles weekend in Melbourne, Yiddish concerts in Sydney, a visiting Israeli General in Adelaide - click here: http://www.jewishaustralia.com

Go to EVENTS on the colored bar on the left. Before adding a new event check our easy-to-fill-in form.
KlezFest St. Petersburg 2004
by Alexander Frenkel <frenk@lea.spb.su>

The Center for Jewish Music of the Jewish Community Center of St. Petersburg is proud to announce **KlezFest St. Petersburg 2004**, an international seminar on the traditional music of Eastern European Jewry, to be held June 12-16, 2004 in St. Petersburg, Russia.

*KlezFest St. Petersburg*, now in its eighth year, is the oldest Klezmer seminar in Russia. The 2004 festival will include master-classes on Yiddish folk songs and Klezmer music, workshops on Yiddish folklore and Yiddish dance, lectures, concerts, and two excursions: **Jewish St. Petersburg and Rivers and Canals of St. Petersburg**.

Our staff will include world-famous musicians—the world’s leading expert on Yiddish dance, violinist, accordion player, vocalist, and ethnomusicologist Michael Alpert from New York, the outstanding Klezmer clarinetist from Berlin, Christian Dawid, and others.

*KlezFest St. Petersburg*, dedicated to bringing Klezmer music and Yiddish culture back to the land of their birth, includes Jewish musicians from the vibrant centers of the Jewish renaissance throughout the former Soviet Union.

This year again we are pleased to announce a special program for lovers of Yiddish music and culture from other parts of the globe. We are asking for a contribution of $550. This sum will include food and lodging in St. Petersburg for 5 days and the entire seminar program, including interpreters when needed, concerts and the two excursions. Participants will pay their own transportation to St. Petersburg.

For more information, please contact the Jewish Community Center of St. Petersburg via fax at (+7-812) 314-5117, or e-mail <frenk@lea.spb.su>.

For advice on travel and visa arrangements, contact our American sponsor, the Jewish Community Development Fund in Russia and Ukraine, a project of the American Jewish World Service (New York), via telephone: (+1-212) 273-1642, or e-mail: <jcdf@ajws.org>.

Join us at **KlezFest St. Petersburg** this summer! If you haven’t been on the Neva River during White Nights with Russian klezmorim, you haven’t lived!

Alexander Frenkel, JCC of St. Petersburg
Phones: +7 812 113 3889, 117 6440

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Di Yam Gazlonim
by Al Grand

Zalmen Mlotek will conduct the New Yiddish Chorale in a Folksbiene presentation of my Yiddish version of *The Pirates of Penance* (a.k.a., *Di Yam Gazlonim*) at Temple Shaaray Tefila, 250 East 79th St. (at Second Ave.), NY on Sun., May 2, 2004 at 3:00 PM. This performance is presented in honor of Theodore Bikel in celebration of his 80th birthday. Mr. Bikel will be in attendance. He and I have shared our Yiddish translation efforts over the years. He is a life-long Yiddish enthusiast who was pleased with my recent Yiddish translations of *Over the Rainbow* and *White Christmas*.

I invite readers of *Der Bay* to come to the concert and to rejoice with Theodore Bikel. For information please call the Folksbiene at 212-213-2120. For additional information visit, website: [www.folksbiene.org/readspecial.htm#pirates](http://www.folksbiene.org/readspecial.htm#pirates)

**DER BAVEBTER YID**

*S’iz aroys a nayer numer fun internets-zhurnal Der Bavebter Yid. In dem numer vet ir gefinen bashraybungen fun farayorikn Bobover Purim- Shpil; an esey fun Yoysef Sherman lekoved Dovid Fram z”l; un kharifesdike lider fun Yisroel Nekrasov. Kumt tsu gast far, beshas, oder nokh ayer purim-sude!

http://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/bavebter/

A new issue of Der Bavebter Yid is available. It includes a description of last year’s Bobover purim-shpil, an essay by Joseph Sherman about the late poet David Fram, and poems by Yisroel Nekrasov.

**Di Yorshim**

S. J. Gluck, Pres. Sh. Aleichem Mem. Foundation

It has been some time since we have been in touch. Hope all is well with you. The Sholom Aleichem Memorial Foundation has received a request to find a particular story or book, originally titled, *Di Yorshim*, which sometimes goes by the name of *Sender Blank or Heirs*.

The Folksbiene is interested in producing it as a play in their 2005 repertoire. We are making efforts to locate the original Yiddish & English translation. By any chance, can you be helpful in guiding us to where we might find it? Your efforts will be appreciated and acknowledged.

E-mail: SholomAMF@aol.com
Tel. 212-929-9850
The Synagogue of the Hills, heir to a rich history, today represents the only Jewish community in Western South Dakota. The Synagogue traces its roots to the Gold Stampede days of 1876, when news of gold in the streams of Dakota’s Black Hills spread throughout the East. Throngs of prospectors, restless adventurers, gamblers and entrepreneurs ventured into the wilderness in search of what only the lucky few among them would find—great wealth in the gold and all that came with it. Ore-bearing streams ran through the thick, dead brush in the gulch from which Deadwood derived its name.

By horseback and mule, the first Jews to arrive were enterprising pioneer merchants and businessmen, willing to stake their lives and fortunes on the promise of great success in Dakota Territory. It was a difficult and dangerous undertaking. They found a lawless frontier, needing their talent and courage to help establish a stable community.

The Deadwood of 1876 was only a string of mining claims, tents and crude wooden structures, but the gold strike called for businesses to be started, and an explosion of growth ensued. The landscape and thick vegetation set the scene for a succession of fires and floods, almost biblical in destructive force, which regularly rampaged through Deadwood Gulch. It forced residents from homes and businesses, challenging them to either rebuild or retreat. Each rebuilding, each stand against the destruction, produced a new structure, more fireproof and sturdier than the prior one.

One of the first businesses established, the Big Horn Grocery, started in 1876 by Jacob Goldberg. It began as a tent set up on what later become Deadwood’s Main Street, and survived through the 1980s. Goldberg’s Grocery, as the Big Horn was known, is today recognized as Goldberg’s Casino, in the same location, but having been rebuilt many times over.

Solomon Star, a Jew, and partner of Deadwood’s first Sheriff, Seth Bullock, was a respected businessman and civic leader. The partners built a flourishing hardware store on the site of today’s Bullock Hotel. That same sandstone building, Star and Bullock’s Hardware Store, now renovated and refurbished as the Bullock Hotel, is in early pictures of territorial Deadwood’s Main Street. Sol Star organized the first fire department and was first postmaster, active in political and civic affairs from Deadwood’s earliest days. Deadwood’s mayor for at least 3 terms, and Republican representative to the state legislature in Pierre, Star served his community long and well.

Harris Franklin, nee Finkelstein, an early immigrant from Eastern Europe, came to America as a youngster. Starting as a pack peddler, a common occupation for young Jewish men in those times, he went on to build a great fortune as a banker, cattleman, owner of the Golden Reward gold mine, and main partner in the Deadwood Business Club, the venture which built Deadwood’s Historic Franklin Hotel. The Franklin family home, the stately Victorian mansion on Jefferson Ave., now a National Historic Landmark known as the Adams House, was built for Franklin in 1890 by Simeon Eisenhardt, a renowned New York synagogue architect. Harris’s son, Nathan, served as the mayor of Deadwood. He was the second Jew to fill that office. With the help of talented Jews assuming positions of leadership and influence, Deadwood had become the commercial and social hub of the Black Hills.

The first telephone exchange in Deadwood was established and managed by Paul Rewman, an English Jew. His wife, Mabel, earned a reputation as an early campaigner for women’s rights. Both Rewmans have been recognized in Who’s Who in South Dakota. Blending into the community, many Jews became respected leaders in business, social and civic affairs. At some point in Deadwood’s history, fully two-thirds of all business establishments on Deadwood’s Main Street were either owned, operated, or occupied by Jewish merchants.

Although they never had a formal synagogue building, there was a Jewish presence and holiday observance from the earliest days of settlement. Their Torah, now known as the “Deadwood Torah”, came from Koenigsburg, Germany, in 1886, with Freda Lowenberg, young bride of Benjamin Blumenthal. The Torah traveled overland across Europe, over the Atlantic, across the United States by train, and finally by stagecoach into the Hills. The first lay leader of the Jewish community was Nathan Colman, father of Blanche, Theresa and Anne Colman. Judge Colman arrived in Deadwood in 1876, where he and his wife, Amalia, had a large family. The Colmans’ daughter Blanche made her mark as the first woman lawyer in the State of South Dakota, working for the Homestake Gold Mine as legal counsel for most of her life.

In 1896 the Hebrew Cemetery Association purchased cemetery land on Deadwood’s Mt. Moriah, high on a
hill—overlooking Deadwood. It was known as Hebrew Hill. Some of western South Dakota’s foremost pioneers are buried here, including Harris Franklin and his wife Anna; the Colman family, including seven of their children, four of whom died in early childhood; the Jacobs family; the Blumenthals; the Finks; the Zoellners; the Margolins; the Schwarzwalds; and the Levinsons, among others. Mt. Moriah cemetery is open to the public and a walk through the Jewish section reveals an occasional grave marker bearing a small stone, evidence of a Jewish visitor who paid their quiet respects.

The small number of gravestones is no indicator of the true number of Jewish people who left an impression in the Black Hills, said to have been as many as 200. Many, like Sol Star, were taken elsewhere for burial. Some of the tombstones are beautifully engraved both in Hebrew and English, some too eroded to read, but each telling a story of a Jewish person who left their footprint in a remote wilderness. Mt. Moriah has been dedicated as a National Historic Cemetery.

As the gold rush waned, Deadwood’s population diminished. The younger generation, seeking higher education and Jewish mates, gradually drifted away. Due to Rapid City’s favorable location, Rapid City’s population increased and in the 1950s the Deadwood Torah, center of Jewish worship, finally was brought to Rapid City. The names of Blanche and Theresa Colman, pioneering ancestors of the congregation who read from that Torah, are recited as the yizkor list is read each year at Yom Kippur at the Synagogue of the Hills in Rapid City.

One of the earliest Jewish families in Rapid City was the Poznansky family. Felix Poznansky was a clothing merchant who started out in Deadwood and later moved his business to Rapid City where he became active in civic affairs. His son Joseph was manager of Rapid City’s first water company. Another son, Benjamin, was the first male graduate of the South Dakota School of Mines. Felix’s only daughter, Julia, in later years joined with the congregation of the Synagogue of the Hills in purchasing a second Torah. The name of Julia Poznansky also appears on the Yizkor list. The Poznanskys and other Jewish families are buried in the old section of Rapid City’s Mountain View Cemetery.

Rapid City’s Main Street owes its first brick building, now home of the Prairie Edge Trading Company, at Sixth and Main Streets, to Louis Morris. Louis and brother Julian contracted for this building to house their thriving dry goods business. Here, in later years, Nathan Horwitz would develop Rapid City Clothing into another very successful firm. The building is a magnificent example of the value of historical preservation, and is arguably the crown jewel of historic buildings in Rapid City.

In the 1940s the little Jewish population of Rapid City began to organize to observe the major holidays. Services were held at the site of the present Faith Temple on Kansas City Street, occasionally in Canyon Lake Park, and eventually in the Chapel at Ellsworth Air Force Base, located 10 miles outside of Rapid City. A parent-taught Sunday school was started to offer the children religious instruction.

In the 1950s, with the help of Morris Adelstein, father of long-time President Stanford Adelstein, the Synagogue of the Hills was recognized as a Reform synagogue by the Union of America Hebrew Congregations. Services would continue at Ellsworth Air Force Base for 30 years. The Jewish military officers donated a Torah. It was inscribed with the watchword, Peace is Our Profession. The end of the Cold War caused Air Base personnel cutbacks and although fewer Jewish military congregants were based there, services continued to be held at the base chapel for the local Jewish community.

In 1995, guided by the newly formed Board of Directors, under the leadership of Synagogue President Stanford Adelstein and the late Vice-President, Terry L. Fredricks, a decision was made by the congregation to move the Synagogue from Ellsworth Air Force Base into Rapid City. A temporary location was established at the Hills Materials Quarry Room on Sturgis Road, until a permanent building, donated by Mr. Adelstein, became the new home of the Synagogue.

Visiting Rabbi Steven Forstein, with the help of the congregation, moved the two Torahs from the Quarry Room to their home in the sanctuary at 417 North 40th Street, and April 14th, 1996, the new Synagogue of the Hills was consecrated. Since then, remodeling has taken place, a sanctuary installed, and classrooms and a library created. In this space a vital and active membership meets for weekly Shabbat services conducted by skilled lay leaders, religious school, holidays and life-cycle events.

Through its membership in the Union of Reform Judaism (formerly UAHC), congregants enjoy monthly visits of a rabbinic student to lead Friday Shabbat services as well as to conduct High Holiday worship. Services are open to Jewish worshippers regardless of denomination.

A Jewish wanderer in the wilderness can still find a hospitable destination in the Black Hills of Dakota.
This autobiographical marvel, tells the story of Shepsl Nudleman, who lived in the East Bronx, New York, in a crowded apartment on Morris Avenue with a father, mother, bobe, aunt, and a brother.

His parents were immigrants from the Russian Pale and worked in garment trades as members of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

The language of the home was Yiddish and papa Meyer was a member of the Workmen’s Circle/Arbeter Ring, and read the Jewish Daily Forward. Shepsl went to a neighborhood Arbeter Ring Shul, but engaged in saying morning prayers and was Bar Mitzvah. Together with the boys on the block he played stickball and was an avid Yankee fan.

Meyer had a case of syphilis of the bladder, apparently developed when he was a single immigrant. It affected his ability to walk and Shepsl was his strong right arm as he came and went on the subway.

Shepsl graduated from De Witt Clinton High School and was able to get a scholarship to New York University in Manhattan. Coping with his father’s affliction stimulated Shepsl to think about becoming a doctor.

When he was 19 between his Junior and Senior year at N.Y.U., Shepsl landed a position as counselor at the Yiddish secular children’s camp, Boiberik. Named after one of Sholem Aleichem’s fabled shtetls, Boiberik, sponsored by the Sholem Aleichem Folks Institute, it emphasized Traditzie (tradition) and Yiddishkayt. He developed a very positive relationship with the campers, earning praise from the camp director Yiddish pedagogue, Leibush Lehrer. The female counselors introduced Shepsl to the mysteries of sexuality.

His summer job was interrupted by the physical demands of his father. When he returned to Boiberik, he became depressed. He then had to consider his options in going to medical school.

A wealthy member of the extended family took Shepsl under his wing while living in New Rochelle. He learned that the Yale University Medical School recruited medical students based on an interview as well as on academic records. Shepsl made it and became a member of the Yale Medical School student body. Periodically he had to visit his progressively ailing father in the Bronx. Meyer’s affliction became worse, but his pride in Shepsl shone through the pain.

Shepsl Nudierman changed his name to Sherwin B. Nuland. Dr. Nuland was attracted to the field or surgery and succeed in overcoming the barriers to becoming a chiet resident in that area. He retained a sense or history and was absorbed in the development or the practice or medicine.

Then Nuland, himself, suffered a serious setback or prolonged depression. Luckily one of his medical colleagues resisted the introduction of a lobotomy—brain surgery. Instead he had a prolonged series of electro-shock therapy procedures and reached a degree of normal behavior.

His mother and bobe died and his syphilitic father became a physical problem in care and sanitation. When Dr. Nuland’s father died the life of entanglement of father and son became a memory to be renewed with annual visits to the Arbeter Ring cemetery.

This autobiography rivals the brilliant Tuesdays with Morrie of Mitch Aibom. Fortunately Lost in America is available in paperback. For those of us who lived with working class parents in Jewish sectors of our large cities, this book is a must read.

Dr. Nuland has written books on doctors, How We Live and How We Die. One of his latest excursions into medical history deals with Ignace Semmelweiss who urged doctors to wash their hands thoroughly after being in contact with sick patients. He is clinical professor of surgery at the Yale School of Medicine.

Israel Kugler, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus in Social Science, The City University of New York
Former President of The Workmen’s Circle

Alfred A. Knopf, New York 2003
224 pages $24.00
ISBN 0375727221 paperback, 0375412948 hardback
Panning for Gold

Gold and Yiddish are both very valuable!

We may be able to learn some lessons on how to foster Yiddish by learning how the gold miners searched for gold. Naturally as a displaced Easterner (New Jersey) your editor has learned all about the 49ers and the gold rush in gold country—California.

If YOU were put on a balance scale and the other side were gold, the gold would be worth a million dollars. Yes, gold is valuable—so is our rich heritage of the Yiddish language and culture.

You don’t look for gold on the top of the mountain. It is found in seams in quartz—the hardest common mineral. When one finds a rich seam, it is referred to as The Mother Lode. Naturally it is difficult to find and difficult to mine.

On the other hand early miners soon learned that as the Western mountains rose and were eroded, the much heavier gold remained behind in the bottom of fast-running mountain streams. Gold is valuable because it not only is beautiful, but it does not oxidize.

By scooping up sediments in the creek bed they were able to winnow out the gold flakes, and even gold nuggets. As they swished the pan with the sediments and gold, the lighter clay, silt and sand would rise to the top and they could decant it off.

How then does this information help us with panning for Yiddish? Where is the mother lode for Yiddish? One place is in the khasidik community. We know that it is like mining in quartz. It is one tough rock to crack. Besides, we all agree that if Yiddish is to prosper and grow in the future, we need to foster her among our young people.

Where are these potentially 100,000 young people? They are in some type of Hebrew school—the modern term for a kheyder. So, how do we reach these students? One way is through their teachers. So, how do we reach their teachers? One way, is through their teachers’ and administrators’ professional organization. So, what is this organization? It is called CAJE (pronounced cage).

So how do we get to speak with them? More important, how do we convince them that the Yiddish language and culture is important and that she should be included in the curriculum? The next column gives a method of attack to this problem. If you can help, please contact your editor.

Panning for Yiddish

Yes, the khasidim represent a large reservoir of Yiddish speakers, but their major interest is in the religious aspect of their lives. They are not interested in the great Yiddish writers like Mendele, Peretz or Sholom Aleichem. They have no interest in organizations like YIVO, The National Yiddish Book Center, Yugntruf, The International Association of Yiddish Clubs, the Forward, etc. So why bother trying to mine the hardrock!

There is a wonderful, untapped, reservoir of potentially Yiddish-interested young people in the Hebrew and Day Schools. How do we reach them? CAJE (Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education) is the professional organization of Hebrew School teachers and administrators.

CAJE has an annual convention in August with over 2,000 teachers and administrators in attendance. This year it will be at Hofstra College in Hempstead on Long Island, New York. There will be a Pre-Conference session August 12-15, 2004. This 29th Conference on Alternatives in Jewish Education will follow immediately on Aug. 15-19.

You can see CAJE’s web site at: http://www.caje.org/ or at Der Bay’s homepage. Click on other links and then CAJE.

Marcia Grus Levinsohn has been the major leader on behalf of Yiddish at CAJE for many years. She is in the process of reinvigorating a Yiddish Language and Culture Network. Currently there are thirteen networks in CAJE, but there is none for Yiddish. If you are a CAJE member, or know one, please contact Marcia at: masha1nk@toad.net or your editor at: Fishl@derbay.org

Marcia and Fishl have submitted proposals for presentations. If accepted, they will be:

Marcia’s topic—Connect with Yiddish Around the World
Fishl’s topic—Yiddish in America: The Immigrant Experience

Marcia can also be reached at:
3602 Chorley Woods Way
Silver Spring, MD 20906
Ph: 301-598-2187

CAJE is located at:
261 35th St.
New York, NY1001
Ph: 212-268-4219, Fax: 212-268-4214
E-mail: caje29@caje.org
Mame-loshn & Mother Nature

Our beloved Yiddish has many similarities to Mother Nature. In the past we have written about the Life History of a river and compared it to the *Life History of Yiddish Organizations*, or for that matter, the Life History of any organization or institution:

- Youth: Vibrant and fast running
- Middle Age: Larger but slower running
- Old Age: Broader and dying

In this article we shall look at another aspect—that of Mother Nature and its cyclical reforestation, and the similarity to Yiddish.

Periodically, there is a forest fire, usually set by a bolt of lightning, and the charred remains cover the landscape. However, within a short time there is rejuvenation, and the small green sprouts push through the gray and white ashes. These are found among the few islands of untouched stands that the fire may have bypassed.

The Holocaust was only one, albeit a major cause of the decline of Yiddish. Its similarity to the forest fire is very obvious. We shall look at some of the new growth that came after the wake of all the calamities that befell Yiddish the causative agent whether it was external (Holocaust, Stalin) or whether it was internal (Israel, assimilation).

One of these *new shoots* is the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC), and along with the NYBC and new growths in Vilnius, Israel, London, St. Petersburg, etc. there is a resurgence of our mame-loshn.

Inside IAYC

Starting with this issue there will be a monthly column about another aspect of IAYC. We start by featuring the officers and trustees and their activities on behalf of Yiddish. They all are strongly devoted to fostering Yiddish in their community and in the worldwide arena. They are chosen to represent various areas of interest, geographical localities, areas of Yiddish knowledge, major Yiddish groups or computer expertise. Most fit into several groups.

In addition to learning about the IAYC Board of Directors, *Der Bay* again will keep you abreast of interesting developments in the IAYC Conferences (Minneapolis, June ’05 will be the next one). *Der Bay’s* website adds additional information about the IAYC and lists member clubs. Lists of club events are on the site in *der internatsyonaler kalendar*.

**Officers & Trustees of the IAYC**

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The Charlotte Yiddish Institute

The love and interest in Yiddish, not its knowledge, will create a joyous experience for you in the XXVI Charlotte Yiddish Institute, Thursday-Sunday, Aug. 12-15 at Wildacres Retreat, Little Switzerland, NC on the Blue Ridge Parkway. The program is designed for a multi-generational audience which includes children/grandchildren age 9 and over who will fully participate in the programs.

The theme is Living Yiddish through workshops—Jewish cooking, silver jewelry casting, touring the studios of world famous artisans and craftspeople, beginning Yiddish, advanced Yiddish and sharing memories. Presentations by playwright, Miriam Hoffman, international singer, Caroline Channin orchestral conductor and pianist Joyce Rosenzweig will highlight the weekend, Saturday evening Talent Show and late evening singing and dancing.

Accommodations are in two mountaintop lodges. All rooms have private baths. All facilities are handicapped accessible. The cost for room, kosher meals, snacks, gratuities and tuition is $285 for adults and $110 for children. Transportation by bus is available from the Charlotte Airport for $65 round trip. For information and/or reservations call Branya Gibbs (704-849-6933) or Baila Pransky (704-366-5564.)

Margie Memorial Musicale

The First Annual Margie Rosenthal Memorial Musicale will be held Sunday, May 16, 2004 at Congregation Ner Tamid in San Francisco. Margie was a remarkable person and the family wants to celebrate her life with a joyful celebration.

Archie Barkan, raconteur, will highlight the program in his Yiddish, Yinglish and Borscht. The cabaret atmosphere will feature The Klezmer Soul Band in Concert, The Larks in beautiful accompaniment and the magnificent voice of Cantor Rudy Hassid in Broadway Tunes.

Ernie Rosenthal, master pastry chef, will oversee the lavish refreshments. For reservations call: 415-661-3383 or 650-349-6946

Bloch Publishing Company

Der Bay has never written an article about a Jewish publishing house. This will come as a surprise to the company. In the last issue there was a Yiddish translation of 2 Shakespeare’s sonnets. Your editor asked to see a list of other publications and noticed an interesting mix of Jewish books.

Sholom Aleichem is Coming to S.F.

A Sholom Aleichem stage comedy with songs is planned for local performance in Fall 2004. Joel Schechter, a Workmen’s Circle member, will direct the play. He is Professor of Theatre Arts at San Francisco State University, and has directed several other Yiddish theatre projects in English, including Messiah in America and I Want to Be a Boarder.

Schechter plans to work with State University students on Sholom Aleichem’s one act comedy, She Must Marry a Doctor. It is a play about parents, their children, and a matchmaker. It will be performed free of charge at local centers, and schools. Songs in the performance will be sung in Yiddish and English, and the play itself will be performed in English. Sholom Aleichem wrote the rarely seen comedy in 1887, while he was in Russia.

It is co-sponsored by the Departments of Theatre Arts & Jewish Studies at San Francisco State University. Prof. Schechter is at: jschech@sfsu.edu

Yiddish Class in Fort Meyers, FL?

I am interested in finding a Yiddish language class in Fort Myers, Florida. It is between Sarasota and Naples on the gulf. We have at least 6 temples here (conservative, reform and Lubavicher). Hebrew lessons are available, but Yiddish isn’t.

Beverley Winfeld, Ft. Meyers, FL Bazion2@aol.com
The West Coast Jewish Theatre is alive and well in Los Angeles! We started with a dream that began in 1993 when Naomi Karz Jacobs assembled a group of friends with Yidishkayt and love of theatre in their hearts to formulate a way to start a permanent Jewish theatre in Los Angeles. Until then, Los Angeles, the second largest Jewish community in the United States, with a pool of the most talented people in the film, television and theatre industries and the home of major Hollywood studios, had no Jewish theatre. Yet, there are over forty Jewish theatres throughout the United States and Canada.

Our mission is to keep alive dramatic works of the past and to promote and encourage new and contemporary playwrights whose plays deal with Jewish themes, so that our rich literature and culture continues to inform and entertain future generations. Theatre is part of our tradition. Jewish cultural continuity is something we believe in and, at this time, when people are searching for their roots, a key communicate it is through the theatrical experience.

To this end, we began with staged readings, musical and comedic performances, which have been well received. Although previous attempts by others had failed, Naomi Karz Jacobs successfully gathered support from many talented, dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers who understood this important need. Naomi and Skip Usen, co-founders of the WCJT, opened with a production of Love, Dreams & Lost Uncles, with an introduction by Elliott Gould on November 16, 1994 at the Friars Club in Beverly Hills.

Over the years, other productions featured the talents of writers, poets, actors, producers and directors, such as Judy Arnold, Edward Asner, who appeared with his son and daughter, Matthew and Kate, Barbara Bain, Gene Barry, Glen Beaudin, Shelley Berman, Herb Brin, Mike Burstyn, Amy Beth Cohn, Mimi Cozzens, Jerry Cutler, Leslie deBeauvais, Bonnie Franklin, Arlene Golonka, Harold Gould, Monty Hall, Estelle Harris, Rocky Kalish, Stanley Kamel, Hal Kanter, Bernie Kopell, Steve Landesburg, Valerie Landsburg, Alison LaPlaca, Sheldon Leonard, Len Lesser Paul Linke, Bennes Mardenn, Taylor Negron, Peter Mark Richman, Doris Roberts, Marion Ross, Paul Michael and Sammy Shore.

Works presented included:
- The Rally by John Herman Shaner
- Hollywood Trilogy by Malvin
- Wald, The Elevator by Allan Byrns
- Sholom Aleichem's plays
- Chaim’s Love Song by Marvin Chemoff

The Yiddish Trojan Women by Carole Braverman,
Horowitz & Mrs. Washington by Henry Denker,
Peace Talks by Audrey Kahane,
A Medal for Murray by Peter Mark Richman,
When the Rabbi Lied, by and starring Hildy Brooks,
The God of Isaac by James Sherman,
Antisemitropolis by Dan Kagan,
Ben & Charlotte by Marvin Chernoff,
First Is Supper by Shelley Berman, and
Der Onshelt Makher by Howard Teichman

A Sunday Morning Bagel Theatre Series, Works included:
- Nobody’s Gilgul by Lois Roisman,
- It Should Be So by Ted Herstand,
- Static Line by Bennett Michaelson.
- The Gathering by Arje Shaw
- Churches Nearby by Larry Cohen
- The Festival of Lights by Steven Korba,
- Vilna’s Got A Golem by Ernest Joselovitz,
- Next Year In Jerusalem by Naomi Karz Jacobs,
- A Place in the Land by Ron Friedman,
- Hold Onto Your Heart by Ernest Joselovitz
- Fugumetunachai by Howard Teichman & S. Simon.

In 1998, West Coast Jewish Theatre began a Writers/Actors Workshop devoted to writers and professional actors working to develop new works concerned with our Jewish heritage. The venues used included private homes, the Friars Club, University Synagogue, the University of Judaism, The Wilshire Boulevard Temple, Temple Etz Chaim, and JCC Los Angeles.

From September 12 through October 13, 2002, the WCJT and the LA Repertory Company presented The Chosen, by Chaim Potok.

The establishment of the West Coast Jewish Theatre is a positive thing to have happened in Los Angeles. This will enhance the quality of life of those participating in the productions, as well as the community at large. Other plans include the acquisition of a Center for Jewish Theatre, including areas for creative research, teaching, workshops for youth, play readings, development of new works and, a permanent venue for future productions.

The West Coast Jewish Theatre is affiliated with the Association for Jewish Theatre and is a member of Theatre L.A. It is a 501(c) non-profit corporation.

520 Washington Boulevard #946
Marina del Rey, CA 90292
Ph: 310-828-1296 Fax: 310-827-1604
URL: www.westcoastjewishtheatre.org
Yiddish tango flourished during the first half of the 20th century, combining the zest of tango with the language and culture of the Eastern European Jews. This show recreates the vibrant atmosphere of Argentinian and European cabaret, featuring songs written in the 1930s and 40s in Buenos Aires by European Jewish immigrants, in New York for the Yiddish theatre, and in the ghettos and concentration camps during WW II.

Tangele was conceived by Lloica Czackis. The project was awarded a JMI Millennium Award leading to workshops, illustrated lectures and concert engagements. These have included, in the UK, London’s ArtsFest (The Spitz), Klezmer Beats on Upper Street (Union Chapel), Ot Azoy!, KlezFest, Klezmer in Sheffield, Brighton Festival of Jewish Music, Limmud and National Holocaust Memorial Day (The Dream Factory, Birmingham); in Paris, Klezmer Week and European Day of Jewish Culture (Maison de la Culture Yiddish-Bibliothèque Medem); Jewish Museum in Vienna and Centre Communautaire Laïc Juif, in Brussels.

This is the first time this repertoire is performed by Argentinian musicians of European Jewish descent. Lloica Czackis is a singer of Yiddish tango, and performer of art, cabaret and folksongs. Juan Lucas Aisemberg, a viola player in the Deutsche Oper, Berlin, was reared in the tango tradition. Gustavo Beytelmann is a renowned composer and pianist.

A little history...

The tango was born just before the turn of the 20th Century in Buenos Aires as the blend of Italian, Spanish, French and Eastern European Jewish immigrant cultures, and Afro-Argentine rhythms. In the 1910s the tango took Western Europe by storm, soon reaching Eastern Europe. Ballrooms and cabarets featured this Latin American import. Jews started to write new tangos. During the Holocaust it became part of the life of ghettos and concentration camps, where tango, in Yiddish, was adopted as a vehicle to express the experience of inmates and their hopes for freedom. Not only did the Nazis allow this music, they forced Lagerkapellen, the camp orchestras, to play the Tangele of Death to accompany prisoners as they were marched to the gas chambers. In happier circumstances, Jewish musicians in Buenos Aires and New York wrote Yiddish Tangos for the Yiddish Theatre, musicals and Jewish revues. The mixed nature of tango may explain why it was embraced and transformed around the world. Yiddish Tangos are an example of the Jews’ tendency to adapt to their adoptive countries.

Let Justice Well Up Like Water: Progressive Jews From Hillel
To Helen Suzman
by Bennett Muraskin

It was published by the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations and The Center for Cultural Judaism.

Progressive secular Jews need heroes—here are sixty-two! Biographies of anarchists, Bundists, socialists, social reformers, communists, Zionists, journalists, labor leaders, anti-fascist resisters, feminists, writers, performing artists, and historians across the Jewish world and timeline. Here are Heroes, but not hero worship, rather, critical assessments of their life and work.

Muraskin includes profiles of nineteen women and eight architects of Yiddish culture, four pre-modern figures, and five modern religious Jews. What ties the sixty-two together? It is a commitment to universal human rights and social justice, within a Jewish context.

From the Table of Contents

Social Reformers: Lillian Wald, Janusz Korczak, Justine Wise Polier
Labor Leaders: Baruch Charney Vladeck, Rose Schneiderman, Rose Pesotta
Communists: Mossaye Olgin, Clara Lemlich Shavelson, Rose Pastor Stokes, Solomon Mikhoels
Women’s Rights Advocates: Ernestine Rose, Betty Friedan, Henry Morgentaler, Irena Klepfisz
Political Leaders: Leon Blum, Joseph Zuken, Bella Abzug, Helen Suzman
Architects of Yiddish Culture: Morris Rosenfeld, S. Ansky, Itsik Manger, Chaim Grade, Max Weinreich, Ruth Rubin

Bennett Muraskin is a frequent contributor to Jewish Currents, Humanistic Judaism, and Outlook (Canada). The Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations (CSJO) has published his Yiddish Short Story Sampler, Secular Humanistic Shabbes Reader, and Celebrating Jewish Holidays (co-authored with Judith Seid and Lawrence Schofer). His most recent book is Humanist Readings in Jewish Folktore (International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism, 2001)

Copies @ $14.50 includes postage and handling
Make checks payable to CSJO.

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From A South Africa Contact
by Rochelle Winer

Es iz a fargenign tsu bakumen Der Bay. You must be a very special person to give us so much joy and to keep us in touch with so many people all over the Yiddish world. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

I was in Cape Town and the Bnoth Zion Society held a very successful fundraiser with me as the guest speaker. I did a talk on Sholom Aleichem, Mendele and Peretz. I mentioned a few of the characters they created, thus portraying shtetl life through the eyes of the little people who inhabited the shtetlekh of Eastern Europe. During tea everybody chats to each other and it is really wonderful to see how people discover where their families came from and there is so much to talk about. It is a nostalgic re-union for people who haven't seen each other for many years.

It is always so exciting to receive Der Bay and to see what is happening. I like the new format very much.

Jennie Freilich vil visn

Ikh vil aykh fregn oyb ir kont mir helfn mit an eytse. Ikh hob ibergezetst oyf yidish dos bikhl (A Carp in der Vane). Ikh veys nit oyb es eksestirt ergets aza ibergezetsung oyb nit volt ikh zeyer gevolt dos aroysgeb'n. Ikh veys ober nit vi tsu ontsuhoybn. Ikh volt aykh zeyer badankt far ayer hilf in dem inyen.


Meyer Zaremba Writes

In Der Nister's book, Di Familye Mashber we read about a man talking to his brother and reminding him that his pursuit of things is not in keeping with the ethical teachings of our religion. He says, "What you are doing is not for us .... not for those who have received the warnings we were given in our father's will".

This is a reference to a genre of Yiddish "literature" ("tsvoeh literatur") in which parents communicated "ethical wills" to their children.

My wife, Helen, wrote a poem to our sons which, I believe, fits into this category. (See the next column)

TO OUR SONS
by Helen Zaremba

To you, beloveds, we pass the baton
Given to us a generation ago
(And which you, and your peers, in time, must pass on to the next generation)

Of an Experience, like none other
Of a heritage sweet and bitter
Proud and Painful
Passionate and Persistent

Still standing,
    albeit battered and bloody
But Strong
And Surviving Some 5000 years now!!
While other powers and empires
    have come and gone
The baton is still ours to pass on!

Remember always the courage
    of your grandparents,
To leave their homeland
To come so far
To begin again
To learn a new language
To orient in a new, confusing environ
To emerge
To place the priorities of their heritage
    into their lives
To prevail!!!

So now we, their children, bear the burden
    and the privilege
To excite within you, dear sons,
The wonder of this awesome heritage
To be thrilled with the knowledge
That when we celebrate a New Year
Jews all over the world are doing so too!!

That prayers we pray
Have been prayed the year before
And twenty years before
And one hundred years before
And one thousand years before!!!!

And so you have become part
    of this remarkable adventure.
Know that it will not be easy
Know that it will make you cry
Know that It will make you different

Finally,
Never forget who you are
Never forget from whence you came
Never forget!

The Zarembas are at: greenehczineh@aol.com
Confusion reigned on women’s names because they were generally hypocorististic terms with dialectal consonance such as Pessele for Elisabeth, Ziberle for Deborah, or Sorle for Sarah. It’s common knowledge that Jewesses in Alsace passed down Yiddish to the next generation. Often, they hardly spoke French, particularly at home where the Mammele was an emotional and linguistic reference. Since the French law for civil status was patriarchal, women in many instances were not forced to deeply change their habits. Many even maintained their original name identity, Pessele for example, wife of David Schwab.

Beginning with the Restoration and the July Monarchy of Louis XVIII, the legal normalization of the Jewish community was achieved. Gradually, the Consistories and Grand Rabbis asked their co-religionists to engage in the practice of common secular jobs to study and show interest in the sciences and the arts, and to avoid usury. Their slogan encouraged all Jews to embrace their new homeland by declaring, “Israelites, you are not wandering any more, you are not stateless any longer!” The rural communities grew rapidly between the years 1840 and 1860. During this period, synagogues were restored, transformed, and some even newly constructed. The administrative centers of these districts attracted an enormous segment of the Jewish population. From 1860 onwards, the rural communities began to empty in favor of the larger cities. The Industrial Revolution and the development of transportation made this rural depopulation possible.

The annexation of Alsace and Northern Lorraine to the German Empire in 1871 was the single significant political event that most rapidly increased the rate of depopulation. Numerous young Jews emigrated to France (particularly to Paris and neighboring towns), but also to the colonial territories of Northern Africa, and eventually onto America. Depending on the level of assimilation into French society, many urban Jews emigrated to avoid the Prussian way of life or having to serve in the German Army. For those Jews that spoke Yiddish and Galleres-Daytsh, and had regular contact with German Jewish centers for study at famous Yeshivot, the banned French language and German way of life was bearable. Alsatians were forced to turn to the East again.

Author Max Warcharowski explains, for instance, that Alsatian Jews didn’t know the Yizkor that German Jews introduced after 1870 for the high holiday Yom Kippur. They were accustomed to reciting the Memmere, a prayer in favor of the martyrs of the region. The Alsatian Selikhot were recited in a different order than German Ashkenazim were accustomed to between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

While Alsatian Jews emigrated to the west or abroad, Eastern European and German Jews came to Alsace. Even though Germany had declared Jews to be full nationals a few years earlier, most Jews remained partisans of France in their hearts and minds, but tended to never show it to excess.

The Jewish population dropped by 20% in some regions of Alsace and Lorraine. The urban centers of Strasbourg, Colmar, and Mulhouse, consequently became more and more influential, while the rural communities progressively became unable to find candidates for the rabbinate or maintain rabbis and officiates. Regarding the cultural and social status of the Jews in the late 19th Century, there is a huge discrepancy with the situation in 1806 when Napoleon tried to federate the French Jews. The illustrious Berr-Isaac-Berr, from Lorraine, complained that heads of families in villages and small towns were totally uncultured; the traditional teaching at the synagogues had disappeared after the Revolution and religious practices were disorganized and disrupted by the secularization and centralized politics of Napoleon. However, the situation gradually improved even though Eastern Jews often criticized that religious practices declined under the influence of the capital.

There wasn’t any liberal schism in France, contrary to Germany. A simplification of the ritual had been aimed, perhaps at reform to more liberal Jews, but this failed because of the vehement resistance of the Rabbinates of Alsace and Lorraine that were reputed to be more conservative. Moreover, the rural communities in the East sided with their representatives against in depth reforms without necessarily moving to the other extreme, such as radicalization or opposition to change. The fact remains that the Yeshiva of Metz in Lorraine became a National Theological Seminary for a period, but was transferred to Paris to avoid the traditionalist influence that reigned in the reformist elements in Metz. However, Metz could take pride in having received illustrious leading rabbis from all over Europe. They tended to reflect the rather conservative nature of the Lorraine Jews.
Jonathan Eibeschutz came from Prague arriving in Metz in the middle of the 18th Century. He was a conservative, and his influence was disputed during a period where the notables began to take an interest in the ideas of the Enlightenment. Eibeschutz remained for eight years in Metz before moving onto Hamburg.

Another illustrious rabbi of the age was the conservative Rabbi Arie Loeb, also known as Cha'agath Arie, from Lithuania. Loeb came to Metz in 1765, and stayed there until his death in 1785. He contributed to the renowned Yeshiva of Metz, and promoted Hebrew printing in and around town.

On August 21, 1829, the Central Rabbinical School was founded in Metz ensuring the continuity of the ancient renowned Yeshiva of Metz that had been in operation since the Middle Ages. The Central Consistory had converted it into the Central Theology School in 1827 and was authorized to bestow a National Rabbinical Diploma on its students. Until the middle of the 19th Century, the school welcomed many foreign students. They were then in the homes of local families using a coupon system called Pletten. Other Theological Seminaries were created in Middle Europe in the 19th Century, which were also important for the peoples of Alsace and Lorraine who attended these rabbinical seminaries in Germany, particularly those located in Breslau and Berlin.

Jean Daltroff deals with this topic in his article about the comparison between Theological Seminaries in Metz and Germany, and documents that numerous Alsatian students decided upon following the orthodox tendency of the Rabbinical Seminary lead by the renowned Azriel Hildesheimer.

Other Alsatian notables, such as Victor Marx, received their education at the famous conservative Jüdisch-Theologisches Seminary in Breslau, which was responsible for the education and training of numerous rabbis and Doctors of Law who subsequently disseminated their acquired knowledge throughout Germany and the United States. This occurred up until 1938 when it abruptly ended with the rise of the Third Reich.

The successor of Arie Loeb should have been a disciple of Mendelsohn. Rabbi Hirschel Loeb Levin from Poland, the former Rabbi of London and Berlin, would have been a likely candidate, but he retracted. If he had to come to Metz, he supposed that this Jewry was more or less in favor of the Jewish Enlightenment, but upon closer examination, he probably came to the understanding that the common Jew of Lorraine was still basically conservative.

In conclusion, the Jewish population of both Alsace and Lorraine, despite small differences, had taken a huge step forward regarding its civic integration with French society. This period also marked the renewal of urban communities whose rabbis were paid by the State. Judaism became officially recognized both before and after the annexation of these two regions by Germany.

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Harold Black, President of the IAYC was born in a shtetl, Goniondz, Poland. His father left for Mexico and Harold and his mother joined him a short time later. He attended the first Jewish Kheyder in Mexico City, but not for any length of time, because the family moved to the United States in 1929—just in time for the depression.

In the United States, he attended a kheyder and then a Hebrew school until his Bar Mitzvah. He was bilingual for a time, speaking Yiddish at home and English elsewhere. After marriage he spoke only English. Little by little he lost his interest in Yiddish until at age fifty four he began attending Yiddish programs at the JCC in the Washington, D.C. area.

The president of Yiddish of Greater Washington noticed his regular attendance and asked if he would like to be on the Board. He agreed and later became president. During one period he was in charge of writing proposals to the Maryland Arts Council for funding of various Yiddish of Greater Washington’s programs. One year he had a bright idea, why not hold a conference of Yiddish Clubs so they could exchange ideas and share materials? So he wrote up a grant proposal for that and it was funded.

As the time came closer for the conference it looked like very few people would come, but at the last minute about 140 people registered. What a joyous time they had meeting each other. People danced in the aisles and sang to the wee hours of the night. This first conference was co-chaired with Sid Verner and Jonathan Sunshine.

At the conference, Harold Black met Fishl Kutner and Dr. Allan Blair. The trio decided that we should organize the clubs and do the conferences on a regular basis. That’s part of how the International Association of Yiddish Clubs was founded.

Later Harold was called upon to again run an IAYC Conference—the 6th one in Chevy Chase, MD at the 4H international headquarters. This time his co-chair was the very capable Elaine Mann.

Harold Black was a City Planner and he became an assistant to the Mayor of Detroit. He has two Masters degrees, one in Sociology and one in Urban Planning. He also has a Ph.D. in Urban Planning.

One thing he likes to point out is that in his family, every child was born in a different country, he in Poland, a sister in Mexico and another sister in the United States. He hopes to see all of you at the IAYC conference in Minneapolis in June of 2005.

We keep writing and talking about the IAYC, the International Association of Yiddish Clubs, but for the majority of us who may not even belong to a Yiddish club—why should we care? That is a good and fair question, and why should clubs belong?

First, there is strength in numbers. The larger your membership, the more you can do in fostering Yiddish—our main goal.

Second, IAYC has sponsored successfully eight conferences throughout the United States and in Toronto, Canada. Its next conference will be in Minneapolis. We are planning for the one after that possibly being on Long Island, NY.

Third, while there are:
• Quite a few colleges and institutes to take Yiddish courses,
• KlezKamp and others to sharpen your musical skills, and
• Weekend retreats to enjoy a Yiddish ambience—none combines all these areas for club members to come, share, be invigorated and take home ideas for their Yiddish groups.

Fourth, IAYC is a relatively new group with a dynamic growth pattern. Rather than competing with the older and established organizations, it augments them.

Fifth, like Der Bay, IAYC has no paid personnel, needs no funds for housing, utilities or insurance. No Board member receives reimbursement for traveling to prospective sites, phone or other expenses.

Sixth, Member clubs receive regularly free books, booklets, etc. This usually far surpasses the amount that is paid in dues. How is this done? Every conference has had a small net balance and this money is used for donations, scholarships and club handouts. Why is there a positive balance at the Conferences? Outside donations have augmented the income, and this helps keep the cost down and has left a small net.

Seventh, unlike other conferences that invariably are held in one location, IAYC Conferences have been held in: College Park, MD; Toronto, Canada; Miami, FL, Fairfield, CT; Los Angeles, CA, Chevy Chase, MD; Milwaukee, WI and Baltimore, MD.

Join IAYC—have your group send a dollar a member ($25 minimum) to Seymour Graiver, treas. 212-08 15th Ave., Bayside, NY 11360-1106 Ph: 718-224-5497 seymour.graiver@worldnet.att.net
Yiddish Basics

This article is meant both for the absolute beginner who is looking for a roadmap on approaching the study of and about Yiddish language and culture, and as a checklist for those who have spent time and effort in becoming knowledgeable about Yiddish.

Yiddish is multi-faceted. To be able truly to say that you even have a grasp of Yiddish you should know at least a little about each area. If an area is omitted, your editor is sure that a reader will bring it to our attention.

• Speaking: Owning a car is great, but you want to drive or be driven in it. Can you carry on a basic conversation? Learn how to greet and say adieu. Do not worry about grammar and intersperse your English if necessary, but practice speaking. If you do not have someone around, get in front of a mirror and carry on a two-way conversation. Watch the motion of your lips. Attending a club or class is best.

• Reading: As soon as possible learn the Hebrew / Yiddish alphabet. There is a great reward in being able to read the great masters in the original. If this is too difficult, Romanization (transliteration) is second best. It is simple, for there are only a few simple rules. Learn the YIVO standard orthography (spelling).

• Dictionaries: Start with one having both your native language and Yiddish. Then advance to a larger one and eventually a Hebrew / Yiddish dictionary. Learn the alphabet. Not everyone who knows the letters can say the alphabet in its standard order. You will need it to use the dictionary without wasting a lot of time.

• Music: Many use the term Klezmer synonymous with Ashkenazi music. Besides being pleasant and enjoyable, it is a great way to learn new words and their pronunciation. If you are musically inclined, playing an instrument, or singing, is even better.

• Publications: Read as many different Yiddish journals, newsletters, newspapers, magazines as possible. If you can afford to subscribe to them that will be even better. They come in different formats—Yiddish, English and Romanized. Sharing with others gives you the opportunity to read more and get different views. Get your JCC, synagogue, temple, or Workmen’s Circle Branch to subscribe.

• Theater: While Yiddish theater is rare, the next best to live performances are the many excellent videos. It is an effortless way to enjoy and learn. Remember, support Yiddish theater when it comes to town.

• Writing: Having a briv-fraynd (pen pal) is a great way to further your Yiddish usage and knowledge. It can be done using the H/Y letters or Romanized. You can correspond with a relative, a friend or find someone online. Each venue you use will help you to improve your Yiddish.

• Attending: Conferences, conventions, institutes, seminars and retreats are stimulating and rewarding. Experiences. Here is where you will meet and make friendships. Many of us look forward to seeing our newly-found friends at successive events and share our common love of mame-loshn.

• Belonging: Membership in a local group (shmuekraz, leynenkrayz or shraybkraz) and attending on a regular basis are the bases of local sponsorship of Yiddish activities. Here is where programs from the outside get their support. Traveling musical, and theatrical groups, and lecturers bring outside stimuli, pleasure and knowledge. These new experiences add to the interest and development of local Yiddish interest.

Schooling: We all can benefit from attending a Yiddish class at our level. Fortunately there are many wonderful teachers. For those who have had the opportunity of sitting in a class of teachers like; Peysak Fiszman, Chava Lapin, Mordkhe Schaechter—and the many other fine teachers—you know the inspiration that they instill to make you want to learn more and more.

Role Playing: Each one of us should take every opportunity to extol the advantages of learning and fostering Yiddish. We have this chance when speaking to our friends, children and grandchildren. This can be in the form of interspersing a few Yiddish words, a proverb or a song. Teaching children a little song when babysitting or putting them to bed will leave memories of many years to come.

Tracing Your Roots: Developing a family tree means finding out about your heritage. In looking back to unearth the facts of your ancestors invariably will expose you to some memorabilia that has Yiddish. It may be on the back of photographs, in the form of letters or in the inside cover of a book.

In Conclusion: Yiddish must and can become a part of our everyday life. We need to take apart of every day and have Yiddish input in any of the forms listed above. We can listen to music while we walk; watch a video in the evening or read a story, newsletter or journal. The key is that Yiddish becomes an integral part of our life like dressing, grooming and eating.
The analogy of Yiddish to a subway train has several applications. As we get older time seems to pass faster and faster, and we don’t seem to be able to read/write Yiddish and attend all the meetings and Yiddish events that we wish we could.

Next, is the effect of technology—A brivele dem mamen—Mame doesn’t have to sit by the window waiting for the mailman. She can send an e-mail message online or pick up the cell phone and remind you to wear the scarf and a hat in winter.

The term Virtual Shtetl has been coined to describe the ability to bring together and communicate with other like-minded Yiddish lovers all around the world. By using Yiddish as the common language, we once again remove this language barrier. Well, what and where are examples of these Yiddish Expresses.

Currently, the longest operating and largest is the Mendele forum. It has gone through some management changes, but owes much of its success to Prof. Noyekh Miller. We cannot thank you enough.

On an individual basis, the largest online briv-fraynd (pen-pal) writership is Der Bay’s List of 400, worldwide. It is simple to join—fill out the form on Der Bay’s website. It can be in the form of Romanization (transliteration) or in hardcopy using the Hebrew/Yiddish letters.

Instant messaging and voice transmission via cyberspace exist and should be another fast-growing train of the Yiddish Express.

Chelm on Two Levels

On the one hand Der Bay is running a series of original Chelm stories of an imaginary Yiddish club (Our Yiddish Club) located in the imaginary town (Yenemsville). The club members learned of their common Chelm heritage and they are making an imaginary trip to Chelm. On the other hand Der Bay is pursuing a very intense effort to:

- Form a Chelm Society of Chelmers, with second and third generation included. It will not be along the lines of the old landsmanshaft, that many of us, and our parents belonged, but more of a clearinghouse along the lines of my dear friend Ben Giladi and his The Voice of Piotrkow Survivors. His bimonthly has over forty pages and contains articles in English, Hebrew, Polish and Yiddish.
- Help with the translation of the Johannesburg Chelm Yizkor Book, published in 1954 and edited by M. Bakalczuk (740 pages). This effort has been started, and is online at JewishGen. www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/chelm/chelm.html—project coordinator is Dr. Leah Z. Davidson. She is the granddaughter of R. Zygelboim, and can be reached at lzd2@juno.com or her office: 212-799-0642

Dr. Davidson is a remarkably dedicated person with an international reputation in her psychiatry career. She is unselfish in her time and effort in getting the Yizkor Book translated into English.
How you can help. If you know anyone who is a Chelmer or a descendant of one, please send in the information. Second, if you can, help support the Yizkor Book translation.
The name Chernobyl comes from the Slavonic term for the wormwood plant which thrives in the local marshlands. According to the Habrit Hakadisha (New Testament) it means bitterness; thus, the Anger of G-d, "And there fell a great star from Heaven, ...and the name of the Star is called wormwood... and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter." Yet, many people did not know that "Chernobyl is located in the heart of the former Pale of Settlement, and the area affected by the disaster "from Chernobyl north to Belarus... and south to Kiev and beyond" is the same "area that was soaked in Jewish blood for the past two centuries."

On April 26, 1986, one of the worst nuclear accidents in the history of civilization occurred at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and fifty-thousand residents in the Chernobyl region had to be immediately evacuated. Until the disaster, the town of Chernobyl, had been a town where about 50,000 people (mainly physicists, engineers and other scientists) lived, worked, attended cultural events and sent their children to school.

Thus, Chernobyl not only experienced a nuclear disaster, but it also was the area in which many Jews lived and died. The Pale of Settlement, established in 1791, was the area of the Former Soviet Union, where millions of Jews were forced to live until the Russian Revolution in 1917. At its zenith the Pale was home to the largest Jewish population in the world. In 1827, Czar Nicholas I ordered each Jewish community to deliver a specific number of conscripts—boys as young as twelve, to serve in the Russian Army for 25 years, where strenuous efforts were made to convert them to Christianity. In addition, they were often the victims of pogroms (pogrom is the Ukrainian word for attacks against Jews) in which they were injured or killed.

Chernobyl had one of the oldest Jewish settlements in the Ukraine, dating from the end of the Seventeenth Century. By 1847 the Jewish community had reached 3,400 people and by 1897, it was over 5,500, close to 60% of the population. The Jews, ten percent of the population in the Pale, lived in a rural society. They lived in little villages or shtetlakh (a shtetl was a small village in which most of the residents were Jews) in the Chernobyl area, but were not allowed to own land or sell liquor. Therefore, they had to earn their living as peddlers, tailors or shoemakers, but the numbers of those workers was often greater than the demand for their services. Thus, many of them lived in abject poverty and didn't even know if, when or where they would have their next meal. In spite of their poverty they had a rich cultural life. The parents valued education for their children and refused to "compromise Torah education ..." In fact, "Torah scholarship reached an apex in the great yeshivas that dotted the Pale." The Jews, as impoverished as they were, always helped those less fortunate than themselves. They established orphanages and clinics, gave dowries to brides who were indigent or were orphans, and had their own burial societies.

In 1917, when the Communists came into power, all religious, social and communal activities were ended. The Pale of Settlement was no longer a separate entity. Jews who had hoped Communism would improve their situation because they thought it would make everybody equal, became disillusioned because one of the new Government's major commitments was to do away with all religious institutions. Judaism was now forbidden, but Jewish organizations operated underground. They continued to provide for the welfare of their communities and cared for the poor and sick and continued to suffer for their faith.

During the Bolsheviks' 1917 October Revolution, Jews experienced more pogroms and in 1919, a notorious twenty-three year old warlord, Ataman Strunk, lead a gang of peasants who forced one-thousand Chernobyl Jews, at gunpoint into the Pripyat River, where they drowned. Later, in 1941, when the Nazis invaded the Former Soviet union, over a million and a half Jews were killed.

In 1986, when the disaster occurred, more than 500,000 Jews still lived in the area of the former Pale, which received the brunt of radioactive fallout. Thus, a disproportionate number of Jews suffered the consequences of the fallout. Thousands of Jewish children had been exposed to the radioactive fallout, and the children in the Chernobyl area are 200 times more vulnerable to cancer than the average child. So, Jews in the Chernobyl area, had lead an active religious, social and cultural life for centuries, in spite of all of the pogroms and attempts to convert them to Christianity, until they were massacred in the Holocaust.

However, many years later when the nuclear accident occurred, all the residents of the Chernobyl area were affected, and large numbers of them became sick and died. Moreover, many areas of Europe continue to be affected by the radioactive fallout, and people will probably sicken and die from radiation-induced illnesses.
Please add the radio show, The Yiddish Voice, to your New England Events calendar. It is locally heard, locally produced, local-relevant content, much of it is original and fresh. The show is All in Yiddish. We broadcast news, public service announcements, commentary, exclusive interviews, holiday presentations, and plays a variety of recordings (Klezmer, Yiddish folk songs, theater songs, Khazones, and comedy performances).

Wednesdays 7:30-8:30 p.m.
On WUNR 1600 AM/Brookline, Massachusetts
E-Mail: radio@yv.org
Web: http://www.yiddishvoice.com
Mailing Address: Yiddish Voice c/o WUNR, 160 N. Washington St., Boston, MA 02114 USA
Phone: 617-730-8484 * Fax: 617-249-0141 *
Requests: 617-367-8456 (only call during the show)

**Dimitri Shraybt fun Rusland**
*fun Dimitri Dozorets*

Dos iz a mekhaye tsu derhaltn briv inem konvert mit post-markes, im tsu efenen a aroyshlep shurshendike shneyvayse papirn mit di kleyne yidishe oyse afn zey, leyenen un dervisn mitn ksav vos fara shtimung hot der shrayber gehat...


Dos iz geven der entfer un itst hob ikh a frage. Veystu, vu ken men tsu gefinen materialn af English (yidish oder rusish) in gebit fun tipologie fun lider oyi yidish (un teoretishe verk vegn yidishe lider un muzik bikhlal)? A dank far ufmerkzamrayt. A gutn!

**A Yiddish Club Activity**

Try to have active participation at meetings. Someone should have a dictionary (*verterbukh*) at meetings. You should learn at least one new word at each meeting. The column to the right speaks about a particular group of Yiddish words and how they affect other words in a sentence (*zats*).

On the next page is a special list of words. Before the meeting make a copy for each member. Go around the room and have each member makh a zats (sentence) fun a vort in der reshime (list).

**Nu?—Neuter Nouns**

When I asked my mom o’h what she knew about grammar, the response was, “What do you want to know about bobes (granmas)?”

On the next page is a list of neuter nouns. Yiddish nouns usually are only masculine, feminine or neuter. Unlike English many languages have genders for their nouns (names of people, places or things). A common neuter noun in Yiddish is kind (child, plural kinder). How do we say the child? It all depends, for there are four Yiddish words for the English word *the*. They are; *di, der, dos and dem*. It is easy for plurals, for we always use *di* (*di* kinder).

Let us simplify things, for if we are speaking of only one child, we use either *dos* or *dem*—never *di* or *der*. This is true for all the words on the next page. Here are examples.

The child is here. *Dos* kind iz do.
I see the child. Ikh ze *dos* kind.
I bring the child a book. Ikh breng *dem* kind a bukh.

There are groups of words that are neuter nouns and act like *kind*. They are country names, towns, metals and diminutives or affectionate (often ending in *ele*). It is interesting to note that Northeastern Yiddish does not use the neuter, but assigns them to either masculine or feminine. So if you never use *dos* for the English *the*, you may be using Northeastern Yiddish.

Another reason to know the gender relates to the ending of words that change the meaning of the noun (the adjective). The ending of an adjective changes depending on which form of *the* one uses. There is a one to one correspondence.

With *der* you add *er*
With *di* or *dos* you add *e*
With *dem* you add *n* or *en*

Let’s add a describing word *good* to each of the above sentences and see how it is changed. The good child is here. *Dos* gute kind iz do.
I see the good child. Ikh ze *dos* gute kind.
The good child’s book is here. *Dem* gutn kinds bukh iz do.
I bring the good child the book. Ikh breng *dem* gutn kind *dos* bukh.

The Yiddish words *a* and *an* are spelled and used exactly as they are in English. When using *a* or *an* the describing word is not changed—good is gut.
A good child is here. A gut kind iz do.
A good child’s book is here. A gut kinds bukh iz do.
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THE IAYC KLUB KORNER

For those who have not visited Der Bay’s website lately, it is suggested that they may wish to do so. There have been format changes as well as additional sections. As more and more readers are getting access to e-mail and are able to browse, the website is being used more and more. The site is located at: http://www.derbay.org and works in conjunction with the newsletter.

Because it can easily be updated regularly, and can store a vast amount of material, it is a wonderful instant resource for Yiddish. Best of all it is absolutely free. Income from the newsletter partially supports the website.

The site is proactive.

• You can send a listing for your event. Send city, date, time, name of event & contact phone #.
• You can register your Yiddish club with IAYC and become a member
• You can ask for a briv fraynd.
• You can e-mail a translator, klezmer group, lecturer or teacher.
• You can find many other Yiddish and other Jewish sites and click without knowing or inputting their e-mail address or website.

Below is the list of major sections of the website. Each is subdivided and has links to other sites and to other pages within the site. This list is what you will see on the left side when you go to Der Bay’s homepage.

Der Bay
Yiddish Events
Order Der Bay
Yiddish Links
Other Jewish Links
Yiddish Word Lists
List your Event
International Assoc. of Yiddish Clubs
Klub Körner
Presenters
Klezmer Bands
Briv-fraynd Pen-Pals
Translators
Major Event
The Yiddish Network
Fishl’s Bio
Yiddish for Disabled
Guided Tour
Publications
250 Songs
FAQs
Sample Issue
E-mail Fishl

Just to show how extensive the website is, we shall take one of the 20 sections. Number 8 is the International Association of Yiddish Clubs Frequently Asked Questions. This list of FAQs represents the Q and A section. This is an ever-expanding section that can be useful to others in addition to Yiddish club leaders and members. It is a work in progress, and will keep on enlarging. If you have any additions or corrections, please let your editor/webmaster know. When you click on a question, it takes you to the answer.

When you click on the Klub Körner on the homepage, here is what you will see. After reading the following—the list is next.

This column will meet the needs of the expanding Yiddish Club Program of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC). Below is a list of Informational Help Sheets being prepared—we’ll report on their availability. Do you wish an additional topic? Send in your request, and it will be added or put on the to-do list. If you wish to do the write-up for one of the coming soon listings, please submit it, and you will be recognized.

1. How Can I Start A Yiddish Club?
2. Why Should We Join The IAYC?
3. Where Do I Get Yiddish Films?
4. Where Can We Purchase Yiddish Materials?
5. Ideas For Club Programming.
6. What Publications Should We Get
7. To What Organizations Should We Belong?
8. What Yiddish Dictionaries Are Available?
10. Where Can We Get “Transliterated” Skits?
11. Where Can We Find A Yiddish Translator?
12. Where Can We Find A Yiddish Teacher?
13. Where Can We Find The Words To A Song?
14. Where Can We Find A Klezmer Group?
15. Where Can We Get A Good Speaker?
16. Where Can We Go For A Yiddish Conference?
17. Where are The Yiddish Elderhostels?
18. Where Are Yiddish College Courses?
19. Where Can We Find Yiddish Pen-Pals?
20. What Are Good Beginner’s Yiddish Books?
21. Where Can We Find Lists of Yiddish Words?
22. What Materials Are Available For The Blind?
23. What Yiddish Sites Are On The Internet?
24. What Yiddish Software Is Available?
25. Ideas For Learning The Hebrew Alphabet
26. Ideas For Using The Yiddish Dictionary

Coming Soon:

24. What Yiddish Software Is Available?
26. Ideas For Using The Yiddish Dictionary
KLEZCALIFORNIA
by Julie Egger

It is a Summer Day Camp for All Ages Featuring Klezmer Music, Yiddish Language and Folk Arts.


New this year will be a collective theatre lab culminating in a play based on a short story by Singer, coordinated by Corey Fischer, a founder of a Traveling Jewish Theatre. There will be the rich repertoire of Aliza Greenblatt, the renowned Yiddish poet, whose daughter married Woody Guthrie.

For teens, there is electric klezmer, a youth orchestra, the opportunity to act, and to be introduced to Yiddish through play and art. For children aged 5 - 12, a program ranges from music and drama, to art and the chance to learn the real meaning of chutzpah.

Instructors include:

* Adrienne Cooper, singer, featured on the Grammy-nominated CD Partisans of Vilna, who has recorded with the world-renowned band, the Klezmatics;

* Joshua Horowitz, musician and scholar, whose recordings with Budowitz, Rubin & Horowitz and Brave Old World have become klezmer revival classics;

* Naomi Seidman, author of A Marriage Made in Heaven: The Sexual Politics of Hebrew and Yiddish, and director of the Jewish Studies program of the Graduate Theological Union.

The program will take place 9 - 6 pm at the Jewish Community High School of the Bay, San Francisco, with special events in the evening and a Staff Concert, June 21*. Tuition is $320 for children, $335 for teens (12-17), and $425 for adults. Separate registration is available for single days, courses, or evening programs. Advance registration is required.

KlezCalifornia is presented in association with the Jewish Music Festival and co-sponsored by the Berkeley Richmond and Osher Marin Jewish Community Centers, Lehrhaus Judaica, and Yiddishkayt Los Angeles. For registration and contact Rachel McClung, at 415-456-7547, www.klezCalifornia.org or info@klezcalifornia.org

Our Newest TYN Contact

Thank you indeed for your invitation to be part of The Yiddish Network for my area. It is an invitation that I am very honoured to accept. My area is a group of islands called The Channel Islands which form part of Great Britain, but are located only 12 miles off the coast of N.W. France.

The principal business here is Offshore Finance, but there is a bit of Tourism & Agriculture. Jersey is the island that I live on. There are other islands—Guernsey Alderney Sark and Herm. Collectively they are known as The Channel Islands.

My Mum is German Jewish. That is the reason I want to learn Yiddish. She was born in Bremmen but her family had to escape Germany in the late 1930’s. They arrived as refugees in the UK in about 1938 after having to abandon their Department Store business in Germany somewhere. She never talks about it and brought my sister and me up speaking only English in London, but I like to count myself as half Yiddish if only to try and preserve what is left of our culture and traditions.

Michael A Poole MASCE Attorney
2 Victoria Apts., James Road
St Helier, Jersey JE2 4QY
Channel Islands
United Kingdom
Tell +44 1534 630403
email michaelapoole@localdial.com

IAYC Madrid Yiddish Club:
Letter to IAYC V.P., Paul Melrood

For the week of May 18th and 19th, a major Spanish newspaper (EL ABC) ran a series of articles on Isaac Bashevis Singer and the world of Yiddish. I’m announcing this event in the Jewish communities of Madrid. And the Círculo de Bellas Artes has its own mailing list, so there’ll be a large turnout.

In Hebraica, one of the Jewish communities made up mainly of Argentinian Jews, they are having a Yiddish film festival (with Spanish subtitles) and they asked me to moderate the discussion after each showing. Now, we convinced the Círculo de Bellas Artes to show these films to non-Jewish audiences, and they will that same week.

Your letter to the people at the Círculo was beautiful. They deserve credit for organizing this program when anti-Jewish and anti-American feelings are running high, but these events will reach the people here who questions these attitudes and want to know more about Judaism.
The 3R’s of: Club Membership Development

RECRUITMENT
Leadership
Participation
Attendance

RESPONSIBILITY
RETENTION

Of all the areas of Yiddish club activities, near the top is membership. You can always find a place to meet. You can always show a movie or sit around and speak, but if you do not have people attending in at least a critical mass, you may not have a viable club.

Think of membership as a triangle with smaller triangles at each vertex.

Recruitment: You must turn the prospect into a member. This consists of getting the names of prospects and asking them to attend and join (all of these steps will be thoroughly covered in the future).

Responsibility: This is the indoctrination process. The club has the responsibility of incorporating the rookies into the fold. Besides introducing them, there should be a membership packet. Each club will vary based on the local interests. A membership list and resources are a must. IAYC is developing a sample packet.

Retention: All clubs experience periods when some of he members skip meetings and begin to lose interest. It is easier to keep a member than to get a new one. It is a basic law of salesmanship. A telephone tree with monthly calls to each member is the opportunity to learn of members’ needs.

Center of the Triangle: Okay, so they join—now how do you get them to be involved in some activity? After they attend and become involved how do you develop them into leaders? These will be covered in future issues. Meanwhile, your editor hopes that clubs will write in and share their successes as well as their problems.

Join IAYC—If your group does not belong to the International Association of Yiddish Clubs, give it serious consideration. Help foster the growth of our mame-loshn. Have your group send a dollar a member ($25 minimum) to:

Seymour Graiver, IAYC Treas.
212-08 15th Ave.,
Bayside, NY 11360-1106
Ph: 718-224-5497 seymour.graiver@worldnet.att.net

IAYC Leadership

Paul Melrood was born in Pilava, a shtetl in the Ukraine, about 125 miles from Kiev. The family left Pilava in 1921, when he was less than a year old. They were part of a train of horse and wagons headed for Warsaw. It took these escapees from local bandits, about 3 months, to get to relatives in Milwaukee. His father, who was a graduate of the yeshiva in Zvil, was a Yiddish/Hebrew teacher in Milwaukee for 50 years. He worked at the Folk Shule, Arbeiter Ring Shule, I. L. Peretz Shule, and United Hebrew Schools.

Yiddish was Paul’s first language. He graduated from the Yiddishe Folk Shule, and its Mitl Shule in 1936, and was a member of Habonim (Labor Zionist Youth) from 1933 to 1941. In 1941 Paul received a BS in Art Education from Milwaukee State Teachers College. During the 4 summers, while attending college, he worked as a counselor at the Farband Camp in Chelsea, Mich. This Jewish National Workers Alliance camp had a strong presence of Yiddish in its daily program. During one of those summers, in the late 1930’s, Noach Nachbush, a famous member of the Wilno troupe, visited the camp, and gave Paul his first opportunity to do Yiddish theatre.

He was drafted into the Air Corps on Dec. 9th, 1941, and spent 4 1/2 years on active duty, and 6 1/2 years in the Air Corps reserves. Upon discharge from the army, he joined Milwaukee’s Peretz Hirschbein Folks Theatre, known as Perhift. It was the oldest, non-professional Yiddish theatre group in the country. It had active productions from 1921-1971. This Perhift Theatre ensemble is recognized in Zalman Zilberzweig’s 4th edition of The Lexicon of Yiddish Theatre. Paul has participated in local Warsaw Ghetto observances, for 40 years.

At the 4th annual IAYC conference in Miami, he met Fishl Kutner, and got caught up in the excitement of a national Yiddish organization. This led to his chairing the 6th IAYC Conference in Milwaukee in 2003. After the Milwaukee conference, Marlene and he traveled to Madrid, were successful in getting the Yiddish club to be the first IAYC club in Europe. Paul was elected IAYC vice president at the last conference in Baltimore. Early this year, IAYC president Dr. Harold Black and Paul visited Minneapolis, to do preliminary planning for the next conference. It will be held there in 2005.

Currently Paul is a member of the Milwaukee Yiddish Vinkl which has grown to a membership of over 100 in its short 3 year history. He has been a real estate broker, and builder since 1952.
Interesting Ambiguity:
of a Yiddish Word
by Louis Fridhandler, Walnut Creek, CA

Az a mensh iz a bisl genit af khotsh tsvey leshoynes ken men dershatsn az iberzetsn eyn loshn af an andern iz take shver, ober oykh pedagogish, voyl dertsipher. Tsum bayshpil: dos Yidish vort *kukvinkl* meg hobn kimat di zelbe meynung vos hot der English oysdruk *point of view*, ober men ken dershpim an ander min gefil.

Translation:

If a person is somewhat experienced in at least two languages, he or she can appreciate that translating one language into another is difficult but also rather educational. For example: the Yiddish word *kukvinkl* may have practically the same meaning as the English expression *point of view* but one senses another kind of feeling.

Let me speculate further in English:

A point has no dimensions, its position is undefined, and because it has no dimensions it has no boundaries. As to the English expression, a conceivable boundary is the skin of the person seeing from that *point of view*. He or she is unbound, free and clear to shift positions.

*Kukvinkl* stems from two Yiddish words: *kuk* meaning look, and *vinkl* meaning corner. A person with a *kukvinkl* seems to be looking things over from her or his position in a corner. A corner presumably has two boundaries that meet where the person is. He or she is seeing the world (or just the room) at leisure, comfortably positioned, snugly ensconced in the corner. That is one way of sensing the compound word.

However, there is an ambiguity raising interesting tension. Is the person in the corner not at all comfortable, but feeling backed into that corner? Hasn't the Jewish experience backed Jews into rather uncomfortable strictures from time to time. Naturally, I don't know if the latter is what inspired the word *kukvinkl*, but I can't help wondering. In any case ambiguity makes for added interest, and sharply differentiates the Yiddish word from the English expression.

I love both the English and the Yiddish equivalent. I'd love to be able to fully translate one into the other. Is it possible?

Editor’s note—If you have a response/opinion on the subject, please send it in.

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Archie Barkan Headlines Event

Noted raconteur, Archie Barkan, headed a four-act musicale in San Francisco. This *First Margie Rosenthal Memorial Musicale* honored a very special person. Margie was one of a small number who survived the Holocaust when the family found a haven in Manila in the Philippines.

Archie is well known in the Greater Los Angeles area as an entertainer as well as a superb Yidish teacher and translator. The event also featured The Klezmer Soul Band in Concert, The Larks: Alla & Yakov, Cantor Rudy Hassid and Heather.

Special guests were the Yiddish actress, Chayale Ash, members of the San Rafael Keep Yiddish Alive, Yiddish club and Dr Arnold Adicoff's group from Grass Valley. The wonderful event was held at Congregation Ner Tamid.

Sophia Adler Writes

I found a page in the September 2001 issue of Der Bay, titled: *Farewell To the King, Personal Memories of Abraham Khinkis*. How can I contact him? The text identifies his town only as "from our small Bessarabian village". My mother and her large Warshavsky family came to U.S. in 1906, from village Dubossar, and several other villages in Bessarabia. *I learned much from my mother and grandfather, about their life there.*

In 2001 I helped translate the Dubossar Yizkor from the Yiddish to English (which has a great deal of history & names). The Yizkor Memorial Book is at: http:wwwjewishgen.org/yizkor/dubossary/dubossary.html *Sophia Adler, Southold, NY*

Tillie Fogelbaum Berlant Writes

On April 13 I achieved the age of 90. I am a graduate of the Sholem Aleichem Elementary and IWO Mitlshul. So it was a delight to read about the events that relate to Yiddish. One of my dearest teachers in the Sholem Aleichem Shule was Dr. Shasby, a brilliant scholar and darling person. How he could tolerate us 13 and 14 year olds, was a miracle.

In the low mitl shul one of our favorite teachers was Itche Goldberg who is celebrating his 100th birthday. I sent him a birthday card and informed him that one of his students is now 90 years old. I am also enclosing a check for my grandson who has an interest in Yiddish, but does not understand it. Please send him Der Bay, and perhaps it will touch dos pintele yid.

Tillie Fogelbaum Berlant, Laguna Woods, CA
On Your Visit to ISRAEL

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e-mail: leivik-h@012.net.il
http://members.tripod.com/beit_leivik

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Rachel Ramras: Exec. Dir.

Yankev shraybt fun atlanta

Dos iz di tsveyte korespondents-iberblik oysgekratst
fun di letzte numern fun der bay. ikh khazer iber mayn
bekoshe tsu gibn dir tsu visn ayer meynung vegn
mayne bamerkungen. ikh hob nisht in zinen tsu
kritikirn di redkolegye, bloyz, vu es iz meglekh,
oystsubesern di tsaytshrift. ikh hob shoyn anuml	
geshribn vegn di grayzn fun yidishe verter un
oysdrukn, vos khapn zikh arayn in der tsaytshrift, vi,
tsum bayshpil in numer 6, zayt 1, ershte shpalt: es
darf zayn a brivele der mamen nisht dem mamen.
un ot leyen ikh o

Oyf der 6ter zayt di oyfklerung funem bashtimtn
artikl (definite article) der, di, dos (nisset dem!), on a
shum oyfklerung, az der artikl tret aroys in eyntsol,
kayn vort vegn dem umbashtimtn artikl (indefinite
article), vegn di artiklen in eyntsol un mertsol, kayn
vort vegn di artiklen in farshidene deklinatsyes. ven
kh’volt nisht gekont yidish volt ikh beshun oyn
nisht farshitanen oyfi praktishn oyfi viazoy un ven
banust men di artiklen. es volt geven a yoysher tsu
betn a genitn yidishist tsu gibn di farinteresirte
leyener a blits-kurs fun yidisher gramatik.

farrikherte grayzn fun zayt 7:
lekht - candle likht - light
krayzl - kurl orun - coffin
kerper - body kentenish - skill
a lign - a lie erfindenish - invention
khaloshes - fainting knepl - button
knipl - knot meshugas - craziness, nuts
kamzoyl - vest batsolt - paid
skhires - salary farmegn - possession
nakhes - joy tsufridnayt - satisfaction

Ven di redaktsy fun yidish,
shemt zikh nisht tsu farrikhtn di grayzn; es vet
tsunuts kumen di redaktsy un dem korespondent.

mit derekh erets,
Yankev (Jacob - nisht Joseph) shchupak.
What IAYC Clubs Have Received!

There are many excellent reasons why Yiddish clubs should join the IAYC. One of the reasons is that IAYC member clubs regularly receive materials which usually more than equals the annual dues they have paid. The Selection Committee is chaired by Troim Katz-Handler. Here is a list of materials sent to the clubs over the years.

1. **Mayn Oytser: Gems of Yiddish Art & Folk Songs**
2. An issue of the journal **Yiddish Culture**
3. **Der Onheyb**—journal (twice)
4. **Mayn Shtetle Bronzville**—Sylvia Schildt
5. **Making Love in Yiddish**—Sid Weinstein
6. **Simkhe**—Poems by Troim Katz-Handler
7. **Toppelpunkt**—Yiddish Israeli journal
8. **Kumpt Tsum Tish**—Poems - Sarah Moskovitz
9. **Peretz Miransky**—Poems & Fables
10. **A Sheyner Gelekhter**—Ruth Levitan (Romanized)
11. **Potpourri**—Stories, poems, skits - Sid Weinstein
12. **Lomir Redn Yiddish**—Fannie Yokor
13. **Der Yidn Fraynd**—Yiddish, Romanized, English
14. **Tam-Tam**—two issues
15. **Moyshe Nadir**—Sampling (Romanized) - Sid Weinstein
16. **Mayn Sheyne Meydl**—Video
17. **Humorous Yiddish Postcards**
18. **Pearls of Yiddish Song**—Mlotek
19. **The Yiddish Teacher**—Beginners textbook
20. **Onkelos Stories**—Yiddish, Romanized (our next mailing)
21. **Peretz Miransky**—selected poems and fables in Yiddish and romanization.
22. Board member, Troim Katz Handler, transliterated Yentl, by IB Singer. This will be one of the future mailings.

Jewish Art Fund for Latin America

It is my pleasure to contact you in order to introduce our organization. My name is Jonathan Krumecadyk and I am executive director of Bynd, the Jewish Art Fund for Latin America. We work to promote Jewish art and artists in Latin America and around the world. I would like to invite you to visit our web site: www.bynd.org where you can see who we are and what we do. We believe Der Bay can help us get in touch with artists and other Jewish culture promoting organizations/individuals. Congratulations on your work and we look forward to hearing from you soon,

Jonathan A. Krumecadyk, Executive Director
jkrumecadyk@bynd.org

Jewish Art Fund for Latin America, JM Giuffra
312 C1064ADD, Buenos Aires Argentina

B.I.S.O.N. Yiddish Club

Completing its 8th year Tuesday, June 29, 2004, the Beth Israel Yiddish Group honored one of its active members Saul Seder, age 103, and George Gershman, age 97, of the Jewish Community Center Yiddish Group. Between them, they cover an age span of 200 years. Their pictures were the centerpiece of a cake. The celebration was in the Beth Israel chapel.

Sam Gordon, Worcester, MA
samncar@aol.com 508-754-4915

In a previous issue of Der Bay, it was suggested that we write a little letter in transliterated Yiddish to someone within our group, sort of as a pen pal. When I suggested this to our members someone came up with the suggestion that we each write to Phil our director. As a result, I now have everyone writing stories in Yiddish (transliteration) about Tuesday with Phil or better known as Dynstik mit Fayvl. I plan on putting this together along with a photo of each contributor in sort of a book form. I will keep you posted on our progress.

I am collecting as many stories as I can of Herschel Ostropolier. As a little boy, when I was ill, my grandmother would sit on the edge of my bed and tell me these stories. A number of years ago I purchased a book with many of these stories; however, foolishly lent it to someone and lost track of to whom I lent it. Perhaps you could place a little notice in Der Bay requesting anyone that has any of these stories to contact me or forward same via e-mail.

Temple Beth El Yiddish Vinkl
Phil London fsg@tampabay.rr.com

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OSCAR ANTEL was born in Dombrovits, Poland (now Ukraine), near Rovna and came to Winnipeg, Canada with his family at the age of seven. He attended the I.L.Peretz School as a Yiddish day school student till grade six and continued Yiddish studies evening classes till past high school under some prominent Yiddish teachers. His studies in Yiddish included language, history and geography. He is fluent in Yiddish, both spoken and written.

Oscar served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during the war and was stationed overseas in England.

He graduated from the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg as a Chartered Accountant. During his working days he was a partner in a charter accounting company.

Oscar became very active in the Jewish community life of Winnipeg and later on a national basis. He served as education chairman (dertziungs forzitzer) and then became president of the I. L. Peretz Folk School. Later he served as Chairman of the Yiddish Committee of the Canadian Jewish Congress. At that time the Committee covered the entire country. Today there are independent Committees in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. The Canadian Jewish Congress has moved their national headquarters from Montreal to Ottawa, the national capitol.

After having met Fishl and being introduced to the IAYC Board, at one of the Canadian meetings, he became a member of the Board of Directors of the International Association of Yiddish Clubs, and has been a trustee ever since.

He is now retired. His wife is Bella who also attended the I. L. Peretz Folk School and taught as a Yiddish kindergarten teacher. Oscar has two sons, a daughter, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Four years ago he visited his old Polish (now Ukraine) shtetl along with his sons and visited some of the remnants of the Jewish communities in Poland and Ukraine. He still remains involved with many activities promoting Yiddish.

Winnipeg is remarkable in its Yiddish/Jewish activities when one considers its size. It has a Jewish radio program, theater, library, and Yiddish is being taught at the University of Manitoba. Oscar is one of three Canadians on the IAYC Board. We are very fortunate to have him.

TROIM KATZ HANDLER was born in the Boyle Heights section of Los Angeles, California, to Yiddish short-story writer Chaske Blacher and Yiddish-English poet Menke Katz and was reared mostly by her Lubavitch grandparents, Moyshe and Shhtsheshe Blacher in Passaic, New Jersey.

Her brother is Dr. Dovid Katz, professor of Yiddish at Vilnius U. and academic director of the Yiddish Institute, Lithuania, and author of many books.


A product of the Workmen’s Circle shule in Passaic, Troim's first job after high school was as secretary to Itche Goldberg, who is still editor of Yiddisches Kultur. He, she says, was her "Yiddish University for one". He sent her to school to learn Yiddish shorthand and typing and dictated his articles to her. From him she learned Yiddish grammar and literature and attended his classes at the Hekhere Kursn weekends for 5 years. After that, she taught in the Long Island shules 6 years while attending NYU evenings.

After a career as a secondary-school teacher of English/journalism, she returned to work one day a week in Itche’s office where she brushed up on her Yiddish stenography skills. During her 30 years as an English teacher and advisor to school publications, she had enjoyed correcting English grammar. She then turned her interest to Yiddish grammar and studied with Avrom-Yankev Sacks at the YIVO and Dr. Mordkhe Schaechter at the Columbia-YIVO summer program. He also met with her to mentor her when she began writing Yiddish poetry in 1991.

Troim enjoys checking the Yiddish grammar and transliteration for IAYC projects, such as the script for Mayn Sheyne Meyd (My Fair Lady), and Onkelos stories, future mailings now in the works. Troim and her husband Frank deliver many separate lectures in Florida and NY/NJ. She lectures on Yiddish literature in Yiddish, English, or both; and he lectures about Jewish history. They also present bilingual humor programs as a team. They have 2 daughters, Claudia and Sheh-sheh (the singer who produced her album, Lider fun mayn zeydn, and 4 grandchildren.
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 g-t's bruim, mit khayes?
E: WHO SAYS JEWS HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH G-D'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 zindelek, hint, kets, therepakhes, 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 oysgehodevet, tsuzamen mit mayne tsvey zindelek, hint, kets, therepakhes, krolikes, a shtekhldikn yozshik, a grine salamandre, un tropishe fishlekh.
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 MALE 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 shplitaysg.
E: WHEN WE TOOK HIM INTO OUR HOUSE, HE WAS A SOFT, WOOLY, PLAYING 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 beyner un dekker, arayn un aroys fun mist-kestlekh, gemakht kozhshkes arum rizike hint-sobakes, un, der iker, terorizirt andere kets.
E: THIS MALE CAT WANDERED 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, THE MAIN THING HE DID WAS TO TERRORIZE OTHER CATS.

Y: Biz eyn mol, in der fri, iz er aheym gekumen on an oyg.
E: UNTIL ONE TIME. IN THE MORNING, HE CAME HOME WITHOUT AN EYE.

Y: Hot men af im ongeshrign:
E: HE WAS SCOLDED:

Y: "Staytsh, 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, in tsveytn aroys.
E: BUT IT WENT INTO ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER.
Y: Vos an emes hot er afn tsveytn tog ongevoyrn bezde oyern, un mit a vokh shpeter iz er kam gekumen tsuloyfn hinkendik af a fus mit a tsefliktkn 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 shoyn aynlign?
E: YOU WOULD THINK THAT HE WOULD LIE DOWN?

Y: A nekhtiker tog!
E: NO WAY!

Y: Der koter hot zikh azoy lang arumgeyogt biz er iz aheymgekumen a tsebalter un a tsekaliyetshter, zikh avekgeleygt in gortn, un geshtorbn.
E: THE MALE CAT CHASED AROUND SO LONG THAT HE CAME HOME SWOLLEN AND IMPALED; AND HE LAY DOWN IN THE GARDEN AND DIED.

Y: Hobn di kinder oysgegrobn a grub lebn hoyz, im bagrobn mit trern in di oygn, un af zayn keyver a vays-bloye fon mitn oyfshrit: "Do ligt 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 gehaltn.
E: AFTER THAT WE NO LONGER KEPT CATS.

Y: Vayzt zikh aroys, az yidn hobn gehaltn shtub-khayes, gepilnevet oyves, un gekhovet bheymes.
E: IT SEEMS THAT JEWS KEPT HOUSE-ANIMALS, PAMPERED POULTRY, AND RAISED COWS.

Y: S’iz geven gor a yidishe mide fun tsar bale-khayem.
E: IT WAS A JEWISH TRAIT TO LOVE ANIMALS.

Y: Punkt azoy vi di yidn hobn toyznter yor gelebt zayt bay zayt mit eysevs kinder, azoy hobn zey oykh nisht oysgemitin di velt fun g-ts 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 G-D’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 ayngerdt.
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 SO QUIET, AS WE HAVE BEEN LED TO BELIEVE.

Y: Yidn hobn arum di bale-khay ufgeshtelt a rakhvediskn folklor, fun kishef-mayses un shrek-ibergloybenishn, zabobones, zgules, un opshprekhenishn.
E: JEWS HAVE ESTABLISHED A COMFORTABLE FOLKLORE AROUND THIS CONCERN FOR ANIMALS, FROM MAGICAL STORIES AND FEARFUL SUPERSTITION, PLAYFUL THINGS, REMEDIES, AND EXORCISM.

Y: Der iker hot men zikh geshrokn farn gilgl-neshome.
E: THEY MAINLY FEARED THE TRANSFORMATION 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 can be reached at: troim@webtv.net
The JCC Chicago Yiddish Institute

We shall celebrate our 15th anniversary October 14-17, 2004, at Perlstein Resort and Conference Center, in Lake Delton, Wisconsin. Our facility has 3 lodges, air-conditioned and heated with private bathrooms. It is handicapped accessible. The Bess Merens Pavilion is the center of all activities. We have a moshgiakh on the premises at all times, and we serve delicious kosher food.

This year we feature Sabell Bender, dynamic actress covering vibrant world of Yiddish Theater; Deborah Davis, Cantor and co director of the Second Avenue Klezmer Ensemble, with Dr. Ellen Weller; and Dr. Nathaniel Stampfer, resident rabbi and lecturer of the Conversational Yiddish workshops. This is a beautiful program that will interest everyone. "We come as friends—leave as mishpokhe."

Helen Schechtman, co-ordinator, PO Box 5162, Skokie, Il., 60076, helenschechtman@aol.com

The Inexhaustible Wellspring: Reaping the Rewards of Shtetl Life by Dr. Heszel Klepfisz

This 39-chapter book is a 348-page distillation of five volumes written during the 1980s and 90s, dealing with the high level of Jewish civilization achieved in Eastern Europe, as for example:

- The uniqueness of the shtetl in Jewish history
- Were shtetl Jews iufi-mentshn?
- The role of the Pinkas in Jewish life
- How the kehila administered Jewish autonomy—helped the sick and negotiated with government
- How political Zionism originated in East Europe and the leaders who established Israel.
- Founding of the National Library in Jerusalem
- Resistance and self-defense against military occupation and pogroms,
- How and when Yiddish originated & flourished.

The chapters are written in a popular style and from a cultural-anthropological viewpoint. They first appeared as separate articles in Yiddish newspapers in Poland and elsewhere and were very popular among the readers. The editing involved removal of redundancies and providing additional biographical data for important people mentioned in the book.

This book is a valuable resource for learning about the role that Ashkenazim played in Jewish history, and how the civilization they created differed from those created by the Sephardim and the Jews who lived in Babylonia.


To purchase e-mail at: sales@devorapublishing.com or call 1-800-232-2931. The translator would appreciate comments at: yankst@nac.net

On the Madrid Yiddish Conference
Hannah Galay asafgl@012.net.il

I want to express my deep thanks to you and to the great work that is done through Der Bay. It enabled my husband Daniel Galay and me to meet the Yiddish-lovers group in Madrid.

The Conference took place in Madrid—the days devoted to Isaak Bashevis Singer and the world of Yiddish culture. It was organized by the Circulo de Belle Artis with collaboration of the Jewish community of Madrid, The Israeli Embassy, The International Association of Yiddish Clubs and others. Daniel Galay, the chairman of the Association of Yiddish Writers and Journalists in Israel, was invited to take part at the panel of the symposium.

We were impressed with wonderful people. We met Roda Henelde Abecassis, a well-known translator from Yiddish to Spanish, who translated some of Bashevis Singer’s books into Spanish. We met Zish, an American, who lives and works in Madrid and other great Yiddish speakers and lovers like Shifra the wife of the Chabad Rabbi in Madrid, a mother of 14(!!!) children who raises her family in Yiddish. Es iz geven a groyse fargenigen tzu trefn ale tayere Yiddish Lovers of Madrid, and I thank Der Bay which through its connection we met that group.

YiddishForum Online
David Grossman, Moderator, davidg@macam.ac.il

It is the group for communicating in basic Yiddish. A full description of YiddishForum is available at: www.geocities.com/ourjewishgroups/1YiddishForum/Intro.html

Important Internet and email addresses:
- Posting a message to the group: Send to yiddishforum@yahoogroups.com
- How to subscribe to YiddishForum: YiddishForum-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
- To learn of other Jewish and Hebrew groups: http://www.geocities.com/jewishgroups

Rules for Yiddish Forum are available at: www.geocities.com/ourjewishgroups/1YiddishForum/Rules.html
On *kukvinkl*

by Harold Ticktin, Esq.  ticktin@visn.net

I have been reading *Der Bay* with great pleasure, and now am moved to comment on friend Fridhandler’s concerns about *kukvinkl*. I am conversant in 8 languages and the problem of translation is of course paramount. The Italians say: Traduzione/Tradizione—translation is treason, which it often is and just as often not.

The idea that *kukvinkl* reflects the rigors of Jewish history is really an instance of what has come to be known as the Lachrymose Theory of Jewish history, that it is a long series of disasters. The theory overlooks the long periods of quiet and productive cultural achievements. Utilizing Ockham’s Razor, the idea that the simplest explanations are the best, I hazard that *kukvinkl* and point of view are pretty good renderings (a much better term than translation).

I do a talk on Jewish humor, a portion of which is based on personal experience, including the difficulty of rendering. The following is an example: years ago, talking with an old Jewish pharmacist (apteyker) he rhapsodized about selling trusses in the old days.

"We did such a business in trusses, now who buys a truss? We sold so many we had an expression in Yiddish—ayer kile iz undzerer gedile."

I asked him how he would translate that and he replied literally. “Your hernia is our pleasure.”

I remonstrated with him about such a rendering which conveyed no flavor at all in English. He shot back: "So, how would you translate it?"

"It's simple" I said, "your rupture is our rapture."

In the Yiddish Vinkl, I facilitate in Cleveland at a retirement home, we have discussions over correct renderings. My Lil, a Jewish lady of a certain age, contended that *nebach* could not be translated. Leo Rosten has 10 renderings of the word, but we were unsatisfied. Finally we reverted to Victorian English for a savory exchange: *Tis a pity.*

Navigating among languages requires a steady keel and a vivid imagination. My Yiddish is self-taught. It can be done.

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On *Yizkor Books*

by Jack S. Berger

The Zamosc Memorial Book committed to the printer, I have turned my attention to my next target of opportunity: *Sefer Zikaron Kehillat Szczubrzeszn.* This shtetl, outside of Zamosc, is where my father was born, and I look forward to seeing what it contains, and the degree to which the writing overlaps with that in *Pinkas Zamosc*.

I am sending you an excerpt from the Foreword that sheds further light on my feelings regarding the imperative for translation. This book is the first in which I have found side-by-side versions of some of the writing in the original Yiddish and Hebrew translation. The text below eloquently explains the motivation for this. I do not need to repeat it.

It is regrettalbe that the English Summary is restricted to the Foreword and the Table of Contents. This is far from sufficient for what the Book Committee refers to as the younger generation in the Diaspora.

I send this to underscore my prior message concerning the necessity—but lack of sufficiency—in the initiative of the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA to create the Steven Spielberg Digital Archive of Yizkor Books. While laudable, we must be vocal in showing World Jewry that more needs to be done, if this record is not to become entombed behind a language barrier, and ministered to by specialist acolytes in an ivory tower.

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**A Visit to Thailand**

by Carolyn Shapiro tzrl@yahoo.com

I will check my files to see if I can find the names and addresses of the various Jewish minyanim in Bangkok. We attended the one actual synagogue, which has a Lubavitch rabbi. I had obtained the address and phone number for the shul before we left on the trip. I think I got it from United Synagogue, but I don’t remember now.

After the shabes morning service, all the daveners were invited to lunch! The rebetzn, a native of San Francisco, was very welcoming, despite numerous children hanging on her arms.

The minyan was mainly made up of Israelis—if not for that tour group from Israel, there would not have been ten men.

As our cab driver moved slowly along the street, looking for the address, I recognized a mogen david on the building. I reassured the cab driver that we wanted to get out there. He really was very reluctant to leave us on such an empty street early on a Saturday morning. I had to agree it was an unlikely tourist destination! The shul itself was very aynshtendik, behind high walls which surrounded its courtyard.
Boston Yiddish Radio Show’s 10th Year
Celebrating Co-host Hasia Segal’s 90th Birthday
by Mark H. David <radio@yv.org>

The Yiddish Voice, a Yiddish-language weekly radio show heard in Boston and on the Internet, has now completed ten years of broadcasting. The show is heard on WUNR 1600 AM in the Boston area every Wednesday evening from 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm. The show features music, poetry, comedy, news, interviews, commentary, and announcements of current events, all of it in the Yiddish language.

Host and producer Mark David stated, “I’d like to thank my co-host Hasia Segal for giving so much of her talent to our show. She has talents as a humorist, a wonderful speaker, and a fine interviewer. She draws on her depth of knowledge of both Hebrew and Yiddish language and culture. Her experience of having lived through the heyday of Yiddish culture, as a young woman in interwar Lithuania, has brought many contacts and experience, and lends a stamp of authenticity to our broadcast. I would also like to extend warmest wishes to Hasia on reaching her 90th year, as we say alevay biz hundert un tsvantsik.”

“I’d also like to thank the other volunteers who have helped produce and/or host the show. Thanks, of course, to the many guests; they are the living voices of the Yidishe Gas (the Yiddish/Jewish world) that make our show unique. And I want to thank those listeners, and those fans who’ve only heard about us through the Internet, who have voiced so much encouragement and guidance over the years. Finally, thanks to our supporters—individuals, businesses, and foundations, who’ve given the financial support necessary to make this venture function.”

For the future, “We wish to recruit new volunteers to help to do the show. I am excited to welcome Iosif Lakhman, a writer for the Yiddish and Russian Forward newspapers, as a co-host. His voice will be a welcome addition. We hope to continue to create and air great radio segments, especially through new guest interviews. We plan to organize our archive of exclusive recordings, especially interviews, and update the catalogue, and to make copies of the recordings available via the Internet, on tape, and CD.”

The Yiddish Voice (Dos Yidishe Kol) was founded by host/producer Mark David and cohost Hasia Segal. The team actually marks its 13th year of producing Yiddish radio in Boston this year: this same team created another all-Yiddish Boston radio show, The Yiddish Hour, in 1991. That show was, and is to this day, broadcast on WBRS 100 FM/Waltham, a non-commercial station.

The Yiddish Voice was spun off from The Yiddish Hour in 1994. The primary goal was to overcome the number one complaint about the old show: lack of reception. By operating on a 5,000 watt commercial AM station, The Yiddish Voice reaches the entire Metro Boston area. The old show was only heard in Waltham and nearby towns, on FM.

In addition to reaching a wider Boston audience through the higher powered airwaves of WUNR 1600/AM, the Yiddish Voice has been reaching a worldwide audience through live Internet audio streaming of its weekly program, and on-demand streaming of select excerpts of past programs. The audio streaming link is available from the show’s web site: http://www.yiddishvoice.com

The Yiddish Voice operates on a not-for-profit basis. In recent years, the show has expanded its operations to include an associated "Yiddish Voice Store" web site (http://www.yiddishstore.com), which sells Yiddish-related items, including books, music, videos, and software, with all profits used to support the radio show.

The all-volunteer staff of the Yiddish Voice includes Mark David, the show’s producer and regular host, and Hasia Segal, who continues to offer frequent special presentations and exclusive interviews of important personalities.

Numerous other contributors have provided features over the years. These have included Miriam Libenson, Dovid Braun, Rhoda Bernard, Betty Silberman, Norman Miller, Zalman Srebro, and Iosif Lakhman, as well as the late Manya Web and Cantor Simon Kandler.

The show has produced many original and radio segments, including Jewish holiday specials, poetry recitals, musical performances, and interviews. Interviews have been done on a variety of topics, with Yiddish-speakers from a wide variety of fields. A list of interviews is online at the show’s web site.

For further information, call, email, or mail to:

Mark David
The Yiddish Voice
PO Box 313
Brookline, MA 02446

617-730-8484 Fax: 617-249-0141
http://www.yiddishvoice.com
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 5th, 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.
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 82nd Ave.,  
Kew Gardens, 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

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 Tzadike'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.

"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. Wedammed 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 sawmill. 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 redaksye
• 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 nonpartisan 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, 8399 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 heymish atmosphere

Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club
Lilke Mejzner, Pres. 310-275-8455

The Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club, a nonpartisan 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, 8399 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.

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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 zindelek, hint, kets, therepakhes, 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 oysgehodevet, tsuzamen mit mayne tsvey zindelek, hint, kets, therepakhes, krolikes, a shtekhldikn yozshik, a grine salamandre, un tropishe fishlekh.
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 arayngumenen in shtub, iz er geven a veykh volbaleml, a hopsedik un lebedik shplitsayg.
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 beyner un deker, arayn un aroyos 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'tay tsh, vi past es far a yidisher kats azoy zikh uftsufirn? Nokh alemen, kumst dokh arayos fun onshendik 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 aroyos.
E: BUT IT WENT INTO ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER.
Y: Vos an emes hot er afn tsveytn tog ongevoyrn beyde oyern, un mit a vokh shpeter iz er kam gekumen tsu loyfn hinkendik af a fus mit a tsvefliktn 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 shoyn 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 aheyrmekumen a tsebalter un a tsekaliyetshter, 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 oysgegrobn a grub lebn hoyz, im bagrobn mit trern in di oygn, un af zayn keyver a vays-bloye fon mitn oyfshrit: "Do ligt 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 gehaltn.
E: AFTER THAT WE NO LONGER KEPT CATS.

Y: Vayzt zikh aroys, az yidn hobn gehalt nシュmb-khayes, gepilnevet oyfes, un gekhovet bheymes.
E: IT THINGS 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 oysgemitin di velt fun gots 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 griltn—mit eyn vort, di shtume velt fun di bale-khay iz gornish 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 rakhvesikn folklor, fun kishef-mayses un shreik-iber-gloybenishn, 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 gilglneshome.
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—nushek 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.

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 the World of Living Creatures

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

Transliterated & translated by Troim Katz Handler

Y: Shtelt aykh for di freyd ven es vet geboyrn a yingle, eyn kleynikayt, a zokher b'Yisroyel!
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.

E: Imagine the joy at the birth of a little boy—no small matter—a male for the House of Israel!


E: On the wall they used to hang the psalms.

Y: Derfar hot men ongeton a royt bendele un opgeshprokhn an ayen-geboyrenem oyfele; gehit es fun di lapes fun Lilisn, di malke fun di nish-gute.
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.

E: They therefore tied a red ribbon on the infant and uttered an ayen-hore—"TFU! TFU! TFU! MAY NOTHING, HEAVEN FORBID, HARM HIM."

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

E: They dressed the little fellow in girls' clothing and let his curls grow—"TFU! TFU! TFU! MAY NOTHING, HEAVEN FORBID, HARM HIM." 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 movekyll! Megst zayn di kapore far ot dem oyfele un alds shlekhts vos s'iz im bashert zol oyseyn 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."

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.

E: Only after this ceremony had occurred would the parents go to sleep in peace.

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

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.

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 zist ot ybn un tsornt utn.
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.

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 nicht gekent shteyn in der poze.
E: PRAISE GOD THAT THE ROOSTER COULD NOT HOLD THAT POSITION VERY LONG.

E: Praise God that the rooster could not hold that position very long.

Y: Yos 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?

E: What did Jews do when they wanted to be sure that all chicks would hatch without damage and without harm?
ONE WOULD THEN PLAN TO PUT ALL THE SITTING HENS ON THE EGGS SUNDAY, NOONTIME, JUST AS THE GENTILES WERE LEAVING THE CHURCH.

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

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

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

A SICK PERSON WAS THEN IN GOD'S HANDS.

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.

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.

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

JEWS WERE NOT PALS WITH DOGS.

I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT.

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

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 tserayn.”
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 oyfgeleyt 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 shoyn 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 hobbn gezuggelzen, 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 video-tashmes, 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: Onshhot 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 tsemeymest, 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 oyfgetrotn 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 shoyn blaybn an eybiger 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 bafliglte 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 viif 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 kheshbn 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, svishtshendike, poyzidike bashefenishn a groyse industriye.

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


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 glikleh.

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 gliklehntoyt.

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

Y: Dos partsef-ponim fun di yidishe balekh 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 khanp moyshe raboynes kiyele, ibertseyln di flekelekh af zayne fligl, un prubirn oysrekehnven ven meshiekh 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.
IAYC 9th Conference in Minneapolis:

They Came to the Goldene Medine:
The Immigrant Experience

The demographics of Minneapolis/St. Paul have changed greatly. The predominant population had been Scandinavian. Now we have one of the largest Hmong populations in the U.S., and a very large Somali population. We are aware of the problems that immigrants have had to deal with.

Thinking about this resulted in thinking about our own parents and grandparents’ experience coming to America. We wanted to explore the immigrant experience of those survivors who came to our community from the Shoah and from the former Soviet Union.

We chose our theme for the IAYC Convention (June 2-5, 2005) in Minneapolis ... "They Came to the Goldene Medine: The Immigrant Experience". All groups faced difficult times upon arrival in the U.S. ... language skills, employment problems, and, of course, limited or no income.

My Parents

They came to Minneapolis because my father's aunts were here. He was a graduate from a gymnasium in Odessa, worked as a janitor in the Nabisco cookie factory. He later had clerical jobs, and opened a clothing store. Times were hard, but my folks were involved with the Labor Zionists, and attended endless meetings. There were social and cultural activities, music, literary readings, and picnics.

To help one another, they formed a Genelas Chesed. Education of the children was a high priority. Even through the bitter depression, sons and daughters attended the University of Minnesota. The shoemaker’s three sons all became doctors; prominent lawyers, professors and doctors also came from this group.

The Migration

To disperse the immigrants from the East Coast they were urged to accept land in North Dakota offered by Baron de Hirsch. Families settled in Devils Lake, ND. (This will be covered in a talk entitled And Prairie Dogs Weren’t Kosher.) Some came to Minneapolis, but then moved on to Aberdeen, South Dakota, hoping it would be better there. Thirty families supported a rabbi. Kosher meat came to them by Greyhound bus from Iowa during the winter only.

The New Immigration

Many came from the Shoah—professionals: dentists, physicians, engineers, etc. Some re-trained to meet local standards. Others had vocational training. We were enriched by the quality of these people—their perseverance and intelligence were truly admirable. And, so it was with those who came from the former USSR. The Minnesota orchestra quickly hired talented musicians. Scientists joined the faculty at the University. Others have been very enterprising.

These are just a few examples of migrant experiences. We shall have sessions that tell the fascinating stories, of the Upper Midwest, and other parts of the country ... how, from these tribulations came achievements, and nakhes fun di kinder in The Goldene Medine!

This Ninth IAYC Conference will be in Minneapolis on Thurs., June 2nd to Sun., June 5th, 2005.
If you have any questions, please call Chair Roz Baker at: 612-377-5456, or Publicity chair, Annalee Odessky at: annalee26@aol.com or 952-544-5423.
Website: http://www.IAYC-minnesota.org

Editor’s note: You’ll find information about the Tribute Book in the back of this issue. Honor your immigrant parents or grandparents. Fishl, Sally & Debbie already have registered. See you there!
One Man's Vilna: Part I
by Britt Albritton

A vort forois: This is not a stuffy, scholarly, academic, piece. It has not been painstakingly researched in musty libraries or even on the Internet. It is rather a report in the first-person of my experiences in a totally unfamiliar environment, in this case the University of Vilna (Vilnius) in the city of Vilnius, capital of the Republic of Lithuania. A person’s observations may at times be at variance with the facts. As long as the person believes what he reports as he sees it, the observations are valid—even though they do not agree with the facts. This isn’t to say that first person reporting has a license to lie. I merely means that as Red Skelton’s Clem used to say, “I calls ‘em the way I sees ‘em”. Since I am not Jewish, my report contains material from the goyish point of view—if there is a difference.

Some of the subject matter in this piece is not pleasant to read, e.g., excursions arranged by the Yiddish Institute as integral parts of the program to scenes where mass murder occurred, such as Kovno and Ponar. Other than these, trips to the countryside were indeed delightful.

* * * *

The year 2004 is the 9th year of a program of summer study of Yiddish arranged by the Yiddish Institute of the Department of Philology, University of Vilnius (hereafter called Vilna). It is the product of a general renaissance of the Yiddish language—however long the odds are against Yiddish resuming its place as the language of Eastern Europe and the world.

I didn’t make a personal survey, but my guess is that I’m the oldest member of the class of ’04. Personal accommodations vary from plush to bare-essential, according to individual needs. A couple of months in advance, I requested quarters within as near walking distance to classes as possible in view of my age. The arrangements made by the school turned out to be the nicest surprise one could hope for: A beautifully furnished apartment within fifteen minutes’ walk to classes.

The University of Vilna (est 1579) is in the Altstadt (Old Town, or Senamiestis if you prefer Lithuanian), as was my apartment. We, the talmidim came from everywhere: The USA of course, Australia, the countries of Europe, Japan, China, Africa, and a sizeable group from Israel. The official welcoming program was emceed by the Chief of the Yiddish Institute, Mendy Cahan. It is impossible for me to lavish too much praise on this fellow. He has a very engaging personality, radiates charm, and makes complicated things look easy. He was everywhere at all times, completely tireless, with a million-dollar smile for everybody—the perfect hancho.

The first contact with academics is the placement session: Each individual, having already sent in their own assessment of the level of skill that had attained in Yiddish, must face a group of faculty members whose attitude to your assessment or your Yiddish skill is, “Oh yeah?”

The cross-exam is conducted entirely in Yiddish. I was asked what my goal was in the study of Yiddish. I said I was interested primarily in the literature. They asked, “Name some of the Yiddish writers you have read.” My mind went blank. I think I stammered out “Sholem-Aleichem...uh...Peretz....uh...Singer...” They crossed out my personal assessment - 4 - and downgraded it to 3.

That was the beginning of a panic that really overcame me with the first class: It was total immersion in Yiddish. NO English was used at any time throughout the course. All speaking and writing was in Yiddish. I was like a frog in a hailstorm. I simply could not understand the instructors. Both were Israelis, a male and a lady. And they wrote Yiddish on the blackboard as fast as they could speak it. I began to wish I were back in the safety and comfort of Fanny Yokor’s Yiddish class in New Orleans!

The second day, I attended a speech of an hour and a half duration. Some of the Yiddish accents I could make some sense of—but this one—nebekh. After the speaker had finished, I asked my neighbor if she understood anything that lady said. She said, “Of course. I understood everything she said”. I told her, “As far as I’m concerned, she might as well have been talking Mandarin Chinese!” My morale was at rock bottom. Next day, one girl closed her notebook and walked out of class, never to return. I told myself, ”I can’t keep this up. No way I can phony my way through this! Where the hell did all these kids learn to speak and understand such fluent Yiddish?” But then I began to recover some of my composure. I noticed the majority of the talmidim constantly rifling through their Weinreich Dictionaries—looking up words I had known for years. I realized I could read Yiddish better than any of them. I was saved. I also began slowly to understand my instructors.

Another problem: I have exasperated Yiddish speakers with my dayshmerisms in attempting to speak Yiddish. What I thought was passable Yiddish was nothing but a bastardized sort of German, and they really lowered the boom on me for this. I realized how far out in left field I was. One of my
instructors, Eliezer Niborski, introduced me to a book A Century of Yiddish Writing. The fantastic feature about this book is that it comes with 8 CDs of people - men & women - reading the texts of the stories. For me, it is a Godsend. ((Footnote: bk title: With Great Pleasure - A Century of Yiddish Writing, Heather Valencia, ed., Oxford Institute for Yiddish Studies, 2003, ISBN 1 877909-76-9)) Niborski's father, Yitshok Niborsi, also at the Vilna Yiddish Institute, is the co-author of the authoritative French-Yiddish dictionary, and an exhaustive dictionary of Hebrew terms used in Yiddish, available from YIVO.

My two instructors covered literature and grammar respectively. Another shock: Anyone coming to the Vilna course with the impression that all s/he'll have to do is stay awake in class and look forward to the evening's cocktail party, is in for a surprise. I can truly say, even allowing for creeping senility of advancing age, I can't remember when I worked so hard for any academic course—all the way to the PhD level! There's no intimidation, no 50 lashes for neglecting homework, but they have subtle ways of making you wish you had tried harder. More than one student I heard say that this course crams in an entire year's work into one month.

I missed more than one social event because of heymerbayt. I would study until 3:00 - 3:30 AM, rise at 5:30 and study for a couple more hours before heading for a 9:30 class. There were two classes per day, one from 9:30 to 11:00, a second from 11:30 to 1:00. There is a 30 minute break for coffee, tea and cakes after the first class.

The kids who made up the majority of students represented some of the prestige schools of the country—Harvard, Penn, Brown, the Univ. of Chicago, et al. Some of the musically talented even brought their instruments with them. One bouncy little tsatske with a Harvard Hillel sweatshirt was a real live wire. She was one of the musically inclined, even brought her own alto sax with her. In Niborski's class we had this song, titled Mashke, that this kid accompanied by the rest of us, could do one of the catchiest renditions of any I've ever heard. I'd love to have a CD with this one on it—a real turn-on.

* * * *

It was not all work and no play. There were many activities of a social kind as well as entertainment, some even provided by the students themselves. I must confess that I missed out on a good many of these activities because of my rundown physical condition. There were recitals, concerts, and walking tours in and around Vilna. Of course, I had no idea at the time I moved in, but my apartment as located on a very wide, attractive street with a green promenade in the middle featuring many open-air beer gardens which also served excellent food. The local flea markets offer some pretty good bargains, a cut above the usual shlok. You haven't been to the Baltic until you’ve found a good piece of bernstein (amber). I hear that there are craftsmen who can split a piece of amber and insert a wasp or other bug in it so as to look a thousand years old. Pictorial art is also a bargain, and definitely superior to the Elvis on a velvet genre.

The name of the street where I lived is Vokieciu, ominously Street of the Germans, because German merchants settled there centuries ago. As it turned out, this broad avenue divides what were the two ghettos of wartime Vilna. There was one smaller one, and a large one. My walking route to and from classes was through the smaller former ghetto area. Two of the streets bore the names Zidu, and Gaono-Jewish and Gaon, the latter for the Gaon of Vilna. There is a marble plaque of the area of the ghetto and a simple memorial in Yiddish & Lithuanian on one of the streets.

The smaller ghetto lasted only a few weeks. Sept to Oct 1941. They ran out of people to kill. I will disclose the fate of the large ghetto subsequently. I was informed that Vilna was graced by about 100 synagogues in the pre-WWII era. Today, there is 1.

Anyone who thinks Yiddish is too tough to cope with should take a quick look at Lithuanian. This language, together with Finnish, is one of the most if not the most difficult of the European languages. It is related to Sanskrit. The Litvaks are aware of this, and borukhashem, the menus, even in the smallest hole-in-the-wall shtub, have the menus with English translations.

About the Author
A retired career Air Force officer, Lt. Col. Albritton served in the US Navy and the US Air Force. He was in the Mediterranean Fleet and in the area during the campaign for Israel’s independence in 1948. He served in the Korean conflict. Later he was assigned to the National Security Agency. While at the agency, Col. Albritton earned a Master’s and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Maryland. After retirement from military service, he was an Asst. Prof. in the field of International Relations at the University of Maryland’s European Division, Heidelberg, Germany. Col Albritton's interest in the Yiddish language goes back many years, beginning with private instruction in Erlangen, Germany. After returning to the states, he resumed study of Yiddish at the Baltimore Hebrew College and the Israeli-sponsored Ulpan study of Modern Hebrew. He resides in Gulfport, Mississippi.
Lithuanian food is excellent. The only place where I drew the line was at deep fried pigs’ ears. (So help me. I’m not making this up!) You can have an excellent meal in Lithuania for as little as $4.00. Everything seems so cheap there. The official exchange rate is is 4 Litas to one dollar. The banks give 2.8. Lithuania converts to the Euro in 2007.

I must mention a couple of amazing facts that are immediately apparent when one arrives in Lithuania: Obesity is to all intents & purposes virtually non-existent in Lithuania! There are simply NO fat people. Everyone looks slim, trim, and athletic. Nikita S. Khruschev, former premier of the Soviet Union, is quoted as having said, “The Swedes are the healthiest, happiest, best-looking, most robust people in the world”. He might well have said the same thing about the Litvaks.

There are no special auto tags or reserved parking spaces for the handicapped. There may be a lot of hoykers & hinkers, but I didn’t see any. But one thing I saw too many of for such a prosperous country: panhandlers. I don’t just mean the old babushkas that hang around churches on Sunday, or like the nuns in Italy who display laminated beggars’ permits, I mean young punks in their teens and 20s. Granted, some of them look pretty flaky, but there are too many of them.

Another thing you must see to really believe: In the Altstadt (Old Town), with traffic every bit as dense as any city in the United States, there are neither traffic signals nor traffic policeman! Pedestrians and motorists are so fery well synchronized that the need for traffic control devices has been totally eliminated. Pedestrians rule. That’s it. NO honking of horns, no shaking of fists, no flipping of birds, no all-night serenades of emergency vehicle sirens and horns.

One night for a couple of hours during the Olympics, there was a noisy procession of horn-blowing cars—some with kids actually standing on tops of cars. I found out the reason was that Lithuania had just defeated the US basketball team. Not exactly Halloween in Detroit, but pretty noisy for a while.

As an ex-career military man, I have been stationed all over the world. Wherever you go overseas, the Americans re-create their own country: American PXs, Commissaries, Armed Forces Network Radio and TV (Except in Moslem countries), theaters - the works. All-American!

Not in Lithuania! They joined the EEC and NATO, but I doubt I’ll live to see the day that the Baltic countries are Americanized. The only change that NATO membership has brought about in Lithuania is that I saw a report on the internet that the prostitutes there are charging NATO troops three times the rate they charge their regular customers.

KOVNO

Prominent among the outings arranged by the Vilna Yiddish Institute was a visit to Kovno (Kaunas). About a hundred kilometers from Vilna, it is a clean, prosperous city. We were in two tour busses, and had lovely weather. Upon arrival in the city, we were conducted on a long walking tour through the center of town in a beautiful tree-lined esplanade—long enough to be exhausting for an old gaffer. After a rest and a lunch of pink borscht and potatoes, we boarded the busses and headed back down the road towards Vilna. But after 15-20 minutes we detoured to an isolated park-like area situated atop a long, sloping hill. From there one had a panoramic view of the city and the white birch forests of the surrounding countryside.

Standing starkly against the afternoon sky were three massive monuments which almost defied description. Intuitively I realized that we had arrived at the place for which Kovno will ever be stigmatized as the killing field for thousands & thousands. At some distance from the massive concrete monuments was a brick structure which had the appearance of a medieval fort, surrounded by barbed wire. I learned later that this was the infamous Fort Nine. It is one of a ring of twelve forts built by the Russian Tsars over two centuries ago. It was the final stop for many thousands of doomed people transported from all over Europe.

I broke away from the assembled group which was about to enter the fort and walked towards the massive structures—the center one several stories high. These are memorials erected by Lithuania, dedicated to the people who were murdered in the thousands.

But the thing that made the deepest, and most devastating impression on me was a very long trench, almost the entire length of a football field, and about 20-30 ft wide, and 20-30 ft deep. This trench was where thousands of people breathed their last. Cut down by MG fire like rows of mowed wheat, the dead and dying lay at the bottom of this trench.
As I stood there alone, staggered by emotion at this scene as I had never experienced before, a lone individual approached me from behind and laid his hand on my shoulder. I turned, and for a moment we gazed into each other’s eyes in silence. He then turned and walked away. No words were spoken. For you who may think that this little incident was fabricated for dramatic effect, I am sorry for both of us. I can only swear that every word is true. You have to take it or leave it.

Yes, I had heard and read and even visited some of the notorious camps—if camps is the word—Auschwitz, Maidenek, Sobibor, Mauthausen, and the others—but Kovno was not one of those—by any stretch. The site at Fort Nine was nothing more, nothing less, than a killing ground—one of the many plaques was given by the citizens of Munich, Germany.

Any doubts as to whether the German civilian population at large were aware of what was being done to the deportees nach Osten were resolved by the frank admission on this plaque which began, "Wir, die Mitwisseren ..." "We, who also knew ..., went on to express regrets for the transport of more than 800 Jewish citizens of Munich to Kovno, executed immediately upon arrival.

One wonders. What kind of person does it take to commit such acts as were carried out at Kovno and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. What could motivate those who made up the so-called Eks—the killing squads? By what process were decent, honest, moral, educated people transformed into murderers without a shred or vestige of conscience?

In WWI, as evinced in the memoirs of many people, German soldiers rendered every humanitarian service they could, including food distribution, to the Jewish population. A letter from the German commanding general was addressed "To My Dear Jews!" Of course, they were looking for Jewish support against the Russians. It's amazing when one contemplates the volte face in a nation's attitude that took place in such an amazingly short time: 1918-1939. Adolf Hitler became Chancellor in 1933. By what miracle of black magic could a nation's attitude towards a people hitherto regarded as equals be so radically reversed in just six short years!?

A manifest impossibility!


Footnote to Kovno: Outside the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum at Pamenkalnio Gate (pron: GAteh) (St.) 12, there’s a monument commemorating Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat based in Kaunas (Kovno) who is credited with saving 6,000 Jewish lives during WWII by issuing them papers needed in order to leave the country. Sugihara is a virtual unknown in the West. Unlike the Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, he was on the wrong side, but he is well known and revered in Lithuania.

Regarding the numbers-game concerning people killed by the Nazis in WWII: I refuse to become involved in hair-splitting over precise numbers of victims at various places during the holocaust. I have seen differing numbers on monuments in the same place. It depends often on who placed the monuments. At Kovno there are markers from France and Germany. The marker from the Soviet Union was replaced after Lithuanian independence in 1990. It memorialized “Soviet citizens” killed by the Hitlerites, and did not distinguish the Jewish dead from the other nationalities. The Lithuanian memorial distinguishes the Jewish dead. For my part, it suffices to show that large numbers of innocent people were tortured and killed by the worst kinds of criminals. Any hairsplitting dishonors the memory of those who lost their lives.

About the Author
A retired career Air Force officer, Lt. Col. Albritton served a combined total of 27 years active duty in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force. During service in the Navy, he was in the Mediterranean Fleet and in the area during the fight for Israel’s independence in 1948. After attending college he entered active duty in the Air Force and served in Korea and Japan during the Korean War. From the Far East, he was assigned to the National Security Agency (NSA) at Ft. Meade, MD. Under the Dept. of Defense, the NSA directs the cryptologic services of the United States. While at the Agency, Col. Albritton completed requirements for and was awarded a Master’s and a Doctor’s degree from the University of Maryland. Following a tour of duty in Alaska, he was assigned to Hqs., Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, and subsequently to Hqs., Military Assistance Command, Saigon, Republic of Viet Nam. After return to the National Security Agency, he retired from active duty. After retirement from military service, he was an Asst Prof in the field of International Relations at the University of Maryland’s European Division, Heidelberg, Germany. His interest in Yiddish began with private instruction in Erlangen, Germany. After returning to the states, he resumed the study of Yiddish at the Baltimore Hebrew College, and Israeli-sponsored Ulpan study of Modern Hebrew. He resides in Gulford, Mississippi.
One Man's Vilna: Part III (Final)  
by Britt Albritton

A question I have been asked many times—even by one of my instructors at Vilna, “what is the why of your interest in Yiddish? It is a language used in Jewish old folks’ homes and by slapstick borscht belt comedians. Aside from a perceived renaissance of the language, my primary interest is and has been in the vast literature in the language, much of it yet to be translated.

When I was a young man in college, the idea of Yiddish and Judaica in a university curriculum would have been preposterous. Today these subjects are not only available in the best of colleges, they are increasingly popular. Even in Israel, where for a long time there were bumper-stickers which demanded, Help stamp out Yiddish! there has been a major change in attitude.

The Israelis were embarrassed to find it necessary to turn to New York for textbooks on Yiddish. There were none in Israel. I saw for the first time ever in Vilna a Hebrew-Yiddish, Yiddish-Hebrew dictionary in the possession of a young lady from Israel. "Fresh off the press", she said.

One of the oldest, if not the oldest in Europe, the University of Vilna is not surprisingly located in the old town part of the city. Established by Jesuits in 1570, it was closed for nearly a century. When it reopened it offered courses in over 60 subjects. At a time when both Arabic and Russian were taught, Lithuanian was prohibited! (By the Russians, who were then in control). After several name-changes it became the University of Vilnius and has remained so ever since.

American students notice immediately the absence of typical U.S. college features which they take for granted: ultra-modern student centers featuring shopping emporia and swimming pools, frat and sorority houses, mega athletic facilities with humungous stadia, and risqué student-published campus newspapers.

The Vilna school operates at a bare minimum: Academics only! There is a small book and souvenir shop. Yiddish books are available only at a special library, which operates on short hours. There are no Yiddish books in the bookstore.

Lithuania has been a traditional crossroads for warring armies, most recently the particularly brutal conflict between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The Litvaks have become adept at coping with radical changes imposed by the various occupying powers—some of long duration, some short.

They have enjoyed some triumphs of their own, one being the defeat of the Prussian Teutonic Knights at Gruenwald (aided by Polish allies). The high water mark came during the era of the combined kingdoms of Poland-Lithuania which stretched all the way from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Lithuania was the last European country to convert to Christianity, in the 1300s. Some say this is the reason for the easy accommodation of other religions, especially the Jewish. One of the more interesting revelations to me was the history of the Karaites, a Turkic sect which adopted the Jewish religion back in ancient times. They have traditionally been recognized by rabbinic authorities as members of the Jewish faith with all rights & privileges.

A colony of Karaites has been in Lithuania for centuries, residing in the picturesque lake country at Trakai, location of the imposing Fortress in the Lake. These people were the palace guards for royalty. Imagine this, if you will: An SS Colonel requesting the assistance and advice of a Jewish Rabbi in determining whether the Karaites were racially related to the Hebrews. The Rabbi explained that while indeed the Karaites practiced the Jewish religion, they are not racially akin to the Hebrew people—they are of Turkic origin. Thus, the Karaites were saved by the Rabbi from certain extermination by the Nazis!

The SS Colonel believed what the Rabbi told him. "After all", he figured, "Would a Rabbi lie?" The Rabbi did not indeed lie. What he told the SS Colonel was true. Do you think the Rabbi would have lied if indeed the Karaites and Jews were Semitic brothers?

Each of the succeeding occupying powers in Vilna brought their church with them: The Russians the Orthodox, the Germans the Lutheran, The Poles the Roman Catholic, and the Jews the synagogues.

Thus Vilna has by far the densest population of magnificent churches of any city I have ever seen. There are approved plans to rebuild and restore to original condition the old synagogue in Vilna, with its fabled shulhoyf at its original location.
For the Jews who knew it, the Vilne fun amol no longer exists.

"On its site stands a place identified on the map as Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. Like Troy, the Vilna I knew—the Vilne described in the Jewish annals—now lies buried beneath the debris of history, beneath layers of death and destruction. When the Soviets first occupied Vilna in 1940, they Sovietized it, destroying its historic identity and its Jewish particularity. The Germans who followed destroyed Vilna altogether, murdering nearly all of its 60,000 men, women, and children. Since then, nothing has remained of Vilna’s Jewish culture and spirit. Hardly anything has remained of its buildings—the sticks and stones of Jewish architecture. What little the Nazis left standing, the Soviets, who returned after the war, erased. A visitor to today’s Vilna can no longer find a trace of what had been "the Jerusalem of Lithuania".

Since Lucy Davidowicz wrote these pessimistic words, there have been increasing signs of a Jewish renewal in Vilna and Lithuania. There is hope among the Jewish people I met there, and I hope that my modest participation in the 2004 9th Annual Yiddish Language Program at the University of Vilna has contributed, at least in some small way, to the rebirth of the Jerusalem of Lithuania.

About the Author
A retired career Air Force officer, Lt. Col. Albritton served a combined total of 27 years active duty in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force. During service in the Navy, he served in the Mediterranean Fleet and was in the area during the campaign for Israel's independence in 1948. After college he entered active duty in the Air Force and served in Korea and Japan during the Korean conflict. He was assigned to the National Security Agency. While at the Agency, Col. Albritton earned a Master’s and a Doctor's degree from the University of Maryland. He was assigned to Hqs., Tactical Air Command, and subsequently to Hqs., Military Assistance Command; Saigon, Republic of Viet Nam. After retirement from military service, he was an Asst. Prof. in the field of International Relations at the University of Maryland's European Division, Heidelberg, Germany. Col Albritton's interest in the Yiddish language goes back many years, beginning with private instruction in Erlangen, Germany. After his return to the states, he resumed study of Yiddish at the Baltimore Hebrew College, and the Israeli-sponsored Ulpan study of Modern Hebrew. He resides in Gulfport, Mississippi.
EVENTIDE
By Itzik Manger

Quiet night. Twilight gold.
I sip a glass of wine.
What has become of my day?
A shadow and a shine—
Let but a moments twilight gold
Into this poem of mine.

Quiet night Twilight gold.
A Jew in reverent grace
Through prayer shakes off the dust
Of the yearly market place—
Let but a murmur or a trace
Of prayer, my poem embrace.

Quiet night. Twilight gold.
Wind both far and near.
Deep in sleep the baby deer—
The gloom that was the week
Should only let a breath of sleep
In my poem appear.

Quiet night. Twilight gold.
A bird of summer glides
With wings of gray and gold
To where “God presides”—
Let but a flutter of his wings
Into where my poem resides.

Quiet night. Twilight gold.
Wind and road and wine—
What has become of my day?
A shadow and a shine—
Let but a moments twilight gold
Into this poem of mine.

TRANSLATED BY: LEON H. GILDIN – 1994

Leon was a life-long resident of New York. In his youth he attended the Sholem Aleichem Folkshul. After graduating from Law School he was drafted into the Army. After service he was admitted to the Bar in New York. For 35 years he was counsel to actors writers and composers.

Leon was the Executive Producer of TV documentaries. The most recent one was Therestenstadt, Gateway to Auschwitz; Recollections from Childhood

Most recently he has published a book dealing with the infusion and use of Yiddish into the English Language as a result of the Eastern European immigration to the US in the early 20th century. The book is entitled, You Can’t Do Business (Or most Anything Else) Without Yiddish.

Yiddish at Tulane University
By Brian Horowitz, Director

For the first time, Tulane University's Jewish Studies Program is offering a Yiddish class in the fall semester of 2004. It is being sponsored by Mr. Barry Katz and Dr. Victor Brown of Buena Vista Real Estate. It has long been our desire to introduce this class because of the significance of the Yiddish language.

Yiddish in the years before the Nazi rise to power was the native language of over five million Jews. It was the medium for a powerful and growing literature whose heads included Sholem Aleichem, Itzak Peretz, and Mendele Mocher Sforim. Younger authors, poets, and playwrights came to the United States and continued experiments with literary form, sound, and performance.

There was a thriving Yiddish theater on Second Avenue, the remnants we have in video films such as “Yidl mit dem Fidi” or “Tevye der milkhiker.” Of course Yiddish was the language of the Bund, the Socialist Jewish Workers Party in Eastern Europe. The New York daily, The Forward is written in it. Many of our grandparents spoke it as children, but alas their own children hardly know a word.

It is time to offer the study of Yiddish. Our first class with over 25 students epitomizes the interest in this great and tragic tongue. We hope to continue to offer courses with the gracious help of the university administration and local community members.

Joys Of Yiddish In Bergen Co.

The Senior Citizens Center in Teaneck is offering courses in Yiddish. The Yiddish Class with experienced teacher Feygl Infeld Glaser, will be held on Tuesdays, at the Richard Rodda Community Center, 250 Colonial Ct., Teaneck.

The course’s aim is to familiarize students with vocabulary, pronunciation, and reading skills. Continuation students are encouraged to participate in discussions on current and past events (in their own lives and in the world); by learning about great Jewish personalities, the works of Yiddish poets and writers and by expanding their knowledge about Jewish historical events, holidays and songs. Students include Bergen County residents. Call 201-837-0171. For private lessons, call: 201-385-8315, or e-mail: Yiddish1@Juno.com.
A nayer yidish-kurs far dem kumendikn harbst mit der erfarener lere Feygl Infeld glezer-heybt zikh on dinstik dem 21stn september, 11:00 fri biz 12:30 nokh mitog, inem Richard Rodda Center, 150 Colonial Court, Teaneck, NJ.

Farinteresirte, kenen krign mer informatsye in Center, oyf: 201-837-0171.

Vegn private lektsyes telefonirt Feygl Infeld Glezer, oyf: 201-385-8315, oder Shraybt a blitspost (elektronish) brivl oyfn adres: Yiddish1@Juno.com.
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 tseyv
zindelek, hint, kets, tshepetakhes, krolikes, a
shtekhldikn yoyszik, a grine salamandre, un
tropishe fishelekh.
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 emes dik 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 yisroyeldikne luft makht nisht bloyz
klug nor bashenkt ir bashefenishn mit a kamfs-
gayst, khutspe, un a gefil fun hefker petrishke.
E: IT SEEMS THE ISRAEL AIR MAKES ONE
NOT ONLY CLEVER BUT ALSO IMBUES ONE
WITH A CAMPAIGN SPIRIT, KHUTSPE, AND
A FEELING OF INDEPENDENT WILD OATS.

Y: Ikz 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 beyner un
dekher, arayn un aros 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'tay tsh, vi past es far a yidisher kats azoy
zikh ufutsurin? Nokh alemen, kunst dokh
aroy fun an onshendik 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 aroym.
E: BUT IT WENT INTO ONE EAR AND OUT THE
OTHER.
Y: Vos an emes hot er afn tsveytn tog ongevoyrn beyde oyern, un mit a vokh shpeter iz er kam gekumen tsu loyfn hinkendik af a fus mit a tseflikttn 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 shoyn 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 oysgegrobn a grub lebn hoyz, im bagrobn mit trern in di oygn, un af zayn keyver a vays-bloye fon mitn oyfsn: "Do ligt 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 gehaltn.
E: AFTER THAT WE NO LONGER KEPT CATS.

Y: Vayzt zikh aroys, az yidn hobn gehaltn 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 gots 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 tsvishen un griltsn—mit eyn vort, di shhtume velt fun di bale-khay iz gornisht geven azoy qhtum 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 rakhvesikn 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 gilgl-neshome.
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
Y: Shtelt aykh for di freyd ven es vet geboyrn a yingle, eyn kleynikayt, a zokher b’Yisroyel!
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: Derfar hot men im ongeton a royt bendele un opgeshprokhn an ayen:
E: THEY THEREFORE TIED A RED RIBBON ON THE INFANT AND UTTERED AN AYEN—AGAINST THE EVIL EYE: TFU! TFU! TFU! MAY NOTHING, HEAVEN FORBID, HARM HIM.

Y: Dervayl hot men ongeton dem "khosn bokher" in meylshe kleyde r 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 cats un bshas-mayse aynroymen in oyer: "Her zikh tsu, du ketsisher moveykh! 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: Ot, lemoshl, az m’hot gefirt a kapelye tsu a khasene, hot men dem ferdl ongezogt—"Mitn rekhtn fus foroys, in a mazldiker 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 ferdl hot tsugeshoklt mitn kop vi es volt farshitanen.
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 untn.
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 hobb 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 potraves, 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 krankan—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, gebrokhn piskes, getsoygn bay di oyern, opgeshnit di negl in a labn veykh broyt, un gegeben 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 gehofn.
E: IT’S ONLY A SHAME THAT WE WERE NOT LEFT STATISTICS TO SHOW HOW MUCH THESE INCANTATIONS HELPED.

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Y: Az a Yidish kind ho t 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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**In der velt fun bale-khay, fun Miriam Hoffman Part III**

 Transliterated & Translated by Troim Katz Handler

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 shoyn 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 hozzejzind, 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 video-tashmes, televizyves, telefonen, khart azh 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: Onshtot dem hobn zey zikh geshpilt mit zshabkes, zumefeyglekh, shpiyne, un zshukes.
E: INSTEAD THEY PLAYED WITH FROGS, BUTTERFLIES, SPIDERS, AND BUGS.

Y: S’hot getrofn, az kleynvarg hobn a zshabkele tskevetsht oder tsemeymest, 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 oyfgetrotn 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 simo nim, 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 shoyn 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 nicht 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 bafliglte 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 viif pintelekhl 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 pinte iz a yor; un loyt dem kheshbn 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, svishtshendike, poyzedike bashefenishn a groyse industriye.
E: TODAY WE MAKE OF THESE FOUR-FOOTED, WHISTLING, CRAWLING CREATURES A GREAT INDUSTRY.

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 glikleh.
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 glikleh’n toyt.
E: HE LIVED AS FREE AS A BIRD AND ENJOYED A HAPPY DEATH.

Y: Dos partsef-ponim fun di yidishe balekh 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.

**********************************************************************************************************
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.
Richard Stockton College of NJ

Senior Scholar/Associate or Full Prof.,
Holocaust and Genocide Studies,
Tenure Track Position

DEPARTMENT: Office of Arts and Humanities
Qualifications: Applications are individuals with excellent teaching credentials, strong research and publication history and a proven track record in administration.

The ideal candidate will have extensive experience teaching at the graduate level and possess a commitment to the seminar method. A strong understanding of Jewish life and culture before, during and after the Holocaust, the Church Struggle and the Holocaust, Jewish Christian relations in contemporary society.

DESCRIPTION: The Richard Stockton College Master of Arts Program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies is a recognized program. Founded in 1998, it is America’s first Master’s program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies in a degree granting institution of higher learning. The Founding Director of the program, Dr. Marcia Littell, plans to return to full time teaching. A scholar of senior rank is sought to both teach and direct the program.

The Master’s Program is Interdisciplinary, Interfaith, and International. Candidates should hold an earned doctorate in a field relating to Holocaust & Genocide Studies. Consideration will be given to Jewish Studies, Psychology, Religion, History, Political Science, Sociology, Literature and Education. The Expected starting date is September 2005. The teaching load will be 2 courses/semester. Salary is competitive with a generous benefits package.

SUBMIT: Letter of application, curriculum vitae, names and contact information of (3) references, teaching philosophy and a statement of vision for a MA Program in Holocaust and Genocide Studies to: Kenneth Dollarhide, Dean of Arts & Humanities The Richard Stockton College of NJ, AA118, PO Box 195, Pomona, NJ 08240.

Application deadline is December 1, 2004.

Notes from IAYC Convention City

Although we are busy planning a spectacular conference (JUNE 2-5 of 2005), our monthly Vinkl meetings continue to be informative and fun! We meet the 2nd Sunday of each month from 10-a.m. until noon.

We opened in SEPTEMBER celebrating the centennial of Isaac Bashevis Singer. Our speaker, Rosalyn Fletcher, presented Singer’s colorful background—including his special relationship with each of his translators. Rosalyn then read The Destruction of Kreshov, a gripping and dark tale!

In OCTOBER we marked Columbus Day entitled Aza Yor af Kalombus! We sang all verses of Di Grine Kuzine, plus the Expulsion of 1492 and Ladino Music was presented.

NOVEMBER - “Where did my people come from? Where did they settle and why there?”

DECEMBER- theme is ” The most remarkable gift I have ever received”

JANUARY- The Hassidic Movement

FEBRUARY- If I were a ”Gevir

MARCH - the film The Dybuk

APRIL - A newly revised production of "Mayn Tayere Meydl"

MAY- Yom Hashoah

Besides the theme, all programs have music, singing, a classic Yiddish story is read and we have, of course, refreshments. We shall not meet program for you at the IAYC Conference:

- Three distinguished scholars will speak at the plenary sessions
- 24 breakout session on immigration, art, literature, music, theatre and much more!
And, of course, the entertainment will be freylekh!
- See you in Minneapolis in June!

Check out our Web site: www.IAYC-minnesota.org
<http://www.IAYC-minnesota.org>
Yidish Sof Vokh Oystralye 2004
By Ruth Boltman

They came from the borsht belt; they came from Byron Bay. They drove up from Melbourne and they flew down from Sydney. The drawcard was Yidish Sof Vokh Oystralye 2004.

Inspired by Yidish-Vokh in the Berkshire Mountains in upstate New York, the inaugural Australian version was held in the Dandenongs, at the Chestnut Hill Conference Centre in Kallista. The aim of the two-day program was to immerse participants in Yiddish, to improve their language skills, and to inspire them to increase their usage and knowledge of Yiddish thereafter—and, of course, to have fun!

Sponsored by The Penina Zylberman Foundation, J Waks Cultural Centre, Kadimah, and The Australian Centre for Jewish Civilization at Monash Univ, the weekend attracted families and singles; those who learnt Yiddish at home and those studying at Monash Univ., Mount Scopus & King David. They ranged in age from 15 to “once you get to my age you don’t say.” The activities were pitched at adult level. An exception was the eight week-old daughter of two participants, who became the camp mascot.

Freydi Mrocki was thrilled with the numbers the weekend attracted. “We ended up with 50, and some who came up especially for one day only. In the days before the weekend, I had to turn people away—the venue simply couldn’t accommodate any more.”

As well as the numbers attracted, Mrocki was encouraged by the range of participants. Many of those who attended were outside the circle of the usual suspects who patronise events held by the Yiddish organisations. Mrocki said, “We aimed to be inclusive, and were pleased to have attracted a cross-section of Jewish Australia”.

The formal program included two reading levels, lectures on Jewish cooking, on culture, Yiddish on the radio and the Internet, word games and song-writing. The informal program included much laughter and eating, sport and singing, and walks in the beautiful Dandenong Ranges.

At the conclusion of the weekend, there was much enthusiasm for further events to be organised. It is hoped that further Yiddish weekends will take place once or twice a year, as well as discussion groups, excursions to the botanical gardens and the zoo, coffee get-togethers, and reading groups, all of which will be conducted in Yiddish. Mitn rekhtn fus!

For information regarding future Yiddish events, Contact Zylberman at: mzylberman@tpg.com.au

Yidish Sof Vokh Oystralye:
We came, we shmoozed, we conquered
By Eloise Rosenstein (first year Yiddish student at Monash University)

The minute we arrived, it felt as if another world — welcoming, warm, the air thick with yidishkeyt and chavershaft across 3 days, speaking only Yiddish. My intrepidation was matched only by my excitement and expectation for a challenging yet fulfilling weekend. Having neither grown up in a Yiddish-speaking home nor studied the language for a long time, I wasn’t sure if I would manage amongst a crowd of long-time speakers.

We got to know each other over Shabes dinner. Soon my nerves settled, and I was asking people to ‘derlang mir der rayz, already!’ in all confidence. Later we sang Yidishe lider together, then, naturally, we finished with more food (nu, voden?!).

Next morning we split into 2 groups according to our language proficiency. I joined the beginners’ group. We read an autobiographical piece by Sholem Aleichem, aided by Danielle Charak, our lererin from the university. This was followed with a lecture about Yiddish poets by Hinde Burstin. After this, the option was to go for a walk, have a chat over coffee or play soccer in Yiddish. I went for a lie down instead—a break, and some more food. A cooking demonstration with Rosie in Yiddish and then a debate with Leon Gettler, Alex Dafner, and Danielle Charak and then dinner.

That night we were treated to the Yiddish Roy and H.G, and watched Der Dybuk. It gave a hint of what might have been, had we not lost so many of our Yiddish theatre greats. It encouraged me to work at keeping our fabulous language and culture alive for generations to come.

The next morning we resumed our classes. Half of us joined Shifre Burstin to play games, whilst the rest wrote an original song to mark the occasion—A Sof-Vokh Hymn. We then learned about Yiddish radio and Yiddish on the Internet. Originally planning to leave straight after lunch, my friend and I found ourselves staying longer and longer into the day, saddened by the prospect of leaving behind so many new friends.

On returning home, trying to go back to speaking English was a struggle (much to the amusement of my flatmate). Bustling through the aisles of Coles, an antshuldik! here, a sheynem dank there— thinking, breathing, feeling only Yiddish. It is the greatest thing about Sof Vokh? I’m now more sure than ever before of the language with which my heart lies—it is name-loshn!!
The Yiddish Club Phenomenon:
An Editorial

The Yiddish club, as we know it today, is a relatively new type of organization. There have been Yiddish groups before of intellectuals like di Yunge or fraternal groups like Der Arbeter Ring. However, organizations of laymen, specifically meeting to enjoy Yiddish—that is another matter. Yes, the premiere Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club has been in existence for well over 70 years.

There was not a need for Yiddish clubs when everyone around you spoke Yiddish. In America we have no need for English clubs when almost everyone around us speaks some English.

Der Bay’s database lists over 250 Yiddish clubs in the United States. There are probably close to double that number in the U.S. alone. All of the non-listed ones are small groups meeting in homes or temples. The exception would be seasonal areas like southeast Florida. Most of them go from Thanksgiving to Pesakh, or start after January 1. The Circle of Yiddish Clubs has somewhat of a handle on this group.

There are other wonderful clubs around the world especially in Israel, Australia, England, Spain, Uruguay, etc. Canada (Friends of Yiddish in Toronto), Winnipeg, Vancouver and Montreal but this editorial is meant to discuss only the U.S. Phenomenon.

Why is this so important? Why for the first time is the front page of Der Bay being used for an editorial. The column to the right sets out the rationale for the world-wide Yiddish club growth and the role of the IAYC.

The International Association of Yiddish Clubs (IAYC) was founded in order to have a forum where groups of Yiddish lovers could meet and share ideas, experiences and learn. It has been far more successful than any of the original founders could have ever dreamed.

The founding tates un names realized that cooperation is the basis of success. Thus, from the beginning IAYC has echoed the theme that clubs must reach out to all other groups that foster Yiddish and support their efforts. Every club should have at least one member belong to the major organizations that foster Yiddish and report on articles in their publications.

In line with this The Ninth IAYC Conference will be held from Thurs., June 2nd to Sun., June 5th, 2005 in beautiful Minneapolis, Minnesota only a several hour drive from Lake Itaska the headwaters of the Mighty Mississippi River.

The Minneapolis Yiddish Vinkl co-chair, Roz Baker is coordinating the conference. Her committee is one of the finest that anyone has put together. This should result in another dynamic and vibrant event that will run as smoothly as the Mississippi itself.

Roz can be reached at: 612-377-5456 or the Publicity chair, Annalee Odessey at: annalee26@aol.com or 952-544-5423.

Greater Milwaukee/Chicago area people can travel by chartered Greyhound bus roundtrip for only $100. Call Paul Melrood at: 414-961-1715 or e-mail majpaulww2@sbcglobal.net
The history of the Kadimah reflects much of the story of 20th century Jewish migration and settlement in Australia. Its fortunes wax and wane with the influx and decline of immigration in general and Jewish immigration to Melbourne in particular.

Over all it is a proud history of exemplary service and self-sufficiency, and a pioneering example of cultural autonomy, within an increasingly dependent multi-ethnic, multicultural society.

Above all, the Kadimah fulfilled the vital cultural, linguistic, intellectual and social needs of that, dislocated Jewish community. Sometimes it served as a platform for the expressions of struggle, much of it transplanted and reflecting the turbulent and tragic Jewish experience in 20th century Europe.

**Founding of Kadimah**

Kadimah, the Jewish National Library was founded in 1911 and first was located near the Victorian Parliament in central Melbourne. The founders were mainly newly arrived immigrants, Jews from Eastern Europe and Russia. The fact that the inaugural Kadimah Committee led by President Yehushe Rochlin, chose to launch this secular, cultural initiative davke on Boxing Day and near the bastion of Melbourne’s establishment, illustrates their deference to the arumike soive. This was 60 years prior to the launch of Multiculturalism as a national social policy.

The 5,500 Jews of predominantly Anglo-Germanic background who lived in Melbourne at that time hardly welcomed their new brethren. Most of these Veltlekhe folks Yidn/ secular folk-Jews escaped the failed revolution of 1905. Like all Grine they embarrassed the previously settled and more established Melburnians of Hebraic Persuasion.

Right from the start of the founding of the Kadimah the factions wrangled over languages and the character of the new institution. English and Hebrew were at first the preferred languages of the majority, and Yiddish was looked down upon by many. So it was not surprising that the Hebrew name Kadimah (Forward/Progress) was chosen.

Just prior to WWI as the membership rose to over 200, the Kadimah decided to move to larger quarters. In 1915 it was relocated at 38 Drummond Street Carlton, where the cheap rents were attracting the new migrants. At the end of the War to end all Wars came a lull which saw Kadimah’s activities almost cease completely. Then in 1919, an ensuing struggle between the leftist supporters of the 1917 Russian Revolution and Zionist supporters of the 1917 Belfour Declaration on Palestine, led to significant defections and forced a merger with the pro-Zionist Hatchia organisation.

When one of the shining lights of the East European Yiddish literary renaissance, Perets Hirshbayn arrived for a series of lectures in 1921, he was welcomed like a movie star and proved to be a harbinger of a new, dynamic, Yiddish dominated era. In 1926 the Kadimah broke away from Hatchia, again forming an independent organisation.

**Kadimah Moves and Expands**

By 1933, as Hitler came to power in Germany, the Kadimah blossomed into a fully-fledged cultural centre and built larger premises in Lygon Street, Carlton. The new building had a 400-seat theatre and library. It was renamed the Jewish Cultural Centre and National Library Kadimah. Its activities included lectures, recitals, concerts, debates, plays and dance evenings. A youth committee coordinated activities aimed at the growing number of younger members.

With the arrival of such Yiddish luminaries as the writer-poet Melekh Ravich and pedagogue Josef Giligich, the Kadimah published its first Yiddish book in Australia—Der Oystralisher Almanach/The Australian Almanac.

In 1938, a year later, the pioneer Yiddish writer Pinkhas Goldhar published his excellent Dertzaylungen fun Oystrale/Stories from Australia and the Yiddish weekly Di Yiddishe Naye began circulation under his editorship in 1939.

**World War II**

As news of the disaster in Europe reached Australia, the Melbourne Jewish community rallied, beginning with a Kadimah initiated protest against Nuremburg Racial Laws. The Kadimah continued its cultural activities, rallies, protests and solidarity meetings. The appeals, fund raising and attempts to speed up the immigration process became the prime concern during and immediately following the war years.

The war in Europe ravaged Jewish life everywhere, but local ideological battles continued. A spat over a 1944 Victorian Jewish Board of Deputies resolution supporting the declaration of a Jewish State in Palestine, nearly split the Kadimah.
Warsaw Ghetto Commemoration

*Kadimah* held the 1st Warsaw Ghetto Commemoration on April 19, 1945. With the new policy in 1948, the post-war trickle of Jewish refugees to Australia turned into a stream of newcomers. Many were Holocaust survivors and refugees from the Soviet Union labour camps, making Melbourne the home of the highest number of such survivors per capita, after Israel.

*Kadimah* became the focal point of the cultural and intellectual life of the post-war Jewish community, centered in the Melbourne suburbs of Carlton and Brunswick. By 1950 there were 1000 members. Then a schism occurred. The leftist youth section was at odds with the *Kadimah* Committee. While the leftists Bundist-SKIF and centrist Zionist-Habonim youths still met at *Kadimah*. The 1953 protest rallies against the Soviet Union’s persecution of Jews and the Doctors’ Plot and Slonsky Show Trials, again galvanised the community around the *Kadimah*.

Theatrical Productions

The few surviving prominent actors and artists, such as Yakov Weislitz and Rokhl Holtzer, built on an earlier local Yiddish theatre tradition. They established a new ensemble and later renamed it the Dovid Herman Theatre by der *Kadimah* after the famous director of the Vilno Troupe. By 1953 they were staging 5 separate productions a year and the *Kadimah* membership reached 1300. Melbourne’s reputation as a new centre of Jewish and Yiddish life spread around the world.

From the early 1950’s on well known performers, directors and lecturers, visited the *Kadimah*, as flying became a regular and affordable means of travel. They included: Avrom Sutzkever, Shimon Dzigan, Sidor Belarski, Ida Kaminska, Prof Eliezer Naks, Dinah Halpern, Prof Klepfish, Shmuel Rudensky, Shmuel Atzmon, Nekhama Lifshitz, Michael Alpert, Prof Dav Noy, Prof Gershom Winer, Prof Avrom Novershtern, Prof Eugene Orenstein, Adam Gruzman and more.

These luminaries packed the *Kadimah* auditorium. Many published their work in the *Kadimah*’s literary journal *Di Melbourne Blette/The Melbourne Chronicle*. The Yiddish section, like the current issue, has been under the editorship of writer-broadcaster Moishe Ajzenbud, and the English section has been edited by Ron Abel, Serge Liberman, Arnold Zable, Yvonne Fein and Zoi Juvris.

In the late 1950’s and early ‘60’s, as the Jewish migrant community became more prosperous, it shifted from inner city Carlton to the more middle class suburbs of Melbourne: First southwards to St Kilda and Elwood, then southeast to Caulfield, Brighton and beyond. The *Kadimah* was abandoned by its former migrant patrons and had to follow by moving southeast and building the Leo Fink Hall in Selwyn St. The present location in Elsternwick has Melbourne’s oldest operating picture theatre, *The Esquire (now Classic) Cinema*.

With a little renovation additional changing rooms, *The Classic* doubled as a theatre for performances of the Dovid Herman Theatre by der *Kadimah*. For many years the Hazomir mixed Choir at the *Kadimah* held concerts and sang at Holocaust Commemorations and Yom-Haatzmaut Celebrations, first under founding composer and director Boruch Kalushiner and then Ben Segalov and Adrian Bartek.

Melbourne Yiddish Youth Theatre

In 1970 with the rejuvenation of Australian theatre a youth ensemble, the Melbourne Yiddish Youth Theatre at the *Kadimah*, began performing Yiddish translations of English language plays and classics. Whilst the older *Dovid Herman Theatre* wound down its run following the passing of Yakov Weislitz, Shiah Tigel and later Yasha Sher, the younger troupe continued with their productions of locally devised musicals until the late 1990’s.

With the aging of Jewish migrant population, other initiatives of the *Kadimah* became a priority. In 1984 under the stewardship of Rachel Lewita, the Wednesday Club functioned as a gathering for senior members. The clubs included literary and cultural presentations, entertainment, lunch and games.

A Look to the Future

The National Library at the *Kadimah* the original *raison d’etre* for the founding of the institution in 1911 is undergoing a cataloguing and modernisation process led by vice-pres. Rachel Kalman. The *Josef Giligich Foundation*, which fosters Yiddish education, has found a home in the *Kadimah National Library*. The *Kadimah Reading Circle* has its meetings at the library under the stewardship of Jacob Dessauer.

The *Kadimah Concerts with Friendship* organised by Gersh Mikhman and the annual *Concert in the Park*, which the *Kadimah* has co-hosted with SKIF, attract thousands. With 50 activities per year it is one of the most active organisations within the Jewish community in Australia.

The challenge for the future is to make the *Kadimah* relevant to the 2nd and 3rd generation Australian born Jewish offspring of those migrants who made this country and this institution a real home away from the home that was so cruelly destroyed.
Lessons from the Blind Community
By Philip Fishl Kutner

As one who is visually impaired and active in the Council for the Blind, there are similarities and lessons each can learn from the other.

One major difference is that Yiddish is a matter of choice—blindness is not.

What prompted this article is a newly published article revealing that the number of Federal Jobs for the disabled community has dropped 20% in the last 20 years. The reason this fact is so significant is that the Federal government has been held up as a model job resource for the disabled.

What has that got to do with our love for Yiddish? Nothing at all if all that we care about is sitting around reminiscing about our childhood days, and leave it to the Khasidim.

Whether it is political, social, environmental or Yiddish activism, it means put your effort and money where your mouth is.

Successful activism is like raising a child. You must be prepared to take action when danger lurks. A blind person must be especially aware when starting to cross a street and a speeding car suddenly comes around the corner on the left side.

Now for the major lesson the Yiddish community must learn—ACTIVISM. We have written several articles in the past suggesting how to stimulate interest and foster groups and organizations in their endeavors on behalf of our mame-loshn.

Learn to budget your time and money on behalf of your ideals and priorities. Yiddish does not need to take up a great deal of your time or money to truly benefit you or Yiddish. The entire should list below easily can be done for less than half the price of a daily Starbucks cup o’ coffee.

A should list is:

• Attending a Yiddish group—shmoozkrayz, leyenkrayz or shraybkrayz
• Attending a Klezmer concert/play
• Joining a major Yiddish organization
• Purchasing a Yiddish book/CD
• Subscribing to a Yiddish publication

A wish list is:

• Attending a Yiddish class
• Attending a Yiddish conference/institute/sof-vokh

Highlights of KlezKamp 20
December 26-31, 2004
Kerhonkson, NY

Yiddish Theater Workshop: Hy Wolfe

Doyres in the Yiddish Theater: Hy Wolfe

Interviews: Mina Bern, Shifra Lerer, David Rogow.

Youth Theater Workshop: Jenny Romaine

Introduction to Yiddish: Paula Teitelbaum

Intermediate Yiddish: Miriam Isaacs

Advanced Yiddish: Yitskhok Niborski

Fun Dor tsu Dor: Chana & Zalmen Mlotek

How to Accompany a Singer: Mlotek & Cooper

A Century of Yiddish Recording: Henry Sapoznik

Wexology: Age and Aging in Yiddish: Michael Wex

Klezmorimlekh in Yankeeland: Pete Sokolow

Yiddish for Singers: Paula Teitelbaum

Mandolin Orchestra: Jeff Warschauer

Hasidic Dance Band: Ken Maltz

Fidl Kapelye: Cookie Segelstein

Intermediate Ear Band: Pete Rushefsky

Generations of Klezmorim in Yiddish Literature: Miriam Isaacs: We discuss I.L. Peretz, Mendele With the assistance of fiddler Deborah Strauss.

Di Prose fun Moyshe Nadir: Yitskhok Niborski

The Singer of a Different Tune: Esther Singer Kreitman: Anita Norich
The Singers older sister wrote of religious life, the diamond business, and condition of women.

How Did They Say That in English? Anita Norich
We’ll compare multiple translations.

Survivors: Stories of Chava Rosenfarb: Faith Jones
Chava discusses her works with Goldie Morgentaler.
Lithuanian food is excellent. The only place where I drew the line was at *deep fried pigs’ ears*. (So help me. I’m not making this up!) You can have an excellent meal in Lithuania for as little as $4.00. Everything seems so cheap there. The official exchange rate is 4 Litas to one dollar. The banks give 2.8. Lithuania converts to the Euro in 2007.

I must mention a couple of amazing facts that are immediately apparent when one arrives in Lithuania: Obesity is to all intents & purposes virtually non-existent in Lithuania! There are simply NO fat people. Everyone looks slim, trim, and athletic. Nikita S. Khruschev, former premier of the Soviet Union, is quoted as having said, “The Swedes are the healthiest, happiest, best-looking, most robust people in the world”. He might well have said the same thing about the Litvaks.

There are no special auto tags or reserved parking spaces for the handicapped. There may be a lot of *hoykers & hinkers*, but I didn’t see any. But one thing I saw too many of for such a prosperous country: panhandlers. I don’t just mean the old babushkas that hang around churches on Sunday, or like the nuns in Italy who display laminated beggars’ permits, I mean young punks in their teens and 20s. Granted, some of them look pretty flaky, but there are too many of them.

Another thing you must see to really believe: In the *Altstadt* (Old Town), with traffic every bit as dense as any city in the United States, there are neither traffic signals nor traffic policeman! Pedestrians and motorists are so very well synchronized that the need for traffic control devices has been totally eliminated. Pedestrians rule. That’s it. NO honking of horns, no shaking of fists, no flipping of birds, no all-night serenades of emergency vehicle sirens and horns.

One night for a couple of hours during the Olympics, there was a noisy procession of horn-blowing cars—some with kids actually standing on tops of cars. I found out the reason was that Lithuania had just defeated the US basketball team. Not exactly Halloween in Detroit, but pretty noisy for a while.

As an ex-career military man, I have been stationed all over the world. Wherever you go overseas, the Americans re-create their own country: American PXs, Commissaries, Armed Forces Network Radio and TV (Except in Moslem countries), theaters - the works. All-American!

Not in Lithuania! They joined the EEC and NATO, but I doubt I’ll live to see the day that the Baltic countries are Americanized. The only change that NATO membership has brought about in Lithuania is that I saw a report on the internet that the prostitutes there are charging NATO troops *three times* the rate they charge their regular customers.

**KO V NO**

Prominent among the outings arranged by the Vilna Yiddish Institute was a visit to Kovno (Kaunas). About a hundred kilometers from Vilna, it is a clean, prosperous city. We were in two tour busses, and had lovely weather. Upon arrival in the city, we were conducted on a long walking tour through the center of town in a beautiful tree-lined esplanade—long enough to be exhausting for an old gaffer. After a rest and a lunch of pink borsch and potatoes, we boarded the busses and headed back down the road towards Vilna. But after 15-20 minutes we detoured to an isolated park-like area situated atop a long, sloping hill. From there one had a panoramic view of the city and the white birch forests of the surrounding countryside.

Standing starkly against the afternoon sky were three massive monuments which almost defied description. Intuitively I realized that we had arrived at the place for which Kovno will ever be stigmatized as the killing field for thousands & thousands. At some distance from the massive concrete monuments was a brick structure which had the appearance of a medieval fort, surrounded by barbed wire. I learned later that this was the infamous *Fort Nine*. It is one of a ring of twelve forts built by the Russian Tsars over two centuries ago. It was the final stop for many thousands of doomed people transported from all over Europe.

I broke away from the assembled group which was about to enter the fort and walked towards the massive structures. The center one is several stories high. These are memorials erected by Lithuania, dedicated to the people who were murdered in the thousands.

But the thing that made the deepest, and most devastating impression on me was a very long trench, almost the entire length of a football field, and about 20-30 ft wide, and 20-30 ft deep. This trench was where thousands of people breathed their last. Cut down by MG fire like rows of mowed wheat, the dead and dying lay at the bottom of this trench.
As I stood there alone, staggered by emotion at this scene as I had never experienced before, a lone individual approached me from behind and laid his hand on my shoulder. I turned, and for a moment we gazed into each other’s eyes in silence. He then turned and walked away. No words were spoken.

For you who may think that this little incident was fabricated for dramatic effect, I am sorry for both of us. I can only swear that every word is true. You have to take it or leave it.

I had heard and read and even visited some of the notorious camps—if camp is the word—Sobibor, Auschwitz, Maidanek, Mauthausen, and the others—but Kovno was not one of those—by any stretch. The site at Fort Nine was nothing more, or less, than a killing ground. One of the many plaques was given by citizens of Munich, Germany.

Any doubts as to whether the German civilian population at large were aware of what was being done to the deportees nach Osten were resolved by the frank admission on this plaque which began, ”Wir, die Mitwissende...” “We, who also knew...”, went on to express regrets for the transport of more than 800 Jewish citizens of Munich to Kovno, executed immediately upon arrival.

One wonders. What kind of person does it take to commit such acts as were carried out at Kovno and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. What could motivate those who made up the so-called Eks—the killing squads? By what process were decent, honest, moral educated people transformed into murderers without a shred or vestige of conscience?

In WWI, as evinced in the memoirs of many people, German soldiers rendered every humanitarian service they could, including food distribution, to the Jewish population. A letter from the German commanding general was addressed <<To My Dear Jews>>. Of course, they were looking for Jewish support against the Russians. It's amazing when one contemplates the volte face in a nation’s attitude that took place in such an amazingly short time: 1918-1939. Adolf Hitler became Chancellor in 1933. By what miracle of black magic could a nation’s attitude towards a people hitherto regarded as equals be so radically reversed in just six short years?!

A manifest impossibility!


A footnote to Kovno: Outside the Vilna Gaon Jewish State Museum at Pamenkalnio Gate (pronounced: GAteh) (St.) 12, there is a monument commemorating Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat based in Kaunas (Kovno) who is credited with saving 6,000 Jewish lives during WWII by issuing them papers needed in order to leave the country. Sugihara is a virtual unknown in the West. Unlike the Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, he was on the wrong side, but he is well known and revered in Lithuania.

Regarding the numbers-game concerning people killed by the Nazis in WWII: I refuse to become involved in hair-splitting over precise numbers of victims at various places during the holocaust. I have seen differing numbers on monuments in the same place. It depends often on who placed the monuments. At Kovno there are monuments and markers from France, Germany, the USSR, and they don't all agree. For my part, it suffices to show that large numbers of innocent people were tortured and killed by the worst kinds of criminals. Any hairsplintering dishonors the memory of those who lost their lives.

About the Author
A retired career Air Force officer, Lt. Col. Albritton served a combined total of 27 years active duty in the United States Navy and the United States Air Force. During service in the Navy, he served in the Mediterranean Fleet and was in the area during the campaign for Israel's independence in 1948. After attending college he entered active duty in the Air Force and served in Korea and Japan during the Korean conflict. From the Far East, he was assigned to the National Security Agency (NSA) at Ft. Meade, Maryland. Under the Dept. of Defense, the National Security Agency directs the cryptologic services of the United States. While at the Agency, Col. Albritton completed requirements for and was awarded a Master’s and a Doctor's degree from the University of Maryland. Following a tour of duty in Alaska, he was assigned to Hqs., Tactical Air Command, Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, and subsequently to Hqs., Military Assistance Command, Saigon, Republic of Viet Nam. After return to the National Security Agency, he retired from active duty. After retirement from military service, he was an Asst Prof in the field of International Relations at the University of Maryland’s European Division, Heidelberg, Germany. Col Albritton's interest in the Yiddish language goes back many years, beginning with private instruction in Erlangen, Germany. After return to the states, he resumed study of Yiddish at the Baltimore Hebrew College, as well as the Israeli-sponsored Ulpan study of Modern Hebrew. He currently reside in Gulford, Mississippi.
A question I have been asked many times—even by one of my instructors at Vilna, “what is the why of your interest in Yiddish? It is a language used in Jewish old folks’ homes and by slapstick borscht belt comedians. Aside from a perceived renaissance of the language, my primary interest is and has been in the vast literature in the language, much of it yet to be translated.

When I was a young man in college, the idea of Yiddish and Judaica in a university curriculum would have been preposterous. Today these subjects are not only available in the best of colleges, they are increasingly popular. Even in Israel, where for a long time there were bumper-stickers which demanded, Help stamp out Yiddish! there has been a major change in attitude.

The Israelis were embarrassed to find it necessary to turn to New York for textbooks on Yiddish. There were none in Israel. I saw for the first time ever in Vilna a Hebrew-Yiddish, Yiddish-Hebrew dictionary in the possession of a young lady from Israel. "Fresh off the press", she said.

One of the oldest, if not the oldest in Europe, the University of Vilna is not surprisingly located in the old town part of the city. Established by Jesuits in 1570, it was closed for nearly a century. When it reopened it offered courses in over 60 subjects. At a time when both Arabic and Russian were taught, Lithuanian was prohibited! (By the Russians, who were then in control). After several name-changes it became the University of Vilnius and has remained so ever since.

American students notice immediately the absence of typical U.S. college features which they take for granted: ultra-modern student centers featuring shopping emporia and swimming pools, frat and sorority houses, mega athletic facilities with humungous stadia, and risqué student-published campus newspapers.

The Vilna school operates at a bare minimum: Academics only! There is a small book and souvenir shop. Yiddish books are available only at a special library, which operates on short hours. There are no Yiddish books in the bookstore.

Lithuania has been a traditional crossroads for warring armies, most recently the particularly brutal conflict between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. The Litvaks have become adept at coping with radical changes imposed by the various occupying powers—some of long duration, some short.

They have enjoyed some triumphs of their own, one being the defeat of the Prussian Teutonic Knights at Gruenwald (aided by Polish allies). The high water mark came during the era of the combined kingdoms of Poland-Lithuania which stretched all the way from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Lithuania was the last European country to convert to Christianity, in the 1300s. Some say this is the reason for the easy accommodation of other religions, especially the Jewish. One of the more interesting revelations to me was the history of the Karaites, a Turkic sect which adopted the Jewish religion back in ancient times. They have traditionally been recognized by rabbinic authorities as members of the Jewish faith with all rights & privileges.

A colony of Karaites has been in Lithuania for centuries, residing in the picturesque lake country at Trakai, location of the imposing Fortress in the Lake. These people were the palace guards for royalty. Imagine this, if you will: An SS Colonel requesting the assistance and advice of a Jewish Rabbi in determining whether the Karaites were racially related to the Hebrews. The Rabbi explained that while indeed the Karaites practiced the Jewish religion, they are not racially akin to the Hebrew people—they are of Turkic origin. Thus, the Karaites were saved by the Rabbi from certain extermination by the Nazis!

The SS Colonel believed what the Rabbi told him. "After all", he figured, "Would a Rabbi lie?" The Rabbi did not indeed lie. What he told the SS Colonel was true. Do you think the Rabbi would have lied if indeed the Karaites and Jews were Semitic brothers?

Each of the succeeding occupying powers in Vilna brought their church with them: The Russians the Orthodox, the Germans the Lutheran, The Poles the Roman Catholic, and the Jews the synagogues.

Thus Vilna has by far the densest population of magnificent churches of any city I have ever seen. There are approved plans to rebuild and restore to original condition the old synagogue in Vilna, with its fabled shulhoyf at its original location.
For the Jews who knew it, the Vilne fun amol no longer exists.

"On its site stands a place identified on the map as Vilnius, capital of Lithuania, a constituent republic of the Soviet Union. Like Troy, the Vilna I knew—the Vilne described in the Jewish annals—now lies buried beneath the debris of history, beneath layers of death and destruction. When the Soviets first occupied Vilna in 1940, they Sovietized it, destroying its historic identity and its Jewish particularity. The Germans who followed destroyed Vilna altogether, murdering nearly all of its 60,000 men, women, and children. Since then, nothing has remained of Vilna's Jewish culture and spirit. Hardly anything has remained of its buildings—the sticks and stones of Jewish architecture. What little the Nazis left standing, the Soviets, who returned after the war, erased. A visitor to today's Vilna can no longer find a trace of what had been "the Jerusalem of Lithuania".

Since Lucy Davidowicz wrote these pessimistic words, there have been increasing signs of a Jewish renewal in Vilna and Lithuania. There is hope among the Jewish people I met there, and I hope that my modest participation in the 2004 9th Annual Yiddish Language Program at the University of Vilna has contributed, at least in some small way, to the rebirth of the Jerusalem of Lithuania.

About the Author
A retired career Air Force officer, Lt. Col. Albritton served a combined total of 27 years active duty in the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Air Force. During service in the Navy, he served in the Mediterranean Fleet and was in the area during the campaign for Israel's independence in 1948. After college he entered active duty in the Air Force and served in Korea and Japan during the Korean conflict. He was assigned to the National Security Agency. While at the Agency, Col. Albritton earned a Master's and a Doctor's degree from the University of Maryland. He was assigned to Hqs., Tactical Air Command, and subsequently to Hqs., Military Assistance Command, Saigon, Republic of Viet Nam. After retirement from military service, he was an Asst. Prof. in the field of International Relations at the University of Maryland's European Division, Heidelberg, Germany. Col Albritton's interest in the Yiddish language goes back many years, beginning with private instruction in Erlangen, Germany. After his return to the states, he resumed study of Yiddish at the Baltimore Hebrew College, and the Israeli-sponsored Ulpan study of Modern Hebrew. He resides in Gulfport, Mississippi.
Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish
A Review by Fishl Kutner

Prof. Dovid Katz aptly attacks the much-debated problem of Yiddish survival. Opposite camps have their proponents within and outside of academia. Unlike using non-factual and emotional arguments, the case for this viewpoint is based on past and present facts and a projection set in sound, logical principles.

While current thinking refers to Yiddish as an amalgam of German Hebrew/Aramaic and Slavic languages, Prof. Katz goes back prior to the common era. He first analyzes and then traces the roles of Hebrew and Aramaic up to the migration to Central Europe.

The laymen’s mundane use of Aramaic and the scholarly, priestly use of Hebrew are then developed. This led to the Jewish migration into southern Europe and a northeasterly flow with the concurrent adoption and incorporation of Germanic terms.

Prof. Katz aptly analyzes the seesaw chronology of the Jewish fate from the Dark Ages through the Renaissance. Each location first accepted and often welcomed the Jews, but soon imposed various dicta imposing heavy taxes, imposing laws banning certain trades and types of commerce and even geographic prohibitions.

While some of the material presented is fairly well-known by readers of Der Bay, it is the manner in which it is presented that makes this book exceptional. Here are a few such quotes:

“Israeli Hebrew is a language that was artificially constructed by Yiddish-speaking Eastern European Zionists around a hundred years ago.”

“Throughout history the traditionalists have been challenged by secular outbursts. They tend to occur during the first few generations of creative intermingling with tolerant, multicultural non-Jews.” Katz gives examples of Philo of Alexandria, Maimonides, Spinoza, Freud, and Einstein.

“The rise and spread of Hasidism occurred during the lifetime of the greatest Ashkenaz scholar, the Gaon of Vilna, Eyliohu ben Shloyme Zalmen 1720-1797”

“The modernizers in East Europe in the early1800s onward developed a literary tradition both Yiddish and Hebrew with such modern European genres as the poem, short story, novel, drama, periodical, newspaper, etc.”

“The most brilliant Yiddish scholar of the 1900s, Ber Borokhov 1881-1917, single-handedly fashioned Yiddish studies as a field of academic research. He also was the founder and major theoretician of Labor Zionism.”

“Traditional Judaism will never be accepted by modern Jews. The traditional kind of Judaism (ultraorthodoxy), which is winning the contest to become the future of American (and Diaspora) Jewry, believes in much more than the 613 commandments in rabbinic tradition…”

“Yiddish will be the future language of the bulk of Diaspora Jewry because speaking it is part of the Jewish civilization of the Hasidic movement…not because of Mendele, Sholem Aleichem, Peretz or any other Yiddish icon. Secular Yiddishism could only work as a real civilization in its native homeland of Eastern Europe.”

Maps, photos and diagrams are interspersed throughout the book and add a significant dimension for the reader. Especially noteworthy is the diagram The Big Bang that created Yiddish. It graphically shows the interrelationships among Hebrew, Aramaic and Yiddish (Western and Eastern). However the half dozen maps, while excellent in content are a little difficult to read.

While some may discredit readability formulae, they nevertheless can be useful as an indicator of reading difficulty. Of those reviewed in the literature, this reviewer prefers the Fry Readability Curve.

This text was found to be in the long-word range, but off the chart on sentence-length which places it well in the above freshman college level. One consideration is the knowledge of terminology used. Thus a person with a good background in Jewish history would find this material reading at a lower level than one with a poorer Jewish background.

Prof. Katz has been a prolific writer, and this most recent book fits right in with his other masteries of Yiddish text. It is highly recommended.


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Publisher: 800-345-5359 Mention 20% promo. =24.31 includes s&h, + your state tax.
Oystsugn fun briv in der redaktsye

I received dues for another new club #101
Heritage Hills Yiddish Conversation Group
Contact: Harold Penn, e-mail: hpenn@aol.com
641B Heritage Hill, Somers, N.Y. 10589
Seymour Graiver, IAYC Treasurer, Bayside, NY

Most of the members of our NSJC Seniors’ Yiddish Club, children or grandchildren of immigrants heard and spoke Yiddish in our homes during early childhood. However, we abandoned it during the busy years of school, making a living, and raising families. Now we are on a sentimental journey back to mame-loshn. shirlprof@aol.com
Shirley Rosenfeld, Coram, NY

The purpose of Kreytman’s Page is to make her known. I would be grateful if you could give me the reference when it appears in Der Bay. It will be included in the page. We were unwilling to allow her talent not be known by a wider readership.
Alicia Ramos González, Granada, Spain
http://www.ugr.es/~aramos/kreytman/

Es shraybt dir Amanda (Miriam-Khaye) Seigel fun Brooklyn, NY (kh’hob gevoynt in Minneapolis). Gedenkst mikh fun der konferents in Milwaukee efsher? Ich hob gehat tsures mtn vebzaytl "der bay" - ven ikh hob prubirt "shikn" informatsie vegn a kottsart farn kalendar, hob ikh nit gekent, un ikh veys nisht far vos. Efsher kenst mir gebn an eytse?
Miriam-Khaye Seigel, Brooklyn, NY
amkseigel@yahoo.com

Celebrate Hanukkah at the Funky Khanike Freylekh, Saturday, Dec. 4 from 5 to 8 PM At Congregation Nahalat Shalom. Features: Yiddish dancing by Rikud Dance Troupe to exciting music of a 16-plus piece intergenerational Community Klezmer Band, and stories with Lynn Gottlieb. Penelope Mainz, Albuquerque, NM Nahalatshalom@earthlink.net Ph: 505-343-8227, Website: www.nahalatshalom.org

Ikh bin geven a lererke fun yidish far zibitsoy vos un hob genist a sakh fun di temes vos ir rekemindirt. Efsher vel ikh amol shikn maynse fun Pinkus Revern (Paul Revere), Di kleyne Royte Furendike Mantl, un mer....
Frances A. Buratt, Woodmere, NY

After volunteer political campaign activity, I am ready for translation projects. As a graduate of Arbeter Ring Lerer Seminar, author, translator, and chair of the Baltimore IAYC Conference, my background is varied. I am a Yiddish scholar. Your project will be in competent hands. Sylvia Schildt Baltimore, MD 410-298-4765 or creativa@charm.net

I want to thank you for recommending me to Helen Schechtman at the Chicago Yiddish Institute. We gave 3 programs at their 15th Annual Sof Vokh. The performances garnered a great response. Helen & Leonard were great hosts. My performances of Mayn sheyne meydle have been very successful at Yiddish clubs. Debby Davis, San Diego, CA
Editor’s note: Debby is the leader of the Second Avenue Klezmer Orchestra. 619-275-1539

Besides teaching 2 levels of Yiddish at Ohio State University, I have 3 independent small groups. I am available for presentations in: Yiddish, English and Spanish; story and poetry reading in Yiddish; private classes and conversations in Yiddish; and translations in Yiddish, English and Spanish.
Moises Mermelstein, Columbus, OH 614-846-4824 mermelstein.2@osu.edu

I look forward to each issue. My wife, Mimi, brings them to her mame-loshn meetings each time and they all enjoy it. The Yiddish Folk Chorus of South Florida is resuming rehearsals on Thurs Dec 9th. Let me know if you need any further information.
Hy Perlstein, Boca Raton, FL Hymimi01@aol.com

I have found new Yiddish pen pals on the Internet. Miriam Kravitz, Bronx, NY

We use Der Bay in our Yiddish Circle at the La Jolla JCC. My sister-in-law in New York has recently joined a Yiddish group, and I am sure she’ll enjoy receiving Der Bay. Enclosed is my contribution for her subscription. Sylvia S. Kirsch, La Jolla, CA

Ir bemerkte, mistame, ven mayn transliterations gefint zikh in The Yiddish Vinkl in the English Forward. Ikh badoyrer vos mayn mame-loshn klas iz azoy farklemert gevorn in Penn Sourh Senior Center. Goldie A. Gold, New York, NY

I’m sending a copy of my article Uncovering Yiddish in Seattle’s Jewish Past. It was published in the Washington State Jewish Historical Society’s newsletter. Murray Meld, Seattle, WA murmel4@aol.com

The Minnesota State Historical Society had a great exhibit of the lives of Jewish settlers on the prairie in the upper northwest entitled: And Prairie Dogs Weren’t Kosher. They might still have it. They have extensive archives, memoirs, and footage of interviews with descendants of these early settlers. These settlers often waited a year for a shoykhet to come to town to slaughter a cow so they’d have meat for the winter. Joan Levin, Chicago, IL
I’m looking for any information of Chelm 1939-44—especially photos from the town. I live in Chelm and I am preparing the website about Chelm’s history 1939-1944. I shall describe Chelm’s army groups (7 ppl, 2 PAC), September’39, Russian and German occupation, Nazi terror, Chelm’s ghetto, Stalag 319, AK, AL, Bch, etc - the whole story of Chelm in WWII.

Now I am preparing part of the website about Chelm’s getto and liquidation-aktzion, and looking for information about Chelm’s getto—maybe a witness story. My priority is to find photos from Chelm (during WWII).

I decided to make the website about Chelm 39-44 because only few people in Chelm know anything about it. On TV there are all the time programs from the Warsaw Uprising, but not many people remember that during WWII in Chelm about 90.000 people lost theirs life.

Nobody remembers that in WWII there was Nazi terror in the Chelm ghetto, and about 18.000 Jewish Chelmians just disappeared during 4 years. The website will be open for everyone to remember the past.