The Golden Gate to the World-Wide Yiddish Community

October 2000  
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IAYC Conferences 2000 & 2002

Our Sixth International Association of Yiddish Clubs Conference is now part of the history books, and this organization is now well-established. It ranks as one of the major Yiddish events. The theme for the conference was Celebrating a Thousand Years of Yiddish, and met at the 4-H International Center in Chevy Chase, MD. Harold Black, of Bethesda, MD, the organization's president, announced that the next conference will be held in Milwaukee, WI during April 12-15, 2002.

We are very fortunate in having Paul Melrood, a former Yiddish actor with Perhfit, coordinating the event. It will be the first time the conference will be held in the Midwest. Previous conferences have been in New England, Mid Atlantic, the South, on the West Coast and in Toronto Canada. The host-city has decided on the theme of Mame-loshn and the Shoah—Yiddish and the Holocaust. If you live in the Midwest, or interested in the theme of the conference, you may contact Paul Melrood with your ideas or willingness to help. Paul and his charming wife Marlene can be reached at 414-961-1715 or e-mail maiPaulww2@aol.com

Work has begun on the January 2001 issue of Der Bay. It will mark the 10th anniversary of on-time publication. This special issue will be befitting the occasion. It will be a limited edition and sent only to current supporters. It will be an opportunity for your editor personally to thank all of you who have been constant supporters. In some cases we go back to the first year when Der Bay was a publication of and for the San Francisco Bay Area. Today it is sent to 33 countries and every state in the United States and Puerto Rico

Backbone of these other free services has been TYN, (The Yiddish Network), which consists of key Yiddish-loving people who report on their local Yiddish events and are an aid to travelers and those who relocate. Der Bay has been a compiler and clearinghouse for listing and locating Yiddish teachers, Yiddish clubs, Der internatsyonaler kalendar Klezmer groups, performers, translators, and pen-pals (now 300).

Books Written by Our Readers

Live & be Well
by Richard F. Shepard & Vicki Gold Levi

This wonderful book was originally published in 1982. A new printing was handled by the Rutgers University Press. It is picture-packed. Unfortunately the lead author recently passed away. Laid out in alphabetical order, it goes from Allen Street to Zeydes and Bobes.

There is an excellent bibliography and a listing of the sources for these picture treasures. Of special note are photos from; American Jewish Archive, Brown Brothers, Corbis Bettmann, Library of Congress, Museum of the City of New York, Billy Rose Theatre Collection, and YIVO. It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. This book is a perfect example of it.
Cloth ISBN 0-8135-2812-7

Blessings, Curses, Hopes and Fears: Psycho-Ostensive Expressions in Yiddish
by James A. Mati"off

Prof. Mati"off is a linguist at UC Berkev. His examples and analysis of these Yiddish expressions, are not only scholarly, but highly interesting—even to a layman. The 323 expressions interspersed throughout the book are given in YIVO standard orthography as well as in English. Notes at the end are quite detailed and add another dimension to this wonderful book.
It is listed in paperback at $13.45 by Amazon, and has an ISBN: 0804733945.

Children of a Vanished World
By Mara Vishniac Kohn and Miriam Hartman Flacks

You may be familiar with Vishniac's work. He took thousands of pictures in traditional East European Villages just before the Holocaust. They were smuggled out of Europe, and finally arrived in the U.S. via Cuba.

What makes this so special is that opposite each picture is a Yiddish poem that has been made into a song. Many of these songs are familiar. The text is in Yiddish with transliteration directly underneath the Yiddish, and the English translation is in the adjoining column. There is a Guide to pronunciation using the YIVO standard orthography. It is published by the University of California Press, 1999— ISBN 0-520-22187-7. Amazon sells it for $20.00 in hardcopy.
It really is a very beautiful volume.

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To receive Der Bay make checks for chai ($18) payable to Der Bay. If you've been blessed, won't you send a LITTLE extra—please?
Der Internatsyonaler Kalendar

October
1 First Sun., 1:30 P.M., Yiddish Club of Wittingham, Jamesburg, NJ 086-960-0037
1 First Sun., 2:00 P.M., W.C. Nassau County Yiddish Vinkel, East Meadow, Long Island NY 516-681-1465
2 Mons. (1st & 3rd), 12:45 P.M., Ocean Hills Yiddish Club, Oceanside, CA 619-941-8526
2 (Every Mon.), 3:30 P.M., Heritage Yiddish Club, Columbus, OH 614-231-2244
2 Mon. (1st & 3rd), 7:30 P.M., Eugene Yiddish Club, Eugene, OR, 541-484-2252
3 (Every Tues.) 7:00 P.M., Vancouver Jewish Folk Choir, Vancouver, Canada 604-324-5101
3 Every Tues., Noon-1:20 P.M., Yale-New Haven Leyenkrazy, Haven, CT, 203-288-8206
3 Every Tues., 10:00 A.M., Forverts Sho, Rockville, MD, 301-984-4455
3 Every Tues., 10:00 A.M., Tuesday Yiddish Class, Pittsburgh, PA 412-421-4269
4 Wed., 1:00 P.M., Temple Akiba Yid Conv. Group Claire Silverman, Culver City, CA 310-398-5783
5 Thurs. (Every), 1:00 P.M., Mameloshn Meynim, Buffalo, NY 716-834-70751
7 Sat., 9:00 P.M., Yiddishc Kooz Band College of Wooster, OH 330-287-3503
7 Every Sat., 7:30 P.M. Yiddish Culture Club of L.A., 8339 W. 3rd St A Los Angeles, CA 213-725-8455
7 Every Sat., 3:00 P.M. Friends of Yiddish, London, England +44(0)171-488 3909
8 Sun., Noon, Boulder Leyen-Krayz, Boulder, CO Call 303-494-9709
8 Sun. (2nd), 1:00 P.M., Einstein Senior Yiddish Club, Sacramento, CA 916-487-9175
8 Sun (2nd), 1:30 P.M., JCC Yiddish Club, Milwaukee, WI, 414-355-1938
8 Sun. (2nd), 10:00 A.M., JCC Yiddish Vinkel, Minneapolis, MN Call 612-377-5456
8 Sun (2nd), 11:00 P.M., Seattle Yiddish Group, Seattle, WA, 206-523-6564
8 Sun (2nd), 2:00 P.M., Keep Yiddish Alive, San Rafael (JCC), CA, 415-479-7604
11 Wed., 7:30 P.M., Moscow Yiddish Art Theater and Marc Chagall, Sabell Tender, Valley Yiddish Culture Club, Valley Village, 818-376-1640
13 Wed., 2:00 P.M., Beth Simcha Yiddish Kreiz, Amsterdarm, The Netherlands 31 20-6613556
18 Every Wed., 2:00 P.M., A Bisseele Yiddish, Phoenix, AZ 602-264-2325
18-19 Budowitz Klezmer Workshop, Monika Feil of Fialke, Fuertth, Germany Ph +49-9131-205345
20 Frt., 8:30 P.M., Yidishes Cup Klezmer Band Concert, Fairmount Temple, Beachwood, OH 216-464-1330
20 Fri. (1st & 3rd) 1:00 P.M., Yiddish Program, JCC of Greater Wash., Rockville, MD, 301-881-0100
25 Every Wed., 3:30 P.M., Kadimah, Leo Fink Hall Selwyn St, Elsternwick, Australia 613-523-9817
26 Thurs. (Every), 5:00 P.M., The Yiddish Club, Missoula, MT 406-549-9408
28-29 Sat.-Sun. Holocaust Week, Harvey Atkin, Ellie Moidel, David Wall & Marilyn Lemer, Toronto, Tues, 7:00 P.M., Jeff Warschauer Klezmer Workshop, Fall Session II, NYC, 212-889-6800 xt 220

Our Rapid City, SD Contact
Ann Stanton <maswwired@yahoo.com>

Thanks for calling and finally making voice contact. I already felt as though I knew you from Der Bay, but in just a little while on the telephone I really felt as though I'd established bonds with a new friend.

I'm just back from shul, and we had a beautiful and moving Friday night service. Especially during the summer, we have visitors to our little Rapid City, South Dakota, shul. As always, they got a warm reception and left feeling as though they, too, had made new friends. This visiting couple was from Puerto Rico, and was particularly genial. I was struck by their sincere appreciation of being surrounded by a small circle of Jews in this rather remote outpost, Jews who love to meet and worship together. He has a large and robust manner and a lovely voice, and he sang the prayers with gusto and fervor, carrying the rest of us along on his rich tones.

At the oneg he looked at our little group, smiled and said, "every Jew is a treasure". I felt particularly blessed at that moment. This was such sweet and heartfelt affirmation of who we are and what we are, and not just our little group, but all of us in general. Any one of us can go anywhere in the world and sing these songs and invite these prayers and feel perfectly at home surrounded by extended family. Or at least, we should be able to.

Everyone is very excited about Gore's selection of Joseph Lieberman to be his running mate. I've been stopped in the halls at the hospital where I work by people who ask, "so what do you think of Lieberman"? As though I were some expert on this subject because I am also Jewish. I imagine many of us are having this very same experience. What do I think? I think he was a brilliant choice. We have here a man of character as well as intelligence. He is not afraid to speak his mind, and he is not afraid to stand out boldly as a religious, committed Jew. Now let's see what the American public thinks.

Tonight's sermon dealt with how far we've come as a nation, from "tolerance" of religions other than Christianity, to acceptance, to appreciation. Of course, we're still a work in progress, but we've come a long way.

You asked about the Klezmer concert that we had here in July—it was absolutely wonderful. Who would have thought you could hear Klezmer music resounding in the Black Hills of South Dakota. We had a full weekend of great Jewish music, and everyone who attended had a terrific time listening, clapping along, and dancing. The Minnesota Klezmer Band, Jewish Music from the Land of the Frozen Chozon, is "hot", and if any of your readers get to Minneapolis in time to attend one of their concerts, they have a treat in store. They also do a show called "Gershwyn the Klezmer", which they performed in San Diego earlier in the year, and will be performing at various locations around the country this year. This was their second appearance here in the Black Hills, and they have developed a small but devoted following. We wish it could make Klezmer concerts into an annual event, but we can't justify this unless we get a bigger turnout.

It has been an unusual couple of years; first the Deadwood Adams Museum exhibit about the Jewish history in the Black Hills, and now the Klezmer concert. We are getting noticed for our contributions, and this is a matter of some pride and great satisfaction.
Houston Yiddish Vinkl
By Barbara Goldstein

Since the Houston Yiddish Vinkl/Houston JCC
Yiddish Heritage Series: Revitalizing a Legacy at the JCC
in March 2000, the Yiddish Vinkel has grown significantly.
Our membership is increasing! The Houston Yiddish
Vinkl meets every second Monday of the month at the
JCC. Its monthly newsletter, "Yiddish by the Bayou," is
sent via "snail mail" and e-mail to Vinkl members and
friends. In addition, by demand, Susan Ganc who heads
the Yiddish Vinkl now teaches a weekly Beginners Yiddish
class at the JCC. Susan's Yiddish literature class that meets
every week in her home has also increased in its number
of actively participating members. Besakhkh...mir lebn;
mir vakhn!

The Yiddish Vinkl will commemorate the 100th
anniversary of Der Arbiter-Ring (The Workmen's Circle)
at a meeting at the JCC on Wednesday, October 18, 2000.
Led by Henrietta Bell and Zelda Rick, this program will
be presented also in honor of Workmen's Circle member
Rose Keeper. For one-hundred years the Workmen's
Circle has made its indelible mark in American history
as an organization for the relief of oppressive working
conditions and for the education of immigrant workers.
Adele and Max Lewis will lead a Yiddish sing-a-long of
Workmen's Circle songs that have become treasures in
American Jewish culture. For more information about
the meeting, call Ana Kaye at 713-771-7535.

Another interesting thing is that we have a
wonderful working relationship with the Houston
Yiddish Oneg Shabbat Club at the Goldberg B'nai B'rith
Towers.

Lomir Lernen Yidish
By Fannie Yokor (New Orleans)

Yiddish cinema - it's here again. Encouraged by the
enthusiastic, response to our Yiddish film series of the
past two seasons, we are having another successful
season. The amazing feature is that even though most of
the films were made prior to World War II, they still speak
to us. They still have a great deal of relevance and appeal.
We have also introduced a truly novel element to our
viewing. After each showing, we open the floor to general
discussion relating to what we have just seen. This has
met with a great deal of response. We have found that
people are eager to express their own personal views and
opinions. The films we select are in Yiddish with English
sub-titles.

Our first film not only contains Yiddish, but the film
is narrated by Orson Welles—in English, of course. It is an
overview of Yiddish films in general. We thought it was a
good introduction to our series. The film is called Raisins
and Almonds and contains clips from many of the films
we have already seen.
We "film" the last Tuesday of each month at the
Uptown Jewish Community Center. A deli lunch is
generously provided by Dr. Victor Drown. He is
co-facilitator of the program. It usually precedes
the program, and we start at noon. See you there...

No. 9 Using Yiddish Dictionaries in Programs

Last month's article in this series contained a list of
Yiddish dictionaries. Now we shall show ways that they
can be used to enrich our meetings and make them even
more enjoyable. Whether your group is just for shmozing
or it is a serious leyenkrayz (reading circle) or shraybkrayz
(writing circle) at least one Yiddish dictionary should be
on hand at each meeting.

The most important reason for learning any alphabet
in its accepted series is to be able to catalog any item. One
could learn the letters of the alphabet, without knowing
the accepted sequence. We use the accepted sequence to
list items in a universally accepted order.

HINT: In any dictionary the words across the top
show the first and last words on a page. Use these words
to locate the page your word is on rather than going
up/down columns. This will speed up the word search.

HINT: Read explanations of Guidelines, Symbols,
Abbreviations, etc. that are given to help you further
understand the words.

HINT: In learning the alphabet, there are several
patterns that will help you locate the words. The lamed,
mem, nun are in the middle of the alphabet as are their L,
M, N counterparts in the Roman alphabet.

HINT: There are sets of sequential letters that sound
alike—pey-fey, khes-tos, kof-khaf, shin-sin, and tof-sof.

HINT: Know the half dozen letters that are found
only in words of Hebrew origin.

HINT: More words start with aleph than any other
letter.

HINT: Learn the common prefixes and suffixes.

HINT: The YIVO standard orthography is the most
widely accepted method of spelling Yiddish words.

- One of the best programs is "What is the Yiddish Word
for..." This can be altered so that you give the Yiddish
word and ask for a synonym or meaning.
- Spelling Bees can be done in Yiddish (using the yidish
oysyes) or using transliteration, using our Roman alphabet.
- Themes periodically can be selected using the lists on
Der Bay's web site or in Coldoff's Dictionary. You can have
sessions based on various areas, such as:

Animals
Colors
Family Relationships
Flowers
Foods
Fruits
Geography
Music
Occupations
Parts of the Body
Plants
Short Common Words
Sound the Same Y-E
Spelled the Same Y-E
Time
Vegetables
Verbs
Weather
Translation of Yizkor Books into English
By Jack Berger <jack.berger@citcorp.com>

I am writing as part of an eclectically put together audience, regarding the issue of translating Yizkor Books from (largely) Yiddish and Hebrew into English. This message comes shortly after an interesting meeting I had with Mark Swiatlo, Curator of Judaica, at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, on Friday, July 28, 2000.

The background to my meeting with Mark stems from my interest in providing an English version of the histories of those towns and cities from which my ancestors came. I am vitally interested in assuring that future generations of my family in North America, will not encounter a language barrier, if their interests drive them to seek a better understanding of their roots and origins. It manifests an implied concern, on my part, that Yiddish is in danger of being marginalized, and relegated to the domain of a shrinking pool of scholar-specialists.

Mark was able to provide me with a larger perspective on the issue, and challenged me to address the concern on his mind that was raised by my individual initiative. While he is in complete sympathy with what I am doing, endeavors of my kind are not central to his immediate professional priority. Mark is primarily a zamler, a collector of original texts. In this sense his concerns are most closely aligned with those of Dr. Aaron Lansky at the National Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA. His only foray into translation relates to the 7,300 pages of eyewitness testimony of Holocaust survivors that he is in the process of retrieving from Poland (the so-called "Voice from the Ashes" program).

Mark is concerned that singular efforts such as mine, and those of other individuals operating in similar isolation, do not address the larger task. He estimates that there are perhaps a thousand such Holocaust Yizkor books, of which he believes the most complete collection to be at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, Israel. He thinks he has about half of this body at his repository in Florida.

The question posed by Mark is a matter of concern. Do we know if there is a concerted, global, effort to render this body of work into English? The question is not meant to be linguistically parochial, but does take cognizance of the fact that English is emerging as a global lingua franca. Do we know how many of these books have been, or are being translated as we sit today?. If so: where is the focal point, and how do we know it receives adequate resources? If not: is this an issue that we, as a world community should be concerned about? In other words, does the imperative to preserve ongoing access to this historical record command some sort of priority that perhaps has been overlooked to date?

I found these questions to be provocative and meaningful. I have little knowledge of eprogramming in this area. I am aware that the JewishGen.org web site provides a focal point for such efforts, but the initiative comes from individuals. I told Mark that I would create a dialogue around this matter, and certify that there was a need, prior to entertaining the question of financial and intellectual resources to address this challenge.

I would appreciate your thoughts, and would encourage you to forward this message to all those people whom you believe can add value to the give-and-take of this project.

TYN Contact in Sweden
Ir fregt vos tut zikh in shevindn in undzer ek velt. Vegn yidishen ken ikh aykh dertseyln az di shevindishem melukhe hot onerents yidish az a minoritet-shprakh in shevind. S'zit nit faran a sakh yidin in shevind vos redn yidish, in gants shevind iz nor faran arum 15000-20000 yidin vos men veys, un fun zey farshleyt efshe 3000 yidish, 1500 kenen reydn yidish, 1000 kenen leynen yidish un 500 shraybn. S'zit nit a sakh ober mir hofn az es vet zikh ist endern.

S'zit faran az interes, vi ikh hob derzen a az a leter fun yidish. Ihk hob gefirt a kurs mit 16 talmidim. S'zit nit azoy laykh mit yidishes kursn. Me zogt az men vil zikh oyslernen yidish, az men vyest gornnicht, ober nokh a vayl farsh'teyt men az di merste taldimen kenen mer ve zey aleyn visn. Men hot gehert yidish in der heym un hot gegleybt az men hot kimat als fargen, ober dos shtsimit nit. S'zit epes a yidishen gen in di glider vos kumt aroyos in a vayl! Un der leter iz getsvungen tus pravn konversatsye.


Ikh hob oykh aroyosgebn a sakh bikker vos hot tsu mit Holocaust. Lemoshb a klei bikhl vos hot geshibn Mala Maroko Freund, vegn Lodzer geto. S'zit 70 zaytn mit fotografes. Mala hot ibergleibet dem geto. Itr bikhln iz banutst in a sakh shuln do in shevind ven men dertseyln vegn Holocaust. Dos material iz oykh faran in a manuskript in english un ikh zukhn an amerikander farlegeray. Ken emetser mi helfn gefin a farlegeray vos iz interesert fun dem bikhl? Lennart Kerbel, Bromna, Sweden,Kerbel@megilla.se

A Special Musical Project from Israel
Golden Peacock <aviv_light@inter.net.il>

We wish to introduce Songs Hand-Hammered in Copper- a musical homage to traditional Jewish music and to the Yiddish Culture. We are brothers, Aviv Livnat (guitarist, vocalist), and Ariek Livnat (saxophonist), grandsons of Arieh Merzer, whose hand hammered copper reliefs commemorate Jewish folk-village-scene in Eastern Europe.

Our performance includes songs in Yiddish written by Itsik Manger (who was a close friend of Merzer), Gebirg, and tunes like "Di Goldene Pave", "Rabbi Elimelech", and more. We revive these melodies in a dialogue with music, while our Grandfather's reliefs are projected on a large screen.

Arik played for President Clinton during his visit to Israel, and was invited to play at the White House. He also has performed with Stevie Wonder. We recently returned from a concert tour in Poland.

Please put us in touch with people or organizations who would be interested in our programme.
Aviv and Arik Livnat, tel + fax: 972-3-5467246
3 Birinbaum st. Tel Aviv 62302 Israel
www.goldenpeacock.com
The Art of Yiddish
December 17-29, 2000
UCLA Extension & Yiddishkayt Los Angeles

An exciting new Yiddish program is to be started in Los Angeles. It is the first time that any such ambitious endeavor has been undertaken on the West Coast.

Program Coordinator, Miriam Koral, is the Yiddish Lecturer at UCLA and Director of the California Institute for Yiddish Language and Culture of Yiddishkayt Los Angeles. Yiddishkayt LA is the group that coordinates the largest Yiddish events on the West Coast.

LANGUAGE LEVELS

Yiddish I Complete Beginners
Basic reading, writing, and conversation skills

Yiddish II Advanced Beginners
Yiddish grammar, reading, and conversation for students with knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet and some language skills

Yiddish III Intermediate
Exploration in Yiddish literature and advanced grammar and conversation for students with moderate reading, writing, and conversation skills

Yiddish IV Advanced
Exploration in Yiddish literature and advanced grammar and conversation for students with good reading, writing and speaking skills

LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS

Pesakh Fiszman, Jewish Theological Seminary of NY
Henia Lewin, U of Mass., National Yiddish Book Center
Sheynid Liberman, University of Judaism and UCLA
Yakob Basner, Arbeter Ring & Beverly H.S. Adult Ed.

Highlights of Yiddish Theater
A multimedia lecture series by the theater director and authority on Yiddish theater, Sabell Bender—in English.

Living Yiddish Theater
Experience Yiddish theater first-hand by participating in a workshop series by Eleanor Reissa, Tony-nominated director and co-artistic director of Folksbiene Yiddish Theater. For all levels of proficiency and fluency, the workshop culminates in a staged performance—in Yiddish and English.

Afternoon Tea with Sholem Aleichem
Performance lecture on the greatest Yiddish luminary Sholem Aleichem, given by celebrated Yiddish stage actor Jacob Lewin—in English and Yiddish.

Yiddish Cinema between Two Worlds
A film odyssey and lecture series by Sharon Pucker Rivo, co-founder and Executive Director, National Center for Jewish Film, and Adjunct Associate Professor Brandeis University.

Kaleidoscope of Classic Yiddish Theater as Portrayed on Film. Evening screening of Yiddish cinema include:

Tevye: Maurice Schwartz, Director
Based on a staged version of Sholem Aleichem’s classic work, 1939 (Participants are asked to view “Fiddler on the Roof” on video in advance for comparison.)

Grine Felder: Edgar Ulmer & Jacob Ben-Ami, Directors
Based on a play by Peretz Hirschbein, 1937

Got, Mentsh, un Tayvl: Joseph Seiden, Director
Based on a play by Jacob Gordin, 1949

Yankl der Shmid: Edgar Ulmer, Director
Based on a play by David Pinski, 1938

All films are in Yiddish with English subtitles

SONGS

Eleanor Reissa, International Performer

YIDDISH EXPRESSIONS

Michael Wex, Internationally known scholar & humorist

Historical and Local Context

Professor Eli Katz, U.C. Berkeley
Lilke Majnsner, Pres., Los Angeles Yiddish Culture Club

GUIDED TOURS

Skirball Jewish Cultural Center
Gatti Center
Historical Jewish Areas of Los Angeles

For additional program information call 310-206-9029 or 310-396-5212

The program will be held at the:
Double Tree Guest Suites
1707 Fourth Street
Santa Monica, California 90401

For Hotel Reservations call 800-222-8733 or 310-395-3332. The Hotel rates are $90 for single room and $120 for a double room. Be sure to mention the Yiddish Program.

To receive college credits for the course (Jewish Studies X 405, 4 Units), one must register in one of the intensive Yiddish Language classes, attend related afternoon lectures and events, and complete all written language assignments and a cultural project. The fee is 650 for a single, 1200 for a couple and 350 for full-time students with ID. To enroll by phone use a major credit card and 310-825-9971 or 818-784-7006.

An online enrollment form can be requested at https://www.uclaextension.org/catalog/EntryForm.cfm?Reg= %27%27
Leon Levitt Raises an Interesting Point
Leon Levitt <llevitt@mediaone.net>

Although not specifically mentioned, Yiddish is clearly a language whose possible loss would be deplorable. Here (below) is major scholarly evidence of the tremendous need to continue actively to promote and to teach both the written and the spoken language, in all of its many permutations. It is noteworthy, for example, that while the written form of Polish, Russian, and Lithuanian Yiddish is the same in Hebrew characters, it is also the same in the YIVO transliterations which are based phonetically on the Polish pronunciation. Unless the spoken language of other accents is somehow preserved, as the native speakers are lost, their accents will be lost forever unless audio-recorded by oral historian/linguistic scholars. I wonder whether that is being done. Der Bay is the perfect venue for raising that question; if the finding is negative, Der Bay can help to initiate such study.


Will the World's "Small Languages" Survive?

Earl Shorris, a contributing editor [of the Chronicle], examines the question of which languages are likely to survive. He cites linguist Michael Krauss, director of the Alaska Native Language Center, who says that in the next century as many as 3,000 languages will die.

Mr. Shorris notes that English, a language rich with stolen words, will ultimately lose some of its vitality if less-used languages die. "English, as it is generally spoken, seems to be losing more words than it gains," he writes. "You need only look at the thin thesaurus that came with your word-processing program to see how the English language is losing its internal diversity." Mr. Shorris goes into scenes of intense conversation in other languages, visiting a conclave of Alaskan Yup'ik speakers who talk about starting a course in their language and lore. He also briefly visits the history of Eyak, another Alaskan language. Only one speaker is left in all of the world.

"Neither T.S. Eliot nor Claude Levi-Strauss knew how the world would end, but the last speaker of Eyak knows: it will end in silence," Mr. Shorris writes. Although scholars were once content to catalog words as they were lost, they have now learned to mourn the passing of various tongues.

"Anthropologists and, until quite recently, most linguists have been content to embalm the dead, preparing languages for the file cabinet and the museum," Mr. Shorris writes. "This killing of a language happens exactly as one would expect: the weak must speak to the strong in the language of the strong. Eventually, the language of the weak loses its utility, except for secrets and the making of ill-fated rebellions." But every language has its unique beauty and encompasses a unique, irreplaceable world.

Mr. Shorris writes. "There are nine different words in Maya for the color blue in the comprehensive Portrú Spanish-Maya Dictionary but just 3 Spanish translations, leaving six butterflies that can be seen only by the Maya, proving beyond doubt that when a language dies six butterflies disappear from the consciousness of the earth."

Yiddish Culture and Education
The Workmen's Circle/Arbeter Ring Statement

Education that fosters Jewish cultural literacy is a cornerstone of the development of Jewish identity and of committed participation in Jewish peoplehood—the major goals expressed in the mission statement of The Workmen's Circle. Such identity and participation, in turn, form the strongest defense against the cultural dilution that affects the American Jewish community. For these reasons, it advocates life-long Jewish learning and family education, since these link parents, grandparents and children and reinforce an inter-generational sense of shared history and identity.

Such Jewish education should encompass:

- Worldwide Jewish history from Biblical times to the present.
- Ethics and social justice within a framework of Jewish values.
- Jewish holidays and traditions as cultural practices.
- Jewish, especially Yiddish, literature and music in the original languages and/or in translation.
- Yiddish language instruction and an awareness of the history and contemporary usage of Jewish languages including Hebrew and Ladino.

Yiddish, the vehicle for the transmission of a thousand-year Ashkenazic Jewish heritage, and the language of one of the major literacy treasures of world civilization, is a strong link with the generations of our parents and grandparents. Though it is challenging to develop fluency, we believe that it is both possible and desirable to forge meaningful and lasting connections with Yiddish literature, language, and music.

As a Jewish membership and cultural organization, The Workmen's Circle fosters Yiddish, using Yiddish in communications, publications and activities, teaching Yiddish in our shule system, and creating and sponsoring Yiddish cultural programs, activities and events. We are committed to strengthening our system with curriculum and policy guidelines that provide a basis for teaching Jewish cultural literacy as well as the values of freedom, friendship, solidarity and social Justice. We foster values of freedom, friendship, solidarity and social justice. We strengthen our ties and exchange information and ideas with like-minded organizations.

The goal of strengthening our educational activities hinges on an expanded funding base. We must build our development activity, both within the organization and with outside sources, reaching out to secure financial support from cultural foundations, individual donors and government sources. We especially urge that Jewish federations recognize the important contributions made by The Workmen's Circle schools and other secular Jewish schools and we call upon them to help fund these schools as they do other 36 Jewish communal schools.

We commit resources to maintain and strengthen the Jewish (especially Yiddish) cultural treasures, which are our legacy. Zol lebn Yidish!

Workmen's Circle, 45 E. 33rd St. NY, NY 10016
New Yaffa Yarkoni Classic Yiddish CD Release

Special Offer to Readers of Der Bay: $12.98 includes shipping IN THE US*** The classic recording, *Rumania, Rumania-Sahra Sings Yiddish* by Israeli Superstar Yaffa Yarkoni now on compact disc. This out-of-print classic by Israel's most famous artist has arrangements by Glenn Osser, one of the most talented arranger-conductors in the music industry, who arranged many "Gold Records" for Johnny Mathis. Miss Yarkoni performs such traditional songs such as *Pepirosh, Ikhn Hob Dikh Tshu Lib*, and *Mamele*. Visa & Mastercard, Ph. 323-655-7083
Web site: www.hatikvahmusic.com, Hatikvah Music, Simon Rutberg, Los Angeles, CA

Jewish Festival in Vilnius
From: "DPN" <dpn@takas.lt>

Old Vilnius culture and art foundation in cooperation with the Vilnius Yiddish Institute with Mendy Cahan, director of the Vilnius Program in Yiddish, we have organized a Jewish Culture Festival in Vilnius for November 23-26, 2000. It will be the first such festival in Lithuania. There will be three concerts: Choral, Hasidic, and Klezmer. In addition we shall have exhibitions, films and lectures. Invitations will be extended to musicians and artists from Israel, United States, Poland, Russia and Lithuania.

E-mail requests for more information to: "DPN" <dpn@takas.lt>
Kazimieras Andriuskevich, Dir. Jewish Culture Festival

Yiddish Poet Alter Esselin's Web Site
By Joseph Esselin josephesselin@email.ms.com

I have put together the bitter-sweet lyrical beauty of the lifetime work of my father Alter Esselin. I remember that you expressed an awareness of his work, but I hope that now that "awareness" will be transformed to a much richer appreciation for the depth and power of his extraordinary, yet highly accessible work.

The web site has 77 of his hundreds of published poems in translation into English and the Yiddish originals. You can fully enjoy the poetry (since no translation can do justice to true poetry). Also there is a gallery of pictures devoted to his life, a concise biographical memoir with commentary by several well-known Yiddish literary critics, and a sound track of Alter Esselin reading his poetry in English and Yiddish. The web site is at: http://www.esselin.com

A literarishe frase

Fun velkhe fun Peretz's pyhes hot men aroysegenumen Di Tsvey Brider. In zayne gezamelete arbet gefint men nisht kayn dermonung vengn di Tsvey Brider. Peretz hot take geshribn a kleyn poemele mitt titl Tsvey Brider ober dos iz nit vos ikh zukh. Marvin Zukerman un Marion Herbst, in zayer drier band vengn di dray klassiker fun undzer literatur giben aber an iberzetsum geshildert af eynglish fun Joseph Leftwich, ober vayzn nisht fun velkhe gresere pyese dos iberzetsum iz genumen. Gerry (Yankel) Kane, gerry.kane@sympatico.ca

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