

why the signs are all in Russian - no money to replace them!

Even the Karzites are trying to leave for Israel

[Sandler from Tarbut School in Vilna puts out Yiddish self-taught; 1st 30,000 copies disappeared at once; 2nd ed. 70,000: recited ייִדיש to Bialik]

Conversation w/ Misha: his children out school 1/2 week; total loss of control; must teach them at home; full of lit. plans, to translate ^{Back to the sources} Perquin Book, etc.

- domestic flights: attendants stuy up front, do absolutely nothing, turn out the lights & leave the plane 1st! radio blasting
- Arkady Monastirsky & sidekick pick me up; A. full of beers
- pick up on R. Goren's & Carlsoch's very young wives; Goren very stingy
- seem to be flooded w/ visitors lately; hurt by displacement of Yiddish
- tonight opening of Osher Shvartsman Library; various "Ensembles"
- speak very broken Yiddish; obviously have no idea how to run a cultural institution
- no trad. of self-help, voluntarism, organizations
- Misha says this is typical of Ukraine, but I doubt it
- won't get to see Chernin who's leaving on the 10th
- impossible to get on any int-flight
- Chernin used to be an actor-director; some repertoire 20-70 yrs ago: פר 13 מיל 3.11 ל, 200,000, פריה פריש מירון; Chernin turned letter into pro-Zionist play (here in Kiev!)

old
rep.

(wonderful dream about sliding on the ice; crying over lost childhood of snow woke up thinking abt Sutcler & how he could switch landscapes)

- Fishman's tale of horrors: no one awaited him; finally got turn to Chernin who found him a hotel room at 4 in the morning
- let me in w/out checking: only 2 same categories as in West: decide or not
- ~~very~~ very reminiscent of Israel except that here people work even less
- no security or fear of theft at internal airport; people leave their bags unattended
- couldn't get a cart w/out rubles but couldn't get rubles until I got out!
- (TV is on all over the house constantly) - Peysach had his cosmetics bag stolen at airport

Peysach's hostess takes us for a walk around town (Nesya-Anna)

- shows us the areas destroyed by Red Army before their retreat & the new buildings that Krushchov ordered built - but then he objected to the fancy ornaments!
- she shows us the building on the Kreshchatik where the whole balcony collapsed when the State decides to replace the tiles on the columns - no liability insurance here!
- dangling electrical wires, huge pot holes, open construction sites no safety standards to speak of
- she is a retired doctor, quite educated w/ wonderful sense of humor
- we visit SA's house on Kromozarmeyshka but it's boarded up
- ubiquitous lines for very little food
- gold store is empty - all the goods bought up
- fur hats cannot be bought for love or \$

Shloyme Kolikov b. 1947 - only child; mother bought their house at end of NEP
 Arkady Monastirski b. 1961
 Boris Kinfeld - father from Zhanokoy; mother refuses to learn alef-bet (3)
 Misha Kmitkov - only child; learned grandfather
 Yasha Balzac - cabbie / journalist in Ukrainiza

- the only ones with \$ to spend are the peasants, she claims, who have stopped producing ~~many things~~ ^{sausages} that are easier to buy ready-made ∴ sausage shortage
- no fresh vegies or much fruit: Bella serves only pickled tomatoes, cucumbers, cabbage or ^{fruit} preserves
- meet Bella's daughter-in-law Susan - Shoshena's lovely granddaughter
- give her 1st pick of סוויט - presents which Susan correctly explains
- but no one knows how to play draughts - not even Boris

The Library Opening

- MC is Ukrainiza woman w/ huge head of hair
- Jews very obsequious to Ukrainians; much talk about their ^{happy} coexistence
- Levitzo is the Old Guard Communist who glowers & can only say 1 Yid. sentence
- Buchbinder reads from his poems & his side-kick doesn't even know which lang to speak in - obviously chooses Russian; older ones love to talk
- Shipiro presents them w/ 4 vols. of Kritkya Encyclopedia
- 1 man reads his Russian poems by heart
- kind of town ~~hall~~ ^{hall} atmosphere of diff. people standing up to speak
- beginning to see the generational fault: younger people either self-conscious or defiant while older is too scared to really seize the day
- haven't yet seen an Esther Markish type
- vast majority have never seen G.S. סוויט lit before
- even presidium doesn't know that str candle = shames; nervously wants to light them himself at very beginning; probably worried what the geyim might think
- older men sport their war decorations (even in shul) while younger ones display Heb/Yid. badges

- old rep.
- גדולי'ם perform 1/13, 11/20 9:00-11:00 : 13/12'1 & 11/13'1
 - present noa lme w/ roses & New Years card & then go wild over the gifts
 - rep, for some reason, the flags (because it's so obviously a ntl. symbol?)
 - donate most of my books (that I haven't already given Misha) to library
 - art work includes mod. sketches of Bergelson, Markish, Feffer

- old rep.
- they, like us, feeding off clichés and the remains of 50 yrs. ago
 - man who stands up w/ long memoir to make passionate speech
 - children also declaim something patriotic abt סוויט tho no one has ever done it!
 - later hear Zionists fault the library for not displaying Israeli materials

Meeting at Pedagogical Institute

- get there hr late because Kuperberg brings an English-speaking Jew terrified about not being able to get an apt. I make the mistake of giving him Renz's name
- Misha & Shloyme are waiting for us; Kuperberg unbelievably obsequious to the director; she, in turn, trying very hard to impress us.
- wants us to drink champagne; disappointed when we insist on tea
- runs a very tight ship; sharp Zdrastvuyte to a girl who didn't greet her 1st
- about to retire but looks 15 yrs. younger
- "Today everything is possible" - incl. Hebrew / Yiddish
- we visit Russian lit, Ukrainian folkways party; computer room; natural history & esp. the choir: at informal party sing no love lament but she insists that it's too sad; if reflects a gloomy past; so then they sing something lively; choir sings Black spiritual, pronouncing Jesus with a "Y" - favorite English-lang writers are Jack London, Dreiser & Isaac Asimov
- the fantastic push for Ukrainian - create textbooks for all subjects
- not the mother tongue of many students
- (my God, what Yid could have had w/ Stalinist regime behind it!)
- director gives us 2 extremely expensive books
- we are emissaries from America who will perhaps provide the computers they need
- she reminds me of Gurdun - terrific rapport w/ teachers & students
- likes to believe that everything is run democratically, that educ. is unpuzzled of change
- but what impresses us is discipline, shining faces, naivete', group effort, the terrific desire to please
- the whole meeting was set up for sake of Kuperberg's son, to get him exempted for our seminar; how his face shone when I mentioned his son to the director
- how reminiscent of SA's /65-66- /62/5-16
 ys p"ns ps!! oqv (w: neither Pepsakh nor I could understand what our meeting had already effected
- Misha not nearly so impressed by her as we were
- for him, our pedagogy is far superior - dynamic, creative, imagination
- "each longs for what his lacking": we for discipline, he for indiv. creativity
- here educ. is standardized (Shloyme's report due on Dec 31: length predetermined)
- if Kuperberg didn't need to submit a detailed plzm, we would never have set down to do it!

old rep.

Dream Book

- most intense dreams I have ever had in my life
- New Year's Night about cross/throaties: centers on Borukh: when I hear a young academic trouncing him I burst out crying; overhear a medical discussion between him & Anne; went for a certain juice test to another hospital because the one we're in refused to administer it; nurse is reading Swedish transl. of ? ~~The~~ Green Aquarium?
- most dreams happen at Pagnuelo: the people living at the Feiffers have a beautiful crippled daughter; parade at the Ferron's driveway; I'm explaining my dreams to someone while Shira goes off jogging somewhere; see a ^{sad} nude woman go off to her room; when I follow her there it turns out there's already a man in her bed. He comes to taunt me w/ leather jacket later but I swear to Shira that "nothing transpired between me /that woman." I have just returned home from Russia to Artych & his kid brother.
- the new metro opening triggered an association w/ Seminary: bulldozers clearing a path so whole faculty has to "evacuate"; Ismar is right behind me
- night before last I dream not seeking solace from Eva but her bed was empty. Found her lying between parents, the father was on mother's side of the bed; when she pulled off her nightgown, she had a small penis.
- another dream abt having my wallet stolen; Michel Alpert fishes it out of a crowd in full view of everyone, then returns \$1500 wet bills.

Thurs

- Incredible dream about father perhaps prompted by episode in class when 1 elderly man wanted to recall his mother if he had the power of "שאלה ופירוש"
- were walking together (in Pagnuelo?) & he's confiding a story about his best friend Helle who taught him to be in touch w/ feelings, to open up: I am astonished to hear my father talking this way. We came to the Minyan (archetypal!) & the conversation continues in public, only now someone else (Judy Pepper?) will demonstrate how Helle taught my father "how to touch the water." She is dumsy. Has to stand on 1 foot & turn around & can't quite do it, but everyone is very interested.
 - then we begin reading a Warsaw ghetto chronicle - somehow connected to him.
 - the person reading can only read the Polish but not the Yiddish: how women had to wear ugly distinguishing headaddresses & people slept in 12-yr shifts. The morning (or evening) shifts had to be roused & kicked out of bed, forced to work through time.
 - I thought how could one film these women - no hollywood producer would do it - but maybe by the uprising they fought w/ free-flowing hair
 - inspired by this reading in Polish, some Minyan members - led by Mike Broder - get up to sing the Hazonim Hymn in Polish. I laugh nervously. So other minyan members - not former Hazonim-niks also stand up in solidarity - and I think in silent protest to my laughter. Dad then gets up to leave & I follow him out
 - but we sit down on a hill instead, overlooking the minyan. So 2 new members came running after me thinking I left in protest. I decide to go back for shoyt but wake up before I can.

Russian Manners

- speech differentiation analogous to Britain's only Misha claims that Moscow speech is liability in part circles - all bureaucrats came from the provinces & distrust Moscow - Leningrad speech
- educated standard created by Moscow Art Theater
- everyone is an amateur sociologist of lang.
- Shloyne claims you can recognize a Jew's speech by his diction & correctness
- Breghner made countless mistakes & many jokes circulated abt them
- even Gorbachev mis-accents certain words & gov't officials imitate his mistakes
- diff. dialects of Ukrainian, too, of course

Jewish Politics

- Misha can understand the Yevsektzia: give these Jews absolute powers & they'd kill their competitors
- incredible proliferation of groups & splinters
- פ'ינאן און צייע is run by a totalitarian → now abt to split into 6/7 parts
- Kottlyarsky started his own called Lurie
- aided & abetted from abroad because Israelis/Americans want to feel imp while local officials are getting rich & hope it will help them in their bid to immigrate
- Poytsel says he can now understand JA's (י"ג) און ארבע : when you're powerless, you talk and talk and talk
- but Ukrainian journalism is much more flowery than Russian
- ∴ there's a string to say, you might as well liver it up!
- Arkady's report in Birobidzhaner Sktern bears this out
- Vergelis was always an enemy of Biro.; now they're readying an indictment against him; once escaped thru a window when his brother came to visit
- hilarious anecdotes abt similarity in phone numbers
- imagine imagine their surprise when Misha answers - in Yiddish - that they have the wrong number! Answers guess abt the holidays
- SH kind of Jew club where Jews came to shoot the breeze, find out abt Israel consulate & discuss immigration
- Misha defends Vergelis's literary sensibility: SH only source for Jew. art
- Bank in Ufa ^{Vostok} paid 800 ~~roubles~~ to rent hall where Congress took place (Mufti owns the bank)
- everyone in Uzbek region desperate to leave: Russians & Jews alike
- new hypsterz now to get into Hebrew classes
- seldom go beyond אפון א"ק
- you can earn handsome income teaching Hebrew: 5 mkles / 3 hrs.
- even the NKVD Hebrew specialists coming into their own!
- break-way Shy in Kiev to fight Levitas - how he was shouted off stage in Moscow

folklore

Trip to Boyarka New Years Day 1990

- 1/2 hr train ride which we could never have negotiated on our own
- trains are no frills, no smoking, probably no bathrooms either
- finding a bathroom almost as hard as finding a restaurant
- yesterday in the Bazaar, today at the train station;
- now you have to pay for it, too, from 10-15 kop.
- the Boyarka dachas on rich side of town (Karl Marx St) are quaint enough otherwise there's only the steam engine of the legendary train, 1st to be built after Rev.
- Lenin is ubiquitous; his statue towers over train station, too



Boris brings Poyarko's incredibly heavy box

- feels as if he were an Israeli living in USSR: knows that the colors here are grey & brown but that צבעוני represents the rainbow
- vivid recollection of foreign delegations visiting Pioneer Camp - how the children all jumped at the tape recorder that was discarded
- analogy to the dreidel I brought that are all the rage of Kiev
- but pleads w/ us to distribute what we have =ly among the seminarians
- when he wanted to buy a single rose instead of a whole bouquet, accused of being an American
- summers spent in far north near Virkuta kayaking w/ wife & daughter
- his 2 dictionaries: Yiddish-Russian pieced together & bound from SH supplement; Russian-Yiddish from Moscow 1941!
- his article in no. 2 ИЛС-ОНЕУ about creating a Kiev Yiddish Theater w/out teachers
- impossibility of reading classical writers even w/old-times because of their abysmal ignorance of Hebrew & traditions.
- Jude: how it took 17 yrs to move from 1 end of Kreshčatik → other (new Lenin Monument vs. Old)
- Yzovarsky, one of my addressees: he'll know about impending program 2 days before it happens
- (Mishz tells us that ~~most~~ ^{many} Ukrainian writers grew up in shtetlekh & speak fluent Yiddish; some even went to kid. schools, since there weren't any others!)

Mishz laments the demise of Museums of Atherism - all the Jew. objects are being discarded & dispersed

"I feel as if I were in a time machine, thrust back to circa 1905. Hotted debates about the Lang. Ques., the Nationalities Ques., the Immigration Question, the Zionist Question."

- Brand: don't discuss Jew business in presence of goyim - so how emancipated are they?

library

cannot assimilate Merger → but very responsive to Hupeny
Sutclaver

Yiddish Lit. - 0/11/6 1/65

I learned more abt Yid lit than they did

- 1) illusion of power more demoralizing than total powerlessness
- 2) speech as surrogate for action - SA
- 3) the shetlechs are not colorful - they are drab & everywhere the same: Lenin-Mark & Tolstoy → must be prettified for literary consumption
- 4) פֿאַר אַ גוטן זאך is the literal condition
- 5) fantastic proliferation of jokes
- 6) SA did well to die in NYC - before the Rev.
- 7) how politics governed the "production" of mod. Yid. lit - created a crippled culture - never has a lit. so failed its people.
- 8) Shloyme Kolikov & the Kulbok Connection - the strength of family history - clan as tribe
- 9) Levitas & Bergelson's פֿ'סן - אַ'ס'ן: these are now the people whom everyone hates yet they still wield power; those Ukrainians who fawned on Stalin are now at the very top, while those Jews who did the same are mostly dead
- 10) I. B. Singer & the madness of memory - Gershman's daughter who "saw everything" - the whole housing complex of writers, journalists, scholars arrested 1 by one; the poet, the bard, the indifferent. Children born in the Gulag - others expelled from home/school; expert in Ukrainian art whose own son is an artist or Jew. motifs but walks around w/ ghosts in her head
- 11) Heard a Father's monologue almost identical to אַ'ס'ן/א'ס'ן except that the son had to free the music all alone - ended up in Tomsk (Siberia) - same sequence of Institute (in Odessa) followed by night school + daytime work only to face a Ukrainian אָב'ל - too proud to sell himself short, he insulted her before the other examiners
- 12) Now appreciate Lebedev even more - found myself whistling Odes just to fight off my depression - outrageous dagger to ward off the ~~tears~~ emptiness
- 13) no precedent for discussion of burial - cf. פּוּבליקאַציע פֿון אַ בוך פֿון אַ זאָלדאַט
- 14) the hottest seats in town are for Ukrainian production of Teyge → impassioned plea for peaceful coexistence; this land belongs to us all very graphic scene of ~~the~~ ^{chaos} conversion; lively wedding scene, but not of Teyge sitting אַ'ס'ל
- 15) Sutclaver's אַ'ס'ן/א'ס'ן & אַ'ס'ן אַ'ס'ן אַ'ס'ן אַ'ס'ן: Sunday morning at Babi-Yar where they wouldn't let us mourn; at night opening of Israeli video library
- 16) Bundist - אַ'ס'ן/א'ס'ן vs. Zionist insurgency but who represents the middle ground - Jew. culture in Russian? Only Shloyme spoke thereof.
- 17) Arkady אַ'ס'ן/א'ס'ן - protecting Levitas
- 18) Ansley could have been writing for them - totally ignorant

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- bought sweet bread for N/A, Balzac supplied white tablecloth & wine
- we meet here & go to shul together by trolly
- Mark from Sverdlosk very solicitous towards me though he cannot make himself understood
- Riva from Odessa is in her element: incredibly fluent & mellifluous Yiddish
- claims that in their shul it's packed w/ young people
- could never invite people / foreigners to their table
- in shul sit next to Yitshok & ascertain that he doesn't have his own פֿאַר
- put them ^{on} only once in Moscow shul
- meet young Stoliner hasid who's come w/ wife until noon - excellent Yiddish
- צי 316 זען זיך בעזען ו/סמילען
- our group walks back led by Arkady - serenade Regyl from Lemberg w/ songs
- trying hard to ward off the emptiness, the impending doom?
- abt 25 people have assembled: the moment I enter someone says: "You see these people? In 10 yrs not 1 of them will still be here."
- the muscular man w/ chestful of medals is a Kivite from Podol who stepped foot in ~~the~~ shul tonight for 1st time in his life!
- later led us in 1 of the folk songs
- Liba Pyevska tells me that '52-1161; 113" & Levitas: how he chased down their meeting place - a coop. restaurant - because owner let him have it: wanted the '52 to buy it from him for 60,000 rubles & turn it into theirs; how Levitas was chased off the stage in Moscow; a former gym teacher who surrounds himself w/ yes-men -> Liba formed break-away group last week!
- also comments on destruction of Podol - ~~was~~ caught on very late that tree should be preserved
- after kiddush, cake, apples & cookies - start singing: some common repertoire
- זיך-פֿאַרמאכען, דאָס-וואָס זײַנען, זײַן דיס נאָר; אױף'ן פֿיר יאָר (1945)
- Liba sings incredible solos - great performer; recites Shikl Driz by heart
- פֿון אַרײַן זײַן זײַן is still a favorite: she (Riva) do a kind of top-of-war
- Rekhmiel very sad that I don't have tefillin for him
- זיך 316 זען זיך אױף ברינגט די האַנד דאָרף און מיין שױן ציצלען ווען איך פֿרױן זינגען אָדער; אױף לײַב האָט ער ער האָרד עס - פֿון אַ ~~דער~~ פּיפּאָרטע הױל. פֿילם
- local woman Miriam starts dancing a hora; even wrote a poem in our honor
- Yelena (who is probably exhausted herself) reminds everyone that it's time to leave
- Boruch knows a few more songs - from the theater
- when everyone leaves, Shelya Gartsman comes w/ her tale of horrors
- I can barely hold back my tears, though I need Pysulch to translate songs used
- total disappearance of a culture: tremendous outpouring of emotion at end, Pysulch thanks to us for our personal support

quote

old rep.

89
17
72

Leviny Russia

① Fzgrade of feverish activity

- library opening; video library opening
- 1st Yiddish seminar in Ukraine since 1939
- Teyge in Ukrainian; Mazl-tov in Yiddish - successful run of two plays
- "572-166, v.1." now occupying former NKVD building together w/ Ukrainian cultural center which (originally Yiddish Pedagogic Institute)
- ~~ongoing~~ 27 toglaw of Moscow conf.
- Yiddish smizdat from Moscow
- new dictionary, self-teacher, 3/2/91 ~~is~~ - actually something worth reading
- fantastic proliferation of smizdat - Tzmitdat in SH
- ambitious plans for publishing new books, journals R&K
- Evangelical group performs at Lenin Square

② ~~Markov~~ Seminar

- Collected concerts, Israeli musicians, benefits
- Yiddish theater, ensembles
- pins, pins, pins! Full
- elementary school in 1991

SA in Kiev

- close mj/like rrs running in SH
- 3/11 10 p.m. 3 still a performance
- Teyge in Ukrainian
- how fortunate to have died when he did!
- everything getting replayed

Leviny

- Chenin
- Karzites

34 yrs. old 34 ארבעים וארבע

- how a Soviet-made food-processor-juicer works
- terrible shortage ("deficit" - most oft-used word) of ~~best~~ infant clothes & wares
- men w/ special coupons have to line up three night before
- want accept invitation to Columbia because he's planning to leave in 2 yrs.
- prints pos. picture of Levitas - he's responsible for the seminar; got official clearance
- theme of Hebraists knowing it all
- discovered his goal at Bar-Ilan Seminar: to teach Yiddish in Israel!

26 yrs. old

- Lenz looks much younger than him but they've already been married 7 yrs.
- funny description of a red-faced fat Soviet butcher - he'll give you meat w/less bones & will save the spleen for Borschts
- gave up Yiddish theater when he realized (a) that he wasn't prof. quality (b) there was no real future in it

lib

- his tremendous admiration for Veld Chernia who changed his life; considers him his best friend; Chernia left him priceless books including Dobrushin's chapbook of folktales
- saw the drawings of Russian writers: exquisite book; also biop. sketches of SA
- can't send art books out of the country; can't take out any book published before 1961!
- on Sunday we go for coffee & cake to a hotel (unfortunately w/ Arkady & bride)
- then takes me to Larra where (1) woman tells us to take off our hats and (2) mother one tells us to speak Yiddish more quietly - visit real church & he is visibly shaken
- knows great deal abt Ukrainian art/culture; shows real enthusiasm for stylized folk art & for their local genius whom Picasso lauded but whose neighbors considered to be crazy
- (proud of the Gogol statue at entrance of his apt. complex)

joke

- wonderful old joke abt 2 worms sticking their heads out of the ground: what's all this brown stuff? Mud. Why do we live here? It's our Motherland!

lib.

- fabulous collection of Hebrew smizdat / tamizdat, including books w/ false publication date; oldest copy of נ"ח 9/א on very thick xerox paper -> smizdat from Kishinev, Moscow, Leningrad; ~~he~~ he, too, loved the article abt Eliyahu: to leave or not to leave. Colorful books abt Israel (vs. counter-propaganda on Biro-Bidzhan)
- newest Hebrew books (1st 2000 steps) come w/ 2 cassette tapes
- info. brochures on career opportunities in Israel - goes like hot cakes
- a teacher is a born actor: can switch roles at will
- hiking expeditions in the tundra = best opportunity for swapping stories

politics

- Yiddish: thru official channels; publish own alphabet, Uruments
- Hebrew: romance of operating underground: meeting girls in private apts
- very committed to this stance: Cultural Ministry backing them all the way
- politics of inreach to minorities even tho they're dead-in-the-wood anti-S.
- visit to Friendship Bookstore: cheapest place to buy Polish ed. of Manger, jokes, etc.

Lovie

- picked up by 2 musicians, Atele & wife. He went far north, near border w/ Finland because no Jews were admitted to local conservatory; found much better (Jew) teachers
- tomorrow should receive his permission to leave
- meeting in "bedroom suburb" of Kiev: types straight out of Warsaw ghetto uprising
- room decorated w/ fruits of Israel (what wonderful propyzandz!), USSR, poster of Israel Philharmonic & scenes of Jerusalem
- walk in Shlomo Artsi rock concert - start crying: the contrast between life/death is too overwhelming
- these young Jews are ready for anything - most know that they want to be working in their prof.
- English teacher finished intensive Heb. course 2 months ago & is now teaching others
- conduct hr-long dictation on kitchen floor: correct their spelling & handwriting
- young doctor; gym teacher (sport instructor), 03/11
- they, too, talk of "deficit" but they mean of Hebrew books, though they're the envy of the fiddishits (after all - who else has a VCR?)
- just published 2 new pocket dictionaries Russian-Hebrew; give me a grammar
- the only illegal thing is printing the price - to counteract blackmarketeers
- gives me 3rd issue of NIB31
- every Heb. activist carries books in his bag
- analogy to ghetto underground - thrust into positions of power & ultimate responsibility by virtue of being the only ones in possession of arms & organizational talent
- as the ranks thin, new leaders, less trained, rise to the fore
- Shaul = Chernin (very impressed by his group leadership skills)
Kiev Moscow
- everyone here really looks his part! (brief meeting w/ Jew. theater director in street)
- * Gov't losing revenue on exp. courses; wants to recoup thru Hebrew!

CENTRAL CASTING

- 1) ^{71/72}Levitz: Old Guard Stalinist - knows the ropes
- 2) Arkady: slightly effeminate sycophant { knows exactly where to catch on }
- 3) Balzac: bouncer, tough, bully,
- 4) Bronch/Shaul: handsome young Zionists - long haired or bearded religious types
- 5) War Veterans w/ medals
- 6) Jewish mothers w/ plenty of spunk
- 7) too few young women
- 8) Igor: only middle-generation type (straddles all groups)
- 9) Dying breed: the informer
- 10) Cast of thousands - Ukrainians, Russians

Babi-Yar

Kakay
gadost!

- recapitulate the route they walked; pass the house where they left all their belongings
- official tour guide, impeccably dressed, mouth official propaganda abt Great Patriotic War & sheds crocodile tears - goes on and on w/ rehearsed speech
- the real survivor impatient, so we are, to say Kaddish
- guide imparts no information, only slogans, clichés. Imp. to point out that after they finished w/ Jews, killed Soviet sportsmen, sailors, citizens
- Balzac doing brisk business on the side
- climb the monument steps, start shaking while reciting *le/ni li*; Peysakh leads them thru Kaddish; then sing 2 stanzas of *le/ni li* *le/ni li* that we rehearsed earlier
- finish w/ unsingable song by Vergeles abt Babi Yar
- survivor takes us roundabout route to real slaughter site
- tells us abt 237 Himmel-brigade charged w (1) digging up corpses, (2) burning them in makeshift ovens made from Jew. tombstones (3) crushing the bones (4) sifting them and (5) spreading them out w/ gravel
- chained at night & kept in underground bunker - same story as Poznan
- found keys among the corpses until 1 of them fit; when their official translator overheard that they would be shot the next day, decided to run for it
- shouted For Stalin & the Motherland & most were mowed down by machine guns
- prompted by Liba to tell story of gold coins - buried them in his prison cell when he thought his end was nigh; ~~was~~ they saved him from Gulag after the liberation
- educated man, ^{former} bookkeeper in large factory, who doesn't want to leave
- good pension, zpt., fluent in Ukrainian, Russian, Yiddish
- wants copy of Werhowski; tells me NKVD is listening to our conversation

Traveling By Taxi

- got to know the official price to judge
- private taxis only 2 yr old - used to be hounded by Police
- but virtually anyone w/ car will pick you up
- UMC couple returning to town from suburbs - dressed in furs!
- will charge you more if your accent gives you away
- altogether difficult for 2 tourist to negotiate alone
- finding 2 place to eat virtually insurmountable! let alone where to piss.

IMPORTANCE OF PINS - fantastic diversity where before only 2 Magen-David
 2 commemorative pins for Babi-Yar
 Zionists have their names in Hebrew
 Amfence, Haccubi etc.

The Library of Jew. Self-Discovery

- 1) Ancient lit - for the sake of last chap: Jew. wisdom lit
- 2) Heine - עס צו גיין ווי סאטמאר'ס פון פא"י
- 3) ~~Dictionary of Soviet Jews~~ - Fiddish 2nd of last, just before Gyps 89
- 4) Shelf of anti-S lit - read between the lines
- 5) SA "collected works" - very hard to get, only 2 editions - new 1 last yr.
- 6) Biro-bidzhan (Boruch claims they're happy there)
- 7) Lubavitch pamphlets; beautiful new Lilliput sized siddur
- 8) Holiday fold-outs, NIS: very artful - 1 uach-a-2 - postcard
- 9) Zionist pamphlets that fit into an envelope
- 10) Nothing on the Holocaust
- 11) שיעור'ן: Sholem Asch: ווילן פֿון אַרען, SA אָפֿטע סך'דיגער סאך
- 12) No ~~basic~~ basic book on Judaism
- 13) Random vols. of Aliyah Library: Dubnow's essays on Jew. nationalism - saw the complete set in Israeli Consulate (?)
- 14) No history books
- 15) Schocken Library would work perfectly here: Baer on Galut, (why are only the Zionists & Hasidim sending books & published materials? Why not Committee for the Free World? the Seminary? HUC?)
- 16) Fiddish Self-Thought; new Fiddish-Russian dictionary
- ARCHAEOLOGY { 17) ס'אָ דאַרפֿן זיך שרעקלעך פֿון 1945 - פֿונדן עס אין גראַנדמאָטער'ס האַוז
- 18) Russia-Fiddish ~~dicto~~ pocket dictionary from 1941
- 19) I.B.S. "НОСТРАННАЯ ЛИТЕРАТУРА", 1989, NH. פֿאַר אַזוי, 83 4
- 20) Dictionary of Soviet Folklore - זאַרע 6 אָדער 7 אָדער 8

Address to Teachers

9.I. 90

- George extremely well versed in local history: the scene of poets romantic liaisons
- Ukrainian mother, Russian father, Austrian grandfather
- once turned down for a Jew because of Austrian surname
- unafraid because... he has another job to fall back on
- 2 teachers have already emigrated
- only 3 women teachers (who also made eye contact) dared to ask questions
- nodded in agreement when I told about corrupting influence of Affirmative Action
- upside down version of their "Staline"
- most earnest among them said that their discrimination works along ethnic/class lines instead; parents are down-graded; she wanted to know if I ever had to hide my identity
- they are also in the throes of curriculum revision - 1st breach in Bismarckian system
- gradual intro. of electives & minority studies
- 1st gymnasium to open in Moscow, Kiev - humanistic curriculum (this had brought laughs from Natasha in Beginner's class)
- Jew black-bird from Vilna wanted to know 1st higher ed. in Israel
- fascinated by Hirsch's Cultural Literacy - recalled science component (promised to send them 2 copy)
- utterly amazed when I talked about women's studies - incredulous abt lesbian/homosexual caucuses at MLA
- one gorgeous woman challenged me: why were you so amazed to discover the poverty of Soviet Jewish/Jew. culture?
- ~~it~~ was it she who asked abt illiteracy in America?

Folklore

- As we pass Bulgarian embassy, George recalls that Kasprow was quoted in Soviet press as saying that USSR could solve its economic woes by selling Bulgaria to the Chinese
- this prompted outrage on part of the Bulgarians

George: my new lang teaching methods in America

A: Americans notorious abt learning langs; collapse of lang requirement post 69 also cannot write an essay anymore

Tevye-Telchel ~~production~~ - 3 1/2 hrs long

- 2 VIPs in front row seats; young couple bumped to the side
- we had 2nd-row seats
- excellent stage design of roof-table - ~~is~~
- ~~stage~~ = realm of the stars; Pevsich mid cradle device goes back to Mikhaels (cf. end of Bruno Schulz movie)
- superb performance of Menekhem-Mendel - totally plastic body; perfect fit for his g zrtish clothes
- Tevye beardless, sometimes hollower, no ~~is~~ - later does a yzsmulke (Bovch says he himself is an anti-S!)
- always he pulling the cart (apparently his ~~is~~ died before the play begins)
- only explanatory note is the Rabbi (borrowed from Fiddler)
- puts on a ~~is~~ to make Kiddush
- 3 dance sequences (at least 1 too many) - men & women dance together
- daughters strongly effective despite their strong Slavic features
- ~~is~~ is as real in Ukrainism as in Fiddish
- funny use of Fiddish, as when Stepan, an invented ~~is~~, tries to exorcise God's illness; or drinking bout between Leyzer-Volf & Tevye
- that scene played for long - at least 20 minutes long, w/ MM as ~~is~~ behind the scenes.
- Ukrainism Uradnik & Stepan both sympathetic characters
- only outside E. Orthodox agitator or decrees from St. Petersburg
- extremely responsive audience: clap during dance sequences
- at least here the emigration theme is dealt w/ hard - on, except that only first-act Leyzer Volf goes off to America; the rest for Berdichev but MM comes to them instead in comedy of errors.
- Chava returns with ~~the~~ Fedor & everyone is reconciled
- shouts "I don't want your Sabbath!" as if she left for religious reasons
- very effective use of torn ~~is~~ - symbol of sacrifice w/c Tevye holds up to God
- MM announces to Tevye that he saw Pevsich in Kiev carrying a red flag
- Only the corpulent butcher Leyzer-Volf goes off to America, awkwardly uttering his 1st English words: "Good ^{use}bye."
- Ukrainism types ~~speaks~~ ^{use} a coarser accent than the Fiddish-speaking ones
- before leaving sit down for a DoOPA YAC - do you do this too, asks the Ukrainism
- the elderly couple who give us a lift also want a favor - bring ^{out} ~~from~~ dollars for their daughters in Seattle

Leave-taking

- in childlike way, students write poems & present us w/ certificates
- chip in a lot of \$ to buy us rufs, red presentation covers, cakes
- I try to set the mood w/ ערש יום יום & another solo performance of "ביתנו" NT
- but Igar is there w/ his speeches & hype; even sour-faced Levitas joins the party (earlier there was a shouting match between him & Rivka from Odessa; Igar is conciliatory; admits their mistakes & inadequate planning)
- announce month-long seminar this summer; elementary school in 1991
- tremendous sense of gratitude to us -> exaggerated expectations
- Yankew thinks he'll be running the seminar! ("Why didn't he get a picture...?")
- Peyszk's idea of giving out the pictures as gifts goes over exceptionally well
- I explain & reiterate that there simply aren't enough to go around
- Mark visibly hurt that he wasn't honored but I felt that he was understandable
- Natzsha, Evgeny surprised to be singled out; fiery Elena relieved (saved her for last)
- Miriam שייח'ה און יעקב און אביב און אורי
- despite their harsh living conditions (open toilets I-in-a-row!), formed friendships; how few places for Jews to congregate, socialize
- Nura wants me to write dedication on copy of Ansky
- last hr. on Sutekover goes over well: know next to nothing abt Jew. partisans
- esp. moved by פרעזידענט פון פאליטישע און קולטורעלע זאכן
- only Yankew appreciates humor of Margie שוויצער-פאן
- copied our addresses as if there were a magic formula, a talisman
- Boruch brings me BTB medallion & pins; I give him Ukrainian flag instead
- how much it actually costs to leave - roughly 5000 rubles per family
- he will have to cough up \$10,000; must renovate your state-owned apt before you leave
- lengthy discussion of NT - why they say we murdered Jesus
- moved by my explanation of צווייטער קרויצפוג -> Crusades -> Vitenberg
- Boruch: pay scale for a teacher: 130 rubles/month starting salary for 18 hrs week (pay you less computing your wages monthly) + 30 for teaching Eng, Russian, Math (you grade student papers) + 30 for being section head
- ∴ undaunted by low wages & status of teachers in Israel
- who told me the story about Shouchenko saving Jew. houses in a fire?
- Nura who's researching frans. into Yid (Hofstein, Feller)
- I am "found out" in the hostel as an American (What are you doing here?)
- then stalked by a dim-witted Ukrainian
- Nege asks Boruch who's side he's on - hedges his reply
- at 4:30 am, Yasha appears in hr. early - tells us of his radiation sickness
- doctors laughed it off; only when he arrived at Odessa did people treat him like a war hero

Tues

Wed

Writers' Union

- whose house was it? Brodsky's? Gorodzensky's?
- beautiful inlaid wood, ~~carved~~ carved ceilings at least 20 ft high; ceramic stoves
- shown his private shul w/ removable ceiling (for a sukkah?)
- Pohribny is free; Yuri Serdyuk; older writers comes in w/ no'dy-p'de
- mostly mouth slopans abt Jews/Ukrainians working together
- Igor feeds mem hype about present achievements & future plans
- I respond abt double crippling of Jew. culture
- their response: wealth of refs to Jews, Jew. culture in Ukrainian lit
- older man attends pop. song concert in Chernivci - singer is a Jew
- No anti-S. left in Ukraine - his denunciation of anti-S wasn't pub. in Pravda
- instead of Gorbachev, why not put up Parishkevitch's portrait?
NO PICTURE OF GORBACHEV ANYWHERE.
- their room has huge tapestry of Lenin
- dream-like quality to our discussion since no one wants to admit that Jews are leaving
- I try to steer the discussion in more practical direction
 - a) open the archives & invite Western scholars to use them
 - b) integrate Jew contribution to Ukrainian culture (eg at Lviv)
 - c) Jewish film festival - Levitus tells me abt all the Jews in movie industry
- older man turns it into SA Theater festival
- Pohribny talks abt schvartzky sovereignty
- downstairs selling Ukrainian semizdat & nationalist pins (Levitus buys two)
- cannot hear what I'm saying - that there's no culture to resurrect
- when I start on Hasidism they try showing off their knowledge
- Pohribny has grandiose plans for teaching all minority cultures
- Serdyuk would welcome a young Yid. writer w/ open arms into Union & would help him issue/edit his work
- cannot conceive of the world's ignorance/image of the Ukraine
- my play for opening archives for public relations has no resonance whatsoever
- when I criticize the play for its factual errors & explain that even to Jews didn't pick up on the mistake - respond that so-and-so is a Jew or that he remembers superb pre-war performances of Yid. theater
- noted dialogue, but are Igor/Levitus interested in anything more than posturing.
- their zeal is real enough, but it's totally self-centered.
Serve Soviet Peps!
- Pohribny's exaggerated expectations of March conf

Jewish Communists

My hatred of you, Jew. communists, is boundless

I am returning in kind what you professed us.

Jewish self-hatred reached unparalleled depths under your brief moment under the sun.

It is easy to blame the fearless, nameless Yevsekhtiz, but I shall not take the easy way out. Not just the shock troops of the red but each one of you was guilty ^{even} you, my revered teachers Max Erik of Minsk and Meir Wiener of Kiew

- for you knew exactly what you were forsaking
- and it was you who invented the Black List, not the Nazis, not Mc Carthy
 - a) Ash but not Opotshu
 - b) Hupen but not the hules of Proletpen
- the first to throw the Fascist epithet at your own brothers
- this mirage called BB - emptying how much mileage are still jets from this Potemkin Village of Jew. sovereignty
- missed the 1/2 hr special on Thursday
- the left-wing kibbutzim also thought they could dispense w/ priests, but ~~at least~~ they had the Bible, & their own historic land וְנָשׂוּ לָאֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה אֲבוֹתָיִךְ
- and Herzl Koolk who sanctified your civil marriages ex post facto so your children wouldn't be certifiable bastards; & you circumcised your ^{male} children, preserving the ancient covenant between God / Abraham
- my ~~newly~~ new-found friends, Jew. activists all, wouldn't stand next to me in the urinals for fear I would see they weren't (yet) circumcised.
- What a talent for destruction! In that, you proved yourselves true children of the Motherland.
- under the guise of creating a Jew. proletarian culture, you produced 2 gen. of functional illiterates; Jews who cannot use the 26 letters to decipher the simplest non-Soviet text; whose abysmal ignorance of their own past & present renders them incapable of understanding the ~~most elementary~~ ^{simplest} Yiddish lullabye, the most rudimentary Jew. prayer
- you did not deserve such a horrible death; but our mourning for you is mixed with anger, confusion
- talent for squandering state money on empty projects, useless books, monuments to your own hybrids
- My student would recite Newton's First Principle of Physics in Yiddish but didn't ~~know~~... he had never read God's first commandment to Abraham

Miscellaneous

- Yasha's radiation sickness - got a relapse when he opened the TV set in Odessa
- said Kiev train station looked like wartime evacuation
- got on a flight to Odessa by paying 3 times the official rate
- still suffers from headaches from a mugging in his car
- the night the wind shifted he was driving w/ windows open making a buck

LOCAL MEMORY vs. COLLECTIVE MEMORY

- any intelligent person can tell you something abt this place or that
- but only classical book learning provides the depth of shared experience
- they know much more abt their local landscape than we do
- but we know how to pray, who Elijah, Moses, Rembrandt & Reali are
- never met Belous; probably too poor to attend
- women must marry very young; beauty of high cheek-boned Ukrainian women (George's wife; the woman at my teacher's English teacher on the left in elegant dress)
- Ina already married to a sport jock

Incident at airport: refuse to pay \$250 overweight (instead of \$20.50!) so they let me go without paying anything; but had to relinquish the caviar

- same thing happened on the way in when my visa wasn't stamped for Kiev
- is this because the rules are changing faster than officials can enforce them
- or because building the system is a national pastime?
- the loud-mouthed, overweight and chain-smoking Russians ~~to~~ on my flight all happened to be Ukrainian Jews!
- like the Italians on the way over, turned the flight into a ~~one~~ ^{one} trip

Moyshke kept his daughter home from daycare for 2 1/2 yrs because she was getting sick all the time; paid his wife's entire salary for childcare person

- Influenza epidemic now doing the rounds - winter break extended another week
- Bruch / ~~then~~ Lenz had severe orthopedic problems with Ilona from birth
- Yankov complains about his hearing aid
- Moyshke: Our 2 biggest problems (1) getting food (2) trying not to get fat on the food we are forced to buy. Come home & stuff yourself on starch