

“MUSEUM OF JEWISH ORAL HISTORY”

In the course of the last two decades Jewish communities on the territory of the former Soviet Union have been constantly developing interest to their own history. This interest was expressed in multiple publications of local history character in various local Jewish periodicals and books on Jewish local history.

Local history remains the main method for local researchers, both amateur and professional. Thus sharing of the new experience of collecting and presentation of oral history with historians in various Jewish communes existing in the post-Soviet space is becoming a very topical task.

The general aim of this project “Museum of Oral History” may be described as creating a resource for preservation of collective knowledge and collective memory as an important way of self-understanding, self-representation, and consolidation of various Jewish communes. Already the very first exhibition in the Museum, based on the Center's field materials, provoked a large interest in Petersburg Jewish community, and virtually effaced the borderline between academic and community work by popularizing the acquired knowledge.

Within the frames of this project the Center is developing an information environment where local history specialists, historians, community activists, and all who are interested in the Jewish past and present of their city, will get the possibility to acquire methodology of collecting, processing, preservation, and presentation of local oral history. Web-sites created in various localities may turn into centers for communal consolidation for their present members and immigrants from local communities.

For more information, please, visit our web site at: <http://www.judaica.spb.ru>

We will be glad to see you in our Center.

We appreciate your help and cooperation

In case you would like to initiate a joint research project, to organize exhibitions, to take part in our expeditions to the Ukraine, Moldova, Byelorussia, or to give us financial or other support, please, call or write to us.

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European University at St. Petersburg

**The Interdepartment Center
"Petersburg Judaica"**



The Interdepartment Center "Petersburg Judaica"

was opened at the end of 1999. Since 2004 our Center became the integral part of European University at St. Petersburg (EUSP) and is housed in the beautiful 19th century building of the University located in the heart of the city.

Petersburg Judaica functions as an Interdepartmental Center of Jewish Studies for graduate students of the European University in St. Petersburg. Being affiliated to other Departments of the University (such as Anthropology, History, Sociology), our students write their doctoral dissertations on various Jewish themes.

Petersburg Judaica is a research center concentrate on history and culture of East European Jews. The Center organizes annual expeditions to various places within the former "pale of settlement" in Ukraine (e.g. Tulchin, Balta, Mogilev-Podol'sky, Bershad', Tomashpol', Yampol', etc.). As a result of these expedition a vast oral history archive was created (over 1000 digital recordings, extensive photo collection and about 40 hours of video recordings), featuring various topics related to past and present-day life of the Jewish communities in Ukraine.

Petersburg Judaica owns a vast Jewish collection that includes pieces of modern Jewish art, archival photographs and documents on the history of the Jewish community in St. Petersburg, ethnographic materials and pieces of folk art that belonged to various Jewish communities in Russia, and a collection of Jewish postcards dating back to the early 20th century, archive of St. Petersburg artist and art historian David Goberman.

Petersburg Judaica purchased photographs from the collection former Petersburg Jewish Museum, the so-called An-sky collection (370 original photo prints taken at various Jewish shtetls of Ukraine during An-sky ethnographic expeditions of 1912-14).

During last 8 years Petersburg Judaica organized 28 exhibitions in Russia and abroad.

The most important of them are:

* «The Great Synagogues. The Third Destruction of the Temple» (St. Petersburg, Nov.-Dec. 2000; Palm Beach, Jan. Feb. 2002);

* «The Jewish World in Postcards» (St. Petersburg, Sept. 2001- Jan. 2002; Moscow, Sept.-Oct. 2002; Kaliningrad, Nov. 2002; Ann Arbor, Michigan, Aug.-Sept. 2003);

* «Artistic Works of Anatoly Kaplan: Painting, Graphic, Ceramic from I. Kushner collection» (St. Petersburg, Jan. 2003);

* «Red Zion: The Project of the Jewish Autonomy in Crimea and on the Far East. Photos of 1920 - 1930s from the OZET archive» (together with the Russian State Ethnographic Museum) (St. Petersburg, May - Sept. 2003);

* «Returning of the context. Relief of Jewish tombstones in David Goberman's monotypes and photos» (St. Petersburg, Nov. - Dec. 2004);

* «Photo-archive of An-sky expeditions» Exhibition 1-5. (St. Petersburg, 2005-2008);

* «Talks on Lenin Street: Jewish Tulchin in Field Interviews of 2005-06» (St. Petersburg, Nov. 2006-May 2007).

All our exhibitions are portable, and may be easily put up in any showroom.

We are always happy to present our collections anywhere in the world.

Petersburg Judaica organizes permanent seminars and public lectures on Yiddish literature, Jewish ethnography, and Jewish art.

A special seminar for translators of Yiddish poetry and prose working in the Center for a number of years.

In its publication program, Petersburg Judaica seeks to disseminate the results of its research work in the field of Jewish studies.

The Center published:

a historical guide «100 Shtetls of the Ukraine» (2000);

a reference book «Journal «Voskhod» (1881-1906). Description of Content» (2002);
album with a CD-disk based on the exhibition «The Jewish World in Postcards» (2002);

album «The Great Synagogues» based on the Center's first exhibition (2003);

an illustrated edition of Itsik Manger's poems «Medresh Itsik» translated into Russian (2003);

five albums of S.An-sky expedition photographs (with the scholarly introduction and commentaries) (2005-2007);

a collection of articles «Shtetl. XXI century» based on the Center's expedition materials (2008).

Petersburg Judaica offers an international summer program in the history and anthropology of East European Jewry "**Historical-anthropological approaches in Jewish Studies: Theory and practice of field research in former shtetls of Ukraine.**"

The program is targeted at advanced undergraduate and graduate students with a serious interest in Jewish or Slavic studies and a working knowledge of Russian, who wish to acquire skills of fieldwork and collect materials relevant to their research topics.