Going to the People: Jews and the Ethnographic Impulse

An International Conference
February 17-18, 2013
Dogwood Room, Indiana Memorial Union
Indiana University, Bloomington

Marking 100 years since S. An-sky’s expedition, this conference brings together scholars and collectors of Jewish ethnography from the former Soviet Union, Israel, England, and North America to discuss their predecessors’ endeavors and to share their work.

FEATURING
Haya BAR-ITZHAk Elissa BEMPORAD
Alan BERN Simon BRONNER
Nathaniel DEUTSCH Valery DYMShITS
Larisa FIALKOVA David FISHMAN
Halina GOLDBERG Itzik GOTTESMAN
Sarah IMHOFF Jason JACKSON
Sergei KAN Dov-Ber KERLER
Marija KRUPOVES Mikhail KRUTIKOV
Moisei LEMSTER Shaul MAGID
Alexandra POLJAN Anya QUILITZSCH
David RANSEL Ilana ROSEN
Boris SANDLER Sebastian SCHULMAN
Dmitri SLEPOVITCH Yuri VEDENYAPIN
Jeffrey VEIDLINGER Deborah YALEN
This conference is sponsored by the Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program and the Dr. Alice Field Cohn Chair in Yiddish Studies

Conference Organizing Committee:

Professor Haya Bar-Itzhak
Professor Dov-Ber Kerler
Anya Quilitszch
Professor Jeffrey Veidlinger
The Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program
Indiana University

The National Yiddish Theatre ~ Folksbiene presents

Traveling the Yiddishland

with special guest
Michael Alpert

Sunday, February 17, 2013
8 pm ~ Free Admission
John Waldron Arts Center
122 South Walnut Street
Bloomington, Indiana

Dmitri Zisl Slepovitch
and his band Litvakus
present a multi-media musical dialogue with
Belarusian Jews who have passed a treasure trove of rarely heard gems on to a new generation.

An educational partnership with Ivy Tech Community College
Sunday, February 17

Dogwood Room, Indiana Memorial Union

9:00-10:30 a.m.  LANGUAGE AND LOCUS
Session I

Chair: Jeffrey Veidlinger, Indiana University

- Synagogue in Mohilev-Podolsky: Yesterday and Today
  Valery Dymshits, Center “Petersburg Judaica”
- Notions of “Yidish” and “Linguistic Integrity” among Prewar-Born Native Yiddish Speakers
  Dov-Ber Kerler, Indiana University
- The Use of Hebrew and Yiddish in the Rituals of the Contemporary Jewry of Bukovina and Bessarabia
  Alexandra Poljan, Moscow State University

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.  TRANSPLANTED COMMUNITIES
Session II

Chair: Sarah Imhoff, Indiana University

- Ethnography and Folklore among Polish Jews in Israel
  Haya Bar-Itzhak, University of Haifa
- Ex-Soviet Jews: Collective Auto-Ethnography
  Larisa Fialkova, University of Haifa and Maria Yelenevskaya, Technion-Israel Institute of Technology
- In Mrs. Goldberg’s Kitchen: The Lodz Museum Exhibit as a Jewish Microhistory Lesson
  Halina Goldberg, Indiana University

1:45 -3:15 p.m.  CLASSIC JEWISH FOLKLORISTS AND ETHNOGRAPHERS
Session III

Chair: David Ransel, Indiana University

- Performing Jewish Ethnography: The Theater of the Jewish Ethnographic Expedition
  Nathaniel Deutsch, University of California, Santa Cruz
- To Study Our Past, Make Sense of Our Present and Develop Our National Consciousness: Lev Shternberg’s Comprehensive Program for Jewish Ethnography in Soviet Russia
  Sergei Kan, Dartmouth College
- After An-sky: I.M. Pul’ner and the Jewish Section of the State Museum of Ethnography of the Peoples of the USSR
  Deborah Yalen, Colorado State University, Fort Collins

3:30-5:00 pm  MUSIC OF THE JEWS
Session IV

Chair: Halina Goldberg, Indiana University

- Litvak Folksongs Recorded in Situ in the Post-Soviet Period in the Context of Major Yiddish Songs Collections
  Marija Krupoves, Independent Scholar and Performer
- Musical Litvakland as Atlantis: Researching Jewish Music Culture in North-Eastern Europe After It’s Gone
  Dmitri Slepowitch, Scholar and Performer
- The Other Europeans: On the Trail of the Right Question...
  Alan Bern, Scholar and Performer

8:00 p.m.  TRAVELING THE YIDDISHLAND (John Waldron Arts Center Auditorium)
Monday, February 18

9:00 - 10:30 a.m.  LITERATURE AND FOLKLORE  Chair: Dov-Ber Kerler, Indiana University
Session V

- The Compilation of Jewish Customs and Folkways Found in Yiddish Literature
  Itzik Gottesman, Yiddish Forward
- Soviet Yiddish Folkloristics in Search of its Ideological Space
  Mikhail Krutikov, University of Michigan
- Interviewing and Filming Yiddish Writers in Israel in the Last Two Decades
  Boris Sandler, Yiddish Forward

10:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.  LIFE OF THE PIOUS  Chair: Shaul Magid, Indiana University
Session VI

- Undzer Rebenyu: Religion, Memory and Identity in Postwar Moldova
  Sebastian Schulman, Indiana University
- Jews and Yidn: Anthropological Fieldwork in Ultra-Orthodox Communities
  Yuri Vedenyapin, Columbia University
- Food and Faith in the Ukrainian Shtetl
  Jeffrey Veidlinger, Indiana University

1:45 - 3:15 p.m.  REGIONAL IDENTITY  Chair: Haya Bar-Itzhak, University of Haifa
Session VII

- What Should We Collect? Ethnography, Local Studies and the Formation of a Belorussian Jewish Identity
  Elissa Bemporad, Queens College, City University of New York
- Surviving Vestiges of Bessarabian Yiddish Folklore in Contemporary Moldova
  Moisei Lemster, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- Community Spirit in Zhytomyr: Rebuilding a Jewish Community in Ukraine in the Post-Soviet Era
  Anya Quilitzsch, Indiana University

3:30-5:00 pm.  THEORY, PRACTICE, AND PUBLIC PRESENTATION  Chair: Jason Jackson, Indiana University
Session VIII

- On Jewish Expressiveness: Ethnography and Folklore on the Boundaries of Ethnicity
  Simon Bronner, Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg
- Explorations of Austro-Hungarian Jewish-Israeli Groups Past and Present
  Ilana Rosen, Ben Gurion University
- The Last ‘Zamlers’: Avrohom Sutzkever and Szmerke Kaczerginski in Vilna, 1944-1946
  David Fishman, The Jewish Theological Seminary
HAYA BAR-ITZHAH
Haya Bar-Itzhak is professor of literature and folklore at the University of Haifa, where she serves as Head of Folklore Studies and the Director of the Israel Folktale Archives. The focus of her research is Jewish folk literature with an emphasis on the ethnographic and poetic aspects. She has published extensively on settlement, immigration and ethnicity in Israel, and Jewish folk literature in Eastern Europe. Professor Bar-Itzhak has published nine books, and is a recipient of several awards, among them the American National Jewish Book Award and the Lerner Foundation for Yiddish Culture Award. She is the editor of the first Encyclopedia of Jewish Folklore and Traditions published by M.E. Sharpe.

ELISSA BEMPORAD
Elissa Bemporad is assistant professor of history and Jerry and William Ungar Professor of Eastern European Jewish History and the Holocaust at Queens College, City University of New York. She was trained at the University of Bologna and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. She received a PhD in history from Stanford University and is most recently the author of Becoming Soviet Jews: The Bolshevik Experiment in Minsk (forthcoming with Indiana University Press), which received the Fraenkel Prize in Contemporary History for an outstanding work of twentieth century history.

ALAN BERN
Dr. Alan Bern is director of “The Other Europeans.” He is founding director of Yiddish Summer Weimar and other music e.V. and director of Brave Old World. Alan Bern is considered one of the finest pianists, accordions and composers in Jewish music today. He has performed and recorded with Itzhak Perlman, the Klezmatics, Andy Statman, the trio Bern, Brody & Rodach and many others. Program director of Yiddish Summer Weimar and Winter Edition, Bern is also renowned as an educator, in which capacity he has worked at Klezkanada(Montreal), Klezfest London, YiddishFest Moscow and elsewhere. His compositions have received awards in the USA, Europe and Israel. Bern also writes and directs music for theatre and modern dance. In 2006, he earned a doctorate degree in Music Composition at the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati. A native of Bloomington, Indiana, he has been based in Berlin since 1987. In 2009, he received an Ruth Lifetime Achievement Award from the Dance and Folk Festival Rudolstadt.

SIMON BRONNER
Simon J. Bronner is Distinguished University Professor of American Studies and Folklore, Director of the Penn State Harrisburg Center for Holocaust and Jewish Studies, and Chair of the American Studies Program at the Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg. He has also taught at Harvard University, Osaka University (Japan), Leiden University (Netherlands), and University of California, Davis. The author and editor of over 30 books on folklore and folklife, ethnography and psychological ethnology, and cultural history, his recent work on Jewish studies includes Jewishness: Expression, Identity, and Representation (2008), Jews at Home: The Domestication of Identity (2010), which was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award, and Revisioning Ritual: Jewish Traditions in Transition (2011). He serves as editor of the Jewish Cultural Studies book series for Littman Library of Jewish Civilization and convener of the Jewish Folklore and Ethnology section of the American Folklore Society. He also is currently president of the Fellows of the American Folklore Society and the Western States Folklore Society.

NATHANIEL DEUTSCH
Nathaniel Deutsch is Professor of History and the Neufeld-Levin Endowed Chair of Holocaust Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, where he is the Co-Director of the Center for Jewish Studies and the Director of the Institute for Humanities Research. Among his books are The Maiden of Ludmir: A Jewish Holy Woman and Her World (The University of California Press) and The Jewish Dark Continent: Life and Death in the Russian Pale of Settlement (Harvard University), for which he received a Guggenheim Fellowship.
**Valery Dymshits**

Valery Dymshits is supervisor of Center «Petersburg Judaica» (PJ) - a scientific, educational and exhibition center at the European University in St. Petersburg. Dr. Dymshits has join or led twenty-three ethnographic expeditions (six in cooperation with Center for Jewish Art, Hebrew University, Jerusalem), carrying out studies of Jewish ethnography, traditional art, folklore and oral history in Ukraine, Moldavia, Byelorussia, Baltic States, Central Asia, Caucasus and Romania. Results of the expeditions were partly published in the collections of articles "History of Jews in Ukraine and Byelorussia" (1994) and "Shtetl. XXI cent.” (2008) and in the historical guide-book "100 Shtetls of Ukraine" (Vol.1 – 1997, Vol. 2 – 2000). Dymshits has been involved in studies of Jewish ethnography, history, folklore, Jewish art and folk art and in 1990 began studying and translating Yiddish folklore into Russian. Since 2004 his interest in the field studies has been concentrated in cultural anthropology and social linguistics. In the period 2004-2011 he took part as a researcher in 6 field anthropological summer expeditions in the former Jewish shtetls in Podolia (Ukraine).

**Larisa Fialkova**

Dr. Larisa Fialkova graduated from Kiev State Pedagogical Institute (Ukraine) and got her Ph.D. from the University of Tartu (Estonia). Dr. Fialkova has lived in Israel since 1991. She is a Senior Researcher in the Department of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of Haifa, where she teaches various courses in Russian literature, Slavic and contemporary folklore. Among them are Folklore and Immigration, Folklore in the Era of High-tech, The Image of the Other in Folklore, and so on. She has written articles on Russian literature, as well as on Russian and Ukrainian folklore in English, Hebrew, Russian and Ukrainian. Her book “When Mountains Meet: Essays in Ukrainian-Israeli Folklore Studies” has been published by the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in 2007. In collaboration with M. Yelenevskaya she has written more than 20 essays and the book Ex-Soviets in Israel: From Personal Narratives to a Group Portrait published in 2007 by the Wayne State University Press, U.S.A. The extended Russian version of this book The Russian Street in the Jewish State: Investigation into the Folklore of Immigrants of the 1990s to Israel was published by the Russian Academy of Sciences in 2005 in Moscow.

**David Fishman**

David E. Fishman is professor of Jewish History at The Jewish Theological Seminary and serves as director of Project Judaica, a Jewish-studies program based in Moscow that is sponsored jointly by JTS and Russian State University for the Humanities. Fishman is the author of numerous books and articles on the history and culture of East European Jewry, including Russia's First Modern Jews (New York University Press) and The Rise of Modern Yiddish Culture (Pittsburgh University Press). Dr. Fishman is the coeditor (with Burton Visotzky) of From Mesopotamia to Modernity: Ten Introductions to Jewish History and Literature (Westview Press, 1999), which also appeared in a revised Russian edition called Ot Abrama do sovremenosti (Russian State University Press, 2002). Dr. Fishman travels frequently to Moscow and other parts of the former Soviet Union on behalf of Project Judaica. He directs its Jewish Archival Survey, which publishes guides to Jewish archival materials in the former Soviet Union, and recently co-edited a guide to Jewish collections in the previously top-secret "Special Archive" in Moscow. Fishman received his bachelor's degree from Yeshiva University and his master's degree and doctorate from Harvard. He has taught at Brandeis University, Bar Ilan University, Russian State University in Moscow, and Yeshiva University's Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies. He has been a fellow at the Hebrew University's Institute for Advanced Studies and the University of Pennsylvania's Center for Advanced Judaic Studies.

**Halina Goldberg**

Associate Professor of Musicology at the Jacobs School of Music, Indiana University-Bloomington (Adjunct Professor Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program and Affiliated Professor Russian and East European Institute). She is interested in cultural studies, music and politics, performance practice, and reception, with special focus on 19th- and 20th-century Poland and Eastern Europe, Chopin, and Jewish studies. She is the author of Music in Chopin’s Warsaw (Oxford University Press, 2008) and editor of The Age of Chopin: Interdisciplinary Inquiries (Indiana University Press, 2004). She is presently working on the two larger projects: one deals with music in 19th-century albums, the other with Jews and Jewishness in 19th-century Poland.
ITZIK GOTTESMAN
Itzik Gottesman has a Ph.D in Folklore and Folklife from the University of Pennsylvania. His Masters thesis was on "Yiddish Folksingers in Mexico City". His book *Defining the Yiddish Nation: The Jewish Folklorists of Poland* was published by Wayne State University Press in 2003. He has taught Yiddish language and Yiddish folklore at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Texas at Austin. He has conducted fieldwork with Yiddish singers in New York, Mexico City and Israel. He is currently the Associate Editor of the Yiddish *Forward* newspaper and publishes regular columns on Jewish folklore and music. Recently he was named the Chair of the An-sky Jewish Folklore Research Council, run by the Center for Traditional Music and Dance in NYC, to promote traditional yiddish folklore fieldwork and performance. He has served as the editor of the *Tsukunft* magazine, the oldest Yiddish periodical.

SARAH IMHOFF
Sarah Imhoff is Assistant Professor in the Religious Studies department and Borns Jewish Studies Program at Indiana University. Her research focuses on the intersections of gender, race, and religion in American Jewish communities.

JASON JACKSON
Jason Baird Jackson is the Director of the Mathers Museum of World Cultures and an Associate Professor of Folklore at Indiana University. While himself a specialist in the ethnography and ethnology of Native North American communities, he maintains an interest in Jewish folklore and ethnology as an extension of his concern for the history of these fields and through his advising of students working in this realm. He presently edits *Museum Anthropology Review* and is the interim editor of the *Journal of Folklore Research*.

SERGEI KAN
Sergei Kan is a professor of anthropology and Native American studies at Dartmouth College. He received his Ph.D in anthropology from the University of Chicago in 1982. His publications include *Lev Shternberg, Anthropologist, Russian Socialist, Jewish Activist* and *Memory Eternal: Tlingit Culture and Russian Orthodox Christianity through Two Centuries*. His current projects include a book manuscript on *Vincent Soboleff – A Russian American Photographer in Tlingit Country*.

DOV-BER KERLER

MARIJA KRUPOVES-BERG
Dr. Marija Krupoves-Berg, folklorist and vocal artist, is internationally acclaimed as a singer and interpreter of the folksongs of Central and Eastern Europe, especially those of her native Vilnius. She has traveled extensively to find songs in Yiddish, Polish, Lithuanian, Belarusian, Gypsy (Roma), Karaim, Tatar, and other languages. Multilingual herself, she sings her entire repertory in the original languages. Dr. Krupoves-Berg taught the history of Jewish music and the history and folklore of the stateless cultures of Lithuania (Yiddish, Karaim, Tatar, Roma, and Russian Old Believers) in the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, Department of History at Vilnius University (2001-2009).
MIKHAIL KRUTIKOV
Mikhail Krutikov is from Moscow and received his Ph.D. from the Jewish Theological Seminary in Jewish Literature. He has worked for the Oxford Institute for Yiddish Studies, and is currently Associate Professor in Slavic and Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. He is a columnist for the Yiddish Daily Forverts. Dr. Krutikov’s publications include *Yiddish Fiction and the Crisis of Modernity: 1905-1914* (Stanford UP 2001) and *From Kabbala to Class Struggle: Expressionism, Marxism and Yiddish Literature in the Life and Work of Meir Wiener* (Stanford, 2011). He is co-editor of five volumes in the Yiddish Studies series of the Legenda Press (Oxford) and *Joseph Opatoshu: A Yiddish Writer between Europe and America*, co-edited with Sabine Koller and Gennady Estraihk, forthcoming this year.

MOISEI LEMSTER
Moisei Lemster is a regular columnist for the Yiddish Forverts. For many years he served as the Senior Bibliographer of "The Index of Yiddish Periodicals" project at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, the Director of the H. Levyik Yiddish Publishing House, and the Chief Archivist of the Association of Yiddish Writers and Journalists. Before immigrating to Israel in 2000, Dr. Lemster served as Director of the International Summer School in Yiddish Language and Jewish Culture in Chişinău; as a Senior Lecturer in Yiddish Language, Literature and Pedagogy at Moldova State University; and as a researcher in the Academy of Sciences of Moldova, specializing in the history of Bessarabian Jews. His monograph on the life and works of the great Yiddish fabulist and educationalist Eliezer Shteynbarg appeared in Chişinău in 1999 (in Russian). He is, perhaps, best known as an original Yiddish poet and the Host and Director of a bi-weekly Yiddish television series on Moldovan State Television that ran from 1992-2000.

SHAUL MAGID

ALEXANDRA POLJAN
Alexandra Poljan is a research fellow in the Department for Jewish Studies, Institute of Asian and African Studies, Moscow State University, and a lecturer at the Eshkolot project (eshkolot.ru). She is a linguist and a philologist, and is currently writing her thesis on the prosody of the Hebrew Enlightenment poetry. Her main working languages are Yiddish and Hebrew. Since 2005, she has been participating in expeditions to Bukovina and Bessarabia. She has just finished two co-authored books: *Russko-yevreyskiy Berlin [Russian-Jewish Berlin] (1920-1941)*, (together with Prof. O. Budnitskii) and a Hebrew textbook for beginners (together with L. Shor and I. Knyazhitskii).

ANYA QUILITZSCH
Any Quilitzsch is Project Manager of AHEYM. She holds a BA in Jewish Studies and Media Studies from the University of Wales, and an MA in Jewish Studies from Harvard University. It was during these initial years of graduate study that Anya was first drawn to Yiddish language and culture. As a PhD candidate in Modern Jewish History at IU, her research interests include post-WWII Jewish life in Ukraine between 1945 and 1982. She has been working on AHEYM as a Research Assistant, interview transcriber, and annotator since 2009.
David Ransel

David Ransel is the Robert F. Byrnes Professor in the Department of History at Indiana University. Ransel specializes in the history of politics and society in Russia. His contributions include *The Politics of Catherinean Russia* (Yale, 1975), a study of political clienteles. He edited *The Family in Imperial Russia* (Illinois, 1978), the first collection of essays on Russian family life. His second monograph, *Mothers of Misery: Child Abandonment in Russia* (Princeton, 1988) opened the field of the history of charity in Russia. He followed this with studies of village life, including the reconstruction of an ethnography of peasant women and children, *Village Life in Late Tsarist Russia* (Indiana, 1993) and another monograph, *Village Mothers: Three Generations of Change in Russia and Tataria* (Indiana, 2000), a book based on oral testimony collected from 100 village women throughout Russia. Ransel then published two further collections, *Imperial Russia: New Histories for the Empire*, and *Polish Encounters, Russian Identity*. A new monograph by Ransel appeared this year, *A Russian Merchant’s Tale: The Life and Adventures of Ivan Alekseevich Tolchënov, Based on His Diary* (Indiana University Press, 2009). He is the author of several dozen articles on these and related topics. He is currently at work on two projects: a study of two generations of workers in the industrial suburbs of Moscow, and studies of Russian travelers in eighteenth-century Russia. He works with students in the history and anthropology programs.

Ilana Rosen

Ilana Rosen is Associate Professor of Hebrew Literature at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev at Beer Sheva, Israel. She studies documentary literature, or non-fictional prose, of Jews of Central-Eastern Europe, with stress on their Holocaust memory and narrative, as well as the multi-ethnic narrative of emigration to and foundation of the south of Israel. Her publications include: *Sister in Sorrow – Life Histories of Female Holocaust Survivors from Hungary* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2008), winner of the 2009 American Folklore Society (AFS) Elli Kõngäs-Maranda professional prize for women’s studies; *Soul of Saul – the Life, Narrative, and Proverbs of a Transylvanian-Israeli Grandfather* (Burlington, Vermont: Vermont University, 2011).

Boris Sandler

Boris Sandler graduated from the Music Conservatory in Kishenev. In 1983 he received the highest degree in Literature from the Literary Institute (Academy) in Moscow. Sandler began writing for the Yiddish magazine "Sovetish Heymland." In 1989 he created a Yiddish Show on Moldovian State Television, "On the Jewish Street." Sandler is the author of two documentary film scripts: "Don't give up, Yiddish" (1991) and "Where is my home?" (1992), which dealt with the fate of the Besarabian Jewry. From 1990 till his immigration to Israel in 1992, he was the Yiddish Editor of the bilingual journal "Undzer Kol" ("Our Voice") in Kishinev. In the years 1989-1992 Boris Sandler was the President of the Yiddish Cultural Organization of Moldavia. Sandler is the author of fourteen books of poetry and fiction including "Staircase to a Miracle" (Moscow, 1986) which was also translated into Russian under the same title (1988), "Regarding 5390" (Jerusalem, 1992), "The Old Well" (Tel Aviv, 1994), "Gates" (Jerusalem, 1997). "Gina i Plôt" (Kishinau, 2003) Russian translation of the novel "When the Golem Closed his Eyes" (Tel Aviv, 2004), "Die Grüne Apfel des Paradisses", (Berlin, 2003), "Nisht geshtoygn nisht gefoygn" (Jerusalem, 2007), “Red Shoes for Rachel” (New York, 2009), “Inem klangenets fun netsekh” (New York, 2010). “The hidden righteous ones of my memory" (New York, 2011) 'Stones Don’t Bear Witness' (2011), "Keynemdsorf (New York, 2012), "Зеленые яблоки раа" (2012). He was the Editor of the children's magazine "Kind un Keyt". His works have been translated to Russian, English, French, German, Hebrew and Rumanian. Sandler was also a recipient of a number of prestigious Israeli literary awards. Since April 1998 - Editor-in-Chief of the Yiddish "Forverts", and 1999- present editor of the Forward radio show.

Sebastian Schulman

Sebastian Schulman is a PhD Candidate in Modern Jewish History at Indiana University, Bloomington, where he studies the transformation, transmission and survival of Jewish religion and culture in Soviet Moldova. At Indiana, Sebastian worked as a translator and research assistant for the Archives of Historical and Ethnographic Yiddish Memories, also known as by its acronym AHEYM. A recipient of an American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee Fellowship for work in Moldova and Belarus, Sebastian has participated in several ethnographic expeditions in Eastern Europe, most recently with the Sefer Institute in summer 2011. He currently serves as Translation Projects Coordinator at the Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, MA, where he directs several initiatives, including a graduate-level fellowship in Yiddish literary translation and the development of an online collaborative translation website. Sebastian was recently appointed a Research Associate in the Program in Jewish Studies at Smith College in Northampton, MA.
DMITRI SLEPOVITCH
Dmitri Zisl Slepovitch, Ph.D. is an ethnomusicologist, educator, clarinetist, pianist, composer, and Yiddish singer, founder of Litvakus and Minsker Kapelye bands, Yiddish Language and Culture Instructor at The New School. He is an internationally acclaimed educator / instructor in Yiddish culture and Jewish music (history and performance) who has worked with all different age groups. Slepovitch holds a Ph.D. degree in musicology from Belarus State Academy of Music. He has performed / worked with Michael Alpert, Paul Brody, Psay Korolenko, Frank London, Hankus Netsky, Selim Sesler, Yale Strom, and Theresa Tova, to name a few. Having moved to the US in 2008, Dmitri Slepovitch brought over his rich collection of Litvak Jewish musical folklore. Based on that collection, Slepovitch created and co-produced a theater piece, Traveling the Yiddishland. Slepovitch has worked as a music consultant and played character roles in the movies Defiance (2008) and The Burning Land (2003); co-produced the KlezmerShock! International Jewish Music Festival (Minsk, 2005); worked as a composer, arranger, orchestrator, music director, rehearsal pianist, band musician, and actor in numerous theater productions in the US and FSU. Among his original works are the one-act ballet Two Brothers, documentary Funeral Season, theater pieces The Learning Play, The Agents, and DOROGA (Lost & Found Project).

YURI VEDENYAPIN
Yuri Vedenyapin (B.A. Harvard University; M.A., M.Phil., Columbia University) specializes in Yiddish studies and is currently completing his doctoral dissertation in the Germanic Department at Columbia. His research centers on traditional Yiddish speakers' perceptions of the non-Jewish world, including other religions, languages, and "exotic" places and cultures. His sources include interwar Yiddish travelogues as well as original fieldwork in contemporary Yiddish-speaking Hasidic communities in the UK and the U.S. He served as the Preceptor in Yiddish at Harvard from 2006 to 2011. He has also taught Yiddish language and culture at Cambridge University, Moscow State University, Yiddish Summer Weimar, and the Yiddish Book Center, where he served as the Academic Director of the Steiner Summer Program from 2008 to 2010. His "Doctors Prescribe Laughter: The Yiddish Comedy of Shimen Dzigan" was published by the Harvard College Library in 2008. Yuri Vedenyapin's other academic interests include the history of Yiddish dialects and literary standards, old and modern Yiddish literature, East European Jewish folklore, Jewish and Russian ethnomusicology and Jewish-Christian relations in twentieth-century Russia. He is currently a visiting graduate student in the Department of German and Dutch at Cambridge University and a Junior Research Associate at the Centre for the Study of Jewish-Christian Relations in Cambridge.

JEFFREY VEIDLINGER
Jeffrey Veidlinger is Professor of History and Jewish Studies, Director of the Robert A. and Sandra S. Borns Jewish Studies Program and Alvin H. Rosenfeld Chair in Jewish Studies at Indiana University. Veidlinger’s first book, The Moscow State Yiddish Theater: Jewish Culture on the Soviet Stage, won a National Jewish Book Award and the Barnard Hewitt Award in Theatre Studies. His second book, Jewish Public Culture in the Late Russian Empire won a Canadian Jewish Book Award and the J. I. Segal Award. His book, In the Shadow of the Shtetl: Small Town Jewish Life in Soviet Ukraine, is forthcoming from Indiana University Press. In 2006, Professor Veidlinger was named a Top Young Historian by History News Network.

DEBORAH YALEN
Deborah Yalen is an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Colorado State University-Fort Collins. She earned her PhD from the University of California, Berkeley and was a post-doctoral fellow at the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Michigan. At Colorado State University, she teaches courses on Imperial Russian, Soviet, modern European and modern Jewish history. She is currently completing revisions to her book manuscript, tentatively titled "The Soviet Shtetl: Ideology, Scholarship, Memory."