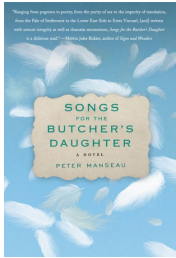


# **TORAH FUND BOOK CLUB**

**May 15, 2010**



## ***Songs for the Butcher's Daughter* by Peter Manseau**

Frustrated by a career that stalled before it began, a young American writer becomes an unlikely translator for a ninety-something Russian Yiddish poet who recorded his life story in a series of notebooks, a job that is complicated by the younger man's affair and entanglement in a cumbersome lie.

## **FURTHER READING**

**Available in the Maxwell Abbell Library**

### ***Wandering Stars: A Novel* by Sholem Aleichem; foreword by Tony Kushner (F)**

This epic tale finds Reisel, the daughter of a poor cantor, and Liebel, a rich man's son, falling under the spell of a traveling Yiddish acting company and separated by managers who would exploit their talents. Translated in full for the first time, one hundred years after its original publication, and for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the author's birth. See also *Tevye the Dairyman* and *The Railroad Stories* and others.

### ***Unfinished People: Eastern European Jews Encounter America* by Ruth Gay (900.73)**

A portrait of the Eastern European Jewish immigrants that arrived in America between 1880 and the First World War explores the ways in which they held on to their customs and traditions from life in the old country, resisting assimilation into the American melting pot.

### ***The Story of Yiddish: How a Mish-Mosh of Languages Saved the Jews* by Neal Karlen (490)**

A lighthearted and irreverent history of Yiddish depicts the language as an unlikely survivor of the ages, in a chronological narrative that charts Yiddish from its beginnings as a minor dialect in the eleventh century through its peak in World War II and revival in recent years.

### ***Words on Fire: The Unfinished Story of Yiddish* by Dovid Katz (490)**

The son of renowned Yiddish poet Menke Katz provides a history of the Yiddish language, its contributions to the story of Judaism, and its rapid growth in ultra-Orthodox movements.

### ***Outwitting History: The Amazing Adventures of A Man Who Rescued A Million Yiddish Books* by Aaron Lansky (490)**

The author explains how he founded the National Yiddish Book Center, and describes the worldwide effort he currently leads to collect unwanted Yiddish books and save the Yiddish language from extinction.

***The Joys of Yiddish* by Leo Rosten (817)**

Describes the history and folklore behind Yiddish and Hebrew words and offers liberal translations.

***Meshuggenary: Celebrating the World of Yiddish* by Payson R. Stevens, Charles M. Levine & Sol Steinmetz (490)**

An eclectic introduction to the Yiddish language and its culture in America throughout the past century considers its grammatical and vocabulary basics, offers a wealth of expressions and insults, and profiles Yiddish influences on the arts, food, and education.

***Yiddish: A Nation of Words* by Miriam Weinstein (490)**

A history of Yiddish takes readers deep into Eastern Europe to explore the origins of this unique and enduring language.

***Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language And Culture in All Its Moods* by Michael Wex (490)**

A humorous history of the Yiddish language from the middle ages to today traces the origins of numerous everyday terms, citing events throughout the past one thousand years that contributed to Jewish European communication practices. See also: *Just Say Nu: Yiddish for Every Occasion (When English Just Won't Do)* and *How to Be a Mentsh (and Not a Schmuck)*.

***If You Liked *Songs for the Butcher's Daughter*, Try . . .***

***Laish* by Aharon Appelfeld (F)**

Searching for a place of their own after falling victim to pogroms that have left them without a home, a caravan of Jews, including fifteen-year-old Laish, makes its way through pre-World War II Eastern Europe on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but their journey is complicated by lack of funds to get them to the port from which their ship will sail.

***Away* by Amy Bloom (F)**

Arriving in America alone after her family is destroyed in a Russian pogrom, Lillian Leyb receives word that her daughter Sophie might still be alive and embarks on a risky odyssey that takes her from New York's Lower East Side to Seattle's Jazz District, Alaska, and along the Telegraph Trail toward Siberia to find the missing girl.

***The Yiddish Policemen's Union* by Michael Chabon (F)**

An alternate historical work based on a premise that Alaska became the Jewish homeland after World War II finds detective Meyer Landsman investigating a heroin-addicted chess prodigy's murder, a case with ties to an extremist Orthodox sect.

***The History of Love* by Nicole Krauss (F)**

Sixty years after a book's publication, its author remembers his lost love and missing son, while a teenage girl, named for one of the book's characters, seeks her namesake, as well as a cure for her widowed mother's loneliness.

***The River Midnight* by Lilian Nattel (F)**

The author turns her own family history into the story of five women, Polish Jews living in a ghetto outside Warsaw before the cataclysm of World War II.

***The Pagan Rabbi, and Other Stories* by Cynthia Ozick (F)**

See "Envy; or, Yiddish in America" about a Yiddish poet who struggles to find a translator.

***Yiddishlands: A Memoir* by David G. Roskies (B)**

Roskies leads readers through "Yiddishlands" old and new by revisiting his personal and professional experiences and retelling his remarkable family saga in a series of lively, irreverent, and interwoven stories. Beginning with a flashback to his grandmother's storybook wedding in 1878, he brings to life the major debates, struggles, and triumphs of the modern Yiddish experience, and provides readers with memorable portraits of its great writers, cultural leaders, and educators.

***Puppet* by Eva Wiseman (TF)**

A powerful fictionalized account of the last blood libel trial in Hungary in 1882 is told through the eyes of Julie, a friend of the murdered servant girl Esther, and a servant at the jail where fourteen-year-old Morris Scharf is imprisoned.