

With Freedom in My Ears: Histories of Jewish Anarchism
Online Supplement and Teaching Guide for Freedom's Fullness

Part I: Chapter Guide and Study Questions

Chapter 1 Study Questions

1. What can be learned from inter-ethnic relations within the anarchist movement?
2. Discuss the role of oratory in radical movements.
3. How did Yiddish anarchism endure into the twentieth century?

Document 1: Freiheit Reports on the Yom Kippur Ball, 1896

Chapter 2 Study Questions

1. What are the origins of Yiddish anarchist satire?
2. What are the main characteristics of Morris Winchewsky's satire?
3. How was Yiddish anarchist satire different from other satirical modes of expression?

Chapter 3 Study Questions

1. What is "temporality," and how is talking about temporality different from simply talking about "time?"
2. What is "temporal assimilation," and what kinds of questions are involved in a minority or oppressed culture's decision to adopt the temporal norms of others?
3. What might be appealing to Jewish anarchists about "progressive" temporality? What might be problematic about it? What might be appealing to Jewish anarchists about "nonlinear" temporality? What might be problematic about it?

Chapter 4 Study Questions

1. How can a revolutionary organization, siding with the poor, finance its activities?

2. What are the moral claims for and against expropriations?
3. What are the practical claims for and against expropriations?
4. How the ways an organization finances its activities may affect its organizational and political development?

Document 2: Proclamation by the Federation of Odessa Anarchist-Communist Groups

Chapter 5 Study Questions

1. What factors influenced the Fraye arbeter shtime's coverage of the McKinley Assassination in 1901?
2. How did the role of translation in the Yiddish press change over time? Why did Yiddish newspapers like the Fraye arbeter shtime rely on translation as a political and commercial strategy? How did translation impact the types of arguments included in the newspaper?
3. How did Saul Yanovsky's views on issues like violence, translation, and the role of newspapers in the anarchist movement change over time?
4. What similarities and differences do you notice between Emma Goldman and Saul Yanovsky's reactions to the McKinley Assassination at the time and in retrospective accounts?

Chapter 6 Study Questions

1. This chapter emphasizes the critical roles played by Russian-speaking Jews in leading an organization composed primarily of non-Jewish Ukrainian and Russian peasants who had fled the tsarist empire. What are some of the reasons why Jews rose to the top of the URW? Consider the historical and political context.
2. What does the chapter argue about the anarchist movement's position vis a vis the labor movement, and how does this argument challenge existing historiographical claims and popular assumptions about anarchists and anarchism?

3. What does the chapter argue about the First Red Scare, and does it alter your perception and interpretation of the events?

Document 3: “Main Principles of the Federation” by the Federation of the Unions of Russian Workers of the United States and Canada

Chapter 7 Study Questions

1. How did ethnic violence alter ideas about ethnicity?
2. How did the newspaper as a central place for such debates shape immigrant politics?
3. What was at stake for the Jewish anarchist movement in choosing between focusing on the English-language and “internationalism” versus the Yiddish-language and Yiddish culture? What were the pros and cons of either choice?

Document 4: “Serious Questions” by Hillel Solatoroff

See the original Yiddish here:

<https://archive.org/details/nybc207536/page/n302/mode/2up>

Chapter 8 Study Questions

1. What role does anarchist economics play in cultural activism?
2. How does cosmopolitanism disrupt ideologies of nationalism?
3. Can art contribute to building an anarchist movement?
4. What’s “Jewish” about Alfred Stieglitz’s anarchism?

Chapter 9 Study Questions

1. How did Semyon Sibirakov and other writers in this chapter manage their multiple identities, including “Soviet writer,” “Jewish” and “anarchist”?
2. What distinguishes Dynamite Literature from the revolutionary memoir and anarchist literature?
3. What was the Memoir Boom in early Soviet Russian literature?

4. How did anarchists navigate the shuttering of anarchist and cross-party organizations like the Kropotkin Museum and the OPK under Stalin?

Document 5: “The Lord’s Prayer, Jewish-Style” by Semyon Braverman-Sibiriakov

Chapter 10 Study Questions

1. Why were these women different from other women of their era?
2. How was their parenting different from other women of their era?
3. How did they approach the concept of monogamy?
4. How successfully were they able to practice their ideologies in everyday life?
5. How did they challenge the norms of their times, in theory or praxis?

Conclusion Study Questions

1. What direction do you anticipate Jewish anarchism heading in the 21st Century?
2. Why was it so significant for Jewish anarchists to construct a historical genealogy of their ideals? Why did other anarchist historians “remain adamantly anti-teleological, emphasizing the contingency rather than inevitability of power”?
3. What was the range of Jewish anarchists’ views on sexuality and feminism?

Part II: Anarchism and Yiddish Literature

Introduction: On Rivkin's Ideas by Eliui Damm

Document 6: "A Few Introductory Words on Rivkin," by Abba Gordin

1. What is the significance of '*mentsh-bashaf*' for Rivkin's thought?
2. How do Gordin and Rivkin interpret messianism politically?
3. How does Gordin characterize Rivkin's literary aesthetics?

See the original text in Yiddish here:

<https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/collections/yiddish-books/spb-nybc210176/rivkin-b-rivkin-minnie-a-gloybn-far-umgloybike>

Document 7: "A Pseudo-Territory--In Place of Religion," by Baruch Rivkin

1. What is Gordin and Rivkin's ideal role for spirituality within Jewish anarchism?
2. In what ways can you see Rivkin's influence on Jewish anarchism of the twentieth century? Can you identify its resonances or influences still today?
3. What might metaphysical spaces provide that physical spaces cannot? Can you think of other metaphysical spaces outside of Rivkin's Yiddishland?

Document 8: "Anarchism and Literature" by Yosef Luden

1. How does Luden distinguish anarchism from socialist Marxism "and other sorts of socialism"?
2. What does Luden consider to be the "secret of the deep relationship between anarchism and literature"?
3. What authors does Luden claim for an anarchist literary canon?

See the Yiddish text here:

<https://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/collections/yiddish-books/spb-nybc204483/luden-josef-shturem-glokn-eseyen-vol-1>

Online Resources for Exploring Jewish Anarchist History

Documentary, *Free Voice of Labor*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2OkLdPEqFGw>

The digitized papers of Sholem Shvartsbard are held at YIVO's [The Edward Blank YIVO Vilna Online Collections](#), which include poems, photos, and journalistic coverage of his trial in Paris.

[https://vilnacollections.yivo.org/?ca=\(\(item.php!col_v*id_rg-85](https://vilnacollections.yivo.org/?ca=((item.php!col_v*id_rg-85)

John Patten, *Yiddish Anarchist Bibliography* (Kate Sharpley Library)

<https://www.katesharpleylibrary.net/3ffbzi>

The *Fraye arbeter shtime* at the National Library of Israel

<https://www.nli.org.il/en/newspapers/freiearb?&e=-----en-20--1--img-txIN%7ctxTI-----1>

YIVO Conference on Yiddish Anarchism

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLtPOkhh8R4wx0r1gmJ2aouhNUEah6YVYJ>

The Emma Goldman Papers

<https://www.lib.berkeley.edu/goldman/>

Emma Goldman documents at Duke University

<https://repository.duke.edu/dc/goldmanemma>