

American Jewish Folk Tale

I. Mintz, Jerome R.

A. Legends of the Hasidim: An Introduction To Hasidic Culture and Oral Tradition in the New World; The University of Chicago Press; Chicago and London; 1968; II, 457

B. Pages devoted to:

1. Table of Contents:
2. Introduction:
3. The Hasidic People:
4. The Legends:
5. Appendix A- Storytellers:
6. Appendix B- Historical figures cited:
7. Glossary
8. Selected Bibliography
9. Index

C. Volume size: regular

D. Photography by author, has footnotes, some tales classified by motif #

E. Aims and Purpose - anthropological nature

1. "... Both a study of the contemporary hasidic community in New York and a collection of hasidic oral tradition." (p.)
2. "By analyzing the tales for their significant themes, and by examining the motivations, attitudes, and values of the characters portrayed in the tales, it was possible to make inferences concerning the beliefs and mores of the culture." (pp. 14-15) "... The narratives were therefore used as a mirror of belief and custom, and also as an investigative tool, serving at times as a means of obtaining value judgements." (p. 16)
3. The work is not a comparative study with other studies of tales. Some notes to major ~~the~~ collections cited.

F. Method of Collection:

1. Data obtained through participant observation, interviews, photography, collection of life stories
2. Tales collected in N.Y.C. 1959-1961 and summer of 1963
3. Tales recorded in a variety of places- stores, homes, ritual ceremonies; taped and penciled, great majority on tape.
4. 59 storytellers altogether from thirteen different courts; each identified

by narrator, court and language used

5. Gives an example of "interview guide"- some interviews structure and sharply focused, others were not. 150+ people interviewed- only 50 in detail- very few women. He did not pretend to be orthodox.

G. Tales

1. Tales arranged in chronological order to the dates of the Rebbes.
2. Variants of tales included when they contain significant differences of new information.
3. Each tale is divided into a category and given a letter.
4. Data about the storytellers given later when information available.
5. Tale described as originally told in either English or Yiddish. Language problems discussed.
6. Except for minor variations, tales recorded as they were told (including parts out of order).

H. Storytellers

Appendix A- given narrator, court, age, occupation- no location of the story setting etc.

I. Also selected bibliography

II. Dorson, Richard M.

- A. "Jewish American Dialect Stories on Tape" in Studies in Biblical and Jewish Folklore; edited by Patai, R., Utley, F. and Noy, Doy; Indiana University Press; Bloomington, 1960; pp. 111- 177

B.

- B. Aims: "This strange assertion (Jewish dialect jokes are not Jewish at all- Au.abel) ~~#####~~ eliminates from consideration a major element in American Jewish humor, the mimicry of Yiddish intonation and pronunciation by American born Jewish storytellers... ." (p.)

C. Method

1. Used 4 informants- describes each and general description on how they gave tale.
2. Aware of extrol. oral as well as visual humor- realizes printed version lacks.
3. All material from tape
4. Indiana University Folklore Archives contain variants along with the names

of the collections, informants,
etc.

5. Describes general dialect activity and
uses them accordingly.
6. No mention of setting scene