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Encyclopedia Interrupta, or Gale's Unfinished: the Scandal of the EJ2

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Erratum

On p. 203, the birthdate of Maimonides was corrected from 1038 to 1138.

text. To the extent that a rabbinic text is a window into rabbinic culture as well as the rabbis' attitudes toward and interactions with the surrounding culture(s), it is impossible to explain fully its broader significance until its cultural and ideological connotations have been explored. Here, too, one runs the risk of including so much in the discussion of a text that the focus of discourse moves away from the document itself towards a set of questions more properly belonging to other disciplines. However, the field of rabbinics has been insulated from other academic disciplines longer and more completely than any other field of Jewish studies. Therefore it is crucial that we broaden our discussion of rabbinic texts to include the scholarship of those who have applied the tools and insights of disciplines other than philology to the study of rabbinic literature.

My third assumption is that new developments in a field deserve to be documented. A number of articles from *EJ1* were left untouched despite the existence of new research in the field (see examples above). Whether this was due to difficulties in finding suitable contributors, time pressures, or other factors is unclear, but to allow entries that should have been updated to be retained in their original form is misleading and ultimately inexcusable.



Encyclopedia Interrupta, or Gale's Unfinished: the Scandal of the *EJ2*

BARRY DOV WALFISH

Encyclopaedia Judaica, 2nd ed. Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA in association with Keter Publishing House (Jerusalem), 2007. Editor-In-Chief: Fred Skolnik; Executive Editor: Michael Berenbaum. 22 vols. (18,015 p.). ISBN 978-0-02-865928-2. \$2,263.00.

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Encyclopedias are important reference works. They are meant to summarize the state of knowledge in any given field and convey it to both the layperson and the scholar in a clear, concise manner. For Jews and Judaism, the first major effort in this regard was the *Jewish Encyclopedia* of 1906, which drew upon the knowledge of a cadre of European and American scholars of the Science of Judaism (Wissenschaft des Judentums). Its successor the German *Encyclopaedia Judaica* began to appear in 1929 but was interrupted in 1934

by the rise of Nazism. It had only reached the end of the letter L. After the war, efforts resumed which resulted in the production of two major encyclopedias, The Hebrew *Encyclopaedia Hebraica* (*ha-Entsiklopedyah ha-'Ivrit*), completed in 1982, and the English *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (henceforth *EJ1*), which first appeared in 1971 followed by a corrected edition in 1972. Both works were published in Israel and are considered to be major achievements. The latter used a lot of material from both its German and Hebrew predecessors.

The period since 1972 has witnessed the flowering of Jewish Studies in the academy, with positions and departments being filled in universities and seminaries all over the world, especially Israel, Europe, and North America. Hundreds of scholars at these institutions have written thousands of books and articles, advancing our knowledge in every field of Jewish Studies imaginable. Furthermore, *EJ1* had a definite Israeli bias, which was no longer appropriate in a world with vibrant Jewish communities in North America and Europe that deserved full and equal representation both for their communities and their scholarship. While a number of yearbooks and a decennial book (1982) had been published which filled in some gaps, a new edition was long overdue. It was thus welcome news to learn that Thomson Gale Corporation partnered with Keter of Jerusalem to prepare a new edition of *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (henceforth *EJ2*) which would incorporate the findings of over a generation of scholarly endeavor, rectify biases, and bring it up to date and into the twenty-first century. The choice of Michael Berenbaum, a Holocaust historian with a high profile in the academy and the American Jewish community, as Executive Editor, seemed promising. (Jerusalem-based Fred Skolnik served as editor-in-chief.)

EJ2 was published in 2007 with a great deal of fanfare and hailed by many as major milestone. It was even awarded the American Library Association's Dartmouth Medal for Outstanding Reference work. But, despite its positive reception in the general library world, it is still necessary to ask to what extent it fulfilled its primary goal of updating the *EJ1* and summarizing the current state of knowledge on the entire range of topics in Jewish Studies. We will attempt to answer this question in the course of this article.

***EJ1* vs *EJ2*: PHYSICAL APPEARANCE AND ORGANIZATION**

EJ1 was published in sixteen volumes in the course of one year. Volumes 2–15 appeared at the same time, but the publication of volume 16 was delayed because a number of major articles, e.g., Economic History, Hebrew Language, and Masorah, came in late and the only way to include them was to publish them at the end of the last volume. The last volume to appear was volume 1, which contained a detailed subject index as well as a number of other features,

including a perpetual calendar, a list of settlements in Israel and a list of Hebrew periodicals. There is also a list of abbreviations, a table of transliteration, and a list of contributors, with the abbreviations assigned to each. The volumes are big (31.5 cm) and vary greatly in thickness, some large ones being double the size of the smallest ones. The binding was cheap and did not stand up well to heavy use. In addition, publication of *EJ1* was followed by the appearance of several yearbooks containing updates to articles in the original sixteen volumes, along with entries on new subjects.

By contrast, *EJ2* is published in twenty-two volumes with the index in the last volume. The binding is sturdy and attractive. At 28.5 cm height, the volumes are smaller and easier to handle. They are also more uniform in length, and seem to vary by no more than 200 pages or so. In terms of physical appearance and sturdiness, *EJ2* is an improvement over *EJ1*.

All of the articles, including articles from volume 16 and from yearbooks, are in their proper place in correct alphabetical order. Most of the extra features from volume 1 were incorporated in their proper place in the encyclopedia. The perpetual calendar, however, one of my favorites, is missing.

A major drawback, however—one that has been noted by many other reviewers—is the removal of the bulk of the illustrations. Each volume does contain a number of full color plates in the center, but the thousands of black and white illustrations accompanying the articles have been removed. It is difficult to understand why this was done and impossible to justify. I can only imagine that financial considerations prevailed. Since over 2,000 new articles were added and the publishers did not wish to increase the size of the publication, an easy way to make space for the new articles was to cut out the black-and-white illustrations. Perhaps copyright privileges were also an issue, but I cannot say for sure. In any case, this unfortunate decision automatically renders *EJ1* irreplaceable and requires libraries, some faced with space constraints, to keep both editions on the shelf side by side.

One welcome feature in *EJ2* is the thematic index, which provides a classified outline of the entire contents of the encyclopedia and provides another approach to accessing its contents. This feature proved useful to me in writing this article. Another convenient feature is the presence of a glossary and list of abbreviations at the back of every volume.

The list of contributors includes a list of articles each one wrote for the encyclopedia. This is useful for getting a sense of the level of the scholarship in the entries. It should be noted that this list is not complete. One omission I noticed is Isaac Markon (1875–1949), a scholar who wrote many articles for the German *EJ* in the 1930s, many of which were included in *EJ1*. A number of these, mainly short biographies, were reprinted in *EJ2*. Examples are the Karaites: Bali, Abraham ben Jacob; Bali, Moses ben Abraham; and Poki, Judah ben Eliezer Chelebi. (The name of the latter should actually be Fuki, something that should have been corrected, since it is buried under an invented otherwise unknown heading.)

CONTENT

The new *EJ2* contained over 21,000 entries of which 2,600 are brand new and 11,000 have been updated. The publisher stated that it was not going to undertake a full revision but would only update entries when deemed necessary. Also, bibliographies would be revised to bring them up-to-date with current scholarship.

According to this account, fully 7,400 articles remained untouched from the first edition. Is this acceptable? Was there no discernible need to update these articles? In what follows, I will demonstrate that this was decidedly not the case.

The treatment of many areas has been expanded and improved, e.g., American and Canadian Jewry, Holocaust, Israel, art, literature, and women. In these areas, hundreds of articles have been added and hundreds of others updated. This is all to the good and deserves to be acknowledged. As the reviews by Faith Jones on Women and Yiddish in *EJ2* indicate (*JL* 15 [2009], 41–45), both of these areas were well served by their editors and contributors. The same holds true with Rabbinics for the most part. Though there are some lacunae, much good work was done to update the scholarship and rectify imbalances, and this is commendable. (See the article by Eliezer Diamond, “Rabbinics in the *New Encyclopaedia Judaica*,” in this issue.)

ARTICLES THAT WERE UPDATED

Among the articles that were updated are the following:

Hasidism. The main article seems to be adequately updated, with extensive additions and a long bibliography. The chart of Hasidic dynasties, which was first published in volume 1 of *EJ1* was appended to the Hasidism article in volume 8 of *EJ2* but was not updated.

The article on **Haskalah** includes an addendum on women by Judith Baskin.

Holocaust gets a full updating in all its aspects. Appended to the article is a thirty-page pictorial history. The hand of Executive Editor Michael Berenbaum was no doubt at work here.

Israel Place List, from volume 1 of *EJ1* has been updated to 2004 and appears in volume 10, pp. 306–329.

Judah Halevi is freshly treated by Angel Saenz-Badillos and Daniel Lasker.

Likewise, **Ibn Ezra, Abraham** is updated by Uriel Simon and Raphael Jospe.

There is a new article on **Liturgy**, by Ruth Langer, with a much expanded bibliography.

These are just a few examples. There are many more.

TOPICS OF INTEREST TO LIBRARIANS AND BIBLIOPHILES

The areas of printing, publishing, and book history are of special interest to librarians. How do they fare in *EJ2*?

It should be noted that there is no librarian or special editor for bibliography listed in the credits and one can search in vain in the thematic index for a bibliography or book history section. This should give an indication of the importance this topic had for the editors.

Archives. The large article from *EJ1* was reprinted unchanged. Several sections were added pertaining to the United States and Germany. The bibliography was not updated. Thus most of the information in this article, on a topic for which information is in a constant state of flux, is valid as of 1969, i.e., two decades before the end of the Cold War and the opening of archives in the former Soviet bloc.

Artscroll. There is an article on the prolific Ultra-Orthodox publishing house, Mesorah Press, but no bibliography; see for instance the critiques by Barry Levy:

Levy, B. Barry. "Artscroll—An Overview," in *Approaches to Modern Judaism* [vol. 1], ed. by Marc Lee Raphael (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1983): 111–140.

Levy, B. Barry. "Our Torah, Your Torah, and Their Torah: An Evaluation of the Artscroll Phenomenon," in *Truth and Compassion: Essays on Judaism and Religion in Memory of Rabbi Dr. Solomon Frank*, ed. by H. Joseph [et al.] (Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion, 1983): 137–189.

The article **Bibliography** by A.M. Habermann is reprinted unchanged, with an anonymous paragraph, mostly about Shlomo Shumani's 1975 supplement to his *Bibliography of Jewish Bibliographies*. There is no mention of bibliographic work done in last forty years by Robert Singerman, Jacob Kabakoff, Yosef Goldman, and many others—or even of the *Bibliography of the Hebrew Book*, the major bibliography of Hebrew literature up to 1960, the fruit of the labors of the staff of the Hebrew Bibliography Project, first published on CD-ROM and then in an online edition. This omission is astounding.

The article on **Bibliophiles** has been reprinted untouched, so there is no mention of important collectors of the second half of the twentieth century, such as Rene Braginsky (Zurich), Michael Floersheim (Zurich), Albert Friedberg (Toronto), Manfred Lehmann (New York), or Jack Lunzer (Valmadonna Trust, London).

There is a new article **Calligraphy, Modern Hebrew** by Leila Avrin, probably taken from one of the yearbooks.

The article **Haggadah, Passover**, was essentially unchanged from the first edition, except that the second edition is lacking the entry outline and the six pages of Haggadah illustrations found in the first edition. There is a welcome addition on feminist Haggadot by Jody Myers but the main body of article was not updated, leaving no mention for instance of the exquisite Moss Haggadah (1984)¹ and other sumptuously illuminated Haggadot by other artists. One finds no mention of kibbutz or other secular Haggadot. In the bibliography, the major bibliography of Haggadot by Yitshak Yudlov, *Otsar ha-haggadot* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1997), is conspicuously absent.

The article on the Jewish National and University Library is, for some reason, entered under “**Library, Jewish National and University**,” an odd carryover from the first edition. (The Library’s name was changed to the National Library of Israel on November 26, 2007.) The article was not updated. One reads there: “Since 1956, a graduate library school has been functioning at the library.” As a matter of fact, the Library School closed in 2005.

The article **Manuscripts, Hebrew** is totally out of date. It doesn’t mention any of the numerous manuscript catalogs published in the last forty years. Information about the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts is completely inaccurate. It states for instance:

The Institute for the Photography of Hebrew Manuscripts was founded in 1950 by the Israel Government (Ministry of Education and Culture) in order to enable a comparative processing and registration of all possible material. In 1962 the institute was placed under the authority of the Hebrew University and became affiliated with the National and University Library. During its 20 years of activity the Institute has photographed—mainly in the form of microfilms—approximately half of the collections of manuscripts and fragments scattered throughout the libraries of the world.

Thus the entry emphasizes its validity only until 1970, though it would not have been difficult to update it with accurate information on the present situation. From the article the reader would not know that the institute is now called Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts (IMHM) and that it contains microfilms of over ninety percent of the Hebrew manuscripts in the world. (See further the blog entry by Benjamin Richler on seforimblog.com.)

Newspapers and Periodicals, Hebrew. This valuable list by Getzel Kressel, published in volume 1 of *EJ1*, has been reprinted in *EJ2* in volume 15, in the correct spot in the alphabetic sequence, but no attempt was made to update it.

¹ It is mentioned in the article on Calligraphy, Modern Hebrew, not the first place one would think to look.

The article **Printing, Hebrew**, by Gershon Zilberberg, was reprinted unchanged from *EJ1*, except for three sentences on the late twentieth century. There is, however, a new section on Women Printers by Jennifer Breger (again, thanks to Judith Baskin). The additional bibliography appended to the article all pertains to women printers. The inclusion of a table listing persons and establishments in the printing business in Israel in 1969 drives home the lack of timeliness.

In the article on **Publishing**, the error in first line of the *EJ1* was corrected (the words: "Jews joined the European publishing industry" did not appear in *EJ1*). Most sections are left untouched, but a section was added for publishing in America after the 1970s. The Israel section was rewritten, but there is no additional bibliography. Except for Mossad Harav Kook, there is no mention of religious publishers, a huge industry, some of which produce high quality publications.

Anyone wishing to find authoritative, up-to-date information on any of the topics just listed had best look elsewhere.

A SELECTION OF ARTICLES NOT, OR ONLY PARTIALLY, UPDATED

Many other areas suffered neglect in *EJ2*. The following are some highlights; the list is not meant to be comprehensive.

The article on the Karaite poet **Dar'i, Moses**, by Jefim Schirmann, is reprinted untouched even though there is a new edition of his poetry (Leon Weinberger, *Jewish Poet in Muslim Egypt: Moses Dar'i's Hebrew Collection: Critical Edition with Introduction and Commentary* [Leiden: Brill, 2000]; see now the more complete edition by Joachim Yeshaya, *Medieval Hebrew Poetry in Muslim Egypt: The Secular Poetry of the Karaite Poet Moses ben Abraham Dar'i* [Leiden: Brill, 2011]).

The article on **Economic History** by Arcadius Kahan was not updated. Thus, a major topic was left untouched. At the very least the bibliography should have been updated. The latest item listed dates from 1966.

Eybeschuetz, Jonathan—Gershom Scholem's article on this seminal figure is untouched despite significant scholarship published by Sid (Shnayer) Leiman and others. RAMBI lists thirty-four articles up to 2006.

History. The articles by Haim Hillel Ben Sasson are untouched, with an addendum by Fred Skolnik, not a historian, on the last thirty-five years. Surely a new article should have been commissioned for this central topic. This is a major topic that was not updated.

Hasidei Ashkenaz. The article was reprinted untouched despite significant research on this important group of medieval German pietists. RAMBI lists 95 articles in Roman script, 59 in Hebrew and Yiddish. See, e.g.:

Soloveitchik, Haym. "Three Themes in the Sefer Hasidim," *AJS Review* 1 (1976): 311–358.

_____. "Piety, Pietism and German Pietism: 'Sefer Hasidim I' and the Influence of 'Hasidei Ashkenaz,'" *Jewish Quarterly Review* 92:3–4 (2002): 455–493.

Wolfson, Elliott R. "Martyrdom, Eroticism, and Asceticism in Twelfth-Century Ashkenazi Piety," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. by Michael A. Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001): 171–220.

Homosexuality. This is a topic that has received an extraordinary amount of attention in the last generation. There is a vast amount of literature as well as films about gays and lesbians. There has also been a huge attitudinal shift which has seen these groups become more integrated into the social fabric of the Jewish community, as they have in the general society. Yet *EJ2* has chosen to reprint the original article from *EJ1* written by Immanuel Jakobovits from an Orthodox perspective. This article begins with the statement: "Among the sexual perversions proscribed as criminal offenses in the moral code of the Torah are homosexual relations between males (Lev. 18:22)." It concludes as follows:

Jewish law, then, rejected the view that homosexuality was to be regarded merely as a disease or as morally neutral, categorically rejecting the view that homosexual acts "between two consenting adults" were to be judged by the same criterion as heterosexual marriage—that is, whether they were intended to foster a permanent relation of love. Jewish law holds that no hedonistic ethic, even if called "love," can justify the morality of homosexuality any more than it can legitimize adultery or incest, however genuinely such acts may be performed out of love and by mutual consent.

The whole tone of the article is hostile and offensive. This is equivalent to publishing an article on blacks in the twenty-first century that called miscegenation an abomination and promoted Jim Crow laws. True, there is a short paragraph at the end that mentions that attitudes have changed, but that does little to erase the offensiveness of the preceding comments. And it says that the Orthodox still consider homosexuality an abomination, an attitude that is changing thanks to Orthodox gays and lesbians, such as Steven Greenberg, who have come out of the closet. The bibliography should have included Steven Greenberg's book *Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), and mention should have been made of *Trembling before God* (2003), a groundbreaking movie about Orthodox homosexuals.

Kabbalah. I would question the decision to reprint Gershom Scholem's book-length article with an addendum by Moshe Idel, supposedly bringing the topic up to date. The original publication of a monograph in an encyclopedia was problematic, but was done supposedly in order to rectify the neglect of the topic in earlier encyclopedias and because Scholem was basically given carte blanche to do what he wanted. But the editors of *EJ2* had a choice. It would have been preferable to have Idel or another scholar produce a new synthetic article rather than a supplement to Scholem. The question of proportion also should have been addressed, as this article is the fourth largest in the entire encyclopedia, which seems excessive.

The **Levi ben Gershom** article is untouched, but with additional bibliography. Levi was the major Jewish philosopher of the late Middle Ages.

The article on **Leon, Messer David ben Judah** is untouched, even though there is a new monograph on him by Hava Tirosh-Samuels: *Between Worlds: The Life and Thought of Rabbi David ben Judah Messer Leon* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991). Thus, his intellectual biography is not addressed.

The article on **Maimonides** was not updated. At least his birthdate should have been changed; the scholarly consensus now is that he was born in 1138. The bibliography was augmented, but it is hard to believe that nothing in the article should have been changed in light of the vast literature produced on this great scholar in the last thirty-five years.

The article on **Morteira, Saul Levi**, is untouched, despite important work on him by Marc Saperstein. See his *Exile in Amsterdam: Saul Levi Morteira's Sermons to a Congregation of "New Jews"* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2005).

The **Nahmanides** article has a lengthy addendum by Haviva Pedaya on his mysticism and additional bibliography, but the rest of the article is untouched.

The article on **Pethahiah of Regensburg** is not updated, despite a new edition of his travelogue by Avraham David, based on the Warsaw manuscript:

“Sibuv R. Petaḥyah mi-Regensburg be-nusah ḥadash,” yotse le-or ‘al-yede Avraham David, in *Qovets ‘al yad* 13 (new series 23) (1995/1996): 235–269.

The *EJ2* article states that the best editions are the first (Prague, 1595) and the Jerusalem edition of 1905.

The article on **Preaching** is untouched from the first edition, thereby ignoring the significant body of research published by Marc Saperstein and others in the

last thirty years. See, for instance, Saperstein's collected studies: *"Your Voice Like a Ram's Horn": Themes and Texts in Traditional Jewish Preaching* (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1996).

The article on **Rashi**, one of the giants of Jewish life in the Middle Ages, was hardly touched. There is no change in the article from *EJI*; two items after 1970 were added to the bibliography; I found 29 books and 102 articles published between 1970 and 2006. Even in the first edition, the bibliography was thin. It should include at least:

- Banitt, Menahem. *Rashi: Interpreter of the Biblical Letter*. [Tel Aviv]: Chaim Rosenberg School of Jewish Studies, Tel Aviv University, 1985.
- Grossman, Avraham. *Ḥakhme Tsarefat ha-rishonim: ḳorotehem, darkam behanhagat ha-tsibur, yetsiratam ha-ruḥanit*. Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, 1995.
- Grossman, Avraham. *Rashi: R. Shelomoh Yitshāḳi*. Yerushalayim: Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-toldot Yiśra'el, 766 [2005 or 2006].
- Kamin, Sarah. *Rashi: peshuṭo shel Miḳra u-midrasho shel Miḳra*. Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a.sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, 1986.
- Schwarzfuchs, Simon. *Rachi de Troyes*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1991.
- Steinfeld, Zvi Aryeh. *Rashi: 'iyunim bi-yetsirato*. Ramat-Gan: Universiṭat Bar-Ilan, [1993].

Rossi, Azariah ben Moses dei. This article was not updated despite the significant work of Joanna Weinberg on this seminal figure. See, e.g.:

- Rossi, Azariah de'. *The Light of the Eyes*. Trans. Joanna Weinberg. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Weinberg, Joanna. *Azariah de' Rossi's Observations on the Syriac New Testament: A Critique of the Vulgate by a Sixteenth-Century Jew*. London: Warburg Institute, 2005.

Samuel ben Meir (Rashbam) was the most important Northern French biblical exegete after Rashi. Despite the many books and articles produced about him in the last thirty-five years by Sara Japhet, Martin Lockshin, Elazar Tuitou, and others, his article was not updated. See, e.g.:

- Japhet, Sara, ed. *Perush R. Shemu'el ben Me'ir (Rashbam) le-Sefer Iyov*. Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, 2000.
- Kamin, Sarah. *Ben Yehudim le-Notsrim be-farshanut ha-Miḳra*. Yerushalayim: Hotsa'at sefarim 'a. sh. Y.L. Magnes, ha-Universiṭah ha-'Ivrit, c1991. 2nd ed., 2008.

Lockshin, Martin, trans. *Rabbi Samuel ben Meir's Commentary on Genesis: An Annotated Translation*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1989. (Plus similar volumes on Exodus [1997], Leviticus-Numbers [2001], and Deuteronomy [2004]. Lockshin has also recently published a new Hebrew edition of Rashbam's Torah commentary [Jerusalem: Horev, 2009]).

Touitou, Elazar. *"ha-Peshaṭot ha-mithadshim be-khol yom": 'iyunim be-ferusho shel Rashbam la-Torah*. Ramat-Gan: Universiṭat Bar-Ilan, 2003.

The article on **Sefer ha-Yashar** is untouched despite a new edition of this work edited by Joseph Dan (Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1986).

The article for **Schneerson, Menahem Mendel**, the last leader of the Lubavitch Hasidim has no bibliography. See, e.g.:

Berger, David. *The Rebbe, the Messiah, and the Scandal of Orthodox Indifference*. London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2001.

Ehrlich, Avrum M. *The Messiah of Brooklyn: Understanding Lubavitch Hasidism Past and Present*. Jersey City, NJ: KTAV, 2004.

Levin, Faitel. *Heaven on Earth: Reflections on the Theology of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem M. Schneerson*. Brooklyn: Kehot Publication Society, 2002.²

I could continue, but this should be enough to make the point. To claim that everything was updated that needed updating is ludicrous. Indeed, for topics on which considerable research has been done, to simply publish additional bibliography is unacceptable and puts the onus on readers to do the research themselves.

OMISSIONS FROM FIRST EDITION

The following items from volume 1 of *EJ1* were not included in *EJ2*:

The survey of pottery, volume 1, pp. 221–271.

Estimated number of Synagogues according to country, volume 1, p. 272.

Perpetual Calendar.

² Editor's note: Since the publication of *EJ2* these books have been joined by the following studies: Samuel C. Heilman and Menachem Friedman, *The Rebbe: The Life and Afterlife of Menachem Mendel Schneerson* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), and Elliot R. Wolfson, *Open Secret: Postmessianic Messianism and the Mystical Revision of Menahem Mendel Schneerson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

LACUNAE

A few that I noticed:

Codicology, Hebrew. See **Topics of Interest to Librarians and Bibliophiles**, above.

Conversion. This is one of the most contentious topics in modern Jewish discourse and has been in the news continually for many years. It is a topic of major interest. There is no article in *EJ2*.

Martyrdom. A topic of great scholarly interest, it recurs in all periods of Jewish history. No article in *EJ2*.

THE INDEX

In general, printing the index in larger type is a welcome innovation in *EJ2*. It is easier to use. Still, it shows signs of sloppy editing.

- ◇ For instance, one wonders why there are so many titles beginning with *He hayedi'ah*, the Hebrew definite article. This goes against all filing rules. Examples: *Ha-Sifrut ha-Yehudit ha-helenistit*, *Ha-Sozializm ha-Ma'aravi u-she'elat ha-Yehudim*. There are many more. By comparison “A” and “The” are not filing elements.
- ◇ In the Index one finds one after the other: *Leyl ha-Esrim* (Sobol), 8:721, translated here “the Night of the Twentieth,” and *Leyl ha-Esserim* (Sobol), 18:702, translated here “Status Night of the 20th.”
- ◇ *Or Kain* should be *Ot Kain*
- ◇ There are also a number of needless see references, such as: “Marre, Alan. See Marre, Sir Alan.”

And here is my favorite. The index lists: “Hasidim, Sefer, see Sefer Hasidim.” Right underneath we find: “Hasidim, sefer [lower case], 6:529, 600.” There are several page references under Sefer Hasidim. Yet, the entry for Sefer Hasidim in *EJ2* is under **Hasidim, Sefer!**

THE E-BOOK

The *EJ2* is published as an e-book—i.e., as the electronic version of the print edition—and this should prove popular to users. As such, however, it is not subject to revision. In general, the search mechanism works well, though when

doing a search I have been frustrated at the difficulty in finding the main entry for some topics since all search results are listed in alphabetical order. It would have been preferable to list them in order of relevance.

Sometimes, it is difficult to find what you want. For example, an online search for Modena, Leone turns up six articles, none of them the main article — which after clicking on the hyperlink turns out to be under **Modena, Leon**. This inconsistency should have been fixed.

WHAT WENT WRONG?

Why is it that so many important articles on topics where research has advanced considerably over the years were not rewritten or augmented? I suspect that one reason is that the time frame was too short: A project of such magnitude should have required at least five years rather than three. Many of the commissioned authors and the editors were not able to meet the publisher's deadline (as several scholars have told me). Rather than accommodating the authors, the publisher stuck to the deadline and published the old articles from *EJ1*. The result is an unfinished work, which leaves many topics where they were forty years ago. This is inexcusable.

In the final analysis the publisher must bear the bulk of the blame for this, though the editors (especially the main editors) also must share some of the responsibility. The encyclopedia editor's job is not an easy one. I speak from my own experience as Judaism Editor for the *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009–). Recruiting authors is difficult. Many top scholars are overcommitted, or don't value this kind of writing and would rather spend time on their research. Unless they are compensated well, they will not write for an encyclopedia. For that reason, it is often hard to recruit the best authors for certain topics. Sometimes, even when you do, the best do not give of their best for such an enterprise, for the same reasons mentioned above. And sometimes authors who commit fail to deliver. Ultimate responsibility for this lies with section editors.

In this regard, Judith Baskin, editor of the Women and Gender section of *EJ2*, deserves a lot of credit. She seems to have had a sense of mission in undertaking to increase women's presence in the *EJ2* by commissioning new articles or supplementing old ones with sections on women. She commissioned dozens of articles and when some didn't come in on time on topics that she felt should be included, rather than give up, she wrote them herself.³ Other editors, such as Shamma Friedman and Stephen Wald for Rabbinics, Richard Menkis and Harold Troper for Canadiana, and Michael Berenbaum for Holocaust, carried out their roles equally conscientiously.

³ See her article, "Adding Women and Gender to the Second Edition of the Encyclopaedia Judaica," *Journal of Modern Jewish Studies* 5:3 (Nov. 2006): 343–348.

Some sections seem to have been less well served by their editors. Perhaps not enough thought was given to what needed to be updated. Perhaps new articles were assigned, but because authors couldn't meet the deadlines and the editors could not write the articles themselves, they took the only steps possible, and either let the old articles be reprinted or didn't include the topics that should have been included. (Or perhaps, no editor was assigned to an area and topics fell through the cracks.) Thus, many old, outdated articles were allowed to stand in the new edition.

Publishing is a risky business these days and commercial publishers have to keep an eye on the bottom line. But they also owe it to their readership to produce a quality product, even if this means pushing their resources to the limits and incurring unexpected costs. In this case the publisher failed to provide a product of consistently high quality.

The other problem (as I have already suggested) is the antiquated publishing model in which the print edition drives the agenda. In this case, the electronic edition is the electronic version of a print book and as such cannot be updated. Thus, there is no gain of flexibility for the publisher from the electronic version.

THE NEED FOR A NEW MODEL

I would argue that print encyclopedias are heading for extinction. Today's reader expects up-to-date information, which is often provided by Wikipedia and other online resources. Roger Kohn has suggested adopting a version of the Wikipedia model for the *EJ*, whereby anyone could contribute and update articles online under the supervision of a professional editor.⁴ I am a little hesitant to follow that route, mainly because of the issue of quality control. I agree that it was a huge mistake to publish the *EJ2* as an e-book that could not be updated. Far better is the database model. The beauty of an electronic database is that it can be constantly updated. A generation raised on Wikipedia expects that. But the quality issue is of paramount importance and this is where Wikipedia often falls short. So, the model of the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* is better suited to a project such as the *EJ*. It contains signed, commissioned articles by known scholars and they are posted as soon as they have passed through the editorial process. The encyclopedia grows organically and is flexible and able to accommodate authors' schedules.

The proliferation of specialized encyclopedias in recent years, such as the *YIVO Encyclopedia of the Jews in Eastern Europe* (New York: Yale University Press and YIVO, 2008) and the *Encyclopedia of the Jews in the Islamic World* (Leiden:

⁴ See his "Of Descartes and Train Schedules: Evaluating the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, Wikipedia, and Other General and Jewish Studies Encyclopedias," *Library Review* 59:4 (2010): 249–260. See also his article, "The Second Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*: 'Snapshot' or 'Lasting Monument'?" *Studies in Contemporary Jewry* 24 (2010): 193–205.

Brill, 2010), is also helping to fill in the gaps where the general encyclopedias are wanting. Both of these projects are exemplary in the care taken to maintain the highest standards of quality. Sadly this was not the case with *EJ2*.

In sum, *EJ2* could have been a great work. The editors seem to have had good intentions and there are many new articles, many of them very good. Nevertheless, in the final analysis, this is a deeply flawed work that does not deliver what it promises. It does not consistently represent the present state of our knowledge of all aspects of Judaism, Jewish history, and Jewish culture. Its claim to be authoritative does not stand up to scrutiny. Many important entries were left untouched or only partially updated. This is unacceptable. Michael Berenbaum, the executive editor, has been quoted as saying: "If you make a bad film, it closes. If you make a bad museum, it's there for a very, very long time. If you make a bad encyclopedia, it's out there for a generation. That's why you've got to make a good one."⁵ If only he had minded his own words.

EJ2 is the Jewish encyclopedia for this generation. It should have been properly updated but was not. The publisher took shortcuts and rushed to publish. Customers feel they need to buy the new edition because of all the new material in it, but they are being sold a flawed product, certainly not one worthy of an award. In 2006, Gale negotiated an arrangement with Catholic University Press of America for the ongoing updating of the second edition of the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* in both print and electronic (e-book) versions. I would urge Gale and Keter to negotiate a similar arrangement so that the new *EJ* can be updated and kept current, and to enable completion of the job that should have done in 2006. We don't want to be stuck with an "encyclopedia interrupta" for another thirty years.

⁵ Interview with Larry Gordon, *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 2007.