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Letter to the Editor

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As an update to my article “Creating a National Bibliographic Past: The Institute for Hebrew Bibliography,” (*Judaica Librarianship*, vol. 13 [2007], pp. 27–40), I would like to inform readers that the Institute for Hebrew bibliography (IHB) has ceased to exist: its reference collection has been dispersed, its space is used for another project of the National Library of Israel (NLI), and its director, Rabbi Isaac Yudlov, does not have any official position anymore.

In 2006, the IHB was funded with year-to-year grants from private foundations and it did not receive any regular funding from the Hebrew University or from any other Israeli governmental agencies. There was one full-time cataloger employed by the IHB, beside Rabbi Yudlov, with the Hebrew University providing the office space. In 2007, only Rabbi Yudlov remained employed by the IHB. The closing of the IHB took place in December 2008 or early January 2009, a few months after the NLI was officially created, according to the information I gathered during a trip to Israel during the summer of 2009.

As noted in my article, the work of the IHB was not “completed”; a database as important as the database of all the pre-1960 books in Hebrew characters needs constant updating. Many books in Hebrew characters in Ladino, Yiddish, Judeo-Arabic, along with multi-volume sets of the Bible, Talmud, and rabbinic codes, still need to be described and entered in the database. I hope that the administration of the NLI will find a place for “maintaining a national bibliographic past” among the many ambitious projects to which it is considering devoting its resources.

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