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Association of Jewish Libraries Reference Book Award, 1993

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Association of Jewish Libraries Reference Book Award, 1993*

Presentation by:

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Tonight I have the privilege of presenting to Charles Cutter and Micha Oppenheim one of the two Association of Jewish Libraries Reference Book Awards for 1993 for their second edition of *Judaica Reference Sources: A Selective, Annotated Bibliographic Guide*, published by Denali Press. My task is especially pleasurable since the award recognizes the fruits of the labor of two of our esteemed colleagues in the Jewish library profession, Dr. Charles Cutter, Head, Judaic Department, Brandeis University Libraries and Micha Oppenheim, Head, Bibliographic Control, the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The award is funded again by Eric Chaim Kline.

Judaica Reference Sources is an excellent guide for librarians to use in the development of Judaica collections in academic, public, and private institutions. It is a wonderful tool for the individual who is engaged in research in a specific Judaica-related area. The authors have selected and annotated more than 800 titles for inclusion in their book. They have arranged them under dozens of subject headings that clarify the scope and use of each work. In addition to the standard subject areas of Bible, Jewish history, Zionism, and the Holocaust, *Judaica Reference Sources* provides a guide to titles under such contemporary topics as Jewish genealogy, women's studies, and computer software.

This edition of *Judaica Reference Sources* is also special because it may be the only Judaica title published in Alaska! Our authors note that Denali Press derives its name from the native name for Mount McKinley, the highest mountain on the North American continent. Charles and Micha, not only have you gone from "strength to strength," but with this new guide you have also gone from "height to height." We are grateful to you for your efforts. I am delighted to present this award to you.

*Remarks at the Banquet of the Association of Jewish Libraries held in Atlanta, GA, June 21, 1994.

Remarks by Micha Oppenheim

On behalf of Charles and myself, I wish to thank you for naming us as co-winners of the Association's 1993 Reference Book Award. In 1980, Ruth Frank, Director of the Jewish Book Council, asked me to revise and update Herbert Zafren's "Jewish Reference Books; A Select List," which was first published in the 1962 edition of the *Jewish Book Annual*. Charles heard about the update and asked to join the effort, and thus began a fruitful collaboration. It soon became obvious to us that in light of the proliferation of Judaica reference works since 1962, a brief list of basic reference works would be of limited value. We therefore decided to publish a more extensive list.

The first edition of our book, entitled *Jewish Reference Sources: A Selective, Annotated Bibliographic Guide*, was published by Garland in 1982. It listed close to 370 basic reference works in the field of Jewish studies. We were assured by the inclusion of our bibliography in Sheehy's *Guide to Reference Books*, as well as in other bibliographies, of the acceptance of our work as a basic reference tool. The second edition, entitled *Judaica Reference Sources*, was published by Denali Press in 1993. This edition, greatly expanded, includes close to 900 reference books and bibliographic articles that have been published largely since 1975, and like the first, is intended to assist scholars, students, librarians and laymen in their search for information. It also can be used by librarians in synagogue, Jewish center, public, college, and university libraries to develop collections in Judaica-related subject areas.

Our book is dedicated to the memory of three cherished colleagues: Berl Kagan, Amnon Zipin, and Nathan Kaganoff. Mr. Kagan was the recipient of this same reference award for his *Leksikon fun Yidish-shraybers* in 1987. His contributions to the fields of Yiddish literature, the Holocaust, and East European Jewish history were monumental. Amnon Zipin served as co-chair of the First International Conference

of Judaica and Israeli Librarians. He will long be remembered for his outstanding bibliographic contributions in the field of Hebrew and Arabic literature. Dr. Kaganoff's achievements in the field of American Jewish history in his capacity as the Librarian of the American Jewish Historical Society, editor of the Society's *American Jewish Historical Quarterly*, and author of numerous articles and monographs are well known. He was a mentor to both Charles and myself, as well as to countless others.

The favorable reception of our book, as well as its recognition by the Association is gratifying. Its continued use by our intended audiences will indeed be a fitting living memorial to our late colleagues in whose memory we dedicated our bibliography.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Mr. Alan Schorr, editor of Denali Press, for producing a most handsome work; to Dr. Bella Weinberg, editor of *Judaica Librarianship*, for permission to reprint excerpts from our column, "Recommended Judaica Reference Works"; to our respective institutions, the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and Brandeis University Library, for encouraging and supporting our work. And *aharon aharon haviv* [last but not least], our heartfelt thanks to all of you, our friends and colleagues of the Association of Jewish Libraries, for granting us this recognition and honor.

Editor's note: Presentation and acceptance speeches for the other Reference Book Award and for the Bibliography Award given in 1994 were not submitted for publication. The award-winning books were listed in Judaica Librarianship vol. 8 (1994), p. 178.

Dr. Peggy K. Pearlstein, Area Specialist, Hebraic Section, Library of Congress, Washington, DC, served as Recording Secretary of the Research and Special Libraries Division of the Association of Jewish Libraries for 1990-92.