

12-31-2006

# Judaica Reference Sources: A Selective, Annotated Bibliographic Guide. 3rd rev. and expanded ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004

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### Recommended Citation

Kohn, Roger S.. 2006. "Judaica Reference Sources: A Selective, Annotated Bibliographic Guide. 3rd rev. and expanded ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004." *Judaica Librarianship* 12: 88-89. doi:10.14263/2330-2976.1101.

Cutter, Charles. *Judaica Reference Sources: A Selective, Annotated Bibliographic Guide*. 3rd rev. and expanded ed. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited, 2004.<sup>1</sup> xxii, 365 p. ISBN 1591581338. \$50.00.

Reviewed by Roger S. Kohn, Library of Congress, Washington, DC

This third edition covers publications published between 1975 and 2002, although it also contains earlier fundamental works not superseded and a “few major works published during the earlier part of 2003.” The new edition contains 62 percent more pages than the second edition and includes 50 percent more entries (1,337 entries against 888). Expanded indeed! The major innovation of this edition is the inclusion of websites (182) and software programs (21) in each chapter (27 instead of 24).

Some chapters are new; others have been expanded; others have been relabeled; and still others have been moved around. Like the previous edition the third edition is divided into two sections: General Reference, and Subject Reference. However, the contents of each section shifted significantly between the two editions. In particular, there are many revisions to the sections where chapters have been assigned, the titles given to chapters, and the grouping of subjects.

For example, the chapter on “Children’s Literature,” located under General Reference in the second edition, has been moved to Subject Reference in the third edition. Chapter 4, “The Internet,” with eight entries, replaces the second edition’s Chapter 5 (“Computer Software Programs”), but its contents are totally new. Three chapters on “Directories, Almanacs, Yearbooks”; “Dissertations”; and “Educational materials”—previously included in General Reference (Chapters 6 to 8, in the second edition)—are now clustered in the Subject Reference section, within Chapter 22, “Jewish Education.” Here, too, the contents are entirely new.

Under Subject Reference, there are now four new chapters for “The Hebrew Book, Judaica Libraries, and Librarianship” (Chapters 8 to 11), instead of just one chapter subdivided into five sections in the previous edition (Chapter 14). Chapter 17, “Jewish Communities of the Diaspora,” includes new sections for Austria, the Czech

Republic/Slovakia, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia. The title for the following chapter, previously called “Israel/Palestine,” is now “Erets Yisra’el.” Why was the title changed to one in Hebrew? And why the change from “Folklore and Legends” to “Legends and Folklore” (in Chapter 27, “Miscellaneous Subjects”)?

Some topics have expanded so much that they have been removed from the last chapter, “Miscellaneous Subjects,” and given their own chapters, such as “Anti-Semitism” (Chapter 20), “Jewish Women” (Chapter 23), “Creative Arts” (Chapter 24), and “Genealogy and Onomastics” (Chapter 26). Two new topics introduced as part of “Miscellaneous Subjects” are “Alcoholism” and “Epitaphs.”

How important are these changes? In the overall arrangement, they are not significant; the pieces of the puzzle are just arranged differently. For the librarian using the book for collection management, it might be difficult to compare the second and the third editions. It is the annotations prepared by the editor for each entry that make this book so valuable to the user. The critical evaluations of Charles Cutter, the retired Judaica Librarian of the Brandeis University Libraries, allow the individual reader to decide if an entry is relevant for her or his purpose.

My main bone of contention is with the table of contents. In the second edition, it was seven pages long. It is now more than fifteen pages long, making it difficult to navigate. In the Table of Contents, Chapter 17 (“Jewish Communities of the Diaspora”) occupies no fewer than six pages! Readers are sometimes led astray by the table of contents as well. For example, on p. xv there is an entry: “Women—p. 195.” Go to page 195 and there is instead a cross-reference: “Women—See Chapter 23.”

To partially remedy this issue, there are now five indexes: Names, Titles, Websites, Software, and Subject. I checked randomly for the indexing of the information on page 194, especially the titles cited within the annotation to the entry for Abraham S. W. Rosenbach’s *An American Jewish Bibliography* (entry no. 17.120).

At least one of the works mentioned in this annotation is not listed in all of the relevant indexes. Rabbi Allan E. Levine’s work, *An American Jewish Bibliography: A List of Books and Pamphlets by Jews or Relating to Them* is indexed by the name of its author but does not appear in the Title index. Also, following his citation of Levine’s work, Cutter notes that it “is in the possession of the Klau Library,” seemingly indicating that that the disser-

<sup>1</sup> The previous edition was reviewed extensively by Zachary M. Baker in *Judaica Librarianship*, Vol. 9, no. 1–2 (Spring 1994–1995): pp. 30–31.

tation was not published.<sup>2</sup> Finally, a typo in the annotation needs to be corrected: the author's name is Allan, and not Allen E. Levine.

These quibbles should not distract us from emphasizing the major accomplishment of this third edition. It is an updated, cogent, and useful evaluation of all of the relevant publications in English—and all the important ones in most other languages—in the field of Jewish Studies, broadly defined.

Roger S. Kohn is a member of the Hebraica cataloging team at The Library of Congress. From 1991 to 1998 he served at the Reinhard Family Curator of Judaica and Hebraica Collections, in The Stanford University Libraries.

*Hebrew Manuscripts in the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma: Catalogue (Kitve ha-yad ha-'lvriyim be-Sifriyat ha-Palaṭinah be-Parmah: qaṭalog)*, edited by Benjamin Richler; palaeographical and codicological descriptions Malachi Beit-Arié. Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, 2001. xxx, 574, 36 p., [48] p. of plates: ill. ISBN 965-7207-00-2

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Italy is a richly fertile ground for the study of the Jewish Diaspora in Europe. From the time of the Roman legions to the present, the territory within the borders of what is now Italy has always had a Jewish presence. The apex of fertility for Italian Jewry may well have been during the end of the

Middle Ages and the first decades of the Renaissance, when Jews recently expelled from France, Spain, Portugal, and German cities found refuge in Naples, the Papal lands, the duchies of Northern Italy, and powerful cities such as Venice.

These Jews, the refugees as well as those long settled in Italy, encountered there one of the most powerful technological innovations of the Western world, the printing press. Although Gutenberg worked in Mainz around 1454, the birth of Jewish printing occurred in Italy. The first books in Hebrew were most likely printed around 1470 in Rome—a mere two decades after the printing press had been invented—and no more than 300 Hebrew titles printed before the year 1500 have survived. Entrepreneurial Italian printers needed Hebrew manuscripts as “raw materials” for their printing endeavors and the confluence of refugees from diverse traditions brought them many manuscripts.

For scholars in the field of Jewish studies, publication of the catalog of the Hebrew manuscripts preserved in the Palatina Library in Parma is an occasion for celebration. This library houses the largest such collection in Italy, and is one of the ten largest repositories of Hebrew manuscripts in the world. Like most scholarly undertakings in the field of Hebrew codicology and paleography nowadays, it is a collaborative effort between institutions and individuals: the manuscripts are preserved in Italy; the publishers of the work are the Hebrew University and the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL) in Jerusalem; and the editor is Benjamin Richler, whose *Guide to Hebrew Manuscript Collections* (1994) is the required entry point to any research using Hebrew manuscripts.

Richler, who retired in late 2005 after working for several decades at the JNUL's Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts (IMHM), conceived and designed the overall structure of the catalog, and obtained the collaboration of specialists who wrote the descriptions for the manuscripts in their fields of expertise. Richler and his collaborators worked from microfilms deposited at the IMHM, in Jerusalem, while Professor Malachi Beit-Arié, responsible for the palaeographical and codicological descriptions, made several visits to Parma over a period of five years to examine the Hebrew manuscripts *de visu*.

The *Catalogue* describes some 1,600 manuscripts in Hebrew characters, over 1,400 of which come from one source, the collection of Giovanni B. de Rossi (1742–1831), a professor of Oriental languages at the University of Parma. In 1816 the Bibliotheca Palatina purchased his collection and a

<sup>2</sup> *An American Jewish Bibliography: A List of Books and Pamphlets by Jews or Relating to Them, Printed in the United States from 1851–1875, Which Are in the Possession of the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion Library in Cincinnati*. (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1959). Originally presented as the author's rabbinical dissertation, now a publication in the series Monographs of the American Jewish Archives, no. [2].

\* I would like to thank Dr. Joan C. Biella, Dr. Michael W. Grunberger, Benjamin Richler, Dr. Silvia Scipioni, and Nice Ugolotti, who have helped me, in various ways, to write this article. Although I acknowledge their generous assistance, I am solely responsible for any errors or mistakes that might occur in this article. I also make grateful acknowledgment of the support of my supervisors at The Library of Congress who made it possible for me to travel to the Palatina Library.