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Scatter of the Literature (1995)

Pearl Berger

Yeshiva University, New York, NY, berger@yu.edu

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SCATTER OF THE LITERATURE

Pearl Berger
Yeshiva University
New York, NY

Editor's note: Donna Kutnick, the regular compiler of this column, collected some of the articles listed here, but was unable to write the abstracts. We are grateful to Pearl Berger for taking over the compilation of the column for this issue.

Ms. Kutnick hopes to compile the column for the next issue. Please send copies of articles of interest to Judaica librarians that are found in other journals, both general and Jewish, as well as relevant chapters in books and encyclopedias, to:

Donna Kutnick
Library Director
Neumann College
Concord Road
Aston, PA 19014

Anderson, Vicki. *Immigrants in the United States in Fiction: A Guide to 705 Books for Librarians and Teachers, K-9.* Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1994, 135 p.

This annotated bibliography is arranged by "nationality or ethnicity" and subarranged by author. In addition to bibliographical information, each entry contains a grade-level designation, a brief description of the story, and in parentheses, the associated subjects. The work contains author, title, and subject indexes. The subject entry for "Jews" cites twenty-one books. A list of "Books Arranged by Grade Level" appears as an appendix.

Association of Research Libraries/ Association for Jewish Studies. *Task Force on Foreign Acquisitions: Israel, Report.* Cambridge, Mass., 1994. 19 p. Issued as a supplement to *Association for Jewish Studies Newsletter* 44 (Summer 1994).

The report for Israel was produced by the Association for Jewish Studies as part of the project "Scholarship, Research Libraries and Foreign Publishing in the 1990s," conducted under the auspices of the Association of Research Libraries. In his introduction, Charles Berlin, Co-Chairman of the Task Force, divides Israeli publishing into two categories: Jewish Studies, and the history and culture of Israel. While

the first category finds a strong focus in American libraries, the second, which documents the history and culture of Israel, finds little support here, with one or two exceptions.

Brief articles, one or two pages in length, are divided into three sections: Library Resources for the Study of Israel, Trends in Scholarship in Israel, and Meeting the Needs of Scholarship. Included under library resources are essays on bibliographic control, cost of books, library collecting patterns, and electronic information resources. The disciplines reviewed in the section on scholarship trends are modern Hebrew literature, cultural studies, social sciences, modern history and Zionism, and religious literature.

Burns, Sarah K. "Finding Your Religion in Cyberspace," *The Internet Homesteader* 2:8 (August 1995), pp. 1, 5-7.

A review of Internet sites and homepages of interest for theology and religious studies. Types of information covered are described, and examples are cited. Links or sections for Judaism, Jewish Studies, and Biblical Studies are included. [See a related article in the ALEF BIT section of this issue.—Ed.]

Drobnicki, John A. et al. "Holocaust-Denial Literature in Public Libraries: An Investigation of Public Librarians' Attitudes Regarding Acquisition and Access," *Public & Access Services Quarterly* 1:1 (1995), pp. 5-40.

The authors conducted a survey to determine librarians' opinions about whether Holocaust denial literature should be acquired by public libraries, how this literature should be classified, and where it should be shelved. In a 1991 article Jeffrey Katz identifies the tensions involved:

It cannot be denied that Holocaust-denial literature is designed to distort the truth, promote hatred, and advance a racist ideology. It also cannot be denied that free speech is, indeed, a right, and that the most fundamental ethic of the library profession is intellectual freedom.

The problem for the librarian, therefore, is to find a way to reconcile both truths.

Survey results show that the majority of librarians would purchase Holocaust denial literature for their public libraries; that they would keep this literature accessible on open shelves; and that many would classify it with Holocaust history. The percentage of European-Americans or Jews in the local community did not appear to influence librarians' decisions on this issue. One of the survey respondents expressed the conflict between personal and professional convictions as follows:

As a librarian I feel it is wrong to censor the material we make available to our patrons—that includes Holocaust-revisionist materials. However, as a child of a Holocaust survivor . . . I am repulsed by this material. . . . Given my background I would find it difficult to select such material; but I am torn between that and my responsibility as a librarian to provide uncensored material to my patrons.

[This article has many references to papers on Holocaust denial literature which were published in *Judaica Librarianship*.—Ed.]

Heller, Marvin J. "Designing the Talmud: The Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page." *Tradition* 29:3 (Spring 1995), pp. 40-51.

The design of the Talmud page originated in Italy in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries with the volumes printed by Joshua Solomon Soncino and by his nephew Gershom Soncino, and with the edition printed by Daniel Bomberg. The page layout, with text in the center, *Rashi's* commentary at the inner margin and *Tosafot* at the outer margin was introduced by the Soncinos. The *editio princeps*, the first complete edition of the Talmud, which was begun by Daniel Bomberg in 1919/20, utilizes the Soncino's design and establishes the "text organization and pagination" for future editions. (Established practice for references to Talmudic passages is by page, rather than by chapter or verse.)

Heller reviews the history of Talmud printing over the centuries. He identifies important editions and their characteristics; traces the evolution and acceptance of the standardized design; and highlights editions that deviated from it, providing explanations or rationales.

The issue of page layout for the Talmud appeared to be settled by the early eighteenth century. The twenty-volume editions of today, which are the accepted standard, adhere to this pagination and layout, and contain additional commentaries and annotations, primarily attributable to the Vilna Shas printed by the Widow and Brothers Romm, 1880–1886.

Hoffman-Pfeffer, Carol. "Israel," in *Encyclopedia of Library History*, edited by Wayne A. Wiegand and Donald G. Davis, Jr. New York: Garland, 1994, pp. 307–309.

The development of libraries in Israel began during the period 1882 to 1914, when the first two waves of immigrants arrived. This article reviews the founding and proliferation of public, academic, national, school, special, Arab, and religious libraries over a period of more than a century. Library organizations, professional education for librarianship, and laws relating to the establishment of libraries are discussed.

Lottman, Herbert R. "Meet Israel's 'Biblicon Valley,'" *Publishers Weekly* 242:4 (January 23, 1995), pp. 34–39.

Jerusalem's biennial international book fair was held from March 12 to March 17, 1995. A large array of electronic media was scheduled to be featured alongside traditional publications. The article surveys a variety of new companies as well as long-standing firms, and describes some of their current products: Enigma Information Retrieval Systems markets the Insight full-text authoring system; Superstudio is concentrating upon corporate multimedia presentations and consumer software; Rom-Tech Electronics specializes in electronic dictionaries and educational games; C.D.I. Systems' HiWay is a full-text retrieval system for multimedia producers; Pixel Group coproduced *Dead Sea Scrolls*, a CD-Rom which contains a 3-D walk-through of the site where the original scrolls were discovered.

Familiar names in the Israeli book and publishing trade, such as Steimatzky, Jerusalem Publishing House, Carta, and Keter, are discussed in some detail as well.

Musleah, Rahel. "A Half Century of Schocken's Imprint," *Publishers Weekly* 242:14 (April 3, 1995), pp. 24–25.

1995 marks Schocken's 50th year in America. Salman Schocken founded the publishing house in 1933 in Germany, where it continued until *Kristallnacht* (November 9, 1938). In the 1930s Schocken established his firm in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, and in 1945 he opened in New York. Since 1987 Schocken has been part of Random House.

To reclaim the past and provide for the future, editorial director Arthur Samuelson has a three-pronged plan. The publisher will reissue old classics from its backlist, concentrate on its traditional area—Judaica, and publish actively in the field of religious, cultural, and women's studies. Says Samuelson, "We have one foot in the academic world, and one in the commercial world. If we do our job well, we can cross over these boundaries."

Musleah, Rahel. "Sacred Texts: Exploring Jewish Wisdom," *Publishers Weekly* 242:41 (October 9, 1995), pp. 40–42.

In line with a national trend to seek spiritual identity, American Jews are turning to traditional sources. New English translations of ancient texts as well as "companion books" which explicate them are appearing with increasing frequency. This article reviews current and forthcoming publications relating to Judaic sacred texts.

The Jewish Publication Society's *Tanakh: The Hebrew Scriptures*, Mesorah's *Stone Chumash*, and UAHC's [Union of American Hebrew Congregation's] *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*—translations of the Hebrew scripture from various perspectives—have each sold approximately 200,000 copies. While traditional Bible commentaries continue to appear, modern approaches such as feminist commentaries have begun to proliferate. The drama of the Book of Genesis is the focus of renewed analysis and interpretation. Talmud translations, study guides and self-teaching aids have moved to center stage with the appearance of the Steinsaltz and Schottenstein English editions.

Musleah, Rahel. "Spring Religion Books: Back to Jewish Basics," *Publishers Weekly* 242:7 (February 13, 1995), pp. 34–39.

Publishing trends in the arena of Jewish books are analyzed against the background of developing interests and changing needs of American Jewish readers. The search for personal religion and spirituality, accompanied by a desire for community, is much in evidence. Along with these is a perceived need to connect religion with "lifecycle moments" and an attraction toward traditional sacred texts.

New publishers have recently joined the Jewish publishing field. Spiritual autobiographies, feminist approaches to Jewish life and tradition, new Bible and Talmud translations and commentaries, Jewish guidebooks, and children's books all play a role in the changing interests and trends in Jewish publishing.

Pilger, Mary Anne. *Multicultural Projects Index: Things to Make and Do to Celebrate Festivals, Cultures, and Holidays around the World*. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1992, 200 p.

This volume emerges from a large database amassed by the author, and parallels two related volumes, *Crafts Index for Young People and Holidays* and *Special Days Project Index for Young People*, both issued by Libraries Unlimited. The index covers crafts, holidays, food, games, and historical projects. Each entry consists of "SUBJECT Description [Book] Pages." A complete list of the books indexed follows the alphabetical subject listing.

The subject "HANUKKAH" serves as a good example. The *Index* lists twenty-eight entries under "HANUKKAH—PARTIES" and nine entries for "HANUKKAH—PUPPETS." The level of detail and potential usefulness of the volume may be judged from the following:

- HANUKKAH—PARTIES dreidel cake, making. [294] 186.
- HANUKKAH—PARTIES dreidel game, making. [294] 187.
- HANUKKAH—PARTIES dreidel grab bag centerpiece or decorated spinning dreidel, making. [370] 57–58.
- HANUKKAH—PARTIES dreidel napkin rings, paper, making. [829] 56.
- HANUKKAH—PARTIES dreidels, miniature, cardboard, making. [829] 58.

Posner, Marcia. "Children's Textbooks as Works of Art: A Report on the Moldovan Family's Collection," *Jewish Book World* 13:1 (Spring 1995), pp. 3–5.

On January 29, 1995, Jean Moldovan presented a lecture with slides at the Jewish Museum in New York, describing her fascinating collection of early Jewish children's books, particularly Aleph-Bet books (Hebrew primers). From April through December 1995 the books were on display at the Yeshiva University Museum in an exhibit entitled "Letters Dipped in Honey: Jewish Children's Literature from the Moldovan Family Collection." The lecture and exhibit were Mrs. Moldovan's last opportunities to observe the joy and appreciation her collection inspired. Jean Moldovan passed away on June 16, 1995. *May her memory be blessed.*

Marcia Posner's report on Mrs. Moldovan's lecture offers a brief insight into the contexts in which the children's books were published, and highlights the collector's interest and involvement with this genre. The contents of selected items are described as well. "Only the books themselves concerned me," says Mrs. Moldovan, "where and when they were published and, if they were illustrated, who were the artists. The authors were not a concern of mine."

Reishis Limudim by Shlomo Block, published in Hanover, Germany, in 1837, is the oldest illustrated book in the Moldovan Collection. Black-and-white woodcuts by an unknown artist illustrate this volume, which is printed on blue paper. A set of books published one hundred years later in Vilna, 1937 was described at the conclusion of the lecture. "One book especially caught my eyes *K'she Ani Ehiye Gadol . . . When I Will Be Big*. How many children who read this book ever grew up?"

Schidorsky, Dov. "Jewish Libraries," in *Encyclopedia of Library History*, edited by Wayne A. Wiegand and Donald G. Davis, Jr. New York: Garland, 1994, pp. 322–325.

The entry for "Jewish Libraries" is an overview spanning the period from the early Middle Ages to the post-Holocaust era. Private collections of note are identified, and the role of such collections in establishing the world's great Judaica libraries is described.

Publicly accessible libraries in the form of communal libraries, seminary libraries, Judaica collections in national and university libraries, general public libraries, and

libraries of voluntary organizations all developed during the nineteenth century. A large number of these were confiscated or destroyed by the Nazis. One million volumes were distributed to Jewish libraries in Israel, the United States, and other countries after the War. Of an estimated four million volumes held in Germany and German occupied territories, half vanished.

Schidorsky, Dov. "Modernization and Continuity in Library Development in Palestine Under the British Mandate (1920–1948)," *Libri* 45:1 (March 1995), pp. 19–30.

A continuation of an earlier piece by the author—"The Emergence of Jewish Public Libraries in Nineteenth Century Palestine"—which appeared in *Libri* in 1982. The period of nearly three decades covered in the present essay was crucial for several important aspects of library development in Israel: shaping the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL); delivery of library services to agricultural settlements, cities, and towns by local labor councils; provision of library services in urban areas by municipalities; introduction of special library services for specific fields such as medicine and technology; and establishment of librarianship as a profession. Each of these categories is discussed against the backdrop of social and historical factors that characterized the period.

Some interesting facts:

- The collections of the JNUL grew from 30,000 volumes in 1920 to 411,947 in 1946. In 1946, Judaica and Hebraica represented 30% of these collections.
- In the same year, there was a 1:1 ratio of books in libraries to the number of inhabitants in the city of Tel-Aviv, i.e., 200,000.
- "The first conference ever held in Palestine was the meeting of librarians of the collective settlements which took place in Afulah in 1927."
- Publishing activity in Palestine rose from 151 books in 1924 to approximately 1000 books in 1947.

Sever, Irene. "Israel," in *International Book Publishing: An Encyclopedia*, edited by Philip G. Altbach and Edith S. Hoshino. New York: Garland, 1995, pp. 618–621.

The entry for "Israel" reviews the growth and development of the publishing industry in Israel, taking into account such factors as population growth, immigrant languages, knowledge of Hebrew, and the impact of the changing political scene.

"Almost half the Israeli population is made up of active readers who say they have read at least one book during the last month." Israelis tend to buy books and lend them to friends and colleagues, rather than borrow from libraries. From the mid-1960s to the mid-1980s, the number of books published in Israel more than doubled, from 2,230 to 5,300. The number of periodicals, exclusive of regional and local newspapers, rose from 481 in 1968/69 to 895 in 1990/91. The number of Arabic publications grows steadily as well.

Singerman, Robert. "Jewish Translation History: A Bibliography of Bibliographies and Research (Parts I, II, III)," *Bulletin of Bibliography* 51:4 (December 1994), pp. 303–323; 52:1 (March 1995), pp. 55–67; 52:2 (June 1995), pp. 133–152.

Published in three successive issues of the *Bulletin of Bibliography*, this series contains 1,165 entries gleaned from published works as well as unpublished theses and dissertations dating from 1840 through 1994. The author casts a broad net both in geographical and chronological terms, but states that he "makes no pretense of being exhaustive."

The present work "attempts to record bibliographies of bibliographies as well as published research linked in any way to Jewish literature and its translation to or from Arabic, Hebrew, Yiddish, Judezmo, and so on from ca. A.D. 900 to the present day." Jewish Bible translation history is not included, nor does the bibliography provide ready information about the existence of translations of specific titles.

The bibliography is organized in twelve sections, followed by an author index. The category headings are:

- I. General (Including Rabbinical Literature)
- II. Medieval and Renaissance Period, 900–1500
- III. Early Modern Period, 1500–1750
- IV. Haskalah Period, 1750–1850
- V. Translations into Hebrew, 1850–1990's
- VI. Translations and Translating of Hebrew and Israeli Literature
- VII. Translations to and From Yiddish
- VIII. Judezmo (Ladino) Translations
- IX. Judeo-Italian Translations
- X. Judeo-Persian Translations
- XI. Arabic and Judeo-Arabic Translations of Jewish Literature
- XII. Modern Bible Translations.

Taylor, Desmond. *The Juvenile Novels of World War II: An Annotated Bibliography.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994, 175 p. (*Bibliographies and indexes in world literature*, Number 44.)

Four hundred thirty-eight juvenile novels are listed and described in this chronologically arranged bibliography. Its scope is restricted to novels written or translated into English in which the Second World War is a substantial part of the action or serves as the background. Short stories and nonfiction are not included, and no effort was made to include picture books. The sequence is alphabetical by author within each year. Author, subject, and title indexes are appended. Thirty-seven entries appear under the index heading "Jews."

This bibliography follows the author's two-volume work, *The Novels of World War II, an Annotated Bibliography*, New York, 1993, which lists adult novels. Taken together, these two publications aim "to identify all of the novels about World War II."

Pearl Berger is Benjamin Gottesman Librarian and Dean of Libraries at Yeshiva University. She serves as Associate Editor of Judaica Librarianship.