The Hebraica Cataloging Manual of the Library of Congress: Its Structure and Adequacy as a Reference Work

Bella Hass Weinberg
St. John's University
Jamaica, New York
and YIVO Institute for Jewish Research
New York, NY

Introduction

The publication of a guide to LC's Hebraica cataloging practice (Maher, 1987) is a welcome event for Judaica librarians, who formerly had to wade through numerous issues of *Cataloging Service Bulletin* to locate a specific rule.

Though this is obviously not its raison d'être, the compilation facilitates the writing of critiques of LC's Hebraica cataloging practice by Judaica librarians and other consumers of LC copy; however, it is not the purpose of this review to provide such a critique. Instead, the guide is examined in terms of its adequacy as a reference work, i.e., the degree to which it facilitates the location of a specific rule relating to Hebraica cataloging. In other words, the question being asked here is: Does the guide meet its own objective—"to serve as a published guide to the romanization and cataloging of Hebraica materials" (p. 6)? The review thus deals with the form rather than the content of *Hebraica Cataloging.* [For a discussion of its content, see the review by Leah Adler in this issue.]

Scope of the Work

The subtitle of the work under review is *A Guide To ALA/LC Romanization and Descriptive Cataloging,* hence subject cataloging and classification are outside its scope. The guide therefore does not serve as a complete manual for the Hebraica cataloger, who, in order to create a full bibliographic record, must have access to many other LC publications—including even sources on descriptive cataloging, since the work before us does not repeat information in AACR2 (*Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules,* 2nd ed.); it only supplements it. Practices previously described in various issues of *Cataloging Service Bulletin* are often reproduced or amplified in *Hebraica Cataloging,* but without reference to the original.

The manual is essentially a compilation of Library of Congress Rule Interpretations (LCRIs), i.e., "commentary" on the code we refer to as AACR2 (1978), with the addition of "oral law," practices documented in the *Descriptive Cataloging Manual* of the Library of Congress, which is inaccessible to us. Until now, Hebraica catalogers could, in many cases, only infer these rules by analyzing LC printed cards or online records, and they often had to write LC for clarification. The guide includes, in addition, historical information on LC's Hebraica cataloging practice—which is very useful to librarians working with older cataloging copy—as well as appendices of abbreviations and Romanization tables.

Structure of the Work

The major sections of the work deal with Romanization, LCRIs, the Descriptive Cataloging Manual, and Reference Aids for Hebraica. The sections are unnumbered, which complicates cross referencing between them. Sending the reader to a section "below" (see, for example, p. 11) is not a precise method of referral.

In addition to the fact that it is difficult to follow cross references in the book, there is insufficient linkage of related sections. There is, for example, no reference from the Romanization table currently in use (p. 8)—or from the historical note that accompanies it—to the older tables in the appendix; nor is there a reference in the other direction—from the obsolete tables in the back of the guide to the current one, which should have been placed at the end for ease of reference.

The work is, in part, "self-arranging" in that subdivisions of certain sections are alphabetically sequenced by topic, while others are arranged numerically by AACR2 rule number. This compensates very minimally for the lack of an *index,* the omission that

detracts to the greatest extent from the value of the guide as a reference work. AACR2's index is incomplete (it lacks, for example, an entry for *subtitle*), and I have observed that many Judaica catalogers have difficulty using it to locate a specific rule (e.g., How do you punctuate a compound title containing the word *and*?). Indexes to *Cataloging Service Bulletin* have not been issued by LC, and thus changes in Hebraica cataloging policy are hard to track. (LC has announced that it will issue a loose-leaf cumulation of LCRIs from *Cataloging Service Bulletin,* but no index is mentioned in the flyer.) An index to *Hebraica Cataloging* was therefore an absolute necessity. In one of the annotations to reference works, the compiler of *Hebraica Cataloging* observes: "Use of the Zinberg work is somewhat hampered by the lack of a cumulative index . . ." (p. 66). Why do librarians recognize the value of indexes in works compiled by other people, but often fail to provide them in their own?

Running heads identifying the section of the work to which a given page belongs would also have enhanced the reference value of the guide. The detailed Table of Contents lacks *continuation headings* in cases where major sections take more than one page, and also does not provide *feature headings* for AACR2 rule numbers. Thus, for example, if a cataloger does not know what rule 1.4C6 deals with, scanning the table of contents will not be helpful if s/he has a question on place names.

At professional meetings, LC staff members tend to talk in terms of AACR2 rule numbers and MARC tags rather than using words such as *main entry* and *date.* This exacerbates the problem of jargon in our field, and further gives the impression that these alphanumeric codes have the status of words and that the rules and structures are permanent. LC's "indexes" to *Cataloging Service Bulletin* arranged by rule number are another example of this.

Recent discussions of format integration in machine-readable cataloging provide evidence, however, that basic structures may be questioned (Stovel, 1989), and after examining the history of Hebraica cataloging practice à la LC, one may conclude that the rules change with bewildering frequency. To quote from the work under review, "AACR2 22.3C, the footnote, and their LCRIs, have gone through several revisions since 1981" (p. 47).

The guide also uses MARC tags without explanation (see, for example, p. 27 or 45), which further detracts from its value as a training tool. Although trainees in Hebraica cataloging at LC may be assumed to have a thorough knowledge of AACR2 and MARC format, this is far from true for most Judaica libraries. Since many MARC tags are used repeatedly in the manual, a "glossary" of them among the appendices would not have been space-consuming, and should have been included.

An anomalous feature of the layout of the book is that right-hand (recto) pages are even-numbered, and left-hand (verso) pages are odd-numbered. The first numbered page is 5, "Note to the Reader." Working back from this, page 1 falls in the middle of the Table of Contents!

The Note to the Reader mentions "a limitation in typographical facilities," i.e., that diacritics in LC's Romanization table could not be produced in the prescribed form. This does not speak well for LC's support of this publication nor for the ease of implementing what I like to call "peppery Romanization"—transcription with all the dots.

Cataloging in Publication Data

The Cataloging in Publication (CIP) Data for this work is interesting in that it assigns a personal name—that of the compiler—as main entry. To prevent conflict, LC adds Paul Maher's date of birth, although his middle name (Eugene) is far more accessible to the cataloger from the preliminary matter. The inexperienced searcher and non-librarian are likely to select a personal name on a title page for the primary element of a bibliographic reference, but this work is a perfect example of corporate authorship or "emanation" in AACR2's terms (rule 21.1B2a), since it deals with the internal policies and procedures of the Library of Congress. The corporate added entry given to this work is *Library of Congress. Descriptive Cataloging Division;* the subdivision is unlikely to be known to the person seeking this work in a catalog, who is in possession only of the information that LC had issued a guide to its Hebraica cataloging practice. Title main entry might have

been preferable as *Hebraica Cataloging* is the running foot on each page; a title added entry is, of course, provided.

In online bibliographic databases, the selection of an access point for main entry is not critical. It is interesting to note, however, that LC's cataloging of its own publications sometimes appears to conflict with its own rules.

The subject heading found in the CIP data, HEBREW LANGUAGE—TRANSLITERATION INTO ENGLISH, also merits comment in that LC's own term is "romanization." The accepted definition of *transliteration* is "letter-for-letter substitution," but LC's systems of romanization for Hebrew and Yiddish are phonetically oriented, and hence more correctly called *transcriptions.*

The inclusion of a Hebrew title page in the work is probably a whimsical touch, but it serves to underscore several points:

> This guide to LC's Hebraica cataloging practices . . . contains authoritative information, but its poor design as a reference work coupled with the inherent complexity of LC's rules . . . will not make the training of Hebraica catalogers . . . easier than it has been . . .

1. Even where the Library of Congress provides Hebrew bibliographic data on an added title page, its own bibliographic record for the work (even on RLIN) will ironically contain romanization only, since added title pages are documented in the note field (see *Hebraica Cataloging,* p. 42, LCRI 1.7), in which no vernacular data is provided.

2. The author's surname in Hebrew is a transcription of its roman counterpart *Maher.* The Hebrew spelling—*mem, double yod, resh*—would likely be generated by a minority of librarians. Most would probably transliterate the roman consonants into *mem, he, resh.* This is the obverse of the problem of transcribing Hebrew surnames into roman characters.

3. The Hebrew title is not a translation of its English counterpart. It literally means "Cataloging and Romanization: A Guide to the System of the American Library Association and the Library of Congress," which suggests a scope much greater than is

actually the case, since it omits mention of Hebraica.

Errors

As an editor, this reviewer is painfully aware of the difficulty of catching all errors in a manuscript or galleys, and dislikes reviews that harp on trivial misprints. *Hebraica Cataloging* has a number of glaring errors, however, that seem to belie even a single proofreading. Simple transpositions of letters such as "Talbes" (in the Table of Contents) may be excused, but numerous misspellings in the text such as "dilema" (p. 7), "preceeded" (p. 19), "preceeding" (p. 21), "separated by comas" (p. 28), "relavent" (p. 40), "accomodate" (p. 47), and "apendix" (p. 69) detract from the authoritativeness of the work, which emphasizes orthography. The manuscript appears to be word processed, and a spelling checker could have been used to eliminate some of these errors, but even this could not have identified mistakes in the spelling of homonyms such as "principle use" (p. 63) or in agreement of subject and verb, e.g., "The initial and final alef . . . is disregarded" (p. 12).

There are additional errors that affect the accuracy of the manual, for example, a missing dot (*dagesh*) in the letter *pey* in LC's current Hebrew romanization table (p. 8). The forename of Alexander Harkavy is twice romanized as *Alkesander* on p. 64, leading the cataloger to wonder whether LC has some hyperscholarly information on the vocalization of this name. The Yiddish word and abbreviation for 'volume' are incorrectly romanized as *yargang* and *yarg.* respectively in an Appendix (p. 69) that will surely be referred to frequently by those not expert in Yiddish. (The correct romanizations are *yorgang* and *yorg.*)

Conclusions

This guide to LC's Hebraica cataloging practices is useful as it contains authoritative information, but its poor design as a reference work coupled with the inherent complexity of LC's rules for Hebrew romanization [see Leah Adler's review] will not make the training of Hebraica catalogers much easier than it has been to date. Although some practitioners may read the guide sequentially upon receipt, they cannot be expected to memorize all of LC's rules or the guide's arrangement, and returning to a specific point is difficult.

The guide receives a poor grade for editing and structure, for errors in English, and for flouting general library science principles—notably that a logically arranged work requires an index, especially if it is designed

for reference rather than sequential read-ing.

To facilitate use of the guide, Hebraica cata-logers should add feature headings to the Table of Contents, running heads to the text, and page numbers to "below" refer-ences. After locating a specific point via a sequential search, the cataloger should create an index entry on the inside back cover. Perhaps an enterprising Judaica cat-aloger will compile a general index to the guide for the benefit of all those who try to follow LC's rules for cataloging Hebraica.

In this reviewer's experience as editor of *Judaica Librarianship,* any article emanat-ing from the Library of Congress has to go through multiple checks. The acknowledg-ments in the guide indicate that many LC staff members reviewed the draft, thus making the errors and design flaws all the more inexplicable.

Hebraica Cataloging appeared many months after its availability was announced by LC. A staff member explained that the first batch produced was recalled because of a binding problem. LC seemed to show more concern for the physical aspects of the work than for its contents. The errors in the text reflect poorly on our unofficial na-tional library, home of the Center for the Book, and this warrants the production of a revised edition of *Hebraica Cataloging* that will truly serve as an authoritative, accurate and well designed reference work.

References

[AACR2]. *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules.* 2nd ed. Chicago: American Library Association, 1978.

Maher, Paul. *Hebraica Cataloging: A Guide to ALA/LC Romanization and Descriptive Catalog-ing.* Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, 1987.

Stovel, Lennie. "MARC Format Integration and its Implications." *LITA Newsletter* Vol. 10 No. 1 (Winter 1989), pp. 12–13.

Dr. Bella Hass Weinberg is an Associate Professor in the Division of Library and In-formation Science at St. John's University and President of the American Society of Indexers. She is also Consulting Librarian at YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, has taught Hebraica and Judaica Cataloging at its Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies, and serves as a panelist at Association of Jewish Libraries Cataloging Workshops.

Library of Congress Classification for Judaica: Recent Changes

Ricky Dreyfuss
Yeshiva University
New York, NY

Purpose

One of the primary goals of *Judaica Li-brarianship* is to provide authoritative infor-mation related to our multi-faceted profes-sion, thereby keeping professionals in the field abreast of all developments that are relevant for the proper organization and management of Judaica and Hebraica col-lections.

In keeping with this goal, the journal has, from the outset, included articles on Juda-ica acquisitions, cataloging, reference sources, the latest technology, and histor-ical perspectives on all aspects of the pro-fession. Some of these columns have become continuing features of the journal. One of these reports on new Library of Con-gress (LC) subject headings of Jewish interest. With this issue of *Judaica Li-brarianship,* we add a complementary fea-ture to the Catalog Department of the journal—the monitoring of changes in LC classification as it pertains to Judaica, in-cluding additions, cancellations, or replace-ments of class numbers.

It is hoped that this column will benefit both catalogers and reference librarians. The value to catalogers may seem too obvious to be mentioned. One reason that it is im-portant to publish this information here is that not all librarians have access to lists of LC additions and changes to its classifica-tion. The cumulations of these lists pro-duced by Gale Research Co. are pro-hibitively expensive, and smaller Judaica research libraries often cannot acquire them. Through this column we hope to provide all Judaica catalogers with informa-tion on changes in LC class numbers. The format chosen was designed specifically with these professionals in mind so that they may readily record changes in their own copies of the schedules.

The value of the column to reference li-brarians may not be as obvious, but Juda-ica reference personnel must be kept informed of classification changes. Such in-formation improves their job performance by allowing them to send their patrons di-rectly to the section of a library where books on particular topics can be found.

Scope and Format

The format chosen for this column is a se-quential one, i.e., in the order of the notation of the classification; reports on changes are accompanied by comments and observa-tions. The scope of the column encom-passes the entire LC classification, with particular emphasis on the classes of major importance to Judaica libraries—Classes BM (Judaism), BS (The Bible), DS (Jewish History) and PJ (Oriental Philology and Lit-erature). As for the classes of peripheral im-portance to Judaica libraries, only the sections of interest will be monitored. In Class B (Philosophy and Psychology), we shall monitor changes in the numbers deal-ing with Jewish Ethics; in Class D (General History of Eastern Europe), we shall em-phasize the numbers dealing specifically with World War II and the Holocaust; Class DD (History of Germany) is of interest only for the numbers dealing with the Nazi party and Hitler; in Classes E and F (American History), we shall watch for changes per-taining to Jews in the United States; in Class H (Sociology and Economics), we shall track only the numbers dealing with topics such as Kibbutzim, Labor and Juda-ism, the Jewish woman, and refugees; and likewise in Classes K (Law), L (Education), M (Music), N (Fine Arts), R (Medicine), and Z (Bibliography)—we shall monitor only the numbers dealing with Jewish aspects of these topics.

In the process of reviewing recent LC cards and Cataloging-in-Publication data in new works, one may observe additions and changes to these peripheral classes. It is our goal to extract the changes that are rele-vant to Judaica libraries and report them in this column.

Although many of the LC classification schedules of greatest interest to Judaica li-brarians have not been revised to incorpo-rate additions and changes since the 1960s, it was decided to begin this column by reviewing *LC Classification Additions and Changes,* Lists 225–229, which cover January 1987–March 1988. Fortunately for our purposes, three of the major classes we shall be monitoring have up-to-date