

Judaica Librarianship: The View From Israel

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Anniversaries are somewhat artificial occasions, which we use as an opportunity to raise our heads from the day-to-day details of the present and try to take a longer look — both forward and backward: where have we been, what have we accomplished, and where are we going. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the Harvard Judaica Department is such an opportunity.

This is also an anniversary year in Israel: the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel. In many areas of Israeli life we, too, are trying to summarize what we have accomplished (and not accomplished) and what we hope to do in the future. It is, therefore, a doubly fitting time to try to summarize the state of Judaica librarianship in Israel, both in its own right and within the international scene.

Virtually every Israeli library (with the exception of the scientific-technological libraries) contains Judaica, Hebraica, and materials relating to the Land of Israel and is concerned to some degree with the problems of organizing and developing these materials and making them accessible to its readers. This is true of most public libraries, Yeshiva libraries, and libraries of various institutes, serving their particular user communities. It has, however, been said that the Jews are the "People of the Book" but not the "People of the Library" (Sever, 1986, p. 393). Many significant collections of Judaica, both public and private, are "collections" but not "libraries" — they lack professional standards of organization, maintenance, and service.

In the context of this paper, I will deal primarily with library services to the Judaica academic research community in Israel. It is in the services to this community that we should find the primary leadership and concern for the professional aspects of Judaica librarianship. I will try to survey the accomplishments, problems, plans, and hopes of Israeli Judaica librarianship, as I see them.

Collections: Where is the Judaica

Judaica/Hebraica in significant quantities can be found in virtually every library in Israel. Public and school libraries, aside from current Hebrew literature, all maintain collections to support at least high-school-level studies in Bible, Judaism, Jewish his-

tory, and Land of Israel studies — all of which are compulsory for matriculation. (Israeli high-school-level Judaica studies would probably be college level elsewhere.) Many public libraries have significant collections of Yiddish literature, Holocaust studies, Rabbinic literature, etc. These collections serve their local communities and only rarely are known or used on a wider scale — the notable exception being the Rambam Library of Judaica, part of the Tel-Aviv Public Library system.

Much Judaica is also found in the hundreds of small Judaica "research institutes" and yeshivot. These collections, while often containing many rare items, also serve local user communities and usually are virtually unorganized by professional standards.

The vast majority of Israel's information resources and services are centered in the libraries of its eight universities (in the context of research-level Judaica, only five: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv and Bar-Ilan universities in the Tel-Aviv area, Ben-Gurion University in Beer-Sheva, and the University of Haifa). These libraries serve not only their own academic communities but also large segments of the general public (which may have adversely affected public library development). The university libraries are linked by interlibrary loan services and have made attempts at cooperation and networking, with various degrees of success.

Unquestionably, leadership in Judaica librarianship has centered in the Hebrew University's Jewish National and University Library (JNUL), which houses the world's largest collection of printed and manuscript Judaica, many special Judaica bibliographic projects, and a staff of unequalled expertise. Because for many years the JNUL was the only academic library in Israel (and from 1956 to 1972 housed the only graduate school of librarianship in Israel), it set up and promulgated standards for the entire library community.

The idea of a Jewish national library in Jerusalem was first proposed in 1872, and steps toward its creation began shortly thereafter. The JNUL, in its official role as the Jewish National Library, came into being in 1920 when the World Zionist Organization officially adopted the previously established library, then under the auspices of the Bnei Brith organization (for

a brief historical survey of the JNUL, see Haezrahi, 1966). Virtually from its start, the JNUL had a double role: as the national library of the Jewish people, and as the central, general library of the Hebrew University, opened soon thereafter (the wisdom of this step was debated even then; see Sever, 1975, p. 114). This dual role, problematic in itself, became further complicated in the 1930s when the JNUL became the depository library of the Jewish Yishuv in Mandatory Palestine (and subsequently of the State of Israel), further widening its role to areas outside traditional Judaica. In fact, the JNUL serves in a fourth role as well, as a national public library, circulating books to the public and serving particularly as the Judaica public library of Jerusalem, with its large Rabbinics-oriented population.

This multiple role has created problems over the years. The fact that most departments of the Hebrew University set up their own independent libraries in order to have control over their specific collections is partly a sign of dissatisfaction with the multipurpose central library. The JNUL has also, to a large degree, emphasized its Jewish-national role over its Israeli-national one. For example, the national (Jewish/Israeli) bibliography *Kiryat Sefer* is arranged by specific subjects in Judaica ("Talmud," "Kabala," "Liturgy"), but until 1973 did not subdivide the heading "State of Israel." Even today, much Israeli published non-Judaica is consigned to the general sections: "Humanities and Social Sciences," "Science and Technology" and "Miscellaneous." The JNUL has also shown less interest in leading and coordinating the Israeli library community than one would expect from a national library.

Despite its dual national role, the JNUL is entirely an administrative unit of the Hebrew University (with, for a long time, special financial support from the Ministry of Education and Culture), and its loyalty has been first and foremost to the needs of the local academic community. Directors of the JNUL are appointed by the Hebrew University alone: not all have been Judaists or librarians.

The JNUL is now at a crossroads. Following the 1967 war and the recapture of its old campus on Mount Scopus, the Hebrew University decided to split its academic

units between the two campuses, which are at opposite ends of Jerusalem. The major part of this transfer was made in 1981. For various reasons, primarily financial, the faculties of social sciences and humanities (including Jewish studies) were moved to Mount Scopus; the JNUL, however, was left behind at Giv'at Ram, which has become the university's science campus. The JNUL now finds itself cut off from its primary user group — the university's faculty and students of Jewish studies, who make prime use of the Mount Scopus central library of Social Sciences and Humanities. The reduced direct use of the JNUL by the university community in the current period of university financial crisis has led to a reduction in library hours and services. Ideally, this might be taken as an opportunity to separate the national roles of the library from its service to the Hebrew University. Indeed, such a step was recommended in 1982 by an outside consultant on behalf of the University Grants Committee (Humphreys, 1982). However, in this time of severe nation-wide budget constraints, it seems unlikely that a case could be made for a viable independent national library, however necessary.

Collection Development

Several distinct periods can be distinguished in the development of Israeli Judaica collections, virtually all characterized by lack of adequate funding.

During the pre-State period, the JNUL was effectively the only research library in the country (aside from some private collections). It was, however, almost entirely dependent for acquisitions on donations from abroad — including many major entire collections (for details see Sever, 1975).

The first decade of the State of Israel was a financially difficult but bibliographically rich one. Hundreds of thousands of volumes of Judaica, remnants of the Jewish communities of Europe, remained ownerless. The majority of these were consigned to the JNUL, whose representative, Shlomo Shunami, spent years searching for them throughout Europe. Some 500,000 volumes were ultimately sent to Israel, of which the JNUL retained some 200,000 and distributed the remainder to other libraries in the country. In addition, this was the period of mass aliya of Oriental Jews, who brought with them many books and manuscripts unknown in Europe. During this period, the JNUL collection doubled in size, a good part of this growth being Judaica.

The period from 1960 to 1974 is distinguished as the period of expansion of

Israeli universities. Small universities became large and new universities were founded. The government (the primary funding body for all the universities) gave high priority to the development of research and higher education. The university libraries grew significantly and were able to purchase many private collections. It was now possible to do serious library-based Judaica research in Tel-Aviv, Ramat Gan, Haifa, or Beer-Sheva as well as in Jerusalem.

Most of the period from 1974 to the present has been one of "lean" budgets for higher education in general, and for libraries in particular. Israeli libraries have been hard put to maintain minimal acquisitions levels of current Judaica, much less acquire collections or antiquarian items, whose prices have shot up during recent years. Two major exceptions have been the purchase and donation of the Wiener Library of Holocaust materials to Tel-Aviv University, and the transfer of thousands of volumes from Rumanian Jewish communities to Bar-Ilan University.

Collection Organization and Maintenance

The problems of professionally organizing Hebraica and Judaica collections were first faced by the JNUL in the 1920s and the solutions reached then were copied by other libraries and promulgated by the Hebrew University's Graduate School of Librarianship until they became de facto standards. These formative years of the JNUL were a period of conflict between American and German library traditions (for details see Sever, 1985), and not all the solutions reached were consistent. In general, Israeli descriptive cataloging has followed American practice, while subject access has (with recent exceptions) been through the classified catalog.

All Israeli libraries maintain separate catalogs for Hebraica, in which all access points are in Hebrew. While this means the reader will have to look in two separate files for the works of an author (e.g., Bialik in Hebrew and in translation), the alternative Romanization is not considered viable in a Hebrew-speaking country. Most libraries with Arabic collections also maintain a separate Arabic alphabet catalog and some libraries have Cyrillic catalogs as well.

A major Israeli deviation from international cataloging practice is the "normalization" of access points to a single orthographic form. Nonvocalized Hebrew can be written in either of two officially recognized forms: the *ketiv haser* (defective or minimal form) and the *ketiv male* (plene or full form). The

difference between these forms involves representing certain vowels with consonants. Since a given name or title may appear in either form or in a mixture of both (unfortunately quite common), the standard Israeli approach has been to normalize to a single uniform form. The choice of the minimal form was made in the 1920s and continues to date, even though the current popular trend is toward fuller spelling. This decision was reaffirmed recently by the Inter-University Subcommittee on Cataloging, for two pragmatic reasons: it is much easier to normalize to the minimal form than to the full form, and a large body of machine-readable cataloging already exists in this form. Material in Yiddish further complicates this situation, as it has its own fairly standard full form. As a result, material in Yiddish usually has been kept in a separate card file. With the advent of automated systems, however, Yiddish has been merged with Hebrew, normalizing personal names to Hebrew minimal forms but leaving titles in Yiddish full forms.

Israeli libraries also use unique uniform title headings for classic Judaica, most of which were formulated at the JNUL. Israeli practice in this area is often different from Anglo-American practice, although AACR2 has narrowed the gap somewhat. For example, Israeli libraries never used the old "Jews. Liturgy and ritual" heading, preferring the simple "Tefillot." Using "Haggadah" as an independent heading is also a long established Israeli practice. Israeli libraries have not, however, followed the AACR2 policy on scattering all types of prayer books. Special practices also exist for headings under "Bible," "Dead Sea Scrolls," and "Talmudic and Midrashic literature." These practices have recently been standardized and issued by the Inter-University Subcommittee on Cataloging in the form of a list of all classic Judaica uniform title headings.

In subject cataloging, most Israeli libraries have followed the JNUL's lead in instituting the classified-catalog approach, using the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC). Since DDC of the 1920s was woefully inadequate in Judaica (undivided 296 for Judaism, no number at all for modern Jewish history), the JNUL decided to expand DDC to meet its own needs. This expansion became known as the Scholem System after its founder, the late Professor Gershom Scholem, then head of the library's Judaica Department.

The Scholem expansion included not only additional subdivision and redefining of some subjects, but also the use of special characters and punctuation as in UDC, e.g.:

221.5=21 933.5(73)	BIBLE IN ENGLISH HISTORY OF THE JEWS IN THE UNITED STATES
(ayin)78	JEWISH MUSIC [actu- ally an abbreviated form of 296.978]
E370	EDUCATION IN ISRAEL
E301.35(C)	SOCIOLOGY OF THE KIBBUTZ
E115 (HAIFA)	GEOGRAPHY OF A SPECIFIC PLACE

Even today this system works fairly well as a retrieval tool to the JNUL's closed stack collection (closed since 1936), in which the books are shelved in accession order. Furthermore, the Hebrew *ayin* and *E* prefixes were particularly suited to a national library wishing to emphasize the national (Jewish and Israeli) facet.

The Scholem System (officially called *Seder ha-miktso'ot be-mada'e ha-yahadut*) has been published several times by the JNUL and is updated on a gradual basis. The last published edition appeared in 1981.

As other Israeli libraries came into being, they naturally looked to the JNUL's expansion of Judaica and copied it, often attempting to shelve by these numbers as well — a rather complicated task. But the special letter arrangements to isolate Israeli and Jewish materials were not always applicable to other libraries. When an Israeli version of abridged DDC was prepared (primarily for the public libraries), the Judaica sections were based on Scholem but abridged and without the special punctuation. Indication of Jewish or Israeli context in a non-Judaic area was moved to the end of the number, e.g., 370(9) (=education in Israel), 370(2) (=Jewish education). Only geography and history of the Land of Israel remained outside the span of regular DDC style numbers, as (9)1. . . and (9)9. . .

The use of alphabetic subject headings in Israel has been quite limited, because of both the precedent of the JNUL classified catalog and the lack of a Hebrew thesaurus of subject terms. Certainly in the 1920s the newly reborn Hebrew language was inadequate to support a general library subject catalog (except for Judaica), and even until recent times the classified catalog has been advantageous — both in its own right and particularly for serving a multilingual population. The fact that the JNUL classified catalog approach has been followed by the cataloging card service of the Center for Public Libraries has insured its wide and continued use, even in the smallest public libraries.

Extensive use of subject headings is found today only in some of the university libraries, primarily those using LC classification. The University of Haifa was the first major Israeli library to convert to LC, followed subsequently by Ben-Gurion University and the central Social Science/Humanities and Science libraries of the Hebrew University. All these libraries also use LC subject headings (in English), assuming that university-level library users must have a working knowledge of English. Libraries using LC have all made various, mostly minor, adaptations to both the classification and the subject headings: for example, the University of Haifa has moved Holocaust materials from general history of World War II to Jewish history, rearranged the books of the Bible to the Jewish order, and instituted specific subject headings such as "Halakha" (as separate from "Jewish Law"), "Holocaust" and "Kibbutz" (the latter two recently added in slightly different form by LC).

Bar-Ilan University, while retaining DDC and its own expansion of Scholem, has a split subject catalog: LC subject headings for Roman alphabet materials and Hebrew subject headings for Hebrew materials. The only other extensive use of Hebrew subject headings is in the *Index to Hebrew Periodicals* project which has a thesaurus of over 25,000 terms, but is limited to subjects covered in Hebrew journals.

In the area of collection maintenance, few Israeli libraries have been able to institute even minimal environmental control over their collections, much less attempt to restore or film deteriorating materials. The JNUL has filmed many of its journals and rarer items, partly in cooperation with a major microform vendor.

Bibliographic Services

The national bibliography of both Israel and the Jewish people is *Kiryat Sefer*, published since 1924. *Kiryat Sefer* fills several functions: it is a bibliography of current Judaica published worldwide, as well as of all Israeli publications on any subject. Many of its entries are extensively annotated. In addition, each issue contains book reviews and articles of Judaica bibliographic content, often based on materials found in the JNUL. For many years *Kiryat Sefer* also contained a "current contents" style section listing scholarly Judaica articles appearing in current journals. In 1975 this section was discontinued in favor of the subject-oriented *Index of Articles in Jewish Studies* (see below).

The primary criticism of *Kiryat Sefer* has been the considerable delay between

actual publication and listing in *Kiryat Sefer* — which seriously limits its use as a book selection tool. This is particularly noticeable in current Israeli Hebraica, which should be reaching the JNUL regularly but is often listed more than a year after publication.

During the period from 1966 to 1971 many libraries used the Library of Congress PL-480 Project's *Accessions List: Israel* as a current Israeli national bibliography. Indeed, with the closing of the PL-480 office in Tel-Aviv, plans were drawn up by the Standing Committee of the National and University Libraries (SCONUL) to produce a current Israeli national bibliography similar in form to the PL-480 *Accessions List*. These plans were never acted on, primarily due to the limited funding available in the aftermath of the 1973 war and thereafter.

A major bibliographic project housed in the JNUL is the Institute for Hebrew Bibliography. This project set out in 1960 to produce a definitive bibliography of all books in Hebrew characters from the invention of printing to the year 1960. The specimen brochure issued in 1964 indicated the intent to complete the card file by the mid 1970s; however, work on the project still continues and publication is not planned in the near future.

While monograph bibliography has advanced slowly, several major indexing projects have developed during this period. As most of these are either computerized or in stages of computerization they have the potential for great current and future use.

The major indexing project in Judaica is the JNUL's *Index of Articles on Jewish Studies* (known in Israel by its Hebrew acronym *RAMBI*) prepared by the *Kiryat Sefer* staff. *RAMBI* is a list of "scholarly" Judaica articles appearing in all languages. Its arrangement is by broad subject area, with an index of specific topics. The primary problem with *RAMBI* today is the lack of a cumulation of its twenty-seven annual volumes — necessitating tedious searching of each volume. The computerization of *RAMBI* (which has just begun) may solve the problem, although at this point there are no plans to enter the retrospective data.

The other major Israeli indexing project is the *Index to Hebrew Periodicals* produced since 1977 by the University of Haifa Library. The *Index* is a cover-to-cover author and specific subject index of some 250 current Hebrew journals in all fields, which appears in print (annually) and in microfiche (current bimonthly, and multi-year cumulations). In the area of Judaica there is some overlap with *RAMBI*;

however, the *Index* covers much material in Rabbinics, Hebrew literature, and Israeli affairs not covered in *RAMBI* (for a comparison of the two from a Judaica standpoint, see Greenbaum, 1983). The *Index* is computer-produced, can be searched on-line, and is now available for searching to all university libraries in Israel via the ALEPH network (see below).

Other computerized Judaica indexing projects in Israel include the University of Haifa's *Eretz-Israel Data Base* (a partial retrospective index of materials on history, archaeology, nature, etc.), an index to nineteenth-century Hebrew newspapers prepared by Yad Ben Zvi, an index to current Israeli newspapers prepared by Tel-Hai College, an index to newspaper literary supplements and to some pre-1977 Judaica journals prepared at the Bar-Ilan Library, and a cumulated index to materials on medieval Hebrew poetry — a joint project of Ben-Gurion and Haifa universities. All these projects have been prepared using the University of Haifa's software and many use the same thesaurus of subject headings. All the data in these files potentially can be made available to other libraries in various forms, including on-line searching. (For a more detailed description of these and other automated Judaica projects, see Adler, 1983.)

Aside from indexing, the last forty years have seen a large increase in the number of Israeli Judaica reference works, particularly encyclopedias and compendia.

A different concept in reference service is the full text index, in effect a computerized concordance with sophisticated search capabilities and the entire text available. The pioneering project of this type is Bar-Ilan's Responsa Project (Choueka 1980), containing several hundred entire volumes of Rabbinic responsa. This type of service has just recently come down to the local library level in the form of a system that makes available the Bible, Talmud (both Bavli and Yerushalmi), and many classic Halachic and Midrashic works — all on a standard microcomputer. This system has just been introduced in Israel and should be a significant research tool.

Professional Training and Organization

The academic background of many librarians tends to be in the humanities, which, in Israel, often is a branch of Jewish studies: Bible, Jewish history, Hebrew literature, etc. Many Israeli-trained academic librarians, therefore, should be minimally conversant with at least some aspects of Judaica. All the university-based schools of librarianship also offer some specific

courses in Judaica aspects of librarianship (in addition to covering Judaica topics within the framework of other courses).

The University of Haifa's Department of Library Studies offers a single elective course in Judaica resources and reference works, which is meant primarily for students with limited background in Judaica. The Hebrew University and Bar-Ilan, on the other hand, have rich programs intended to produce Judaica specialists. For example, this year (1988) Bar-Ilan University's Department of Librarianship and Bibliography is offering courses on the history of Hebrew printing, cataloging of Judaica rare books, Judaica libraries, and a seminar on Judaica bibliography. Bar-Ilan also publishes a journal, *Alei Sefer*, devoted to Hebrew bibliography and booklore. The Hebrew University's Graduate School of Library and Archive Studies is expanding its Judaica librarianship track, and intends in 1989 to offer an elaborate program including specific courses on Judaica resources, Talmudic and Rabbinic literature, Hebrew printing, Hebrew paleography and Jewish libraries, with the writing of an M.L.S. or even Ph.D. thesis in Judaica librarianship. The schools of librarianship will also allow (or even encourage) students to take elective courses in their universities' various Jewish studies departments.

The above applies to the university-level schools of librarianship. There are also other, lower, levels of library education in Israel, whose graduates staff most of the public libraries in Israel (for details see Sever, 1981). Even in these paraprofessional frameworks, Judaic topics are covered and introductory courses in Jewish literature are becoming common.

While the interested student can specialize in Judaica at two of the three library schools, Judaica library education unfortunately ends at this point. There are various frameworks of continuing library education in Israel, but none of them offer any Judaic content. This may be related to the lack of any professional organization dedicated to Judaic bibliography and its problems. Virtually all continuing education for librarians is organized by the Israel Society of Special Libraries and Information Centers, the Israel Library Association (in effect, the trade union of the nonacademic librarians), and the Association of University Graduates in the Humanities and Social Sciences (the trade union of the academic librarians). All of these organizations sponsor conferences and seminars for librarians; but rarely, if ever, is a Judaica-related topic discussed. Professional articles of Judaic content occasionally appear

in the Center for Public Library's journal, *Yad la-kore*.

It appears that while many librarians have Judaica backgrounds, and many function specifically as Judaica librarians, there is little formal contact among them and few opportunities to discuss common problems. There is no Israeli counterpart to the American Association of Jewish Libraries and no forum to sponsor discussions.

Networking

As mentioned earlier, networking and cooperation among Israeli academic libraries have not always gone smoothly. Without going into historical details, which have been covered elsewhere (Sever, 1983), the current situation is that all Israeli university libraries, as well as some other research libraries (in Judaica, notably the library of the Jerusalem branch of Hebrew Union College) are using the same software system, the Hebrew University's ALEPH, to maintain their catalogs. This is no minor achievement and it enables a high degree of data sharing without the complicated communication protocols required to link different software systems.

The ALEPH system is a flexible, state-of-the-art library automation system (for a general description of ALEPH see Levi, 1984). From the standpoint of the Israeli national network ALEPH has several outstanding qualities: it was designed to handle multialphabet data (Latin, Hebrew, and soon Arabic), it enables "user-transparent" communication with all other ALEPH systems in the network, and it allows the copying of bibliographic records from one library's file to another.

A library user at any ALEPH terminal can, theoretically, request a "transfer" to another library and search its data base as if it were resident on his local computer, using basically the same search syntax. This capability exists, but is limited, both by the number of outside users trying to access a given library simultaneously and by the willingness of the libraries in the network to enable this access. While the Israeli universities are all obligated to allow each other access (within the numerical limit they can set), the use of the network by libraries outside the university group has been a subject of recent discussion; there are concerns that access by additional "outside" libraries might both tie up the lines and degrade local library services. In principle, there is no reason that a library outside Israel with a suitable terminal could not link into the network — at least to use the search functions.

The network, at this point, consists mainly of the current cataloging of the member libraries, some going back several years. Only the Social Sciences/Humanities and Science libraries of the Hebrew University (but *not* the JNUL) have undertaken and completed full conversion to date. Furthermore, the Hebrew University and Tel-Aviv University have autonomous departmental libraries with their own separate files, further complicating a nation-wide search. As a partial solution to this problem a brief-entry national union catalog to be automatically derived from the individual library files is planned.

From the standpoint of Judaica, the network is, at this point, much less useful than it is in science or technology, where primary interest is in recent publications. As retrospective conversion proceeds at the Judaica libraries, and particularly at the JNUL, its value will greatly increase. Unfortunately, a major conversion effort at the JNUL does not seem likely in the near future.

In addition to cataloging data, the ALEPH network contains several other "libraries" of Judaica bibliographic data. To date, the *Israel Union List of Serials*, the *Index to Hebrew Periodicals*, and *Eretz Israel Data Base*, as well as the data base of the Hebrew University's Institute for Contemporary Jewry, are all available. Current cataloging of the JNUL's National Sound Archives, Department of Manuscripts and Archives, and the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts is also being entered into ALEPH; however, these files are not yet available through the network. RAMBI data is being entered into an ALEPH file as well, and one hopes that *Kiryat Sefer*, the data of the Institute for Hebrew Bibliography, and other JNUL bibliographic projects will also be input and made available through the network.

Clearly, as more and more Judaica bibliographic data is amassed within the network, its value will grow for libraries outside Israel as well. Simple searching presents

no major technical problems — the communications technology exists and is reliable. Alternately, given sufficient interest, some of these data bases could be made available in CD-ROM form, searchable via a local microcomputer.

Downloading Israeli cataloging data into foreign automated systems is a much more complicated task, involving both character and format conversion (for a detailed discussion of the problems of American use of Israeli cataloging data see Adler, 1988). I believe this is possible and worth serious consideration.

Future — International Cooperation

The Israeli Judaica library scene has consisted up to now largely of individual collections and individual expertise. The Israeli library community has the ability to provide bibliographic services that are needed worldwide: cataloging, indexing, union lists, and copies of scarce materials. In order to do this, several things are needed on both national and international levels: leadership, coordination, standards, and, last but not least, funding.

I believe that cooperation between Israeli and American Judaica libraries and librarians — agreement on joint projects of mutual benefit — is not only possible but crucial in these days of limited budgets, improved communications technology, and the recognized need for resource sharing — both bibliographic and human. I hope that when we look back at the next anniversary occasion, we will be able to point to significant achievements in this area.

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