

RESPONSA

On Indexes to Jewish Periodicals

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Q. Where can the article "The Jewish Parasite," by Alex Bein, be found?

A. The correct answer to this question is that Alex Bein's article, "The Jewish Parasite: Notes on the Semantics of the Jewish Problem, with special reference to Germany," appeared in vol. 9 of the Leo Baeck Institute's *Year Book* (1964), on pages 3-40.

If the answer were all that is of interest, we could stop here and say no more. But it is the purpose of this column to convey the joy of the hunt as well as the quarry, to describe methods as well as results. It should therefore be instructive to discuss alternate search strategies for obtaining this information.

The basis of this query was a telephone call from an information specialist at a corporate library. She was inquiring on behalf of a reader seeking an article by Bein that he *thought* had been published "around ten years ago, in a Jewish scholarly journal," and that—to the best of his recollection—bore the title "Jewish Parasite."

Periodical Indexes

Given these three bits of information—author's name, approximate title of article, and period of publication—it was decided to consult the two indexes to Judaica periodical literature that cover English-language serials: *Index to Jewish Periodicals* (with coverage from June 1963) and *Index of Articles on Jewish Studies* (with coverage in numerous languages from 1966; sometimes referred to as *RAMBI*, after its Hebrew name). Although the date of publication was supposedly circa 1978, the search was extended to encompass the earliest volumes of these two indexes, because it has often been my experience that when a reader of a certain age recalls a citation for an item published "about ten years ago," it can actually mean—as turned out to be the case here—upwards of a quarter century ago. Unfortunately, no

citation for the sought article was located in either of the two indexes, from their very first volumes through 1980.

While a citation for "The Jewish Parasite" was not found in these tools, a potentially helpful citation was noted in vol. 1 of *RAMBI* for an article by Bein in French, entitled "La question juive dans la littérature antisémite moderne," which appeared in vol. 7 of *Dispersion et Unité* (1966), a periodical issued by the World Zionist Organization. Its English-language counterpart has been called, variously, *In the Dispersion, Dispersion and Unity*, and *Forum on the Jewish People, Zionism and Israel*.

The English version of "La question juive . . ." first appeared in issue no. 4 of *In the Dispersion* (Winter 1964/65), under the title "The Jewish Question in Modern Anti-Semitic Literature: Prelude to 'The Final Solution'" (pp. 126-154). In a footnote, Bein refers readers to "my essay, 'Der jüdische Parasit: Observations on the Semantics of the Jewish Problem,' to be published in *Year Book* No. IX of the Leo Baeck Institute" (Bein 1964/65, p. 136, footnote 22). With this reference in hand, it was now easy to locate Bein's article in the Leo Baeck Institute *Year Book*, where (as we have seen) it bears the English title "The Jewish Parasite."

So much for Search Strategy No. 1. While ultimately successful, this roundabout approach illustrates a couple of the shortcomings of Judaica periodical indexes:

(1) *Lack of cumulation*: A volume-by-volume search over a span of 15 years can be extremely tedious, in the absence of either printed index cumulations or online databases covering the field. This particular search was expedited by the fact that the author of the article and its approximate title were both known. Nevertheless, as Menahem Schmelzer pointed out in his presentation on "Research Services" at the 1988 Harvard conference *Judaica Librarianship: Facing the Future*, "All users

appreciate the comprehensiveness and the detailed and easy classification of the *Index of Articles on Jewish Studies* [*RAMBI*], but the fact that there are now twenty-seven volumes of this important work makes cumulative indexes arranged by author and subject and published at regular intervals, desirable." (Schmelzer, 1989, p. 29)

(2) *Selective coverage*: The article in question turns out to have been published in an annual that is not covered by the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*, and it appeared too early to be covered in *RAMBI*. (Moreover, the *LBI Year Book* is covered only from vol. 2 [1967] of that index.)

Bein's article might have been included in *Palestine and Zionism*, an index prepared at the Zionist Archives and Library in New York and printed by the H. W. Wilson Company; however, this index, described by Shimeon Brisman in his excellent survey of "Indexes to Jewish Periodicals and Monographs" as "the most comprehensive and professionally executed of its kind in the Jewish field" (Brisman 1977, p. 209), ceased publication in 1956.

For ten years thereafter, index coverage of a large body of Judaica periodicals was either altogether nonexistent or (for the years prior to publication of vol. 1 of *RAMBI*, during which the *Index to Jewish Periodicals* alone appeared) inadequate. In the end, then, by using the Judaica periodical index route to track down Bein's essay, it was purely serendipitous that the actual citation was located.

Had there been reason beforehand to suspect that "The Jewish Parasite" was published in the *LBI Year Book*, the cumulative index to that annual could have been consulted. In his survey, Brisman includes a list of "Indexes to Individual Jewish Periodicals: Retrospective and Current" (Brisman 1977, pp. 239-241). But at the time of his book's publication, the LBI had not yet issued a cumulative index to its *Year Book*.

A *General Index to Year Books I–XX* (1956–1975), compiled by Eli Rothschild, was only published in 1982. In it, Bein's essay is accessible through the Index of Authors, Index of Persons (i.e., authors and persons as subjects of articles), and the Index of Subjects, under the heading "Antisemitism." Given the sketchy nature of the information provided over the telephone, it did not occur to me to check this cumulative index, however.

How else might one have located this reference? One method, which is not readily available to librarians working in small or specialized Judaica collections, would be to scan general periodical indexes in which the LBI *Year Book* is indexed. The 13th edition (1987–88) of *Irregular Serials and Annuals* indicates that the LBI *Year Book* is indexed in the following sources: *American Bibliography of Slavic and East European Studies* (which began publication in 1967, as a continuation of the *American Bibliography of Russian and East European Studies*, covering the years 1956–1966), *Historical Abstracts* (in Part A, Modern History Abstracts, and Part B, Twentieth Century Abstracts), and *America, History and Life. Historical Abstracts and America, History and Life* are both published by ABC-Clio, in Santa Barbara, California, and in these tools the LBI *Year Book* is indexed from 1963. ABC-Clio indexes are available both in print and online.

Subject Bibliographies

Another avenue of approach would be to check subject bibliographies. Given its presumed title, one might assume (correctly) that Bein's essay had something to do with antisemitism, and then proceed by consulting bibliographies on antisemitism and the Holocaust. Citations for "The Jewish Parasite" are in fact found in three such bibliographies: *Prejudice: Racist—Religious—Nationalist* (no. 5 of The Wiener Library's *Catalogue Series*, 1971); the recently published *Bibliography on Holocaust Literature*, compiled by Abraham J. Edelheit and Hershel Edelheit (1986); and *The Holocaust and After*, compiled by Jacob Robinson (1973).

Consultation of these bibliographies, however, reveals an inconsistency in the subject approach of one and an indexing error in a second.

In *Prejudice: Racist—Religious—Nationalist*, the German and English versions of "The Jewish Parasite" are classified in two separate chapters: under the heading *General Works. Antisemitism* in Section II.C (item 493: "'Der jüdische Parasit': Bemerkungen zur Semantik der Juden-

frage"; the adjacent items 492 and 494 are citations for articles by Bein on related topics), and under *Individual Countries. Germany. Antisemitism. History and Sociology* in Section II.K.2.a (item 2637: "The Jewish Parasite . . .").

At least three references to articles by Bein appear in Robinson's bibliography, *The Holocaust and After*, which covers English-language publications only. The phrase "at least three" is used here, because Bein's name appears only *once* in the index (item 154: "Modern Anti-Semitism and Its Effect on the Jewish Question"), whereas two additional citations for articles by Bein appear on the same page as the indexed reference (items 159–160: "The Jewish Parasite . . ." and "The Jewish Question in Modern Anti-Semitic Literature").

Conclusions

Serious gaps exist in the coverage of Judaica periodical indexes. First, there is the gap in *chronological* coverage, ranging from 1956 (the demise of *Palestine and Zionism*) to 1963 (the inception of the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*) or 1966 (the advent of *RAMBI*)—not to mention the total lack of coverage for Judaica periodicals issued prior to 1946. It is devoutly to be desired that index coverage be retrospectively extended to include at least the 1956–1966 period, and that coverage be provided on a cumulated basis. Second, there is a gap in the *completeness* of coverage of serials in the field (the LBI *Year Book* is indexed only from vol. 2 of *RAMBI*, and not at all in the *Index to Jewish Periodicals*). What this means, is that a search of Judaica indexing tools alone will yield incomplete results when one is faced with the sort of research problem posed here. Judaica index searches need to be supplemented both by searches of Judaica subject bibliographies and of non-Judaica indexes.

The indexing field has embraced computer technology, and today one finds not only printed indexes, but also online indexes and indexes in CD-ROM format. This trend toward online or optical disk databases has not yet affected Judaica periodical indexes, though both *RAMBI* and the *Index to Jewish Periodicals* make use of computerized typesetting techniques, and their future may well lie in the direction of online or optical disk formats. It is unclear, however, at this time whether the bibliographical data included in these as-yet-unrealized tools will become part of a *retrospective* database (including coverage of the "missing years" between 1956 and 1963 or 1966), or whether only newly created bibliographic records will form part

of the database. For the time being, it appears that a creative and improvisational search strategy will be necessary to yield satisfactory results in inquiries such as the one that inspired the present column.

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Hebrew and Bilingual Serials

1. אסופות: ספר שנה למדעי היהדות.
2. גלים: כתב עת של אגודת שוחרי הספרות חיפה והצפון.
3. דרכי אר"ץ: בטאון המרכז העולמי למורשת יהדות ארם-צובה (חלב).
4. עדות.
5. פסיפס: עיתון לשירה ולמידע על ספרי שירה ואמנות.
6. שנתון אסטרטגי.

1. **Asupot: Annual for Jewish Studies.** v. 1— 1987/1988— Editor: Meir Benayahu. Yad Harav Nissim, 44 Jabotinsky Street, Jerusalem, Israel. Annual. \$25.00.

A scholarly publication devoted to Jewish studies. The initial volume includes articles about the history of the Hebrew calendar; messianism and astrology in the thought of Rabbi Isaac Abravanel; and the legal status of the Jews of Livorno in 1593. Of particular note is a bibliography describing 118 Hebrew manuscripts, parts of which are found in various collections.

2. **Galim: Literary Magazine.** Gilayon 1— 1987/1988— Editors: Ada Aharoni, Mordehaj Steinberg. Galim, P.O.B. 9137, Haifa 31091, Israel. Annual. \$3.00.

This annual, published by Agudat Shoḥare ha-Sifrut Hefah veva-Tsafon (loosely translated: Association for Promotion of Literature of Haifa and the North), seeks to make modern literature accessible to a wider public, and to encourage beginning authors and poets by publishing new Hebrew poetry and prose. The first issue includes an interview with Saul Bellow, an essay about the depiction of Arabs and Jews in Arab-Israeli literature, and an article about the Jewish problem as a theme in French novels. Prose, poetry, and drama by new authors appear throughout the issue. A final section lists activities of the Association.

3. **Darchey Eretz: Journal of the World Centre for Aleppo Jews Traditional Culture.** no. 1— September 1986— Editor: Moshe Cohen. World Center for Aleppo Jews Traditional Culture, 118a Ben Yehuda Street, Tel-Aviv 63401, Israel. Irregular. \$8.00 per issue.

The World Center for Aleppo Jews Traditional Culture was established in Israel in

1985, "to document, to promote and to disseminate" the cultural heritage of Aleppo Jewry. Their journal "reflects the many facets of the Aleppo Jewish community," through stories, biographies, photos, legend, and poetry. Each issue includes book reviews.

4. **Edut (Testimony).** v. 1— June 1987— Editors: Aryeh Fialkov, Yudke Helman. Joint publication of Bet Loḥame ha-Geta'ot and Kibuts ha-Me'uḥad Publishing House, 102 Arlosoroff Street, Tel-Aviv 62097, Israel. Irregular. \$5.00 per issue.

This journal continues *Yedi'ot*, issued by Bet Loḥame ha-Geta'ot (Ghetto Fighters House) from 1951 to 1960. "The broadening of the activities of" Bet Loḥame ha-Geta'ot, the expansion of its archives, and the establishment of the Zuckerman Study Center for Jewish Resistance in Nazi-Occupied Europe led to the renewal of the journal. The editors see "the deepening of an awareness of the Holocaust among the young generation" as their mission. The lead article of the premier issue is about the "Final Solution." The author is Zvi Shner, one of the founders of Bet Loḥame ha-Geta'ot. Much of the rest of the periodical is devoted to personal narratives from the archives of Bet Loḥame ha-Geta'ot. Included also are book and periodical reviews.

5. **Pesefas: 'Iton le-Shirah ule-Meda' 'al Sifre Shirah ve-Omanut.** Gilayon 1— December 1987— Editor: Itamar Ya'oz-Kest. Eked, 29 Bar-Kokhba, Tel-Aviv 61111, Israel. Quarterly. \$20.00.

A magazine devoted to poetry. The first issue includes articles about Aba Kovner, an interview with Louis Aragon, and an essay on poetic sensibility in the thought of Rav Kook. New Hebrew poetry is interspersed throughout the periodical, which includes a section for children's poetry as well as book reviews.

6. **Shenaton Estrategi.** 1986— Editor: Yosef Alfer. Joint publication of ha-Merkaz le-Meḥkarim Estrategiyim 'a. sh. Yafeh and Kibuts ha-Me'uḥad Publishing House, P.O.B. 16040, 39 Hayetzira Street, Ramat Gan 52521, Israel. Annual. Price not available. ISBN 965-02-0023-1.

Includes articles pertaining to Israel's military policy and other issues of strategic interest to Israel. The first volume includes pieces about the Lebanon Campaign of 1982, the sale of Israeli weapons to other countries, and the attitude of the Soviet bloc towards terrorist organizations.

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Schmelzer, Menahem. "Research Services." In: Berlin, Charles, ed. *Judaica Librarianship: Facing the Future; Proceedings of a Conference Held at Harvard University on May 2-3, 1988 on the Occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Judaica Department of the Harvard College Library.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Library, 1989, pp. 27-32. Reprinted in: *Judaica Librarianship* Vol. 4 No. 2 (Spring 1988-Winter 1989), pp. 128-130.

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