

COMMENTARIES

AJL, 1965-1990

Nov. 26, 1991

Dear Bella,

I was pleased to receive *Judaica Librarianship* [vol. 5, no. 2] and thank you for sending it.

The historical section brought back many memories. I have a copy of the photo [p. 209] of the 1951 Dinner [of the Jewish Librarians Association] and I was able to identify nearly all the participants without referring to the caption.

Good to hear from you. All the best.

Cordially,

Philip Goodman
Jerusalem, Israel

Editor's Note: Rabbi Goodman was sent the preceding issue of the journal because a letter-to-the-editor written by him was published in that issue (p. 210). He is mentioned in several articles within the special section on AJL's history as having played a key role in the founding of the Association. – BHW

CATALOG DEPT.

August 28, 1991

Dear Editor:

Recently we received a complete siddur meant to be used on Yom ha-atma'ut. Until now, we had no rational means of handling Yom ha-atma'ut prayers at all. We used a "bandage heading" like: Israel Independence Day prayers. But this siddur got me to thinking about how to distinguish between a book merely containing supplementary prayers for Yom ha-atma'ut and/or Yom Yerushalayim and a prayer book one can use fully for the whole special day.

The solution is simple: enter a book containing Yom ha-atma'ut or Yom Yerushalayim [prayers] under author, title (or uniform title) – whichever is appropriate and add (a) subject heading(s) for Yom ha-atma'ut – Liturgy texts (or Yom Yerushalayim – Liturgy texts) as needed. For publications fully devoted to the day assign for main and added entries: Siddur. Yom ha-atma'ut and/or Siddur. Yom Yerushalayim.

Also, an update on how we are filing liturgy in our card catalog: We are now including language as an element in the filing. However, rite is not being considered a filing element because we can use subjects to access all liturgy of a particular rite.

Sincerely yours,

Bernard Rabenstein
Judaica Librarian
Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute
of Religion
Cincinnati, Ohio

Dear Mr. Rabenstein:

Thank you for your letter. The approach you describe seems sensible from a user perspective, in addition to being consistent with the practices of the Library of Congress.

Regarding your point on filing, I would like to note that the YIVO Library has subarranged Jewish prayer books by language for decades, and that this method is very responsive to user needs, i.e., it allows for quick retrieval of a Siddur in French, or a Mahzor in German. You did not indicate, however, whether the language element follows or precedes the occasion to which the prayer book is devoted, e.g., *Siddur. Sabbath. French* or *Siddur. French. Sabbath*. From your Yom Ha-atma'ut examples, I would infer the former pattern, but this hides information from a user primarily interested in language.

At YIVO we, too, have found that including rite as an element of the heading is problematic. The problem is not so much one of filing as it is of cataloging: it is often difficult for the cataloger to ascertain the precise rite. You are correct in pointing out the redundancy of marking the rite in both descriptive and subject headings.

As I note in my article in this issue, "Judaica and Hebraica Cataloging: Anglo-American Traditions," we need more research on the user approach to the catalog with regard to liturgical works.

I am pleased to note the continuing interest in the problems of cataloging Jewish liturgy. See a related article by Suzanne Stauffer of HUC-JIR, New York, in this issue.

Sincerely,

Bella Hass Weinberg
Editor, *Judaica Librarianship*
and
Consulting Librarian, YIVO

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