


12-31-1995

Jewish Theological Seminary of America Library.
Broadside Collection. Hamden, Conn.:
Micrographic Systems of Connecticut for The
Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992. 3
microfilm reels. \$35.00 per reel + shipping

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Recommended Citation

Walfish, Barry D.. 1995. "Jewish Theological Seminary of America Library. Broadside Collection. Hamden, Conn.: Micrographic Systems of Connecticut for The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992. 3 microfilm reels. \$35.00 per reel + shipping." *Judaica Librarianship* 9: 40-47. doi:[10.14263/2330-2976.1183](https://doi.org/10.14263/2330-2976.1183).

Jewish Theological Seminary of America. *Library. Broadside Collection.*

Hamden, Conn.: Micrographic Systems of Connecticut for The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1992. 3 microfilm reels. \$35.00 per reel + shipping.

Reviewed by:

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Abstract: Reviews the broadside collection published by the Jewish Theological Seminary on microfilm, provides highlights from the collection, and evaluates the organization, cataloging, and indexing of the material.

The Nature of Broadside

Broadside are single sheets of paper printed on one side for distribution on the streets or in public meeting-places. They cover "many different forms of popular street literature—handbills, proclamations, advertisements, religious documents, as well as ballads and songs" (Shepard, 1962, p. 23). This description applies to Jewish broadside equally well, as is attested by the extensive broadside collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary Library, part of which has recently been made available on microfilm.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about broadside is that they have been preserved at all, since they had "no pretensions to permanence" (ibid.). They address events or issues of immediate concern and are meant to be discarded after having been read or circulated. Yet many broadside have survived, and they provide important information about the social, religious, and cultural lives of the communities which produced them. Thus they serve as important sources for social and literary historians.

Several examples of books of Judaic interest which are based on broadside are: *'Am mekadeshe shevi'i* (1986), on the struggle for Sabbath observance in Petah-Tikvah, Israel; Herzog, *Conflict of Symbols* (1987), a sociological analysis of Israeli election campaigns based on campaign posters; and Kluger, *Min ha-ma'or* (1977–1987), which includes broadside produced by the Jerusalem ultra-Orthodox community between 1840 and 1940.

The JTS Collection

The Seminary's broadside collection is very rich. The three microfilm reels under review contain only a portion of the collection. They include over 1,100 items, originating in various parts of Europe, North America, and Palestine/Israel, and dating from the seventeenth to the mid-twentieth century. Most are anonymous, but some are signed and even dated. The range of material covered is quite extensive, including religious and secular poems in Hebrew, Yiddish, and European languages; alphabet charts for the study of Hebrew; proclamations and open letters by religious authorities on the burning issues of the day; funeral orations; wedding invitations; and requests for charitable donations. Items of special interest are listed in the Appendix to this review, which provides further details on the nature of this material.

Cataloging of the Material

Cataloging is an expensive, labor-intensive activity. Yet it must be done if a library is to provide adequate access to its holdings. Cataloging of ephemera such as broadside is a particularly expensive proposition when one considers the extent of each item—a single page. Most libraries would find the cost prohibitive and would at best provide a checklist of their holdings of such material. The Seminary Library is therefore to be highly commended for its efforts to provide full cataloging for this material. By doing this, it has integrated broadside into its holdings and helped to increase their utilization by its patrons.

Still, I would be remiss in my responsibilities as reviewer if I did not point out several shortcomings and inconsistencies in the quality of the cataloging provided:

1. *Mistakes in transcription and romanization.* The romanization is especially poor for the Yiddish items. It seems obvious that the cataloger[s?] did not understand Yiddish. For example, no. 2:86 should read "Shtey oyf mayn folk," not "Shete oyf mayn polek; and no. 2:127 should read: "Ikh mit mayn sheyne mishpohe," not "Eikh mit mayin shene mishpohe" (see Figure 1). French in archaic script also seems to have presented problems. For example, the entry for item 2:110 (see Appendix) should read: "Louange à l'éternel qui a partagé. . . ." not "Lovange . . . qui a partadé. . . ."

2. *Omission of important access points.* Occasionally, authors and subjects are omitted from the records. For example, although item 3:179 (see Appendix) is signed by Isaac Bernays, the catalog record does not mention his name. Many records do not provide subject headings. If the goal was uniform accessibility, then all items should have received the same level of treatment.

3. *Inconsistencies.* The same items are occasionally cataloged more than once and sometimes differently. There is no need for such pointless repetition. Duplicate copies should be so indicated. One glaring example of lack of authority control is the case of the author Elazar Aharon Polyasi. His name appears under three different spellings: Ployise, Elazar Aharon; Polyise, Elazar Aharon; and Pulyasi, Eliezer Aharon (see Hebrew spelling in Figure 2).

Organization of the Broadside

While the provision of cataloging copy for this material is indeed an important step in making it accessible, other measures could have been taken to enhance its value as a collection. Only minimal effort was made to

organize the broadsides in any recognizable fashion before microfilming them. One does encounter groups of related items in various locations on the reels. This is especially true of the first reel, over half of which consists of various Hebrew poems from Italy, including wedding poems, synagogue dedication poems, and eulogies. There are, however, many other poems of a similar nature and provenance scattered among the other reels. Anyone looking for all the Italian Hebrew poetry in the collection would have to scan it in its entirety. The same applies for virtually any other topic; the material is not organized in an easily perceptible manner. Alphabet charts, for example, are scattered throughout the reels, even though the various items are obviously related (see Appendix, items 1:11, 13; 2:21; 3:322).

This shortcoming could have been overcome by adequate indexes, but here, too, the user is not well served. The only index provided is to the call numbers of the items, which have no immediate significance to the reader (see Figure 3). The items are not even numbered in sequence on the reels, and so if one is searching for a particular item on a reel, one must use the call number index and count the items oneself, an extremely cumbersome operation. The only way to access the information provided in the catalog records is through the Seminary's online catalog, which is available in situ [on site] or on the Internet. But these tools provide access to the Seminary's entire collection, and users wishing to limit their search to broadsides as a cultural phenomenon or a literary genre would not be helped very much by this type of access. A search cannot be limited by genre because the term 'Broad-sides' does not appear in most records as an access point. It does appear in the collation, but this field is not searchable. (A recent telnet search for the subject 'Broad-sides' in the Seminary's online catalog turned up close to 400 items. This was more than expected and indicates that the Seminary's catalogers have added the subject heading 'Broad-sides' to many records since the time that the microfilms were produced. Still, this represents just over a third of the collection; much more needs to be done to enhance access to this genre.)

Index of Broadside call numbers

Call number	#	Call number	#	Call number	#
B. B10	171	B. B127	154	B. E22	19
B. B11	172	B. B132	176	B. E23	23
B. B24	168	B. B133	175	B. E24	20
B. B32	152	B. B134a	174	B. E27	5
B. B34	162	B. B134b	173	B. E30	18
B. B37	161	B. B136	150	B. E43	8
B. B42	159	B. B150	149	B. E44	15
B. B43	151	B. B175	164	B. E50	6
B. B56	160	B. E1	10	B. E53	9
B. B58	153	B. E2	11	B. E55	17
B. B66	166	B. E3	16	B. G6	28
B. B68	165	B. E-4	14	B. G7	31
B. B71	167	B. E-5	13	B. G8	41
B. B78	156	B. E6	22	B. G10	30
B. B82	158	B. E8	24	B. G11	29
B. B100	169	B. E9	25	B. G16	27
B. B101	170	B. E10	26	B. G24	40
B. B106	163	B. E15	12	B. G40a	33
B. B108	157	B. E16	7	B. G42	48
B. B120	155	B. E21	21	B. G43	39

List of Broad-sides on reel 1

#	Call number	#	Call number	#	Call number
1	B. (NS)E120	21	B. E21	41	B. G8
2	B. (NS)E121	22	B. E6	42	B. G55
3	B. (NS)E102	23	B. E23	43	B. G75
4	B. (NS)E101	24	B. E8	44	B. G74
5	B. E27	25	B. E9	45	B. G71
6	B. E50	26	B. E10	46	B. G68, 68a
7	B. E16	27	B. G16	47	B. G52
8	B. E43	28	B. G6	48	B. G42
9	B. E53	29	B. G11	49	B. (NS)Cr194
10	B. E1	30	B. G10	50	B. (NS)Cr64
11	B. E2	31	B. G7	51	B. (NS)Cr74
12	B. E15	32	B. G47	52	B. (NS)Cr75
13	B. E-5	33	B. G40a	53	B. (NS)Cr29
14	B. E-4	34	B. G49	54	B. (NS)Cr83
15	B. E44	35	B. G73	55	B. (NS)Cr173
16	B. E3	36	B. G51	56	B. (NS)Cr85
17	B. E55	37	B. (NS)G78	57	B. (NS)Cr26
18	B. E30	38	B. G50	58	B. (NS)Cr89
19	B. E22	39	B. G43	59	B. (NS)Cr14
20	B. E24	40	B. G24	60	B. (NS)Cr8

Figure 3. Excerpts from the printed index to the *Broadside Collection* on microfilm.

One gets the impression that the microfilming of this collection was done in-house as part of a preservation project and that no thought was given initially to making the films available to other libraries. Only as an afterthought was this done, and then no effort was made, presumably owing to lack of time and/or money, to provide proper indexes to the collection.

Conclusion

The JTS Library deserves to be commended for its efforts in preserving, cataloging, and disseminating this important collection. As was already mentioned, the present publication includes only a part of the Seminary's broadside holdings, and the Library intends to continue microfilming. I would urge the Seminary Library to make every effort to improve the organization and cataloging quality of this material, and to provide proper indexes which would greatly enhance the accessibility of the collection to potential users.

Appendix: Selected Items from The JTS Broadside Collection

(Captions are the reviewer's, based, in most cases, on the cataloging provided by JTS on the reels.)

Reel 1

3. Lerner, Mayer ben Mordecai. Responsum regarding burial practices in Altona. Altona, [18—?].

11, 13. Alphabet chart with prayers and woodcut depicting a scene with children playing at a table while the teacher is about to beat a student and an angel hovers overhead. Venice, 1646.

57. Prayer for the sick, during cholera epidemic. Amsterdam, [18—?].

104. Contract for synagogue seat. Lvov, [1813/14].

142. Ottolenghi, Samuel David. Poem on the dedication of a synagogue. Padua, 1705.

146. *Tefilah 'al hatslahat milhamot ha-malkah* (Prayer for the success of the wars of the Queen). Mantua, [1777/78].

149. Publisher's announcement for Koenigsberg edition of the *Arba'ah Turim*. Koenigsberg, 1860.

150. Collection of parallel passages to *Seder 'olam*, ch. 30 [a chronology of Jewish history from the geonic period]. Stockholm, 1889.



Figure 4. Shemirah (amulet) for a newborn featuring a micrographic portrait of Rabbi Akiva Eger, of Posen. Micrography is an art form in which miniature script (in this case, Hebrew) is used to create geometric or abstract forms or depictions of objects, animals, or human beings. It has been in use since the early Middle Ages, was especially popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and continues to be popular today especially among religious artists, for whom it can be seen as a form of religious expression.

152. Proposal for establishing an evening yeshivah in New York City. New York, [1939/40].

155. Announcement of publication of vol. 2 of *ha-Ketav vaha-ḳabalah* (Text and tradition, by J. Z. Mecklenburg [a commentary on the Torah]). Koenigsberg, [1842/43].

163. Avrahamiyahu, N. Call to introduce Hebrew language instruction in schools all over the world, as Hebrew is the language of peace. Jerusalem [between 1927 and 1932].

177. Genealogical table of the Lehmann family, 1801–1945. [Germany, 1945?].

Reel 2

21. Alphabet chart with prayers. Livorno, 1846. With engraving of teacher whipping a student, and an angel dropping something to students sitting at a table.

58. Ten Commandments with micrographic illustration of Moses. [France, 19—?].

59. Braverman, Hilel. Micrographic illustration of King Solomon, containing Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. [France, 18—?].
60. *Shemirah* [amulet] for newborn and mother, with micrographic portrait of R. Akiva Eger. [Budapest, 18—?]. (See Figure 4.)
61. Struck, Hermann, Hayyim Nahman Bialik's *Megilat ha-esh* (Scroll of Fire) in a micrographic portrait of the author. Tel-Aviv, [19—?]. (See Figure 5.)
62. Goldshtain, Mosheh Eliyahu. Jonah's ship in micrography. [Europe, 1897]. (See Figure 6.)
96. Shraiber, M. A. Song in Hebrew and English to commemorate the 100th year of American independence. New York, 1876.
99. Gaster, A. E. *Shir mizmor le-Holland be-yom hag huledet malkenu ve-avinu Vilhelm ha-3* (A song for Holland on the birthday of our king and father Wilhelm 3), 1863. Bucarest, 1863. In Hebrew, Dutch, and Rumanian.
109. Wine song for Purim, a parody of the *piyut Zekhor* (Remember), which is part of the *Geshem* service (prayer for rain recited on Shemini Atseret as part of the Musaf service). Czernowitz, 1861.
110. Crosnic, Josef. Song of praise to Napoleon in Hebrew and French. France, [18—?].
115. Kopelowitz, J. Laudatory poem to Queen Victoria for her sixtieth birthday. London, 1897. In Hebrew and English.
- 326–28. Kazis, Yisrael Gedalyah. Sumptuary laws [laws to prevent extravagance in private life by limiting spending on clothing, furniture, banquets, etc.]. Mantua, [17—?].

Reel 3

- 14–15. Yiddish poster warning against lice. Berlin, 1923. The text reads: *Dam, tsefarde'a, kinim—di drite make iz di ergste; hit zikh far layz! Fun layz krigt men plektifus* (Blood, Frogs, Lice—The third plague is the worst: Protect yourself against lice; from lice one gets plaque-typhus).
20. Police announcement of reward for killers of Joseph Yacoubi and his son David of Nahalal, Palestine. Jerusalem, 1932.
67. Prayer for lighting Sabbath candles. Mantua, [16—?].
77. Prayer concerning plague in Avignon, France, written in Italy, [18—?].
78. Prayer of thanks for victory of the Emperor Joseph II after the capture of Belgrade. Mantua, [18—?].
96. *Haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) proclamation against paying taxes to the *kefar ha-yishuv* (Jewish community in Palestine before the establishment of the State in 1948). [Jerusalem?, 19—?].



Figure 5. Hayyim Nahman Bialik, portrayed in a micrographic portrait using the text of his epic poem of the exile, *Megilat ha-esh* (Scroll of Fire).

105. Warning by Agudat Yisrael in Jerusalem not to participate in census on the occasion of the annexation of Danzig by the Germans. Jerusalem, 1939.
106. Subscription sheet for the Anti-Zionist League in Paris. Paris, 1924.
108. Proclamation by Neturei Karta of the United States against participation in a strike organized by the Zionists. [Jerusalem, 19—?].
120. Announcement by R. Zvi Pesah Frank that it is too dangerous to come to synagogue for *selihot* (penitential prayers recited before dawn during the week preceding Rosh Hashanah and between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), and it is better to pray at home. [Jerusalem, 19—?]. Several

Jews had recently been murdered in the streets of Jerusalem.

152. Defense of the Zohar and *qabalah* against attacks by Yemenite Jews, published by *Bet-din tsedek la'adat ha-Sefaradim* (Religious court of the Sephardi Community). Jerusalem, 1933.
155. Denunciation of Yemenite critics of the Zohar, specifically, Yahya Kafih, by the Ashkenazi rabbi, Joseph Dushinsky. Jerusalem, [1933/34].
156. Denunciation by Yemenite rabbis of the Yemenite authors of the open letter (*gilui da'at*), who are referred to as Irgun or Merkaz Avi David. [Jerusalem, between 1930 and 1950].

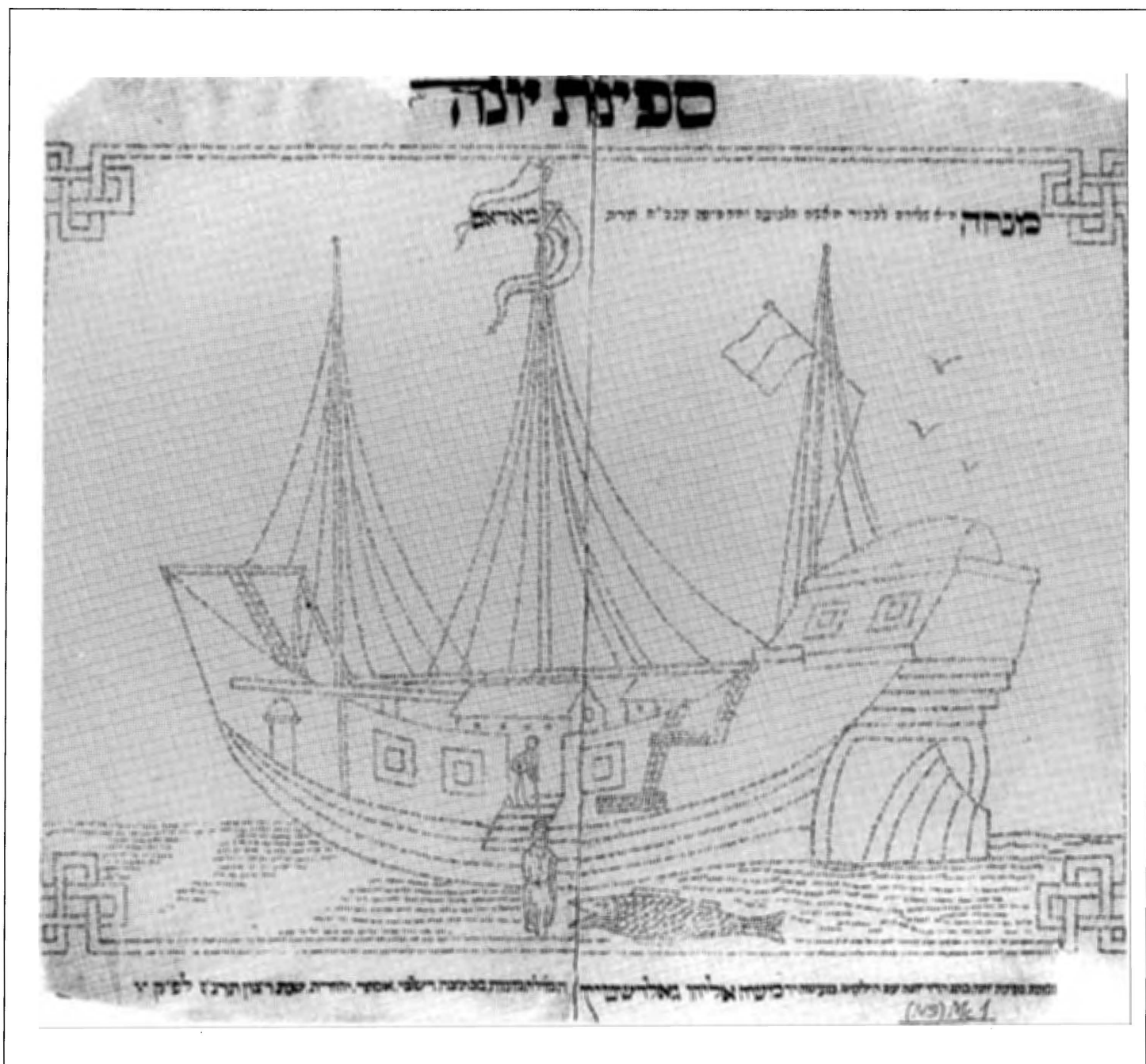


Figure 6. The book of Jonah in a micrographic illustration, depicting the ship he sailed on and the big fish that swallowed him.

158. Request to Rabbi Abraham Galliki of Istanbul for charity for Jews of Safed after an earthquake in that city. Istanbul, 1762.

176. Invitation to E. N. Adler for a special service at the Central Synagogue to commemorate the 75th year of Victoria's reign, June 20, 1897. Adler was a well-known bibliophile, collector, and traveler. His manuscript collection was acquired by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1923.

179. Bernays, Isaac. Proclamation against Reform innovations in the prayerbook (re references to redemption [*ge'ulah*], resurrection [*tehiyah*], and Messiah [*mashiah*]). Hamburg, 1841. In German in Hebrew script. Bernays was the rabbi of Hamburg from 1821 until his death in 1849. He waged a fierce campaign against the nascent Reform movement and its theological and liturgical innovations.

188. Announcement of the establishment of a fund to provide free education at the Talmud Torah of Venice. Venice, 1776/77.

198. Announcement of a tax exemption for the Jewish community in Bohemia. [Bohemia], 1846.

201. Proclamation by several rabbis against allowing women to vote and run for election in the Palestine municipal elections. Jerusalem, [1919?].

206. Proclamation signed by nine rabbis against the use of Hebrew language in schools (*lvrit be-lvrit*). Jerusalem, 1919.

227. Announcement of a decision by a general meeting of the rabbis of Palestine rejecting the decision by the temporary committee allowing women to vote. Jerusalem, 1920. Witnessed by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, chief rabbi of Palestine from 1921 to 1935.

240. Proclamation by Voice of Torah Jewry that the Jewish people and their redemption are not connected with the State of Israel. [New York, 194-?].

276. Proclamation against introducing secular studies in Jewish schools. Alot ha-berit. Jerusalem, [1878]. (See Figure 7.)

282. *Eyder du host gevashn di hent mit zeyf un vaser, rir zikh nit tsu tsum esn. Rir nit on reyne oyn. Klepigē kreynk klepn zikh tsu shmuts. Berlin: "Aze", 1923.* (Translation: Do not touch food before you have washed your hands with soap and water. Do not touch clean eyes. Contagious diseases stick to dirt. (See Figure 8.)

322. Alphabet chart with prayers, with woodcut of teacher whipping a boy and other kids playing. Venice, 1655/56. French and Hebrew. Cf. similar items, cited above under Reels 1 and 2 (1:13, 2:21).

336. Prayer for peace. [France], 1809.

337. Pesaro, Moise Sabbato Beer. Poem of praise to Napoleon. Pisa, 1809.



Figure 7. Proclamation against engaging in secular studies, issued by a number of Jerusalem rabbis in 1878.



Figure 8. A public health announcement, Berlin 1923. (See Appendix, Reel 3, entry 282 for Romanization of Yiddish text and English translation.)

Acknowledgment

The figures accompanying this article are reproduced courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

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