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## Hebraica Authority Control at Brandeis\*

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**Abstract:** Brandeis University Libraries has maintained separate authority files for all names written on title pages in Hebraic script—for personal, corporate, place, and conference headings. The files enable the cataloger to search in roman or Hebraic script. This paper reviews the history of the Hebraica authority files, their organization, changes in usage, adaptation to AACR2, and their reactivation when Hebrew script became available on RLIN. Current usage is examined in light of RLIN and the accommodation of nonroman scripts in the USMARC authorities format.

### Why Authority Control?

We tend to think of authority control as a relatively recent problem, a problem of card catalogs or online catalogs (OPACs). But actually, the issue is more antiquated than that. Consider names in the Bible: who was the father-in-law of Moses? Yitro? Re'uel? Hovav? For thousands of years, Biblical commentators have been either creating cross references (they are all the same!) or deleting cross references (they are all different!) to these names. While many accept a "Supreme" authority, obviously, there is no authority *control* in the Bible.

Or consider the old Yiddish story about the new Jewish immigrant in New York whose name was Shaun Ferguson. How did a young Jewish man from Russia get such an anglicized name? Well, when he was crossing the Atlantic, his friend told him that he couldn't be an American with his given name: Chaim Schwartz. He therefore was to memorize a new American name: John Smith. Try as Chaim might, when the immigration officer asked

him his name, he couldn't remember it and blurted out in Yiddish "*Oy! Shoyv Fargesen!*" (I forgot already!). And so, Shaun Ferguson was recorded by the immigration officer, who admitted the renamed Chaim Schwartz to the shores of America. Luckily, Chaim hadn't published too much and didn't leave librarians too much of a mystery.

And that's what authority control is about: librarians trying to solve such mysteries for users in order to facilitate location of information. This Sherlock Holmes aspect of cataloging is well known to be labor-intensive and, therefore, expensive (Bechtel, 1992). But it remains the basis of reader services for all librarians and users. How much more so is all this true for users of nonroman scripts, when searching catalogs or OPACs is usually handicapped by romanization.

Authority control is even more essential for nonroman headings in this environment. In 1991, the national standard USMARC *Format for Authority Data* authorized usage of original script, also called alternate graphic representation. However, input of such nonroman data in the authority format has not yet been implemented online. Still, long before this, because of the specific history of the library at Brandeis University, Hebraica authority control became a part of Hebraica cataloging.

### The Brandeis Experience

The founders of the Brandeis library probably envisioned their catalog along the model of that of the Hebrew University: one catalog for each alphabet. The difference at Brandeis was that all access points in the Hebraica catalog—authors, titles, and subjects—also existed in the main catalog in English or romanized entries. This was, after all, the United States, where the concept of the "universal" catalog obtained: the complete holdings of a library were to be listed in one sequence from A to Z (Aliprand, 1992).

The Hebraica catalog provided additional entries and access points to the information listed in the main catalog, by using another script. This is not dissimilar to the concepts we work with today in RLIN (Research Libraries Information Network). Back then, catalogers of Hebraica at Brandeis were required to produce two full sets of cards for each title, one set for each catalog.

The expectation was that bibliographic control over the nonroman entries would be maintained in the same manner that it was maintained over the roman entries. To accomplish this task, Hebraica authority files were established. Initially, there existed three authority files: name, series, and subject.

The name authority file includes not only personal, corporate, and conference names, but also geographic and uniform title headings. There are two sections in the file: one lists all entries in roman form, from A to Z; the other lists all entries in Hebrew script, from *alef* to *tav*. Based on a count of twenty-one drawers on each side, each drawer containing about eleven inches of cards, I estimate that we have approximately 22,000 entries. An additional 250 to 300 new headings are added each year, including changes to pre-AACR2 (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2nd ed.) headings (see Figure 1).

The cards on the roman side are typed with the roman heading uppermost; the reverse is true for the Hebraica side. Cross references are usually typed only on the card to be filed in the Hebraica side of the authority file. Our current practice takes account of AACR2 headings. If the roman heading is established according to AACR2, the card is stamped with this abbreviation and dated on the upper left. Moreover, for the past three years, we have also been adding the LC online Name Authority File (NAF) number on the bottom left of the card, in the hope of one day downloading the NAF records to our local system.

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The Series Authority File is in one drawer only, consisting of nearly 700 cards. The Hebraic entry is always typed on top (see Figure 2), and the cards are filed by Hebrew script entry only. Cards for the roman form of the series used to be filed in the General Series Authority File. This is no longer the case. The series cards may also indicate the LC online Name Authority File number, as well as any current information about changes from pre-AACR2 to AACR2 headings.

The Subject Authority File, which no longer exists, was created by translating Library of Congress subject headings into Hebrew (see Figure 3). The job description of the Hebraica cataloger used to include the ability to translate subject headings into modern, idiomatic Hebrew (Brandeis University Libraries, 1971).

The use of these three authority files changed when the definition of the Hebraica card catalog changed. By the early 1970s, the maintenance of the Hebraica catalog was found to be too costly and too labor-intensive. "It is quite possible that only a Hebrew title file is of any real use," said one memo from that period (Brandeis University Libraries, 1970). Thus, in 1977, the Hebraica catalog became a Hebrew title file only. When this happened, none of the author entries, already typed and filed in Hebrew, were removed, but only Hebrew-script titles were added to the Hebraica catalog from then on.

#### Hebraica Authority Control in an Automated Environment

Ten years later, in 1987, we stopped filing Hebraic titles altogether, when we began computerizing our catalog via RLIN. As these changes occurred, the way we performed maintenance on the Hebraica authority files also underwent a change. When the Hebraica catalog became a title-only catalog, the Hebraica Subject Authority File was eliminated; it was determined that our users searched subjects primarily by their English forms rather than by a Hebrew form. The Name and Series Authority Files were not eliminated, but it was no longer necessary to create Hebrew or Yiddish cross references, since these were no longer filed into the Hebraica card catalog. Nonetheless, the Hebraica authority files remained a special tool; Hebraica catalogers continued to use the Hebraica Name and Series Authority Files for verification of Hebrew and Yiddish headings. No cataloger wanted to give up the ability of searching a heading in Hebrew script.

	<p>Dukes, Leopold, 1810-1891.</p> <p>דוקס, יהודה לייב. אדוקס, לייב יהודה.</p>
<p>אברהם</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">3/84</p> <p>הברמן, אברהם מאיר. Habermann, Abraham Meir, 1901-</p> <p>א הימן הירושלמי, פסאוד. א הימן ירושלמי, פסאוד.</p> <p>NAFL 81100972</p>
	<p>וונינער, מאיר. Wiener, Meir. 1894-1841.</p> <p>אוינער, מאיר.</p>
<p>ראשי</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">1/85</p> <p>Rashi, 1040-1105.</p> <p>רשיי. א שלמה בן יצחק, המכונה רשיי.</p> <p>NAFL 5082616</p>

Figure 1. Authority records for personal names in the Brandeis University Library.

Until the advent of RLIN in 1987, the Hebraica authority files remained a cataloger's reference tool without any functional application to users. Only catalogers saw or used the Hebrew script headings. Usage has now increased. Because we input Hebrew-script names into RLIN, where users will see them, the Hebraic form of a name needs more evaluation. The Hebrew-script heading now has an expanded use in the RLIN catalog: not only verification, but also what has been called "collocation" of headings. We also see a potential for a future cross-reference structure and even (are we dreaming?!), for vendor authority services for nonroman scripts.

Given this background, let us turn to current practice. How do we integrate authority work and the Hebraica authority file into our work? Every name, for both copy cataloging and original cataloging, is checked first in the authority files to verify not only whether it was established in accordance with AACR2 (it was if the card is stamped) but also to check the Hebrew spelling (see Figure 1). Before RLIN, we were changing only the roman heading to correspond to AACR2. We now also evaluate the Hebrew form, which often was based on earlier ALA (American Library Association) rules, requiring real name or the fullest form of a name. It makes no sense to enter *Shelomoh ben Yitshak* in Hebrew script and *Rashi* in roman script into an RLIN record.

How do we establish the Hebrew form? For a new name, we follow AACR2 for Hebrew headings in that the most common form of the name is used, that is the "name by which he [or she]... is commonly known" (AACR2 rule 22.1). This is most often the one found on the first piece in hand. Using the Hebrew-script name on the first piece in hand was an in-house rule for at least ten to fifteen years at Brandeis (interview with H. Haas). At present, we try to match the Hebrew form as closely as possible with the authorized roman form, in that we include dates, as necessary, and decide whether to include a full name or just initials. In certain cases, our research for the Hebrew name may also extend to consulting the ALEPH network in Israel, now that we can easily connect electronically. We do not do any further research into the Hebrew name, unless, for example, we need to distinguish between two like names in the Hebrew form that are different in the roman form. As a further guideline, unless a book is in Yiddish, the Hebrew form of a name would be used, if both the Hebrew and Yiddish spellings are present in the text.

<p>AACR2</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2/87</p> <p style="text-align: center;">סידרת תרגומים מספרות יידיש. Sidrat Targumim mi-sifrut Yidish.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">84730825</p>
<p>AACR2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">מחקרי האוניברסיטה הפתוחה. Mehkere ha-Universitah ha-petuhah.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DO NOT MAKE SERIES ADDED ENTRY.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NAFL 84747133</p>
<p>AACR2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Not valid under AACR2; record kept for Hebraica Catalog</p> <p style="text-align: center;">מקורות לתולדות עם ישראל (ירושלים) ; ספר --</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Mekorot le-toldot 'am Yisrael (Yerushalayim) ; sefer --</p> <p>AACR2 heading: Mekorot le-toldot 'am Yisra'el (Merkaz Zalman Shazar le-ha'amakat ha-toda'ah ha-historit ha-yehudit) ; sefer --</p>

Figure 2. Series authority records in the Brandeis University Library.

Do we have controlled headings for different languages? All of these Hebrew script headings are not separately controlled Hebrew or Yiddish language headings, but rather, one heading in Hebrew script for each name, with cross references from the form(s) in the other language. Our Hebraica authority file is predominantly a multiscript rather than a multilingual file, even if in Yiddish-only entries we use Yiddish spellings (Aliprand, 1993).

How much time do we spend on authority control? Our copy cataloger spends at least one-quarter of her time on maintaining the authority files. This includes searching the files, searching online, pulling cards, retyping cards for changed headings, refiling, and training a student aide.

What are our guidelines for recon? For our retrospective conversion project, we check the authority file for the Hebrew form of the name if we suspect that the name on the card is not correct. The standard here is not as strict as in cataloging, because it is a retrospective project. However, our goal is the same: to try to maintain uniformity in our Hebrew name headings.

For uniform titles—Bible, Talmud, and liturgy—we have created a chart that provides parallels to roman headings and updates the headings in the Hebraica name authority file. Geographic names are also entered into the authority file. Most difficult is the spelling of European shtetls, whose original names may have been in Russian or Polish or both.

How expensive is the maintenance of the Hebraic authority files? Unquestionably, the operation *is* labor-intensive. While our file is far from perfect, we are committed to this essential indirect service to users and librarians. National standards now incorporate alternate graphic representation, i.e., in original script. Brandeis is ready to participate fully in a cooperative effort to make its Hebraica authority files available in an online format. In 1987, we outlined our vision of Hebraica authority control to GEAC Computers, in a Request for Proposal for Hebrew-script support. This was never implemented. Clearly, the timing was too early, although the dream was realistic. Now that national standards have full data linkage to accommodate nonroman scripts, we urge a proactive approach by concerned Judaica librarians to implement this standard online.

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<p>Arithmetic</p>	<p>חשבון ארותמטיקה</p>
<p>Yiddish language - Dictionaries.</p>	<p>לשון אידיש - מילונים. אלשון אידיש - מלונים.</p>
<p>Sermons, Yiddish</p> <p>Do not subdivide geographically.</p>	<p>דרשות באידיש</p>

Figure 3. Translation of Library of Congress subject headings into Hebrew in the authority file of the Brandeis University Library.

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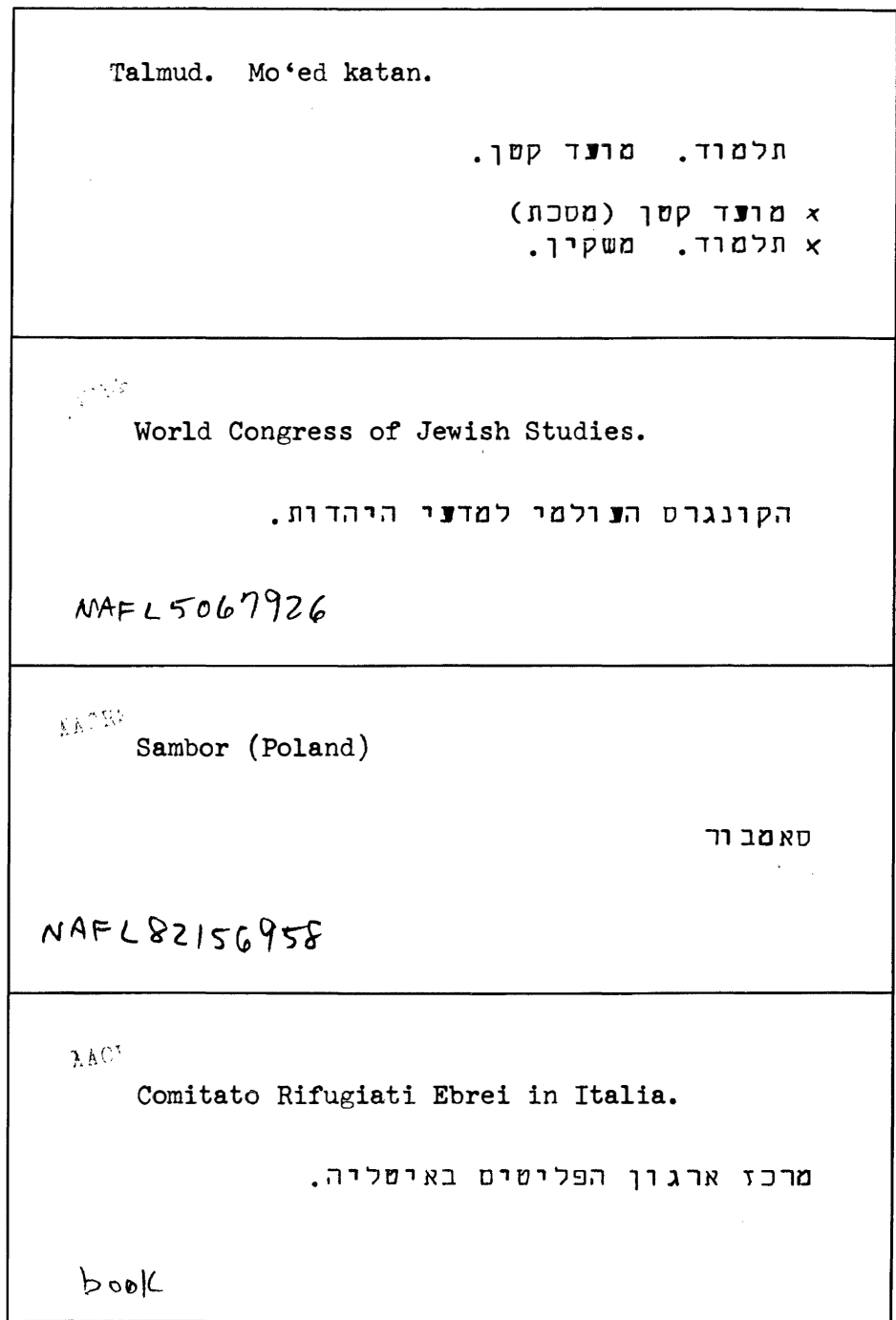


Figure 4. Authority records for uniform titles, corporate headings, and geographic names in the Brandeis University Library.

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