
Elia Benamozegh (1823–1900)—Italian rabbi, kabbalist, publisher, and thinker of Moroccan descent who lived in the Tuscan port city of Livorno—is known for his copious writings in Hebrew, Italian, and French encompassing exegetical, historical, and philosophical studies and especially for his posthumous magnum opus, *Israel and Humanity*. Eager to foster religious unity across faiths, demonstrate Jewish universalism, and fight against secularism, he inspired Christian-Jewish encounters in twentieth-century France. This article is the first study of Benamozegh’s work as a publisher, revealing the deep significance of his ties with the Mashriq and Maghrib. The scope of Benamozegh’s publications and the contentious reception of his work provide an opportunity to reexamine important yet less studied aspects of modern Jewish thought, including the dynamics of modern Sephardi thought and self-representation and the intellectual, transnational networks that spanned the Mediterranean and the Middle East in an age of nationalism and colonialism.


Footprints: Jewish Books Through Time and Place is a database and research project designed to trace books-in-motion. It brings together acts of careful individual research with large-scale quantification and mapping: using inscriptions, owner’s marks, and catalogs of copies of early Jewish printed books. The project is a cooperative endeavor of four project directors, both faculty and librarian, from different institutions, each representing different fields of Jewish Studies. With the technical expertise of partners at a university-based center for teaching and learning, a mix of paid and volunteer student, postdoctoral, and library based researchers, the project directors have created a database that is transforming the way research on the history of the book is done. This chapter will address collaboration in three

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*Editor’s note: Wherever possible, annotations to these citations are based on those provided by indexing and abstracting services.*
aspects: between project directors; between the project and its contributors (individual and institutional, public and private); and between contributors and users. The chapter argues for a new model of iterative projects that relies in part on networked collaboration rather than only on operations in concert by a small, bounded group.”


Hebrew-language resources are widely cataloged throughout the world, but until the era of RDA there had never been an attempt to translate a comprehensive set of cataloging terminology and definitions. Translating the result of centuries of cataloging traditions and of international cooperation into Hebrew is a highly complex task. Aside from the usual issues of grammar, syntax, and orthography, respect must be paid to the pidgin used in professional communication and in Israeli library school cataloging classes. Other factors to be considered include the highly-gendered nature of Hebrew, the effect of Academy of the Hebrew Language decisions on cataloging terminology, and the organizational challenge of translation in a country which has no national policy and standards body and whose librarianship organizations are led by volunteers. This paper will discuss the problems involved in translating RDA terminology into Hebrew as well as the innovations in the Israeli cataloging world being undertaken to facilitate an efficient and timely translation.


The creation of a national archive or the reorganization of existing ones is commonly viewed as a significant step toward the creation of a nation-state. Archival documents can be highly significant in shaping the attitude of the emergent national culture toward its past. Indeed, the place of the archive in modern national movements and nation-states and its contribution to the shaping of a new collective identity are attracting increasing interest in the research community. Particularly interesting in the context of the State of Israel is the fact that some months after the establishment of the State in 1948, a decision was made to establish the State Archives, although the Central Zionist Archives had already existed for many years and enjoyed a dominant position in the preservation of national documents. The aim of this essay is to analyze the discourse surrounding the establishment of the State Archives, as reflected in a process referred to as “Transition from the Zionist Community (Yishuv) to a State”. The scholarly discourse on this issue touches on some of the basic aspects of the emergent Israeli society, which in its early years confronted questions of statehood, the attitude towards its Jewish and Zionist roots, the shaping of Israeli identity, and the construction of a collective-national consciousness. In order to bring these questions into focus vis-à-vis the *yishuv*-to-state transition, the essay will discuss the decision to establish the State Archives and will
explore two of its main outcomes: the fact that it ignored the centrality and importance of the Central Zionist Archives by creating a State-operated archive; and its impact on the Central Zionist Archives and what insights that can provide regarding the transition from *yishuv* to state.


The introduction of state preventive censorship of Jewish publications in the Kingdom of Poland was by no means something obvious. The Constitution of the Kingdom guaranteed the freedom of establishing publishing and printing houses. Neither did the state have any direct interest in interfering with the Jews’ religious publications or any disputes among them. In fact, in Russia itself and in the so-called seized lands, there was no censorship of Jewish books all the way until the 1820s. Therefore the call for censorship did not come from Petersburg but precisely from Warsaw. It can even be suspected that in Russia itself, preventive censorship was largely introduced in response to suggestions if not demands coming from the Kingdom because massive imports of Jewish books from Russia frustrated the effects of the actions of the local censors. The censorship in the Congress Kingdom can be regarded a sequel to internal Jewish censorship exercised by *Waad Arba Aratsot*, except that now it as implemented by another camp inside the Jewry and with the help of state authorities. In the Congress Kingdom the censor’s authority was taken over by the *maskil* faction, which supported a program of reforms of the Jewry, popular with political elites, by branding as an enemy whatever it deemed to be vestiges of Jewish obscurantism: first of all the recently formed and dynamically growing Hassidism and he Jewish vernacular, a tool of Jewish separatism and backwardness. Preventive censorship did not prove to be terribly successful. The ambitious plans to reform the Jews in a small patch of the vast lands inhabited by the Jews of the old Republic of Poland had to misfire, given that the borders were not sealed tight and the individual neighbors who partitioned Poland were each pursuing a different policy toward the Jews.


The aim of the research is to find out the influence of the Nazi regime on preservation of historical book collections, which were established in Jewish societies, schools, religious organizations and private houses in Latvia until the first Soviet occupation (1940/1941). At the beginning, libraries of Jewish associations and other institutions were expropriated by the Soviet power, which started the elimination of Jewish books and periodicals published in the independent Republic of Latvia. The massive destruction of Jewish literature collections was carried out by Nazi occupation authorities (1941–1944/45), proclaiming Jews and Judaism as their main “enemies”. However, digitized archives of Nazi organizations (mainly
documents of the Reichsleiter Rosenberg Taskforce) shows that a small part of the Latvian Jewish book collections was preserved for research purposes and after the Second World War scattered in different countries. Analysis of archival documents will clarify the Nazi strategy for Latvian Jewish book collections. It will be determined which book values survived the war and what their further fate in the second half of the 1940s was.


The authors report on the existence of three hitherto unknown copies of Hebrew incunabula printed in Soncino, provide a full description and discussion of a copy of an incunabulum from Leiria, and fragments of an incunabulum from Hijar, which they had previously identified, and offer an updated list of all the Hebrew incunabula extant in Spanish libraries and archives.


The Fortunoff Archive for Holocaust Testimonies (FVAHT) has been recording the testimonies of survivors, witnesses and bystanders of the Holocaust since 1979. It currently holds more than 4,500 testimonies, comprising over 10,000 recorded hours of videotape. Having recently completed a large-scale digitisation of the entire collection at the FVAHT’s in-house facility, the archive has pivoted to increasing access and use of this new digital collection. The collection, which was originally recorded in cooperation with 37 affiliated projects across North America, South America, Europe and Israel, will now be available via a streaming access system at academic partner sites worldwide. This paper will discuss several of the challenges faced by the archive’s staff when transitioning from the analogue to the digital world, the design of its new digital access system, and plans for further enhancement in the near future.


This article provides an overview of a rare collection of manuscripts that was purchased by the National Library of Israel in recent years. These manuscripts, which belong to a larger
corpus of manuscripts known as the “Afghan Genizah,” appear to have originated in central Afghanistan, possibly in the Bamiyan area, and are datable to a period of two hundred years, namely, from the early 5th/11th century to the early 7th/13th century. The overview of these texts is accompanied by an edition and translation of two Islamic acknowledgment (iqrār) deeds in New Persian, dated to the beginning of the 5th/11th century.


This article seeks to open a discursive space in which to reflect on issues of Holocaust historiography arising from emerging research on personal archives collected by “ordinary” people in relation to the Holocaust. The explorations, intended as a discussion piece, are anchored in a specific context, namely that of the Dorrith Sim Collection (DMSC) which is held in the Scottish Jewish Archives Centre (SJAC) in Glasgow. This collection offers a focus to concretize the historiographical discussion in a largely un-researched collection, while enabling consideration of a range of related collections and publications. The article investigates the historiographical practices of those involved in the collection, preservation, presentation, and publication processes, and considers the inherent ethical choices, choices that highlight the agency of the family, the archivist, and the scholar. Ethical choices, here, the investment of specific meanings and claims to significance, are amplified in this context because of their connection to genocide. I suggest that a “transparent historiography” that accounts for the research process within the published narrative could address the challenges arising from the necessity to be selective about what to collect, preserve, and write about, and how to do so. I borrow from other fields of research and professional practice to highlight possible avenues along which to advance historiographical discussion.


This chapter continues with the theme of confiscated books by examining the short-lived plan to build a World Jewish Library in Europe, under the auspices of UNESCO, as a home for a portion of confiscated Jewish books that could not be restituted because their original owners or any surviving relations had not survived or were not identifiable. The World Jewish Library plan, almost entirely forgotten since, challenges the long-held view that Jewish life and culture fled or was shipped, virtually without question or contest, out of post-Holocaust Europe at the earliest possible opportunity. This chapter argues that one of the visions for postwar Europe included a new future for a postwar Jewish Europe, one that provided an alternative future vision to Zionism.

Printing began in Poland in the sixteenth century and Jewish printing began in the 1530s. These early Jewish printers printed in their books printers’ marks. This article details the early history of the printers’ mark by publishers of Jewish origin.


The discovery and relocation of genizah material is a multi-layered and complex story. This article re-examines, to the extent possible given the current available evidence, the discovery and distribution of Cairo genizah manuscripts in the late nineteenth century by taking a closer look at known historical accounts in conjunction with some lesser-known contemporary reports. Much provenance and provenience history was lost or destroyed during the course of multiple relocations and reorganizations of these materials; thus, this article emphasizes the need to pay greater attention to the multifaceted history of the Cairo manuscripts, and the need to be more circumspect when using an “across-the-board” term like “the Cairo Genizah.” Such a label can prevent us from truly appreciating the breadth of Jewish material culture in Cairo in all its varied manifestations over time. More detailed provenance history for the genizah manuscripts will increase our knowledge about how culture is transmitted and how attitudes towards the preservation of Jewish cultural heritage have evolved.


The following article examines the Revd Greville John Chester’s activities in the Egyptian antiquities trade from 1889 to 1892, specifically his involvement in discovering and distributing Hebrew manuscripts from the now famous Cairo Genizah. Based on letters written by Chester to the Bodleian Librarian, E.W.B. Nicholson, as well as other supporting documentary evidence, this investigation provides insights into the early history of the Cairo Genizah manuscripts before Solomon Schechter’s celebrated ‘discovery’ of them in 1896/97. Overall, this article shows that the provenance story of ‘the Cairo Genizah’ is multi-faceted and needs to be subjected to much greater scrutiny.

The case studies assembled in this volume explore various fields of research on Hebrew manuscripts. They show paradigmatically the current developments concerning codicology and palaeography, book forms like the scroll and codex, scribes and their writing material, patrons, collectors and censors, manuscript and book collections, illuminations and fragments, and new methods of material analysis applied to manuscripts. The principal focus of this volume is the material and intellectual history of Hebrew book cultures. Of particular interest to JL readers are the following papers under the Collections section:

1. Steimann, Ilona. “The Preservation of Hebrew Books by Christians in the Pre-Reformation German Milieu,” 203–226. The main aim of this article is to provide an overview of how German humanists and Hebraists formed their Hebraica collections around 1500, ranging from less than a dozen Hebrew codices to several hundred volumes in mid-16th century humanist libraries. The period in question is actually one of the earliest encounters that Christians had with a great number of Jewish books, and reflects earlier Christian conceptions of Jewish literature as well as predetermining those to come. First, the article analyses the modes and channels for the acquisition of Hebraica by Christians and the difficulties involved in such a task, which had serious implications for the scope and character of Christian Hebraica collections. It then traces the dissemination of Jewish texts among Christians according to the texts’ genres and discusses their Christian uses. Christian additions to and modifications of Hebrew texts reflected polemics, appreciation and appropriation, and as a whole effected the transition of the Hebrew book from a Jewish to a Christian object.

2. Leicht, Reimund. “Johannes Reuchlin’s Collection of Hebrew Books—Its Afterlife and Influence,” 227–242. This paper discusses the importance of Reuchlin’s Hebrew book collection for Hebrew Studies in Germany (and beyond) and the scientific value of his manuscripts and early prints for Jewish Studies today. It will become clear that the items which are of particular interest are those that are known to have once been part of Reuchlin’s library, but were removed and lost at some point in time - either lost completely through physical destruction or lost from the collection in Karlsruhe, but physically preserved at other locations. There seems to be a close correlation in most cases between the disappearance of books and manuscripts and the scholarly interest in these works.

3. Tahan, Ilana. “Matters of Provenance: Hebrew Manuscripts Owned by a Distinguished French Archbishop,” 243–274. In 1946, the British Museum acquired six important Hebrew manuscripts that now form part of the British Library’s collection. Five of the manuscripts were written in Italy in the 15th century and include Bahya ibn Paquda’s philosophical work Ḥovot ha-Levavot (“Duties of the Heart”), Yosef Gikatilla’s Kabbalistic treatise Sha’are Ora (“The Gates of Light”), and Shesh Kenafayim (“Six Wings”),
an astronomical treatise by ʿImmanu’el ben Yaʿaqov Bonfils of Tarascon. This paper explores the manuscripts’ content, codicological features, and fascinating provenance, focusing particularly on their illustrious former Christian owners. It further discusses the historical background and momentous circumstances that led to the accession of these handwritten Hebrew works to the British Museum’s library seventy-one years ago.

4. Vollandt, Ronny. “Jacob Georg Christian Adler (1756–1834) and his Books, 275–306. Textual studies have always depended on the discovery of new manuscripts. Oriental scholarship in Germany and Denmark in the late 18th and early 19th century, on which this article focuses, not only actively promoted the search for new sources, but also developed new tools to describe, date and localise manuscripts in order to put them at the disposal of textual scholars. One particularly intriguing figure in this context is Jacob Georg Christian Adler (1756–1834), who studied—and actually physically examined—an unprecedented range of Hebrew, Syriac and Arabic manuscripts as a young scholar, which he consulted during his travels to the main libraries of Europe. While on this peregrinatio academica, he documented his observations in a number of notebooks, none of which have hitherto attracted attention or even been discussed. These notebooks show a scholar at work and record his thoughts on the manuscripts he consulted, particularly on the repository of texts they contained and on their physical appearance. He drew upon this preliminary work later in a number of books that he published. Adler perceived both aspects as being intrinsically connected and, indeed, inseparable, much in contrast to later research, which degraded the study of the material embodiment of texts to a mere Hilfswissenschaft (ancillary discipline).


A historical account of the formation of the Center for Jewish History is the 1990s with the partnership of Yeshiva University, YIVO, and AJHS together with the Leo Baeck Institute and the American Sephardi Federation. YIVO, Yeshiva University and AJHS originally tried to form a central archive in the 1950s, but due to differences in ideology and methodology could not agree. The authors detail the events of the time, the interest in American Jewish History and the key players, institutions, and historians who played a role.


Gotthard Deutsch (1859–1921) taught at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati from 1891 until his death, where he produced a card index of 70,000 “facts” of Jewish history. This
article explores the biography of this artefact of research and poses the following question: Does Deutsch’s index constitute a great unwritten work of history, as some have claimed, or are the cards ultimately useless “chips from his workshop”? It may seem a curious relic of positivistic history, but closer examination allows us to interrogate the materiality of scholarly labor. The catalogue constitutes a total archive and highlights memory’s multiple registers, as both a prosthesis for personal recall and a symbol of a “human encyclopedia”. The article argues that this mostly forgotten scholar’s work had surprising repercussions: Deutsch’s student Jacob Rader Marcus (1896–1995) brought his teacher’s emphasis on facticity to the field of American Jewish history that he pioneered, catapulting a 19th-century positivism to the threshold of the 21st century. Deutsch’s index was at an inflection point of knowledge production, created as historians were shifting away from “facts” but just before new technologies (also based on cards) enabled “big data” on a larger scale. The article thus excavates a vision of monumentality but proposes we look past these objects as monuments to “heroic” scholarship. Indeed, Deutsch’s index is massive but middling, especially when placed alongside those of Niklas Luhmann, Paul Otlet, or Gershom Scholem. It thus presents a necessary corrective to anointing such indexes as predecessors to the Internet and big data because we must keep their problematic positivism in perspective.


A jubilee volume to Prof. Menahem Schmelzer on the occasion of his eighty-fifth birthday. The over 750-page volume is organized in two parts (English part: 374 pp.; Hebrew part: 383 pp.) by the following sections: Liturgy, Hebrew Poetry and Literature, Booklore, Talmud, Rabbinics, and Jewish History. Many articles may be of interest to JL readers, especially those under the Booklore section:


In the late nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, Jewish immigrants took, when possible, from the Russian empire to their new destinations their dearest possessions. One of these was their books. Religious and prayer books represented the knowledge sages and rabbis had passed from generation to generation to their people. Belle lettres and political books in different languages were an important part of their education, upbringing, and ideology. These collections were the start of the libraries at the Jewish settlements in Argentina. Based on published memoirs of these first settlers this article presents how these libraries were created and notes a pattern of similarities on how they became a space to share books, to socialize, to enjoy cultural events, including readings and discussions of Yiddish and European masterpieces as well as musical and theatrical evenings, and to promote political beliefs.


This article explores the interface between copyright law and the Holocaust. The Holocaust’s duration and scope, its occurrence in midst of the twentieth century with photography and film technologies already available, and its setting at the heart of Europe, yielded countless documents, diaries, notes, memoirs, musical works, photographs, films, letters, and additional artifacts. On the victims’ part, many of those items—including secret archives comprised at various ghettos, music composed in concentration camps, and personal diaries—manifest an explicit act of real-time historical documentation for future generations. On the perpetrators’ side, some materials were produced as a result of organized documentation, others—such as Joseph Goebbels’ diaries or Hitler’s Mein Kampf—comprise records of prominent figures in the Nazi regime. Numerous Holocaust-related materials are still subject to copyright protection. Yet, the impact of copyright law on the memory of the Holocaust remains largely unexplored. This article engages in a first systematic exploration of the copyright-Holocaust interface and presents a twofold argument. First, we demonstrate that copyright law plays a heretofore-unnoticed role in shaping the collective memory of the Holocaust. Second, on a normative level, we argue that the prevalent narratives underlying copyright law, as well as ordinary copyright doctrines, do not comfortably apply to Holocaust-related materials, and that this state of affairs yields socially undesirable consequences. The latter include, inter alia, victims’ works created with the explicit goal of documenting the Holocaust that may remain in the file-drawer due to copyright concerns, as well as ordinary copyright protection applying to infamous Nazi materials, thus providing their owners with certain influence over the Holocaust’s narrative. By closely examining various case studies, we analyze the principal tensions between the copyright regime and the Holocaust and offer several concrete recommendations concerning the application of copyright law to Holocaust-related materials. On a more general note, our analysis sheds new light on copyright’s impact on collective and intergenerational memory.

This article tackles the issue of integrating heterogeneous archival sources in one single data repository, namely the EHRI portal, whose aim is to support Holocaust research by providing online access to information about dispersed sources relating to the Holocaust ([http://portal.ehri-project.eu](http://portal.ehri-project.eu)). In this case, the problem at hand is to combine data coming from a network of archives in order to create an interoperable data space which can be used to search for, retrieve and disseminate content in the context of archival-based research. The central aspect of the work described in this paper is the assessment of the role of the Encoded Archival Description (EAD) standard as the basis for achieving the tasks described above. We have worked out how we could develop a real strategy of defining specific customization of EAD that could be used at various stages of the process of integrating heterogeneous sources. We have developed a methodology based on a specification and customization method inspired from the extensive experience of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) community. In the TEI framework, one has the possibility to model specific subsets or extensions of the TEI guidelines while maintaining both the technical (XML schemas) and editorial (documentation) content within a single framework. This work has led us quite far in anticipating that the method we have developed may be of a wider interest within similar environments, but also, as we believe, for the future maintenance of the EAD standard.


In the first decades of the seventeenth century, a book collection belonging to the Ets Haim Yesiba, the scholastic arm of Western Sephardic Jewry in Amsterdam, emerged as the period’s first Jewish institutional library. It grew in size and importance as thousands of Conversos emigrated to the Dutch Republic in search of religious tolerance and financial opportunity. As carriers of new knowledge, books—specifically, traditional texts in Hebrew,
and Bibles, liturgies, and legal works in vernacular languages—supported the population’s Judaization, particularly within the walls of the Ets Haim. Using shelf lists and, more significantly, annual acquisition records, this paper explores the development of the Ets Haim Library and its impact on Western Sephardic Jewish identity and culture. It addresses three sets of questions: How did the Ets Haim acquire its books, from whom and under what circumstances? What did Portuguese interest in rabbinic books signify about the community’s perceived uniqueness, especially considering the public’s continued adherence to Iberian languages and culture? Did the Ets Haim Library act merely as a facilitator of intellectual, religious, and cultural activity, or did it embody meaning in its own right? In tackling these issues, the article highlights how Portuguese lay leadership sought to ensure the success of its educational institution, as well as the significance of its rabbinate, through the frequent and widespread purchase of canonical texts and newly published rabbinic scholarship.


European data privacy laws arose largely in reaction to the horrors of authoritarian rule generally, and the Holocaust specifically. Privacy and data protection have consistently been a barrier to Holocaust justice. The Data Theory of the Dutch Holocaust, widely cited as a justification for EU data protection law, has long served as a smokescreen for extensive collaboration with the Nazis. The largest Holocaust archive was inaccessible to victims and researchers for decades, principally on account of privacy considerations. Privacy prevented publication of indictments of Auschwitz SS, and served as principle grounds for non-cooperation of banks and insurance companies in restitution of property of Holocaust victims and survivors. The EU’s new data protection regulation (GDPR) and its new Right to be Forgotten threaten to pose further challenges to Holocaust research, and bold legal positions may need to be taken in order to avoid Holocaust research being stifled, as several approaches are analysed. Holocaust justice has been central in informing legal responses to other atrocities. For all its importance, data protection law must not be allowed to prevent justice in human-rights abuses, nor to prevent proper research and victims’ healing.


In this work, we have explored the potentiality of energy dispersive X-ray fluorescence spectrometry (EDXRF), X-ray diffraction (XRD), the vibrational attenuated total reflection
—Fourier transform infrared spectroscopy (ATR-FTIR), and scanning electron microscopy coupled to energy dispersive X-ray spectrometry (SEM-EDS) for the characterization of the natural degradation of old parchment. The samples used in this work comprise four Moroccan Jewish historical parchments belonging to private libraries. The results have been correlated with those obtained by a selected modern parchment. The results obtained allowed for the first time an accurate insight into the chemical composition of these parchments. EDXRF Analysis of the samples allowed us to study some of the undertaken process along the preparation of parchments, such as the liming treatment using CaCO\textsubscript{3}. XRD was used to elucidate the collagen main features, to identify the inorganic composition of the parchments, and to evaluate the crystallinity changes upon natural weathering. FTIR spectroscopy enabled us to determine the changes of collagen material in response to natural aging, overall oxidation (detection of bands at 1716 cm\textsuperscript{-1}) and collagen gelatinization. SEM-EDS results disclosed the morphological surface changes occurring at different levels in the fibrous network of collagen, and have proved a poor conservation state in some parchments.


Acquiring Hebrew books was a common practice among Christian humanists. More surprising, perhaps, is that a large group of Hebrew manuscripts was produced for a Christian library. A Jewish scribal workshop organized by Johann Jakob Fugger (1516–75) in Venice—here analyzed for the first time—is one of the rarest examples of this phenomenon that emerged out of Renaissance book culture. To understand Fugger’s extensive bibliophilic enterprise, this essay examines the circulation and dissemination of Hebrew texts from the Jewish bookshelf among Christians, the relationships between Christian patrons and Jewish scribes, and the role of manuscripts as agents of print and as objects of collecting.


This paper explores a transcription and analysis project of Jewish prayer tunes in Prague undertaken at the eve of the Shoah. From 1935 to 1941, the music student and composer Siegmund Schul (1916–1944) wrote down the repertoire known to the physician Salomon Lieben (1884–1942), who officiated regularly as a prayer leader in the Lieben Shul, a small orthodox family-based minyan in Prague. The result was the Sbírka staropražských synagogálních zpívů (Collection of Old Prague Synagogue Chants), containing manuscript notations of more than 200 prayer chants. In addition to documenting the chants, Schul sought to determine their origin and age. On the basis of the unpublished Collection, archival material and interviews with eye-witnesses, this paper examines the development process, methods and objectives of the project, placing it in the context of period Jewish music scholarship.

Globalization, in its earlier stages, was expected to erode national and ethnic identities. In contrast, ethnicity and ethnic affiliations persisted, growing socially and politically. This paper examines the role of the globalizing new communications technologies on this process, focusing on Diasporas. The study of trans-state networks based on ethnic solidarity, connections and affinities in the framework of social and political science is quite recent. Following a clarification of the distinction between classical and modern Diasporas we analyse a particular case study, that of the Jewish Diaspora. This diaspora was an early adopter of computer-based communications and the Internet for a wide range of purposes. Early events are described including the diffusion of the Internet to Israel, the planning of a Global Jewish Information Network, Israel 2020 macro scenarios for Israel and the Jewish People and the decision on Jewish Peoplehood through communication technologies. A survey of historical systems (Responsa, BBS, and Usenet) follows by a description of the Jewish population and the wide variety of Jewish Web based activities today. These include the Institutional landscape; Jewish media—press, radio, video and blogs; the impact on Jewish religious observance; Jewish genealogy; Online dating; Social networks; Jewish education; Online learning; Jewish Studies and Digital Humanities; Jewish memory. Judaica Europeana supports the activities previously described by aggregating and facilitating the access and the re-use of Jewish digital culture. Europeana is the leading global digital library for cultural heritage as well as a lively eco-system for relevant stakeholders.


This article explores the lively Geniza scene that developed on the social media site Facebook and how it is research tool as well as a means for outreach. “When studying Geniza fragments we often encounter things we do not understand. While we could consult venerable tomes in the library, or bombard our teachers and colleagues with inquiring emails, a quick question on Facebook usually provides a more rapid result. On other occasions, we have come across a fragment that is not relevant to of someone pertinent. Often the result is an unexpected discovery.” At the same time, Facebook has allowed the Geniza to go beyond the academic circle and reach a broader audience.
Montreal’s Jewish community lived a very particular experience of the 1960s, as evidenced by the collections held at the Jewish Public Library Archives (JPL-A). As a community repository that has been collecting at the grass-roots level for over one hundred years, the stacks at the JPL-A provide insight into this tumultuous era. They reveal the complexity and shifting realities of local Jewish identity. The Jewish Public Library (JPL) was founded as a ‘folks’ library, a library for all which was the consolidation of smaller ideology-based libraries already in existence in Montreal. The collections of the JPL are broadened and enhanced by the onsite Archives, which since 1914 operate under the mandate to collect, preserve, and make available the social, economic, and cultural accomplishments of Montreal’s Jewish community. The collections document the stories of individuals, institutions, associations, and schools. They provide a tangible image of Jewish life in Montreal over the last 250 years.” This article highlights three subjects: the Arab-Israeli War—Community Engagement; Soviet Jewry—Street level expressions; Sephardic immigration—embracing plurality.


This essay offers a practice guide to the major collections and editions of Geniza documents as well as to some of the resources for their study.