

SCATTER OF THE LITERATURE

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Please send articles of interest to *Judaica librarians that are found in other journals—both Jewish and general—to:*

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Aliprand, Joan M. "Nonroman Scripts in the Bibliographic Environment," *Information Technology and Libraries*, vol. 11, no. 2 (June 1992), pp. 105–119.

In the past, readers of nonroman alphabets had to resort to romanization as a substitute method of inputting nonroman scripts in machine-readable form. Aside from being an unnatural presentation of the language, romanization can misrepresent information and, in many cases, distort and change meaning.

The author describes some of these problems and discusses some of the current approaches to solving them. Eight-bit USMARC character sets can accommodate most nonroman scripts, but the goal of having a single global standard for all scripts has not yet been achieved.

The author regards the eventual adoption of a global character set "for all the data in a machine-readable bibliographic record, not just for the alternate graphic representation" (p. 117), as the ultimate solution to the problems of romanization. There would be no need for romanization, as all nonroman alphabets would appear on a bibliographic record in the vernacular. The alternate graphic representation would become the only bibliographic description and would facilitate access to the growing collections of nonroman scripts by librarians and scholars.

[Cf. the final entry in this column.—Ed.]

Baker, Zachary. "History of the Jewish Collections at the Vernadsky Library in Kiev," *Shofar*, vol. 10, no. 4 (Summer 1992), pp. 31–48.*

One result of the breakup of the former Soviet Union has been renewed access to previously unknown and uncataloged *Judaica* collections. Among the most significant is the V. I. Vernadsky Central Scientific Library in Kiev, Ukraine. The Vernadsky collection rivals the *Judaica* collection in the Central State Historical Archives of St. Petersburg and offers a look at an aspect of Eastern European Jewish cultural life in the 20th century which no longer exists.

Among its treasures are the collections of the Society for the Spread of Enlightenment among the Jews (*Hevrah mefitse haskalah*, or OPE), which includes 60,000 printed book and periodical volumes and 1,000 Hebrew and Arabic manuscripts dating back to the 13th century. These were originally gathered by Yosef Liberberg for the Institute for Jewish Proletarian Culture. Another "find" is the Press Archives dating from 1927 to 1935, which include hundreds of newspapers and journals in Hebrew and Yiddish and other languages. The collection of documents in Vernadsky illustrates the thriving and rich cultural life of the Jews in Russia during the 20th century.

The author notes that the final irony of this discovery is the fact that Jewish culture is now being so painstakingly preserved in the Ukraine, an area not known for its affinity for the Jews. Ukrainians' need to promote their country as an enclave for ethnic diversity has resulted in one of the largest Jewish research collections in the world being restored in Kiev. The reasons for this unlikely alliance may be explored in another forum. For the time being, we can only encourage their study.

*Portions of this paper were presented by the author at the AJL Convention in June 1992.

Bergen, Robert D. "The Computer as Biblical Exegete: Present Realities and Future Prospects." *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, vol. 1 (1), 1993, pp. 69–80.

The computer has enabled scholars to have instantaneous access to lexical and grammatical concordances, Biblical texts, lexicons, and commentaries. Software is now being developed which will not only identify, but will also *analyze and interpret* Biblical texts; some of these programs exist now.

The attempt to have computers perform exegetical processes involves capturing an element of human intelligence and using it to analyze information. A computer will be able to analyze and identify textual organization, metrical patterns, parallel plots, as well as explain why certain references were utilized in a text. The author argues that rather than dehumanize the living experience, the thought processes that build these new software packages will enable man to truly understand and teach the Bible.

Davis, Enid. "Jewish Materials and Programs," in *Venture Into Cultures: A Resource book of Multicultural materials and programs*, edited by Carla D. Hayden (Chicago: American Library Association, 1992), pp. 107–127.

The chapter on Jewish resources in this book on multicultural materials and programs for children is divided into books and programming ideas.

The primary section, on children's literature, includes annotated bibliographies on a wide range of Jewish subjects: from books on Jewish holidays to fictionalized accounts of the Holocaust; from favorite old Jewish folktales to books about Israel and its history. The bibliography is divided into fiction and nonfiction; grade level is indicated for each title.

There is also a small section which includes programming ideas and resources for Jewish holidays (Passover, Hanukkah, and Purim). A wide range of games, crafts, recipes, filmstrips, and movies are suggested.

The author also lists selected publishers and producers of Jewish books and media. What is obvious from this chapter and from current literature on the subject is that there is a new interest in juvenile Judaica resources and that there is something out there for practically everyone, i.e., all shades of the religious spectrum.

Gold, Sarah. "Reaching a New Jewish Readership: Some Core Books in Judaica Are Being Freshened for a Lay Audience That Seeks Authenticity," *Publishers Weekly*, (February 8, 1993), pp. 34-36.

There is an increasing demand for traditional Jewish texts in English. Previously, anyone not educated in Hebrew or traditional Jewish sources was unable to study these basic texts.

With the translation of *The Steinsaltz Talmud* by Random House, we are now seeing major publishers entering the Judaica market and finding it quite lucrative. Mesorah Publications has understood the potential market for some time now, and its *Artscroll* series is becoming very popular among traditional and nontraditional Jews. Other significant translations include *The Book of Legends*, which Schocken editor Bonnie Fetterman has prepared, and a Passover Haggadah with commentary by Elie Wiesel and illustrations by Mark Podwal, which Simon & Schuster is publishing. The popularity of these sources demonstrates the renewed interest in traditional Judaism.

Musleah, Rahel. "New Challenges in Children's Judaica: Increased Competition from General Trade Houses is Transforming Quality, Content and Selling Strategies," *Publishers Weekly*, (Sept. 6, 1991), pp. 22-26.

The renewed interest in publications of Jewish content and value has also extended into the children's book market. As with their counterparts in adult publishing, non-Jewish publishers are entering the "Jewish" market with a big bang.

Within the past few years, a book with a Jewish theme—*Number the Stars*, by Lois

Lowry—published by Houghton Mifflin/Dell, won the prestigious Newbery Award. Marcia Posner, children's literature specialist for the Jewish Book Council, sees the surge in Judaica books partly resulting from the baby-boomers who have now become parents themselves and want their children to grow up with books that they had cherished. Undoubtedly, several factors have contributed to this new phenomenon and, as always, traditional holiday books on Hanukkah and Passover are popular. Regardless of the reasons for the new interest, we are now seeing an exciting new market of quality Jewish resources for children.

Musleah, Rahel. "Rediscovering the Jewish Folktale: Publishers of Judaica Find That the Stories, Largely for Children, Combine Faith and Tradition in Salable Proportions," *Publishers Weekly*, (September 21, 1992), pp. 42-43.

For many, "Jewishness" is not the result of adherence to religious laws and ceremonies, but is more abstract: a feeling, a tradition, a shared past. Folktales are stories retold many times which contain certain elements: a Jewish place, a Jewish character, Jewish time (some holiday, perhaps), and most significantly, a Jewish message. For many nonreligious Jews, these folktales are a genre through which their children can experience traditional Jewish values.

The new appeal of folktales is not only a Jewish phenomenon. Publishers are witnessing a new curiosity about roots throughout society. Both the growth of the multicultural movement and the revival of the art of oral storytelling have contributed to this appeal.

The Jewish folktales that are being published now are not only of the "shtetl" and the East European Jewish experience, but also tell of Jewish life in Yemen and Morocco. They include unusual combinations of ethnic traditions. Publishers hope that these books will speak to a larger and more universal audience than has been the case traditionally.

Arthur Kurzweil, editor-in-chief of Jason Aronson's Judaica division, expressed the function of these books best when he said that he was tired of hearing how Jews died. He wants to know how we lived, and folktales, more than any form of literature, let us keep in touch with our roots.

Musleah, Rahel. "Reverence for Earth: A Jewish Experience," *Publishers Weekly*, (September 21, 1992), p. 36.

It is not surprising that in a period in which ecology is a major social issue that the Jewish angle has been explored. The *Shomrei Adamah* movement, founded in 1988 by Ellen Bernstein and currently based at The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (Wyncote, PA), attempts to show that environmentalism is an integral part of Judaism.

Two new books on this subject have recently come out: *Let the Earth Teach You Torah*, by Ellen Bernstein and Dan Fink, and *A Garden of Choice Fruit*, by Rabbi David Stein. *Shomrei Adamah* also publishes booklets for children on Jewish holidays. Tu Bi-Shevat has become a more popular holiday, and some Jews have even renewed an old mystical custom of holding a Tu Bi-Shevat seder.

This reexamination of Judaism and ecology is not merely a counterculture phenomenon. Major Jewish publishing houses like Behrman House have joined in, as has the more traditional Mesorah Publications, in Brooklyn, NY. *Tikun olam* [repairing the world] is not a theoretical concept, but a way of tying in Jewish values and practices with constructive ways to improve the world in which we live.

Vernon, Elizabeth. "Hebrew and Arabic Script Materials in the Automated Library: The United States Scene," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, vol. 14 (1) 1991, pp. 49-67.

As the technological options improve, Judaica librarians have choices to make in cataloging a Judaica/Hebraica collection. Despite the problems of romanization, the author of this article, after consulting with several prominent Judaica librarians in the United States, feels that there are still worthy reasons for continuing romanization even as we add text in the vernacular to machine-readable bibliographic records.

Rule 1.0E1 of AACR2 states that the title and statement of responsibility, the edition, and the publisher should appear in the language and script of the item wherever practicable. While acknowledging the difficulties with romanization, the author still finds merit in its use in automated systems. The benefits include increased accessibility of bibliographic records to the patron and reduced cataloging time, resulting from the use of available copy.

Dr. Charles Berlin, Head of the Judaica Division of Harvard College Library, which has a computerized catalog of its Hebraica collection, points out that "the decision was not romanization per se," but "the goal was automation and romanization was the means then available to achieve that goal" (p. 57).

In its Hebrew records, the Research Libraries Information Network (RLIN) combines romanization and vernacular script. This meets the goal of accessibility while preserving the author's meaning. Another product with Hebrew capability which has attracted attention is the Israeli ALEPH system; however, as ALEPH requires adapted hardware and software to run, it is used in only a few American libraries at this stage. For the time being we must be content with a mixture of romanization and vernacular in bibliographic records.


Donna Kutnick is the Director of Library and Media Services at Neumann College (Aston, PA) and is the immediate Past President of the Philadelphia Area Chapter of the Association of Jewish Libraries. Ms. Kutnick has previously worked as a Judaica librarian at The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, The Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies, Gratz College, Brandeis University, and the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem.

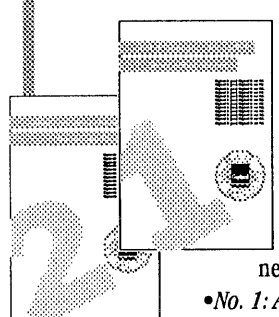
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