

# EPISTLE FROM THE HOLY LAND

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*This column will report news of interest to the Judaica library world from Israel -Eds.*

## **Albert Einstein Archives**

Probably the major event of the year for Israeli libraries was the acquisition — after years of complex litigation and negotiations — of the Albert Einstein Archives by the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL) in Jerusalem. The Archives contain 43,000 documents, including much of the scientist's correspondence and more than thirty unpublished scientific manuscripts.

Since Einstein's death in 1955 the papers had been housed at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey, where the scientist spent his last years; they were flown to Jerusalem toward the end of 1982. According to Professor Reuven Yaron, former director of the Jewish National and University Library and director of the Hebrew University Centre for Research in the History and Philosophy of Science, Technology and Medicine, the Centre will undertake the preparation of a detailed catalog of the contents of the archive which, he said, he hoped will be published by Princeton University Press, which is editing and publishing the Einstein papers as a joint effort with Hebrew University. The University is planning a full program involving the papers, considered by many to be one of the greatest existing scientific, cultural and historical collections. The archives will be housed in the Jewish National and University Library, located at the University's Givat Ram campus in Jerusalem.

The documents which arrived in Jerusalem include scientific and non-scientific material, with the non-scientific items outnumbering the scientific by a margin of about three-to-two. The great majority of the material, including most of the correspondence, has never been published.

The University will continue the process of acquiring additional materials for the archives — either copies or originals — and will also continue with plans for a major Einstein exhibition in April 1985, marking the 30th anniversary of Einstein's death.

## **Periodicals Microfilming Project**

At the end of 1982 the systematic microfilming of Hebrew and Jewish periodicals published outside of Israel was begun by JNUL. The project is being conducted concurrently with the project already underway to microfilm Israeli periodicals in imminent danger of disintegration. At the same time an attempt is being made to locate and microfilm any issues missing in the library's sets of periodicals, from collections in other libraries.

## **Laor Map Collection**

Another JNUL collection which has undergone an impressive expansion in the past year is the Map Collection. With the transferral of the collection to larger quarters, the collection of antique maps of Mr. E. Laor was finally made available to visitors to the National Library. Until the relocation of the Map Collection, Mr. Laor's large collection of antique maps of Israel and the Middle East had been housed in the donor's apartment because of lack of space in the Library.

## **Exhibitions and Publications**

To mark the 30th anniversary of the execution of Yiddish writers in the Soviet Union, the JNUL and the Center for Research on Eastern European Jewry of the Yiddish Department of Hebrew University recently issued facsimiles of thirteen of their books in a limited edition of 500 copies. To mark the 40th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, an exhibition and catalog on the subject was organized and presented in the Library's Berman Hall under the direction of the JNUL's Reference Department.

## **Scholem Collection**

In 1982 the Library acquired and began processing the unique and outstanding collection of the late Professor Gershom Scholem, one of the founders of the Jewish National and University Library. His library of 26,000 volumes includes a comprehensive collection on Jewish mysticism, Kabbalah, Sabbateanism and Hasidism, as well as a fine collection of books on mysticism in general, magic, history of religions and Hebrew bibliography. The Scholem Library will be housed in a separate reading room as a special collection and will serve the planned Scholem Centre for Research in Jewish Mysticism and Kabbalah.

## **Gifts**

Two gifts of international significance recently bestowed on the nation's repository are worth mentioning: a rare Stravinsky manuscript valued at about \$40,000 and containing the original 34-page score of his work *Abraham and Isaac*, donated by Jerusalem Mayor Teddy Kollek; and a huge triptych in stained glass by artist Mordecai Ardon, representing an interpretation of a passage from Isaiah, to be installed in the upper foyer of the Library. The windows, which will cost more than \$500,000, are being financed by the sale of a limited, signed and numbered edition of 150 scale replicas, each of which will sell for \$6000.

## **Reading Symposium**

As a special feature of the April 1983 Eleventh Annual Jerusalem International Book Fair, the Hebrew University Graduate School of Library and Archive Studies organized and hosted an international symposium on "The Encouragement of Reading Among Disadvantaged Populations." The conference was both well-attended and well-received, and it is hoped that it will become a semi-annual event and permanent feature of the semi-annual Jerusalem International Book Fair.

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