

## Catalogs of Israeli Book Exporters

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# THE CHOSEN BOOK

Identifying what has been published in the field of Judaica in every country poses a formidable challenge to the librarian; however, there is one country where the task is easier. In Israel, book exporters publish lists, and, in aggregate, cover the majority of current Israeli publications. While there are other sources of information concerning such publications (see our *Building a Judaica Library*, Libraries Unlimited, 1983), the book exporters' catalogs comprise a prime resource.

The dealers' catalogs filled the void that was left when the PL-480 program was suspended. At the time of its existence (1964-1973) libraries could receive a monthly Accessions List from the Library of Congress which included all or almost all of Israeli publications. This list was extremely useful to acquisition librarians. Once the *Accessions List* was no longer available, various dealers attempted to provide libraries outside of Israel with current lists of materials available to them.

The catalogs of the dealers vary in purpose and format. Some strive for comprehensiveness while others attempt to cover a more narrowly defined area. Some arrange the lists topically, others alphabetically.

The "big three" in this area are Pinat Hasefer, Robinson and Weinberg. Each publishes a monthly list which attempts to include all publications of Jewish interest. This is interpreted very broadly and therefore includes anything related to Judaica. Ben Arza specializes in Rabbinic works, Ludwig Mayer in scholarly works in all languages, and Jerusalem Books in English publications.

It should be noted that the catalogs do not necessarily reflect the services offered by a dealer. The dealer may provide other works not included on the list. For example, one could purchase *The Canterbury Tales* in Hebrew from Robinson, but he does not list this type of material since it is not Judaica. Similarly, Hanan Rivkin of Jerusalem Books will provide any book or periodical published in Israel, even though his catalog lists only English works.

Not all the dealers will consent to put anyone on their mailing list. Some will provide a list only to regular customers; others might charge for the service.

Prices vary from dealer to dealer. Some seem to be consistently higher or lower than others, while in many cases the prices charged by the dealers vary from book to book — one will charge more than the others for one title and less than others for another.

Judaica acquisition librarians will find these lists extremely helpful. Some librarians might find one list sufficient for their needs; others will be interested in receiving more than one.

Table 1 analyzes six catalogs of Israeli book exporters in terms of coverage and arrangement. All prices are in dollars. (See p. 24.)

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## Recently Published Acquisition Tools

This section will list new and recently published materials that could be useful as acquisition tools. If you are aware of anything that falls into this category, kindly send it to me:

Prof. Edith Lubetski  
Hedi Steinberg Library  
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**Jewish Book World**, 1982— . New York: JWB Jewish Book Council, 1982— . Quarterly. Free. (15 East 26th Street, New York, NY 10010).

A newsletter providing short descriptive annotations of approximately fifty books of Jewish interest, ranging from scholarly to juvenile. Items from the list are selected from those received at the JWB Jewish Book Council office.

**Combined Jewish Book Catalog**, 1982— . New York: Association of Jewish Book Publishers, 1982— . Annual. Free. (838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021).

Arranged by publisher, the list includes new and old works. Most entries are annotated. The books range in level from scholarly to juvenile. Each entry includes price but no date of publication.

**Israel Book News**, 1983— . Tel Aviv: Book and Printing Center of the Israel Export Institute, 1983— . Quarterly. \$5.00. (29 Hamered Street, P.O. Box 5084, Tel Aviv, Israel).

This is a continuation of both the *Israel Book World* which was published in the 1970's and the literary supplement to the *Jerusalem Post International Edition* of the 1980's. One of the major features of this quarterly is the section "Publishers' Showcase" devoted to short notices of new Israeli books. Various articles and columns providing information about Israeli publishing and printing are also included.