

EPISTLE FROM ISRAEL

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Nachum Goldman Library

The Nachum Goldman Library was dedicated on August 31, 1983, at the Institute for Peace in the Middle East in Kibbutz Gat. The date marked the first anniversary of the death of Dr. Goldman, who was the President of the First World Jewish Congress. The library is to be housed in the historic building in which early discussions were held with a delegation from the Egyptian Army during Israel's War of Independence. These discussions eventually led to the signing of the ceasefire agreement in Rhodes in 1949.

Dr. Yakov Mayus, Director of the Institute for Peace in the Middle East, stated at the dedication that the library will be devoted primarily to problems of the Middle East and Arab-Israeli peace, a goal for which Dr. Goldman struggled all his life. In addition, the library will include considerable material on topics in Judaica and political science.

Abraham Sutzkever Exhibition

November 10, 1983 marked the opening of a comprehensive exhibition in honor of the great Yiddish poet Abraham Sutzkever, on the occasion of his 70th birthday, at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. Hebrew University President Don Patinkin presided over the opening program, which included lectures by Professors Dov Sadan and Chone Shmeruk, and which closed with a moving reading from Sutzkever's poetry by the author himself. Mr. Sutzkever is transferring his important archive to the JNUL, thus enriching the Yiddish literary archives already located in the Library, including papers of Prof. Dov Sadan, Itzik Manager, Melech Ravitch, A. Zeitlin and others.

Gifts

Two important manuscripts were recently donated to the Manuscript Department of the JNUL. Miss Winnifred A. Myers of London, a long-standing contributor of important Jewish autographs (including the archive of the nineteenth-century Jewish artist Moritz Oppenheim) donated a manuscript by Max Nordau on Palestinian nationality. Mr. Albert E.

Emsellem of Rockville, Maryland, contributed an important manuscript on Kabbalah and astronomy, written in Fez by his late father, Mahluf ben Yitzhak Emsellem.

Another long-time supporter of the JNUL, Mr. Ludwig Jesselson of New York, presented the library with a number of rare Hebrew printed books, mostly *Haggadot*, from Sotheby's auction of June 23, 1983.

Publications

Several publishing ventures of interest to Judaica librarians are underway or have recently been completed under the auspices of Israeli libraries and archives. The Research Committee of the Jabotinsky Institute in Tel Aviv has undertaken to translate into Hebrew and publish a selection of articles by Ze'ev Jabotinsky published in the Russian language weekly *Rassvet* (Dawn) between the years 1922-1934. This newspaper, which was published first in Berlin and later in Paris, was the first journal of the Revisionist Movement. Jabotinsky published hundreds of articles in *Rassvet*, most of them dedicated to expressing his views and positions on topics related to Zionism in Eretz Israel.

The JNUL and a London publisher, Mr. Chaim Rabinowitz, have combined to produce a facsimile edition of the famous Worms Machzor, the medieval prayer book compiled in 1272. The original narrowly escaped destruction when the Worms Synagogue was destroyed during Kristallnacht on November 9-10, 1938. The priceless book was hidden in the local cathedral, and following a postwar legal battle, was deposited in the Hebrew University Library in 1957. An accompanying volume of commentary on the two-volume facsimile has been prepared by a team of renowned scholars and is being printed by a firm of specialists in Austria.

Finally, as part of its program to increase the availability of rare books, the JNUL has published facsimile editions of three rare collections of poems by Uri Zvi Greenberg, whose important archive was recently donated to the Library by his widow, Mrs. Aliza Greenberg, and of Abraham

Sutzkever's extremely rare book of poems, *Valdiks*, which was originally published in Vilna in 1940.

Shlomo Shunami

One of Israel's most distinguished librarians and bibliographers died in Jerusalem on March 6 at the age of eighty-seven. Shlomo Shunami was the author of the highly important bibliographic tool *Bibliography of Jewish Bibliographies* and editor of the journals *Yad Lakore* (Reader's Aid) and *Israel Librarians Association Journal*.

Born in Hungary, Shunami came to Israel following his graduation from the Ecole de Bibliothecaires in Paris. For forty years, from 1921-1961, he worked for the JNUL, and in 1946 he was sent by the Library to Europe to arrange for the transfer to Jerusalem of Israel's share of the collection of Alfred Rosenberg, the notorious Nazi propagandist who set up a giant library of Jewish books for propaganda purposes. Shunami succeeded in bringing 400,000 books to Israel from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Germany and Poland, 100,000 of which were added to the collection of the JNUL, while the others were distributed among various religious and scientific institutions.

A year later, in 1947, Shunami served as a liaison between the Hebrew University and the Syrian Metropolitan in Jerusalem for the purchase of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and in 1971 he served as a consultant to the Yeshiva University Library in New York.

Shlomo Shunami's work in Judaica librarianship places him among the ranks of great contributors to the field. His organizational activity was unequalled in both scope and success. In addition, his monumental publication, the *Bibliography of Jewish Bibliographies*, remains one of the cornerstones of Jewish scholarship and in itself would be sufficient to assure him a place in the history of Jewish and Israeli culture.

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