

# REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

## Israel Reference Works on Microfiche

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The use of microfiche as a medium for reference sources is a relatively new phenomenon in Israel. Some are produced from computer tapes, and coincide with the growing use of computers for the maintenance of data bases; others are simply photocopies of existing material.

### Union List of Serials

The first computer-output microfiche (COM) produced in Israel, the *Union List of Serials in Israel Libraries*, also called *ULS-Israel*, has been available on microfiche since 1980; however, only since its edition, dated May 1, 1984, includes a Hebrew section. Its Hebrew acronym, *RAMKI*, stands for *Reshimah Me'uhedet shel Kitvet be-sifriyot Yisrael*. *ULS-Israel* will be of interest to Judaica librarians not only for the Hebrew titles, but also for the vast number of Judaica titles in other languages, among them many little-known periodicals and "one-time" newspapers.

Each entry in *ULS-Israel* gives complete bibliographic data, including title changes, sponsoring bodies, and holdings in each of the more than 150 participating libraries. The International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) is given for each Israeli periodical. The department of the Jewish National and University Library which issues *ULS-Israel* is the official ISSN agency in Israel, responsible for assigning all ISSNs to serials published in this country. The microfiche set consists of a main section of titles, cataloged according to AACR2 rules, with an index of names of sponsoring bodies and a list of participating libraries. There are 5 Hebrew fiche and 36 Latin-character fiche in the edition dated March 1, 1985, representing about 70,000 titles. An accompanying 20-page booklet includes a User Guide and a list of library codes and addresses in Hebrew and English.

### Index to Hebrew Periodicals

Another computer-produced reference source on microfiche which, like *ULS-Israel*, originally appeared in book form, is *Mafteah le-kitve-et be-ivrit (Index to Hebrew periodicals)*. Unlike *ULS-Israel*,

*Mafteah* continues to be published in book form as well. Volumes for 1982 and 1983 have appeared. *Mafteah* first appeared on microfiche in 1982, in two parts. The first part is a cumulation, in one alphabetical sequence, of the volumes which appeared from 1977 to 1981. The second part is a periodically updated cumulation beginning from 1982. A thesaurus of index terms is also available on microfiche, but is not necessary for ordinary searches, as the body of the *Mafteah* includes a multitude of cross references. The team of librarians at the University of Haifa who compile it have made the *Mafteah* an important source of current information on a wide variety of subjects, including literary criticism, current events, medicine, and art. *Mafteah* indexes over 200 Hebrew periodicals, however, it does not index articles in newspapers and, until recently, there was no index to the daily press in Israel. (See Avraham Greenbaum's detailed analysis of *Index to Hebrew periodicals in Judaica Librarianship*, Vol. 1 No. 1, p. 34-35. - Ed.)

### Catalog of Articles from the Hebrew Press

The daily newspaper *Ha-Aretz* published two volumes which have served as indexes to important events for the years 1948 to 1963. The first, "Eser ha-shanim harishonot; yoman me'ora'ot yisrael," was published in 1958. The second, "1958-1961; yoman eru'e shelosh ha-shanim," was published in 1961.

To fill the gap in coverage of newspapers, an index entitled *Katalog analiti selektiv le-ma'amarim meha-itonut ha-yomit ha-ivrit im mafteah kumulativi*, began publication in 1981. Roughly translated, the title is: "Analytic selective catalog of articles from the Hebrew daily press, with cumulative index."

The *Katalog* is the result of the work of Ya'akov Fitzer who, in 1969, began to compile a card file of important articles from the daily press and from selected periodicals. The library of the regional college at Tel-Hai in the Upper Galilee undertook the project of preparing and distributing the card file on microfiche. Typed catalog cards, arranged alpha-

betically by subject heading, are reproduced on the fiche—260 cards on each.

The first set of the *Katalog*, covering the years 1969 to 1980, consists of 233 fiche, with a separate fiche index of subject headings, including cross references. Annual supplements (three to date) continue the consecutive numbering of the microfiche. Each supplement is accompanied by a cumulated index of subject headings.

An important function of the subject headings index is that it indicates not only fiche number, but also column and row number. Pinpointing the exact location is extremely helpful, because the alphabetical arrangement of the subject headings on each fiche is not immediately apparent, given the arrangement of the cards in several horizontal groups rather than in one consecutive column. Another function of the index is to facilitate retrieval of articles on a given subject in all of the annual supplements. It is therefore important to consult the index before each search.

The *Katalog*, which covered selected periodicals, as well as newspapers, from 1969 to 1980, complements the *Mafteah*, which began publication only in 1977. Thus the *Katalog* fills a gap in Hebrew periodical indexing as well as presenting references to newspaper articles on a wide range of subjects, such as urban renewal, motion pictures and current events. The subject of literature, however, is given only slight coverage, as it was planned as a separate section. Currently in the final stages of preparation, this section, entitled "Sofrim vi-yetsirothem" (Writers and their works), is to be ready in June, 1985 and will cover the years 1969 through 1984.

### Central Lexicon of Israel

Another index to the Hebrew daily press, which was short-lived, is the *Leksikon merkazi le-yisrael*. This may be translated as "Central Lexicon of Israel." It was conceived of by Shmuel Shihor as a continuously updated encyclopedic data

bank of Israeli current events. Shihor was head archivist of the daily newspaper *Ha-Aretz* for many years, until his death in October, 1982. (He also worked on its index.) In June, 1983 a set of 14 microfiche produced from computer tapes was issued by his widow, Dr. Rachel Shihor, and the publishing firm Lewin-Epstein-Modan.

The *Leksikon* has two parts. The main part, "Historiyografiyah: homer shotef" (Current history) is arranged alphabetically by subject. Each entry consists of a synopsis of the news item, followed by the date on which it appeared in the press. The name of a specific newspaper is not indicated unless the item appeared in only one newspaper.

The second part is called "Reshimat ha'arakhim veva-hafnayot" (List of entries and references). This part serves both as an index to the main part and as an index to a number of existing reference books, such as the *Encyclopaedia Hebraica*. For example, the name "Abu, Solomon" appears with an asterisk, indicating that there is an entry under his name in the Current History section, while Ahad Ha-Am appears with a reference to volume and page in the *Encyclopaedia Hebraica*. These additional references were designed to round out the contents of a central data bank of all Israel-related information.

Although this ambitious project has been discontinued, the *Leksikon* can serve as a comprehensive index to the daily press for the period between August 1, 1981 and March 31, 1983. Unlike the *Katalog*, which is selective, the *Leksikon* includes all news items and articles. For example, in the *Leksikon* there are ten entries between September 7, 1982 and January 18, 1983 about Solomon Abu, who was accused of murdering Shem-Tov Mizrahi. In the *Katalog*, Solomon Abu is not listed at all.

### Jerusalem Post Clippings Archive

Yet another newspaper-oriented microfiche tool is the Jerusalem Post Clippings Archive product called *Prominent People, 1933-1977*. This presents, on 1,929 fiche, reproductions of entire articles and news items as they appeared in the *Jerusalem Post*. The clippings are dated, and arranged alphabetically under the names of each of 535 "prominent people." Only persons about whom there have been a number of articles or news items are included. For example, there are 20 fiche devoted to Abba Eban and 9 to Adolph Eichmann. There are no obituaries or news items concerning lesser-known people, as in the *Leksikon*.

An unexpected feature is the appearance of the names of staff members of the *Post* among the "prominent people." For

example, all the articles by Eric Silver, London correspondent, appear between articles on Abba Hillel Silver, American Zionist leader, and on George Singer, Conductor of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. This is apparently a result of filming the clippings file straight through, without editing out the files of staff members. Admittedly, the latter may have been difficult to accomplish, as several of the by-line names are also the subjects of articles.

*Prominent People* was prepared and distributed by the Inter Documentation Company (IDC) of Zug, Switzerland. The quality of their work is good, but could not compensate for the deteriorated condition of some of the older clippings.

### Jewish National Library Catalogs

IDC was also responsible for the preparation of the microfiche of the Judaica classified catalog of the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL) in Jerusalem. It is arranged by the Scholem classification scheme, a modified version of the Dewey Decimal System, and is accompanied by a printed index to the scheme. It lists about 300,000 publications, which represent 85 percent of all publications ever printed in Hebrew and 80 percent of material in other languages. As the catalog of the largest Judaica collection in the world, this set of microfiche is a valuable finding tool and an excellent source for bibliographic data. Those who do not need the entire set may order specific subject sections, such as Bible, Jewish history, Jewish biography and Palestine-State of Israel.

The alphabetical catalog of the Jewish National and University Library is also available on microfiche from IDC. It has five alphabets which can be ordered as separate items. The Hebrew section is arranged by author and title in one alphabet, as is the Yiddish section. The Arabic section consists of separate author and title alphabets. The Latin character section and the Cyrillic character section, which include a great deal of rare Judaica, have authors and titles in one alphabet; however, until 1970, title cards were prepared for main entries only.

IDC has also produced microfiche indexes to the manuscript and archival collections of the Jewish National and University Library, and microfiche inventories of a number of archives at the Central Zionist Archives and the Israel State Archives, as well as microfiche editions of many out-of-print Judaica books and periodicals. Their catalog, "Jewish studies; research collections on microform," can be requested from the

The microfiche reference works discussed have been a boon to Judaica librarians. There now exist indexes to articles in Israeli newspapers and periodicals. Furthermore, the microform medium has made available materials which were not suitable for publication in hard copy. Now, without adding to their already overcrowded shelves, Judaica librarians throughout the world can enrich their collections with a variety of new reference works.

### Bibliography

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*Union list of serials in Israel libraries (ULS-Israel) = Re-shimah me'uhedet shel kitve-et besifriyot yisrael (RAMKI)*. Jerusalem: Standing Committee of the National and University Libraries, Jewish National and University Library [P.O.B. 503, Jerusalem], 1985. 41 microfiche, [\$35]. Updated cumulations published periodically.

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