


9-1-1994

The Otsar Hasefarim of Yeshivat Har Etzion: A Unique Yeshiva Library

Yaakov Aronson

Bar Ilan University, Yaakov.Aronson@biu.ac.il

Follow this and additional works at: <http://ajlpublishing.org/jl>

 Part of the [Bilingual, Multilingual, and Multicultural Education Commons](#), [Information Literacy Commons](#), [Jewish Studies Commons](#), and the [Reading and Language Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Aronson, Yaakov. 1994. "The Otsar Hasefarim of Yeshivat Har Etzion: A Unique Yeshiva Library." *Judaica Librarianship* 8: 132-138.
doi:10.14263/2330-2976.1256.

HOUSES OF THE BOOK

The *Otsar Hasefarim* of Yeshivat Har Etzion—a Unique Yeshiva Library*

Ya'akov Aronson
Bar-Ilan University
Ramat Gan, Israel

Abstract: An outstanding yeshiva library in Israel is described from the point of view of its physical plant, collection, approach to classification and cataloging of the collection, and overall organization. Also included in the article is information about the geographical area in which the yeshiva is located, the early history of the yeshiva, and the background of the special collections located in the library.

Yeshivot Hesder

The climax of each year's Israel Independence Day celebrations is an impressive ceremony at the Jerusalem Theater at which the year's Israel Prizes are awarded. The Israeli equivalent of Pulitzer prizes, these are awarded in specific categories such as law, mathematics, and education; there is also a general prize "for contributions to Israeli society." In 1991 a prize in the last category was awarded to *yeshivot hesder*—yeshivot that combine Torah study with army service. *Hesder* means "arrangement," referring to the original arrangement with the Israeli government authorizing the establishment of this program.

A passage in traditional Jewish literature that can be interpreted as referring to a combination of the literary with the military is recorded as early as the fifth century of this era in *Leviticus Rabbah*, the midrash on the book of Leviticus, where in the name of Rabbi Elazar it is said that the "sword and the book were given from heaven wrapped together."¹

*A revised and updated version, submitted January 1994, of a paper delivered at the Association of Jewish Libraries Convention in Miami in June, 1991.

The first *yeshivat hesder*, Yeshivat Kerem Be-Yavneh, near Ashdod, was established in 1963 by Rabbi Chaim Goldvicht. Today there are 14 *yeshivot hesder* located throughout the country, from Kiryat She-monah in the north to the Katif Region in the Gaza Strip in the South. The more than 3,000 students studying in these institutions are divided into classes, and during the obligatory five-year period of service, each class as a group spends a total of a year-and-a-half in the army, serving in front-line units, and the remainder of the time learning in the yeshiva.

The idea of combining army service with yeshiva study is only one of a number of innovations introduced in *yeshivot hesder*. Another point of emphasis is communal service, exemplified by participation of the students in *Perah*, a nationwide program providing tutors for weaker elementary school students. Recently some *yeshivot hesder* have expanded their programs to include sponsoring seminars for new immigrants from the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly the Soviet Union). Also occupying a place of enhanced importance in these yeshivot is the establishment of an *organized* library.

Yeshiva Libraries

Yeshiva libraries are called *otsrot sefarim* (singular: *otsar sefarim* [book treasury]), in yeshiva parlance, indicating the special relationship that the students have to religious texts. *Otsrot sefarim* have traditionally consisted of volumes on shelves lining the walls of the *bet ha-midrash*, the yeshiva's main study hall. A library did not exist as a separate entity. Today in *yeshivot hesder*, as well as in many of the more traditional yeshivot, independent libraries have been established. These include only *sifre kodesh*, religious texts.

A previous article by this author² presented the results of a study of ten yeshiva libraries in both *yeshivot hesder* and more traditional yeshivot such as Ponevezh and Hebron. As the yeshiva sector of the Israeli library community had not previously been studied, it was decided to continue this line of research and concentrate on the most outstanding library of the group studied. Two characteristics were chosen to determine which library would be singled out: size and variety of the collection, and its organization. Based upon these criteria, the library of Yeshivat Har Etzion in Alon Shevut, in the Gush Etzion region near Jerusalem, was chosen.

Gush Etzion

Beginning in 1943 the first of a group of settlements eventually called Gush Etzion, The Etzion Bloc, was established south of Jerusalem. One of the primary functions of the settlements was to act as a line of defense for Jerusalem. During the War of Independence the area was overrun by the Jordanian Legion and many of the men were sent to Jordanian prison camps. Upon their release some of them joined with other former Gush Etzion settlers in reestablishing their settlements elsewhere in Israel—Massuot Yitzhak and Ein Zurim near Ashkelon being two examples.

Moshe Moskovitz, a member of the re-located Massuot Yitzhak, took upon himself to head the rebuilding of the Gush Etzion area when it was returned to Israeli control after the Six Day War, and he is still active in this undertaking. Not only were the original settlements re-established, but a settlement designed to serve as an educational center and the city of Efrat were also set up.

Founding Yeshivat Har Etzion

From the outset of the project in 1967, the founders of the new settlements in the area, together with others from the Kibutz ha-Dati movement (the association of religious kibbutzim affiliated with the National Religious Party), felt that the jewel in the crown of the rebuilt Gush Etzion must be a yeshiva, and they set about finding the financial support necessary for its establishment as well as an outstanding rabbi to head the yeshiva. By September 1967, the institution, named Yeshivat Har Etzion to emphasize its geographical location (rather than naming it for one of the major benefactors), began functioning with 38 students in quonset huts (see Figure 1) that had previously been barracks for the Jordanian army. This first location of the yeshiva was in the reestablished Kfar Etzion settlement. In 1971, a permanent campus for the yeshiva was begun; the regional educational center Alon Shevut later developed around it.

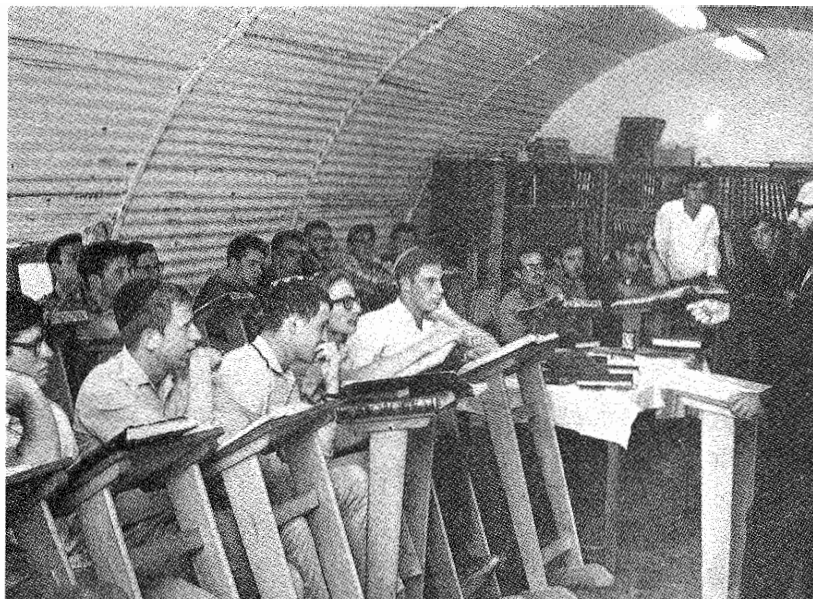


Figure 1. The yeshiva's *Bet ha-Midrash* (study hall), located in a quonset hut at the yeshiva's founding (1967).

The stated goal of the yeshiva's founders was to create a unique Torah learning opportunity in surroundings that would do honor to the importance of Torah. No effort was spared to assure that quality would characterize every aspect of the undertaking. To the yeshiva's good fortune, a synagogue in the Newark, New Jersey area, Kehillat Yisrael, decided to discontinue its activities at this time because of demographic changes in the area. The members were seeking a good cause in Israel to which to donate the proceeds of the sale of the building. The Israeli Consul in New York City heard about this and suggested Yeshivat Har Etzion as a possible recipient. The congregation's leaders were introduced to representatives of the yeshiva, and a cordial relationship was established. As a result, a \$300,000 gift was made to the yeshiva; the amount was matched by the Israeli government.³ Har Etzion's move to the new location at Alon Shevut took place in 1971, and in 1973, the first permanent building, the dining hall, was completed. In 1977, the impressive *bet midrash* was added (see Figure 2), and in 1981 the library wing was completed. Today, the yeshiva has a student body of over 600, 140 of whom come from abroad, and a 1994 budget of \$4,700,000.

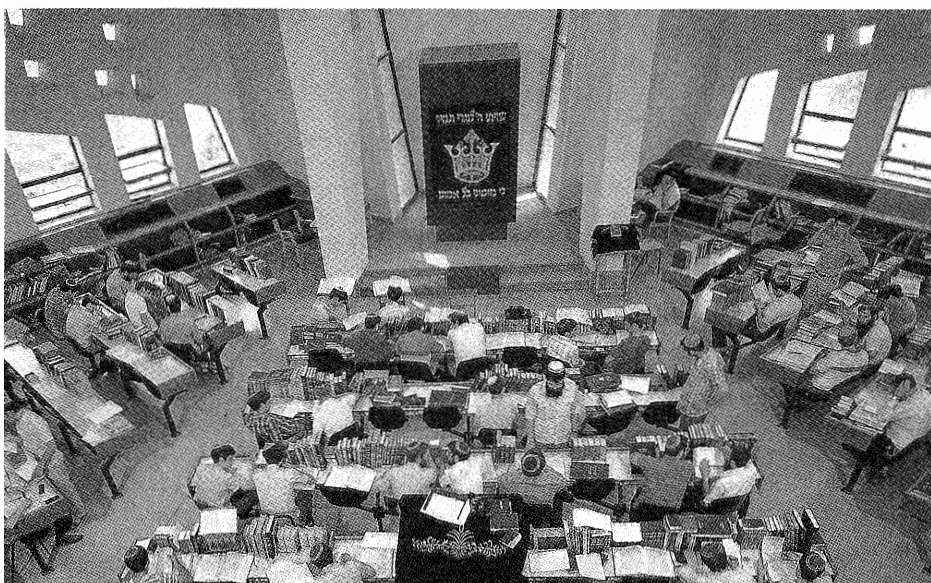


Figure 2. The *Bet ha-Midrash* today.

each other in many ways and provide the students with exposure to two very different approaches to the study of Torah.

Library

Har Etzion's library is housed in a separate wing of the complex of buildings comprising the yeshiva (see Figure 3). The library is divided into seven separate areas occupying a total of 615 square meters (about 6,000 square feet), including a space of 90 square meters for

expansion. On the upper story of the same wing is the Yeshiva's Ya'akov Herzog Teachers' Institute, with its own library. Studying in this institute are fourth- and fifth-year yeshiva students who elect to do so. This two-year program qualifies them to become teachers of religious subjects in grades 1-8. If a student decides to stay in the yeshiva beyond the required five years, he can continue in the Teachers' Institute for two additional years and be granted a high school teacher's certificate. Over 900 students are currently

Chosen to head the yeshiva was Rabbi Yehudah Amital, an authority on responsa literature. Later when Rabbi Aharon Lightenstein moved to Israel from the United States, the yeshiva offered him the position of co-Rosh Yeshiva. This arrangement, unique among yeshivas, is very beneficial as the two men complement



Figure 3. The main building of Yeshivat Har Etzion, with the library wing in the foreground.

enrolled in the institution, including students from Har Etzion, other yeshivas, and from the surrounding area.

Because of the nature of the material used for instruction, a separate library was established. The Teachers' Institute library collection now numbers about 11,000 items, over half of which are instructional aids such as slides, videos, and kits on various subjects, some purchased, others prepared by the library's staff or by the students. But the main component of the yeshiva's library complex, with a collection of over 40,000 volumes, is the yeshiva library, which is composed of a general collection, three major special collections, and a small museum of Torah ornaments from the Newark synagogue.

Collection Building

Among yeshivot, Har Etzion has a unique view of the scope of its library. Whereas most yeshivot limit the contents of their libraries primarily to works of immediate relevance to the curriculum, Har Etzion is constantly on the lookout for interesting items to add to its library. One component of the collection is a group of about 500 rare volumes, transferred to the yeshiva in 1988 from the Bet Midrash 'Ets Hayim (Ashkenazi) in Amsterdam. That the yeshiva was interested in obtaining such a collection reflects its goal of trying to create a library in which can be found a large percentage of the important works of rabbinic scholarship from all the ages.

Representatives and supporters of Har Etzion travel around the world on yeshiva business and during these trips occasionally come upon important books which they are able to obtain for the library. One example is a set of books now located in the room containing the Amsterdam collection. Most of the volumes in the room date from the late 1700s to early 1800s and are in their original bindings, but on one shelf is what looks like a recent edition of the Talmud, with a new leather binding. This is in fact what has been referred to as the "Survivors' Talmud," an edition whose publication began in 1948.

After World War II, a Va'adat Agudat Harabbanim was active in Western Europe, helping concentration camp survivors. Members of the committee thought that a fitting memorial to Europe's Jews, which at the same time would show the vitality of the Jewish spirit, would be to publish a complete edition of the Talmud in Germany. With U.S. Army support and additional financing from the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, several hundred sets were printed by the Carl Winter Publishing House in Heidelberg. On the title page appears the legend

Va'adat Agudat Harabbanim in the
American Sector of Germany
under the supervision of the Procurement
Division of the European Quartermaster
Depot of the U.S. Army

—and the edition is dedicated to the U.S.

Army. This edition of the Talmud is not a rare item,⁴ but the story of the acquisition of the copy at Har Etzion is unique. One of the Yeshiva's supporters visited the Winter Publishing House during a trip to Germany in 1990 and found one complete copy and an additional partial copy of this 40-year-old printing lying unbound in the printer's store room. In response to a request to purchase these volumes, the firm's management bound them in leather and presented them as a gift to Yeshivat Har Etzion.⁵

Special Collections

Amsterdam Collection

When Ashkenazi Jews began arriving in Amsterdam in the 1620s, they were not readily accepted into the already established Sephardi community and soon established their own institutions, one of which was 'Ets Hayim-Study Hall for the German Jewish Community in Amsterdam.⁶ Though once a thriving institution, the community affiliated with it dwindled over the years, and by 1980 little use was being made of the very important library that had been collected. There were even instances of books of great value disappearing. In the mid-1980s, the organization's board, officially called Trustees and Parnasim of the Ashkenazi Community in Amsterdam 'Ets Hayim, decided to select important items from the collection and sell them at auction. Sotheby's in London was chosen to handle the arrangements,

and in February 1986, 138 lots were offered for sale.⁷ The sale went very well, and until today the community supports a number of needy families from a fund established from the proceeds.

The following year, during a visit to London, a graduate of Yeshivat Har Etzion, himself a collector and lover of old books who is today a rare book dealer, heard about the remaining library—that it was not being used, that it was even being abused—and he arranged a trip to Amsterdam to investigate. The result of his efforts was the “loan” (for legal reasons) of the volumes to Yeshivat Har Etzion, where today 500 volumes are housed in a special reading room with a 5' x 8' picture of the old 'Ets Hַayim building adorning the entrance.

Along with the collection came the original ledger in which the library's contents had been registered, as well as the card catalog, written in a beautiful script. Most of the volumes in the collection are bound in leather, in some cases stretched over wooden boards, a much sturdier binding than today's bindings that are stretched over cardboard, which very often warps with changes in the weather. Volumes whose physical condition was very bad were rebound. Other items had their bindings cleaned so as to restore their original look.

Included in the collection are the traditional multivolume sets such as the Bible, Talmud, Mishnah, Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, Alfasi's commentary on the Talmud, *Shulhan Arukh*, and monographic works ranging from responsa to a popular work called *Yesodot ha-Dat*: [to educate ... Jewish youth].

Many of these volumes, like volumes found today in synagogues in the United States and elsewhere, bear inscriptions declaring by whom they were donated and in memory of whom. One dedication states further that in recognition of the donation of the book to the synagogue, a yearly class will be taught in memory of the deceased on the date of his death (*yahrzeit*).

Tamar Collection

The largest special collection at Har Etzion is the Tamar collection, housed in a separate area of the main reading room. This collection was built by Rabbi Isachar Tamar, who was born in Poland at the end of the last century, moved to Germany because of the unsettled conditions at the time of World War I, and then to Israel in 1933, entering the country thanks to a special permit obtained by Rabbi Abra-

ham Isaac Kook, then Chief Rabbi of Palestine. It was not long before Rabbi Tamar's erudition was recognized and he was appointed to the Chief Rabbinical Council of Tel Aviv, a position he held for almost 50 years. His field of expertise was *kashrut*.

Before coming to Israel, Rabbi Tamar began collecting books, but unfortunately was not able to take any of them with him when he left Germany. Starting anew in Israel, Rabbi Tamar built a library of 8,000 volumes, including about 800 rare items. Rabbi Tamar was not a rich man, but he spared no effort to scout out volumes that could be obtained for reasonable prices and, as his grandson puts it, he would then sneak them into the house without his wife's knowledge. He was known to all the important book dealers in the country, and they would contact him immediately when an interesting item appeared on the market at a reasonable price.

Upon Rabbi Tamar's death in 1982, his family looked for a suitable home for his library. Negotiations were entered into with a number of possible sites, and in the end Yeshivat Har Etzion succeeded in obtaining the collection. In addition to seeking an appropriate home for the collection, the family had another important condition to be met by its recipient. During his lifetime, Rabbi Tamar had taken a special interest in the Jerusalem Talmud and recorded comments in note-

books over a period of six decades. It was realized by Rabbi Tamar's son-in-law, Rabbi Abraham Rabinowitz, that they amounted to a commentary on the entire Jerusalem Talmud, and it was then decided to publish the commentary under Rabbi Rabinowitz's editorship.

When Rabbi Tamar died, only two volumes of the commentary, entitled *'Ale Tamar*, had appeared, and the family specified that the institution receiving the library must support the publication of the remainder of the commentary. After the appearance of the third volume, Rabbi Rabinowitz died suddenly; the final volume was published in 1992 by Rabbi Tamar's grandson, Rabbi Moshe Rabinowitz, a graduate of the Har Etzion Yeshiva.

As is fitting for the author of a commentary on the Jerusalem Talmud, the showpiece of Rabbi Tamar's library is a collection of 14 editions of that work. The earliest is the first printed edition, published by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1520, and the latest was published in Eastern Europe in 1812.

Indicative of the approach of Har Etzion to handling almost everything connected with the library is the effort that went into the design of the bookplate prepared for Rabbi Tamar's books (see Figure 4). A photograph of the title page of the



Figure 4. Bookplate for the Tamar Collection.

Bomberg edition of the Jerusalem Talmud was made. The printer's name was removed and in its place the inscription ["Library of Rabbi Isachar Tamar, may the memory of a saint be remembered for a blessing, author of 'Ale Tamar, commentary on the Jerusalem Talmud"] was inserted.⁸

Rabbi Tamar had far-ranging interests, as can be seen in the scope of his collection. In the biography and *festschrift* category are to be found a work about the ultra-Orthodox Rabbi Meir Shapiro of Lublin, founder of Yeshivat Hakhme Lublin and the originator of the *Daf Yomi* program in which Jews all over the world study one folio of the Babylonian Talmud daily and finish the entire Talmud in a little over seven years, as well as a volume honoring the noted bibliographer Moritz Steinschneider, whose interest in secular subjects matched his interest in Jewish subjects. Among the numerous volumes of periodicals that Rabbi Tamar collected can be found the religiously oriented *Pardes*, subtitled ["Collection of Rabbinic Writings"] and *No'am: [Yearbook for the Explication of Halachic Problems]*, as well as *Areshet: Yearbook for the Study of the Hebrew Book*, a publication with no specific religious orientation.

In addition to all the major traditional Jewish works which appear in numerous editions—for example, 14 editions of the Zohar—can be found 40 volumes of dictionaries, memorial books to Jewish communities that perished in the Holocaust, and even jubilee books such as that published in Toronto in 1943 in honor of the 25th anniversary of Congregation Etz Hayim.⁹ The rare books are housed in a special glass-enclosed, locked bookcase. The glass doors make it easy for readers to browse through the titles, and the books are made readily available by the librarians.

Facsimile Collection

A third, much smaller special collection, housed in its own room and dedicated to the memory of a yeshiva student killed in an automobile accident, contains facsimile editions of manuscripts and early printings of the Bible, Talmud, Mishnah, *Mishneh Torah*, and *piyutim* (religious poetry). This collection is consulted primarily by teachers and students in the higher classes.

It is well known that Hebrew works, especially the Talmud, were subjected to censorship by the Church in the Middle Ages,¹⁰ and this resulted in the transmittal

of many corrupt texts, not to mention errors that slipped in due to printers' carelessness and were then reprinted. In some cases, these errors can cause the student to arrive at a conclusion the opposite of that which the text originally intended. Many times, when logic argues against what seems evident from the text, the student or faculty member may wish to check earlier editions or manuscripts, to verify the accuracy of the text.¹¹ This collection serves that purpose. Among the works of which facsimiles are included are the Leningrad Bible manuscript, volumes of the Bomberg edition of the Talmud, the Vatican Talmud manuscript, the first printing of the Mishnah (Naples, 1492), and the first printing of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* (1480). No similar collection may be found in any other yeshiva. Har Etzion also has a collection of microfilms of over 200 Hebrew manuscripts and early printings of classic Hebrew works, including the Jewish Theological Seminary of America's incunabula collection.¹² All of this is in addition to the yeshiva's basic collection of about 30,000 volumes.

Use of the library is not restricted to the yeshiva's students. Many area residents consult the library also, and local scholars working on the publication *Otsar ha-Poskim*, a work of legal decisions organized according to the order of the *Shulhan 'Arukh*, the code of Jewish law compiled by Joseph Karo in the 1500s, have done much of their research in Har Etzion's library.

Classification

Yeshivas have taken varying approaches to the classification of books in their libraries. Yeshivat Mir, for example, with only about 3,500 volumes, uses color-coded tapes to classify its books into seven subject categories. Even Yeshivat Merkaz ha-Rav, with about 20,000 volumes, has only seven classes in its system. On the other hand, the system developed by Har Etzion has over 500 subclasses. It is based upon a classification scheme developed for the Torah library of the Ramat-Gan Religious Council almost 30 years ago;¹³ the scheme was adapted and expanded by the Har Etzion staff.¹⁴ Har Etzion is not the only yeshiva that has adopted a detailed system of classification. Both Yeshivat Sha'alvim, with 20,000 volumes, and Yeshivat ha-Kotel, with 13,500 volumes, use detailed classification schemes that are also based on the system of the Ramat-Gan Religious Council.

A concrete example of the detail in the Har Etzion classification scheme can be taken from the subject High Holiday Prayer Books. Other classification systems treat this subject as follows: the Weine system¹⁵ provides two classification numbers as subdivisions of the topic liturgy (z262.2 Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mahzorim, z262.21 Selihot); the Elazar system¹⁶ lists High Holiday prayer books as a subtopic under a general High Holiday heading (238.2 Liturgy, 238.29 Selihot [i.e., Selihot]), with subdivisions by rite and for commentaries and explanations; the Dewey Decimal Classification System,¹⁷ not known for its in-depth treatment of Jewish subjects, includes all material related to the holiday, including prayer books, in the number for the holiday (296.431 Rosh Hashannah, 296.432 Yom Kippur); the Scholem system,¹⁸ developed at the Jewish National and University Library, deals with the subject as part of the general classification "Prayer and customs," listing a heading for "mahzorim"—festival prayer books, which includes both those of the high holidays and of the three pilgrim festivals (296.312), and the material classified under this number can be subdivided by rite; and the Library of Congress classification¹⁹ lists six subtopics under the liturgy heading (BM670.K6 Kol nidre, BM670.U25 U-netaneh tokef, BM675.H5 High Holy Day Prayers, BM675.R67 Rosh ha-shana [New Year] prayers; BM675.S4 Selihot, BM675.Y58 Yom Kippur [Day of Atonement, Kol nidre] prayers), all of which can be further subdivided by standard categories such as translations, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform, adaptations for children—subdivisions not appropriate for a yeshiva library.

In contrast to all of these schemes, Har Etzion's classification system has twelve subdivisions for the liturgy of the High Holidays. "Selihot, Selihot according to the Ashkenazi rite, Selihot according to the Polish rite, Selihot according to the Sephardic rite; Mahzor, Mahzor according to the Ashkenazic rite, Mahzor according to the Sephard (Hasidic) rite, Mahzor according to the Sephardic rite; Absolution of oaths, *Tashlikh*, Yom Kippur confession, Yom Kippur Temple Service." A similar level of detail is found throughout the Har Etzion classification system.

The same basic classification scheme is used in the yeshiva's main library and in the Teachers' Institute Library, but the Institute has added subdivisions in areas of special interest to its students, such as education and Hebrew language.

Computerization

Both libraries are automated with ALEPH,²⁰ the integrated library management system developed at the Hebrew University. All of Israel's universities use the same program running on VAX computers, while Har Etzion has the PC (personal computer) version and through a local area network (LAN) has tied together three PCs—two in the main library, one of which has an 80mb [mega-byte] hard disk, and one in the Teachers' Institute. A separate catalog is maintained by each library within ALEPH.

The process of computerization was begun around 1986, when the yeshiva commissioned the writing of a computerized circulation system. Two years later, the ALEPH system was purchased to deal with other aspects of the library's operations. Today, the complete catalogs of both libraries have been converted, but only about 30 percent of the machine-readable records include full cataloging data, with the rest represented in a minimal form. A card catalog provides additional information on minimally cataloged items, but the libraries' goal is to update all computer entries and do away completely with the card catalog.

Cataloging

When Yeshivat Har Etzion decided to buy ALEPH, the main library adopted a thorough approach to catalog conversion. First it was decided that authority control was important, which is rare in yeshiva libraries. To assist in this task, the microfiche edition of the alphabetical catalog of JNUL²¹ was purchased and consulted in order to create uniform headings for all the authors entered in the card catalog. The creation of authoritative headings for all authors found in the catalog was decided upon so that new items being added to the collection would in most cases already have established author headings and could be easily added.

After the authority work was completed, the Chief Librarian began entering complete bibliographical records using the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*²² as a guide, which is also rare in yeshiva libraries. All current acquisitions—mainly commentaries on the Talmud and *Shulhan 'Arukh*, responsa and books on halakhah (Jewish law)—purchases amounting to about NIS 1,200 (\$400) monthly—are cataloged upon receipt by the circulation librarian. Retrospective work is primarily done by the Chief Librarian,

working through the collection in classified sequence. The elements included in catalog entries are the standard ones—author, title, imprint, etc.—except that more records have explanatory notes than are normally found in library catalogs because so many titles of rabbinic works do not reflect their contents.

Staff

Har Etzion is the only yeshiva in Israel that pays all members of its library staff. All other yeshiva libraries are manned primarily by volunteers. This is true even at Yeshivat Ponevezh, where the librarian, a widely published expert in the field of rabbinic literature, has been at the job voluntarily for over 20 years. The Har Etzion library, which is open 51 hours a week, has a staff of ten: three librarians and seven yeshiva students who assist in staffing the loan desk, reshelving books, and other administrative activities.

Members of the library staff do not have formal library science training, but through years of experience have learned the profession. Har Etzion's Chief Librarian, Aharon Bejell, a former student at the yeshiva, has been working in the library for 11 years and plans to make this his career. Everyone working in the library is enthusiastic about the work, above and beyond what might be expected. For example, one student who worked at the loan desk noted problems with the computerized circulation program, which handles approximately 100 transactions daily and keeps track of the 1,000 books on two-week loan at any one time. Being a computer buff, he viewed improving the system as a challenge and wrote an entirely new program which provided all the features the yeshiva wanted, including printing overdue notices. This student provided assistance to the library in another way. ALEPH PC does not print cards, and so a card catalog was maintained for the public, with cards being prepared manually by the staff. This student wrote a program that manipulated information from a special file built by ALEPH so that cards could be printed, thus allowing the yeshiva to enjoy an additional benefit of computerization.

The characteristics of the library at Yeshivat Har Etzion described herein are exemplary for any institution, but in a yeshiva library they are especially noteworthy and should serve as an example to other institutions.

***The characteristics
of the library
at Yeshivat Har
Etzion ...
are exemplary for
any institution, but in
a yeshiva library
they are especially
noteworthy and
should serve as an
example***

Acknowledgments

The author would like to express his thanks to the following individuals for their cooperation in providing information for this paper: the Roshe ha-Yeshiva; Mr. Aharon Bejell, the yeshiva's Chief Librarian; his staff; the staff of the Ya'akov Herzog Teachers' Institute, and the yeshiva's administration.

Thanks are also expressed to Mr. Ezra Kahn, Chief Librarian of Jews' College, London, for bringing to the author's attention the article in American Jewish History about the edition of the Talmud printed in Germany after World War II.

Notes

An asterisk () denotes a parallel Hebrew note to be found after the English notes.*

1. **Midrash Rabbah—Leviticus*, Chapter 35, section 6. Translation from Soncino edition (English) 1939. Though the continuation of the section uses the combination of sword and book for another purpose, the beginning of this section has frequently been cited in regard to *yeshivat hesder*. For the full quotation, see the Hebrew note.

2. Ya'akov Aronson, "Yeshiva Libraries in Israel." *Judaica Librarianship* vol. 6, no. 1-2 (1992), pp. 38-42.

3. This is not the only example of a synagogue in the United States closing and transferring its assets to Israel. Tractate *Megilah* of the Babylonian Talmud states (29a): "The synagogues and study halls of Babylonia will be reestablished in Eretz Yisrael." If taken as a general statement about diaspora synagogues, then the building of Yeshivat Har Etzion is certainly an example, and not the only one. In the Kiryat Moshe section of Jerusalem is found, as incongruous as it may sound, the Young Israel of Claremont Parkway (Bronx), and in the ha-Zvi Yisrael synagogue in the Rehavia section of Jerusalem, a sign prominently displayed in the entrance notifies worshippers that with the assistance of the attorney general of New York State, Louis Lefkowitz, the assets of Congregation K'nesset Yisrael of Arverne (Queens) were made available to help erect the ha-Zvi synagogue's building.
4. This statement is based upon an interview with Rabbi Samuel Rose in Jerusalem in 1990. Rabbi Rose, survivor of a number of concentration camps, was one of the main initiators of the project. Authors of publications dealing with this edition of the Talmud are not of one opinion on the subject. Abraham J. Karp, in *From the Ends of the Earth: Judaic Treasures of the Library of Congress* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1991), says "... complete sets are a rarity," (p. 54), but Gerd Korman, in an article on the subject in the periodical *American Jewish History*, says that "In many a library stands a set of oversized volumes which appear to be ordinary copies of the Babylonian Talmud but constitute in fact an extraordinary edition [the Survivors' Edition]" (p. 252; see next note for full reference).
5. A brief discussion (in Hebrew) of this edition of the Talmud, from the point of view of those responsible for its publication, Rabbi Samuel A. Snieg and Rabbi Samuel Jacob Rose, can be found on the verso of the title page of the first volume of the work, **Berakhot* (Munich-Heidelberg: Va'ad Agudat ha-Rabbanim, 5709-1948). A succinct description of the edition is found in Abraham J. Karp, *From the Ends of the Earth*, pp. 52-54. A fuller treatment of the subject is found in Gerd Korman, "Survivors' Talmud and the U.S. Army," *American Jewish History*, vol. 78, no. 3 (March 1984), pp. 252-285.
6. Background material on 'Ets Hayim appears in *Dan Michman, "The Mizrahi spirit and the Rabbinical and Religious Teachers' Seminary in Amsterdam, on the coming of Rabbi Doctor J. Neubauer to Holland" (Hebrew), *Bi-sheville ha-tehiyah*, 4 (in press).
7. A description of the items sold is found in *Hebrew Books and Works of Art* [sale catalogue] (London: Sotheby's, 1986).
8. Another example of Har Etzion's special handling of dedicatory material is a plaque honoring the donor of a fund to purchase responsa literature. Framing the inscription honoring the donor is a border taken from the title page of a volume of responsa.
9. More information on the Tamar collection is found in the introductions to the various volumes of *Y. Tamar, *'Ale Tamar*, 7 vols., 5739-5752, 1979-1991 (Hebrew). *Nezikin, Nashim, Zera'im* (Givatayim: 'Atir). *Mo'ed* (Alon Shevut: Hotsa'at Yeshivat Har Etzion).
10. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, "Censorship." *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), vol. 5, cols. 276-281.
11. This subject is discussed in two articles by *Shlomo Jakobowitz, "Remove the Old to Make Way for the New," *Yated Ne'eman*, Tamuz 23, 5748 [July 8, 1988], Supplement, p. 4 (Hebrew); "The Value of History," *Yated Ne'eman*, Iyar 5, 5751 [April 19, 1992], Supplement, pp. 8-9.
12. Jewish Theological Seminary [*Hebrew Incunabula from the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America*. Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 197-] Microfilm.
13. *Meir Wunder, "Classification System for Subjects Appropriate to the Needs of Torah Libraries in Israel ..." (Bne Brak: Center for Torah Libraries, 5725 [1965]). (Hebrew).
14. **[Shitat Miyun* (Alon Shevut: Yeshivat Har Etzion, 5738 [1978])].
15. Mae Weine, *Weine Classification System for Judaica Libraries*, 7th ed., revised by Mildred Kurland and Mae Weine (New York: Association of Jewish Libraries, 1982), p. 4. [An AJL Committee has developed a new edition.—Ed.]
16. David H. Elazar and Daniel Elazar, *A Classification System for Libraries of Judaica*, 2nd ed. (Ramat Gan: Turtledove, 1978), p. 66.
17. John P. Comaromi, ed., *Dewey Decimal Classification and Relative Index*, 20th ed. (Albany: Forest Press, 1989), vol. 2, p. 187. [The 21st edition will include a significant expansion of the Judaism schedule.—Ed.]
18. *Jewish National and University Library, [*Classification Schedule for Judaica*] (Jerusalem: 5741 [1981]).
19. Library of Congress, *Classification: Class B, Subclasses BL, BM, BP, BQ, Religion: Religions, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism*. 3rd ed. (Washington: Library of Congress, 1984), pp. 127-128. [For changes to LC classification of liturgical works, see Ricky Dreyfuss' column in this issue.—Ed.]
20. A description of the structure of ALEPH is found in Judith Levi, "ALEPH: An Online Real-Time Integrated Library System," *Judaica Librarianship*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring 1984), pp. 58-63. A recent critique of ALEPH appeared in Susan S. Lazinger, "ALEPH: Israel's Research Library Network: Background, Evolution, and Implications for Networking in a Small Country," *Information Technology and Libraries*, vol. 10, no. 4 (December, 1991), pp. 275-291.
21. Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, *Alphabetic Catalogue, Hebrew Characters* . . . [Jerusalem, n.d.]. Microfiche.
22. Michael Gorman and Paul W. Winkler, eds., *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, 2nd ed., 1988 revision (Chicago: American Library Association, 1988).

Hebrew Notes

1. **ויקרא רבא**, לה, ו: "יתני בשם רי אלעזר: הסיף והספר נתנו מכרכין מן השמים-אמר להם הקדוש ברוך הוא: אם שמרתם מה שכתוב בספר זה הרי אתם נצולים מן הסיף, ואם לאו, סוף שהוא הורג אתכם."
4. **מסכת ברכות מן תלמוד בבלי** (מינכן-היידלבערג: יוצא לאור ע"י ויגד אגודת הרבנים, 1948-5709).
5. דן מכמן, "רוח המזרחי ובית המדרש לרבנים ולמורי דת באמסטרדם: על בואו של הרב ד"ר י' נויבאוואר להולנד," **בשבילי התהיה**, 4 (בדפוס).
8. ישכר תמר, **עלי תמר**, 7 כ"ז, תשל"ט-תשמ"ב, 1979-1991. נזיקין, נשים, זרעים (גבעתיים: עתיר). מוגד (אלון שבות: הוצאת ישיבת הר עציון).
9. שלמה יעקובוביטש, "וישן מפני חדש תוציאו," **יתד נאמן**, כ"ג תמוז, תשמ"ח [1988], מוסף, ע' 4; "יערכה של היסטוריה," **יתד נאמן**, ה' באייר, תשנ"א [1991], מוסף, ע' 8-9.
10. מאיר וונדר, **שיטת המיזן למקצועות: מותאמת לצרכי הספריות התורניות בארץ**. (בני-ברק: המרכז לספריות תורניות, תשכ"ה [1965]).
11. [שיטת מיזן. (אלון שבות: ישיבת הר עציון, תשל"ח, 1978)].
15. בית הספרים הלאומי והאוניברסיטאי, ירושלים, **סדר המקצועות במדעי היהדות**. מהד' די (ירושלים: תשמ"א-1981).

Ya'akov Aronson is University Librarian at Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel. He holds an M.A. from the Department of History, Columbia University, and a Graduate Librarian's Certificate from Bar-Ilan University, where he is at present a Ph.D. candidate in American history. Address: Wurzwiler Central Library, Bar-Ilan University, Box 90,000, Ramat Gan 52900, Israel.