

REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

AJL Judaica Reference Book Award*

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Introductory Remarks

I am very honored to be able to present this year's outstanding reference book award. As the incoming President of the Research and Special Library Division, I first want to thank the Reference Book Award Committee headed by Sarah Levy and including Charles Cutter and Robert Singerman. They diligently examined dozens of Judaica reference books following the criteria established last year, when the inaugural Association of Jewish Libraries Reference Book Award was presented.

This year's recipient was a unanimous choice of the committee. Irene Heskes' *The Resource Book of Jewish Music: a bibliographical and topical guide to the book and journal literature and program materials* (Greenwood Press, 1985), is a compilation of published English textual resources for Jewish music that will serve the needs of musicians, scholars, and the general public.

I can affirm its value as a resource, for in the past three months I have continuously sought the Seminary's copy in the reference stacks. The Reference Librarian assured me it was not lost, but it was never there when I looked. Apparently, each of the Seminary's cantorial students was working on a term paper and, as they told me, there's nothing else that offers such in-depth bibliographic coverage for their projects and musical performances. One of the Book Award review copies is being sold to the Seminary as its second copy.

*Remarks made at the Banquet of the 21st Annual Convention of the Association of Jewish Libraries held in Montreal, Canada, June 17, 1986.

The *Resource Book* is a selective, computerized bibliography of over 1200 entries spanning all periods of literature and all sources, from general publications to specifically Judaica ones. The entries are divided into eight chapters by type of publication. Included are:

- Reference works such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, bibliographies and catalogs of Jewish music;
- Books and monographs on Jewish music, including collections of essays;
- Articles on Jewish music topics appearing in music and general periodicals;
- Jewish music periodicals, with full coverage of the issues and their contents;
- Instruction and performance resources on Jewish music, including educational publications, program aids, guides, manuals, and catalogs of publishers of Jewish music;
- Anthologies and songsters of Jewish music collections, especially those with romanized texts; and
- Dance materials with Jewish music.

Each of these divisions is further subdivided by subject, and finally alphabetized by last names of authors, editors, and compilers. Each entry is numbered consecutively, and no duplication of entries occurs. The bibliographic description is accompanied by an annotation that assesses the value of the work, its content, and treatment. Access to the material is further enhanced through an author index and a topical index which lists instrument and vocal scores, recordings, and highlights of various special collections and archives.

The majority of entries in *The Resource Book of Jewish Music* post-date the two previous bibliographies on this topic, Alfred Sendrey's 1951 work and Albert Weisser's volume of 1969.

Only someone who has intimately worked with Jewish music and its literature could produce such a volume. Irene Heskes is a music historian, lecturer, and founder and currently director of the American Yiddish Theater Music Restoration and Revival Project. From 1968–1980, she was Director of the National Jewish Music Council of the National Jewish Welfare Board. She has contributed to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica* and is the author of the following books: *The Cantorial Art*, *Studies in Jewish Music*, *Jews in Music*, and with Suzanne Bloch, *Ernest Bloch: Creative Spirit*. Currently, she is researching a book to be published by the Library of Congress about American Yiddish songs copyrighted during the period 1895–1940.

Irene Heskes was educated at Washington Square College; the Juilliard School of Music; the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York; Harvard University Graduate School; the School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion in New York City; and the Cantors Institute at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Irene Heskes, it is with great pleasure that I present this Reference Book Award of the Association of Jewish Libraries to you.

Linda P. Lerman, Administrative Librarian for Public Services at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, has recently been appointed to the position of Judaica Bibliographer at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut.