



MIDWINTER MEETING

JLC OFFICERS FOR 1978-79:

Susan Kamm
PRESIDENT
Joseph Rine
SECRETARY
Sylvia Eisen
TREASURER
Edward Herman
BOARD MEMBER
Cookie Lewis-Soldinger
BOARD MEMBER
Annette Blank
BOARD MEMBER

JLC COMMITTEES ARE:

Constitutional Revision
Newsletter
Publicity
Membership
Program
Jewish Book Month
Subject Heading Revision

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four times a year

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JLC, 690 Anderson Ave.,
Franklin Square, N.Y.
11010

Contributions to the Newsletter
are welcome. Any articles and/
or items of interest should
be sent to COOKIE LEWIS -
SOLDINGER, Editor, c/o Lewis,
Hollander & CO., 9808 Wilshire
Blvd., Ste 200, Beverly Hills,
Ca. 90212 .

CALL TO ORDER

President Sue Kamm called the meeting to order on Sunday evening, January 7, 1979 at 8:15 P.M. at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Washington, D.C.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Sylvia Eisen reported that as of January 7, 1979 the balance is \$858.56. Dues netted \$475.00 and Roberta Levine of Brooklyn Public Library is given credit for recruiting many new members. We now have 201 members! Conference 1978 expenses were \$365.55. Midwinter 1979 expenses were \$60.00; the newsletter \$156.00; Interest \$20.41. Since Sylvia Eisen can no longer print the newsletter, it will now cost approximately \$600.00 year for printing, paper, and postage. (\$150.00 per issue) The 1979 program costs are as follows: \$150.00 for the honorarium; \$100.00 for travel. Consequently, Sylvia Eisen suggested that dues be increased to \$7.50 while the subscription rate remain at \$5.00. Another alternative would be for the JLC to incorporate which would give us lower postage rates. In New York, a corporation has to meet in New York, but in California this is not a requirement. Sylvia Eisen concluded her report by strongly suggesting that it is to our advantage to incorporate.

AFFILIATE CHAPTERS

Roberta Levine reported that only two branches in Brooklyn had any program or display for Kristalnact in November. Due to this fact, many librarians felt that it was time to organize. A Brooklyn chapter has been formed. Sue Kamm reported that the LA chapter has not met since last summer but is planning to have a tour of the new Holocaust Center in LA. The LA chapter had a nice turnout for a tour of the Hebrew Union College Museum and Library earlier in the year.

OLD BUSINESS

Considerable discussion ensued on the proposed name change of the JLC. Final action will take place on Wednesday. Revision of the constitution commenced to be completed on Wednesday.

NEW BUSINESS

The possibility of an advertising manager was discussed. Sylvia Eisen received a letter from a Russian bookstore owner in New York who has very scholarly Judaica and wants to advertise in the Newsletter. Since present policy does not permit ads, the owner

MIDWINTER MINUTES cont....

wrote to Sylvia asking that a news item be inserted in the next issue of the Newsletter. Sylvia Eisen made a motion and Roberta Levine seconded that the next issue of the Newsletter have a news item on the aforementioned bookstore. Unanimous approval. Discussion whether to have an advertising manager was tabled until June.

MISC. BUSINESS

Sylvia Eisen reported that an anonymous donor purchased six subscriptions to the Newsletter and has given them as complimentary copies. Members as well as subscribers should be aware of this possibility.

RECESS

President Sue Kamm declared at 10:00 P.M. the meeting recessed until Wed. Jan. 10, 1979 at 2:00 P.M. in the Nathan Hale Room.

READJOURNMENT

President Sue Kamm readjourned the Midwinter Meeting of the JLC on Wednesday January 10, 1979 at 2:10 P.M. at the Sheraton Park Hotel, Nathan Hale Room, Washington, D.C.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Dallas Conference Program- Sue Kamm reported for Ed Herman. Considerable discussion ensued with regard to expenditures for Conference Program. Sylvia Eisen made a motion that Ed Herman spend \$350.00 for author's honorarium and travel and that any other incidental expense be carried by Schocken Books. Joe Rine seconded. Passed unanimously.

Jewish Book Month- Annette Blank presented ideas for Jewish Book Month: contact bookstores in the area, art displays, bookfairs, Jewish community center display case, contribute book, to the local library, ideas from the Assoc. of Jewish Libraries of Southern California, sponsor a kit for Jewish Book Month, Church/Synagogue joint program. The question was raised whether JLC should develop a kit for Jewish Book Month in 1980. Annette will write something for the June conference. Members present felt that the kit is a good idea but it is not necessary to duplicate existing programs.

ALA ByLaws Committee- Sylvia Eisen attended the meeting on January 8, 1979. Copies of our constitution were distributed. If conflict with ALA exists, the JLC will be informed.

NEW BUSINESS

Sylvia Eisen made a motion that Sue Kamm be empowered to incorporate the JLC in California at a cost of no more than \$100.00. Annette Blank seconded the motion. Passed unanimously. The entire constitution was discussed and revisions were made where appropriate.

MISC. ADDITIONS

Mr. Theodore Weiner, Library of Congress Hebrew Subject Cataloger, was a guest at the meeting. He briefly discussed his subject headings vs Sandy Berman's.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted
Joe Rine, JLC Secretary

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ALA Midwinter--despite the problems some people had with getting to Washington (and leaving it!)--was a satisfying experience for the Caucus. As you will read in the Minutes of our two meetings, we had a good turnout, and acquired some new members.

DALLAS PROGRAM PLANS

With the cooperation of Pearl Greenberg of Schocken Books, Ed Herman, our program coordinator, is putting together an exciting meeting for our program. Our speaker (not definite at this writing) will be one of Schocken's outstanding authors. Save the date: Wednesday, June 27, 2-4 p.m. (Our business meeting will be Sunday, June 24, 8-10 p.m.)

PROPOSED CONSTITUTION

We discussed a draft for a new constitution; however, since we have decided to incorporate, we will not be presenting formal bylaws for ratification by the membership until after our articles of incorporation have been filed. We will be incorporating in California, since that state allows more leeway in holding meetings outside the state than New York does. In addition, we will be filing a formal request with the Internal Revenue Service and the Franchise Tax Board of California for official non-profit status. When non-profit status is granted, we will be able to apply for a special non-profit postal permit, which will cut down drastically on the costs of our newsletters.

RELATIONSHIP TO ALA

We will need to make a decision within the next year regarding formal affiliation with the American Library Association. I have spoken to an officer of the Theater Library Association, which is presently a formal ALA affiliate. He tells me that their organization derives little benefit from affiliation. Affiliates' programs are listed in the back of the Conference and Midwinter programs, which means that conference attendees cannot easily ascertain whether affiliates' meetings conflict with other programs. Affiliates are not permitted to schedule meetings during the first three days of conferences. We will have to decide whether there are any benefits to be gained from affiliating with ALA before we decide whether to go ahead with affiliation.

NAME CHANGE

At our meetings, we provisionally voted to change the name of our organization to the National Association of Jewish Librarians. This action will be submitted to the membership for a vote as part of the ratification of our by-laws.

MEMBERSHIP

We have more than 150 paid members! I urge all of you to seek new members for our organization, and to encourage those already affiliated with us to continue active membership and participation.

I hope to see many of you at our meetings in Dallas. Please feel free to write me with any questions or comments you may have about the NAJL.

Shalom!

--Sue Kamm
President



Pearl Greenberg, Promotion Director of Schocken books, and Martin H. Greenberg, author of the forthcoming Schocken publication JEWISH LISTS will speak on Jewish publishing in the ecumenical marketplace at the JLC program meeting Wed June 27, 1979 at 2:00 P.M.

The purpose of this program, Ms. Greenberg states, is "to open avenues of discussion between the librarian and publisher in a cooperative effort to foster the growth of ecumenism in the library. We will discuss how the world of Jewish books and Jewish learning and lore can benefit the non-Jewish library and what roles the publisher, author, librarian can play to further and broaden the availability of Jewish books."

Personal Viewpoint *from one of our readers*

To the Editor,

For almost one year I have been trying to have the book Egypt by Lila Perl removed from Morrow Junior books publishing list -- with no results. Would all of you please read it, particularly the sections dealing with Jews and Israel. Perhaps enough pressure from professionals from all over the country will accomplish what I could not. They have not denied that my objections are valid, but will do nothing about it. Please do not publish my name or address. I am also trying to have the book removed from the Queens Borough shelves.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Ms. X has sent me a xerox copy of Chapter 5, "The Rebirth of Egypt". The objections are based upon some of her research using the following sources: Churchill, The Six Day War, Kubric, Israel, Ben-Ashi, Junior Jewish Ency. Statements in quotations are from Egypt while comments in parentheses are Ms. X's.

"For the Nasser who became head of state in 1954 was not a revolutionary zealot"
(organized holy war)

"Despite an Anglo-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt which ended in a U N. cease fire"
(No comment from Ms. X but refers to the nationalization of the Suez Canal)

"the young nation (Israel) had been established on territory that was occupied at the time by Palestinian Arabs" (Arabs encouraged to leave promising them Jews would be driven off-- they would get their land back)

"The Israeli-launched Six Day War of June 1967" "In the attack for which Nasser was shockingly unprepared" (Preemptive attack- were prepared to attack Israel)

"Inter-Arab disputes stemming from the attitudes towards Israel of not only Arab nations but of independant movements like Palestine Liberation Organization
(paid mercenaries)

"Cairo and Alexandria had strong Jewish communities that participated broadly in the commercial and social life of both cities up until the time of the 1948 war against Israel...the Jews of Egypt have not been under attack despite the Arab-Israeli conflict. (propaganda.. no mention of desecration of synagogues, and cemeteries.)

"The Egyptian government however, distinguishes between Jews and Israelis and, if anything, prefers not to encourage further emigration to Israel. It feels that the enlargement of the Israeli population will lead to territorial expansion on the part of Israil and it explains the censure of Israel by stating that Israel's policy of encouraging immigration from anywhere in the world- the so-called "law of return" is not evenhanded. Egypt deems it wrong that until the Palestinians are given a domain of their own, formerly Palestinian territory should become the home of Russian, American, or other immigrant Jew"

"The Egyptian ministry of Foreign Affairs firmly states, however, that Egypt does not oppose the state of Israel. At the same time it feels that lasting peace in the Middle East cannot be acheived unless Israel returns to its pre-1967 war borders and agrees to give some land- probably the West bank of the River Jordan and the Gaza Strip to the Palistinians and other displaced Arab peoples for an independant homeland.

LETTERS cont.



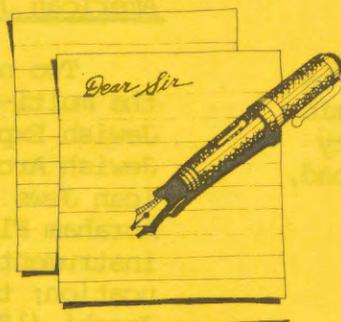
EDITOR'S NOTE: BELOW IS ANOTHER VIEW OF EGYPT REVIEWED BY JLC MEMBER BETH DWOSKIN. WE WELCOME AND ENCOURAGE ALL COMMENTS. PLEASE LET US KNOW WHAT YOUR SCHOOL OR LIBRARY USES IN THIS SUBJECT AREA.

Regarding the book Egypt: Rebirth on the Nile by Lila Perl, which has been protested as being anti-Israel: there is no point in reopening the discussion about the problem of objectivity among historians. Suffice it to say that Lila Perl is as objective as anyone could ask a historian to be, and there is nothing substantially objectionable about the book.

Ms. Perl relates the history of Egypt, and only the last chapter "Rebirth of Egypt" deals with Israel to any extent. Ms. Perl relates the facts as Egypt, Israel, and the international community see them, without adding her own opinion or rhetoric. E.G. "Egypt deems it wrong that, until displaced Palestinians are given a domain of their own, formerly Palestine territory should become the home of a Russian, American or other immigrant Jew." This is a fact as Egypt sees it. What else can a historian say in a book for teenagers?

This is not to say that there are no problems with the book. In recreating the Nasser era of Egypt's history, Ms. Perl fails to emphasize how Nasser's love affair with Soviet socialism and his obsessive hatred of Israel impeded Egyptian social progress. She also states, "In Egypt... tens of thousands of Jews had lived peacefully as citizens for years..." The fact that Jews and other minorities in Moslem countries such as Egypt have always held a tenuous position ranging from suppression of civil rights to full economic freedom. However, these are matters on which a historian takes a stand. The nuances of Nasser's personality and the complexities of Moslem society are outside the scope of the Morrow Junior Books.

In short, Egypt is a factual history with marginal and objective mention of Israel, and any attempt to withdraw it from the library shelves would constitute an inexcusable act of censorship.



Beth Dwoskin
The Temple
Cleveland

Dear Editor,

I am appalled at the suggestion by "Librarian X" that the book Egypt be removed from that library's shelves. Such action is in direct contradiction of the Library Bill of Rights, which states that "no material shall be removed from library shelves because of the proscribed political views of the author."

What "Librarian X" is trying to do is nothing more than censorship. She has no more right to pick the removal of Egypt from the library (and from the publisher's list) than an Arab would have to proscribe an Anti-Arab book.

Censorship is evil no matter what its source. It is particularly shameful when so blatant an attempt is made by a "professional" librarian.

Sue Kamm
ALA IFC



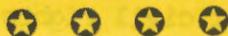
JUDAICA RESOURCES

ADLLO

JUDAICA BOOK NEWS is a semi-annual publication on books of Jewish interest. It is the only publication that lists new and forthcoming Judaica with annotations, publisher, and price-- in hard cover, paperback, and books for young readers; they also include some teachers' materials and games. 3-4 line descriptions are not evaluative but give enough to judge subject content.

In addition, they have book reviews and literary criticism, biographies, articles, interviews with authors, and photographic essays (b & W of quality reproduction suitable for picture files.)

Write to Book News, Inc. 303 W. 10th St., New York, N.Y. 10014 (\$2/each; \$4/year.



Jewish Socialist Critique 200 Center St. Rm. 1366, Berkeley, Ca. 94704. Annual subscriptions \$8/individ. \$14/ inst.

The Jewish Socialist Critique will be devoted to political, social, and economic analyses of the American Jewish community Israel and other Jewish communities abroad, and how sexism, racism, and nationalism operate within these communities today. The journal will also contain critical pieces on Jewish history, culture, and religion as well as reviews, poems, and short literary works.

Plans for the first two issues include articles on the class composition of the American Jewish Community, lack of Jewish community response to neo-facist groups, current labor struggles in Israel, expansionism in Israel policy between 1967-1973, the role of Jews in revolutionary Latin America, and the question of Jewish emancipation in 19th century Germany. In addition, there will be book reviews of Karl Marx and the Radical Critique of Judaism by Julius Carlbach and the Jew as Parrah by Hanna Arendt.

STARTING BIOGRAPHY FILES

Did you do a special program/ exhibit on Isaac Bashevis Singer during Jewish Book Month, or when he won the Nobel Prize for Literature recently? If so what did you do with the materials that you used for research on IBS?

A librarian at Brandeis Institute started a biographical file on Singer to be placed in vertical files. She included articles from Encyclopedia Judaica and other sources.

This is a wonderful idea-- to create files on personalities currently in the news--for future needs in research or as a basis for exhibits, displays and/or program materials.

Library Light 2/79



American Jewish Archive Posters

Two new posters have been added to the multi-color series on the American Jewish Experience, issued by American Jewish Archives. The subject is "American Jews in Medicine"--one is Dr. Abraham Flexner (1866-1959) who was instrumental in improving medical education; the other is Dr. Abraham Jacobi (1830-1919), considered the "Father of American Pediatrics".

Posters are available, without charge to schools, libraries, congregations and organizations. Charge to individuals is \$2 each. They are an excellent addition to every library or teachers center. Write: Ms. Susan Mabo, American Jewish Archives, 3101 Clifton Ave, Cincinnati, Ohio 45220.

An Informal View of Israeli Libraries - by Helen Silberman

Helen and Marvin Silberman visited Israel one year ago to do some research. While there, they viewed some of the public and university libraries in the Tel Aviv-Jaffa and Bat Yam areas--their temporary residence for 5 weeks. In all their visits, they found librarians very gracious, helpful, and willing to share, even opening their libraries when officially closed.

According to one Tel Aviv librarian, education for librarianship consists of 3 yrs of seminary (Israel's Teachers College) plus 2 yrs of librarian-training given by Israeli Library Assn. There are no librarianship courses given at Israeli universities.

A search of Statistical Abstracts of Israel, 1977, gave them the following background: 57% of Jewish population reads at least one book a month; 87% read newspapers; and 82% of the elementary schools have library services. In 1975-76, 3522 titles were published in Israel, 190 of which were children's books. A number of these books are exported by Israel Export Institute--Book & Printing Center. In contrast to these statistics was this statement by a librarian in a large Tel Aviv library: "I asked this librarian about circulation. Without a moment's hesitation she said, 'Israeli's don't read'."

Of course, libraries differed in various locations. One in Jaffa, with a large Arab population, appeared to have almost no books in Arabic, whereas another in Tel Aviv had collections in German, French, English, Arabic, Spanish and Russian. A few had Encyclopedia Judaica (published only in English), one had Encyclopedia Hebraica, several had Encyclopaedia Britannica, Jr. in Hebrew, and others inexpensive encyclopedias.

In their 5 weeks in Bat Yam, a suburb of Tel Aviv, neither Helen nor Marv could find one person in streets or stores who knew the location of a library. Finally, they went to the Government Tourist Agency, which listed 3 libraries in Bat Yam (population 130,000). (Compare this with Evanston, Ill., with 7 libraries for 139,000, or Orlando, Fla with 12 libraries for 99,000.) One was a neighborhood library in the basement of an apartment house...a little shabby but obviously used and loved. Many books had plain covers; collection in Hebrew and Yiddish only; card catalog handwritten; but it attracted a lot of children, most of whom the librarian knew by name. Helen and Marv found Dr. Doolittle and Charlotte's Web in Hebrew; and one youngster was really excited by Tarzan!

Tel Aviv-Jaffa had 5 libraries: on 7th floor of building complex, on 2d floor of El Al Airlines Bldg., an old main library, a new main library scheduled to open in 3 months and in same building as modern Tel Aviv Art Museum, and in municipal bldg. in Jaffa. The Silberman's visited the first 2 and found them large, light and pleasant., with various sections (childrens, adult, reference, periodicals); one rented framed pictures and had a chess/checker board set-up. The other had moving stacks on rollers.

The best library Helen saw was at Kibbutz Sdot Yam near Caesaria--the Bet Hannah Library (named after Hannah Senesh, former kibbutznic). It was warm and comfortable, open 24 hours/day, and on the honor system. It was run by a professional librarian in her late 50s who started her day by scrubbing the library floors at 6:30 am, and, thereafter proceeded with her duties, including preparation of study units for class use. This library was well-equipped with large reading & reference room, primary area, section for teacher/AV materials and books for intermediate readers, and special section for women (including books on sex and homecrafts). They also had photos, filmstrips, games, and recordings. As the official kibbutz archival center, their newspapers were from 1900.

Marvin felt that Tel Aviv University, and Hebrew University, Mt. Scopus, were each smaller than the Library at Cal State University at Northridge; and one-half holdings of each were in English - approximately.

In evaluating libraries, however, Helen indicated that there are many school libraries, which they did not see, and many other sources for books in book stores, department stores, educational book shops, and stationery shops. In conclusion, their major impression was of the "people in the schools and libraries--the epitome of graciousness & courtesy."

Jewish Women: historical perspective



BOOK REVIEWS

Goldreich, Gloria. Leah's Journey. Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1978.
LaZebnick, Edith. Such a Life. William Morrow, 1978.
Plain, Belva. Evergreen. Delacorte Press, 1978.

Recently, a number of novels have appeared, written by Jewish women, recounting the immigrant experience and, in general, the life experiences of Jews in the 20th century. Of these, two have some surprising similarities, particularly as compared with a non-fiction--an autobiography.

In the three books named above, the protagonist is a woman. Each is a family saga dealing with love, courtship, children, and ill-fated family members as they live and grow from the early 1900's to our time. Each opens with a pogrom, some form of violence done to the Jews in the "old country". After struggles and conflicts, each woman follows her dream to come to America.

SUCH A LIFE is a warm and charming remembrance of Jewish family life in pre-Revolutionary Russia. It rings with absolute authenticity as Mrs. LaZebnick describes loving and living in the gentile society of the time. She concludes her autobiography as she makes up her mind to leave her family and go to America.

LEAH'S JOURNEY and EVERGREEN are fiction and very similar. Each starts with a pogrom which precipitates the heroine's departure for New York. The struggle of life on the Lower East Side, in Brooklyn and Coney Island, is nicely described in EVERGREEN. LEAH'S JOURNEY has an extensive and energetic section dealing with the Labor movement in the women's garment industry, which is a highlight of the novel. Wealth and comfort comes to the families in each of these books through hard work, and they move Uptown, and then out of town.

Curiously, many of the plot mechanisms in these two novels are the same. In each, a beloved son marries a problematic girl and, in each, the girl dies. A sojourn in Israel becomes an important part of each book and, in each, someone is caught in an Arab attack. And, finally, in each story, the heroine, beloved wife and mother, has an extramarital affair. However, there are no strident feminist tones in these books, and they are basically old-fashioned family sagas--for light, popular reading.

--Renee Hurewitz, Librarian, Temple Isaiah.

RARE BOOKS

Last year, during a buying trip in Europe, JLC member, Mr. Valery Kuharets, the owner of the Russica Book Shop, acquired a large collection of Judaica from the heirs of the late, prominent book dealer A.P. Struve. The collection consists of books published in the Russian provinces, Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as a number of books published in Berlin and Paris by the Russian-Jewish community. Of special interest is the collection of anti-Semitic publications from the Soviet, emigre and pre-revolutionary press. Those interested should send inquires to: Mr. Valery Kuharets, Russica Book Shop, 799 Broadway, Suite 301-2, New York, New York, 10003

The Sassoon Haggada

Collecting unusual Haggadot of artistic or liturgical interest is a hobby that many pursue on a small scale, but few collectors can match the bibliophilic zeal of David Solomon Sassoon (of the famous Baghdad-to-London Sassoon family), whose collection at his death in 1942, included some 1,350 manuscripts: numerous illuminated Haggadot (among them the famous Sassoon Haggada, Geniza fragments, and historical documents from the North African Jewish communities. Perhaps the prize item was the oldest Hebrew Bible in existence, the Damascus Pentateuch, dating from 840-860 B. C. E.

In March 1971, when the Sassoon library was put up for auction by the Sotheby auctioneers of New York, London, and Zurich, there was great consternation in Israel that the precious collection might be scattered and lost to the Jewish people. The President of Israel tried to influence the Sassoon family to bring the collection to Israel. Chief Rabbi Yitzhak Nissim banned the sale of the documents to non-Jews. Nothing helped. The Sassoons insisted that the money was needed to keep alive the many charities founded by the family.

After a year and half of intense fund-raising, the National and University Library of Jerusalem was able to gather \$1.5 million, the amount for which the collection had originally been offered. However, by this time the bidding price had risen to \$9 million, and Israel's cultural institutions felt helpless to meet the new sum.

In 1975, Professor Reuven Yaron, Director of the National and University Library of Jerusalem, proceeded to Zurich to make his bid.

Yaron returned with suitcases laden with precious Judaica treasures: the ancient Damascus Bible, which had gone for \$415,000; a Samaritan Bible, the oldest of its kind purchased for \$80,000; two volumes of Maimonides commentary, *Perushim Lemshne*, bought for \$455,000; a 12th century Moshe Ibn Ezra manuscript which cost \$42,000, and an old edition of the Talmud for \$13,000. Scholars and bibliophiles were delighted.

Among the prized manuscripts was one of the most important medieval illuminated Haggadot in the world, the Sassoon Haggada, handwritten according to the Spanish Provençal rite. Its style of illumination is Spanish, as is the script, although some of the elongated figures and grotesques show French influence.

This manuscript, combining the traditional Haggada text with other ritual material relating to Passover, seems to have been the more common type of illuminated Haggada. In contrast to the more lavish Haggadot, there are no full-page Biblical illuminations here, but rather smaller Biblical or ritual drawings which illustrate the text. Human figures, animals and edifices illustrating the text are incorporated into the initial-word panels or in the margins. Sometimes these illustrations are quite literal such as a ladder to accompany the text: "And he went down to Egypt"

According to art historians at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, except for the ornamental birds and grotesques which show the influence of Christian art of the time, most of the illustrations relate directly to the text and are not merely decorative. The thin foliage scrolls which appear on most pages give evidence of Byzantine-Bolognese influence in Spain in the first half of the 14th century. A drawing of a man on a horse shows a striped pattern on the horse's housing which resembles the design of the arms of Aragon.

To add to the difficulty of placing and dating the manuscript, the first 251 pages are written in square Spanish script of the late 13th century style and are fully vocalized, while the last 80 pages are written in square Avignon script of the late 14th century. Experts generally regard the document as Spanish circa 1300, probably originating from the eastern Pyrenees or the area of Barcelona, with additions written in Avignon in the late 14th century. The mingling of styles, however, has led some scholars to believe that the Haggada might have come from Majorca or Southern France in the first half of the 14th century.

The Haggada contains instructions for conducting the seder according to various customs, with the names of the seder vegetables given in Catalan, old French, and Arabic. Also included are the Torah and Haftarah readings for Passover and Shavuot, the Targum (Aramaic translation) of the Torah portions, and some unpublished piutim (medieval religious poetry). This remarkable 334-page volume, written on vellum and bound in old leather is now preserved for the Jewish people in Jerusalem's Israel Museum.

Cataloger's Corner

AACR2 NOW AVAILABLE

Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2d edition, is now available from Order Dept. American Library Assn., 50 E Huron St, Chicago 60611 - \$15 cloth, \$10 paper. AACR2 is considered the international standard for cataloging of print and non-print materials. 2d edition replaces the original 1967 AACR and its supplements on monographs and audiovisual media.

Hannah Kuhn, Special Librarian at Brandeis Institute, points out one major difference between AACR1 and AACR2 (Library of Congress Cataloging Service Bulletin, Fall 1978, #2, p.16):

"In the rules for Jewish scriptures, the Encyclopaedia Judaica is cited as an authority. (AACR1 cited the Jewish Encyclopedia.)"

Therefore, for decisions on names, (e.g. spelling and pseudonyms), terms, and definitions, EJ IS NOW THE AUTHORITY, and it appears to extend to all decisions, e.g.

EJ: "SHALOM (Sholem) ALEICHEM
(Shalom Rabinovitz)

JE: "RABINOVITZ, SHALOM (pseudonym,
Shalom Alekem)"

To conform to this new ruling, all entries for SHALOM ALEICHEM should be under S with a cross-reference from Rabinovitz. (Remember: "Aleichem" was NOT his last name--but rather part of Shalom--his pseudonym.)

Another new rule is that tractate AVOT is now entered as a subdivision of MISHNAH, as any other part of the Mishnah (rather than entered independently as in AACR1). (i.e. "Mishnah. Avot.")

AACR2 is complex for those not trained in cataloging. Small and medium libraries might wait for revisions of introductory-type books, e.g. Wynar (due soon), Akers, or Piercy. We'll keep you posted.

The Reference Desk

CURRENT DATA ON ISRAEL

Overheard at the last Association meeting:

WHO IS THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL? I can't find this information in any book!

Unfortunately, because of the limited market, there are few Judaica books that are issued annually to supply this kind of information. The best sources are current magazines and newspapers. When you come across hard-to-find information, take a few minutes to xerox it, or write it on a 3x5 card. Your INFORMATION CARD FILE and your VERTICAL FILES can be your most valuable source for info.

A good source for brief information on Israel is the small paperback, FACTS ABOUT ISRAEL (1977 is current edition), issued by Israel Information Centre and available at Israeli Consulate. Also, WORLD ALMANAC and other general almanacs keep current on data.

To answer the above question: YITZHAK NAVON has succeeded Ephraim Katzir in the largely ceremonial post as President of Israel. On May 29, 1978, he was sworn in to serve a 5-yr term. Navon is a political disciple of the late David Ben-Gurion and is an outspoken Dove. The 57-year old author and amateur playwright is Israel's fifth president, first native-born Sabra president, and first Sephardic Jew to become president. (He traces his family of rabbis and Jewish authors to their beginnings in Jerusalem in the 17th century.) Navon served as chairman of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee in the previous Labor Government, and, among his objectives, will be an attempt to "mend relations" with Israel's 500,000 Arabs.

People With Something to Say

Dear Cookie,

Permit me to salute the persistent, invaluable labors of Sandy Berman for civilized subject headings. Anyone professing devotion to human rights ought to be right up there with him! Not incidentally, moreover, real progress in that and related departments would be greatly enhanced with, say, one tenth of the energy and money being wasted on codes of entry and description (for fifty years, in fact !)

Sidney L. Jackson
Professor
Kent State University

JEWISH BOOK MONTH

Even though it seems Jewish Book Month was a short while ago, now, is the time to start finding ideas for 1979's events. We hope to atart a kit of ideas various libraries have used, and find some new items. What did you do for Jewish Book Month 1977 or 1978? Please send your descriptions of what you did, and also, how others in your area celebrated. What you think of as ordinary could be new and exciting to someone else. Ideas, descriptions, plus publicity flyers should be sent to Annette Chotin Blank, 5477 Cedonia Ave., Baltimore Md. 21206

The few items here, may start you jotting down yours-- send them along to me.

Compile a list of contacts, have joint exhibits and programs, Israeli stamp and coin exhibits, puppet shows, exchange programs with non-Jewish groups, contact Jewish Book Council and Jewish Book stores, voting for favorite Jewish books by children in Jewish day schools, compiling a bibliography of your librarys Jewish books for interested patrons.

THE NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE IS MAY 15th
Please send me book reviews, your comments or letters to the editor, articles, items of interest, or brag notes. Cookie Lewis-Soldinger, Editor, JLC Newsletter, c/o Lewis, Hollander & Co., 9808 Wilshire Blvd. Suite 200, Beverly Hills, Ca. 90212

BOOK REVIEW

In My Father's Court by Isaac Bashevis Singer
Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, 1966

This book is a fond reminiscence of Singer's boyhood in Warsaw. His father's Beth Din or Rabbinical Court was the scene of many memorable events and peopled by unusual personalities, especially as mirrored through the eyes of a sensitive child. In the Yiddish version the book was entitled Beth Din. Such Rabbinical courts enforced their decisions by having the litigants touch the judge's handkerchief. This was possible because the Jewish people then had faith that such courts represented G-d's judgement. Throughout the book the author pays tribute to the vanished way of life of the European Jew and manifests his love and respect for his parents, even when he comes to question their way of life. The most remarkable vignettes were "A day of Pleasure" and "The Washerwoman." Some other episodes were more bland, less satisfying. But overall the collection pleases. It deserves rereading in view of Singer's 1978 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Ann Bender
Brooklyn Public Library

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