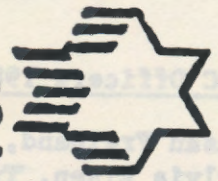


The Jewish Librarians Caucus Newsletter



April - June 1983

Volume 7 Number 2

HEADQUARTERS
OCT 11 1983
LIBRARY

The Library of Congress and the "Jewish Question"

Although long considered offensive by Jews throughout the world, the subject heading "Jewish Question" has continued to be used by the Library of Congress. The anger at the continuing use of the term was exacerbated by the connotation it received during the Holocaust. "The final solution to the Jewish question" was Hitler's description for the murder of one-third of the Jewish people.

Over the years, many people have objected, without effect, to the use of this heading. As the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League noted in a letter dated May 20, 1983, "...the objections to the subject heading 'Jewish Question' as well as to certain other subject headings regarding Jewish-Americans, have been discussed in great detail in a number of articles and papers." The Library of Congress did not respond to the many objections. That is, until recently. Through a concerted effort on the part of the Jewish Librarians' Caucus of the American Library Association, the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League, the Ethnic Materials Information Exchange Round Table, and involved individuals, THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS HAD AGREED TO DELETE THE SUBJECT HEADING.

This issue of the Jewish Librarians' Caucus Newsletter is entirely devoted to correspondence relating to this important matter.

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Articles, letters to
the editor, and items
of interest are always
welcome.

The Jewish Librarians' Caucus is
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organizations, we are short on staff.
We have not had the staff to
appeal for contributions and member-
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On the form below, we have indicated
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Thank you -

Lillian Kahn

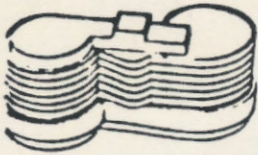
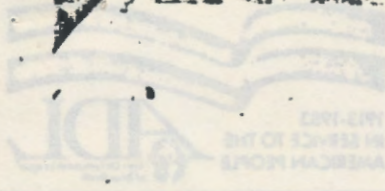
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METROPOLITAN HOSPITAL 201 North Eighth Street, Philadelphia, Pa. 19106-1098 (215) 238-2000
CENTRAL DIVISION

9/21/82

Mary K Pietris
Chief, Subject Cataloging Division
Library of Congress
Washington DC 20540

Dear Ms. Pietris:

I am writing to demand that you immediately remove from the list of LC subject headings the anti-Semitic, offensive, defamatory heading JEWISH QUESTION.

This action is long overdue. There are many alternative possibilities, such as that used by Sears (see enclosed). We are tired of receiving excuses from the Library of Congress for its anti-Semitic nomenclature which is spread to libraries all over the world.

There are other changes which should be made to counteract the ethnocentrism and the authoritarianism of the ruling ethnic groups which perpetuate this and similar practices at the Library of Congress. The world does not revolve around the ethnic and religious segment which has created and perpetuated these offensive practices.

I enclose an article by Sanford Berman, Head Cataloger of Hennepin County (Minnesota) Library, who has won an ALA award for outstanding achievement in cataloging and classification. Perhaps this will shed some light for you upon what an agency of a democratic nation should be doing with its catalog.

Cordially,

Marjorie Greenfield, Librarian

Vertical text on the right margin, including names of various individuals and possibly a list of names.

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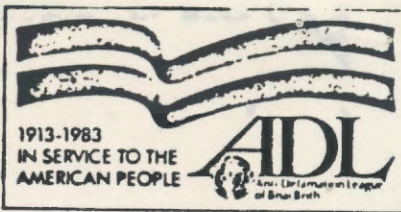
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April 18, 1983

Ms. Marjorie Greenfield
 Librarian
 Metropolitan Hospital Central Division
 201 North Eighth Street
 Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Ms. Greenfield:

I am very sorry that you have had to wait so long to receive a response from us. Judith Nuffa went on a leave of absence shortly after her correspondence with you.

I have read with interest the letter you wrote to Ms. Pietrie at the Library of Congress, as well as Mr. Berman's informative article in Senate. Can you tell me if you have received any response at all from the Library of Congress? Have they in any way acknowledged the fact that the term "Jewish Question", besides being anachronistic and archaic, must be regarded as offensive after the usage it attained during the Holocaust: "The Final Solution of the Jewish Question"?

Upon receipt of your letter, I spoke with several members of the American Library Association who are familiar with the controversy regarding the heading "The Jewish Question", and with Mr. Berman's work in that regard. I have given them your name, and you should be hearing from them shortly. They offered to form a committee that would present the case to the President of the American Library Association, Carol Hemeny, who happens to be an Associate Librarian at the Library of Congress. They believe that official support of the American Library Association, combined with a strong endorsement from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, will provide the impetus needed to effect change at the Library of Congress.

Meanwhile, please let me know if you have received any responses at all from the Library of Congress.

Sincerely,

Frances M. Sonnenschein
 Director
 National Education Department

FMS:js

cc: Nathan Perlmutter
 Theodore Freedman
 Justin J. Finger

EMIE

THE ETHNIC MATERIALS INFORMATION EXCHANGE

David Cohen, Director

Sponsored by the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies
and the Jewish and Ethnic Studies Project, Queens College

May 4, 1983

Ms. Frances M. Sonnenschein, Director
National Education Department
Anti-Defamation League
823 United Nations Plaza
New York City New York 10017

Dear Frances,

As I indicated to you on the telephone, the upsurge in ethnicity in recent years has produced a flood of materials for each ethnic group. One technical problem in cataloging and classification of these materials is the assignment of Subject Headings for easy access and information by the public.

The changes in the Library of Congress Subject Headings have been made very slowly and reluctantly with respect to ethnic groups since it would involve extraordinary changes for the years gone by. In recent years access to resources about Black Americans instead of Negro has been designated as Afro-Americans. The other major change was in the use of the hyphenated name for Mexican-Americans, Italian-Americans, Irish Americans, etc. Jewish-American does not appear because the Jews are treated as a religious group, not an ethnic group. I must remind you also that the Census Bureau does not list Jews as an ethnic group. Population count comes from the estimates made by our own Jewish organizations.

The use of the heading The Jewish Question is still in effect. We find this not only objectionable because of antisemitic overtones but completely outdated and not very useful for cataloging materials about Jewish Americans or Jews anywhere else. By continuing to treat Jews as a religious group, Jewish Americans are listed under Jews in the United States, etc.

I have talked recently with the Chief of Subject Headings division of the Library of Congress, May Kay Pietris. She is willing to drop the Jewish Question immediately provided she does not have to make the changes for materials already cataloged. This I was able to do on the phone. I suggested a task force be set up to advise Ms. Pietris on the treatment of Jews in cataloging. She was very amenable. I am thinking that such a task force should include Sandy Berman, Marjorie Greenfield, Susan Freiband (Jewish Librarians Caucus of ALA), Pearl Berger (Association of Jewish Libraries), and myself as Coordinator of the Ethnic Materials Round Table of ALA. The task force could design a whole series of headings for the Library of Congress to consider.

T 72741 HCL 11-1-802
1983

Perhaps your letter should go directly to:

Ms. Mary K. Pietris
Chief, Subject Cataloging Division
Library of Congress
Washington, D. C. 20540

May I suggest that a copy also go to:

Ms. Carol A. Nemeyer
Associate Librarian for National Programs,
Library of Congress
President, American Library Association
Washington, D. C. 20540

I should be happy to assemble the task force or advisory committee when we receive an affirmative response. In any event, all this will be reported and discussed at the Jewish Librarians Caucus at the ALA Meeting in Los Angeles on June 26, 1983.

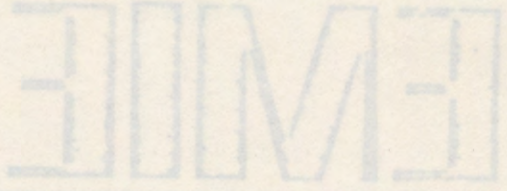
Warmest regards.

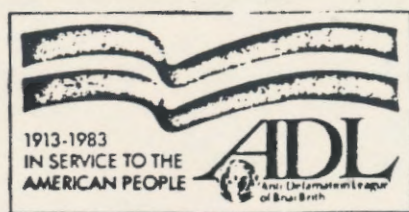
Sincerely,

David Cohen

DC/df

- cc: ^(sic) Ms. Sandy Berman (Sandy is male)
- Ms. Marjorie Greenfield
- Ms. Susan Freiband
- Ms. Pearl Berger





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May 20, 1983

Ms. Mary K. Pietris
Chief, Subject Cataloging Division
Library of Congress
Washington, D.C. 20540

Dear Ms. Pietris:

It has come to our attention that the Library of Congress still retains the subject heading, "Jewish Question," to classify works dealing with the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. We regard this heading, not only as archaic, but also as highly offensive because of the connotations it acquired during the Holocaust: "The Final Solution to the Jewish Question."

We know that you have received requests in the past that the subject heading be changed. The Jewish Caucus of the American Library Association, as well as several individual librarians, have proposed three possible alternatives: "Jews and Gentiles" (Sears); "Jews and Non-Jews" (Index of Jewish Periodicals); "Relations With Gentiles" (Hennepin). In addition, there is a clear precedent for any changes you might make: several years ago, the Library of Congress replaced the heading, "Race Question," with "Race Relations."

David Cohen, the Coordinator of the Ethnic Materials Roundtable of the American Library Association, has informed me that he spoke with you recently, and suggested that an A.L.A. task force be organized to advise the Subject Cataloging Division on the treatment of Jews in cataloging.

Certainly, an A.L.A. task force on the subject should prove very useful. However, the objections to the subject heading "Jewish Question," as well as to certain other subject headings regarding Jewish-Americans, have been discussed in great detail in a number of articles and papers. Steps to resolve the most pressing problems, therefore, could begin even before a task force started its work.

I look forward to receiving your opinion as to the utility of a task force, as well as your assessment of the steps that will be needed to rectify the present troubling situation.



Our libraries should reflect, both in their acquisition policies, and in their cataloging procedures, the many-faceted nature of our democratic, pluralistic society. As long as the Library of Congress continues to use subject headings offensive to Jews, it is not being true either to democratic principles or to our American heritage.

Sincerely,

Francis M. Sonnenschein

Frances M. Sonnenschein
Director
National Education Department

FMS:lw

cc: Carol A. Nemeyer
President, American Library Association



THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

PROCESSING DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT CATALOGING DIVISION

June 21, 1983

Dear Dr. Cohen:

In your letter of May 4 and a letter of May 20 from Frances M. Sonnenschein of the ADL, you proposed that an advisory task force be organized to advise the Subject Cataloging Division on the treatment of Jews in cataloging.

Since your initial question related to the subject heading "Jewish question", I can supply the following historical information:

The heading "Jewish question" was originally established around 1911 to describe the variety of problems facing Jews then. The heading was fully warranted by the terminology used at the time. The phrase can be found in titles issued by pro-Jewish organizations early in this century. A principal user of the phrase was Theodor Herzl; I enclose excerpts from a recent translation of his works. The term was apparently not offensive then.

In the early 1900's a number of subject headings were established in the "... question" form, among them "Oregon question," "Berlin question," "Straits question," "Macedonian question," "Armenian question" and "Currency question." This formulation was an expedient method of expressing complex topics with an economy of words. Three years ago a Washington Post editorial appeared entitled "The Kurdish question", and more recently a pair of editorials appeared entitled "Washington's Polish Question ... " " ... And Warsaw's Food Question." This shows that such formulations are still occasionally used, both with topics and with groups of peoples.

In the seventy-some years since the heading "Jewish question" was established, it appears to have been used with several different meanings. The original scope note appearing under the heading "Jews—Political and social conditions" read:

Here are entered works relating to questions affecting the social and political life of the Jews themselves (e.g., economic conditions, colonization, etc.) in contradistinction to the "Jewish question" in its relation to other races in general and to continental Europe in particular. Works on the latter subject are entered under Jewish question.

June 21, 1983

However, for many years the stated definition was often ignored, as reported last year when Rabbi Wiener, our cataloger of Judaica materials, wrote me that:

"Up til now "Jewish question" has usually been applied to works dealing with Jews in a negative fashion, also with works discussing the problem of the Jew in society in general. "Anti-semitism" was usually applied to works against "Antisemitism"; manifested in works for which the subject "Jewish question" was used. We are considering abolishing the former [i.e., "Jewish question"]..."

The scope note was eliminated sometime before 1978 when the heading under which it was given was cancelled and replaced by two headings.

Although the above paragraphs support our position that we at the Library of Congress have not yet cancelled the heading "Jewish question" because we do not believe that the term is inherently offensive (although what has happened to Jews is offensive), we are prepared to do the following:

1. We will cancel the term in the LC subject headings list.
2. For works in the MARC data base, we will eliminate the subject heading, replacing it with the existing heading that most nearly describes the work as evident from the title. These headings might be ones such as "Jews--History," "Jews--Germany," and so forth. In the many cases in which the heading "Jewish question" has been one of several headings assigned, we will simply eliminate it without replacement.
3. The cards in our old closed card catalog will remain without change. We have stopped making subject changes to this catalog.

Please let me know if this course of action meets with your approval.

Sincerely,

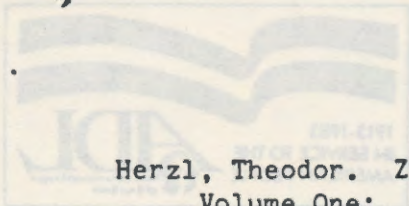
Mary K. D. Pietris

Mary K. D. Pietris
Chief

Enclosure

Dr. David Cohen
Ethnic Materials Information Exchange
Community Facilities Building, Room 251
Queens College, CUNY
Flushing, N.Y. 11367

cc: Ms. Frances Sonnenschein



Herzl, Theodor. Zionist Writings: Essays and Addresses.
 Volume One: January, 1896-June, 1898. Translated
 from the German by Harry Zohn. New York, Herzl Press,
 1973. 73-76668

"...Herzl, though intoxicated with his discovery of Jewish nationalism and the Jewish State as an answer to the Jewish problem, nevertheless exercised great self-restraint." pp. 13-14

"One of these problems is the Jewish Question. The Jewish Question still exists. It would be foolish to deny it. It exists wherever Jews live in appreciable numbers. Where it does not exist, it will be brought into being by Jews in the course of their migrations. Naturally, we move to those places where we are not persecuted; and there our presence soon gives rise to persecution. This is true and is bound to remain true everywhere, even in highly civilized countries--France is a case in point--until a political solution is found for the Jewish Question." p. 22

"But because anti-Semitism does exist, we want to keep alive the question that has been raised. Basically, and we say this in all humility, it is not we who raised the Jewish Question. But since it has been raised, we want it to be solved." p. 60

"You would not believe how many misconceptions, how many horrors surround the Jewish Question on all sides, within and without, and it is part of our misfortune that people cannot as yet brook the dispassionate words of those who see the Jewish Question with new eyes, as it were. There are so many Jews who are frightened by the use of the word "Jew." Now the Zionists have ventured to talk about the Jewish Question candidly and in such a way that Christians and Jews are finally able to discuss it." p. 71

"...our projected public discussion of the Jewish Question is, in fact, evidence of the complete loyalty of our endeavors... We do not stick our heads in the sand. The Jewish Question exists, it gets worse from day to day, and where it does not exist today it will exist tomorrow." p. 80

"At the Basel Congress an honest attempt to solve the Jewish Question in a humane and modern way will for the first time be made before the world." p. 129

"Even today the Jewish Question still arouses passions, as it did in olden times, and in this year of grace people are no more ready to talk dispassionately about the Jews than they have been in the eighteen centuries since our vanquished forefathers were dragged off into captivity and dispersed over the globe. And yet some Jews dare to assert that there is no such thing as a Jewish Question! Oh no, unfortunately the Jewish Question really does exist, and anyone who has experienced it physically or psychically will never be rid of the pain." p. 145

Vertical text on the right margin, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. It contains names and dates, such as "JAN 1896", "FEB 1896", "MAY 1896", "JULY 1896", "OCT 1896", "DEC 1896", "JAN 1897", "FEB 1897", "MAY 1897", "JULY 1897", "OCT 1897", "DEC 1897", "JAN 1898", "FEB 1898", "MAY 1898", "JULY 1898", "OCT 1898", "DEC 1898".

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June 29, 1983

Ms. Marjorie Greenfield
Librarian
Metropolitan Hospital Central Division
201 North Eighth Street
Philadelphia, PA. 19106

Dear Ms. Greenfield:

I am pleased to inform you that the Library of Congress is eliminating the subject heading "The Jewish Question."

The Chief of the Subject Cataloging Division of the Library of Congress, Mary K.D. Pietris, agreed to do so in an address she made on June 24, 1983 to the Jewish Caucus of the American Library Association during the convention of the American Library Association in Los Angeles. The meeting of the Jewish Caucus at which Ms. Pietris spoke was attended, at my request, by Harvey B. Schechter, the Director of the ADL office in Los Angeles.

Copies of Ms. Pietris' letters to me and to David Cohen are enclosed. I am sure you will be hearing shortly from Dr. Cohen as well as from other members of the Jewish Caucus.

Thank you for your interest in this issue. I am delighted that we were able to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. In addition, as a result of your calling this matter to our attention, a more positive relationship has developed between the Jewish Caucus of the American Library Association and the Library of Congress.

Sincerely,
Frances M. Sonnenschein
Frances M. Sonnenschein
Director, National Education Department

FMS:ai
Encl:

cc: Nathan Perlmutter
Theodore H. Freedman
Justin J. Finger
Harvey B. Schechter



THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20540

PROCESSING DEPARTMENT
SUBJECT CATALOGING DIVISION

June 21, 1983

Dear Ms. Sonnenschein:

Enclosed is a copy of a letter I have just sent to Dr. David Cohen of the Ethnic Materials Information Exchange of the American Library Association.

I believe that it addresses most of the questions raised in your letter of May 20. However, it did not discuss the three suggested alternatives to the heading "Jewish question" that you had cited in your letter. We do not find any of those headings satisfactory for the simple reason that the headings do not express the contents of most of the books that have received the subject "Jewish question."

You asked for my opinion about the utility of a task force to "advise the Subject Cataloging Division on the treatment of Jews in cataloging." I share your opinion that the subject has "been discussed in great detail in a number of articles and papers." I therefore am concerned that the task force might simply duplicate work previously done.

I hope you will agree that the solutions described in the letter to Dr. Cohen will satisfy your concerns.

Sincerely,

Mary K. D. Pietris

Mary K. D. Pietris
Chief

Enclosure

Ms. Frances M. Sonnenschein
Director, National Education Department
Anti-Defamation League of Bnai Brith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017

EMIE

THE ETHNIC MATERIALS INFORMATION EXCHANGE

David Cohen, Director

Sponsored by the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies
and the Jewish and Ethnic Studies Project, Queens College

August 4, 1983

Frances M. Sonnenschein, Director
National Education Department
Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith
823 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017

Dear Frances,

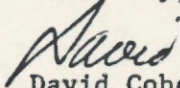
The meeting of the Jewish Librarians Caucus at the Los Angeles ALA Conference was very successful in dealing with "the Jewish Question" as raised with the Library of Congress by Marjorie Greenfield. As a matter of fact it went much better than we anticipated. For example, Mary K. Pietris, Chief of the Subject Cataloging Division of the Library of Congress was present at the meeting and participated actively in the discussion. What is most interesting is that Mrs. Pietris invited me out for a 'talk' before the meeting got under way in the very fashionable Bonaventure Hotel.

We had a discussion which was quite full and exciting relative to the key question which was how information about Jewish Americans could be made more accessible in Library of Congress Subject Headings.

Mrs. Pietris, has agreed to drop the "Jewish Question" as soon as we send her a formal letter with such a request. Harvey Schechter from the Los Angeles office who was present with his wife was very impressed with the proceedings. No doubt you may have already heard from him.

In order to deal with the larger question of access to information about Jewish Americans we set up a formal committee which would make recommendations to the Library of Congress for a more systematic table of headings covering Jewish Americans. The following people are on this committee: Sandy Berman, Marjorie Greenfield, Susan Freiband, Pearl Berger, Richard J. Hyman, May Weine and David Cohen. We are calling this committee The Subject Access Committee. Each member of the committee is being asked to submit relevant items for the agenda dealing with the appropriate separate headings for Jewish Americans. We are also asking Sandy Berman to submit a tentative schemata for the consideration of this committee. You'll be hearing from us.

Sincerely,



David Cohen, Director

DC/abb

cc: Sandy Berman Pearl Berger
Marjorie Greenfield Richard J. Hyman
Susan Freiband May Weine



DATE: 8-11-83

TO: David Cohen

FROM: Sandy Berman

SUBJECT: JEWISH LIBRARIANS CAUCUS SUBJECT ACCESS COMMITTEE:
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS TO LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
SUBJECT CATALOGING DIVISION

The Jewish Librarians Caucus Subject Access Committee recommends that the Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Division, in order to improve access to Judaica:

1. Replace the current form, JEWS, AMERICAN, with JEWISH-AMERICANS, thus according Jews the same treatment enjoyed by other American ethnic groups (e.g., ITALIAN AMERICANS, JAPANESE AMERICANS).
2. Establish these new headings, all of which are warranted by existing library materials:

ALIYAH BETH

ANTISEMITISM IN CHRISTIANITY

ANTISEMITISM IN THE ARMED FORCES

ANTISEMITISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

BEIRUT MASSACRE, SEPTEMBER 16-18, 1982--ISRAELI PARTICIPATION

BILINGUAL MATERIALS--ENGLISH/HEBREW

BILINGUAL MATERIALS--ENGLISH/YIDDISH

CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE JEWISH HOLOCAUST (1933-1945)

CHRISTIAN ZIONISM

CONCENTRATION CAMP SURVIVORS

GAY SYNAGOGUES

GEFILTE FISH

HOMOPHOBIA IN JUDAISM

HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

JEWISH-AMERICAN DETECTIVES [LABOR LEADERS, POLITICIANS, RADICALS, etc.]

JEWISH CONSERVATISM

JEWISH GAYS

JEWISH LESBIANS

JEWISH RADICALISM



JEWISH RESISTANCE AND REVOLTS

JEWISH SOCIALISM

KLEZMER MUSIC

LEBANON--HISTORY--ISRAELI INVASION, 1982

NAZI FUGITIVES

NAZI HUNTERS

PALESTINIAN STATE (PROPOSED)

SEXISM IN JUDAISM

SHTETL

SKOKIE CASE

YIDDISH THEATER

WEST BANK (JORDAN RIVER)--ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS

3. Replace the current, inaccurately-dated form, HOLOCAUST, JEWISH (1939-1945), with HOLOCAUST, JEWISH (1933-1945).

4. Replace these awkward, oddly-formulated headings:

AMERICAN LITERATURE-- JEWISH AUTHORS with JEWISH-AMERICAN LITERATURE

WARSAW--HISTORY-- UPRISING OF 1943 with WARSAW GHETTO UPRISING, 1943

AMAUROTIC FAMILY IDIOCY with TAY-SACHS' DISEASE

NATIONAL SOCIALISM with NAZISM

SLAUGHTERING AND SLAUGHTERHOUSES--JEWS with SCHECTING (or SHECHTING)

5. Institute the following cross-references:

Holocaust, Jewish (1933-1945)

x Shoah

Synagogues

x Jewish synagogues
Shuls
Temples, Jewish

Bible. O.T.

x Bible, Jewish
Jewish Bible

Jews--Persecutions

x Pogroms
Progroms

Babiy Yar Massacre, 1941

xx Antisemitism--Ukraine
Holocaust, Jewish (1933-1945)
Jews--Persecutions [or Jews,
Ukrainian--Persecutions]

Mysticism--Judaism

x Jewish mysticism ::

Jews--Diaspora

x Jewish Diaspora
Jews--Galut

Yom Kippur

x Day of Repentance (Judaism)

Entebbe Airport Raid, 1976

x Israeli Raid, Entebbe Airport, 1976
Uganda Airport Raid, 1976

Auschwitz Trial, Frankfurt Am Main,
1963-1965

xx Holocaust, Jewish (1933-1945)
Jews--Persecutions [or Jews,
European--Persecutions]

6. Eliminate "Christian primacy" in religious headings by means of glosses, suffixes, prefixes; e.g., establishing

CHRISTIAN ANGELS

or

ANGELS (CHRISTIANITY)

CHRISTIAN GOD

or

GOD (CHRISTIANITY)

CHRISTIAN DEVOTIONAL
LITERATURE

or

DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE, CHRISTIAN

7. Assign "Jewish" headings for works in particular genres, whether authored by one or more persons; e.g.,

FAIRY TALES, JEWISH

LEGENDS, JEWISH

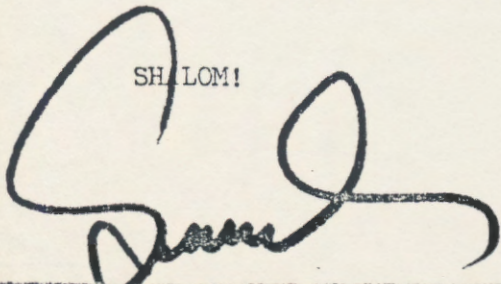
ISRAELI FICTION

ISRAELI POETRY

JEWISH-AMERICAN POETRY

JEWISH-AMERICAN ESSAYS

SHALOM!



Please enter my subscription to the Jewish Librarians Caucus
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J.L.C.
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