

**AUTOMATION: A LIVE COMPARISON OF
THREE HEBREW-CAPABLE LIBRARY SYSTEMS:
PART 2: ALEPH 500 SERIES**

Glenn Ferdman and Kathy Bloch

Description: The Norman and Helen Asher Library has been serving the students, faculty and Society Members of the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies since 1935. It also serves as the Jewish public library for the greater Chicago area. It holdings include over 100,000 books, periodicals, videos, music, microforms, and electronic media. It subscribes to 550 periodicals, and has extensive periodical holdings (back-issues). Reference staff respond to more than 10,000 queries, annually, from around the globe, via phone, fax, email and in-person. The Library is open to the general public, but borrowing privileges are reserved for students, Society members and reciprocal institutions. Anyone can become a member of the Spertus Society, beginning at \$15 per year for students and seniors. The Asher Library went live with the Aleph 500 system from ExLibris in December of 2000. It was ExLibris' first fully-Hebrew capable client in North America using the 500 series. Library staff spent many months working closely with ExLibris staff developing the Hebrew capabilities of the system, in terms of storage, conversion, and display.

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- Asher Library Catalog – Aleph 500 Series, version 12.4
- Hebrew Functionality – Web OPAC
- Welcome to the Asher Library Online Catalog
- Searching the Catalog

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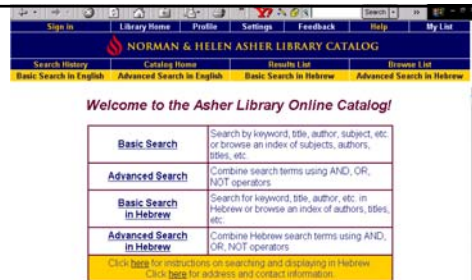
2

**Asher Library Catalog
Aleph 500 Series, ver. 12.4**

- Hebrew Functionality-Web OPAC
 - Does not require special software or plug-ins
 - Uses IE 5.5 and Hebrew language support, which can be downloaded from MS
 - Hebrew keyboard layout template is on OPAC site
 - Searching by keyword, author, title, subject, etc.
 - Allows combined, truncated and wildcard searches
 - Results can be printed, saved to disk, or sent via email

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Please note

If you are searching for material from the Chicago Jewish Archives, please be advised that many of our collections are not yet listed in the catalog. If you don't find what you are looking for, please contact the archivist for assistance at ajc.library@spertus.edu or 312-322-1741.

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- Cataloging in Aleph 12.4 - The GUI side of Aleph
 - The RLIN Loader
 - Aleph Navigation Window
 - Enhancements and Problems
- Kathy Bloch*
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Cataloging in ALEPH 12.4

The GUI Side of Aleph

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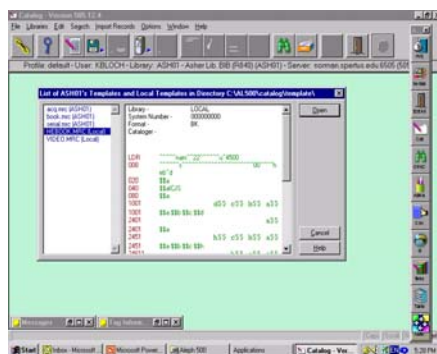
Catalog records can be created

- Directly in the Aleph cataloging module, using system-supplied templates
- From bibliographic records down-loaded from RLIN using a customized “loader” created by Ex Libris

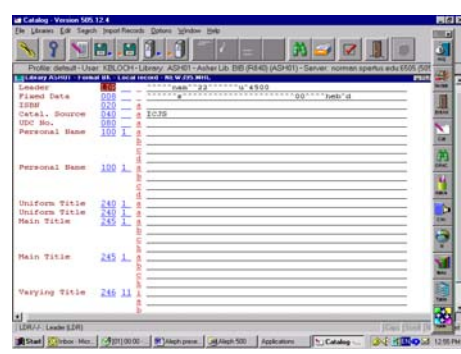
Aleph Templates

- System-supplied book, serials and acquisitions templates can be customized to add parallel Hebrew fields
- Additional templates are easily created from existing templates or from currently-open records

GUI Cataloguing module – Aleph templates



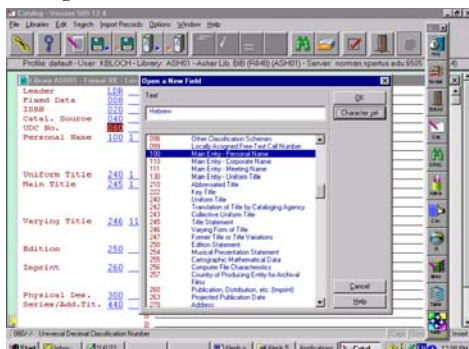
Open template showing parallel fields for Hebrew input



Adding Hebrew Fields

- Right-click to open a new field
- Select field from drop-down list
- Choose character set for input at this time
- Note: character set cannot be changed within a field – even if different sub-fields are involved

Adding a Hebrew 100 field



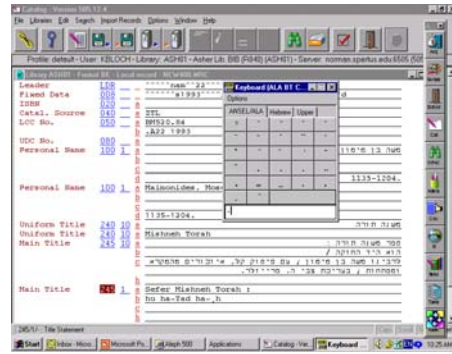
Changes to Hebrew Input in Aleph version 14.2

- Selection of the alphabet in the “Open New Field” window merely chooses the directionality of the input
- Must select a floating keyboard for input of a specific alphabet – each character must be entered by “point-and-click”, then pasted into the field
- Can change character sets within sub-fields, as well as within a field (so we are told)

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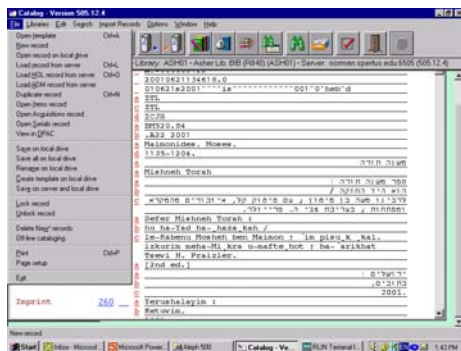
In version 12.4, the floating keyboard is used to insert diacritics.



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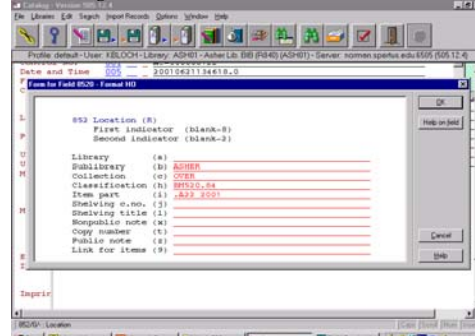
Once all the bib data is entered, the Holdings record is loaded.



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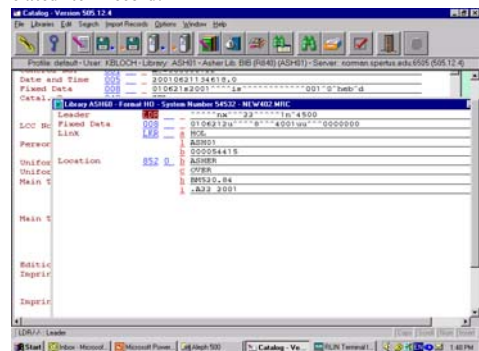
Sub-library, collection code and call number are entered in the Holdings record



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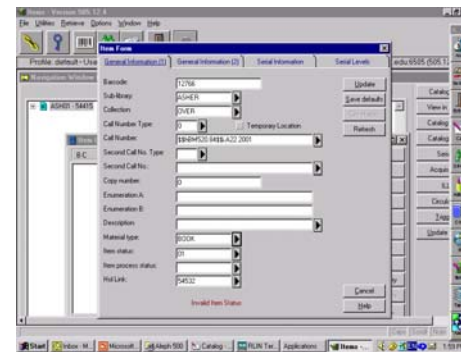
Completed Holdings record. Click on “books” icon to open related Item record.



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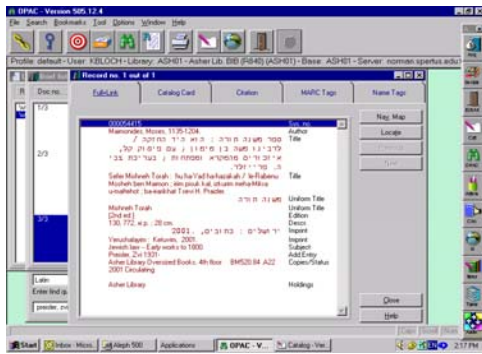
Bar code, volume/copy info and circ status are added to Item Form



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View of completed record in the GUI OPAC



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The RLIN Loader

- Ex Libris creates the PUT profile with RLIN for download of records
- Loader is customizable
 - Mapping from RLIN Holdings fields to Aleph collection codes and item record fields
 - Default values may be entered for material type and circulation status fields

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Using the RLIN Loader

- Derive record from RLIN, adding location code and bar code number
- Use RLIN "PUT" command to transfer record to local server
- Background process brings record into the catalog almost immediately

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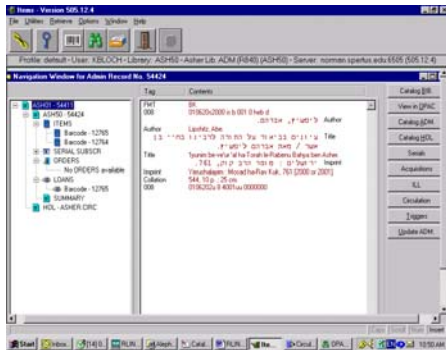
Aleph Navigation Window

- The Navigation Window shows a brief view of the bib record along with a hierarchical "map" showing the related records, and any transactions such as orders or loans that may be attached
- Click on any part of the map to see more information on that record
- Click on any of the buttons to "push" record into any of the GUI modules for further action

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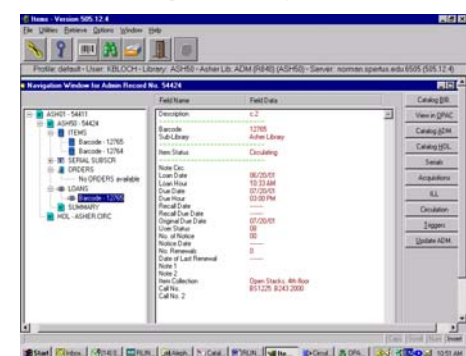
"Nav map" for title with two copies, one of which is on loan



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Loan information is displayed in Navigation Window with a click



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Aleph version 12.4

The good, bad and the ugly

- Hebrew display is generally good – occasionally odd characters appear for no reason
- Input of Hebrew is very easy
- Hebrew and roman characters cannot be input into same field when working directly in Aleph
- When Hebrew and roman characters do co-exist in a field – possible only in records downloaded from RLIN – directionality can be problematic
- Diacritics may not display correctly – particularly in records brought over from RLIN

Aleph version 14.2

Unicode brings improvements (?)

Version 14.2 Enhancements

- Multiple alphabets can co-exist, even within a sub-field
- Directionality problems are solved – can change direction at any point in inputting
- Display of diacritics is improved, though some tinkering may be required
- Hebrew and roman fields are no longer designated by “H” and “L” indicators which had been problematic

Version 14.2 Problems

- The floating keyboard required for input of non-roman character sets is clunky to use
- Even if a field contains only Hebrew, the floating keyboard still must be used. It is no longer possible to select an alphabet at the outset and just type
- Note: Ex Libris is aware of the undesirability of the floating keyboard and is exploring alternatives for non-roman input

Conclusion

- In Aleph 14.2, the display of non-roman character sets is greatly improved, but inputting is more difficult. The results are better, but the process is more laborious.
- Until Ex Libris refines the process for input of non-roman characters, it will be preferable to load records from RLIN rather than to work directly in Aleph.
- Problems previously encountered in display of downloaded RLIN records should be eliminated by version 14.2 improvements in bi-directionality and display of diacritics.

Kathleen Bloch has been Associate Director of the Asher Library of Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies in Chicago since 1985. She holds a BA in History from Northern Illinois University and an MLS from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.