14, 19th & 20th C Extraordinary Scholar Librarians In Their Historical Context and the Post-modern Risk of Extinction of the Scholar librarian

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Values Held Dear by Great Librarians [including Scholarly 20th Century Luminaries]: Reverence, Cherishing, and Love of the Sefer

The reverence, respect, and love for Jewish books as the vessels of potential transmission (masorah) of sacred teaching and knowledge, expanding consciousness (mogen gedolot) via a living teacher is found in Jewish law and custom. Abraham ibn Ezra referred to tomes as “sheaths of wisdom.” The Vilna Gaon known as the GRA expresses the attribute of malchut (royalty) in comparing the 62 tractates of the Babylonian Talmud to the 62 Queens, and the other many 100s of thousands of Rabbinic works to the “maidens who serve the Queens.” The GRA also noted that his sacred tomes where his most precious possessions for just as “his feet allowed him to walk in this world, his books allow him to walk in higher worlds, even outside of history and time.” The higher worlds to which the GRA refers are the Hechalot, the 7 heavens, or palace of Hashem, where according to Rabbinic texts, angelic doorkeepers guard gates, allowing certain priviledged souls who have attained the highest levels of intellectuality and cognitive knowledge to enter into rooms where the soul is delighted and refressed by angelic discourses of fountains of wisdom. This motif is found in texts such as Rambam’s Moreh Nevukhim chapter 52 Part II linked on our Rambam library guide at: http://libguides.tourolib.org/rambam and Orhot Tzadikim. Since Kings in antiquity often served as Judges, the notion of one’s fate and judgment being written in a books is encapsulated in the High Holiday liturgy that on Rosh Hashanah it is written, on Yom Kippur sealed, and on Hoshanah Rabbah G-d’s heavenly court of angels, deliver the verdict of

1 This focus on 19th and 20th century librarians is part of a larger project. which in the big picture is to write a book on the history of Judaica textual collections from antiquity to the middle ages to the present. I have already published on ancient 2nd Temple Hebraica collections at https://sites.google.com/site/mtevansco/elazar-classification relying on hints form Josephus and Talmudic texts, and on medieval Hebraica collections at http://databases.jewishlibraries.org/node/49232 relying on Talmudic and historical texts by scholars of the Middle Ages. The above attachment is merely a small piece (from the 19th and 20th C) of this larger project to a systematische WirkungsGeschichte of the cultural history (Bildungs Roman) of Judaica Librarianship, booklore, and Jewish textual collections from antiquity to the post-modern present. This could be 1 volume or even 7 volumes:

I. Jewish textual collections in antiquity drawing on Josephus and Ancient Near Eastern Studies
2. Jewish textual collections in early middle ages drawing on primary Rabbinic texts
3. Jewish textual collections in the Renaissance drawing on Shabbatai Bass’ and other catalogs, the Phenomena of Christian Hebraism, Records of the Inquisition, and transition from ms.and incunabula to the Revolution of Hebrew Printing by Soncino and Bomberg
4. Jewish textual collection in the 19th and 20th centuries and Great scholar librarians (current paper/piece of this puzzle)
5 Post-modern Judaica Librarianship born digital- revolutions in database construction (Bar Ilan, Otzar HaHokmah, Hebrewbooks.org, Kotar) and digitization of archival primary ms. such as the Cairo Geniza, DSS, and JNUL ketubot collectsion for example
6. The Dangers and risks of post-modern Judaica Librarianship based on Continental Philosophies critique of "techn-crasy"
7. Afterward “once upon a time dear readers.....”
one’s yearly destiny to “G-d’s archive.” Besides from this book metaphor of providence, Maseket Rosh Hashanah notes there are actually 4 new years- for Kings, for trees, for Grain and of course the new Year. Ibn Ezra understands the importance of the calendar divided into these 4 new years within the context also of the Hebrew birthday corresponding to the Zodiac.

In a comic vein, on Purim, little children dress up as a Sefer Torah, suggesting that all human beings are texts yearning to be interpreted and indeed cherished like our holy books. It is the love for the ideas in holy books that bring one closer to G-d that partakes of the books potential to foster Amor Intellectus and Amor Deius.

The Provencal scholar Rabbi Yehudah ibn Tibbon in the 13th century time of the Rishonim, wrote, “Make books your companions; let your bookshelves be your gardens: bask in their beauty, gather their fruit, pluck their roses, take their spices and myrrh. And when your soul be weary, change from garden to garden, and from prospect to prospect.”

The Spanish poet and physician, Rabbi Yehudah HaLevy wrote, ““My pen is my harp and my lyre; my library is my garden and my orchard.”

The original line is: “My

2 Astral commentary, of 'Sefer ha-Moladot', which addresses the doctrine of nativities and the system of continuous horoscopy in nativities, and of 'Sefer ha-Tequfah', which is devoted exclusively to continuous horoscopy in nativities. The doctrine of nativities makes predictions about the whole of an individual's subsequent life on the basis of the natal chart, and the system of continuous horoscopy in nativities is concerned with the interval between life and [death] and makes predictions based mainly on anniversary horoscopes, which are juxtaposed with the natal horoscope. To Abraham Ibn Ezra’s mind, not only are these two doctrines the core of astrology; they also epitomize the praxis of the astrological métier. If the Zodiac is a secret key or Rosetta stone for deciphering G-d as providential shepherd shepherding his flock of angelic hosts whose eyes are the stars which watch and guard meritorious individuals in proportion to the individual’s attainment of intellectual virtue who sailing the sea of heavenly space by the constellations o

3 See Israel Abrahams, Hebrew Ethical Wills, (Phil, 1926) 1:63-64, n.23
harp and my viol are in my pen / its books are my garden and orchard of delight" This is from the poem beginning "יִנַּה" -- that's poem #110 in volume 1 of Brody's edition (Diyan : ye-hu sefer kolel kol shire Yehudah ha-Levi ... ’im hagahat u-ve’urim ye-’im mavo me-et Ḥayim Brodi. Berlin : bi-defus Tsevi Hirsh b.R. Yitsḥak Ițtskoyski, 1896-1930). See p. 166, line 37-8.4

Rabbo Yishaq ben Yosef of Corbeil (d 1280 France) in his Sefer Misvot Qatan composed in 1276-77 in France around 1276 outlines a detailed strategy and plan for the dissemination of his texts by asserting that every community should finance a copy of his halakhic code and keep it so that those who wish to copy or study it will be able to have access on a daily basis.5 He urges that if a Sofer of a community has to stay in another town in order to copy the book, he should be reimbursed for his expenses from the "public fund" and prescribes the rates. Not only should every community finance a copy of the Rabbi of Corbeil’s work and make it available for copying and borrowing on a daily basis, but he further states that if a representative of a community has to stay in another town in order to copy the book, he should be reimbursed for his expenses from the public fund, and even prescribes the rates of expense. This would ensure the distribution of this halakhic code and ensure its standardization. This however was an exception according to Beit Arie in that most books were owned privately by individuals who could afford to maintain collections.

The Spanish statesman, Rabbi Shmuel ha-Nagid wrote, “The wise of heart will abandon ease and pleasures for in his library he will find his treasures6.”2 Rabbi Abraham ibn Daud writes in Sefer ha-Qabbala about Rabbi Shemuel ha-Nagid that he had sofirim who copied Mishnah and Talmudim, and he used to donate these commissioned core texts to students who could not afford to purchase them in the academies in Spain.7

In an earlier period Hai Gaon, Head of Bet Din in 998 in Pumberditah commented, “Three possessions should you prize: a field, a friend, and a book.”8 3 However the Hai Gaon mentions that a book is more reliable than even friends for sacred books span across time, indeed can express eternal ideas, that transcend time itself as later expressed by Rabbi Shimon ben Zemach Duran (Tashbaz) who in his Introduction to Zohar HaRakiah writes, “However when the wise man lies down in death with his fathers, he leaves behind him a treasured and organized blessing: books that enlighten like the brilliance of the firmament (Daniel 12:3) and that extend peace like an eternal river (Isa. 66:12).”

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5 Assaf, Be’oholei Yakov.; see Emanuel Fragments of Tables: Lost books of the Tosaphists, Jerusalem, 2006, p.198
6 Israel Abrahams, Hebrew Ethical Wills, (Phil 1926) 1:64
7 Assaf, Meqorot, vol.4, p.17; ad loc also p. 61 documents of 2 latin texts from Spain (Aragon dated 1328 and Seville 1332) testifying about private individual bequeathing and financing thei purchase of books for students in a Beit Midrash who were poor.
8 See Musar ha-Sekel, par 128, a rhymed ethical treatise consisting of counsel for guidance in life where the Hai Gaon admonishes, “If children thou shouldst bear at length/ Reprove them but with tender thought/ Purchase them books with all thy strength (bikol modekhah)/ and by skilled teachers have them taught..
Rabbi Judah Companton, a Spanish rabbi of the 14th century, interprets the verse from Pirke Avot, “Acquire thyself a companion” to “Acquire thyself a book, for a book is better than companions for the truth and wisdom of man goes farther if one is diligent “He who increases books increases wisdom."

The Chofetz Chaim wrote a prayer of intercession for Israel, asking for G-d’s mercy on His people solely because they are guardians of the Jewish book:

Behold, O Thou Master of the Universe, the honor which Thy people Israel bestows on Thee. Just look down from Heaven and see the crowns with which they crowned thy Holy Torah. Thou hast given to They people a Torah small in size, yet see how many mighty towers they have built upon it by writing holy commentaries. Thy studied every word, every letter, and every dot. All of these they have adored and illumined with ornaments as white as pearls and bright as saphires. Just consider the two Talmudim; and then further chaplets of grace without number: The Midrash, The Zohar, the Sifra, the Sifri, the Mekhila, the Tosefta, Alfasi, Rambam, Rishonim, Ahronim! Consider also the circumstances under which these expansions of the palace of torah were created: In the long and bitter Exile, between the fire and the sword, under conditions beyond human endurance and yet, they studied, learned, wrote, and relearned. So dear Master of the Universe, why art Thou wrathful with Thy people Israel? Do you have any other nation to compare that cherishes the Hebrew books so much? Therefore how long, how long dear Father in Heaven wilt Thou allow Thy faithful people Israel to endure its sorrows and sufferings.

The love and reverence for Jewish books is seen in Jewish law. It is not permissible for a sacred Jewish book to lie on the ground and if by accident a book is dropped to the floor is is picked up and given a kiss. A Jewish books is not to be left open unless it is being read, nor is it to be held upside down. It is not permitted to place a book of lesser sanctity on top of a book of higher holiness, so for example one must never put any book whatsoever on top of a Tanakh. If one says to someone, “Please hand me this book,” the book should be given with the right hand and not with the left hand.

If two men are walking the one who is carrying a sacred book should be given the courtesy of entering and leaving a room first, as the second is enjoined to pursue knowledge.”

10 He-Hafetz Hayyim ha-Yov u-Fealav, vol. 1, ch.4; also see Kukis, “Be-Maalot ha-Sefer ha-Ivri”
12 Yoreah Deah 277; Sefer Hasidim 754
13 Massekhet Soferim 83
14 Likutei Mahrib 118
Century who wrote more than three thousand Responsa and volumes on Halkhah and Kabbalah comments, “that if one buys a new book, he should recite over it the benediction of the She-Heheyanu.”

Halakists debated the merits and demerits of lending or not lending private books. R. Asher ben Yehiel of Germany (1250 Toledo 1328) even endorsed a legal discussion to fine an owner who refused to lend a book ten gold coins a day testifying not only to the shortage of books, their precious worth, private nature of book ownership, and Rav Asher’s personal view that knowledge is a common good and treasury of the Jewish people etc.\(^\text{16}\) In a Responsa from Spain one rabbi Asher b Yehiel advocates the donation of books to synagogues, “so that “community books should be available to the poor of the town for studying since it would be a fault if they were to hang around idly for lack of books”.\(^\text{17}\)

Community books therefore stored in synagogues were for the benefit of the poor who could not afford private collections. Yet even bucherim were expected to bring their own texts to school based on private collections as evidenced from a responsum of the head of the Mainz\(^\text{18}\) halakhic school in the second quarter of the 11\(^{th}\) century and from a responsum in 12\(^{th}\) century Provence.\(^\text{19}\) A rare example of an early example of a book produced for public liturgical synagogue use is found in the Bodleian Library from the 14\(^{th}\) century by a scribe named Yakov.\(^\text{20}\)

The phenomena of privately commissioned but publicly used liturgical texts in the Middle Ages for the Cantor can be identified for instance in the well known Worms 1272 Mahzor.\(^\text{21}\) Even this illuminated Mahzor was commissioned by private patrons. It was kept by its owner and taken to synagogue services. The earliest dedication of a book in a non-Karaite synagogue is a colophone dated 1469 of a siddur privately commissioned in order to place it in a Ferrara Italian synagogue under the condition that the community be able to consult it in the synagogue, but no one, neither “man nor woman” be allowed to take it out of the synagogue unless permitted by those in charge (Parnasim).\(^\text{22}\)

In the 15\(^{th}\) Century two Yemenite ms were written for a synagogue in Sana’a- a biblical codex by sofer Yosef son of Benaya, the most renown scribe in Yemen, in 1484 for the

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15 Israel, Goldman M. The Life and Times of Rabbi David ibn abi Zimra, NY. 1970, p.32; also Federbush, Hikrei Yahadut, p.28; An opinion in the Talmud is that “for the study of scripture or Midrash or Mishnah or Talmud a benediction is required and the sage Rabbi Hiyya bar Ashi said, “Many times did I stand before Rab to repeat our section of Sifra in the School of Rab, and he used to first wash his hands and say a blessing and then go over our section with us” see T. Berachot 11b.

16 Assaf, Beoholei Ya’akov p.3-6

17 Responsa Vilnius edition 1885, Kelal 6, par. 25

18 R Judah ha-Kohen; see A. Grossman, “Rabbi Yehudah ha-kohen and his sefer ha-Dinim”, Alei Sefer 1 (1975, p.33


20 A Neubauer, Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library and in the College Libraries of Oxford, vol 1, Oxford 1886, n. 1025; see Catalogue of the Hebrew Ms in the Bodleian Library: Supplement of Addenda and Corrigenda to Vol 1 (A. Neubauer’s Catalogue), compiled by the Institute of Microfilemd Hebrew MS at the JNUL in Jerusalem. This early public commissioned siddur is catalogued as Mich. 436. The siddur is vocalized by Sofer Yakov in the interest of correct standard pronunciation for public prayer.


synagogue. A well known sofer like Joel ben Simeon if he copied and illustrated a Pesah Haggadah without inscribing a colophon according to Beit Arie that is a clue that it was not commissioned by a specific patron, but by a book dealer. Two dozen colophons exist that were copied for chance buyers by the indication of unnamed patrons, whereby an empty space would be left for inserting the patrons names later, or by addition of a deed of sale by a scribe of an uncommissioned manuscript. Also noteworthy is that some scholars and authors were also highly qualified hired scribes for example Rabbi Jehiel ben Jekuthiel ha-Rofe, the sofer of the manuscript of the Jerusalem Talmud from 1289 (Leiden, University Library, MS 4720) who was commissioned to copy three other manuscripts and who is identified as the author of Ma’alot ha-middot, Tanya, and Hilkhot shehitah. The phenomena also exists where persons who had been hired in their youth to copy books to later hire scribes to copy for them.

Besides these exceptions, however the majority of Hebrew books were privately commissioned. Beit Arie argues that beginning in the 10th century about half of medieval Jews books were self produced, a proportion unmatched in other civilizations of the codex. This high rate of self-production may be the most important information yielded by the codicological study of colophoned manuscripts shedding light on the transmission and textual criticism of Hebrew texts.

Malachi Beit-Arie writes, ““altogether privatized consumption of handwritten Hebrew books (in Middle Ages) is associated with the entirely personal production and dissemination of manuscripts. This private character fits the individual nature of intellectual life prevailing among the dispersed medieval Jewish communities characterized by the lack of political frameworks or centralized authorities…. Unlike the preservation and concentration of the non-Hebrew books mainly in institutional collections (monastical, ecclesiastical, state, royal, etc), the Hebrew medieval book was initiated, produced, consumed and kept individually.” Beit Arie notes that “the European halakhic literature, the Tosafot, response, and various

23 See M. Glatzer and C Sirat, Manuscripts medievaux en caracteres hebraiques portant des indications de date jusqu’a 1540, III, Paris, 1986, no.112; the private commissioner of the book is named (MS Jerusalem, Private collection of Prof. M Benyahu; see Glatzer, no. 118; In another non-liturgical book (Rambam’s pirush al ha Mishnah in Judeo-Arabic) the name of the scribe and commissioner are not named and only a short colophon indicates that the copy was completed in 1496 for the synagogue.

24 See Beit Arie, Malachi, Commissioned and Owner Produced Manuscripts in the Sephardic Zone and Italy in the 13th to 15th centuries, in the Late Medieval Hebrew book in the Western Mediterranean: Hebrew manuscripts and incunabula in context, Leiden: Brill, 2015, p.20


28 See: Beit Arie, Malachi, “The individual nature of Hebrew book production and consumption” in Manuscrits hebreux et arabes: melanges en l’honneur de Colette Sirat, De Lange, N.R. M. ; Olszowy-Schlander, Judith (eds), Brepols, p.17; Beit Arie notes further that the response attest to few Jewish establishments such as batei midrash, yeshivot, synagogues, or community authorities that instigated and financed the production of Hebrew ms or administered the selection and the versions of texts to be copied. Neither did they often assemble and
early haktehillic works and the Sefer Hasidim of the German Pietist Movement in German, provide the richest information on Medieval books in general and on scribal practices in particular.” Bez Arie points out, “The documentary sources on Jewish books comprise mainly lists of books. In Europe – particularly in Italy – these lists can be found on blank pages in manuscripts, where one of the successive owners registered his private library.” Book lists have been identified and classified by scholars. The largest recorded Jewish library in the Middle Ages (226 books) was the library which was owned by the two sons of the banker, physician, Rabbi Abraham Finzi, Yishaq and Mordechai Finzi of Mantua. Other private library lists include 156 books by Rabbi Judah Leon Mosconi in Majorca around 1375. Inventories of 26 libraries today. However for much of the early Middle Ages the making of Hebrew books was the outcome of private enterprise motivated by personal need and aimed at private use (p.18). There is mention of Italian Deeds of sale in the renaissance inscribed at the end of manuscripts, however often books where inherited as yerushah in Ethical wills.

30 See J-P. Rothchild, “Les listes de livres reflet de la culture des juifs en Italie du nord au XV et XVI siècle,” in G. Tamiani and A. Vivian (eds.) Manoscritti framenti e libri ebraici nell’Italia de secoli XV-XVI: Atti del VII Congresso internazionale del AISG S. Miniato, 7, 8,9, novembre 1988, Roma, 1991, p.163-193; R. Bonfil The Rabbinate in Renaissance Italy, Jerusalem, 1969, Appendix 2, p 295-298 listed 41 Italian book lists, partly published and partly unpublished; Lists are characterized by owners listing titles, sometimes codicological information or even palaeographical information such as the writing material, the kind of binding and the type of script (Bet Arie, Hebrew Ms. Of East and West, p.33) In the middle east evidence exists of lists by book dealers recovered from the Cairo Geniza.

31 See Allony, N., published many Geniza lists published posthumously by M. Frenkel and H. Ben-Shammai, Jewish Library in the Middle Ages, Book Lists from the Cairo Geniza, Jerusalem, 2006; see Bibliography of Allony, N. and A. Scheiberg. “An autograph of R. Josef Rosh Haseder”, Kirjath Sepher 48, 1972-2973, p. 152-172 and N. Allony “An 11th century Book list”, Alei Sefer 6-7 (1979), p. 28-49. Book lists found in the Cairo Geniza testify to book dealers sale catalogues and inventories (M Frenkel “Book lists from the Geniza as a source for the cultural history of the Jews in the Mediterranean Society”, Te’udo 15, 1999, p.333-349. Of course the pioneering work of SD Goiten author of A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza, 5 vols, Berkeley and LA 1967-1988, cannot not be mentioned as well as many of Goiten’s hundreds of specialized journal articles in this area. A letter from the Cairo Geniza reveals that 230 biblical books, 100 small codices, and 8 sifrei Tora all looted from the foundations of the Jewish community in Jerusalem by Crusaders when they conquered the city in 1099, were redeemed in the summer of 1100 (see Goiten, SD, “New sources on the fate of the Jews during the Crusaders conquest of Jerusalem,” Zion 17, 1952 p.132, 137, 141-142
private Medieval Libraries in Jaca (Huesca province of Aragon) were compiled in 1415. Beit Arie emphasizes his thesis again on the private nature of medieval book collections by amplifying, “Almost all the literary and documentary sources relate to books in private possession produced as a private initiative, and to scribes hired by individuals, in order to prepare copies of specific texts for their personal use. All the European and some of the Oriental lists are in fact catalogues of private collections or lists of inherited books. From dedications on books we do learn however that books were kept in synagogues amassed over the years through donations by individuals who commissioned books specially or donated books from their private libraries. The private personal nature of book production, ownership, use, and preservation is further documented by the SFARDATA base which analyzed over 4000 extant or copied colophons in medieval Hebrew manuscripts assembled by the Hebrew Palaeography project in the context of codicological documentation of dated and undated ms which include indications of scribes names. According to the colophons only a very minuscule # of the ms were commissioned by communities, mostly synagogues. The vast majority were commissioned by private individuals for private use. Scholars, intellectuals, and ordinary literate laymen who wished to obtain a copy of a text had three options: (a) They could aquire the desired book by locating an existing copy in their area and trying to purchase it from an owner as a number of medieval books include deeds of sale in their back matter. A rare case exists documented I the back of a 15th century Provencal manuscript where the scribe explicitly states that he wrote the book “for anyone who would like to purchase it”. The two other options open to those who wished to acquire a book, from the time of the earliest dated codices (beginning 10th century) involved commissioning tailor made production. One could hire either a professional scribe or casual scribe. The third option was copying the required text themselves. Both ways of producing new medieval handmade manuscripts depended of course on obtaining a model or exemplar for copying. According to Beit Arie, “almost all the literary and documentary sources refer to books in private possession, produced by private initiative, and to scribes hired by individuals to prepare copies of certain texts for their personal use. All the European and part of the Oriental book lists are in fact catalogues of private

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36 Colette Sira and Beit Arie sponsored by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in collaboration with the NNUL in Jerusalem in cooperation with the Institut de Recherche et D’Histoire des Textes (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) carried out this worldwide documentation team effort. The project produced digital images of selected pages of each ms. The SFARDATA database has sophisticated retrieval system. Thus the statistical analysis of the SFARDATA supplies researchers with evidence for theses as a precise tool for the typological characterization, historical study, and palaeographical identification of undated ms on the bases of objective criteria of codicological parameters.

collections or listings of inherited books. The other kind of book lists found in the Cairo Geniza is deemed
to have been book dealers’ catalogues and inventories.38

With the advent of the printing press many scribes (sofrim) were distrustful of the new technology
feeling that smugness would result from transcribing from hand copied manuscripts to the printing press.
Not to mention also their concern of the prohibition of writing down oral torah, now made more easy by
the new printing press technology.39 Rabbi Joseph Solomon del Medigo worried that the invention of
printing would be responsible in a bad way for the increase in and spread of inferior books and confident
that the survival of good and noble works would decrease citing Koheleth: יִשְׁלָלָה וְגִנְחוּ לָאַחֲרֹׁנִים שֶׁיִהְיוּ לָאַחֲרֹׁנָה מִצְרָיִם לָאַחֲרֹׁנָה; אִשַּׁמָּה וְגִנְחוּ לָאַחֲרֹׁנִים שֶׁיִהְיוּ לָאַחֲרֹׁנָה

The great Rabbi Isaac Halevy Herzog, the first chief Rabbi of Israel in 1948, always carried a volume of
the Tanakh when walking through the streets of Jerusalem. The rabbi explained that if people would rise
in his presence as is befitting before a Talmud Hakham, the implication would be that they were paying
honor not to him, but to the ideas represented in the text that he carried and surely knew by heart.

This reverence for the Jewish book translated into great Jewish book collectors like Rabbi Menahem ben
Yehudah who in the introduction to his book, Bereita de Rabbi Eliezer and Midrash Agur (Safed, 1587)
writes, “From the day I reached manhood I deprived myself of food and drink in order to pursue and
purchase books that brought me closer to Hashem.”40 Another avid collector who sacrificed in pursuit
of knowledge was the 16th century Rabbi Yosef Shelomo Delmodigo who lived on the Greek Island of
Candia who confesses, “I have often traveled hundreds of miles by land and sea in order to search out,
and buy, even a small precious volume.”41 In the modern period we do find some Ultra Orthodox concern
that the expansion of the palace of torah found in modern libraries widening collection development
policies, that include the works of unbelievers (minim), and apkorsin (knowledgeable unbelievers),
Karaites, missionaries, and Jews who reject the divine revelation of the torah as interpreted by Hazal
constitutes if not in understatement “a challenge” (language of Haskalah) then downright a threat to

38 Beit-Arie, Malachi, Commissioned and Owner-Produced Manuscripts in the Sephardic zone and Italy in the 13th –
15th centuries” in The late medieval Hebrew book in the Western Mediterranean: Hebrew manuscripts and
incunabula in context, Leiden: Brill, 2015, p.16; Beit Arie estimates that 60% of the colophons suggest that Hebrew
ms. Were self produced. He reasons, “since it is inconceivable that a hired scribe would refrain from mentioning
in his colophon the person who commissioned the book and hired him, while it is only natural that someone copying
for himself would not necessarily bother to state it” because the great majority of the colophoned ms. Have no
indication for whom their were copied they must have been user-produced privately done jobs (19).

39 See http://databases.jewishlibraries.org/node/49232

40 Quoted by Haberman, Toledot ha-Sefer ha-Ivri, p.13

41 Introduction to his book Novelot Hakhamah, quoted by Federbush Hikrei Yahadut, p.14

42 The term “palace of torah” has many concepts associated with it- some rabbinical, sociological, and historical. In
the historical context of the 19th century debate arose among Wissenschaft scholars debate ensued regarding the
“essential Jewish library” and the “expansion of the palace of torah.” Steinschneider weighed in on the debate of
what constitutes a core essential Judaica collection as well (see Professor Moritz Steinschneider,” Israelitisches
Familienblatt 10 (Jan. 31, 1907):5; other traces of the debate can be found in: “Einiges zur Lesebuchfrage,”
Israelitisches Familienblatt 10 (Jan. 3, 1907):9; Rotschild-Esslingen, “Zur Lesebuchfrage,” Israelische Familienblatt
“noch einmal die Lesebuchfrage,” Israelitisches Familienblatt 10 (Febr. 14, 1907):10.

traditional belief that could lead to the weakening of emunah pashut and bitachon, and even corruption of the youth so that issurim were issued forbidding the devout to visit by entering libraries of the masklim.43

For lovers of good books, one’s library is something living and dynamic, the pride and joy of their lives, and more importantly provides the sephulchers of wisdom that can open gates in the higher heavenly worlds. Rabbi David Oppenheim (1664-1736) of Prague had a large collection that was acquired by the Bodleian library of Oxford University which views these volumes, some of which were specially printed for Oppenheim on vellum and blue paper, as a glory of its larger collections.

According to Schmelzer at the time of Oppenheimer major Judaica collections were in private hands. Schmelzer writes:

“There were Jewish libraries and collections at seminaries in Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Paris, Cracow, Vilna, Warsaw, and elsewhere, and the library of the Breslaw seminary was quite well known for its good collection of Hebrew manuscripts and printed books, ontaing in 1904 18,000 printed books and 400 manuscripts. Still neither of these libraries matched the major Hebraica collections or could have aspired to rival those of the Bodleian or the British Museum. Libraries of Jewish organizations and institutions could not and did not reach the level of Hebraica collections or could have aspired to rival those of the Bodleian or the British Museum. Libraries of Jewish organizations and institutions could not and did not reach the level of Hebraica collections in royal, ecclesiastical, state, or university libraries in Europe. Historically no public Jewish libraries existed before the 18th century; Hebrew books were owned by individuals and frequently significant private collections of Jewish owners were acquired by non-Jewish libraries. Thus two of the finest private Jewish collections, David

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43 See Schidorsky, Dov, Sifriyah ve-sefer be-eretz Yisra’el be-tefilah ha-tekuafah ha-Ormanit, Yerushalayim: Magnes, 1990, 349-351; For example Haredi declarations in Yerushalayim in 1875, 1904, and 1927 warned Haredi visitors to the JNUL for their spiritual health. Such Ultra-Orthodox censorship is also identifiable in an Orthodox Convention where Rabbi Ralbag burned publically the siddur and Pesah Haggadah of Mordechai Kaplan. Kaplan had eliminated in his siddur the torah blessings proclaiming Jewish uniqueness and privilged status (bahar banu mikol ha-amim ve-natan lanu et torato) before being called in an Aliyah to the torah, the notion of “am segulah.” The notion of Am segulah was also challenged by anti-Semites who recently censored a new edition of Rav Yehudah HaLevy’s Kuzari at a secular bookstore, as Rabbi Yehudah HaLevi makes many “politically incorrect” statements to the modern sensibilities of multicultural inclusiveness that are easily misinterpreted out of context by those not trained in reading the original Hebrew Judeo Arabic text. For example some misreaders infer that Yehudah HaLevy ascribes genetic “superiority” to the “Jewish race” as a function of chosenness. Rather the true reading is the uniqueness of the Jewish people, and prophecy of the tribe of Levy for whom the Urim and Thumim will not depart” as according to Zot Habracha in Moshe’s blessing at the end of Devarim. Kaplan’s pesah haggadah also took out the injunction “to pour out Hashem’s wrath upon the nations that know not G-d and have destroyed Hashem’s servant Yakov, found Tehillim Ayin Tet, when we open the door for Eliyahu haNavi at the pesah seder:

שָׁפְעָה: אֲשֶׁר לֹא אֶחְיָבַת, אֲשֶׁר בְּשֵׁמוֹ, אֲשֶׁר לֹא כָּלֵי נְבוֹתא

6 Pour out Thy wrath upon the nations that know Thee not, {N} and upon the kingdoms that call not upon Thy name.

7 For they have devoured Jacob, and laid waste his habitation.

In my power point on “women and responsible use of the internet” I include a slide from Boro Park NY warning all Haredi Jews against “the evils of the Internet.” Thus apparently the crusade against “unkosher books” has spilled over into Haredi condemnation of rightly concerns with “unkosher websites” of shmut, pritzus, etc. that constitute not only bitul zeman, but corrupting influences on the neshama. See AJL Proceedings Pasadena, CA.
Oppenheime’s and Heimann Michael’s were purchased in the 19th century by the Bodleian and by the British Museum; the important private collections of Abraham Merzbacher was acquired by the City Library of Frankfurt and that of David Kaufmann by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences - both at the beginning of the 20th century.  

Before the 20th century however as early as the 19th century Jewish public libraries acquired new importance, in their importance being recognized for the dissemination and preservation of a common Jewish heritage, continuity, a loci of memory, and as repositories of the work of Wissenschaft scholarship. Abraham Geiger noted that:

The most eloquent witness for the respect of the spiritual work is the foundation and maintenance of a library. A library prives not only nutrition for the spirit, but is also a monument to the spirit where our ancestors are gathered... A library pictorially represents for us the ties of times, where gray antiquity is intertwined with the bright present.

During the 1890s Jewish community leaders and members of the Association for Jewish History and Literature mandated establishment of Jewish libraries to preserve knowledge of the Jewish past. With the establishment of Jewish public reading halls (Lesehallen), the number of Jewish libraries increased further. Lesehallen were founded for example in Berlin in 1894, Frankfurt a. Main in 1905, Hamburg in 1909, and Posen in 1900. The Deutsche-Israelitische Gemeindebund, Masonic Lodges, Juedischen Vereinschaften, and Jewish societies sometimes subsidized these Lesehallen located in primary urban centers. In the case of Frankfurt am Main a Masonic lodge sought to bring Jewish books to rural areas in  

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44 Schmelzer, Menachem, “Building a Great Judaica Library- At what price?”, in Tradition Renewed: A History of the Jewish Theological Seminary, NY:JTSA press, 1997, p 681; Schmelzer elaborates, “The recovery, collection, organization, and preservation of knowledge were primary goals of the pioneers of modern Jewish scholarship, but the establishment of complete collections of the written and printed (Jewish related) word was not among those ambitions.


48 Besides the reading Hall library in Berlin, the Jewish community had access to the Bet Medrash Libraries, the Juedische Bibliothek, the library of the Deutsche-Israelitisher Gemeindebund, the library of the Masonic lodges, as well as the library of the Academic Society for Jewish history and Literature. See P. Schwenke and A. Hortszchansky, Berliner Bibliothekenfuhrer (Berlin: Weidmann, 1906), 147-48; Festschrift zum 10. Stiftungsfest der Akademischen Vereins fuer juedische Geschichte und Literatur, 82; Ludwig Geiger, “Die Bibliothek der Juedischen Gemeinde AZJ 66 (1902): 101-3.

the form of a mobile travel lending library.\textsuperscript{50}The Montefiore Society, the Verein zur Abwehr des Antisemitismus (Association for the defense against anti-Semitism), and other Jewish educational institutions also sought to establish Jewish libraries.\textsuperscript{51} Often modest membership fees included borrowing privileges but often the Jewish public could read books on premises if they did not check items out of the reading room. In the cases of scholarly merit borrowing fees could be waived as noted by Gershom Scholem who only need to provide a note from his mother (z”l) before he could use the collection of the Jewish community Council in Berlin.\textsuperscript{52} According to borrowing statistics and patron volume statistics these libraries for example in Berlin example were used very heavily often with standing room only which Scholem attributes to the incredible thirst of German Jews in search for their roots, as a counter reaction to the process of assimilation and acculturation that had begun en masse centuries earlier, as a result of political emancipation and the modern Enlightenment. Discussion of essential core collection occurred regarding the phenomena of the Vereinsbibliothek.\textsuperscript{53} The phenomena of the homelibrary made possible by the relative greater ease of publishing, and Jewish thirst for cultural roots as a backlash reaction amongst some assimilated Jews after having attained status in the host society as a result of emancipation, assimilation, and acculturation gave rise to the greater number of Hausbibliothek.\textsuperscript{54} Even in the Ghetto this thirst for Jewish roots could be identified in some readers who frequented Ghetto libraries.\textsuperscript{55} Some Jewish libraries such as the one in the Nazi Ghetto of Vilna were allowed to function because German authorities felt they would be a useful distraction for ghetto residents.\textsuperscript{56} Herman Kruk in


\textsuperscript{51} Berghofer, Christian Wilhelm, Die Freiherrlich Carl v. Rotshild’sche offentliche bibliothek. Ein Grundriß ihrer Organisation. Nebst einem Verzeichnis ihrer Zeitschriften und einem Frankfurter Bibliothekenfuehrer (Frankfurt A. M.: Baer, 1913); Frankfurt am Main consisted of various donated collections that encompassed the libraries of R. Salmon Geiger, orientalist Raphael Kircheim, and duplicates from the library of Abraham Berliner as well as the library of Freiherrn Wilhelm Karl von Rotshild. (see “Lauchheim (Wuerttenberg),” Gegenwart 1 (1867): 103 and Bibliothek der israelitischen Religionsschule zu Frankfurt am Main: Katalog.)


\textsuperscript{53} See “Eine Judische Vereinsbibliothek,” AZJ 59 (1895): 88-89; also see “Eine Judische Vereinsbibliothek,” Mitteilungen aus dem Verband der vereine fuer juedische Geschichte und Literatur in Deutschland (Dec. 1902): 47-56; Lists of history books included in this core collection often included works by Heinrich Graetz, Moritz Guedemann, Leo Herzfeld, Isaac Jost, Abraham Geiger, Jost, Abraham Berliner, etc. History of literature lists recommended works by David Cassel, Gustav Karpeles, Moritz Kayserling, Moritz Steinschneider, Michael Sachs, Abraham Sulzbach, Leopold Zunz, etc. In some sense the Adolf Kohut cultural history of German Jewry series sought to also canonize for a core collection scholarly works in academic Judaica.

\textsuperscript{54} Markus Lehmann published historical novels as “Lehmanns judische Hausbucherei.” The Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Wissenschaft des Judentums, advertised their publications as “Buecher fuer die Juedische Hausbibliothek; Schriften herausgegeben von der Gesellschaft zur Foerderung der Wissenschaft des Judentum.” Thus the phenomena of the Judische Lehrhaus and the student public it represented made library book collecting a “family affair.” This thirst for Jewish culture (Bildung) is described by Leo Strauss, in the introduction to Leo Strauss’ book, Spinoza’s Critique of Religion.


\textsuperscript{56} Rose, Jonathan, “Introduction” in The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation, p.3; In this book on pages 165-170 Dina Abramowicz gives testimony to the reading habits of patrons of the Vilna Ghetto which constituted 3 types: (1) “society ladies” who frequented the library in the early morning hours whose husbands
considering the psychological attributes of the ghetto reader, classifies how books might still have any
kind of relevance to their harassed, persecuted, and worked to death readers.57

Rabbi Mathias Strashun (1817-85) collected a magnificent library in Vilna as did the Hebrew
bibliographer Heimann Joseph Michael (1792-1846) in Hamburg. Michael’s collection is now in the
British Museum in London. The great collection of Austrian scholar Solomon Halberstam (1832-1900)
was incorporated into the library of the JTS. German Abraham Merzbacher (1812-85) library later
became part of the library of Frankfurt am Main,58 many of whose books the Nazis collected for a
museum to the “murdered Jewish race” and which ended up in the Offenbach depot, before being sent to
libraries throughout the Jewish world, as described by Gershom Scholem, who was sent by the Israeli

were at hard labor of work, and came to check out serializations of Russian sentimental novels issued by publishing
houses in Riga, (b) children who visited the library after 2 pm. after school who sought out stories such as Children
of Captain Grant, Around the world in 80 Days, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, The Prince and the Pauper,
Abromowitz attributes this to the children’s need for youthful imagination to transport itself to the world of
fantasy which grew more intense in the lack of freedoms imposed by the ghetto and its environment. Abromowitz
writes, “Books were possibly the only vehicle for reaching out to the world from which the Jewish children were
cut off, possibly forever” (168), (c) the third type of Ghetto library patrons who visited on Sundays were people
who went to work outside the ghetto, mostly young people from the Hechalutz Zionist organizations, many
refugees from Warsaw. This group of readers tended to read books for analogies to their own situation. For
example Franz Werfel’s The 40 Days of Musa Dagh described the episode in WWI of the annihilation by the Turks
of an entire Armenian population living in their country. Abromowitz writes, “The idea of a total annihilation of a
racial group, the method of destruction, the helplessness of the victims, and the futility of diplomatic rescue
efforts - this presented such an astonishing similarity to our situation that we read the book with a shudder,
perceiving it almost as a prophetic vision, revealing for us our inevitable fate” (168).”

Kruk writes, “Reading at that time, could be interpreted only as a form of withdrawal from the surrounding
conditions (192).” Kruk notes in a ghetto library report, “Under ghetto conditions, the Reading Room plays a major
and significant role. The consulating of reading matter is not all that takes place here; the space affords an
opportunity for both reading and mental relaxation.” (see diary entry for 8 May 1942). Kruk notes the great
appreciation with which the ghetto intelligentsia greeted the reopening of the Ghetto Reading room and their
recognition of its role as an important cultural enterprise in the ghetto. Visitors regarded the Ghetto reading room
as the “nicest cultural site in the ghetto” thanks to its pleasant atmosphere (Togbuch, 262). Kruk witnessed how
books became a kind of nacrotic for ghetto inmates, a means of escape. Kruk comments, “A human being can
endure hunger, poverty, pain, and suffering, but he cannot tolerate isolation” (192). Kruk writes, “In the ghetto
each individual is allotted scarcely 70 square centimeters (7 sq feet). The house is like a gigantic beehive. Still you
lie down doubled up on your meager possessions, and you ingest the narcotic - the book. The new ghetto
inhabitant thus clings to the last bit of what remained from before. Books carried him away, over the ghetto walls
and into the world. A reader could thus tear himself away from his oppressive isolation and in his mind be
reunited with life, with his stolen freedom” (192). Kruk describes victims deported for gassing in the various
“Actions” as “borrowed readers” (193). Kruk notes that while the majority of borrowers of the ghetto library books
were children, the next group were women who did not work as hard as the conscripted men. He writes, “The
more complicated that life becomes, the harder it gets for there to be any kind of intellectual exertion. Not only
does the act of reading get more difficult for the reader, but so does the ability to make sense of the artistic
details. Readers first and foremost women, normally devour light fiction, mysteries, and semitrashy books - and
that is the situation that currently prevails.” (193). Thus Kruk classifies these readers as those who read for the
purpose of intoxication - that is in order to stop focusing on the horror of the present- or reading in order to ponder
to become interested in comparable fates, to make analogies and reach certain conclusion. (mid March 1943 diary
entry (Togbuch 471).

57 See Israelitische Familien-blatt reprinted in Ulircke Schmidt, “Juedische Bibliotheken in Frankfurt am Main: Vom
government to the Offenbach depot to bring back Hebrew books to the JNUL in Jerusalem. The burning of Jewish books was all the rage by the boyscout Hitler Jugend who when the Fuhrer became chancellor of Germany on May 10, 1933 ordered the conflagration of more than 20 thousand Jewish books in the Square at Unter den Linden in from of the University of Berlin. The German bibliographer Eliezer Rosenthal (1794-1868 of Hannover was accessioned by the University of Amsterderam. Moses Friedland (1826-99) built the Bibliotheca Friedlandiana which was bequeathed by the Asiatic Museum of the Imperial University of St. Petersburg. The Russian Jewish Orientalist scholar Baron David Gunzburg (1857-1910) library is known as the Gunzburg collection in Moscow. In the English speaking world great Jewish private collections were built by Elkan Adler of London, Mayer Sulzberger, Dr. A.S. W. Rosnebach of Philadelphia, David Cassel, Moritz Steinschneider, and Jacob Schiff.

Jewish books are more precious than rubies, the bastion of Jewish survival, a survival kit enabling the perpetuation of Jewish existence and religion. In Sefer Iyov, amongst Job’s afflictions he affirms, “But as for me I know that my redeemer liveth,” who giveth solace in the written word, “Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were inscribed in a book! That with an iron pen and lead/ They were graven in the rock forever! (Iyov 19:23-25). Heinrich Heine referred to the Jewish book as the “Jews portable homeland” for the Jew found suacease from his sorrows and persecutions and resilience and strength to survive from Jewish books. This is attested in Rabbi Joseph Teumin, in his introduction to his book Peri Megadim, which quotes from a letter sent to him by a Jew named “Levi the Poor Hebrew teacher”: When I wake up during the long cold winter nights and my wife weeps because there is no bread for the children, and my mind is filled with agonizing thoughts, it is then that I sit down to open a book and to learn. The book then becomes my city of refuge and my bastion of courage.”

Shmuel Yosef Agnon who was also a great book collector, reminissed in recalling his grandfather’s library in Eastern Europe and writes repeatedly of the sanctity and saving power of the Jewish book.  

59 See Beth Arie, Malachi, “Gershom Scholem: The man and his work, the bibliophile, Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences & Albany: State University of NY Press 1994, p.125; Beth Arie writes, “His (Scholem’s) crowning achievement in this respect (furthering Jewish Continuity) was the sacred task he took upon himself of rescuring the collections of Hebrew and Jewish books confiscated by the Nazis. After the war, in the summer of 1946, Scholem set out for Europe as a representative of the Hebrew University. For five long and arduous months he gathered information about the fate of Jewish libraries, located concentrations of books in Germany, Czechoslavakia, and Austria, examined their content, and conducted complicated and sensitive negotiations in order to salvage them, under indescribably difficult conditons. For several years he supervised the rescue and transfer of some half million books and hundreds of manuscripts from Germany, Czechoslavakia, Poland and Austria to the JNUL and other libraries in Eretz Yisrael.”  

60 Quoted by Federbush, Hikrei Yahadut, p.23; Bialik in the poem Hamatmid also expresses a similar thought that the Jews found refuge in sefarim when he writes, “And should’t thou wish to know the source from which thy tortured breather drew/In evil days their strength of the soul?/ They enter the house of G-d/ The Beit Midrash/ Perhaps they eye may still behold/ the profile of some palid face/ upon an ancient folio bent.” Bialik also writes a poem Lifnei Aron ha-Sefarim “standing before the book case” which opens, “Receive my greetings/ O ancient tomes/ Accept my kisses ye noble shriveled parchments! ”

61 see Kitvei H.N. Bialik (Tel Aviv, 1939), p.47 13 Kitvei Agnon, vol.3, chap. On “Shas al Bet Zikni”; In Agon’s story “In the Heart of the Seas” which I learnt in a class with Gershon Shaked of Hebrew University in Jerusalem, Agnon tells of Rabbi Hananya who went on a hazardous journey by sea to the land of Israel when a storm broke out. The rabbi saw someone sitting on the desk calmly learning a sefer. The rabbis fears vanished for he knew “that no tempest at sea would cause him to sink and no beast of the deep could swallow him up protected by the power of holy
Gershom Scholem in referring to his own library which he donated posthumously to the JNUL, in a letter to Agnon cites a remark of the Besht, founder of modern Hasidim. He writes, “all a person’s household items, his dwelling and his surroundings are filled with the sparks of his soul and are waiting to be lifted up.”

It is the librarian’s job to raise these sparks of light, to elevate them. And in the process a burning fire of the light of past generations continues to illuminate the present and into the future, the sefer becoming a sephulcher that not only can as Rambam notes, “draw one closer to Hashem” but also the bridge (gesher) between generations and the historical phenomena of the historical spirit of past “cultural harvests” (see Emerson, Ralph Waldo). The sparks of the souls of the wise of old who attempted to transmit their findings and knowledge to the future generations by writing their ideas down in books, presents the challenge of “raising up these sparks.” However once a good reference librarian who has helped prepare access to patrons to access the sparks, the conflagration of cognitive illumination, shines and grows, nurtured by the librarian as a Platonic guardian. This glow indeed shines to recuperate the hidden secrets and intellectual treasures of the past, spanning generations, so that we might witness a “hadlikah” as intense as that on Lag B’omer at Meron, on the Rashbi’s yahrzeit. To preserve the glow of these embers of wisdom, is the librarians job, not only to guide patrons to access the light of this wisdom. Such is often a thankless job, but great librarians like Alexander Marx and others, who supervised countless dissertations and donated countless hours to helping researchers navigate the cold bed of the glowing embers, deserve credit, for the light they have enabled to continue to shine into the future. A scholar librarian without a love for great books is like a surgeon without his equipment. The feverish enthusiasm and labor of love to gather and assemble and collect for instance every printed edition.
bearing even an indirect relationship on one’s scholarly interests is a lifelong mission. William Osler for instance kept every edition of the work Religio Medici, for medicine and science were a calling for him, not just a 9 to 5 job, but as the title suggests yes a religious on science and medicine. So too Jewish scholars like Scholem who collected in niche areas such as Jewish mysticism are a great boon to future researchers. Scholem made Herculean efforts for instance to bring together all printed and manuscripts on Kabbala, Sabbateanism and Hasidism. This task required great bibliographic knowledge and detailed in depth knowledge of the history of the printing press and incunabula, as well as typography, lexigraphy, and paleography. Bibliographical research for any scholar librarian is a handmaiden to their research. It is not a separate area, what Nietzsche calls a pleasant sideline of diitantism. Rather it provides for, grounds, and is the foundation for any serious scholarly achievement. Bibliographical/librarian knowledge is not just the materials of a scientist's laboratory to be coldly dissected by the scholar of the history of ideas with a philological scapel. Rather it is a growing, organic, and alive field of force that constitutes a base of knowledge requiring an emotional draw of electromagnetic pull and reach. The bibliophile of Jewish texts is not just someone who owns or possesses books. S/he has a “relationship” with texts, as alive and vibrant as any human relationship. Yet while friends may betray one, a book always is not static and provides further levels of understanding every time the scholar engages with it, so that eventually its contents become a matter of existence outside the physical, constituting a realm of the disembodied intellect. Thus Rambam refers to the Moreh Nevukhim not only as “a key that may open gates of understanding in the 7 palaces of shamayim, into the chambers of which, the soul will be delighted and refreshed by angelic celestial discourses that expand consciousness, and like Eliyahu naNavi clear up contradictions in textual sacred understanding, but for the Rambam he tells his star pupil Yosef, for whom the guide was written, that this work (as well as a key) should become so familiar to his soul, that eventually just recalling the chapter headings, will unwind upon his mind thoughts that “go up” into the worlds (olomot) of emet. It will come up on the mind the cognitive topos of the noetic world redeemed by truth and its pursuit. Thus the distinction between function and essence, between the vesell and its contents, become blurred and cognitively coterminous, a triple point analogously were water exists as both: liquid, gas, and solid. For a real lover of Jewish books, the pursuit of them, is almost irrational likening as a kind of sensual enjoyment. Before payday funds are allocated for the acquiring a special certain sefer. The mission is a desire “without an end to desire.” But this is no Faustian quest and Goethe describes. Rather the stakes are so high that they are ultimate. The quest could pivot on a world redeemed by the attainment of hokmah-binah-vedaas or not. That is why Rambam in Hilchot Teshuva notes that Biolam ha-bah the tzadikim sit with crowns on their heads, enjoying the ziv Shekhinah, The crowns on the heads representing one’s eternal reward however are directly proportional to the hokmah bina vedaas achieved in olam hazeh. Thus this is

64 Gershom Scholem confesses that the extra money that his parents sent him as a student to supplement his vitamin deficient diet (mostly eggs and potatoes) was used by Scholem not to purchase more healthy food for his health and nourishment but set aside for buying more books. Scholem writes, “In the fall I took the money I had saved to my two second hand book dealers in Berlin and bought kabbalistic writings, among them a French translation of the Zohar which appeared in Paris between 1906 and 1912 in 6 thick volumes. (see Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to the Kabbalah”, in Commentary, May 1980: 69, 005, p. 40)
not a game with words, not rhetoric, and neither mere game theory reducing all intellectual matters to “play.” What is at stake is eternal redemption— or not.

**Great Librarians Understanding of the Vulnerability to Censorship of the Jewish Sefer across History:**

**Preservation of the Sefer as a form of Resistance to Censorship**

**Censorship of Jewish Books**

Censorship is an important topic in library science. In this blog entry I hope to amplify and expand upon that Newsletter essay by noting further examples of “enemies of the Jewish book.” Whenever persecutors of the Jews arose they also vented their destructive hate on the Jewish book.  

*In the time of the Macabees, Antiochus Epiphanes burned Jewish books.*

The Mishnah notes “among the five calamities that befell our people on the 17th of Tammuz was the burning of the Sefer Torah.”

*In the days of the Hadrianic persecutions Torah study was forbidden and the Talmud records the fate of Rabbi Hanina ben Teradyon who was one of the 10 Holy martyrs murdered by the Romans as memorialized on Yom Kippur in the Eleh Ezkera:*

The Roman soldiers found him sitting and learning Torah, publicly gathering assemblies and keeping a Scroll of the Law in his bosom. Straightaway they took hold of him, wrapped him the Scroll of law, placed bundles of branches around him and set them on fire. They then took tufts of wool which they had soaked in water and placed them over his heart, so that he should not expire quickly but have a more prolonged and protracted execution. His daughter exclaimed: “Father that I should see you in this state!” He replied: If it were I alone being burnt it would have been a thing hard to bear, but now that I am burning together with the Scroll of the Law, He who will have regard for the plight of the Torah will also have regard for my plight.” His disciples then called out: “Rabbi what seest thou?” He answered them, “the parchments are being burnt, but the letters are soaring high to heaven.”

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65 1 Nedavah, “Gezerot al Sefarim Ivriyim”
66 2 I Maccabees 1:53-56; “And they made Israel to hide themselves in every place of refuge which they had ... And they rent in pieces the books which they found, and set them on fire”
67 3 Taanit 4:6; see: משמורת בן סומא, עפר ומ誠ה אביכנער וסינא אביכנער מנה יכולים שמעור כנף בּוּדֵמֶר, אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער אביכנער
68 4 Tractate Avodah Zarah 18a
In the medieval ages in June 1244, 24 cartloads of Hebrew books were committed to the flames. This holocaust was eulogized by Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg, on the 9th of Av. The kinnus lament prayer opens, “O, ye who are seared in the flames, pray for the peace of thy mourners!”

The Spanish Inquisition under Tomas Torquemado further burnt many Jewish books as recounted by eyewitness Rabbi Abraham Sebag who notes that possession of a Jewish book warranted execution. Many Jews did not escape and were found owning Hebrew books and burned at the stake.

In Rome, Italy on Rosh Hashanah 1553 all found tomes of the Talmud were set to flames at Campo dei Fiori, and the eyewitness of Rabbi Judah Lerma in his book Lehem Yehudah (Sabionetta, 1554) writes:

On Rosh Hashanah the Curia of Rome issued an edict in all countries and they burned the Talmud and all works allied thereof. Also on the month of Marheshvan my authored books which were recently printed, 1500 volumes in all, were set to flames. So I was forced to begin all over again and to write it from memory.

Jonathan Rose writes, “the mass slaughter of Jews was accompanied by the most devastating literary Holocaust of all time.” In Nazi Germany, less than 5 months after the Fuhrer became chancellor of Germany, on the eve of May 10th, 1933 he ordered his boyscouts (Hitler Jugend) to make a great conflagration of more than 25 thousand Jewish books, in the Square at Unter den Linden in front of the University of Berlin. Similar book burnings were staged throughout Germany which were a prelude to the burning of synagogues on Kistallnacht which took place on Nov. 9th, 1938 and was named a “birthday present (geburtstag schenken) to Martin Luther’s call to burn down synagogues and murder the Jews.”

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69 See: The Koren Mesorat HaRav Kinot, The Complete Tisha B’Av Service with Commentary by Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik

70 See, Roth, Cecil, “Jewish Love of books”, p.3-4; While I was in Portugal after having come thither with those expelled from Castile, it came into my mind to compose a commentary on the Five scrolls. That was the time of the Second Expulsion from Portugal of the Jews. I abandoned all my books and fled to Lisbon with only the commentary I had composed on the Pentateuch and the commentary on the Five Scrolls, and a commentary on Pirke Avot, and the work “Hibbur HaKasef” that I had composed earlier. When I arrived in Lisbon, certain Jews told me that a proclamation had been issued that any person in whose possession was a Hebrew book would be put to death. I concealed my books beneath a verdant olive tree but my eyes are bitter as wormwood: and I called it the tree of weeping, for there I had buried all that I held most dear.

71 Ibid.; After I had written three chapters anew, I found one single copy of the printed work in the hands of a non-Jew who had snatched it from the blaze in Marheshvan, and I purchased it at a high price, and I found by the providence of G-d that I had made the second copy more complete than the first.

based on Luther’s hateful works, Die Juden und Ihren Lugen, and “Shem HaMephorash.”


Unfortunately thousands of incidents like the one described in Chaim Kaplan’s, Scroll of Agony, a diary account of the Warsaw Ghetto, go undocumented regarding the destruction of Jewish libraries under the Nazis radical acts of censorship. Rabbi Poznanski was the rabbi of the Tlomackie Synagogue in Warsaw, the largest population of Jews in Eastern Europe rivaling Vilna and Minsk. R. Poznanski served as the head of the library and was an important scholar of tekufah of the Geonim. Poznanski served as librarian of the Tlomackie synagogue which under Poznanski grew to a collection of 40,000 books including manuscripts. At first the library was in a number of rooms but then it expanded to a separate building. Despite Solomon Schechter invitation to Poznanski to join the JTSA faculty and to become its librarian in 1902, Poznanski refused to abandon his congregation in Warsaw. The destruction of the library is depicted In the Warsaw Ghetto diary of Chaim Kaplan, retitled The Scroll of Agony, we read:

“The day before yesterday (Oct. 23), like true Vandals, the conquerors entered the Tlomackie Library, where rare spiritual treasures were stored. They removed all the valuable books and manuscripts, put them on trucks, and took them to some unknown place. This is a burning of the soul of Polish Jewry, for this library was our spiritual sanctuary”.

Systematically the Nazis sought to burn and confiscate Hebraica and Judaica. Kohut recounts the news heard about the Nazi destruction of the Kohut library in Vienna by writing:

I can remember clearly the day a letter arrived from Vienna telling me that the Nazis had burned the books of the Kohut foundation there (in Vienna). In my distress I turned to Professor Marx, who rushed to my home as soon as he received my call. Words cannot describe Professor Marx’s grief as he read the letter. Each one of the books of the Kohut library was like a treasured friend; the loss was irreparable.

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73 See bibliography on M. Luther at: http://libguides.tourolib.org/c.php?g=114197&p=743238
74 The German text reads, “The book burning ceremonies were planned with meticulous attention to detail. This invitation to the book burning in Munich outlines the order of events: invitees “must arrive at the designated area at precisely 11 p.m. At 11 p.m. the torchlight procession of the entire Munich Students Association will be arriving. 1. The united bands will play parade music 2. The festivities will begin at 11 with the song “Brothers, Forward!” 3. Speech by the leader of the German Students Association Kurt Ellersiek 4. Burning of the nation-corrupting books and journals 5. Group sing-along of ... songs”
76 Kohut, Rebeca, “Alexander Marx,” in Alexander Marx Jubilee volume on the occasion of his 70th birthday, NY: NY 1950, xxii.; Marx and others worked to reprint some of the Kohut academic Jewish studies volumes. For example Professor Solomon Skoss of Dropsie College prepared and edition of the Hebrew-Arabic dictionary of David Alf-fasi, a contemporary of Rav Saadia Gaon in two volumes edited from manuscripts in the State Public Library in Leningrad and in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. The 4th volume continuing the book of Joshua in Greek by Professor Margolis was published post-humously. Salo W. Baron’s 1935 celebration of the then 800th anniversary of
As Nazi hordes took over occupied lands in a campaign of pillage, robbery, confissgation, and Einsatzgruppen mass murder of Jews, the Nazis set aside some Jewish books, for a future Museum to the murdered Jewish race. After WWII this collection of Hebrew books at the Offenbach Depot was confisgated by the allies, and the scholar Gershom Scholem was sent to salvage and bring back to the Jewish National Library in Israel precious tomes.  

Prior to the Holocaust Marx of the JTSA anticipated destruction so in the 1930s the rescue of European Jewish treasures was sought. The transfer of ritual objects and Sifrei Torah of the Danzig Jewish community to the Seminary in 1939 is documented by the Jewish Museum. Schmelzer cites a letter of Doctor Israel Schapiro to Marx as follows:

I take this opportunity of bringing to your attention a proposal of Leo Winz, former editor of Ost und West in Berlin, and now a resident of Tel Aviv, Palestine. Mr Winz in a letter recently received states that the Jewish library in Vienna was burned by the Nazis, and that other great Jewish libraries and cultural collections in the Reich stood in similar danger.

Mr. Winz suggests that such valuable collection as those in the Rabbinical seminary at Breslau, the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums and the Hildeschiemer Seminary in Berlin, as well as the library of the Juedische Gemeinde in Berlin could be ransomed for a moderate sum and brought to this country or to Palestine. He cites the German need for foreign exchange as a probably inducement for the Nazis parting with these collections at a reasonable figure and thinks a committee should be formed in this country to collect the monies. I do not know whether you have already been approached on this matter or you thought it practicable.

In the Former Soviet Union for many decades there was a ban on printing, distributing, or owning Jewish books. As Rabbi Yitzchak Zilber notes learning Hebrew and Rabbinic texts had to take place in secret. During the Stalin regime the purge of Jewish intellectuals, poets, writers, and philosophers who were often murdered or sent to Siberia, also involved the confissgation of Jewish literary treasures.

Maimonides birth with Columbia University Press was financed by Kohut. Further Kohut funding enabled the reprint of Tcherikover’s The Jews in Egypt in the Hellenistic Roman Age in the light of the Papyri.


78 See Danzig 1939: Treasures of a Destroyed Community, Catalog for the Jewish Museum exhibit by Vivian B Mann and Joseph Guttman (NY: Jewish Museum, 1980).

79 The library of the reading and learning society in Breslau possessed the collections of Heinrich Herz, S. Guensburg, and MB. Fiedenthal in addition to books they purchased for the collection.


These salvage efforts were not undertaken and it is not known according to Schmelzer what steps in any were taken by the JSTA or other organizations. In the post WWII aftermath the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Organization headed by Salo Baron and administered by Hannah Arendt was responsible for the distribution of many thousandsof Judaica and Hebraica works looted by the Nazis and recovered after the War from the Offenbach warehouse, intended to serve as a stockpile to a Museum of the murdered Jewish race. Schmelzer quotes te 1955 librarian Gerson D.Cohen who reports that 28 thousand volumes arrived in the library in one year. Schmelzer thus deduces that it is no wonder that in 1958 the librarian Nahum Sarna referred to 55 thousand uncataloged books and and equal number of tomes in need of binding.

The Koran calls the Jews, “the people of the book” but indeed the Jews are “the people of the books” and Jewish survival is inextricably linked to the preservation, learning, and internalization of the contents of those written and (oral) sacred texts.

As shown in the Houston AJL presentation, it is during times of crisis that oral traditions are written down as illustrated by the Mishnah in 210 by Rav Yehudah haNasi, Rashi and Tosofot during the Crusades, and the Rambam’s transmission of ma’aseh merkavah and ma’aseh bereshit during his own times of crisis as encapsulated in the Moreh Nevukhim. As Heinrich Heine noted, when books are burned then people can be burned as illustrated in the Hadrianic, Rav Terydion one of the 10 martyrs during the Roman persecution who was wrapped in a sefer torah with wet wool and lit on fire, and Nazi Jewish text burnings. Censorship in general is not new to the Jewish people but will continue to be waged against

82 In footnote 126 Schmelzer cites the 16 May 1938 memo of Adler to Marx about the fate of the collection of the Berlin Jewish community. Adler did not see a possibility to intervene with the American ambassador in Berlin. In the minutes of the Board of Directors, 31 May 1939, it is related how Louis Finkelstein met with a Mr. Teterka who stated that he could bring the library of the Breslau seminary to the US for 75,000 marks. The following remakr is added to this report cited by Schmelzer, “It would be understood that the Breslau community would not ask any compensation for this transaction.” On 21 February 1939, Marx wrote to Adler, “I heard the other day that the Museum of the Berlin Jewish Community could be ransomed for 25,000 “ Stating that he realized it “was absolutely against our policy to send American money to Germany,” Marx suggested that perhaps steps could be taken to slavage the “irreplaceable treasures” by individuals.

83 Dicker, The Seminary Library, p.54-58; 107-12
85 Schmelzer, M., 705; footnote Library Committee Minutes 26 March 1958
86 Jonathan Rose astutely comments on Heine’s remark, “Bet even Heine’s premonition as true as it is terrible, threatens to become a platitudie if we pursue it no further. Strikingly most histories of the Holocaust have nothing more to say about books. We sent that there must be a connection between the book burnings and the gas chambers, but can we explain specifically how one led to the other? Were those bonfires a necessary prelude for what was to follow, and if so, precisely what role did print play in the Holocaust? Through they differ in method and focus, all essays in this volume confront that question” (The Holocaust and the Book: Destruction and Preservation, Amhrest: University of Mass press, 2001, p. 1); The essays in this book attest that books, and Jewish readers during the Holocaust, often came to relate to books as tools for human endurance and resistance. Thus the printed word came to be endowed with an essential element as a key to survival and identity. Books came to be indispensable tools for resistance to the Nazis. In occupied Europe bibliophily was more than a hobby for gentlemen and aesthetes: it became something dangerously political that was an affront to the Nazis rage against anything un-German- un-Aryan i.e. defined as the Jewish spirit. Nazi censorship was a war against the Jewish spirit defined as the opposite of the German spirit.
It will be resisted as long as there are those scholars who revere, cherish, and love the sefarim... as the gateways to coming closer to Hashem.

20th Century Extraordinary Librarians

1 Steinschneider 1816 [Moravia]– 1907 (Berlin)

Steinschneider is the father of modern Jewish *bibliography, orientalist, historian, and scholar of medieval Judaica, among the founders of the "Science of Judaism" (Wissenschaft des Judentums ) as reflected on in Die Zukunft der Juedischen Wissenschaft (1869) a half a century after Zunz had issued his programmatic statement on Etwas ueber die rabbinische Literature.87

Steinschneider’s dedication to Jewish scholarship brought him in the course of his life long devotion to preserving and safeguarding Jewish texts for posterity to Nikolsburg, Prague, Vienna, Leipzig, and Berlin. Steinschneider at one point in his life served as the assistant librarian at the Royal Library in Berlin, but his career as a librarian bibliographer was not an easy one and he was forced to seek parnassa to make ends meet at different times in his life as the principal of a girls school, performing weddings, administering the Jewish oath, and giving private lectures at private institutions. Steinschneider’s contribution is impossible to summarize as he made inroads in new mapped terrain of many areas of Jewish scholarship. Steinschneider took into his scholarly view lore hidden in medieval ms by considering the entire output of printed books in every language that touched upon Jews by providing a map of the whole territory of the intellectual and cultural flourishing of Jewish civilization by preparing catalogs of collections of Hebrew manuscripts as well as the printed history of Hebraica and Judaica. Steinschneider made a “tikkun” by providing reliable catalogs with precise information, classification, and proper organization for collections such as the Bodleian Library in Oxford, the British Museum in London, the Palatina library in Parma, and the City Library in Hamburg. Steinschneider’s catalogs brought to scholarly consciousness an appreciation for materials outside the ken of conventional average rabbinic focus. Therefore as well as halakhic works studied by Rabbinic scholars in the past, Steinschneider pioneered and laid the foundation for subsequent Jewish scholarship in Jewish poetry, belles lettres, Jewish philosophy, Jewish history, Medieval Jewish astronomy-medicine-botany-physics etc. His scope extended to wherever Jewish lived in Jewish history including not only German and Eastern European Ashkenaz civilization but also Sephardic Spain, Portugal, North Africa, Persia, and Yemen etc documenting intercultural symbiosis between Jews and not only Christians but also Muslims in the Middle Ages. Steinschneider documented the philosophic-scientific-medical corpus written in Hebrew characters but often in Arabic language (Judeo-Arabic), along with translations from from Arabic and Latin into Hebrew that were cached in the collections of libraries in Munich, Hamburge, Leiden, Berlin, etc. The topos of this terra incognita was not the focus of traditional Rabbinic scholarship for the previous 2 millenia where the average rabbi focused in learning on a much narrower core canon of more exoteric sacred Rabbinic texts. The expansion of the boundaries of what constitutes Jewish areas of

87 Zunz was a great Bibliophile himself. In the introduction to his Literaturgeschichte der Synagogalen Poesie he refers to 20 libraries in Europe where he had worked for preparation of the volume and to an additional 13 place from which he obtained manuscript copies. See Literatur–geschichte der Synagogalen Poesie (Berlin: L. Gerschel, 1865), p. vi-vii
scholarship owes a debt and legacy to the work of Steinschneider. Steinschneider included any investigation of any aspect of Jewish existence as being relevant to Jewish scholarship. Thus as late as Franz Rosenzweig, the philosopher of Frankfurt am Main could proclaim, “there is not anything Jewish, that was not of interest to his philosophical speculative grasp, as philosophy conceived in Die Stern Der Erloisung, is Cognition of all that exists (verkentnisse des Alles).

Regarding the life blood, love, and passion of Steinschneider for good books, Solomon Goldman writes, “The passion of his being, his staff of life were books- all kinds of books, manuscripts, incunabula, fragments- and everything connected with them; their contents, authors, title pages, and colophons; the stories they told ; the materials that were employed in producing them; choice of type; use of decoration;arrangement of margins; the places where they are to be found; the commentaries that had been written on them and the treatises about them; the parts of them that were lost and the lacunae or errors or obscurities in those that have survived, and the transformations and transmigrations they had undergone ever since they came from the pen of the original author until fate or accident or searching had brought them into his hands. In a word, he was eager to have as complete and thorough an account of them as sweat and acumen could supply.”

Goldman describes Steinschneider as selfless in preserving and binding up memories of the past for future generations. He writes of Steinschneider’s sacrifice for knowledge by commenting, “without ever thinking of deriving any benefits from his conversance with books or exploiting it as a moyen de parvenir.”

Steinschneider was driven to disseminate knowledge. He wanted people to know the riches and beauty of Judaism and its culture (Bildung) in fields such as the role Jews played in mathematics, medicine, philosophy, and all intellectual pursuits of science for knowledge’s sake. Alexander Marx comments fondly about his teacher by writing, “I see the dear old man, before my eyes, sitting at his writing table, and a feeling of love and reverence is in my heart that words cannot express.”

As Charles Manekin remarks, “Unlike other 19th century Jewish scholars of the Wissenschaft des Judentums Beweigung initiated by Immanuel Wolf and made great by Leopold Zunz and Abraham Geiger, Steinschneider’s work was not limited to subjects with a direct Jewish connection. He wrote classic works on the European translations from Arabic and the Arabic translations from Greek, and was familiar with almost everything that had been written about premodern science, philosophy, and medicine. Manekin in an essay, “Moritz Steinschneider’s Indecent Burial” does detective sleuthing to uncover how it is an unfair caricature that it is “reportedly” said by Gershom Scholem in his criticism of

89 Ibid., p.8.
90 Ibid., p.8; Marx refers to Steinschneider as, ‘greatest polymath Judaism has ever produced”; “the greatest scholar of our time”; the most eminent of Jewish scholars and bibliographer of Jewish literature par excellence”; “the most learned”; “the most industrious and most exact of Jewish scholars”; ‘the representative of a collector who truly loved good books”; “the famous master”; “whose history of Jewish literature remains unequalled”; “whose Catalogue marks an epoch in the history of Hebrew bibliography”; “whose article on Maimonides in the same catalogue is an inexhaustible mine”; “whose researches on the contribution of Jews to general culture during the Middle Ages are fundamental without which pioneer work the subject could not be discussed”; etc.
91 Scholem confesses his admiration for Steinschneider when he writes, “In Munich I met Gustav Steinschneider with whom I had been in the same platoon in the army in 1917. He was the grandson of Moritz Steinschneider, the
Wir haben nur noch die Aufgabe die Ueberrest des Judentums ehrenvoll zu bestatten

“The task of Jewish studies is to provide the remnants of Judaism a decent burial”. As for Steinschneider’s alleged comment that it is the task of scholars to provide the remnants of Judaism with a decent burial, it has not been found among his writings but was attributed to him in a necrology published by the German Zionist periodical Juedische Rundschau by the orientalist Gotthold Weil, who had been Steinschneider’s student and participated in the short lived Zionist National-Juedische Verein der Hoerer an der Lehranstalt fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums in Berlin. The clue to this puzzle uncovered by Manekin is we must understand this alleged comment by Steinschneider in the light of Shimshon Raphael Hirsch’s attack on Wissenschaft des Judentums. Hirsch wrote that the scholars of Wissenschaft keep alive the memory of the old Judaism as it is carried to its grave and called Wissenschaft “the fine dust wafting from the stone coffins of moldering corpses.” Steinschneider as a master of ironic retort was saying to his student Weil, “Just as Hirsch and the orthodox have said, we are burial societies- let’s at least make sure that the burial is an honorable one.”

Salo Baron in his essay, “MS. Contributions to Jewish historiography” notes Steinschneider’s “stupendous familiarity with manuscripts and rate books and ability to elucidate an endless array of details pertaining to a great variety of subjects in the history of Jewish and cognate cultures” (83.)

George Kohut:

In Steinschneideriana which George Kohut, referring to Steinschneider as the “prince of bibliography” wrote for the Abraham S. Freidus Memorial volume, Studies in Jewish Bibliography he declared, “to give anything like an acceptable account of the character, personality and achievements of Steinschneider one must needs be an accomplished scholar in many fields of Jewish and Oriental Learning and be gifted with critical insight into the whole domain of human knowledge. “ Kohut notes, the tremendous output of Steinschneider’s contributions which reveal a 24/7 dedication to scholarship. The list of his books and

greatest Hebrew bibliographer and manuscript expert of the last century, who at a ripe old age made no bones about the fact that the function of the Science of Judaism, as he saw it, was to provide a decent burial for Judaism, an important but declining phenomenon. Surely Steinschneider a stupendous scholar and a man I greatly admired was the first authority in this field who was admittedly an agnostic and possibly even an atheist! In those days I gave a lot of thought to this group of scholarly liquidators, and planned to write an article for my friend Walter Benjamin’s projected magazine, Angelus Novus, showing that the so called Science of Judaism was really the suicide of Judaism. But the magazine never appeared. (See Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to the Kabbalah”, in Commentary May 1980, p41).


articles only until 1896, occupies 35 tightly printed pages, that if there were stacked upon one another would exceed the height of their productive author.\(^{93}\)

**Solomon Schechter:** Schechter called one of Steinschneider’s major works, “the Urim and Thummim of every Jewish student.”\(^{94}\)

**Menachem Schmelzer:** Steinschneider desired to prove a decent burial for the remnants of a Judaism which in his opinion was destined to disappear. Steinschneider’s thorough inventory of the Jewish literary, philosophical, scientific and cultural expression of the past ironically became through the efforts of his student, Marx not a monument to the dead, but precisely the opposite, a monument, celebrating the scholarly creativity of the world’s largest Jewish community in the U.S. Schmelzer notes that along with Zunz, “Steinschneider changed the landscape of Jewish learning from strict rabbinics to the entire range of Jewish civilization.”\(^{95}\) Schmelzer shows that Steinschneider’s widening of the scope of what libraries should collect with regards to the expression of the Jewish people throughout history by full documentation of the Jewish past in Jewish libraries led to a broader scope of materials recording Jewish culture and Civilization in the legacy of the Jewish libraries founded after the letter at the JTSA in NYC under Marx, Cincinnati, Frankfurt, Berlin, Warsaw, St. Petersburg, Amsterdam, Jerusalem at the JNUL, Vienna, Prague, and Hamburg.\(^{96}\)

**Gershom Scholem:** In his essay on modern Jewish scholarship, Scholem called Steinschneider, “one of the most significant scholars the Jewish people ever produced.”\(^{97}\)

**Teachers**

Steinschneider received both a general and Jewish education including yeshiva studies in Nikolsburg and attendance at the Universities of Vienna, Leipzig, and Berlin where he met teachers Heinrich L. Fleischer and Franz Delitzsch, Leopold Zunz, Abraham Geiger, and Michael Sachs. His teacher in rabbinic subjects was the chief rabbi of Moravia Rabbi Nehemiah Trebitsch, the author of notes on the Yerushalmi and Rambam.

**Students**


\(^{95}\) Schmelzer, Menachem, “Moritz Steinschneider: An Appreciation”, in Quntres, vol 1, no.1 Winter 2009 published by the library of the JTSA.


\(^{98}\) Rabbi Trebitsch praised Steinschneider’s excellence in Talmudic studies and expressed the pious prayer wishing that Steinschneider not depart from the basic core of traditional texts to the margins of newer areas. See Marx, Alexander, “Steinschneideriana II.” In Jewish Studies in Memory of George Kohut, 1874-1933, NY: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, 1935, 498-499.
In 1859, he received his first regular appointment as lecturer at the Veitel-Heine-Ephraimsche Lehranstalt, where he taught for 48 years. Many of his students later became prominent Jewish scholars, including Ignaz Goldziher,99 Aron Freiman,100 Solomon Schechter,101 Isaac Markon,102 Hayyim Brody,103 Judah L. Magnes,104 H. Maltzer,105 A. Marx,106 Arthur Biram,107 George A. Kohut,108 Samuel

99 Goldziher who was born in Hungary later became the leading Hungarian scholar of modern Islam.
100 Freiman led the Hebraica and Judaica collections of the Frankfurt municipal library and was a bibliographer, historian, and editor of a # of rabbinic texts. Rachel Heuberger has shown that there are references to 19th century catalogs and bibliographies that guides the Frankfur Libaries acquisition policies that drew on Steinschneider’s bibliographies. See Heuberger, Rachel, Bibliothek des Judentums: die Hebraica und Judaica Sammlung der Stadt- und Universitaetbibliothek Frankfurt am Main, Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1966.
101 See Hoffman, Adina, Sacred trash : the lost and found world of the Cairo Geniza, New York : Nextbook : Schocken, c2011 also see Levy, David library guide on Cairo Geniza at http://databases.jewishlibraries.org/node/49232
102 Markon went to St. Petersburg and taught at the University and was later the librarian of the Jewish community library of Hamburg publishing in the field of Karaite studies, further today by the likes of Wallfish.
103 Brody became the chief rabbi of Prague and the librarian of its community library and world expert in Medieval Hebrew poetry.
104 Magnes before becoming a Zionist leader and president of HUJ had served at the largest reform synagogue in NYC and previous to that a librarian at HUC in Cincinnati. Although usually associated with Buber, Ernst Simon, Nathan Rotenreich and other seminal figures in the early history of HUJ and amenable to a divided Jerusalem in solving the Palestinian problem, it should be known that the Chabad Esther Serebranski whose brother is a Rebbe in the Rav Kook Hesder Yeshivah, an ardent Religious Zionist bastion, is a direct relative of Magnes, so that even Magnes’ cousins represent the more conservative political spectrum of ardent religious Zionist ideology proclaiming biblical stakes to Judea and Samaria.
105 Henry Maltzer most well known for his biography on Rav Saadia Gaon, first served as librarian at the library of the Jewish community of Berlin and later became a Prof at HUC in Cincinnati.
106 Marx writes of his teacher Steinschneider, “This apparently crusty scholar, who guarded every moment for his research, readily gave of his precious time to his young pupils and took an abiding interest in their scholarly as well as in their personal concerns... Those of his pupils in whom he recognized true zeal and promise for Jewish learning had free access to his home and were treated as friends. Some of them he even helped out of financial difficulties from his own moderate means.... these younger men loved and revered him, looked up to him like a father and cherished, long after his passing, the memory of the (countless) hours spent with the great teacher.” (see Marx, “Steinschneideriana II.” In Jewish studies in Memory of George Kohut, 1874-1933, NY: The Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation, note., six, 183
107 This Israeli pedagogue was the principal of the Andover of Israeli HS, namely Beit Sefer Reali, in Haifa. Shalom Spiegel, best well known for his book, The Last Trial, in which he marshals medieval ms that indicate that Isaac was indeed slaughtered in the Akedat Yitchak and his ashes taken to heaven by angels’ wings where they were resurrected with the dews of resurrection, a shocking an radical interpretation, was a graduate of and teacher in the school in Haifa wrote an appreciation of Biram on the occasion for Biriam’s 75th birthday, titled, “Talmido shel Rabbi Moshe Steinschneider.” Spiegel argues for a “kesher siklie lihamshich’ (logical continuity) from Steinschneider to Herzl a path leading from Berlin to Haifa which on modeling Steinschneider’s precision, thoroughness, hard work, discipline, minute attention to detail, and dedication, are those very qualities essential for the success of midinat Yisrael not only in scholarship but society and the general culture of labor that led to the draining of malaria swamps, kivush ha-yam by building Tel Aviv as a port city out of the sand, and making the desert Blume by the latest advances in agricultural science. See: Sefer Biram: ma’amirim he-heker ha-Tanakh. Pirsumeh he-Hevrak ha-Mikra be-Yisra’el 2, Yerushalayim: Kiryat sefer, 1956, 1-8, p.1,n.1 and 7.
Poznanski, and H.L Strack etc. Rebecca Kohut refers to Marx’s students as Steinschneider’s lieblingsschüler.

BOOKS and Journals

For more than a quarter of a century (1858-85) he served as editor of the Hebraische Bibliographie or as author of the annual review of the literature pertaining to post-biblical Jewish history for the Jahresberichte der Geschichtswissenschaft. He also wrote a great many book reviews particularly in the Deutsche Literaturzeitung (1881-96). In 1905 Steinschneider published Geschichts-litteratur der Juden a comprehensive work covering a large area of Jewish historiography which is a bibliography of Jewish historical sources. Alexander Kohut’s bibliography of Steinschneider’s writings and subsequent supplements in in ZHB can be found. Steinschneider’s literary output was tremendous; his bibliography contains more than 1,400 items. The following works are of particular note: Die hebraischen Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher (1893), his magnum opus containing a wealth of information based on manuscripts and printed sources in many languages about the transmission of philosophy and the sciences throughout the Middle Ages. Die arabischen Uebersetzungen aus dem Griechischen (1897) and Die europaesichen Uebersetzungen aus dem Arabischen (1904–05) supplemented this work and carried its subject far beyond purely Jewish interests. These three works together provided a pioneering contribution to the understanding of Western civilization's dependence on classical sources and the contribution of Muslim and Jewish civilizations to them. Another of Steinschneider’s major works, Die Arabische Literatur der Juden (1902), lists all of the Jewish authors who wrote in Arabic and includes detailed biographies and bibliographies. His lectures on the same subject appeared in English in the Jewish Quarterly Review (1897–1901). A further work dealing with the relationships between Jews, Arabs, and Christians is his Polemische und apologetische Literatur in arabischer Sprache zwischen Muslimen, Christen und Juden (1877). Not only is the typical full bibliographical and biographical apparatus provided in this work, but it also classifies and enumerates the main areas of religious controversy.

109 Rabbi Poznanski was the rabbi of the Tlomackie Synagogue in Warsaw, the largest population of Jews in Eastern Europe rivaling Vilna and Minsk. R. Poznanski served as the head of the library and was an important scholar of tekufah of the Geonim; Poznanski served as librarian of the Tlomackie synagogue which under Poznanski grew to a collection of 40,000 books including manuscripts. At first the library was in a number of rooms but then it expanded to a separate building. Solomon Schechter invited Poznanski to join the JTSA faculty and to become its librarian in 1902. Pozanski refused to abandon his congregation in Warsaw. The destruction of the library is depicted in the Warsaw Ghetto diary o Chaim Kaplan, retitled The Scroll of Agony, we read, “The day before yesterday (oct. 23), like true Vandals, the conquerors entered the Tlomackie Library, where rare spiritual treasures were stored. They removed all the valuable books and manuscripts, put them on trucks, and took them to some unknown place. This is a burning of the soul of Polish Jewry, for this library was our spiritual sanctuary” (See Kaplan, Chaim, Scroll of Agony, NY: Macmillan, 1965, 57); On Poznanski’s invitation to JTSA see Scult, Mel, in Wertheimer, Jack, editor, Tradition Renewed: History of the JTSA, NY:JTSA, 1997, 61-62.

Another work of Steinschneider’s which still remains the most systematic and broadest treatment of the subject, is Vorlesungen ueber die Kunde Hebraischer Handschriften (1897; Hebrew translations, with additions by A.M. Habermann Harz'ot al Kitvei Yad Ivriyyim, 1965; also printed in Aresheth, 84 (1966)). Also significant are his contributions to the history of the study of the Hebrew language and his work on Jewish writers of history and historiography (Die Geschichtsliteratur der Juden, 1905). Finally, he published the journal Ha-Mazkir (Hebraische Bibliographie. Blatter neuer und altere Literatur des Judentums, 1858–65, 1869–81) to which he contributed more than 500 articles concerning bibliography, library history, booklore, philology and cultural history. The motto at the top of each issue is the biblical verse from Isaiah 42:9 meaning, “Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them.” Each issue of the Journal attempted to give a systematic layout of the year in Jewish scholarship, not just a “scatter of the output” but a systematic accounting of all articles published or appearing for that particular year in what anachronistically might be called “Jewish studies.” That is to say it was a king of RAMBI avant la lettre, but more than an index, also a “year in review” of the scholarly activities of Jews in areas of the sciences and arts and everything touching on Jewish scholarship in general by Jews and non-Jews. It was in the Hebraische Bibliographie in 1861 that Abraham Geiger announced the opening of the Jewish library of the Jewish community of Breslau. Hebraische Bibliographie came out for over 20 years and then with a brief hiatus was renewed under a different name by students of Steinschneider: names Aron Freimann and Heinrich Brody.

In the early 2000s, a web-based translation and revision of the Hebraische Uebersetzungen des Mittelalters was in preparation by Charles H. Manekin (University of Maryland) in collaboration with Y. Tzvi Langermann (Bar-Ilan University), and Hans Heinrich Biesterfeld (Bochum University).

Encyclopedias

Some aspects of his detailed, painstaking research were organized into more general presentations. For the Ersch und Gruber Allgemeine Encyclopaedie, he wrote a systematic survey of Jewish literature (1850) which was translated into English (Jewish Literature from the 8th to the 18th Century, 1857) and...
later into Hebrew by Henry *Malter, one of his pupils (Sifrut Yisrael, 1897–99). For the same encyclopedia, he co-wrote, together with David Cassel, Juedische Typographie und Juedischer Buchhandel (1851), a still-valuable general survey of Jewish printing and book trade. Steinschenider’s contribution to Otsar ha-sefarim (Thesaurus of Hebrew books) by the Vilna scholar Isaac Benjacob is another great contribution.\textsuperscript{113}

**Library Catalogs**

Steinschneider’s unbelievable industry and erudition also manifested itself in a series of catalogs and bibliographies, among which the most important is his Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana (1852–60).\textsuperscript{114} Upon the request of the chief librarian of the Bodleian Library at Oxford University, Steinschneider prepared a catalog of all the printed books up to 1732 in that great library over a period of many years, during which time the library was also dynamically enriching its Hebrew collections through the acquisition of important private libraries. Over the course of five summers in Oxford, Steinschneider described all the Hebrew items there, at which time he also made generous use of all the Hebrew manuscript materials. The catalog is arranged according to the name of the authors (with the exception of anonymous works), gives all the available information on their lives, and is followed by a list of their works and all the references to them in the secondary literature available at that time. At the end follows a list of all printers, patrons, etc., who were associated with the publication of the works, as well as a geographical index providing the Hebrew forms of many geographical names. With this book, Steinschneider raised Hebrew bibliography to a scholarly level and corrected misinformation. Steinschneider also published classic catalogs of the Hebrew manuscript collections of the following libraries: Leiden (1858), Munich (1875; 2nd ed. enlarged, 1896), Hamburg

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\textsuperscript{113} See Isaac Benjacob, Otsar ha-sefarim, Vilna, 1880; The scope is Hebrew printed books up until 1863. Steinschneider’s contributions are signed by the acronym: Rabbi Moshe Steinschneider= Resh,Mem,Shin,Shin. The work has Haskamot by traditional Vilna rabbis.

\textsuperscript{114} See: Steinschneider, Moritz, Catalogus librorum hebraeorum in bibliotheca Bodleiana, Berlin: Friedlaender, 1852-1860; This annotated bibliography enumerates in great detail information relevant to the author of an said text, the book itself, and the printing of that particular edition. There are a total of 9559 entries in the catalog giving biography, subject matter, bibliography, typography, and printing history in each individual entry. The scope is amazing. For example the entry on Rambam is over 40 pages alone subdivided by relevant sub-topics containing original insights by Steinschneider who drew on the original languages of their composition in Arabic as well as translations from all the known Hebrew editions (i.e. Bedarsi, ibn Tibbon, Aharizi for Sefer Moreh Nevukhim) as well as Latin (i.e. Doktor Perplexus Latin edition consulted by St. Thomas Aquinas), and the many vernacular translations into French (i.e. Les Guides des Egares by Solomon Munk) and all languages of the world. Steinschneider’s thoroughness, comprehensiveness, and completeness of information is truly incredible. The catalog itself is in Latin. We must not forget that Latin was the lingua Franca of the academic world up to this time. For example Spinoza chose to write his Ethics in Latin, and as late as Kant, Kant wrote his dissertation in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century in latin. Vestiges of this hegemony are seen as late as Wittgenstein’s Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus with its echoes to the TTP of Spinoza and its reception history and echo in Whitehead and Bertrand Russell’s Principia Mathematica of course alluding to Newton’s Latin text of the Principia. In short all academic discourse was conducted in Latin in the wake of Christian Scholasticism.
(1878, reprint with new introduction, Hellmut Braun, 1969), and Berlin (1878–97). In all of these he identified many hitherto unknown writings and historical research.

His main lifelong interest was the study of the relationship between Jewish and general cultures, especially during medieval times. Upon his early realization that the preliminary requirement for carrying out such studies was a thorough and scientific bibliographical record of all available printed and manuscript materials, Steinschneider devoted himself to the preparation of library catalogs and subject bibliographies.

2 Abraham Berliner 1833-1915

Like Vilsker Berliner was largely self-Taught according to his autobiographical Aus Meiner Knabenzeit, Scholar and author. Vast knowledge or rabbinic literature and of ancient and modern languages

Abraham Berliner studied the Hebrew manuscript collections of the Vatican and of the Biblioteca Palatina in Parma. From 1858-1865 he lectured at the bet-ha-midrash of the Berlin Talmudic Society out of which developed the Rabbiical Seminary founded by Azriel Hildesheimer in 1873 where Berliner was the librarian. He paid frequent visits to the important libraries of Germany, England, Holland, France and Italy in search of their Jewish treasures. He prepared the first critical edition of Rashi’s pirush al ha-humash. Berliner’s historical studies in Geschichte der Juden in Rom (1893) and on the history of German Jewry he wrote, Aus dem Leben der Deutschen Juden im Mittelalter (1861) Also wrote biographies of Israel Isserlein and Isaiah Berlin and a defense of Maimonides against the accusation of apostasy (Moses ben Maimon sein Leben).

In 1874 Berliner began to publish a Magazin fuer juedische Geschichte und Literatur which 2 years later became the Magazin duer die Wissenschaft des Judentums with a Hebrew supplement Ozar Tov which he edited with David Hoffman until 1893.

In 1885 he revived the *Mekize Nirdamim society. On his 70th birthday he was awarded the title of professor by the Prussian government. On that occasion too appeared a Festschrift in his honor, edited by A. Freimann and M. Hildesheimer (Birkat Avraham, 1903) with a bibliography of his writings. A three-volume collection of Berliner’s writings was planned but only the first appeared in 1913. A two-volume collection was published in Hebrew (1945–49). Berliner was a staunch supporter of Orthodoxy and an opponent of Reform. He supported Hildesheimer in the establishment of the Adass Jisroel secessionist congregation and acted as the chairman of its council for many years. Yet in his Randbemerkungen he

suggested certain changes in prayer texts and customs, which were not to the liking of some of his Orthodox friends.

This is what Solomon Goldman writes about Berliner, “Professor Berliner, the autodidact from Obersitzko, Posen, was a man of indefatigable diligence. His store of general knowledge was great and his erudition in Bible, the Targumim, Talmud, Midrash, history, codes, commentaries, liturgy, Hebrew poetry, and bibliography, prodigious. His unlimited scholarly pursuits took him to every well stocked library in England, France, Germany, and Italy, and few were the Jewish manuscripts that escaped his eager, searching eye. In the course of his travels he accumulated a large library of his own, and gained proficiency in several languages particularly in Italian. As a result his work reflects not only breadth of learning but his journeys and searchings as well. Practically everything that came from his pen is a model of thoroughness if not of form. Form, it must be admitted, he seldom achieved, either because of inattention or lack of talent. If however as historian for example he was decent in the architectural genius and felicity of expression of a Graetz, where the spirit or essence of the past of his people was concerned he had the intuition of an artist. His labors on the Targumim, liturgy, Rashi, and other great commentaries on the bible bear ample testimony to his having recognized instinctively which were the sources that had been pivotal in the development of Judaism. Though no phase of Jewish law or lore was ever for him merely a branch of study, and though he was not the pure rationalist or meticulous logician he nevertheless employed scientific methods in his researches, and brought to bear upon historical problems as well as upon living issues of Jewish law, keen intelligence and scholarly objectivity. We may add that Dr. Berliner was no recluse, but an active participant in the life about him.”

Goldman describes Berliner as a manifestation of the fulfillment of the injunction given in Joshua: וַהֲגָהָהָ יֹב יָוִימָן יְהוָה יִוְיֵלֶּחַ as was Dr. David Tzvi Hoffman, whose daughter Marx married.

3 Abraham Friedus 1867-1923

Born in Riga, Latvia, Friedus lived in Paris, in the Palestinian agricultural settlement of Zikhron Ya’akov, and in London before going to New York in 1889. Friedus was also a student of Steinschneider. Friedus proved instrumental in facilitating the sale of Steinschneider’s library by appealing to Jacob H. Schiff to finance the purchase. After lengthy negotiations via George Kohut the Stenschneider library was


118 The Kohut Foundations established by George’s father Alexander, financed many great scholarly academic Jewish works. Kohut Foundations were established in Vienna, Berlin, and Budapest in 1922 and 1923, and resulted in publication of works of immense value to Jewish learning not only by Jews but learned Christians such as Canon R. Travers Herford who did a translation on Pirke Avot. A Greek Index to Philo was prepared by the scholar Ioannes Leisegang, issued jointly by the Institute and the Prussian Academy of Sciences- rare cooperation in pre-Nazi days between a German Academy and Jewish scholars. At home in America the “Yale Oriental Series” was also funded by the Kohut Foundation. Dr. Alexander Kohut himself authored and edited and brought to publication a supplement to an 8 folio volumes of the Aruch Completum, and encyclopedic dictionary of the Talmudim. Noted scholar dr. Shmuel Krauss of the Juedische-Theologische Lehranstalt of Vienna also published from the Kohut Foundation many important works. After WWI anti-semitism was growing but the Kohut Foundation in its Budapest and Berlin branches issued great scholarly works. In Berlin the Kohut Foundation was administered by Ismar Elbogen of the Hochschule fuer die Wissenschaft des Judentums.Scholars whose work was published included- Michael Schlesinger, Joseph Klatzkin etc.
bought by JTS for M10,000. George Kohut was the son of the founder of the Kohut Foundations about which Rebeca Kohut writes, “Nazism completed the destruction of Europe as a center of Jewish learning, and in the fires of the holocaust almost all of men and their works were immolated. But in the two decades between the wars, the Kohut Foundation made possible the preservation and dissemination of at least some of the products of the great minds of European Jewry.”

The NYPL was founded in 1895 and in the first decades of the 20th century philanthropists like Jacob Schiff saw to its acquisition of much Judaica. In 1898 Schiff acquired the library of Dr. Steinschneider of Berlin for 10 thousand marks to remain in possession of Steinschneider until his passing. In 1899 Schiff was faced with the question who would receive Steinschneider’s collection, and candidates for the collection included according to Sultzberger: (1) NYPL, (2) HUC Cincinnati, (3) Dropsie College, and (4) JTSA. Schiff wrote, “My intention is to give the Steinschneider collection to NYPL unless the Seminary herein referred has become established prior to either Professor Steinschneider’s or my own death, and is approved by myself or my inheritors.” Ultimately the Steinschneider library was presented by Schiff to the JTSA library and incorporated in the holdings in 1907 under Marx. This transaction thus was a loss for the NYPL but both the JTSA and the NYPL were in NYC so researchers had access to 2 great collections in New York.

Under the condition of the sale of Steinschneider’s library it remained in Steinschneider’s possession for the rest of his life before its transfer to NYC when it was to be turned over to a public library. George Kohut served as an assistant librarian at the JTSA and thus said about the transfer, “It is no mere coincidence that I who stood in perhaps the closest relation to him should have been the instrument of Providence in initiating and negotiating the sale, and that Alexander Marx, unquestionably his greatest disciple and his most devoted friend, should now be the guardian of the treasure which has come into his keeping.” Thus the home for the Steinschneider collection was destined to be JTSA and not NYPL. NYPL however remained friendly with the Kohut family as Dr. Joshua Bloch, later Chief of the Jewish Division of the NYPL completed George Kohut’s unfinished work: Christsian Hebraists, an anthology of the writings in Hebrew of Chrsitian scholars from Reuchlin to Renan, issued by Yale University Oriental Series.

Freidus completed a course in librarianship at Pratt Institute in 1894 and began working as a cataloger. In 1897 he was appointed first chief of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, where he developed the classification scheme used for Judaica; it was adopted for many other large American Judaica collections as well. Because of his remarkable bibliographical knowledge, Freidus was an

120 See Biblion: Bulletin of the NYPL 3, no.2 (spring 1995), 100th anniversary Commemorative Issue
121 Correspondence concerning the Steinschneider Collection, JTSA Library Archival Group 62, box 6 and Dicker, The Seminary Library p. 23 and quoted by Schmelzer, Menachem, “Building a Great Judaica Library- At what price?” in Tradition Renewed, p.711
indispensable guide to scholars in locating materials. The editors of the 12-volume Jewish Encyclopedia (1901–06) were indebted to him.

Abraham Freidus' Classification Scheme for the Jewish Division of N.Y.P.L.

Abraham Solomon Freidus compiled the first modern Judaica classification scheme for the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library (NYPL) in 1897. While it was originally designed to meet the special needs of this library it has proven serviceable to other libraries as well. It orders knowledge of Jewish materials into the following twenty-four categories:

PA A through Z. Bibliography. Literary History
PB A through Z. General Works
PC A through Z. Hebrew language, Aramaic
PD A through Z. Hebrew Bible
PE A through Z. Archaeology
PF A through Z. Pre-Talmudic Literature and Sects
PG A through Z. Christianity
PH A through Z. Talmudic Literature
PI A through Z. Halachah
PK A through Z. Ritual
PL A through Z. Homiletical Literature
PM A through Z. Ethics
PN A through Z. Doctrinal theology
PO A through Z. Post-Talmudic Schisms and Dissensions
PP A through Z. Philosophy
PQ A through Z. Kabbalah, Chasidism
PR A through Z. Folk-lore
Freidus sought to offer a logical, consistent, and simple scheme that might be readily grasped and retained. The strength of the scheme was that “it is so planned that it shows the sequence of subjects. It shows on the left of a particular book, or group of books, the books that lead up to it, and on the right, the books that lead away from it … In a word the Freidus classification employed by the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library was primarily an arrangement with a definite revealing purpose, and not a mere filing of books irrespective of order (Bloch, 1929, p.4). At the New York Public Library the Freidus notation for each book housed in the Jewish Division begins with P, which would be redundant for an independent Judaica Library. Following the P, there was a one or two letter sequence which allows the scheme to distinguish 676 classes (i.e. 26 x 26). Broad topics such as Bibliography are denoted by a single letter and subdivisions get a second letter. The system had been allowed to remain viable for NYPL by the edition of a third letter in some cases. Manuscripts, book rarities, and works of reference to 1600 are set aside and preceded only by the letter P. A disadvantage of the Freidus system is that it is incompatible with the major general systems and has no possibilities for synthesis. The classifier simply decides what is the general category to which the book belongs with assistance from the published catalog of the Jewish Division. Another characteristic of the Freidus system is that it sometimes separates books on the same subject according to the point of approach. Books on music for instance may be classified in Biblical archeology, liturgy, or secular sciences depending on the method of the particular writer. A second example of this is books on the dietary laws which are classified either ethnologically under Halakah, or sociologically under Jewish race. This scattering, as it applies to an author's works, is further noted in the case of Maimonides Mishnah Torah, getting the designation PIE, the Guide for the Perplexed getting the designation PPO, and Rambarn's medical works being assigned the designation PVL.

4. Umberto Cassuto 1883-1951

CASSUTO, (Moses David; 1883–1951), was more than an Italian historian and biblical and Semitic scholar. Casutto’s unique academic refutation of “Higher biblical criticism” which Solomon Schechter called the “higher anti-semitism” was enabled in ways that did not conflict with tradition, as laid out in his path breaking book, The Documentary Hypothesis, in which Cassutto likens himself to Shimshon pulling down the whole edifice and fallacious foundation on which largely protestant biblical criticism from the 19th century was so foolishly grounded by assuming that such questions had not been asked.
millennia earlier by previous Rabbinic authorities. Cassuto grounded in traditional rabbinic biblical exegesis was able to see the fallacies of the documentary hypothesis as a passing fad proposing the combination of different scribal schools named JEPD as the human authors of the divine revealed text. Cassuto understood the fallacious assumptions of the documentarists who based their weak case on the following five shaky pillars: (1) the use of different names for the Deity,\(^{123}\) (2) variations of language and

\(^{123}\) From Bereishit until Kipitel beth, perek daleth, the name for G-d is Elokim. At verse 4, the tetragrammaton is deployed almost exclusively until the end of kipitel gimel. In the Mabul account the names are alternated. On the basis of this truncated and skewed appearance in the opening of Bereishit, the modern Biblical critics assume a source “J” from the first letter fo the name of the tetragrammaton and a source “E” which they assert where juxtaposed purposely by a human editor (redactor). Rav Soloveitchik refers to Adam I and Adam II in Lonely man of faith to deal with this “apparent contradiction” in names for the Deity that misled the modern biblical critics. For the Rav as well as for Cassutto the differences in the different terms for the Deity merely suggest different manifestation of the same unique Oneness and coherence of G-d. Cassutto and Rav Soloveitch know as every 5 year old Cheder child knows, that according to Rashi when the tetragramaton is deployed G-d’s mercy, compassion, and slower to anger attributes are evoked however when the “E” term appears, this suggests G-d’s strict justice, judgment, and unswerving uncompromising commitment to truth. Thus Rashi comments that on Yom Kippur Hashem moves between two throne chairs. The chair of strict justice and judgment and the chair of mercy compassion and slowness to anger. In fact PA insists that Hashem tips the scales to middot rachamin given that the balances (moznaim) are equal in the reckoning of din ve-heshbon. Cassutto weighs in on this subject by differentiating between Elokim, or forms of its permutation, used to designate the G-dhead, even as it applies to other no nothing gods of other nations (i.e. Elohei Haniechor in Bereishit 35:2) and the tetragrammaton which designates only the G-d of Israel etc. Cassuto notes that in the neveim, only J is employed and in the halakhic literature- those portions of Humash that deal with hukat ve-mishpatim, as well as certain sections of the “wild card” Yehezkel, only “J” is found etc. Cassutto further notes that in Wisdom texts (Iyov, Mishlei, Koheleth) only forms of “E” are manifest. According to Cassutto that is because the Wisdom texts have affinity with the literatures of the nations of the ancient Near East even though they possessed “other names” for their gods. According to Cassutto according to the general universal applicability of wisdom writings, the general destinationation “E” is representative. In the narrative portions of the Humash, both names are representative. Casstto is in keeping with tradition that the appearance of a certain permutation of the name of the Deity signals or hints to the reader an intended “aspect” of the Almighty. Thus we are not dealing with different disparate and unified documents brought together by a human editor, but rather the divine texts ability to connate and inform the careful reader of the different roles Hashem plays at differing times and under differing circumstances on the stage of divinely driven history. Never having heard of the “documentary hypothesis” the Ramban, in HaKadmah LiHaTorah” asserts that the whole torah is a divine encryption of Hashem’s permutated names.” Althogh this essay does not permit the space or time to clarify the Ramban’s mystical remez and what the Ramban means by this, allow us to enter on the docket, the pirush of Don Isaac Abarbanel who like Rashi and Redak commented completely and systematically on the whole span of the “24 sections” of what the Documentary Hypthesis modernists call “the OT.” The Abarbanel already cleared up the significance of each name and the reason or each at varios junctions in the Tanakh (see Perush Hatorah, Warsaw, 1862, p.8).
style in the Humash, apparent contradictions and divergences of view, duplications and repetitions, and signs of composite structure in individual sections whereby the critics claim that

124 Documentary Hypthesis nobies feel that each scribal school JEPD has their own linguistic style. Cassutto logically asserts the fallacy of this position: (1) we cannot determine the different documents such as J and E solely on the basis of stylistic changes, and then proceed to classify all the sections as belonging to a ‘J’ or a ‘E’ etc on the bases of mere stylistic differences. This would be a classic case of circular reasoning. (2) Nor can one emend the texts in order to make them conform to the theory as that is bad faith and bad science of using data to fit only one’s Machiavellian end; (3) we cannot consider words and forms mechanically divorced and uprooted from their context. Grammatical changes may be due to different shades of meaning conveyed by a certain form... and not based on separate scribal schools. Thus Hakim Brit vs. Karat Brit does not suggest two separate scribal schools. Their employment is due to context. Cassutto derives complex rules to govern the deployment of Anochi vs. Ani and not to assume two scribal schools. The subtest of grammatical changes that Hazal alert us to suggest shades of meaning, not to rupture the unity of the text. Thus differing formulaic usage of phrases does not prove varied “authorship” but nuance of meanings that the rabbis for over millennia are acutely sensitive. For example Rashi notes that in the Akedat Yitchak the text does not employ the world “shachot oto” (slaughter Isaac) but rather “vehala oto” (raise him up) to a higher level of spirituality and awareness of Hashem. The rabbis are not quibblers over meaning and syntax but derive great insights from apparently slight differences in diction. The biblical critics are on to nothing new when they self importantly feel they have “discovered” that the different names for Jethro, sometimes called otherwise “hobab’ suggest different scribal schools of authorship had been solved avant la letter by the Midrash that identifies Jethro with not two but indeed seven names.

125 The new documentary critics assume that the discrepancies and varying viewpoints in regards to modalities of worship, customs, and contradictions between pesukim point to “evidenc of multiple authorship.” Koheleth as traditionally interpreted dispels this immature assumption. Classical exegesis asserts that Koheleth intentionally contradicts himself, so that Hazal might arrive at the true synthesis (aufhebung) of the texts secret meanings. Likewise the work known as the _Conciliator _by Rav Menasseh Ben Israel of Amsterdam majesterially lays out the “apparent” contradictions in the biblical narrative and then reconciles them. Likewise Rav Tzvi Mecklenberg of Germany in _HaKatav VeHakabal_ also raises questions by stating an “apparent contradiction” and then solving the contradiction shown to be unproblematic when properly analyzed. Thus the biblical critics insistence to identify contradictions is nothing new. However their pathetic reconciliation of such contradictions when shown in the light of previous Gedolim who have harmonized such problems, appears but what Coleridge calls “the hob goblins of little minds.” Even the most irreconcilable contradictions Hazel hold will be cleared up by Eliyahu HaNavi in the intellectual feast in olam ha-ba, where the righteous will have revealed to their minds all apparent contradictions in rabbinic texts as compatible. The documentary critics pad themselves on the back by noting that JEP have varying conceptions of the Deity. They argue that the “J” Deity is the national God signified by the Yod Key Vav Key or tetragrammaton. They point that this Deity is anthropomorphic said to have for instance a “strong hand and outstretched arm.” Woe to the modern critics! If they had only read, much less understood the Rambam in the Moreh Nevukhim who explains Biblical anthropomorphisms philosophically. That is the Yad Hazakah, or Mishneh Torah (MT) is the strong hand that will free these petty biblical critics from their “mental Egypts.” Yet the mental sunrise of the Rambam has not begun to dawn upon them, nor will it. As long as they deny divine revelation but affirm as did the Greeks, that man’s puny brain is the measure and standard of everything, how long can they exist In their arrogance of the man centered Universe versus a G-d centered Universe? Thus for the Rambam to be BiTzel Elokim, means to have the potential to activate the sekel hapeol as the kesher between humans and Hashem. The sekel hapeol is the link (kesher) between man and Hashem. Not the fabrications of the bible critics own delusionary constructions to put all of wisdom so neatly and smugly in a box and to wrap it up in the nice ribbon of what they call the documentary hypothesis. The Moreh Nevukhim is in 7 sections. The first of which is understanding the truth with regards to biblical Anthropomorphisms. The Documentary critics further insinuate chutzpah by insisting that the “E” source is a distant removed Deity from mankind suggesting his incorporeality revealed in visions. The documentary critics further opine that the “P” or priestly source ascribes to G-d the transcendent dimension. The text of “P” does not emphasize revelation of G-d to man, but states that G-d spoke (Hashem debar) to man or tells man. According to the modern critics “P” is the source of the ritual laws (Vayikra) and the historical commentary and genealogies in Bereishit. Cassutto points out that this does not
we find internal parallels in many of the biblical narratives attributing this to the work of an editor who had before him JE to which he added P and D (Deuternomic) strands. The JEPD hypothesis assumes several sources, at least four. Cassutto in the name of tradition and logic rejects this argument. He showed that not only are the pillars of the hypothesis weak, but non-existent, and thus a combination for them would not support the Philistine Temple of the documentary hypothesis. In its place Cassutto notes the frequent Talmudic emphasis on the orality of the transmission of the interpretation of the text and the text itself. Although acknowledging and familiar with the Near Eastern cultures and cognate Semitic languages, Cassutto banked on reliable traditions insistence on the orality of the tradition. This emphasis on orality should be noted could also be found in secular literatures for example is referred to in Scandinavian literature not to mention Homeric studies of the singer of tales. The emphasis on orality disregards the notion of a final redaction from the various written strands of JEPD, assuming a position in conformity with the authority of the Masoretic text. For a study of the function of orality in the medieval ages see “Archival Textual collections in the Middle Ages” published in the 2013 AJL Proceedings. While Cassutto was a traditional Jew who rejected the denial of Torah MiSinai, he may ruffle the feathers of some unthinking simple Jews by holding in his early Italian works that the Davidic monarchy was a key time for the unifications of traditions for the formation of the Tanakh. Yet Casutto’s attacks on the pillars of the documentary hypothesis can be seen as a fulfillment of the injunction in Pirke Avot, “Dah mah lihasheiv li-ha-epikoros (Know what to respond to an unbeliever). Cassutto realized that the biblical critics were relatively later to identify what they felt were contradictions with the biblical text. The rabbis had been raising these questions for millennia as part of the masorah, but the rabbis conclusions did not shatter emunah in divine revelation but harmonized the piety of thought, which is questioning, with that first given divine revelations. Cassutto revealed in all his scholarship that only if this largely now Jewish Protestant school of modern biblical exegesis had not been ignorant of classical mephereshim on the Tanakh as well as the treasury of the Rabbinic corpus from the Talmudim to the Midrashim and other many thousands of rabbinic texts, they would not have ventured forth such immature hypothesis. As Solomon Schechter understood perhaps best in labeling the ‘higher criticism” “the higher anti-semitism” the hidden agenda and bias of this new fangled modern bible criticism was

“prove” the existence of disparate documents, and the sections “contain nothing that could not be found in a homogenous book.”

Cassutto argues for instance that the first narrative of the Creation is the tradition of the learned which endeavored to show that the world was created by one transcendent unique G-d. The second apparent account was incorporated by the common people as a more popular account on the origin of mankind with the intention of stressing moral lessons in the story of Adam and Chava. Unlike pagan accounts where pantheon of deities for instance express human frailties of murder, theft, revenge and acts such as sex, the Hebrew account of one Deity is above the petty politics of these pagan deities thereby imparting the ethical lesson that the Hebrew deity demands ethical and moral accountability and is indeed the creator of the moral law given as convenant. At one time Cassutto even applies the rabbinic principle of Chzaka by asserting that there are not 2 but 3 Creation accounts to prove Chzaka.

For example Hazal understand the accounts of Creation as portraying different aspects of the briah


See Cassuto, Umberto, La Questione della Genesi, Florence, 1934

What Solomon Schechter means by this is complex and well founded in that Protestant Biblical interpretation lead in direct and certain way to the Protestant clergy in Nazi Germany’s giving Hitler backing with their intellectual muscle represented in their modes of biblical exegesis. The incident of Rivka’s and Yakov’s conspiracy to obtain

to undermine rabbinic authority as part of the spirit of its times, and the historical factors that contributed during the enlightenment to the acculturation, assimilation, and weakening of not only historical Jewish memory among the masses, but indeed any notion of the sacred by preserving recollection of authoritative masorah by which the text received its proper reception history, rather than some “Johny come lately” modern biblical critics, representing the forces of alienation from tradition, and destruction of that tradition, as emblematically represented in Shimshon Raphael Hirsch’ _The Letters of Ben Uzziel_ Thus Cassutto in likening himself to ‘Shimshon” pulling down the pillars of the Philistine temple of Higher Biblical Criticism, is perhaps alluding to his predecessor S.R. Hirsch who saw the dangers’ of such non-Jewish modes of interpretation of the “sacred text” that acknowledge in effect nothing sacred but the cleverness of the puny human intellect to construct schemes of

Yitchak’s bracha, instead of Esauv according to Biblical higher critics suggests a scribal school that “condoned” cheating and poor ethics of theft. Such an observation lent credence to Nazi propaganda of the Jews as enemic thieves shafting the German Volk. Such biblical polemics with an unconscious anti-semitic underground of hate for Yakov representing the Jewish people makes no coincidence that Yakov became the name for any Jew, and Sara, who according to Biblical criticism, unjustly kicked Hagar out, was the name for all Jewish female concentration camp brothel women. Under the guise of interpretative “scholarship” ran resentment that exploded during the Nazi regime. Cassutto picks up on this biased interpretation of the higher biblical criticism but notes that Hazal acknowledged, “indeed Yaakov” would be dealt with as he dealt, midah kineged midah. Cassutto notes that traditional commentary indeed affirmed the moral nature of the Deity for Yakov’s exile from his home was seen as punishment. Further Yaakov is cheated by Laban who made him work another 7 years for Rochel once Yakov was tricked on his wedding night thinking that he was marrying Rachel and not indeed Leah. Hazal further lace the moral with further ethical import suggesting that Rachel out of self sacrifice gifted her destined husband to her sister, for Leah’s “eyes were big and teary” because she dreaded marrying the brute Esauv. Thus just as Yaakov took advantage of the darkness (blindness) in Isaac’s eyes, Laban took advantage of the darkness of night to substitute Leah for Rachel etc. Midah kineged midah is meted out to Rivka. With the same words “shema bikoli”- she advised Yaakov to disguise himself, and with those same words she tells him that he must flee to Haran. The destiny laddeness of language continues to rebound and echo as just as Tamar says to Judah “Hakar na” (recognize this money belt and staff), the brothers say to Yakov, “Hakar Na” (recognize this ketunat passim dipped in the blood of a goat to appear as if a wild animal has devoured Yakov).” But Yakov was no push over. Yakov Guarded Yosef’s words and dreams knowing that this unique son’s words were nevuah so that the brothers were eventually forced to both to Yosef when they went down to Egypt in a time of draught, just as the dream suggested that the sun (Yakov) and the moon (Rochel) would bow along with all the other 11 stars representing the brothers. Such is the nature of the divine alphabet soup that possesses a Zeitgeist of the destinyladdeness of the Amar Elokit. The point is the Biblical critics are attacking Yakov’s actions out of context of the principle of midah kineged midah for the biblical text according to some rabbinic interpretotors within its context provides ample justification for Rivka’s actions in assisting Yakov to receive the blessings. The midrash speaks of the moral state of both Yakov and Esauv. Esauv the brute hunter desired to get out of the womb to go to houses of avodah zarah and prostitution, while the righteous soul Yakov in utero sought to get out to go to learn in the Yeshivot o
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Cassutto points out the difference in interpretation of the word “mirmah” by Rashi and ibn Ezra does indicate a difference in views on the matter. Cassutto cites the listings of Esauv’s wives as an example of contradictory passages. Cassutto claims that the two lists for Esauv’s wives were current in ancient Israel and the torah found room in its divine revelation for both. It is up to Hazal to reconcile them. Rashi reconciles the lists long before the bible critics. As does the Rashbam who says that Judith died without sons and Esauv married Ohalibama after he came to Seir. Ibn ezra emends a reading of hat zivon as ben zivon (36:2).
misinterpretation turning the many away from the good and beautiful masorah of Hazal, all of whom many millennia previously had solved all the “problems” raised by the Biblical higher critics.

Born in Florence. He was educated at the University of Florence, where he completed his studies in 1906, and the Rabbinical College, where he was ordained in 1908.

When Margulies died in 1922, Cassuto was appointed his successor both in the rabbinate and as director of the Rabbinical Seminary. In 1925 he resigned from the rabbinate to become professor of Hebrew language and literature at the University of Florence, where he taught until 1933. Thereafter he began to withdraw from the domain of Italian-Jewish history and to concentrate on Bible studies, a field in which he had published important papers as early as 1912. In 1933 he received a similar appointment at the University of Rome. While there, he cataloged the Hebrew manuscripts of the Vatican Library. Cassuto, like all the other Jewish professors, was dismissed from the University of Rome with the Racial Laws in 1938.

A life-long Zionist, Cassuto accepted an invitation to fill the chair of Bible studies at the Hebrew University in 1939, where he taught till his death in 1951.

Cassuto’s last years were clouded by the tragic loss of two members of his family. The first loss was that of his son NATHAN (d. c. 1945). A successful physician, he headed the Jewish community of Florence during the Holocaust. Nathan was arrested by the Germans in 1943, and soon after he was joined by his wife, who was also arrested. Both were deported to Auschwitz.

The scholarship of Cassuto can be divided in three main fields: the history of Italian Jews and biblical and Ugaritic Studies.

Cassuto also published, in various scholarly periodicals, catalogs of the Hebrew manuscripts and incunabula in various Florentine libraries that were models of their type. Cassuto’s historical researches culminated in his great work Gli ebrei Firenze nell’ età del rinascimento (1918), which displays a remarkable mastery of the source material from both the Florentine archives and Hebrew manuscripts in many countries.

He also contributed articles on Jewish subjects to the Enciclopedia Italiana; those on Jewish literature were republished in book form as Storia della letteratura ebraica postbiblica (1938). In addition, Cassuto published basic articles on the Judeo-Italian dialect, the Hebrew inscriptions of southern Italy, and various allied subjects.

His primary contribution, "Shirat ha-Alilah be-Yisrael," was published in 1944 in Knesset 8 (English translation in Biblical and Oriental Studies II). Among his books on biblical research are a critique of the
documentary hypothesis of the composition of Genesis in Italian (La questione della Genesi, 1934); and in Hebrew (Perush al Sefer Bereshit, 2 vols., 1944–49; English: A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, 2 vols., 1961–64); a commentary on Exodus (Perush al Sefer Shemot, 1942; A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, 1967); and Torat ha-Te'udot (1941; The Documentary Hypothesis, 1961). He was the chief editor of the biblical encyclopedia Enziklopedyah Mikra'it and took an active part in its planning and the preparation of its first volumes.

Other important works are "Il nome divino El nell'Antico Israele," in: Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni, 8 (1932); "Il capitolo 3 di Habaquq e I testi di Ras Shamra, in Annuario di studi ebraici, 2 (1935–37); "Le tre aleph dell'alfabeto ugaritico," in: Orientalia, XVI (1947).

Sid Z Leiman in a shiur delivered in the 5 towns of Long Island NY at the Young Israel of Lawrence Cedarhurst brilliantly revealed how Cassutto’s scholarship was not independent of his bibliographic and librarian detective sleuthing when identifying the Aleppo Codex. This genius of Cassutto not only shows his knowledge of what is in the books of the library but his ability to apply the authoritative Masoretic knowledge to the Bibliographic act of identifying and verifying that “what was supposed for a century to be a pious legend of the Jewish community of Aleppo and was disbelieved by most scholars- named, that the Aleppo Codex is the selfsame model codex declared authoritative by Maimonides in his great halakhic compendium (the Code of MT) with regard to certain fundamental questions of preparing Torah scrolls- is true.” Cassutto with his knowledge of the Rambam was able to verify and identify that the Aleppo Codex is the codex of Maimonides, and as such became the halakhically binding model for later generations. Cassutto’s “proof” is based on Rambam identifying an odd irregular number of pesukim in the Aleppo Codex in Shirat Hayam in parashah Beshallach (Shemot 14 (2) and in parashah Hazinu the Song of Moses (Deut. 32), and (3) open and closed sections. The Jewish community of Aleppo claimed to be in possession of the very code which Maimonides examined for a most authoritative mosorah found in Rambam’s MT. regarding the rules for writing scrolls of law. In all the great detail regulated by Talmudic law (i.e. Maseket Sofrim) later generations tried to follow the system of the model codex as an authoritative exemplar recension Urtext. It is essential to show or not if the Aleppo Codex is the archetype of our textus receptus. From Kacob ben Hayyim to Baer and Ginsburg determining if the Aleppo Codex indeed is the text sanctioned by Maimonides became an ultimate goal for the ideological (sit venia verbo) assumptions of editors of the printed Bibles. To prove this either way modern scholars would have to verify the following 3 objective criteria logically:

1. How does one validate identification based on the colophon claiming to be from the Ben Asher family, if the colophon is lost? How do variants of the Codex shed light- is A the immediate Vorlage of L?
2. How does one prove that the Aleppo Codex is really a Ben Asher ms.?
3. How does one prove that the Aleppo Codex is the text on which Maimonides based his rules?

On page 8 of the journal Sinai 43 (1957) a major breakthrough occurred when the identity of the two MSS derivative from the Aleppo Codex became clear after comparing the two pages photographed side by side. However this is perhaps putting the cart before the horse because the speculations regarding the Aleppo Codex stem from the middle ages until today. The supposed loss of the manuscript during the pillage of the Aleppos synagogue shortly after the UNO decision in 1947 to establish a Midinat Yisrael made this identification even more problematic. The textgeschichte of the Codex is extremely complex.

Heinrich Graetz in 1871 attempted to authenticate the claim of the community of Aleppo of the authenticity of the Aleppo Codex. The Aleppo Rabbinate was cautious and distrustful of Wissenschaft scholars. Thus no modern scholar was allowed to investigate in general the codex of photograph it for microfilm. A number of scholars, including Paul Kahle, doubted the Aleppo communities claims and dated the manuscript later than the time of the Rambam. This is perhaps analogous to Solomon Zeitlin at first ascribing a late date to the Dead Sea Scrolls, which in hindsight did prove to come from the late 2nd Temple period etc. Moseh Goshen-Gottstein remarks with regards to the DSS and the Aleppo Codex, that the Codex for Bible scholars is “hardly of less importance” than the dating of the DSS. If identification of the Codex could be made as authentic confirming the verbal legend of the Aleppo community, the Codex would be the Crown of Aleppo- one of the oldest massoretic MSS and the oldest MS of the whole bible attributable to the Ben Asher family of sofrim in Tiberia.

As history would have it, Cassutto played the key role in the identification of the Aleppo Codex. This was based on Cassutto’s physical examination of the text after permission from the Aleppo Community and not basedon Cassutto’s working copy of the Bible on the margin of which he had noted the readings for the new edition he was planning, containing notes of variants from the Aleppo Codex. A Hartom who supervised the printing of the edition which was based on Cassuto’s notes, noted to Goshen-Gottsein, that “Cassutto’s copy did not contain a single note on variants from the Aleppo Codex.” The luck of Cassutto to secure permission to examin the Codex is noted by Kahle as follows:

He (Cassutto) is the first modern scholar who had the opportunity of doing so (of studing the Codex in person), and he will have been the last one if the news of the destruction for he Codex is confirmed. We are therefore dependent for this Codex on the information Cassutto has to give, and everything that has been said before on the Codex has to be regarded in the main as antiquated.

Cassutto’s findings were first published in 1946 in the sample edition of Sefer Yonah which the Hebrew University of Jerusalem Press published in summer of 1946:

The edition of this Book is based upon the codex of the Prophets which was written at Tiberias by Moses ben Asher, one of the most outstanding MAsoreses, in the year 827 CE after the destruction of the 2nd Temple... This codex now preserved in Cairo, originally comprised also the Pentateuch and the

132 MGWJ 22 (1871), p.52 f. Graetz coined the term Aleppo Codex.
134 Ibid., p.781
135 Kahle, Paul, Vetus Testamentum 1, 1951, p.163
Hagiographa. It may well be that this is the ms. Upon which Maimonides relied was the “Crown of Aaron ben Moses ben Asher, now preserved at Aleppo; however, a thorough examination of that “crown” by the above mentioned Scientific Director (Cassutto) who visited Aleppo for this purpose in 1944, made it quite clear to him that this view is wrong.”

Cassutto based his proof on Rambam’s own rules and remarks about the Codex: (1) Maimonides notes the copy he examined had 67 verses found in Spanish and Yeminite scrolls as opposed to the regular 70 # of verses found in many Ashkenaz manuscripts. Which may be based on an esoteric gematria. Maimonides states that he noted down the open and closed sections as well as the layout of the two

136 See Book of Jonah, HIJ, summer 1946; Cassuto echoes this pronouncement in Ha’aretz 2.1.1948 by writing, “One usually assumes that the book on which Maimonides relied was the Aleppo Codex. Ostensibly this seems likely enough. Yet I permit myself to doubt it for a # of technical reasons which this is not the place (a Newspaper) to set out in detail”. Similarly in his letter to Kahle published in VT 3 (1953), p.418 Cassutto writes, “This tradition about (A) which you regard as indubitable is certainly very old, but it is NOT PROOVED, and there are some reasons for querying it.” In his article in Haaretz of the 2.1.48 we are left asking did Cassuto retract his position? In Haaretz 15:IV 1949 Cassutto mad eno reference to variant [C] while mentioning [A] again. In Vetus Testamentum 3, 1953, p.413 Cassutto writes, “That the codex used by Maimonides is that of which the part containing the prophet’s is preserved today at Cairo is mentioned only in a tentative way in the prospectus attached to the edition of Jonah, and is not more than a conjecture.” Cassutto never fully explained the “technical” reasons of his verdict against [A] nor those in favor of [C].

137 See Rabbi Abraham Hassan IggerethSofer, in HaSegullah no.54, p.7; “for the last 300 years (since days of Rambam) ti has been written in only 67 lines as opposed to the scrolls of the Ashkenaz Jews who always write the Song in 70 lines according to strict Halakhah (p.11).

138 The layout of Song of Moses in 70 pesukim, is the reading of the printed editions ever since the edition of Rabbi Abraham Hassan IggerethSofer, in HaSegullah no.54, p.7; “for the last 300 years (since days of Rambam) ti has been written in only 67 lines as opposed to the scrolls of the Ashkenaz Jews who always write the Song in 70 lines according to strict Halakhah (p.11).

139 See Rav Saadya ben David of Aden (Ha-Adani, ca. 1480) noted by Steinschneider on Oxford Hunt. 372, in Catalogus Librorum Hebr. In Bibl. Bodeleiana, col. 1936 and later referenced in Arab. Literatur der Juden (1902), p.202; later published in Assaf KS, 1946, p.241; “Why is Song of Moses in 67 lines? The answer: Hazal said in order to allude to the name of the reprove [=the author of the poem of reproof], i.e. Moses as is written, “He is reproved (AV Chasteden) also with pain upon his bed, etc. (Iyov 33, 19). The numerical value of the letters BETH, Mem, Kof, Aleph, Vav, Beth is 67. This name is also one of the names of Moses as they said, “Moses had 10 names” (see Margalioth on Leviticus Rabbah 1,3 (Jerusalem, 1953, p.11). Also consider opening of Sifrei, a halackic midrash on Devarim, “these are words of rebuke i.e Devarim)

140 The Rambam speaks of the layout of the closed section i.e. “one leaves a space to the proper measure (Hilchot Sefer Torah, 8:2; 28: 140) but not with the same margin between words. Also decide what is a short reading in a long word. Also decide what is a short reading in a long word. Also decide what is a short reading in a long word. Also decide what is a short reading in a long word. As
Pentateuchal songs according to that model codex. Thus the point of focus for Rambam is (1) open and closed sections, (b) Song of Moses (Deut32) and (c) Song of Moses (Shemot 14), (d) numbers of lines preceding and following Song of Moses. Rambam writes:

regards Song of Moses however Rambam formulates “in the middle one leaves a space similar to the form of a closed section’, which may simply refer to the form in general, but not to the exact width. Rambam emphasizes the “identical width (shav)” between a closed section and the blank between two hemistichs in Song of Moses. Similarly Tur, Yoreh Deah 275. Maimonides developed the system of the Talmud in deciding (Hilchot Sefer Torah 7:5) that if there is not enough space left in the line to write 3 letters the scribe should leave the space empty and start from the beginning of the next line. Moreover, regardless of whether the line was open or closed, if one starts at the beginning of the new line. That would mean that such a song starts at the beginning of the new line. Thus the point of focus for Rambam is (1) open and closed sections, which may simply refer to the form in general, but not to the exact width. Rambam emphasizes the “identical width (shav)” between a closed section and the blank between two hemistichs in Song of Moses. Similarly Tur, Yoreh Deah 275. Maimonides developed the system of the Talmud in deciding (Hilchot Sefer Torah 7:5) that if there is not enough space left in the line to write 3 letters the scribe should leave the space empty and start from the beginning of the next line.

One generation after the Rambam “doubts” arose as from statements from Rabbi Meir ben Todros Halevi Abulafia (Toledo, 1170-1244), as quoted by Rabbi Menhem Ha-Meiri (Perpignan, ca. 1249-1306) in the work Kiriath Sefer II, 2, ed. Hirschler, Jerusalem, 1946, p.46, f. no. 106, 109). The consideration of Maimonides arrangement as an idiosyncrasy is a far step from proclaiming it a “scribal error.” For Rabbi Meir it seemed impossible to him that Rambam should have ruled as was handed down in his name, that there are only five lines after Song of Moses, for this would mean as ha-Me’iri calculated, that “those lines would have to be much too long.” This Meiri argument is further argued by the Massoretic scholar Rabbi Menahem di Lonzano (16th-17th Centuries) By the time of Lonzano the substitution of the 70 line system of Sof had already been accepted to a degree that only a final critique was needed so that the 67 line tradition was declared spurious and the 70 line tradition became recognized. Lonzano writes: “As regards the layout of Song of Moses: Maimonides wrote that it is written in 67 lines. And this indeed is what I found in 3 Maimonides MSS and it is in accordance with what Rabbi David Kokhavi wrote in Beth El in his name and ha-Meiri agree with it. However in the printed Maimonides editions it states that it is written in 70 lines, and I found the same in one Maimonides MS, and in the Hilleli and in…” and in scrolls from Jerusalem more than 500 years old, and thus it is written in Tractate Soferim 12: “Spanish scrolls however differ in this matter some go according to the former view and some according to the latter, and this latter seems to me to be the better opinion. Moreover in my humble view every scroll written according to the first view is unfit for ritual use. This is because in the middle of every line of this song, there must be a space, the size of a closed section, and if the scribe changes this the scroll is pusel as ha-meiri stated expressly and this is the view also of Maimonides. However those holding the former view must in 3 places admit into one line what is 2 lines in the latter view and therefore they cannot leave in the middle of those 3 lines a space the size of a section since the width of the page is too small... There needs to be above this song 6 lines all of them short lines. What then should the sofer do? If he begins them at the right of the column equal to the beginnings of the Song’s lines, there will remain a space at the end of every line on the left hand of the column. And if you look carefully into the matter you will find that all the lines except the first one would ecome “open sections”, which are defined as sections preceded by a space at the end of the previous line while the section itself starts at the beginning of the new line. That would mean that such a sofer made 5 open sections where there is not even one!... thus you have learnt that it is right and proper to write this song in 70 lines; and the beginnings of the hemistichs are indeed those indicated in the printed editions of the Rambam.” (quoted in Goshen-Gottstein, Moshe, “The authenticity of the Aleppo Codex”, p. 805). In summary difficulties raised by decisors from R. Meir to ha-Meiri to Lonzano with regard to the layout of the column on which song of Moses is written, resolve this problem once we realize that the model codex used dummy signs for filling up certain lines. The decisors were concerned in maintaining that only a layout of 70 lines enables one to write a ritualty correct page on which the scribe could leave in the middle of the 2 hemistichs a blank space the size of a closed section.

The layout of the Song of Moses: Every single line has a space in its middle like a closed section, so that every line is divided into two. And it is written in seventy lines.”

Maimonides states that the number of lines is 70. This statement destined halakhah. Rambam decided that Song of Moses should be written in 70 lines and the verses of the following prose section in 5 lines. Ha-Meiri held however that the correct way is 67 lines for the Song and 6 lines for the closing section. Maimonides decision was accepted by many later decisors such as Rav Yosef Karo. This is a problem however for the text Cassutto examined because the Song of Moses (Deut. 32) is portioned off in 67 lines. Ergo by necessity a number of the words which Maimonides mentions as being the beginnings of hemistichs do not tally either. Normal logic would “assume” then that though Cassutto found [A] to be a superior Ben Asher text, it cannot possibl the the modex codex with Maimonides used[?] and many hoped to discover based on the legend of the Aleppo community. However the detective sleuthing is far from over with this hasty rash conclusion. From uncareful cursory examination by Cassutto he in conventional logic might have bene led to conclude to disqualify [A] solely because it did not agree with one of the data specified by Maionides who dealt with the Humahs only. Thus in conformity with Cassutto’s rejection of “higher biblical criticism” her reasoning process was of a basic halakhic nature.

Thus the Cario MS of Moses ben Asher was reconsidered by Cassutto with the qualification and caveat “Ulei” (perhaps), to the rank of the “MS which Maimonides consulted’ and thus it was chosen for the bible edition which Cassutto was planning, the central positon originally reserved for MS. [A]. It is an assumption to consider that variant [C] was a part of the “complete Bible” that Maimonides’ statement indicates that the Rambam examined in the 12th century.

So who was the Ben Asher ben Asher family that authored this authoritative Aleppo Codex that Rambam handled between the years 1135-1204, and what did the Ben Asher work represent? Cassutto understood that the text of Aaon ben Asher represented not a defining and destinig synchronic edition of a diachronic evolution of the authoritative recension of the Masoretic text that became the textus receptus as opposed to the Ben Naftali traditions. Aaron ben Asher was regarded “as the last link in

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מישרט המצוים. אשדות. אתרי. ודורי. באתרי. הלכוס. קהל. שון שעון. הלמה מגונת חסם שון יבש. לדבר. אשת. lvrve. lvrve.

But this is the category of "one of those rules which are not stated in the Talmud but the sofrim practiced them, each generation receiving the masora orally from predecessors. In light of the long discussion of Rambam in 8:4 on the Ben Asher text it is obvious that the Rambam’s rules concerning beginnings of lines befere and after Song of Moses are based on the authority of that saem Ms. It can be deduced then that not only is [a] the only Ms known today in conformity with all these details of Maimonides rules on the text of Song of Moses and the adjacent verses, but it must have been, unique in Maimonides own epoch.

143 See Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh Deah, cccxxv, 5

144 See Mishael Ben Uziel’s treatise on the differences (lullufim) between Ben Asher and Ben Naftali in comparison with the 4 most famous Codices which are: (1) the Aleppo Codex of the Ben Asher family, (2) the codex British Museum Or. 4445 of the Humash (B), and (3) the Cairo Codex of the Neviem (C), and (4) the Leningrad Codex (B) 19a (L). While SoMuseum Or 4445 of the Humash (B), (3) the Cairo Codex of the Neviem (C) characterized by a unique colophon written by Moses ben Asher at the end of the 9th Century, (4) The Leningrad Codex B 19a (L). For many years all Ben Asher ms derivants were studied from photographs, the Aleppo Codex and British Museum Or 4445 were also verified from the material originals. Maionides noted that the Aleppo codex represented a complete Bible with full Masoretic annotation, exhibiting what was to be regarded as the prototype of the Tiberian
the chain of transmission made possible by the Asher ben Asher family in Tiberia.\textsuperscript{145} The Aleppo Codex is not only the oldest complete codex of the Tiberian bible text known, but is it altogether the earliest complete Codex of the Masoretic subsystem which had been perfected by the Ben Asher family. Maimonides identification of the Aleppo Codex as containing the complete Bible proved significant.\textsuperscript{146}

\textsuperscript{145} See Levy, Zur masoretischen Grammatik, p.10

\textsuperscript{146} ליפור שיבוש דמלת וככ הספירה שואיתו בברמודי אל. נו בילבים תסריטים של עברית ממסכת תড"ש מתוך המחדור הדריוית המפותחות המפותחות במכתב בברמודי אל מח_COMPILERים וספונים עלילות, אらない להתקנה של חליפה של התורות העמיות. התורות עמדוولد שנים לטרון לברמודי אל. הפרçe דחייו של התורה וprice ידע interleaved טקסטנקס של מספרים עלילותifica חולק מתוכן ולכסיסלית. בשתייה זו, הביאו בברמודי אל את הפר çe דחייו

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 not only the oldest complete codex of the Tiberian bible text known, but is it altogether the earliest complete Codex of the Masoretic subsystem which had been perfected by the Ben Asher family. Maimonides identification of the Aleppo Codex as containing the complete Bible proved significant.\textsuperscript{146}
משה כן, ראבũת פותחון. יחקל משה סותמת. יאמר משה שמיים לבר ישראל, שיתוך פותחון, יושוע בן נון שלחן לבר ישראל.

לאֶה דוד לך. קהל משלי סותמת. יאמר משה שמיים לבר ישראל, שיתוך פותחון, יושוע בן נון שלחן לבר ישראל.

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MARX (1878–1953) was not only a historian, bibliographer and librarian, but a man who destined the development of the building of the JTSA library by drawing on Steinschneider’s work as the GPS for JTSA acquisition policies, making it into a world reknown resource for Jewish scholarly research. Schmelzer

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writes “without Marx’s conception of what juedische Wissenschaft entailed and what a library that was supposed to serve it should contain, the Seminary library would not have become what it did.”\textsuperscript{148}

Schmelzer continues “For Marx, the study of Judaism encompassed besides rabbinical sources, the history of sciences, philosophy, medicine, and mathematics as pursued and practiced by Jews mainly in the Middle Ages. These were subjects of Steinschneider’s many studies, and Marx was deeply influenced by them. Cultural and intellectual contacts between Jews, Christians, and Muslims, were at the center of Steinschenider’s interest. The study of mutual influences, of translations from one culture into another, became significant aspects of the Wissenschaft des Judentums.”\textsuperscript{149}

Marx did not create the JTSA library ex nihilo building on previous acquired library of Sabato Morais David Cassel and Sulzberger, but under Marx the collection increased exponentially.\textsuperscript{150} For example in September 1911 the library of Emil Kautzsch strong in modern Protestant Biblical criticism, biblical archaeology, and cognate semitic languages, via a bookdealer in Leipzig, Gustav Fock, were delivered to the Seminary. Under Marx the JTSA received donations from Jacob Schiff of Steinschneider’s library and other donations from Felix Warburg, Louis Marshall, and Mortimer Schiff. For example besides their gifts of books, they gave money funds for example of 70,000 of the total 100,00 in 1922 for the purchase of Elkan Nathan Adler Library. Mortimer Schiff gave 4000 annually for special acquisitons in the 1920s.\textsuperscript{151} Besides books and ms. Marx gathered communal record books, decrees, laws, letters, and mmor books and records of Jewish commercial transactions, as well as Pinkasim, memorbooks, broadsides documenting Jewish life. There was not anything even tangently related that Marx did not collect including Bibliographisches Handbuch (Bibliography of Christian Hebraists), Hebrewische Übersetzungen

\textsuperscript{148} Schmelzer, Menachem, “Building a Great Judaica Collection” p. 688

\textsuperscript{149} Schmelzer, M., 688

\textsuperscript{150} Schmelzer writes, “When in 1893 the old Seminary marked the 70\textsuperscript{th} birthday of Sabato Morais, arrangements were made for establishing a library carrying his name. This library incorporated Morais’s own valuable books, and it was conceived of as a center of Hebrew learning and research. Other donations of collections and of individual items came to the library including 3000 volumes of the German Jewish scholar David Cassel; the goal was to make it the most perfect collection of Hebraica and Judaica in this country. This policy served as the basis on which Sulzberger and Alexander Marx, who arrived at the Seminary in November 1903, developed their blueprint for the future of the Seminary library. Sulzberger’s donation of his library of 8000 volumes and 750 ms in 1904 made the library the largest in the Western Hemisphere and one of the largest and most valuable in the world.” (see Schmelzer, Menachem, “Building a Great Judaica Library- At what Price?” in Tradition Renewed, p. 682) The JTSA library grew in many ways, including the JPS donation of its publications and funds donated from the Ottinger brothers, prominent NY lawyers and politicians. When Marx argued the need for new quarters for the library in 1916 the libraries holdings had surpassed 50 thousand books. It is from this 50,000 core of books that Eliezer ben Yehudah used the library regularly collection material for his great Etymological Hebrew dictionary of the evolution fo the Hebrew language. (Board of Directors reports, 15 Nov., 1916, p.16) Donations proved significant according to Director Reports. For example in 1919 the class of 1919 donated funds for sociological acquisitions. Also in 1919 large #s of anti-semitic publications were incorporated at the advice of the board on Marx’ urgings that “the defence of Judaism against the recent anti-semitic attacks made the Juedische Frage timely again. Also Marx saw to the acquisition of Hebrew periodicals of the 1920s in Palestine under English rule. Post WWI the library acquired publications documenting participation of Jewish soldiers of the various armies. In 1925 a collection of Palestine and Zionism was received and the class of 1922 donated monies for the purchase of books in modern Hebrew. In 1937 the Morris Levine Memorial Collection, of Hebrew literature was established.

\textsuperscript{151} Schmelzer footnote 42 of “Building a Great Judaica Collection at What Price” in Tradition Renewed, p.711; Board of Directors reports 1923, p.4
(Hebrew Translations in the Middle Ages), Polemische und apologetische Literature (Polemical and Apologetical Literature) in addition to Geschichtsliteratur der Juden (Historical literature of the Jews). Liturgical texts were gathered in mass not only for Ashkenaz, Sefarad, Italy, and Yemen but also from Aleppo, Algiers, Sicily, Tripoli, etc. Marx followed the blueprint provided by Zunz in Literaturgeschichte der synagogalen Poesie. Including the vast genre of piyyutim. From such collecting Israel Davidson composed his monumental 4 volume Thesaurus of Medieval Hebrew Poetry published between 1924 and 1933. Marx gathered manuscripts so that scholars could prepare critical editions. For example Schechter published the critical edition of Aboth de Rabbi Nathan and later in the 1950s Finkelstein came out with a critical edition of Sifrei. These types of editions compared A and B manuscript variants from exemplars. Lesser known ms. Were hunted down by for instance Elkan Nathan Adler who diligently “tracked” ms. From exotic places in North Africa and Asian communities. As a result JTSA came to own many ms. From the Jews of Yemen, Persia, Bukhara, Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Kurdistanto, and China. This proved invaluable to research. For example Wilhelm Bacher drew on the JTSA collection for his research of Yemenite Jewish texts. Scholars of Chinese Jews could consult many texts including a sefer torah from Kaifeng. Ms. From Fez, Mequinez, Agadir, Oran, Algiers, Jerba, Tripoli, and Gardaia (in the Shara), Tokat (Anatolia), Aleppo, and Damascus made the JTSA collection unique. Rabbi M.M. Kasher in preparing Torah Shelemah drew on the Yemenite holdings of Midrash. Marx did not however neglect traditional Ashkenaz texts. For example he made sure to collect small miniscule editions of Hebrew books that were printed in Russia to elude Czarist censorship. Rare ms. Including deluxe editions printed on parchment, colored paper (mainly blue) large paper copies, artistic bindings, copies with important provenance and hatimah (signatures) were also acquired at great cost. For example a jewel in the crown includes a 3rd edition of Rambam’s MT. printed in Constantinople in 1509 on vellum, found in Yemen. Silver bindings that grooms gave to brides were also acquired as were association copies. A large collection of wedding poems and riddles from Italy collected by Rabbi Moise Soave was bought, as were many ketubbot illustrated with the style of art of the times. The research interests of Professors at JTSA including Schechter, Ginzberg, Friedlaender, Davidson, and Lieberman guided purchases also. Obviously for many decades great backlog in cataloging amassed and staff was limited. The Baron Gunzburg library from Moscow was purchased in 1914 from which many reprints of rishonim are based. Marx appointed Isaac Rivkind to examine the Adler copies of rare books, and to compare them with older copies of the same books already in the library so that Rivkind discovered a number of important typographical difference in copies of rare Hebraica in the title pages and elsewhere, subject for whole dissertations. It would take decades before the staff of the JTSA was large enough to “dig out” from the tremendous bulk of its exponential acquisitions under Marx. Space limitations are always an issue for a library but especially for JTSA. Close to WWII the library acquired 13 thousand books from the personal libraries of Louis Ginzberg and Marx. Debates ensued over mission priorities i.e. whether priority was to collect and preserve ms. Or serve in house patrons? Cyrus Adler felt the library should not devote itself totally to collecting research materials but serve all patrons.152

152 Schmelzer cites Adler writing, “The library is not simply intended as an aid to research. It is of course also for the use of students. (Adler to Marx 3 May 1926); In 1931 Adler writes, “I am sure you know that I want and always have wanted the library to grow as fast as possible, but I somehow have the feeling at the moment that the best thing we can do now is to concentrate in getting it in good running order in our new building and make it as accessible

Marx sought to collect on behalf of JTSA library all available editions of Hebraica printed works, including variants of the same editions and exemplars for textual comparison. Marx assigned Issac Rivkind to collate editions of one and the same work for typographical variants. Thus the seminary today thanks to this foresight owns thousands of haggadot and siddurim. These include a reception history of these texts from the beginning of Hebrew printing until the present. This also accounts for why JTSA library has the largest complete collection of 15th and 16th century Latin books in which there is use of Hebrew typeface. JTSA also boasts one of the largests collections by Christian Hebraicists. Marx carried further the work of Steinschneider. Marx did this by collecting Jewish texts in not only Hebrew and Aramaic, but also in Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-German (i.e. the Biur of Mendelsohn), and Judeo-Italian etc. Marx also sought to acquire on behalf of JTSA manuscripts not only on the standard rabbinc subjects, but also in the sciences-medicine-mathematics-astronomy etc which was the game plan also of Steinschneider laid out in Steinschneider’s research and discoveries as a compass to systematically assemble a complete reception history of materials in a certain area. Thus following Steinschneider direction one of the first things Marx acquired for JTSA assembling from the 4 corners of the earth one hundred comparatible y unknown medical books most probably Solomon Goldman notes because Steinschneider’s absorbing interest in bibliographies on the history of Jewish medicine a subject documented by scholars such as Julius Preuss in Europe and Abrahman Friedenwald in Baltimore At Johns Hopkins. Marx like Steinschneider loved good books not as icons but as the vehicles for conveying knowledge of the Jewish past beyond lo fren del arte. Ultimately these embers of previous Jewish communities and intellectual aheivements testified to living Judaism, which Marx’ s great vision as a Zionist saw was crouching towards Zion or the Jewish homeland. Marx recognized with Solomon Sichechter the importance of the Geniza of Cairo because it “opened up new chapters of the Jewish past and brought never dreamt of information about the literary and spiritual activity of the Jews in Egypt, Palestine, Babylonia and what Gotein called the “Mediterranean Scoiety”. Marx understood tha the recent events of the Holocaust warrented more than ever the importance of knowing the past of the Jews. He appreciated the intellectual and spiritual values for which our forefathers suffered across the ages . As the Besht notes, “Bizikronot yesh ha geulah” (In rmemberance there is redemption). Marx realized that while through all the sufferings of the ages the Jews upheld the Torah, it really was the torah that upheld the Jews as the eternal people committed to an etenal text.

as possible ((Adler to Marx 18 May 1931); “I do not feel that we have a moral right to have assembled the greatest collection in the world and then deal with it as though it were only available to a priviledged class... In the old building our principal effort was at collection and conservation. In the new building our principal effort must be in direction and use” (Adler to Marx 25 Sept. 1931); See Schmelzer p. 714; Marx countered, “I am of the opinion that since here is the largest Jewish community that ever existed in one place, it is our duty to establish a spiritual center and that we ought to have a library as complete as we can make it of all the treasures of our past.” ( (Marx to Warburg 20 May 1919 in Cyrus Adler Papers JTS archives, cited by Schmelzer p. 714); Warburg remained cautious and retorted, “I feel that until our library has caught up in every respect in regard to cataloging, binding, etc. we had better leave new things alone (p.704).

153 In Steinschneider’s Bibliographisches Handbuch ueber die theoretische und praktische Literature fuer hebrishe Sprachkunde (Leipzig: Vogel, 1859, 2nd edition, Yerushalayim: Bamberger and Wharmann, 1937) Steinschneider listed over 2300 titles on the Hebrew language and related topics written mostly by Christian Hebraicist scholars. This work provided the blue print for the collection development policy of Marx to acquire the work of Christian Hebraicists on behalf of the JTSA collection.
Marx enlisted the network of book dealers and gatherers to buy up vast libraires of bibliophilic treasures and research collections in addition to private libraries acquired en bloc. Bookdealer emissaries were authorized to trace and purchase treasures. In America other collectors of library items included magnates Henry E. Huntington, Henry C. Folger, Walter L. Newberry, and J. Pierpont Morgan who assembled at the end of the 19th century extensive rarities. Prior to WWII libraries expanded greatly. For example Columbia University owned 750 thousand books in 1898 but 3 million in 1934.

The only time that Marx was hamstrung by being able to collect texts was during the Depression when the budget was significantly cut. During the Depression the library book budget was cut from $4000 to $250 annually and even in 1947, the allocation was only $2000. Schmelzer reports that “Dr. Boaz Cohen who at that time had been with the library for twenty-three years, and Isaac Rivkind, after twenty-four years of service complained that throughout all their years the staffing remained the same, except for one additional page, while the collection doubled in size.”

Born in Elberfeld, Germany, Marx grew up in Koenigsberg (East Prussia) where he attended a gymnasium. Marx father hired Rabbi Auerbach and Rav Kram of the town to tutor their son in Talmud. Upon graduation from the gymnasium Marx was sent for a year to learn in Halberstadt under Rabbi Joseph Nobel of the hallowed Klaus. Returning to Koenigsberg he began his academic career. He learned under Professor Franz Ruehl from whom he learned insights into history and methods of handling manuscripts. Ruehl showed Marx the importance of primary documents for scholarship. Then Marx

156 Ibid., p.707; Schmelzer explains that the library had to compete with the Seminary’s many other expanding activities. Drs. Moshe Davis who advocated complete “overhauling” was opposed to Dr. Simon Greenberg who represented the the Seminary administration on the library committee. Greenberg recommended that changes “be carried out gradually”. Rabbi Louis Finkelstein supported Greenberg’s strategy. In 1958 the year of Marx’s passing drastic steps to reorganize the library never were taken. In 1958 Dr. Nahum Sarna then the librarian persuaded the seminary administration to invite Maurice F. Tauber, a professor of library service at Columbia University, to undertake a thorough survey of the library and submit an evaluation and recommendations in a 153 page report. Thus in the 1950s while the library was an immensely rich depository of valuable materials it was only rectified in the 1950s to enhance proper classification, cataloging, and access points to Hebraica with reorganization (Schmelzer, p.680). Thus according to Schmelzer the JTSA acquired its vast treasures prior to WWII at a time before the Holocaust when this was still possible.
157 Solmon Goldman writes of Marx encouraging dissertation topic seakers to consider the following ms. For research: To realize the hope of scholars opportunities for research and the acquisition of knowledge Marx encouraged focus on primary documents in JTSA of ms. Such as: (1) song books from Yemen North Africa and various parts from Turkey; unpublished Yemenite commentaries on the Haftarot; Moses ibn Danon’s little known Kelale ha-Talmud; The targum on the Earlier prophets to be found in the incunabulum of Leiria, 1484; the Columbia Talmud ms; the Oxford Ms of Abraham b. David’s pirush on Torah Kohanim and material at JTSA bearing on this opus; the Damascus Arabic translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch; Abhaam bar Hiyya’s work on the Jewish calendar; Judah Leon Mosconi’s inventory of his worldly possessions; the language of Maimonides in a proper edition of his pirush al ha-mishnah; an appraisal of ibn Makta’s contribution to mathematics and astronomy; a study of the entries of famous owners of large libraries that they made in their Ms.; comparing the woodcuts in the incunabulum of Mushal Kodmoni with the illustrations in the ms. Of the same work; A study of the signatories of Lunel who addressed to Maimonides the letter on the Guide and that on astrology; to have Judah ben Barzilai’s
moved to Berlin where he learned under Drs. Abraham Berliner and Moitz Steinschneider. He studied at the University of Berlin and at the Rabbiner-Seminar (Berlin), marrying in 1905 Hannah the daughter of D.Z. Hoffmann, rector of the Seminar. In Berlin, he was influenced by Moritz Steinschneider. Marx visited Solomon Schechter at Cambridge University and they developed a friendship in their shared love of learning and enthusiasm for Hebrew literature. The reason Marx sought out Schechter was because of Marx research on Seder Olam. Schechter was impressed with Marx knowledge and the fact that he would travel week-ends from the University city to London for a kosher meal. In 1903 Marx accepted Solomon Schechter’s invitation to teach history at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and be its head librarian. This joint appointment was not encumbered by bureaucratic obsfugations and dishonesty reasoning that librarians cannot “have two appointments” based on “institutional rules.”

**Solomon Goldman**

According to Goldman we may say of Marx as with Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai and the Geonim of Rav Shelanu and the Geonim of Rav Shelanu that he had never, in all his days, engaged in idle conversation.” According to Goldman “the desire alone for knowledge lured him and held him in willing and obedient servant in its power. It is reported that Marx’s teachers observed of him that he could browse in a library for days at a time, “even if he had been locked up there and restricted to a diet of bread and water. What others looked upon as toil and dreary vistas of boredom was to him the pleasure of his life. Research was nourishment; palaeography, bibliography, typograph history were the call of kin; the rustling of a manuscript was sweet music; the colophon of an incunabulum was superb beauty; the collecting of books was thrilling adventure; the name of the immortal Steinschneider was an awe-inspiring memory.”

Goldman notes that coming from a wealthy and successful family of bankers, Marx “could easily have turned out to be rich man’s son or dilettant or Schoengeist.” Goldman calls him “to the manner born” Marx did not become a “dandylion” but a ‘Jewish lion, expert in Hebrew printing, Manuscripts, and incunaala, or what Goldman calls “a man of the book.” Marx’s memory was amazing as he knew the contents of thousands of printed and unprinted books and the whereabouts of every private collection, collector, and book dealer. Marx knew the bibliographical information to be

reply to the letter on the subject of astronomy that he received from Abraham bar Hiyya; These topics, and many others Marx emphasized the pearls awaiting to be found in the rare ms. Of the JTSA.

158 Solomon Goldman reports that Marx witnessed his father in law David Tzvi Hoffman jumping up from dinner to pen some insight that came to him for his research while waiting for the next course, making his motto: nulla dies sine linea (no day without writing a line). Hoffman was an iluyei called the Wunder kind of Verbo. Hoffman traced the lines of development and evolution of the Mishnah and Midrash as well as championing Biblical exegesis in a traditional modality. Like Cassutto he brought down the shaky foundations of Higher Biblical Criticism noting a “faulty knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish law upon which many of its theories were based”. Hoffman however was not a stranger to non-jewish culture being a classist of Greek and Latin.

159 Ibid., p. 15.; Schechter on first meeting Marx called Marx “a very nice young fellow, a quite mature and competent scholar.”

160 Goldman classifies Marx scholarship in 4 categories: (1) descriptions of manuscripts, incunabula, books printed later than 15th century, (2) presenting new information or disproving or authenticating old information, (3) Stimulating investigators to further research, (4) buling the libraries collections (a full time job at that).


162 Ibid., 2.
found in the works of many scholars. Marx could also read the handwritings in more languages than he had fingers and toes employing amazing skill in palaeography.

Goldman as well as writing on the scholar’s intellectual traits does not ignore his ethical character and middot tovet. Goldman writes, “his kindness, his readiness to help all who turn to him, his respect for the labors of others, and his considerateness for their feelings, sensibilities, and reputation. How can anyone writing about him overlook such charming commonplaces as the fact that all through the years this eminent scholar has carried in his pockets sweets to be given to children coming his way; or that he has delighted in lifting a child by its tiny hands above his head. Or can one forget on the one hand, the graciousness that has moved him to greet every act of generosity or indication of learning with warm praise, that prompted him to mention the names of young scholars side by side with those of the most celebrated savants, that led him to fill his pages with acknowledgment of indebtedness to teachers, colleagues, students, and friends and on the other the modesty that has inhibited him from including in all the hundreds of papers he wrote, a single autobiographical item, or volunteering the least information about any of his talents or the languages he possesses. Who, reading the many reports he has published on the library, will gain, in the press of tributes he pays to so many benefactors, the faintest inkling of the fact that he was the master builder of that infamous institution.”

When Marx spoke it was not about himself. He is someone who did not say what he knows, but knows what he says. His approach is informational to add exact knowledge not to obsfugate and stylistically embellish sophisticated theses. Goldman writes, “His main interest is to add to the fund of exact knowledge; to confirm and demonstrate or to contest and refute the correctness of a date, the authenticity of a fact, trustworthiness of a source; or to do the same with respect to the validity of a claim put forth in behalf of causes and motives operating in the affairs of people and individuals. Facts, facts, facts are paramount with him. With undisciplined conjecturing, vagueness, and indifference, he will show no patience. He is the first to hail comprehensive, architectonic histories of whole periods or countries, or flowing descriptions of mediaval synagogues, menorahs, or haggadot, provided they do not substitute rhetoric for data. For he regards the giving heed to particulars as the sine qua non of his craft, and he will unearth a detail at great effort and set it forth with the seriousness with which he does a cardinal


164 Marx would reunite manuscripts based on his recall of orthographies. For example in 1908 he purchased from a Palestinian dealer a defective copy of Bahya ben Asher’s Kad ha-Qemah and in 1928 he identifies at a glance 8 pages offered to him by the same dealer as belonging to that copy. In 1903 the JTSA came into possession of the second half of a volume of R. Zerahyah HaLevi’s critical notes on Alfasi. In 1923 Dr. Marx recognized in a mass of new ms. Acquired by the JTSA the first half of that volume. When a Yemenite dealer brought him a bag full of innumerable fragments Marx instantly pulled out the colophon page belonging to the 2nd part of Rambam which he bought on behalf of JTS 8 years earlier. He referred to his efforts of reuniting texts as “assembling fugitives of Israe and bringing about the reunion of the exiles” (23). His work of gathering and collecting sefarim for JTSA was one in which the books referred to as “redeeming the captives.”

point.” Marx also brought to light many obscure and lost texts. Marx also contributed to authorship questions. He also cleared up demographica and statistical approximations. Marx also cleared up orthographical font identification. Marx devoted great attention as well to accurate dating. In womens’ history Marx also made discoveries. With regards to Christian-Jewish interaction Marx also

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166 Ibid., p.13.; This attention to factoids is illustrated by Goldman for example: Thus Marx notes that in a certain Yemenite ms Psalm 118 was copied in all kinds of geometrical designs; that in another the Talmudic story of the Hurban is followed by a list of days for fasts; that a certain scribe had the curious name of Abner ben Ner ha-Sharoni; that in the Hijar edition of the Turim one volume has a lion in a black border and antoher in a blue border; that R. Jacob Landau’s A Gur was the first printed book to include an approbation; that a Bologna edition of the Psalms concludes with the birkat hamazon; that a Lisbon incunabula and an Egyptian manuscript both contained musical indications for the sounding of the Shofar; that Maimonides had coined a Hebrew word for a minerals which was overlooked by Ben Yehudah (in his multivolume Etymologica dictionary of the Hebrew language); that a Yemenite Pentateuch probably a copy to the text of ben Asher, was bound in an unusual box binding; that the format of two song books from Aden was most strange - exceedingly long and curiously narrow; that a certain scholar had purloined 2 manuscripts when their owners refused to lend them to him, etc. (p.14); Marx’s mission is informative and search for facts, often leaving subjective theology to theologians. Goldman makes clear that Marx’s descriptions of books are models of precision, preciseness, and thoroughness resembling the glossiata at times of the Tosafists. Goldman also refers to Marx’s “eagle eye” for distinguishing unique features in identifying ms. (p.16). Not a detail escapes the comprehensive scope of Marx’s ms. Descriptions focusing not only on dimensions but quality of parchment, color of ink, calligraphy, inking, literal transcription of title pages and colophons, factotum initials, catchwords, marings, ornaments, lacunae, ruptures, erasures, obscurities, printers, printing establishments, misprints, bad readings, methods of reference, number of editions and variations, commentaries and super commentaries, catalogues, provenance of famous collectors (p.18). In short Marx thoroughness of bibliographical, biographical, and historical data is astounding.

167 For example Solomon Dubno discovered a ms. Containing the writings pertaining to Rambam, a letter written by R. Sheshet ha-Nasi ben Isaac of Saragossa and addressed to the scholars of Lunel, in which a Spanish scholar criticized R. Meir Abulafia for his attack on Maimonides for vies on tihayat ha-maytim. In 1935 Marx published the complete text of this document from an Adler ms. In 1926 Marx brought to light the Correspondence between the rabbis of Provenance and Rambam over astrology and Marx exposed how rabbis who were brilliant Talmudists and pious condemning avodah zarah entangled in superstition and the occult. Marx lets us hear the voice of reason and rationalism in the Rambam’s condemnation of such foolishness. Recently Dr. Norman Strickman has published a work titled, _Without Red Strings or Holy Water_ on the Rambam’s rejection of avodah zarah, superstition, and other irrational beliefs.

168 For example Marx authenticated a quote by R. Joseph Kimhi establishing ibn Gabriol’s claim to the authorship of _The Choice of Pearls_. In another instance Marx makes a claim that it is highly probably that the enigmatic Paltiel, portrayed in the Chronicle of Al-Muizz is none other than Jauhar.

169 Marx determined the exact number of Jews in Spain generally and in Castile in particularly prior to the Expulsion of 1492.

170 Marx proved that the first books to have been printed in Africa and the Balkans were the Abudraham of 1521 for which type was imported from Portugal, and the 1493 Hebrew incunabulum of Constantinople.

171 For example Marx establishes that the printing press in Cairo dates back to at least 1562 and that in Damascus to 1605 and that at the end of the 16th century Donna Reyna, the widow of Joseph Nasi, duke of Naxos, who put a press in her home.

172 For example Marx showed that Rashi’s daughter Rachel and her husband Eliezer changed their names calling themselves Belle-Assez and Joselin. Marx also uncovered how an old fashioned rabbi and Talmudist in asmall town in Moravia wrote to Steinschneider, Marx’s teacher, in the first half of the last century, and of a responsum of David Hoffmann on the attitude of Jewish law towards womens’ suffrage.
made discoveries. Marx also brought to light subjects in certain rishonim. Marx had a way to uncover blind spots and interdisciplinary connections and relate disparate texts. Marx was the quintessential biographer and wrote hundreds of portraits of great rabbis.

A.S.W. Rosenbach American bookseller quipped, “Europe had its Steinschneider American has its Marx.”

Rebekah Kohut refers to Marx as “modest and unassuming” despite his great accomplishments noting that “he will tell you little about himself preferring instead to speak about the precious treasures he gathered from all parts of the world for the JTSA library. Marx advises and guides countless scholars with dissertations and books. Love of languages, passion for books, and ancient manuscripts, and broad humanitarianism.” Kohut further notes Marx’s building the collection from a mere 5 thousand books and 3 manuscripts in 1903 when he began at the age of 25 years to a collection in 1950s of 140 thousand books and 7 thousand manuscripts. Kohut notes Marx generosity of time and help in guiding many scholars at JTSA with their studies and materials available in the library for research. Kohut writes, “He has encouraged a great deal of study in original sources, especially in the field of the Responsa, those compendia of questions and answers on the Law accumulated over centuries of Jewish experience.” Rebecca Kohut notes that Marx took pride in vicarious contributions to Jewish learning by stimulating, giving generously of his time and knowledge, and helping others. She writes, “In many unobtrusive ways, Professor Marx has shown that selfless loyalty to his friends that is all too rare among men in these unmoral days. Others can speak better than I of his unique contributions to Jewish bibliography and history and of his efforts to preserve the scattered treasures of Jewish learning. I can speak only of the man I know, the warm, personality and the generous heart. Sympathetic almost to a

173 For example Marx showed that Dante when writing the Divine Comed had before him Jacob ben Makir’s Almanach. Don Gazalo de Vivero bishop of Salmanaea, ordered in his will, that there should be placed in the library of his church together with his other books certain treatises of Abraham Zacuto. Shemtov ben Jamil whose children were baptized in Spain and who had himself escaped with his life, summoned all his strength and composed in his old age a book, entitled, _Keter Shemtov_, the bereaved father having hoped in the wise to perpetuate his name. Four pages survive of his tragic book.

174 For example Greatz book on Die Heilige Namen des Gottes, is not a new subject but can be found for instance in the rishon, Rabbi Kalonymos ben Kalonymos who wondered at the variation of the divine names in Genesis 1-11.

175 For example following Steinschneider’s interest in history of science and medicine of the medieval ages, Marx brings a quote from Islamic texts related to Maimonides by ibn Abi Usaybia and Arab in his Arabic history of physicians in which the Muslim judge pays tribute to the Jewish philosopher and physician the Rambam. Ibn Abi Usaybia writes: Galen’s medicine is only for the body; that of Abu Imran is suited for body and soul at the same time. If with his knowledge he had made himself the physican of the century he would have cured it with his knowledge from the sickness of ignorance. If the moon had resorted to his art, it certainly would have obtained the perfection it lacks. On the day of full moon he would cure it of its spots, and from its disease on the day of conjunction. A long article devoted to Rambam Marx also brings to our attention from another Arabic texts of a Dictionary of Scientists.

176 Goldman feels that the best of Marx’s biographical pieces besides the well told tale of Norsa is his Rab Saadia Gaon concise substantive work.

177 Kohut, Rebecca, “Alexander Marx” in Alexander Marx jubilee volume on the occasion of his 70th Birthday, NY, NY, 1950, xi

178 Ibid, xii
fault, very modest, he is always ready to sacrifice his few duty-free hours in order to help others.”

Clearly Goldman is alluding to Maimonides description of the Aristotelian gentleman who remembers the good others do him, but boasts not on the good he does others. Except with carrying himself with utmost modesty, going not to the mean but extreme, as Moses is described not just as humble, but very humble. Goldman notes this trait of humility exemplified not by Marx listing of his accomplishments but rather if on rare occasions he makes any reference to himself, it is “for the things he has left undone or does not know.” Ralph Waldo Emerson had noted, “the great always introduce us to facts; the small introduce us to themselves.”

Jacob Minkin notes, “Among the small group of scholars whom the late Solomon Schechter succeeded in attracting to this country for the reorganization of the JTSA Marx was perhaps the most unique and interesting figure.” Time in army “took stoop out of his shoulders for which Jewish scholars are notorious.” “He has not only collected the greatest treasures of Jewish wisdom through the ages under 1 roof, he has created an atmosphere for Jewish scholarship, made the Jewish book a thing to be loved and reered, and his library a mecca for students and scholars far beyond the limits of the city” Trained students in the tools of Jewish scholarship in consulting early editions, rare prints, unpublished manuscripts, and source materials. His standards are high, his demands severe and exacting; he will accept nothing but what is motivated by the loftiest ideal of scholarship. He is as critical towards himself as he is towards others. He loathes nothing as much as half-knowledge, sham learning, and dilettantism that masquerades in the guise of scholarship. He is sober, judicious, and passionate, but also bold in correcting errors of fact or judgment, no matter how sanctified by age or authority. There is no finer index to this side of Professor Marx’ character, the moral core of the man, and his passionate, almost religious worship of truth than his brief monograph, Aims and Tasks of Jewish Historiography. (75).”

Menachem Schmelzer: “At a time when Jewish studies are gaining wider and wider acceptance and recognition on the American Jewish scene…… in 198 at the 100th anniversary of Marx birth, few would challenge assumption, ‘that he is considered one of the chief architects of the phenomenal growth of classical Jewish scholarship in this country.” Providence= 4 captives who carried Jewish learning from Babylonia to the Jews of Europe is one of many examples which illuminates how new sites of Jewish studies evolved before the decline and demise of others. Schechter was successful and instrumental in transplanting the East to the West European modes of learning to a new environment. David Zvi Hoffman was his father-in-law and he received training from prominent German professors in methodology of research, in history, and in the use of manuscripts and early editions for the preparation of critical texts….. With uncanny bibliographic acumen he searched for manuscripts unique printed books, very scarce and out of print publications, etchings and broadsides basic texts and ephemeral

179 Ibid, xxiii.
180 See Rambam’s understanding of virtue as the mean except in 2 character traits of never getting angry and being very humble; ethics chart at http://libguides.tourolib.org/c.php?g=114169&p=743040
181 Gldman provides examples of Marx’s confessions that he is ignorant of Italian, that he understands nothing of musical intervals (by the way Steinschneider could play fugues of Bach), that he is no specialist in Arabic literature, that he is unable to identify certain quotations, that he does not qualify to emend the text of a medieval Hebrew poem, that his manifestly brilliant articles on Maimonides are no more than an inadequate outline; that his labors on Steinschneider were intended only to provide material for the future biographer.
pamphlets all relating to Jewish history and literature in the widest sense of the word. As a result of 50 years of dedicated and single minded search for such treasures the Seminary library became quantitatively as well as qualitatively one of the most significant Jewish book collections ever assembled. That he succeeded in this endeavor is due not only to the great impact of his master had on him but to his total devotion to the perpetuation of Jewish learning. Helping create and develop the organizational structure for scholarship. Figure in JPS, AAJR [American Academy Jewish research], Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation

His mastery of the materials of history and of languages became proverbial. He published articles in many languages and was at home in classical and Semitic languages. Marx contributed monographs and articles to journals on a wide variety of subjects, published two volumes of collected essays (Studies in Jewish History and Booklore=26 essays (1944); Essays in Jewish Biography (1947)), and with Max L. *Margolis wrote A History of the Jewish people (1927, 19622). This pioneering work, stressing economic and social life, organization and legal status, offers the general reader a soundly researched, authoritative, and objective Jewish history in one volume. Marx amassed a private collection of 10,000 books. The JTS library on his arrival in 1903 contained 5,000 volumes and 3 manuscripts. At his death it possessed 165,000 books and over 9,000 Hebrew, Samaritan, Aramaic, and Yiddish manuscripts, comprising the largest Judaica collection in the world. Marx's ability to determine a manuscript's age merely by looking at it was legendary. His annual reports of the library's growth, containing a detailed description of materials acquired, were eagerly awaited by bookmen and scholars. 600 page volume under title, Bibliographical Studies and Notes on Rare books and Manuscripts in the library of the JTSA, 1st 10 chapters of critical edition of Seder Olam. And Rabbi Bezalel Aschkenazi’s Kelalei Ha-Talmud and the textual traditions of Seder Rav Amram Gaon. JQR.

His sister, Esther, married S.Y. Agnon who was a close friend of Gershom Scholem.

His brother Moses (1885–1973) was also a bibliographer and librarian. Best known for his contributions to the field of Hebrew incunabula and 16th-century Hebrew printing, he was a founder of the Soncino Gesellschaft and a Berlin publisher. He issued, inter alia, bibliophile editions of early works by his brother-in-law S.Y. Agnon, and co-edited with Aron Freimann in the 1920s the Thesaurus Typographiae Hebraicae Saeculi XV. In 1926 he went to the United States and joined the staff of the Hebrew Union College Library in Cincinnati. Retiring as head cataloger in 1963, he served briefly as curator of rare books and then settled in Israel. Much of Marx's research in early Jewish printing remained unpublished.

6. Rabbi Efraim Oshry 1914-2003

Oshry compiled a five volume work in Hebrew of the responses, titled Shaalot U’Teshuvot Mimaamakim (“Questions and Answers From the Depths”). This was later translated into a one-volume work titled Responsa From the Holocaust.

(1914–2003), rabbi and halakhic authority, known primarily for his book She’elot u-teshuvot mi-ma’amakim, a collection of halakhic rulings issued in the Kovno (Kaunas) ghetto during the Holocaust
period. Ephraim (Efroim) Oshry was born in Kupishok, in the district of Panevėžys (Ponevezh) in Lithuania. He studied in the finest yeshivas in Lithuania—Khelm, Ponevezh, and Keneset Yisra’el in Slobodka. Oshry discussed halakhic issues and the clarification of Talmudic passages with prominent authorities, including Ḥayim Ozer Grodzenski and Avraham Duber Shapira, with whom he maintained a particularly close relationship.

Oshry spent WWII in Kovno Lithuania in homes of Rav Elchanon Spector, Rav nosson Tzvi Finkel, Rav Avrham Dov Ber Kahana Shapiro, Rav Elchanon Wasserman, and Rav Avroham Grodzensky. Rav Oshry lived in the Kovna Ghetto during the Nazi occupation with his fellow teachers of the Slobadka Yeshiva. Rav Oshry in clandestine baked matzos, gathered layning of torah, and megilas Esther readings on Purim.

The Nazis made Rabbi Oshry the custodian of the warehouse where Jewish books were stored for a planned exhibit to the artifacts of the extinct Jewish race. As a result Rabbi Oshry was able to draw on many of those scholarly volumes for the questions asked of him. In 1942 the Nazis issued a decree prohibiting Jews from assembling in shuls or studying torah. Rabbi Oshry taught torah in secret in hideouts. It was in these places that rabbi Oshry fielded sheilas that became a part of Mimakim. Determining to preserve these questions for posterity, Rabbi Oshry recorded them on scraps of paper of discarded bags and placed them in buried cans. Rabbi Oshry survived the war and unearthed the receptacles containing the scraps of paper and took them with him when he began his journey across Eastern Europe togerher with 65 Yeshiva lite orphaned boys arriving in Rome where he set up a yeshiva. There rabbi Oshry deciphered the scribbled questions and reconstructed his answers. It took 17 years to complete what turned out to be a 5 volume set of Responsa. Rabbi Oshry had little money but 9 children. To paraphrase the prophet Yirmiyahu “I am the man who saw the affliction. I wanted to record for the future generations the spiritual condition of the Jews in the Kovno ghetto. Although we were reduced virtually to an animal existence physically, spiritually we retained our self esteem and love of text. The people in the ghetto cared so much about living as torah Jews that they came to me to make sure they were living by the letter of the law. And this is what I want the people to know today about how living halakhcially is a form of resistance The Jews could not have offered a more spiritually powerful resistance to the Nazis than praying and learning torah under unspeakable conditions. Fighting can be not only physical but can be spiritual. Physically we had nothing but spiritually we could fight. If we gave up on our torah life we would certainly have less than nothing. We would have been reduced to the level the Germans wanted to reduce us to be at. We had no place to go. No one to help us. Event hse who escaped to the forests to join the partisans, 90% were killed by the Lithuanians. We were surrounded on all sides by enemies and we had not weapons. There was no possiblity of oranizing an army. Physically we were enslaved but n spirit were never became slaves.

In the Kovno ghetto during the Nazi occupation, Oshry taught in the Yeḥezkel Kloyz and in Tiferet Bahurim, lecturing before the community at large on such topics as the place of science in the Gemara. Throughout the Nazi occupation and immediately thereafter, he was the source for answers to questions raised by Jews who wished to follow Jewish law even under the most extreme conditions.
Some of the questions had been directed to Shapira, who was ailing and who consequently redirected them to Oshry; many other questions were sent directly to him. Oshry recorded the queries and answers on scraps of paper that he buried in containers in the ghetto; these writings were found following the liberation.

With the final deportation from Kovno beginning on 8 July 1944, Oshry and 33 other Jews concealed themselves in a hiding place they had carefully prepared in advance. On 1 August, the Russians liberated them. Oshry then served for some months as the rabbi for the remnant of the Kovno Jewish community, working at rehabilitating Jewish life. Among other things, he provided Jewish burial to about 2,000 Jews who had been executed, and identified children who had been concealed in monasteries and hidden with Christian families. After leaving Kovno, Oshry established yeshivas in a number of refugee camps in Austria. In 1946, he arrived in Rome and established—with other rabbis—the Me’or ha-Golah yeshiva, which he then headed.

In 1950, Oshry and some of his students moved to Montreal, and in 1952 he settled in New York to set up a place of Torah, where he served as rabbi of Beth Hamedrash Hagadol on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. From then until his death he devoted all his energies to his congregation, to Jewish education, and particularly to writing about the Holocaust and perpetuating its memory. He headed an association of rabbis who were concentration camp survivors, and often expressed his views on issues related to the Holocaust. He opposed the normalization of relations between Jews and Germans.

Oshry’s uniquely important work is his four-part She’elot u-teshuvot mi-ma’amakim (1959–1976), in which he collected the halakhic rulings that he had issued during the Holocaust and immediately thereafter. (A much shorter work, Divre Efrayim . . . Kuntres me-‘emek ha-bakha’, appeared in 1949 in New York.) This work is the most comprehensive collection of responsa from the Holocaust period, containing invaluable historical material about daily life in the Kovno ghetto, especially concentrating on its religious dimensions. As Oshry himself states, he draws “a comprehensive and striking picture of a deeply rooted and creative Jewish community standing on the brink of destruction . . . but nevertheless all of its thoughts and concerns are directed to matters of Torah and religion, matters of spirit and eternity” (vol. 2, p. 3). It should be noted that some of the questions may never have been actually asked, but rather were composed by the author (for example, vol. 1, no. 27, describes how the Nazis used Jewish women for institutionalized prostitution. 182

7. Dr. Chaim Leib Vilsker183 (zI) [1919-1988], son in law of Rav Menachem Mendel Gluskin (ztsl)

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182 See http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Oshry_Ephraim
183 Where not otherwise noted (for example (1) documents sent by Dr. Emanuel Gluskin) this section is based on a translation from Russian to English by Dr. Marina Korsakova Kreyn of Shulamit Shalit’s article appearing online.
According to documents Vilsker was Leib Haimovich, in Russian Lev Yefimovich, and in Israel, Arie Vilsker. Vilsker was born in 1919 in Shumsk Volyn province, then Poland, now in the Ternopil region in Ukraine. He took his pen name Leib Shumsky after the place of his birth. His father was the owner of a seltzer water plant. Lev attended a halutsian Zionist school and when a teenager he took hashsharut—technical training for Aliyah. He trained to become a mechanic in Eretz Yisrael. Lev continued singing the Halutsian Zionist songs throughout his life and was known to stroll throughout St. Petersburg singing these songs.

Lev had two grandfathers that were Talmud scholars with whom Lev learned. Later a Talmud teacher was employed but his grandfathers also continued teaching and testing Lev on Friday at the end of the week. Meanwhile a grandmother would invite Lejbele to another room where she secretly gave him a small glass of wine and piece of Lekach honey cake as reward for his learning, “a taste for the world to come.” That was an incentive but later he learned lishma. His mother would serve the Talmud teacher with great respect and honor always preparing a glass of tea for the teacher. The Melamed would say, “Gemara never cools down, yet a tea can cool down.” Die gemorah vaet nit kalt vern, oon dee tay ken kalt vern.” The Talmud teacher initiated Vilsker into the rhythms and warp and woof of the Aramaic of the Bavli with its sing song cadences of (what does this mean?) and (how do we know this?)

At the age of 20 the Western Ukraine was annexed by the Soviet Union and Lev was drafted in the army and sent to the Far East. There he suffered from varicose veins and sores and was admitted to a military hospital. When the war broke out he was enlisted as a military railwayman first in Galichi and then in Estonia. As a perk of military service Lev was able to petition to study in University. Lev thus went to Leningrad to study at the University. First he entered the French Department of the Institute of Foreign Languages. Eighteen months later Lev transferred to the Department of Assyriology and Ancient Near East at the Institute of Oriental Studies of Leningrad University. And thus Lev’s good foundation of Hebrew and Aramaic from his youth reentered his life. His student colleagues includes Misha, a future professor at Haifa University, Michael Geltser and my aunt Gita Gluskina who wrote her dissertation on the work of Rabbi Yehudah Alharizi, author of the Takemoni and a translation of Rambam’s Moreh haNevukhim. In January of 1949 Lev proposed to Gita Gluskina and in December of 1949 their son Emmanuel was born. Emanuel is a doctor of Electrical Engineering in Israel and has sons in Kollel in Jerusalem.

In 1950 Lev graduated from the University with a diploma of Linguist-Semitologist and received a position in the State Public Library named after ME Saltykov Shchedrin at the department of Hebrew and


184 The technical knowledge proved useful and many years later he was able to change the lock all by himself in a cooperative apartment, and this made the whole of his family very proud
Yiddish books, which was later renamed the Department of literatures of Asia and Africa. There he was renamed Lev Yefimovich by the staff. He was a librarian and advanced to senior editor to senior researcher.

Professor Vinnikov wrote a letter of recommendation that Dr. Vilsker saved and later relayed to his son Dr. Emanuel Gluskin who made Aliyah and lives in Jerusalem. Dr. Gluskin sent me the letter in Russian which in translation reads:

Letter of Recommendation

Vilsker, L. H, born in 1919, had entered the Oriental Department of Leningrad State University (named after L. A. Zhdanov and awarded the State medal after Lenin) as a second-year student of the Division of Assyriology and Hebraistics in 1996. / Before that, Vilsker had attended the Leningrad Pedagogical Institute of Foreign languages/. L. H. Vilsker have been studying seriously the Semitic languages / Arabic, ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian/ and he also devoted a lot of attention to philosophy and history by taking a number of both general and special courses of lectures, and by conducting an extensive review of literature. In addition, comrade Vilsker has been studying independently the recently found Ugarit manuscripts that represent the extremely important cultural monuments. These resulted in his course project, “Laryngeal sounds in Ugarit language,” which demonstrates a profoundness of the author’s approach to the analysis of the poorly understood and complex linguistic problems.

He dedicated his Diploma project to the word-formation in Hebrew language — this is a question of considerable interest for linguistics, which was not explored properly by science. This Diploma project had received the highest praise from the Committee of the Department of Arabic Philology in May of 1950.

The solid training received by comrade Vilsker at the University, as well as completion by him, independently, the serious scientific works mention above, give reason to believe that he is thoroughly prepared for conducting scientific work and scientific research.

Senior researcher of Institute of Oriental Studies of Academy of Sciences, USSR

Professor Vinnikov

Despite strong recommendations, His scholarly life was not easy particularly do to the lack of publishing opportunities in Russia. He was to many an unknown. Who could know the Russian Hebrew philologist Lev Vilsker if there was nowhere for him to be published? He was know to some extent at the Leningrad State Public Library named after M.E. Saltykov-Shchedrin, where Vilsker worked for almost 30 years and
of course was admired by other Hebraists and friends including Alex Tarn,185 James Lieberman,186 Eliezer Rabinovitch,187 Teaching positions were even more rare than publishing opportunities recalling for us Gershom Scholem’s assessment of the situation in Germany during his doctoral studies.188 Clearly the lack of Jewish studies opportunities was much more severe in Communist Russia than in pre-Nazi Germany.

Dr. Ezra Fleischcr, expert in Medieval Hebrew poetry, and pioneer of the Hebrew poems in the Cairo Geniza, memorialized the following about Vilsker in the Yediot Achronot on March 13, 1988:

“The passing of Leo Vilsker is a great loss. Our world mourns not just the important research of this great man, an aristocrat of spirit, who was a messenger from an unfriendly country that persecuted him and Jewish scholarship. Leo Vilsker was a colleague with a generous and selfless soul. Many Israeli scientists have lost a friend who inspired us from afar (in Leningrad) with his never tiring research and answer them?”

185 Tarn writes in response to Shulamith Shalit’s article on which my section on Vilsker is based of the “intelligence, civilization, and even sense of humor of the Vilsker family” : Alex Tarn
Beit Aryeh, Israel - at 2013-01-04 12:19:32 EDT
Only now read this article four years ago and I cannot help but respond.

Thanks to his friendship with the son of Lev Yefimovich Vilsker (יתמר) and Gita Mendelevna Gluskin (גיטל), I had the privilege to know both when I still lived in St. Petersburg; I used to visit their apartment on Vasilevsky. And today, Boris and Katia will be visiting me - so that’s a coincidence.

All this wonderful family is an example of intelligence [civilized behavior] in the highest sense of the word. They are the scientists, scribes, moneyless that have saved, despite being swept through the Stalinist terror and the war, and the mud and filth of horrific Soviet life, some implausible emotional softness, kindness, and constant unconditional willingness to help, to respond practically to any human need somehow caught up in their sight. I also owe them a lot.

I want to tell a funny story that I heard from Boris. To put it mildly, they [Vilskers] were not rich. When Lev Efimovitch would go out to buy bread, dressed in his threadbare coat and with a red shopping bag in his hand, he was not distinguished from the good-for-nothings that were crowding at the entrance to the grocery store. Hence this limportant specialist in the field of Jewish medieval poetry would be regularly stopped with a traditional offer "to be the third" [to share a bottle of alcohol]. Once he laughingly told his son about it. – "Well, what do you answer them?" - Boris asked, knowing his father’s unwillingness and inability to offend people with the word "no." – "I always tell them the same thing: "Not now ..." - replied Lev Yefimovich. "Not now." This was the essence of Lev Yefimovich. This expression became our proverb.

186 James L. Lieberman
Yekaterinburg, Russia - at 2013-01-04 11:30:38 EDT
Once I was acquainted with Lev Yefimovich and Gita Mendelevna. They were, if I may say so, my "godparents" in medieval Hebrew poetry. And I always remember that and I will always be grateful to them. I am grateful to fate for having brought me to these wonderful people. Meeting and communicating with them was not just pleasant and helpful; this largely changed me amd my attitude towards life and people. 4 January 2013.

187 Eliezer Rabinovich- at 2010-03-02 15:03:12 EDT
Somehow I missed this great article before and came across it just now. This article is about a dear person with whom we used to be close and whose books, with his inscriptions, are on my bookshelves. Thank you for the article.

188 Scholem writes, “To be sure the universities did not encourage Jewish studies in those days. Today, when there are hardly any Jews remaing in Germany all the German Universities are eager to establish chairs in Judaica. But in those days when Germany had a lively Jewish population in great ferment, not a single university or provincial ministry would hear of Jewish studies. What Heine wrote is quite true: If there were only one Jew in the world, everyone would come running to have a look at him, but now that there are too many people try to look away.)

See: Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to the Kabbalah” in Commentary, May 1980: 69, 005, p. 40
quest for understanding, with his fiery supreme creative passion, and who at the same time astounded us with his knowledge, and rare modesty.”

The scholarly journal Kiryat Sefer, featured Vilsker’s photo portrait with a long article by Professor Fleischer dedicated to the Vilsker’s discovery of unpublished poems of Rav Yehudah HaLevy and Rav HaLevy’s friendship with Rabbi Moshe ibn Ezra. This article had been ready to send to print, but then came the unexpected and untimely passing of Leib Vilsker suddenly in St. Petersburg. Fleischer made changes in the introduction and footnotes and the editors accepted Fleischer’s request to include a special page with a photo of Vilsker. This publishing of a photo in Kiryat Sefer was the first time in the 62 year history of journal Kiryat Sefer first published since 1926. In this photo Vilsker is wearing a white sweater that he inherited from his scholar brother in Law Joseph Amusin who married Leah Gluskina Amusin, the sister of Vilsker’s wife Gita Gluskiina. In the article by Dr. Fleischer focus was upon the youthful years of Yehudah HaLevy and to the beginning of his friendship with Rabbi Moses ibn Ezra, a venerable poet. The subtitle reads, “according to the research of Arie Vilsker.” The article was already sent for printing when a message about the sudden death of Lev Vilsker had arrived from Leningrad. Professor Fleischer hastened to make necessary changes in the introduction, main text, and notes. The present text had to be changed to past tense. Fleischer insisted that for the first time in 62 years the journal allocate a special page for Arie Vilsker’s photograph. What followed after Vilsker’s passing was a tidal wave of popular newspaper articles and scholarly publications broadcasting the importance of Vilsker’s research.

Back in Russia the passing of Vilsker was marked by a number of obituaries that really did not capture the importance of Vilsker’s research for Jewish studies. However relatively a more comprehensive


191 Both Gita and Lea also received doctorates in Jewish studies. Gita published her disseratation on Rav Yehudah Alharizi’s work. Lea was a scholar of 2nd temple Judaism- including the works of Philo, Josephus, Dead Sea Scrolls, and the formation of the Mishnah. Gita and Lea were 2 of 4 sisters. Esther joined hashomer HaTzair and was punished by Soviet authorities by being sent to harsh conditions in Siberia. Sonia married a man named Minsk, whose son together was the famous ballet dancer Sasha Minsk. I met with Gita in Givatayim around Chanukah of 2004 and interviewed Dr. Gluskina primarilly with regards to her father the Av Bet Din of Minsk Rav Menachem Mendel Gluskin (ztl) the son in law of Rabbi Eliezer Rabinowitch who was the son in law of the Minsker Gadol, Rabbi Eliyahu Pearlman.
acknowledgement of the impact of Vilskers research did appear in Journal “Sovetish Heimland” (Soviet motherland), No 5, May 1988, Translated into by L. Belov on July 6th 1988, Jerusalem and reads:

Obituary for Vilsker

In the beginning of 70-s, there were publication by a new author in a journal “Sovetish Geimland.” The readers were immediately captivated by the unusual character of his materials that were published generally under the rubric “Our announcements.” It is possible to recognize the wide diapason of the author’s research by mentioning only some titles of his papers: “New materials for the History of Jews in Russia,” “Hymn to wisdom: chapter from the unknown book by Said ben Babshad,” “The unknown selected aphorisms by philosophers,” “About the history of printing among Jews,” “The source of Pushkiniana among Jews,” “A recently-found parable of Aesop, a Syrian version written in Jewish shrift,” “The unknown poems by Yehuda Ha-Levi....”

The author of these materials was Leib Vilsker, a Leningrad scientist, candidate of philological sciences.

Leib Vilsker was born in 1919 in a small town of Shumsk of Ternopol region in Ukraine. / From 1940 and till the end of WWII, he served in the Soviet Army. In 1950, he had completed his studies at the Department of Semitology and Hebraistics of Leningrad University. For several years he was in charge of the Department of Semitology at the Leningrad Public Library named after M. E. Saltykov-Schedrin. In 1970, he had defended his dissertation, “Samaritan Language” and received a degree of “candidate of philological sciences.” When this dissertation was published as a book in 1974, it was highly appreciated as an important study in semitology as well as a significant contribution to research in the history of Samaritans.

By dedicating his life to the problems of ancient Hebrew literature, Vilsker chose an unbeaten path. Each of his works, undoubtedly, manifests a unique discovery. Almost all his research papers that were published in the journal “Sovetish Geimland,” have been reprinted in Jewish and Hebrew press abroad, particularly his works about Yehuda Ha-Levi.

As a scientist, Leib Vilsker accomplished a lot in a filed of deciphering the unknown ancient Jewish texts which are located in the library archives in our country [Russia] and which nobody but him was able to study with such competence and pedantic attention to details. In this field, his work has the extreme significance for the world culture.

Several Vilsker works were left unfinished, on his desk. A few days before he died, he had sent to the journal an article about the unknown letters of H.—N. Byalik, which Vilsker had been working on during last few months of his life.

“Sovetish Geimland” has published two collections of L. Vilsker’ works, which were added to the journal publications under the name “Discovered Treasures,” and which included only some of his research papers; both these small books made a strong impression on readers. One can tell with confidence that there will be in the future no researchers of ancient Jewish literature, who would be able to do without discoveries made by L. Vilsker. For the history of ancient Jewish literature, his discoveries have made an invaluable contribution.

In bright memory of Vilsker

Journal “Sovetish Geimland” (Soviet motherland), No 5, May 1988

Translation from Hebrew to Russian by L. Belov July 6th 1988, Jerusalem
Unfortunately while Vilsker was alive his fame in Israel where he had never been able to get a VISA out of Russia to go to, was obscured due to the difficulties of publishing in Jewish related subjects in Russia where such research during Vilsker’s lifetime was not only not a priority but frowned upon.

Vilsker influenced the work of colleagues such as Haim Ratshabi, Nehemiah Aloni, Yosef Yahalom, Dov Yarden, and of course Ezra Fleischer. Fleischer referred to Vilsker as “the genius” (ha-iluey). Shulamit Shalit refers to Fleischer as Vilsker’s “guardian angel” analogously as Dov Boris Gaponova’s guardian angel in the area of belles lettres was Abaham Shlionsky who published a translation of the Hebrew Georgian epic, “The Knight in the Panther’s skin” of Rustaveli.192

Shalit shows how Vilsker was a relative unknown, who faced discrimination in Russia against Jewish scholarly matters in general which trickled down to his workplace the Leningrad State Public Library, named after ME Saltykov –Shehedrin. Shalit touches upon the great persecution of Jews under Soviet Hegemony. She writes, “In 1962 in Leningrad Vilsker visited a cousin of Gita, an Israeli. Gita says, “Leib went to hold her, on the street and they met other people from the Israeli group, one of the KGB photographed them. And for the “communication with foreigners”, the head of the library, a hefty anti-Semite made Vilsker to be removed from the department, where he worked in the speciality of Oriental Manuscripts, and was transferred to the acquisitions department.

The discomfort of surveillance193 under the Communists manifested itself throughout the Vilsker family as it did for many Soviet Jews. Gita Gluskina Vilsker told Shulamith Shalit: “At various times she and Lev were summoned by the authorities. He was "asked" to collect readers' conversations. "What kind of readers?" - He asked in response. - "But there are Jewish elders that visit your library – they dig in the Talmud and other religious literature, they converse..." And then he [the official] added that Vilsker must keep this conversation secret. Vilsker replied: "I have no secrets from my wife." He paused and added: "You know, everyone has his vocation, profession. You cannot do my job, and I cannot do yours." After that, Lev was not summoned anymore. As for Gita – this is a different story.” Gita’s sister Esther who joined Hashomer HaTzair was sent to Siberia for her Zionist activities. Although HaShomer Hatzair was a secular Zionist organization, in Russia there was not differentiation, for a Zionist was a Zionist of any political stripe. Thus the Baal HaTanya was arrested because of sending funds to Eretz Yisrael and his date of release is celebrated by Chabad Lubabitch to this day as a national and religious holiday. The pattern of the Baal HaTanya’s arrest under the Tzars, repeated itself in a different modality under the communists when Rav Menachem Mendel Gluskin (father of Gita Gluskina Vilsker) and his father in law

192 Shalit, Shulamit, “Aryeh Vilsker and his treasures 1919-1988: On the 90th Anniversary of his Birth”, accessed 5/12/16 at 12:00 pm. p.2; At URL
193 Jonathan Rose writes, “The Soviets as David Fishman illustrates cultivated their own hostility to expressions of Jewish culture, and after the liberation of Nazi occupied territories the Soviets often continued their literary vandalism begun by the Nazis. Before after and even during the war with Germany, Svoiet authorities suppressed reoprots of Nazi atrocities against the Jews. Russian scholar Arlen Blium draws on the archives of Scoiet censors to show that the crescendo of state-enforced anti-Semitism after the war was spearheaded by the suppression of Jewish authors, publishers, and even literary characters, as well as a complete ban on the publication of Yiddish books. There is good reason to believe that shortly before his death in 1953, Stalin was planning to deport the Jews of the USSR to the far reaches of Sieberia. The destruction of books may have been once again a first step toward the destruction of Jews”[ The Holocaust and the Book, p. 2]
Rabbi Eliezer Rabinowitch were arrested for religious activities. Reports indicate that the Rabbis were kept awake for 48 hours and then made to sign the false form: There is no religious persecution in Russia. It is told that Rav Gluskin’s flock tried to bring their Rabbi his talis and tefillin but the communists would not allow this, as the state was opposed to all religious activities amongst not only Jews but also Christians in their religionless state which Marx had warred against in proclaiming ‘religion as the opiate of the masses.’ Marx’s vision was that a a secular messianism, and as George Orwell shows in Animal Farm, and elsewhere, this is a failed secular messianism at that. Hobbes had advocated for a large bureaucratic state when he witnessed mob violence in a state of civil war. Thus the liberal communist state as a Leviathan bureaucracy, an Egyptian Bureaucracy of old, was born. However persecution of Jews ensued needless to say not from the radical left of Stalinist Russia for example in incidents like “the doctor’s plot” when Stalin feared Jewish doctors were trying to poison him, and the phenomena of the “beili case” which tapped into a 2000 year old blood libel accusation, but obviously dangers are documented from the radical right of the Nazi National Sociolaist party which also was run by a large bureaucratic state that fused the mastery of technology for example in rail transport and construction of crematoria, according to Richard Rubinstein, in the form of “techno-cracy” (technology + bureaucracy). More on technocracy in Judaica Librarianship can be found in the last section of this paper.

However even in ‘exile’ working in Acquisitions Leo also could bring invaluable library knowledge. By keeping his thoughts with Judaica and the Hebraic and Semitic linguistics, he ordered books from many foreign countries. When the researchers from abroad were coming to the library, they were stunned."He got acquainted with the scientific avenues in various fields, not forgetting Judaica, Hebrew and semitic linguistics, and wrote out a book from all countries. When the scientists came from abroad they were amazed (by Vilsker’s breadth, depth, and genius.). 194 thanks to Lev Vilsker] the library collection in Jewish subjects in Leningrad turned to be much richer than in Moscow! Moscow also had a great collection known as the Gunzberg collection from which many recent reprints of obscure rishonim have been made.

Five years later, a new head of the department categorically demanded to bring Vilsker back, for without him, the entire special collection became "stripped."

In 1979 Visker enjoyed a banquet in honor of his 60th anniversary. That evening, he heard a lot of good things. The next morning he was asked to retire. 195

Before this retirements in 1987 the library celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth fo A.S.Firkowicz. During the conference for the 200th anniversary Vilkser announced and presented the

194 Shalit, Shulamit, p.7
195 The retirement age in the Soviet Union was 55 for women and 60 for men
inscription of a slab that was carved in the Samaritan language\textsuperscript{196} dating to 383 CE. Collected by Firkowicz. Such contributions however were somewhat forgotten and Vilsker was forced to retire.

But he was full of energy, on the wings of love from all people around him. He looked (Gita reiterates) young and very handsome. But here came the hit! While on retirement, he learned that he could get another 12 rubles, in addition to the 120 rubles of pension (SSI), if he gets involved in a manual labor for a few months. And...he found a job of a simple bookbinder.

Shulamit Shalit further notes, “But then something unforeseen had happened. In a talented person, a confluence of bitter circumstances may, often unexpectedly, uncover new hidden properties of the soul, mind, character.”

When Lev Efimovich would "stumble" on such a poem, he did not know whether it was known to the world or was it a discovery. It was risky to publicly declare a discovery of the poem, and it was premature to publish about it. What if the poem was already published in some unknown edition?

What did he do? He would write down the first line, only a single line, and send it in a letter to Israel, to Ezra Fleischer; Vilsker knew that prof. Fleischer was the preeminent specialist in medieval Hebrew poetry. The venerable professor, extremely excited, would rush, like a high-spirited young man, to ħeyhal Shlomo (Solomon's Palace) to dug for hours in a huge catalogue containing records of all famous poems of medieval poets, and then send a response to Leningrad.

\textsuperscript{196} Shulamit Shalit in reference to a criticism of her article with regards to the understanding of the nature of the “Samaritan language” retorts: Shulamit Shalit Israel - at 2009-02-18 06:12:39 EDT
An answer to a nameless reader: The reader - at 2009-02-16 04:58:50 EDT article about Vilsker definitely informative and useful, although it is written in a sugary manner similar other publications of this author. it is not clear why the author and his Samaritan interlocutor do not know that the Samaritans use Aramaic language. Samaritan language does not exist.
If the Samaritans used Aramaic, Leo Vilsker would not call his book "Samaritan language." Dr. Boris Podolsky, an expert in Semitic languages (Tel Aviv University), explains: "The Samaritan Torah was written in the same Hebrew as the Jewish Torah. However, the Samaritans’ pronunciation is very different from our familiar pronunciation in the Hebrew language; this is why the scientists call this version of the Hebrew language the Samaritan language. Besides, the Samaritans, as well as Jews, had translated the Torah into Aramaic (already 2000 years ago); therefore it is meaningless to speak of Aramaic as the language of Samaritans."
One can read in the above-mentioned journal "A-B Hadashot ha-Shomron:” “The journal is published in 4 languages: ancient-Samaritan preserved from the time of the First Temple, Arabic, Hebrew, and English. The journal exists from 1935.”
More than half of the Samaritans that are living today in Holon, plus another 4 families (in Benjamin, Givat Ada, Ashdod and Matane), speak Hebrew. Before the first intifada, the Samaritans lived in Nablus, in the old town, but then they moved to Kiryat Luzza on Mount Gerizim. This segment of Samaritans speaks Arabic.
Take a note that in the presented tables offer Samaritan Alphabet and Written Letter. If desired, the reader could compare them with the Aramaic alphabet and the letter to see that the written letters are completely different.
I have received a call from Dr. David Joffe, a writer and reader of my site, who personally knew L. Vilsker. He thanked me for the publication and said that he found in it the precise description of Vilsker (as Dr. Joffe remembers him): an intelligent and knowledgeable scholar and a very warm person.
No! Nope! Unpublished! And by this way Vilsker discovers not one or two, but as many as 22 completely unknown poems of the great Yehuda ha-Levy. He analyses them and publishes his findings, with great difficulties, in "Sovetish Heimland" journal, that is, in Yiddish, while feeling undisguised suspicion towards himself. Gita’s reminiscences: "Lev was not a poet, but he was forced [by the circumstances] to make translations into Yiddish of the words by the great Yehuda ha-Levy! The journal was terribly afraid of any word in Hebrew. As an honest researcher, Lev would supplant the translation with a photocopy of an original. An editorial board’ footnote would say: "Original photo was omitted because of the lack of space." But there was an instance when, either by mistake or because the superiors were not present, one fragment’ facsimile in Hebrew was printed in the journal and the happy scientists in Israel, among them Ezra Fleischer, examined and studied every letter in it. What a story!

So, the first publication of Lev Vilsker’ research about the unknown poems of Yehuda ha-Levy (born not later than 1075 - died in 1141) appeared in the February issue of "Sovetish Heimland" journal, in 1982. Eight pages altogether. On April 7, there was an announcement about the publication in Israeli newspaper "Maariv".

Among those who first responded to this terrific publication were such connoisseurs of medieval poetry and literary historians and experts in Yiddish and Hebrew as Yosef Haim Crunch and Nagid, Jehuda Ratshabi David Iosifon, Dov Yarden and Nehemiah Aloni. The sensation literally rocked the whole scientific world.

Newspapers were first to respond and then the serious journals started responding. The precious treasure was not buried somewhere in a wilderness in a corner of the earth, not in a cave, but in one of the centers of the civilized world. Many rave responses and reviews reached the author. Inspired by them, Vilsker directed his intelligence and passion of a pioneer on the continued search and analysis of the findings. A year later, he published a new and almost twenty-page long article entitled "198 poems of Yehuda ha-Levy in unknown edition." This is how the term "Vilsker List” had appeared in the scientific literature, for among the mentioned 198 “first lines” of the works of Yehuda ha-Levy, the 111 were not mentioned in any other indexes, including the classic catalog by Shmuel David Luzzatto, that had been studied by the scientists for more than 150 years.

Among the first who responded to the first and the second publication of Vilsker in "Sovetish Heimland" was a rabbi and scholar David Yosifon, who, among other things, was the editor of three volumes - the books of Tanakh (Torah, Prophets, Writings) - with a translation into Russian (published by "Mossad ha-Rav Kook" in 1978). Perhaps you have it on your bookshelf. Originally from Poland, David Yosifon knew both Russian and Yiddish. David Yosifon wrote his second article for the newspaper "ha-Tsofe" on his
deathbed. His relatives had sent the article to an editor along with his letter: "I am writing these words in a hospital fortress" hadassa,” after a major surgery. It turned out that while walking on Jaffa street, I fell and lost consciousness. And though I cannot yet get out of bed, I think that this is my duty and pleasure to tell you that the scientist Leib Vilsker, from Leningrad, had made a new discovery and he had written about it in "Sovetish Heimland." I want and must ask for the attention of all the scientists and researchers towards that fact."

Last letter. The words of greeting from one scientist to another – across the Iron Curtain. Of course, they [Vilsker and Yosifon] were not acquaintances.

Later on, others will reference this article by David Yosifon. It is intelligent, insightful, and full of light and love.

In the similar way, “while descending to a grave” (in the same in 1983), Professor Nehemiah Aloni had blessed Vilsker and his labors. That was a reaction to the first article by Vilsker. Professor Aloni wrote in a journal “Sinai”(number 93), "We are waiting with great impatience (bhe kil’on eynaim) a continuation of his [Vilsker’] work in all its brilliance and depth. We learned more from his concise article than from the thick-winded volumes of other voluble authors.” After enumerating orderly the seven discoveries of Vilsker in the eight-page article, while giving them a clear scientific analysis, Aloni adds, "... and the most important discovery is the author himself, who, until yesterday, was not listed among the researcher-experts in the works of Yehuda ha-Levi but who had become the one from today."

A great scientific discovery gives impetus to entire scientific field nd entails an avalanche of new investigations and publications. Lev Vilsker managed to publish three more articles (altogether five), but there was already written the sixth paper that came out after his death. Professor Yosef Yahalom writes: "In the last article, Vilsker presents for the first time the entirely message of ha-Levy to his great patron in Granada, the poet Moshe Ibn Ezra, but ... in Yiddish. The text of the Hebrew original of this important manuscript was prohibited for printing, and the death of Vilsker had closed the last window through which we looked furtively, almost like thieves, into the world of Hebrew manuscripts in Leningrad, which was unknown to us." I hear in these words both anger and bitterness; don't we completely agree with them, while pondering over the fate of such scholars and heroes as Lev Vilsker, Joseph Amusin,197 and many others? Once the Iron Curtain fell, the notable Yosef Yahalom hurried to

197 As Lea Gluskin notes in her article, “The Life and Works of Joseph Amusin (1910-1984)” which appeared in Revue de Qumran 14:1, p.109-120, Amusin had a hard life not only in academia in Russia where appointments in Hebrew Philology and Jewish related matters were far and few in between, but
Amusin was born in turbulent times and his childhood coincided with WWI, the Revolution, and years of civil war. Yet Amusin’s father saw to his son’s Jewish education as a youngster. Lea writes, “Joseph Amussin often remembered his father advising him to learn Hebrew and the history of Jewish culture and saying that he would be able to learn all other things later, but not these precious areas of the soul of his people. The boy luckily encountered a very good teacher, a broad minded and educated man, who trained his pupil for serious studies, developed his intellect and became his first adult deeply esteemed friend” (p.109). Amusin became proficient in Hebrew to such a high level as a child that Amusin read mainly in Hebrew, even recreational reading such as Tolstoy’s “Cossacks” read in Hebrew translation. Amusin left his home Vitebsk (Belorussia) at the young age of 14 for ever, and came to the sophisticated Leningrad. In 1935 Amusin entered Leningrad University (Historical Dept). His early paper “Pushkin and Tacitus” was published in 1941 in Pushkinsskiy Vremenik. After graduation he was forced to enlist in the army and attained rank of lieutenant (1941-1945). During the Siege of Leningrad Amusin’s beloved father who encouraged him to pursue knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish texts, died of starvation and Amusin as the eldest son felt it his duty to support his mother (zl). Thus after the war he had to combine his scientific studies with work in order to earn money to support his mother as a matter of Kavod et Avikah VeEmekkahah. Amusin lectured in ancient history at the Leningrad Pedagogic Institute of Oriental Studies. His first dissertation was based on the Emperor Claudius famous letter to the Alexandrines and the Emperor’s policy towards Jews (P. Lond., 1912) as Amusin knew many languages including Latin and Greek. In 1949 Amusin received a post-doc degree. By that time he had published papers on the subject of Vesbnik dreney islorri, devoted to philological analysis of texts, carefully examining each word and expression, to determine historical facts. After receiving his degree Amusin encountered great discrimination on top of his hard life. Amusin could not find a job so he left Leningrad for Ulianovsk, the native city of Lenin, where he taught ancient history from 1950 to 1954 at the Pedagogical Institute publishing papers on Biblical exegesis. Two papers aroused special interest including “The designation of slaves in Hellenistic Egypt according to the Septuagint” (1952) and “the people of the earth (am ha-aretz)” (1955). The first essay was translated into Japanese in 1958 and the second into Italian in 1986 posthumously. In 1954 Amusin returned to Leningrad in the position of assistant of academician Al Tiumenev. From 1960 until the end of Amusin’s life he was an associate of the Leningrad Department of the Institute of Oriental Studies Academy of Sciences in the USSR, from where in 1966 he received a doctorate. Amusin published during this time 150 papers including four books: (1) The Dead Sea Ms. (1960, 61) (2) The Discoveries in the Dead Sea Region (1964, 1965); (3) The Qumran Texts vol. 1 Translation Introduction and Commentary (1971), (4) The Qumran Community (1983). His books were translated into Japanese, Greek, Roumanian, Hungarian, Polish, Slovak, and Georgian. Amusin published numerous of his 150 articles himself in English, German, and French (Qumran Probleme, 1962; Revue de Qumran 1963, 71, 74; Israel Exploration Journal 1964; Hommages AndreDupon-Sommer, 1971; Klio 1981, etc. His books and 65% of his papers dealt with DSS. Amusin agreed that the DSS Qumran sect were most likely the Essenes described in Josephus and other ancient 2nd temple texts. Amusin published on all aspects of DSS including The Commentary of Habakkuk, Damascus Document, Commentaries on Psalms and on Micah as well as Nahum and the Isaiah scroll. Amusin illuminated how the historical events
alluded to in the scrolls correlated with ancient historiographical accounts and how the sect, although not Christian, shared some (not all) elements theologically with later Christian developments. Amusin showed how the sects historical allusions are coded in encryptions out of fear of governmental censorship. Amusin argued that Demetrius is Demetrius III Eucairos (95-83 BCE) who had been called upon by the rabbis in 88 BCE to aid them in their rebellion against Jannaeus (103-76 BCE) until his wife Alexandra Salome (76-67) who reinstated the Pharisees to power. Salome was the sister of the Av Bet Din of the Sanhedrin Shimon ben Shetah. Amusin proved that the struggle between their 2 sons Aristobulos and Hyrcanus, the first supported by the Sadducees, the second by the Pharisees resulted in the intrusion under Roman Pompeius in 63 BCE. The designation of Alexander Jannaeus as “the lion of wrath” and the “wicked self proclaimed priest” indicate hostility and Amusin argued Alexander Jannaeus was the chief antagonist against the “teacher of righteousness.” Amusin revealed the social conscience of the DSS sect as the poor, ascetic, and simple in phrases such as “the congregation of the poor”, “the simple ones of Judah”, “the doers of the law”, “the elect of G-d”, and even “the new covenant” of this sect that help property in common a form of communism avant la letter but unlike Marxism that called religion “the opiate of the masses” for the sake of the spiritual religious life as a form of Religious messianic Utopianism. The Pharisaic Talmudic tradition regarding poverty and wealth as predestined for every individual and existing even after the coming of the messiah differed with the DSS sect who like christians saw poverty as a virtue. Amusin also dealt with dating of the DSS such as the Manual (1QS) and the Hymns (1QH) being composed earlier than the Commentaries but the Damascus Document (CD)- later. Amusin also traced anti-Talmudic polemic against Qumran theology such as dualism. While DBL has shown that this polemic of the rabbis is against Zoroastrianism, Amusin noted that the Qumran sects designation of “the sons of light” vs. “the sons of darkness” probably was an attack on the Romans. The separate calendar of the DSS sect, their disdain for the corruption in the Jerusalem temple allied with the Roman government, and their otherworldly emphasis on 2 worlds, this and the next, suggested great differences with the Pharisees not to mention the Sadducees. This in part is the subject of DBL’s paper delivered at the Cleveland AJL Conference. However DBL does not focus on the DSS sect’s attack on the Jerusalem priesthood during the Roman times whereby the Qumran sect railed against “the priests who have done violence to my torah” evoking out of context Ezekiel 22, 26 and Zephaniah 3,4). In short Amusin’s work in part sought to understand the political historical background of corruption from which the DSS sect retreated to the Judean Desert near Ein Gedi. From revealing the historical background of the ‘prayer of Nabonidus” who engaged in moon worship, to the historical context of the Nabatean King Aretas called in for help by Hyrcanus, to the Pseudo Cyprian epistle, and the DSS sect as a precursor of Christianity, there was not any aspect of DSS that escaped Amusin’s notice or philological and Historical textual analysis. At the end of Amusin’s life he followed his social consciousness devoting himself to writing papers on the living conditions of the vulnerable mentioned in the bible such as the poor, widows, and orphans in Ancient Palestine, as well as the legal position of Gerim and toshavim, revealing the policies of the authorities of reigning governments with regards to social help towards the native population. Thus Mark Cohen in his 2 volume set on the _Voice of the Poor_ in the Cairo Geniza that gathers texts that shed light on the Kahal’s attention to protecting the vulnerable in medieval society, although a different epoch, also is scholarship motivated by a social conscience, as the Talmud Tractate Maseket Berachot states with regards to when the shema is to be recited at night, “when the
Leningrad; he then told about the trip and about how he was getting acquainted with the "treasure" of Vilsker ("Peamim" journal, number 46-7, 1991).

Now let's return to Nehemiah Aloni. He named the poem of Yehuda ha-Levy about pogrom in Toledo in the XII century the fourth discovery in the first article by Vilsker. Aloni writes that the historians knew about the anti-Jewish pogroms perpetrated by Muslims in southern Spain. "I wondered, why until now there have been no studies on elegies (mournful songs) in the works of Yehuda ha-Levy. And here came Vilsker and presented us with a new poem filled with the clear hints about participation of northern Christians in the pogroms. And he presents two expressions that were competently treated by Vilsker: “am seir” (hairy) - most likely that was a nickname for Christians; and "Yad Esau"- the hand of Esau (recall his hairiness) that could be a hint about Christians as well.

The poem is called "On the pogrom in Toledo." Let me to give you first its rough translation into Russian, so that the poem content would become clear for the reader. The phonetics of each strophe in Hebrew (each stanza ends with the word "day" - yom) is given in the transcription by Shulamith Shalit below.

Да не знать вам, мне внемлющие,/ О горе моем слышащие,/ Живущие в этот День.

Спросите, если не слышали,/ Поведаю, если не знаете,/ Обратите сердца ваши в тот День.

Вам откроется, как пришла беда,/ Как злосчастье на нас обрушилось/ И в чем грех состоял наш — в тот День.

Знают пусть Ариэля изгнанники:/ (то есть, Иерусалима) Вот, еще одно колено Израиля/ Отрублено в тот День.

Госпожой я была, избранницей,/ Средь сестер своих по изгнанию,/ Пока не нагрянул тот День...

Then the poem develops a topic of the former prosperity: Jews lived in Seira, in Christian Spain, in prosperity and benevolence, their children were counselors for the kings, their elders looked regal and stately, everybody studied Torah, observed the Jewish laws, and lived in peace with the neighbors - "And Esau's hand was with me,” but “in his heart, he dreamed about evil deeds, he was thinking about my blood every day.”

Poor man returns home (after a hard day of work) to eat his meager dinner of “bread with salt.” Amusin dreamed of writing a book towards the end of his career on the Bar Kochba revolt but the circumstances of his life were not easy and quite hard due to persecution, discrimination, and poverty so that many of his scholarly plans and intentions never came to light due to the limits of income, time, and general persecution in Russia particularly for scholars interested in subjects relating to Jewish studies.
Here is how Yehuda ha-Levi sounds in Hebrew:

Lo Aleichem shomey Shimi / ha mitablim al-Nigi / Haim kulhem ha-yom.

Schaal them shmatem lo / lo agidhem them yedatem / sim Ivavhem minutes ha-yom.

Ned nirdefa Eich kalta / ha-paa-in BAME Hite / ha-htaat ha-Zot ha-yom.

Ve-hodiyu golaten Ariel / ki Shevet E-Israel / Nowhere ha-yom ...\(^{198}\)

The fifth discovery, according Aloni, is a song of love "Yonim Yaronu." Here is a brief story. When this song was not known yet in Israel, Vilsker’s friend in Leningrad, the composer Hirsch Paikin, created music for the poem, whereas his wife, Clara Yakovlevna, performed the song. At that time, they both started learning Hebrew with Vilsker, secretly. Inspired by the work of the scientist, Paikin wrote a lot of music for the poems by Yehuda ha-Levy and he even composed an opera about this great poet. They performed this repertoire on many occasions in Israel. But Paikins are not anymore. Clara Yakovlevna managed to send me from Jerusalem a cassette recording of their songs. I am obliged to simply convey you the words:

Yonim Yaron ka-ka-moni chem / Al Bein MASHAV zaaku Mei Mayhew / Homim al Yamim halhu bli hemda / u-Zman peyrud Khalaf ki bi-Mayhew / (Here performers repeat the first two lines as the chorus).

Ve-ekkor Dodi dadey Yonati / Ki Emergency aloft bosmeyhem alai ...

(Doves are cooing, and I am like them /. Here is the watering. And the waters are pure and they murmur like a sea. /Joyless is my wandering. It's time to part. / Doves are cooing. I remember my little dove, the scent of her breasts.\(^{199}\) /

This is clearly a reference to the metaphor of the beloved [dodi] in the Kabbalah Shabbos hymn, Lechah dodi, which itself refers to Shir Hashirim’s numerous times allusion to doves (yonim). Rashi follows in the footsteps of Rabbi Akiva who refers to Shir HaShirim as a mushal for the Kodesh Kodeshim.\(^{200}\) On fact rashi sees the whole poem as a reference for the beit HAMikash which factors the Song as a mushal for Hashem’s love for his people Am Yisrael. Not only is the pusek repating 2x Shuvi Shuvi HaShulamith\(^{201}\) an allusion to “if only the Jews would observe two shabbatot according to Hashem’s ratzon, then the mashiach would arrive, but the olfactory metaphors of myrh, kinamon, and nered also evoke the Kitoret Samim. Thus it is not accidental that the Satmar Rav evoking the 3 vows of Shir HaShirim cites the pusek

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\(^{198}\) "This is how my people have perished" – these words will be said another massacre, eight centuries late, by Chaim Nachman Bialik

\(^{199}\) Notez Bien: play of words in Hebrew: "... ezkor Dodi dadey Yonati" ... which of course is an allusion to Shir HaShirim: See: 1:13-17

\(^{200}\) See http://databases.jewishlibraries.org/node/17679

\(^{201}\) סובוי שבוי השכימיה, שבוי שבוי יוהדיה-כנ; מ-מקווה, שבויי השכימיה, כמותה, ממקימיה
of the 3 vows, to warn against making aliyan en masse, to go up be-homah, as forcing the end (dodhek et ha-ketz) in reference to eschatological reckoning of the “ingathering of the exiles.”

Regarding the image of the “yona” For example (1:13-17)

13 My beloved is unto me as a bag of myrrh, that lieth betwixt my breasts. 202

14 My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna in the vineyards of En-gedi. {S}

15 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thine eyes are as doves.

16 Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant; also our couch is leafy.

17 The beams of our houses are cedars, and our panels are cypresses.

Further in 2: 14 we again encounter the metaphor of the dove, a bird of peace let out by Noach after the flood

14 O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.’

Again in 4:1 the metaphor of the dove is evoked in the Song

1 Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thine eyes are as doves behind thy veil; thy hair is as a flock of goats, that trail down from mount Gilead.

202 Rashi teaches the metaphor fo the woman’s breast as a reference to the Beit HaMikdash on the pusek:

203 Perhaps an allusion to the “doe eyes of Leah” who according to rabbinic texts wept when she learned that she was supposed to marry Esau, and then due to the zekut of Rochel, Rochel deprived herself to wait another 7 years by letting her sister marry Yakov first.
In Chapter 5 the image of the dove again tropes this time associated with the voice of the beloved knocking (Kol Dodi Dofek) the name of Rav Soloveitchik’s famous statement of supporting Midinat Eretz Yisrael as a statement of alliance with the cause of religious Zionism:

Ao nishen olam r: ke'ol dodi dukem, et ha-elect a: tov, et ha-yechid evionpi vokev - shva shem Malka-tov, ke'atenu risti le'ilah.

2 I sleep, but my heart waketh; Hark! my beloved knocketh: ‘Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled; for my head is filled with dew, my locks with the drops of the night.’

In chapter 6:9 of Shir HaShirim the dove metaphor appears again:

9 My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother; she is the choice one of her that bore her. The daughters saw her, and called her happy; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her.

We have mentioned already the name of Abraham Firkowicz. A lover of antiquities, he traveled extensively in different countries of the Middle East. At the end of the XIX century, he sold to the Leningrad (then Imperial Public) Library two collections that were particularly valuable thanks to the manuscripts from the Cairo Geniza. Abraham Garkavi, Paul Kokovtsov, and prof. Khvolson worked with the manuscripts. Scientists from different countries used to come to have a chance to just take a look at the collection. And now Vilsker decided to "to delve into them." Being free from a job, he directed all his energies to the study of Jewish texts of the collection. He was well versed in different handwritings and fonts and he had a sharp eye for the things that were left unnoticed by others. And his labor was

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204 The earliest Hebrew handmade book pre 1200 from the Sefardic areas is MS Leningrad, Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library, II Firkovitch B 124 Fols. 64-94, a biblical manuscript copied in 946 in Kairouan (Tunisia); MS Leningrad, II Firkovitch Heb.-Ar. I2440 fols 1-9 was written in Valencia in 1119; The third oldest Hebrew book in libraries I at Oxford i.e. Bod Heb.b1, fols 10-20 (Cowley’s Catalogue no 2673), a tracate of the BT. Copied in 1123 by a scribe originating in Libya; MS. Leningrad Heb-Ar I4587 fols 1-14is the 4th oldes, copied in Mahdia (Tunisia) in 1125/6; The 5th oldest Hebrew handmade book is in Hamburg: constituting 3 localized manuscripts from Spain dating from the 12th century, the earliest being MS. Hamburg, Staats-und Universitatsbibliothek Cod. Hebr. 19 (Steinschneider’s Catalogue no. 165), a Talmudic copy produced in Gerona in 1184. From Ashkenazic areas only 4 books have survived all of them late 12th century and unlocalized. The earliest is dated 1177 (MS Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale II-I-7 of Talmudic treaties). From Italy 2 manuscripts (written by 8 copyists) have survived from the late 11th century, the oldest dated 1072/73 (MS Vatican Ebr. 31) and 2 from the 1st half of the 12th century. Thus Leningrad is home to the 2 oldest handmade Hebrew books due to Firkovitch collecting. It is well known that regarding Biblical texts the Leningrad Codex, Allepo Codex, and Vatican recension are the oldest Biblical texts known to date besides the revolutionary finding s of the DSS. The DSS date to late 2nd temple and thus predate these medieval manuscripts by almost 1000 years. In short the most rich Leningrad collections whose dated manuscripts have been known until recently only from partial catalogues and handlists, references in literature and some microfilms (partly studies by the French team of the SAFRDatabase Paleographical Project) may reveal more dated books possibly. It is clear that Vilsker had knowledge of these unknown texts, but circumstance of historical persecution and limits in publishing his findings prevented in some cases “getting the word out” to make these treasures known to the rest of the scholarly community. That is why Vilsker’s discovery for instance of 22 unknown poems of Rav Yehudah HaLevy in Vilsker’s library is so revolutionary and represents probably even more undiscovered treasures awaiting tro be proclaimed and announced etc.
bringing discoveries almost every day. He felt that he had found unknown poetry of the medieval Jewish poets, including poems of Yehuda ha-Levi, but he could not know that for sure.

Yet Dr. Chaim Vilsker who was the librarian of the St. Petersberg Saltykov Library Jewish division including the Firkovitch\textsuperscript{205} and Antonin Judaica Collections, where the scholar/librarian found unpublished poems in manuscript form of Rabbi Yehudah HaLevy which he later annotated and published in Yiddish journals, certainly gave much more than was appreciated by the government library. Dr. Isadore Twerski tried to bring Dr. Vilsker to the Harvard Wiedner collection of Judaica, with a joint appointment to lecture on the holdings of the Saltykov library, but could not secure a visa for the scholar/librarian.

Shulamit Shalit writes of this connection with Harvard by noting:

When E. Fleischer was visiting the United States for his research for a whole year, had came to a brilliant idea - to organize a trip for Vilsker to the United States. Finally, he would meet with the dear friend, if not in Israel then in the United States, on the neutral ground. Lev Efimovich was delighted with the official invitation from Harvard University to read lectures about the collection of Hebrew manuscripts in the Leningrad Public Library. He decided to tempt the fate. He was redirected from one office to another, and then to another… He came, he wrote, he was refused, and he continued coming again. Oh, dear naive Professor Fleischer! Maybe it was not worth to start this fight, a fight with not the windmills\textsuperscript{206} – but with the reinforced-concrete Soviet mills...

On February 12, 1988, Lev Vilsker celebrated his birthday. He turned 69 years old. A few days later he sent his sixth article to Moscow, to the "Sovetish Heimland." On February 19th at 5:00 am, Dr. Vilsker experienced a sharp pain in his chest. A doctor made a direct injection into the heart. But that was wrong. Vilsker managed to say clearly these his last words: "Bring a chair for the doctor..."\textsuperscript{207}

\textsuperscript{205} Much can be said about the Firkovitch collection. One aspect is its copious Karaite materials. Fore example the earliest extant example of a tradition of donating privately owend Sifrei Torah and biblical codices to synagogue foundations is documented there. The Karaite custom of donating biblical ms to synagogue foundations is attested by many inscription in biblical codices in the Firkovitch collection of the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg etc A scribe notes that the sifrei torah he was commissioned to transcribe was intended for synagogue use produced for a certain person and his sister so that it be dedicated to a community in a so-far unidentified town in souther Crimea. (MS St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia EBP 1 A 35; see A Harkavy and HL Strack, Katalog der hebraischeen Bibelhandschriften der Kaiserlichen öffentlichen Bibliotek in St. Petersburg (Leipzig, 1875), p. 220. The sefer torah was written in Kokoz. The same scribe was active in Crimea later when he inscribed a dedication in a torah scroll donated to the synagogue of the Karaite community in Solkhat (Staryi Krym).

\textsuperscript{206} Given Shulamith Shalit’s highly cultured background we wonder if the reference to “windmills” is not that of Cervantes in Don Quixote?

\textsuperscript{207} Last words are often significant. Consider for example Yakov’s blessing to his sons at the end of Bereishit, or Moshe Rabbenu’s blessing of the tribes in Zot HaBracha. In rabbinic texts likewise rabbinic students know that the last words of Rav Yochanan ben Zakai carried immense wisdom even from beyond the veil etc. In secular texts the...
The earthly life of Leib son of Chaim Vilsker, - Lev Yefimovich in the Soviet Russia, and Arie Vilsker in Israel, - had ended. His eldest son, Emiko, Emmanuel, had been living in Israel for thirteen years already. The younger son, Boris, with his mother Gita, wife Katya and two sons, had relocated there in 1990. The grandchildren Misha and Sasha grew up and served in the army. The life of the name - Arie Vilsker – has just began in Israel, in the world of science.

Vilsker wrote countless items (100 have been identified) in Russian and other European languages on a great breadth and depth of subjects. Vilsker scorned narrow specialization and his knowledge was broad and immense. His works on ancient manuscripts found in the Dead Sea area and the linguistic works on various Semitic languages, as well as his work in lexicography were just a few of his accomplishments. A total of 100 scientific papers have been ascribed to Vilsker but he had no place often to publish his findings. Some were published in Yiddish in the journal Sovietish Heimland, but it was not easy for Vilskers work on the Samaritans and their language: “On Leib H. Vilsker Manuel d’arameen samaritain

last words of Socrates have drawn much ink, including Nietzsche’s note that “I owe a cock to Aeschlepius” in fact is an allusion to the deity of healing Aechlepias who with Apollo is allied with medicine and refuot etc. Likewise the reported last words of the poet Goethe were “mehr licht, mehr licht” ambiguously signifying equivocally the uncertainty if the poet was going to a realm where “there was more light that he sensed” or was the poet just terrified calling for more light, more light? Whatever in limudei Kodesh, the light of the first day according to Rashi is the light stored up for the righteous in olam habah, to which Rambam in Hilchot teshuva elaborates: העברת הבא אשר יעבור על העברת הבא אחריו אף על פי שהעולם אבד אך העולם הבא אמור乙烯ו אליהם. רבים באים בזווית בא אל אכילה אלו שחיינו ואל בזווית בא אל אכילה אלו שחיינו ואל בזווית בא אל אכילה אלו שחיינו. כל המדברים שנמנו בו אל ריכינו לא_spacing הידו. אלו אסרו ברם בזווית השמרו על נפשיהם. אנו יכולים לחזור.Shalom Ezer Hirschberg and Shlomo Hofman, which cites the work of Benjamin Tzedakah, a Samaritan academic scholar living in Israel who corresponded extensively with Vilsker, recounts the history of the Samaritans by writing: “Samaritanism is related to Judaism in that it accepts the Torah as its holy book. Samaritans consider themselves to be the true followers of the ancient Israelite religious line. The Samaritan temple was on Mt. Gerizim near Shechem (modern Nablus), where dwindling numbers of Samaritans still live and worship today. Passages in the Hebrew Bible indicate that Mt. Gerizim has a legitimate (albeit obscure) claim to sanctity through its association with those who visited it. Abraham and Joseph both visited Shechem (Gen. 12:6–7, 13:18–20), as did Joseph (Gen. 37:12–14 and Josh. 24:32). In Deuteronomy (11:29 and 27:12), Moses commanded the Israelites to bless Mt. Gerizim when they entered the land of Canaan. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan they built an altar on Mt. Ebal (opposite Mt. Gerizim), and six of the tribes faced Mt. Gerizim while blessing the people of Israel as Moses commanded (Josh.8:30–33). Throughout Samaritan history, Samaritans have lived near Mt. Gerizim (Pummer 1968, 8).

After the fall of Samaria (724 B.C.E.), the Assyrian conquerors sent much of the population into exile to be resettled in various parts of the Assyrian empire. Towards the end of the seventh century B.C.E., Josiah tried to reform the cult in Jerusalem and, from then on, the stories and laws of the five first books of the Bible (the Torah, or Pentateuch) were at the heart of Jewish monotheism. The Samaritan tradition maintains that its Torah (the Samaritikon) dates to the time of Moses and that it was copied by Abiša ben Phineas shortly after the Israelite entered the land of Canaan. However, modern literary analysis and criticism does not support this position. In
describing the origins of the Samaritans the EJ, continues, “There are a number of theories about the origins of the Samaritans, all of which have in common a tradition that originally the cult of the Hebrew G-d was widespread through the land of Israel. Even so, the origins and early history of the Samaritans are quite problematic because the sources are far removed from the events and because the non-Samaritan sources tend to be hostile. One tradition is that the Samaritans originated with the northern tribes of Israel because only a small proportion of these tribes was deported during the Assyrian conquests of the late eighth century B.C.E. and that those who remained on the land formed what later became the Samaritans (Mor 1989, 1). Another Samaritan tradition claims that the Samaritan origins lie in the pre-exilic period, at the very beginnings of Israelite history, and that the split between Samaritanism and Judaism only arose when the heretical priest Eli stole the Ark of the Covenant and established a rival cult. Until that time, the Ark of the Covenant had been kept at the sanctuary of YHWH on Mt. Gerizim.

According to this tradition, the priest Eli was prevented from rising to the high priesthood because he was of the family of Itamar, not the high priestly family of Eleazar. Nevertheless, he took the Ark of the Covenant from Mt. Gerizim to Shiloh and established a rival cult there. As a result of this, two centers of the priesthood arose. One center was on Mt. Gerizim, at whose head stood the legitimate high priest, Uzzi (a descendant of Phineas and of the family Eleazar). The second (heretical) priesthood was at Shiloh, and the priest Eli, a descendant of Itamar, was at its head. Thus, according to Samaritan tradition, Samaritanism is a perpetuation of the true Israelite faith, and Judaism only the continuation of Eli’s heresy. This is the case, the Samaritan tradition claims, all the way through Samuel, Saul, David, and the Judean monarchy, with the rival cult of Eli eventually shifting from Shiloh to Jerusalem and continuing up to this day. A non-Samaritan tradition from the same period claims that the Samaritans originated in the Assyrian post-conquest settlement of populations from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim in northern Israel (II Kings 17:24–41), and that they were forced to worship the god of Israel by the native peoples. These immigrant groups brought with them the idols of their native cities, whom they continued to worship in conjunction with the deity of their new home. (II Kings 17:24–41; Ezra 4:2, 10; Mor 1989, 1): “Even while these people were worshipping the Lord, they were serving their idols. To this day their children and grandchildren continue to do as their fathers did” (II Kings 17:41). Another non-Samaritan tradition is that the Assyrian conquest of Israel was far from total, that significant numbers of Israelites remained on the land, and that the Assyrians settled a separate group of exiles in what used to be the Israelite northern kingdom. These populations eventually intermingled, in time becoming a discrete group of people who later came to be referred to as Cutheans and Samaritans (Jos., Ant. 9:288–391; Mor 1989, 1). But, unfortunately, even Samaritan historical traditions are not in agreement on either the time or the circumstances of their return. The Samaritan text Chronicle Adler relates the story of two returns, one under the high priest Seraiah in the early seventh century B.C.E. and another under the high priest Abdiel in the late sixth century B.C.E.! ” The EJ then describes reference to the Samaritans in the time of Nehemiah by writing: “The first direct references we have to the Samaritans come from the book of Nehemiah. In 445 B.C.E., when the person we know as the biblical Nehemiah was appointed by the Persian king Artaxerxes I (464–424 B.C.E.) to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem and later (during a second “tour of duty”) to be the governor of the province of Yehud. During some internecine rivalry surrounding the building of a wall around Jerusalem, Nehemiah named his enemies as Tobiah (the "Ammonite servant"), Geshem (the "Arab"), and *Sanballat (the "Horonite"). Tobiah was a member of an established Jewish family (see *Tobians ) from Transjordan (Neh. 2:10; 2:19; 4:7; 6:1). Geshem led the Arab tribes in the southern part of Judea. Sanballat the Horonite was a Samaritan who was coincidentally the Persian-appointed governor of Samaria, and therefore a direct rival of Nehemiah and a person with whom Nehemiah refused to have any contact (Mor 1989, 2–3). Sanballat, as the Persian-appointed governor of Samaria, may indeed have been in direct competition with Nehemiah, since Jerusalem was to be refortified, whilst Samaria, a provincial center, was not. Urban wall systems of the mid-fifth century are found only at Lachish and Tel en-Nasbeh and at Jerusalem during the time of Nehemiah (Hoglund 1992, 211). Another reason for Nehemiah’s rejection of the Samaritan contingent may have been that Judah had previously been part of the province of Samaria and that the Persian province of Yehud only came into being with the arrival of Nehemiah. This might explain why Sanballat wanted to be involved in the building project. If Samaria had controlled Judah up to this point (and there is a hint of this in the earlier attempts to stop the building program of Ezra), then the hostility towards Nehemiah may have been real. In the same vein, Nehemiah may have felt threatened by Sanballat, feeling that he might be trying to promote integration of Yehud back into the province of Samaria. In either case, there is no proof; only supposition and guesswork.
translated from Russian by J. Margain in Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1981, reviewed by Maurice Baillet in Journal of Near Eastern Studies 42, 4 (1983), p. 295-297. Yes, Vilsker taught himself as an auto-didact Samaritan language and Samaritan graphics. The Samaritan language's roots can be traced to the paleo-Jewish alphabet. This subject was not taught in the University where Vilsker studies and thus his auto-didactism is remarkable in that he mastered the language on his own. Vilsker came to be recognized as a leading Samaratologist. From the abstract of his dissertation “.... Samaritan manuscript collection fo the State Public Library consisting of 18,600 sheets of parchment and paper in addition to scrolls as well as inscriptions on stone, silk, and copper.” Professor Victor Lebedev the former curator of the Jewish-Arab manuscripts, an area of Vilsker's wife speciality Gita Gluskina, who made Aliyah, wrote in the “Alef-Beit” Magazine that Vilsker studied all 18600 sheets “never missing a single one” out of systematic dedication and diligence. Dr. Gita Gluskin notes in a letter, “In the 1970 Lev had defended his thesis and received the degree of candidate of philological sciences. In 1974 his book Samaritan language was published by a Scientific research Institute and soon translated into French (Paris 1981). Remarkably while working on the Samaritan manuscripts Lev had completed a detailed catalog of these manuscripts which was published four years after his death in 1992.  

Baillet notes that Vilsker was a disciple of I.N. Vinnikov. The review notes that Vilsker’s work replaces and trumped that of J. Rosenberg, Lehrbuch der Samaritanische Sprache und Literatur (Vienne, 1901). Baillet notes that the origin of that which one calls “samaritain” is in effect from Occidental Arameen which in historical evolution is successively fused with Hebrew, Greek, and Arabic forms and idioms over the ages. Baillet notes that pages 11-20 give a history of the Samaritans, situated their dialect in the milieu of Arameen, tracing the lines of linguistic evolution. Baillet says the core of the book is pages 21 to 96 focusing on the literature, phonetics, morphology, syntax and lexique of the Samaritan evolved language process. The appendices (p.97-108) give two examples of calligraphic writings and cursive script and two tables of their evolution, with five examples of texts. Pages 111-118 offer a bibliography providing 153 titles and furnishing a list of Samaritan Manuscripts conserved in the Soviet Union. A map is given where these manuscripts are located geographically. For Vilksr 2 Kings 17:24 is a key text. For Vilsker this pusek signifies the arrival of the language of Arameen into Israel. Vilsker (pages 91-92) describes the influence of Hebrew on the Arameen lexicon and their adoption of the “Hebraic law” through their interaction with the Hebrews of the land of Judaea. Baillet writes, “La naissance du

Nehemiah’s program of wall-building can also be seen as an indicator of a reversal in the Persian attitude towards Jerusalem by reference to an earlier and failed attempt to rebuild the fortifications (Ezra 4:7–23). During that earlier attempt, officials in Samaria reported it to the Persian court, and Artaxerxes I ordered that the work be stopped. Samarian officials used imperial military forces to make sure his order was enforced. This lends some support to the idea expressed above that Judea might once have been part of the province of Samaria, hence the rivalry between Sanballat and Nehemiah, both Persian officials. One of Sanballat’s daughters married a son of the Jerusalem high priest Joiadah (Neh. 13:28; Jos, Ant. 11:306–12). Since Nehemiah believed in the "purity" ideology of the returnees, his reaction was to expel the couple from Jerusalem (Mor 1989, 4; Smith-Christopher 1994, 259). Alexander Marx as reported by Solomon Goldman encouraged ambitious dissertation seekers to tackle the Damascus Arabic translation of the Samaritan Pentateuch acquired and housed in the JTSA collection.
Targum est d’ailleurs situee par Vilsker bein avant l’ere chretienne (p.16), ce qui reste surprenant.”

Vilsker then enumerates the other great sources namely Le Mimar Marqe, the Aramaic liturgical poems, Asatir histories, and inscriptions- about 20 of which are in Arameen. The writing derives from the ancient Hebrew alphabet before the Masoretic script. Baillet notes that Vilsker did a good job on the section on morphology, syntax, and lexigraphcial aspects of the Arameen language. Baillet notes that thanks to the work, The Literary and Oral Tradition of Hebrew and Aramaic amongst the Samaritans, vol. 3, pt. 2, The Recitation of Prayers and Hymns (Jerusalem, 1967) of Z. Ben –Hayyim, the phonetical transcription to give the pronunciation of the ancient language for the reader was made possible. Paul Kahle in his Der hebraischer Bibeltext, had raised the question of how the Tiberian masoretes, namely the Ben Asher ben Asher family, arrived at the correct authoritative pronunciation of the biblical text, as opposed to the pronunciations used by the Samaritans. Kahle writes:

Die Samaritaner haben eine Aussprache des Hebraischen bis auf den heutigen Tag festgehalten, welche die palaestinische Punktation in alten Geniza-Fragmenten einst auch fuer die Aussprache des Hebraischen bei den rabbanitischen juden bezeugt hat. Bei diesen rabbanitischen Juden ist diese Aussprache aber abgeloest worden durch eine solche, die von den Masoreten ausgebildet worden ist, die ihren Sitz in Tiberias gehabt haben.

Baillet recognized that Vilsker described correctly the phonetics of the Samaritan language. However Baillet asks, “Have we truly the words where Quf is pronounced similarly, or is it not in the case where the lettere which resembles a in, has been confounded with it? Baillet is concerned about the true vocalization of the ancient Arameen. Baillet questions the technical reasons from which Vilsker decided to note the pronunciation in the chart of vowels . Baillet notes that the translator from Russina to French adopted the same attitude for the same reasons. Baillet regrets that in the six volumes of Z.Ben Hayyim, this difficulty was not an obstacle. Baillet is not convinced that one word can have two accents on two consecutive syllables, if the first is a secondary accent. In Baillet’s view one is able to say that all words with two syllables carry the accent on the punultimate except if the last syllable is long or very long, which in that case is accented. Baillet feels it is important to thus return on the length of syllables and on the rhythm of the language according to which it is pronounced. With that said the long syllables dominate largely. On these bases Baillet feels that Vilksers and his translator have badly rendered certain pronunciations. They have in effect shadowed (d’innombrables) the long vowels and not noted this in the transcription. Baillet feels that the most severe result is that this negligence is running in the models (paradigms). The same thing is seen in the names of numbers, in pronouns, in names with suffixes, in prepositions, etc. Baillet feels a more serious error still is in the treatment of the term “virgin” pronounced in ancient Arameen as betulti, betultak and not betulti, betulatak (p.53) which corresponds to “mes vierges, tes bierges....” Baillet regrets that certain translation choices of Margain

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212 See: Kahle, Paul, Der hebraische Bibeltext, p. 68
rendered his French edition inferior to the original Russian edition. In the end with all the technicalities aside Baillet admits one must thank Vilkser and Margain as Oriental scholars have need of a grammar of ancient samaritain and the contribution of Vilsker is a serious progress towards that end. Baillet concludes by writing:

Sans doute, les orientalists avaient besoin d’une grammaire de l’arameen samaritain, et celle-ci représente un sérieux progress par rapport a ses devancieres. Vilsker et Margain on surement fait tout leur possible, et il fuat les remercier. L’instrument de travail qu’ils nous livrent n’est cependant pas tout a fait au point. N’aurait-il donc pas mieux valu, sur la base de bonnes editions des textes, etudier d’abord a fond la langue de chaque epoque? C’est par une synthese qu’on pourrait arriver a un resultat valable et definitif.213

Today there are about 700 Samaritans still living in Israel. One is named Benjamin Tzedakah whose family served in the Israeli army (IDF). Tzedakah corresponded with Vilsker for many years, as Tzedakah is a scholar of the Samaratin history and language. Second Temple scholars know the Samaritans from Josephus accounts of them.214

214 The EJ writes, “according to Josephus, they once more come into view in Judea, where Manasseh, the brother of the high priest Jaddus, married Nikaso, a daughter of Sanballat III (a descendant of the Sanballat of the time of Nehemiah) (Jos., Ant 11:302–3; Mor 1989, 4). Josephus reports that this Sanballat, like his ancestor a governor of Samaria, hoped that through the marriage of his daughter to the high priest’s brother he could establish ties with the Jewish community in Jerusalem. However, Manasseh was offered two choices by the Jerusalem hierarchy: to stay in Jerusalem and divorce his wife, or to leave the city and take his Samaritan wife with him. Manasseh chose the second option, whereupon his father-in-law promised to build a temple on Mt. Gerizim where Manasseh would be high priest and that, in addition, he would take over civic leadership of Samaria on the death of his father-in-law. According to Josephus, many priests left Jerusalem and followed Manasseh to Samaria (Ant. 11:306–12; Mor 1989, 5).Sanballat III sent 8,000 soldiers to support Alexander’s campaigns and also convinced him that it would be to his advantage to allow the Samaritans to build a temple on Mt. Gerizim, where his son-in-law would be high priest. During this period when the Macedonians were consolidating their hold on the region and the Persians were not yet fully vanquished, the Samaritans quickly built their temple (it took less than nine months). The founding of a temple was not unusual; however, this temple was not far from its Jerusalem rival, and from the establishment of this temple the Samaritans and the Jews grew further apart, and it is from this period onwards that much of the anti-Samaritan polemic in the Hebrew Bible and extra-biblical texts (such as Josephus) originates. The temple was completed around 332 B.C.E., at the time that Alexander finally took control of Gaza (Mor 1989, 7), and was also contemporary with the establishment of a Macedonian colony in the city of Samaria and the rebuilding and resettling of Shechem (Purvis 1968, 105).However, Sanballat III died just two months into Alexander’s siege of Gaza (Jos., Ant. 11:325) and, according to the historian Quintus Curtius, after the siege of Gaza Alexander left a Greek official named Andromachus in charge of the region. Despite Sanballat III’s promise to his son-in-law, and for the first time since the Persian conquest, a Samaritan was not in charge of Samaria (Mor 1989, 9). The Samaritan leadership reacted strongly to this, rebelled against the Macedonians, captured and burned Andromachus alive, and then fled from Shechem to a cave in the Wadi Dalihyeh just north of Jericho (Cross 1985, 7–
The Macedonians retaliated immediately, with Alexander himself said to have left Jerusalem to punish the Samaritans. All of the rebels were killed, all Samaritans were banished from Samaria, and the city of Samaria was settled with Macedonian veterans (Mor 1989, 10). According to Josephus (Jos., Apion, 2:43), following the post-rebellion massacre, administrative control of the district of Samaria was given to the Jews because of their loyalty to Alexander. The Samaritans who survived the Macedonian massacre, and who had heretofore exercised control and political authority and cultural leadership in Samaria, were now wholly disenfranchised and they could not turn to Jerusalem for help. From the death of Alexander the Great, nothing much is known about the Samaritans until the rise of the Seleucid empire in around 200 B.C.E. Josephus (Ant. 12:5–10) we know that a number of Samaritans and Jews settled in Egypt and that relations between them were very strained, with each side demanding that sacrifices be directed to their respective sanctuaries. Any grace or favor to one side was seen as detrimental to the other, and so a tit-for-tat hostility developed. In Palestine, the first report of open hostility between Shechemites and Jews in Jerusalem is dated to the time of Ptolemy V and Antiochus III in around 200 B.C.E. (Jos., Ant. 12:154–56). According to Josephus, the Jews were being harassed by Samaritans through raids on Jewish land and the capture and sale of Jews into slavery, and the Samaritans found themselves under pressure from Antiochus III, because they had allied themselves with pro-Ptolemaic policy, thinking that they would prevail against the Syrians. This was nothing new. This loyalty dated back to the Persian period when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite had allied against Nehemiah, the governor of the province of Judaea. In 168 B.C.E. the two groups grew still further apart when the Seleucid king (Antiochus IV Epiphanes) ordered the Jews and the Samaritans to rededicate their temples to Zeus. In Judea, *Judah Maccabee organized a rebellion which culminated in the ousting of Zeus from the temple and its subsequent repurification. During this period, both Samaritans and Jews were subject to the persecutions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.E.), as is seen in II Maccabees (5:23; 6:2), even though Samaria did not rebel against Antiochus IV. What had been a religious division now became a political conflict as well. Judea, having fought for its freedom from Seleucid rule, became an independent state, ruled by a line of high priests derived from the Hasmonean dynasty. One of them was John *Hyrkanus (134–104 B.C.E.), whose political program included the expansion of the state along with a campaign of propaganda to advertise itself and, as part of this campaign, Hyrkanus utilized a policy of forced conversion to Judaism. While Antiochus VII (Sidetes) was in the east, John Hyrkanus invaded northern Palestine and Syria. Among the places he captured were Shechem and Mt. Gerizim. Later in his reign, Hyrkanus laid siege to Samaria and after a year’s campaign took it (Jos., Wars 1:64ff; Ant. 13:275ff.). The bustling, cosmopolitan, and mainly non-Israelite city of Samaria was utterly destroyed by Hyrkanus (Isser 1999, 571), and in around 128 B.C.E., the sanctuary and temple on Mt. Gerizim were destroyed (Jos., Wars 1:62f.; Ant. 13:254ff.). While the Jewish priesthood ceased to function on Mt. Cæsarea, the Samaritans continued to have an active priesthood with a high priest even after the temple on Mt. Gerizim was destroyed (Pummer 1998, 26–27), and whereas the inevitable dispersal of the Samaritans had not yet happened, the process was underway, not least because the Samaritans were now under the economic and political control of Jerusalem. However, a core group of Samaritans stayed near Mt. Gerizim in the town of Sychar (which may have replaced Shechem as the center of Samaritan religious authority). There are very few sources other than Josephus to help outline the history of the Samaritans in the early Roman period, and those that do exist are often very hostile to their subject. Josephus, for instance, did not even consider the Samaritans to be Jews (Ant. 11:341). Pompey’s conquest of Palestine in 63 B.C.E. ended Jewish domination of Samaria (Jos., Wars 1:166). The cities that had been captured by the Hasmoneans were restored to their previous inhabitants. Samaria and other regions were joined to the Roman province of Syria and protected by two full Roman legions. Because so many of the people of Samaria had been killed or were too scattered to bring back together, the Romans repopulated the newly built town of Samaria with new colonists (Jos., Wars 1:169ff.; Ant. 14:90ff.; Isser 1999, 572). The proconsul of Syria, Aulus Gabinius (57–54 B.C.E.) had to quell an uprising by another Hasmonean, Alexander, son of Aristobulus, during which Roman soldiers sought refuge and came under siege on Mt. Gerizim. (Jos., Wars 1:175ff.; Ant. 14:100). In 43 B.C.E., with Roman backing, *Herod the Great restored order in Samaria (Jos., Wars 1:229; Ant. 14:284; Isser 1999, 572). At the end of the Roman civil war, Herod declared his loyalty to Octavian, who confirmed him as the Jewish king and conferred on him new territories (Jos., Wars 1:396ff.; Ant. 14:217); among these new territories was Samaria. Herod rebuilt and extended the city of Samaria and added a further 6,000 colonists to its population. He renamed the city Sebastia in honor of Octavian (Jos., Wars 1:403; Ant. 14:295ff.; Isser 1999, 573). There are numerous reports of acts of hostility against the Jews.
Rabbinic scholars of the Talmud will recall in Maskeet Rosh Hashanah the “bad PR” regarding the Samaritans in perek sheni, who were said to have intentionally confused the Rabbinic leadership by making bonfires, to intentionally throw off the accurate reporting of sightings of the new moon as related to Rosh Hodesh. Rabban Gamliel examined witnesses testifying to the new moon whose testimonies risked being confused by the Samaritan sabotage. Before the Samaritan acts of sabotage to new moon sightings the Sanhedrin was more lenient from who they accepted testimony from about the moon’s appearance—full, half, etc. Beacons used to be lit but after the Samaritans caused harm, they enacted that messengers should go forth. Bonfires were lit by bringing long poles of cedar wood and rushes and pine wood and tow flax tied together. These were lit and waved on top of a hill to and fro so that 3 hills might discern them. The beacons were kindled from Har Zaytim to Sartaba, and from Sartaba to Agrippina and from Agrippina to Hauran and from Hauran to Beth Baltin, so the diaspora appeared as a

by Samaritans. How true these are is unknown, but there does seem to be a prevailing tradition of antagonism between the groups. As an example of the sort of thing reported, Josephus records that during the procuratorship of Coponius (6–9 C.E.) it had been the practice to keep the gates of the Jerusalem temple open after midnight at Passover. On one such occasion, a number of Samaritans are said to have secretly entered and scattered human bones throughout the grounds, rendering them unclean (Ant. 18:29f.).There is another account in Josephus (Ant. 18:85–89) about a massacre of Samaritans during the Procuratorship of Pilate (26–36 C.E.). Josephus reports that a man whom he describes as a rabble-rouser promised to show the Samaritans the sacred vessels of the mishkan (the ancient tabernacle) which, according to Samaritan tradition, Moses had buried in a secret place on Mt. Gerizim. This discovery would signal the Age of Divine Favor (the fulfillment of Samaritan eschatological belief involving Moses, the mishkan and a person (the “rabble-rouser”) who was a sort of messianic figure—the “restorer”). A large group gathered in a nearby village with the intention of climbing Mt. Gerizim, but Pilate interpreted this as the prelude to revolt and so the gathered Samaritans were intercepted by Roman troops and killed or captured. The leaders were executed at Pilate’s orders. This was too much for the Samaritan council, who complained to Vitellius, the governor of Syria, who accepted their accusations against Pilate and sent Marcellus to take over in Judea and ordered Pilate to return to Rome for trial before the emperor Tiberius. This Pilate did, but Tiberius had died, and we know nothing further about this episode (Grabbe 1994, 424; Isser 1999, 576). An even more serious event occurred during the Procuratorship of Cumanus (48–52 C.E.) at a village named Gema (between Samaria and the Plain of Esdraelon to the north). Josephus reports that some Samaritans attacked a group of Galileans who were on their way to Jerusalem for a festival and killed either many or one (War 2:12:3, 232; Ant. 20, 6:1, 118; Tacitus, Annals XII, 54). When the Jews appealed to Cumanus he did nothing (allegedly because he had been bribed by the Samaritans). A mob of Jews took matters into their own hands and attacked some Samaritan villages. Cumanus then intervened, and both Jews and Samaritans appealed to the Syrian governor, Quadratus. After a preliminary investigation, Quadratus sent Cumanus, the military tribune Celer, some of the Samaritan notables, the high priests Jonathan and Ananias, and other Jewish leaders to Rome for trial before Claudius. Agrippa II petitioned Claudius on behalf of the Jews and Claudius found in their favor, executing the Samaritan delegation and exiling Cumanus. The tribune Celer was taken back to Jerusalem and executed publicly there ( Isser 1999, 574–75).
signal testifying to the new moon.\footnote{In Jerusalem in a courtyard named Beth Yaazek witnesses assembled for the court to exam them.\cite{200} The court thoroughly examined witness as to how they saw the moon.\cite{201}} Rabban Gamliel provided diagrams of the moon in its phases.\cite{202} Rabbi Yehoshua is said to have submitted to Rabban Gamliel’s Rosh Hodesh calculations that fell out on Yom Kippur, as opposed to Rabbi Yehoshua’s differing calculations, thereby submitting to the authority of the Sanhedrin.\cite{203}

However Vilsker’s work departs from such polemics and scientifically analyzes the language of this sect. Vilsker’s work was reviewed in French by Jean-Pierre Rotschild “On Leib H. Vilsker: Manuel d’arameen samaritain trans. From Russian in Revue des Etudes Juives 141, ½ (1982), p. 237-239. Rotschild writes:

\begin{quote}
Le present manuel vise, acces success, non al l’exhaus

to have submitted to Rabban Gamliel’s Rosh Hodesh calcu

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\end{quote}

\footnote{Le present manuel vise, acces success, non al l’exhaus

linguistique, a l’histoire de la langue, aux sources samaritaines et a l’histoire de la samaritologie. La partie proprement grammaticale est amasee entre les pages 21 et 89 (les neuf pages consacrees a la syntaxe, contre cinque pour les seuls numeraux, sont tout de meme un peu maigres). Le chapitre du lexique (p.91-96) explique plusieurs idiotismes frequents et le calendrier samaritain; l’appendice 1 (p.97-104) reproduit plusieurs textes tres courts, en respectant le graphisme des scribes, et en donne la transliteration, la transcription phonetique, la traduction et le commentaire; l’appendice 2 presente, d’apres les ketubot de la collection Firkovic, a Leningrad, des specimens d’ecritures echelonnnes entre les XVI et XVIII siecles, avec leurs dates et les noms des copistes. Aux pp. 109-118, une bibliographie de 153 titres cite les etudes classiques des cent dernieres annees et beaucoup de travaux recents. Bref apercu des manuscrits samaritains, dans les bibliotheques sovietiques pp. 117-118; carte de l’ancienne diaspora samaritaine p.119.

Vilsker as an autodidact Hebrew philologist focused primarily on the linguistic aspects of the Samaritan language. His scholarly interests included the whole gamut of Jewish studies. He wrote articles on a wide range of topics. The following are the tip of the iceberg of a few of his essays characterized by thoroughness and depth:

1. At the root fo Pushkiniana among the Jews
2. Works of Scholem Aleichem translated into Hebrew
3. A review of a bibliography of Mendel Moykher Sforim
4. The Medzhybish tombstone (the kever of the Baal Shem Tov)
5. Unknown letters of Hayiim Nahman Bialik
6. etc

The Saltykov’s libraries publication, Oriental Collection, included Vilsker’s sole published work that appeared during the years of perestroika, after his passing. This work is called, The Book of Wisdom by Saeed bin Babshada. It became the basis for numerous studies and publications. Babshad was a philosphers and poet who lived in Babylon. Frikovich obtained this book from a grave in the Jewish cemetery in Egypt. Small fragments of the book were found by different archaeologists in different times and are now located in different libraries of the world. The Israeli scientists E Shearman who visited the Leningrad library in 1960 mentioned the manuscriipt. Vilsker gave the name to the manuscript The Book of Wisdom. Vilskers knowledge of the literature of the Middle Ages and totality of foreign langugates allowed Vilsker to establish a genuine name of the author and the time of his life that belonged to the second half of the 10th century and first have of the 11th century during the bridge between the Geonim and Rishonim. Vilsker detected a falsification. The poet and philosoper was not a Karaite as was previously assumed. Vilsker did not challenge the editing that someone has “corrected” the original manuscript itself. However solving the puzzle involved Vilsker to connect the dots. Vilsker read in a Karaite prayerbook a liturgical poem that was an acrostic. This acrostic spelled out the author’s name of the work Book of Wisdom. David Ben Babshad ha-Kohen was the name in the decoded encryption. Vilsker argued that “Saed” and “david “ are one and the same person. It is well known that adding the Arabic name by non-Arabs in Arabic speaking countries was widespread in those times. By combining disparate excerpts from the books of Saed Ben Babshad and thus restoring the text, the scientist returned a great poetic work of the medieval author to the world’ consciousness. A.F. Margolin
made a poetic translation into Russian of the _Book of Wisdom_ by Saeed ben Babshad. Dr. Fleischer argued that the author was a Persian Jew and wrote a whole book about Saeed Ben Babshad. Vladimir Lazaris made another translation of 37 couplets from this book chapter "Hymn to Wisdom" which was published in Ariel journal number 15, 1993. The following is a fragment prose translation by Vilsker:

The moon and the sun are shining- thee are the greatest of the stars

But in the light of Wisdom, all stars are pale

The tiaras are numerous, the decorations are luxurious

But Before the crown of Wisdom, all tiaras deteriorate

The pure gold is magnificent, the precious stones are splendid

[«Светит Луна, и Солнце – величайшее из светил,/ Но перед светом Мудрости бледнеют все светила./ Многочисленны короны, обильны украшения,/ Но перед венцом Мудрости ветшают все короны./ Прекрасно чистое золото, великолепны драгоценные камни,/ Но перед прелестью Мудрости все они блекнут/».

But before the charm of Wisdom they all fade

In the preface to his book _Proverbs of Saeed bin Babshad_ Dr. Ezra Fleischer wrote that the Vilsker labors towards rescuing these fragments are simply infinitely invaluable. “I was looking for ways to see Firkowicz manuscripts. Professor Shearman saw them, but did not study them, and I had been waiting for 15 years.” In Fleischer’s book that number over 300 pages, Fleischer constantly refers to the conclusions and findings of Lev Yefimovich as invaluable.

Vilsker’s immediate family included a constellation of a number of scholars. Dr. Vilsker’s wife Dr. Gita Gluskina, the daughter of Rav Menachem Mendel Gluskin (Ztsl) was also a medievalist who published a dissertation on the unpublished manuscript of Rabbi Yehudah AlHarizi author of the Takamoni and a translation of Rambam’s Moreh Nevukhim, also found in the St. Petersburg Saltykov library collection. Dr. Vilsker’s sister-in-law Dr. Leah Gluskina was a scholar of 2nd temple Judaism. Leah’s husband was Dr. David Yosef Amusin who published 100s of articles and over 50 books in various languages on Jewish studies on Dead Sea Scrolls, Biblical exegesis, and history of ancient Israel. Leah’s sister who joined HaShomer Hatzayir was sent to Siberia as punishment under Stalin. Another sister Sonia was the mother of the famous Russian ballet dancer Sasha Minsk.

222 And here are the translations by V. Lazaris: "Солнце с Луной – их ярче не сыщешь светил,/ Но Мудрости свет все другие светила затмил./ Сверкают короны, алмазный рассыпавши свет,/ Но рядом с короною Мудрости места им нет./... Забудут героев, забудут отважных бойцов,/ И в памяти высекут лишь имена мудрецов./... Кто деньги добыл, тот богатство свое стережет,/ Кто Мудрость нашел, тот счастливым себя назовет./... На трапезу к Мудрости стоит всегда поспешить/ И есть ее хлеб, и вино ее сладкое пить./... Кто льнет к вам с любовью – в друзья не берите таких,/ Дружите лишь с ней, что вернее и ближе других»...

223 Dr. Fleischer was the head of the Geniza Hebrew Poetry Institute originally founded by Schocken and transplanted to Israel with the rise of Nazi oppression.
Dr. Vilsker’s father-in Law was the Rav Gluskin (ztsl) was born in 1878 in Parichi, where his fater was rabbi of the town after Rabbi Hillel of Parichi, both Rabbis Hillel and Aaron Gluskin receiving semichah from the Tzemach Tzedek (3rd Lubavitch Rebbe). Some sources on Rav Gluskin include: Eleh Ezkarah, Toldot Yisrael, Mayanot, Rabbi Seidman, Gedolei MiMinsk, and Dr. Gita Gluskina’s “Remembrances of My Childhood” in the possession of DBL as well as oral history interviews. Rabbi Seidman writes: Rav Gluskin was a child prodigy who was constantly learning and intensely diligent. He possessed a personal charm that enchanted all who came into contact with him and while still he young he acquired the reputation of an iluy whose soul was fashioned for greatness. Rav Gluskin would derive insights into the words of Chazal and clarify their opinions through cogent analysis. As he rose to greatness in Torah scholarship, he rose equally in his mastery of Chassidus. His humility resembled that of Moshe Rabbenu, being “anuv Moed” and thus although he frequently came up with new interpretations (Hiddushim) he never claimed any originality for his cutting edge break throughs in Rabbinic thought but attributed anything the Rav discerned to the greatness of former Gedolim, on whose shoulders he stood to glimpse into the PaRDeS. His inner light shown from the depths of an elevated soul and in conversation he shared hidden treasures of his vast knowledge and expertise in Halakhah in a way that would ignite other’s understanding. The range of his deep learning was multifacted and wide. He shunned polemics, with the goal in order to do mitzoth, realizing that if the Jews were divided in makloket they were vulnerable to their enemies as Haman yimach shemo knew in Megillas Esther. He penetrated into the depths of Jewish matters in a straightforward manner. He employed objectivity without prior biases or prejudices or preconceived notions or side interests, a requirement of his functioning as Av Bet Din in Minsk. His analysis was like a chisel of logic. His life was one of dedication and self-sacrifice for all Jews with his soul filled with Ahavas Hashem, Ahavas Torah, and Ahavas Yisrael. Although Rav Gluskin was a Chassid among Misnagdim, a relationship of respect, care, and love was established for what was common to chassidim and Misnagdim was respect for greatness in Torah. He did not engage in polemics with the the opponents of hasidm. Instead of saying “Let us go and prove, and argue” he would say, “Let us go and sing.” It is impossible not to be enchanted by the grace of his personality and the modesty of his middot tovot. When his brother-in-law Dr. Lieberman humorously nudged him with the statement “the Chassidic Shtiebelach are superfluous”, Rav Gluskin responded with a smile and laugh saying, “I think every city and shtetl should have Chassidc Shteibelach, so that Jews not become arrogant with the fancy and big architectural synagogues manifesting an `Edifice (Oedipus) complex.’

The oppression and persecution of Judaism under the Communists in Russia aroused in Rav Gluskin later in his life wondrous powers of resistance, courage, resolve, and steadfastness to allow for continuity of Jewish life. The Rav Gluskin brought light from the darkness. The Rav communicated with other Jews as if he were a ship in the night sending secret light signals to other boats, for during the Communist persecution, KJB agents frequently infiltrated the synagogues and one had to be careful in speech and deed for it was illegal at times to teach torah, own a siddur, bake matzah, etc. Rav Gluskin was a master at communicating thru hints.” Rabbi Zeidman continues describing the secretive manner of communicating under religious persecution: “ships that meet in the heat of the sea during a storm, they hint or signal to the other in the language of secrets. One doesn’t know what his neighbor is bearing and where he is destined to turn. So is the meeting of Jewish men of spirit under the oppression of the times of the regime of the Bosheviks.
8. Scholem, Gershom 1897-1982

Speaking on the occasion of Scholem’s 60th birthday in 1958, Agnon expressed the esteem in which the Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig held his younger scholar Scholem. Rosenzweig knew Scholem before Scholem made Aliyah.²²⁴ Rosenzweig noted Scholem’s “great knowledge, his precision to cite sources, and his striving to return to the mikor of primary sources, for his critical analysis, the astounding breadth and strength of his memory, and his ability to cast off and break through “shells” that are outer, superfluous, and mere intellectual klippot, to penetrate to the core,”²²⁵ generating the intellectual equivalent of nuclear fission (shibeir hageronim). When Agnon once visited Rosenzweig after Scholem had just called, Rosenzweig remarked to Agnon, “I believe Gershom (scholem) may become a sacrifice to the bibliography of the Kabbala. But he added “the sacrifice is worthy of the altar.” Scholem as a bibliographer went beyond mere listing of books, and annotating bibliographies. His multifaceted scholarship, which operated 24/7, even when strolling in Meah Shearim, to scour used Jewish book stores for texts, always viewed books themselves as the noble sepulchers and keystones enabling his creative work. His creative work was always involved in multitasking numerous projects.²²⁶

Scholem like many scholar bibliophiles, however rare the type has become in the age of the etext, possessed a drive and passion to assemble a complete record of the collection of texts in Jewish mysticism broadly defined and connected to his research. Not for antiquarian curiosity but because Scholem’s library was a microcosm for the macrocosm reflected by the priorities of his soul and scholarly commitments. Scholem’s ardor manifested early in his life and represents his maturity from one genre and age appropriateness to serious scholarly research. Thus Scholem sold his collection of “children’s books” pre bar mitzvah for books in fields of history, math, and literature. “At the age of 14 Scholem’s Jewish identity and Jewish consciousness sent him searching for Jewish texts and began buying books on Jewish subjects. “²²⁷ When in late adolescence he plunged into the then uncharted academic field of Jewish mysticism, a subject not included in any depth in historiographical works like Graetz’ Geschichte Der Juden,²²⁸ Scholem sought to acquire and assemble every known text source and

²²⁴ Scholem comments, “The decisions we had made took us in entirely different directions. He sought to reform German Jewry from within. I on the other hand no longer had any hopes for the amalgam known as German Jewry and expected a renewal of Jewry to come about only through its rebirth in Eretz Yisrael (see Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to Kabbalah” in commentary May 1980, p.42)
²²⁵ Agnon, S.Y., Mi-ezmi el azmi, Jerusalem- Tel Aviv, 1976, p.276
²²⁶ For Example while Scholem intended to write his dissertation originally on “Linguistic Philosophy of the Kabbalah” he found that too daunting and switched to the more modest project of a translation and commentary on the Book of Bahir. Fifty years later Scholem was able to finish his project on a book on linguistic philosophy of the Kabbalah. See “How I came to the Kabbalah”, Commentary, May 1980, p.40 ; Any work in Kabbalah at that time in Germany was what his dissertation advisor Baumker called “terra incognita.”
²²⁷ Beth Arie, Malachi, “Gershom Scholem As Bibliophile”
²²⁸ Graetz work was attacked ad hominem. Because Greatz was Jewish and his scholarship focused on Jewish content and Jewish history he was discriminated against. While Walter Benjamin also faced discrimination with publication of his Deutsches Trauiples thesis at the University, the attacks against Greatz were much more vicious given Greatz’s Jewish content. Graetz Geschichte underwent at least 3 editions, while single chapters were reprinted in the German press. The 1st and 2nd volumes were published between 1874 and 1876. After the original publication of the 11th volume in 1870, it was republished once in 1900. His Volkstumliche Geschichte was widely disseminated and saw its 5th edition in 1914 (see Brann, M., “Verzeichnis von H. Graetzns Schriften und
secondary study in Jewish mysticism. Scholem purchased his first book on Kabbala in Berlin\textsuperscript{229} in 1915 and throughout his travels in Germany including Homberg and Frankfurt continued to build his library.\textsuperscript{230} It was a copy of the Zohar on which he inscribed on the title page, \textit{“Gershom Ish Schalom.”} Scholem also describes how he came to “trade” with Moses Marx, Scholem’s own copy of a miniature rare \textit{cabbalisticum} which appeared in Saloniki in 1546 tat had its wonderful Turkish binding with leather tooling that he bought before his arrival to to Frankfort for 100 marks for Marx’s coveted \textit{Kabbalah Denudata}. Twenty two years later in his home in Jerusalem, Scholem owned multiple editions and impressions of the Zohar, over 222 editions. This “archive fever” cannot be described as bourgeois “a gentle madness.”\textsuperscript{231}

\textsuperscript{229} From 1919 to 1923 Scholem came in contact with Jewish intellectuals at Berlin’s Hochschule Fuer Des Wissenschaft des Judentums. Scholem describes the Hochschule as following, “The goal of the Hochschule never achieved was the founding of an academy for the Science of Judaism. What was important about this project was that it did not entail the training of rabbis, and hence did not involve any commitment to a particular ideology or party within Judaism; rather it was to be a pure research center at which believers and unbelievers etc alike who cared about furthering the knowledge of Judaism could work peacefully side by side. Some were Zionists, some were not, but nearly all were highly gifted scholars whose names and achievements still live in Jewish studies people like Fritz Yitzchak Baer, Hartwig David Baneth, Leo Strauss, Selma Stern, Chanoch Albeck, Erst Simon, etc. (see Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to the Kabbalah,” in Commentary, May 1980, p.47)

\textsuperscript{230} Scholem notes, “Thanks to the inflation living in Germany was extremely inexpensive for people who paid in foreign currency, so that many of the most important Jewish writers, poets, and thinkers had congregated there. There was Chaim Nachman Bialk for example, indisputably the brightest star of Hebrew poetry and a true genius of conversation, as well as Ahad Ha’am and Nathan Birnbaum, around whom there gathered some of the outstanding minds of Russian Jewry. Such an illustrious group could hardly have been found outside of Russia or later- of Israel. Agnon often came in from Homberg to Frankfurt, where the main second hand Hebrew book dealers were located and just as often I would go out to Homburg on the Number 24 streetcar which travels the same route to this day. Agnon introduced me to all these intellectuals, and Bialik accorded me a very friendly reception. A German Jew who could speak Hebrew and read kabbalistic books- Bialik had never encountered anything like it, and he maintained his friendly interest in me up until his death. Agnon frequently took me along on his walks with Bialik, and their conversations were memorable. Agnon, who always pronounced my name in the Galician manner, used to say, “Schulem, don’t forget to write down in Hebrew what you hear, in your notebook.” Well I had open ears but no notebook, and didn’t write anything down (Scholem, Gershom, “How I came to the Kabbalah”, in Commentary, May 1980, p.49).

\textsuperscript{231} Nicholas A. Basbanes  
Rather Scholem’s library was a reflection of the extension of his intellectual quest and kindred soul for the subject. Scholem paid to bring to Israel when he made Aliyah 2000 books, six hundred of them on Kabbalah. One reason driving Scholem to make Aliyah, besides being a strong unrepentant Zionist, is his desire to explore the abundance of books to be found in Jerusalem. Scholem was captivated by the prospect of the book trade in Israel at the time post WWI. Immediately upon his arrival Scholem began to scour all the book shops of the Old City’s Jewish Quarter and the Mea Shearim neighborhood. As he put it in his memoirs, while the JNUL, located at the time in the Bnei Brith House, was his place of work, nearby Me’a She’arim was his playground.

In 1937 Scholem printed Quntres alu le-shalom (come to Peace, a pun on the bibliophile’s last name), a list of rare titles on Kabbalah and Hasidism. It contained 80 rare titles in Hebrew and 31 in other languages, Scholem holding that translations as a form of interpretation were essential to understand as Walter Benjamin his friend put it in “The Art of the Translator” to discern the “cultural spirit of an age.”

Scholem, like the last scene in the film Amadeus Mozart, in which the genius composure on his deathbed writes his own resurrection symphony, analogously on Scholem’s deathbed gave instructions for purchasing books. Scholem’s magnanimity is seen in his donation of a magnificent library of more than 20 thousand Jewish volumes which he gifted to the JNUL while still alive, containing not only printed books but manuscripts (ms.), pamphlets, broadsheets, offprints, in the field of Jewish mysticism.

This passionate love for bibliography and books was cultivated as noted in Scholem’s memoir at an early age while in the Berlin library of Moses Marx, before Scholem’s plans to make Aliyah. Scholem describes pulling “all nighters” in the Marx library to learn of bibliographical matters and subtopics such as typography. It is not accidental that given Scholem’s alliance of commitments that Scholem gained entry into Eretz Yisrael by a kind of Hashkamah serving as a form of affidavit in the letter of invitation he received from librarian Shmuel Hugo Bergmann, director of the JNUL, just transferred under the auspices of HUJ. Buber and others as Zionists, earlier had advocated for a JNUL library. Scholem

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232 See Beth Arie, Malachi, “Gershom Scholem as Bibliophile”; “Post WWI was awash in old Hebrew Books: the booksellers were n’t expert in the nature or value of their wares, money was scarce, and few as yet took an interest in book collecting.

233 From Berlin to Jerusalem, NY 1980, p.168

234 At the opening of a much later exhibit at the JNUL Scholem noted that the publication of this work was a mistake on his part, for it made the prices of books in the area soar. Every Judaica dealer attempted to obtain them for collectors. Scholem further confessed that the title suggested by his friend Agnon, had so beguiled him with its word play on the phrase, alu le-shalom, meaning “go you up in peace” from Bereishit 45:17.


236 The idea of a library for JNUL originated 1892 with assistance of Bnai Brit resonated with the blossoming of Jewish libraries in Germany at the time but the location of a planned library in Jerusalem, shifted the Wissenschaft illusion held by many that Berlin was Europe’s Jerusalem. (see Stenographisches Protokoll, 392; Martin Buber, Berholt Feiwel, Chaim Weizmann, Eine Judische Hochschule (Berlin: Judischer Verlag, 1920); However the movement for a Zionist library can be seen growing historically as a phenomena much earlier. Heinrich Loewe initially in Germany advocated for Jewish libraries to be founded in Germany in the pages of the Allgemeine Zeitung des Judenthums at the beginning of the 1890s (see Loewe, Heinrich, “Wir sollen Gemeindebibliotheken
assumed a “fictitious post of librarian.” Scholem writes, “Thus the philosopher Hugo Bergmann, then the director of the JNUL *(which was to serve as the library of the planned though as yet non-existent Hebrew University of Jerusalem), gave me a fictitious appointment as head of the library’s Hebrew section. This had been arranged by my fiancée Escha and I had decided to get married in Eretz Yisrael. Escha had gone over as the equally fictitious fiancée of Abba Khoushi later the mayor of Haifa.” Scholem arrived in Jerusalem in 1923 and opted to work in the library dealing with books, rather than as he wrote working teaching math at a teacher’s seminary. Scholem noted, the choice motivated because at the library he would be dealing with books, and “almost everything about them, that interested (Scholem).” From 1923 to 1927 Scholem was head of the JNUL’s Hebraica and Judaica department. His post was financed by what he called “the schnorring fund” a euphemism for cash donations left by visiting tourists, and only later formally established in trust. Therefor under difficult circumstance with lacks of financial resources Scholem helped Bergmann build the library collection. In 1927 the library published a classification system for Judaica developed and introduced by Scholem. The system provided more room by enumeration of the Dewey system call numbers to the special requirements of Jewish studies for Jewish mysticism.

The Scholem scheme was not intended to place the five classes of directly relevant topics in the DDC scheme in a new organic order, but to supplement and expand the already existing classification. Elhanan Adler writes, "Scholem's approach was to expand the areas of DDC that were allocated to Jewish topics, both by adding subdivisions to topics that were insufficiently broken down, and by redefining the scope of topics to include more than DDC intended" (Adler, Elhanan, p.10). The five classes in Dewey directly relevant to Jewish Studies are:

1-4 Old Testament

296 Jewish Religion

492.4 Hebrew Language

892.4 Hebrew Literature

933 History of Ancient Palestine

The Scholem scheme expands these five classes to the following eighteen categories:

221 Bible

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237 Scholem, Gershon, From Berlin to Jerusalem, p. 163.
238 See Levy, David B http://databases.jewishlibraries.org/node/17678 and longer version at https://sites.google.com/site/mtevansco/elazar-classification
229 Apocrypha and pseudoepigrapha

296.0 Judaism

296.1 Theology and Philosophy

296.2 Anti-Semitism and Apologetics

296.3 Prayer

296.4 Jewish Ethics, Sermons

296.5 Halakhah (Law)

296.6 Sects, religious movements, mysticism

296.7 Daily Life, Popular Literature, Folklore

296.8 Talmud and Midrash

296.9 General subjects in relation to Jews and Judaism

492.4 Philology

892.4=H Hebrew Literature

91 3.33 Jewish Archaeology

922.96 Jewish Biography

933 Jewish History

E State of Israel

In the Scholem system number 296 was enlarged to make it the comprehensive number for Judaism which brings together all topics relating to Jews and Judaism that do not belong to one of the other classes listed above. Numbers 892.4 (Hebrew Literature) was also further subdivided. Numbers 296.1-296.8 are broken down in detailed subdivision. Scholem moved such topics as Jewish art and music, Jewish law, and Jewish education to class 296 (Jewish religion), rather than leave them with their specific disciplines. Scholem took into account as far as possible the general scheme of division in religious subjects proposed by the International Institute of Bibliography in Brussels, but adapted it to the special needs of Jewish studies. The division of class 296.0 (General works on Judaism) recognizes the principle of form divisions to be used as needed with any class number. This principle is "one of the merits of DDC" (Scholem, Gershom, p.iii).

Borderline subjects were arranged under the class number 296.9. A new schedule of subdivisions for class 933 (history of Jews) was also invented. In the remaining classes 221 -4 (Old Testament), 492.4
(Hebrew Language), and 892.4 (Hebrew Literature) Dewey subdivisions were used with the expansion of the Brussels Institute.

We will further note that Scholem substituted for the Dewey number 913 (Geography of and travel in the ancient world) the category Jewish Archaeology (913.33). The Scholem system also used the following symbols for special types of division: = for division by language () for division by countries ” ” for divisions by years We see these symbols employed in Hebrew literature (892.4=H) and General subjects in relation to Jews and Judaism (296.9=’y) which includes such divergent subjects as Missionary societies to the Jews (296.9=’y266.06) to Hebrew Stenography (296.9=’~653) to sport and athletics among Jews (296.9=’~796). In all twenty-six miscellaneous subjects are in this section, one of which is Medicine among the Jews, which might include Maimonides writings on asthma to be separated from Rambam's philosophical writings (i.e. The Moreh Nevukhim) assigned 296.176, and the Rambam's legal writings (i.e. Mishnah Torah and Perush a1 ha-Mishnah) assigned to 296.53.

In the 1950 edition some innovations were needed as a consequence of the events of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the development of the State of Israel. The Scholem system was able to accommodate these changes, thereby demonstrating that it is flexible to growth. The number 229.995 was added as the designation for Dead Sea Scrolls. The twentieth edition of DDC adds 296.1 55 for Qumran community specifying, "Class here comprehensive works on the Dead Sea Scrolls. Class Old Testament texts in the Dead Sea Scrolls in 221.44 pseudepigrapha in the Dead Sea Scrolls in 229.91. In the Scholem system the State of Israel material was brought under the letter E, and divided like the whole Dewey classification. Thus E550 is geology of Israel. The second introduction summarized the features of the Scholem system by noting its:

(1) detailed subdivision of Dewey numbers for Jewish Topics i.e. 296 (Judaism) and 892.4 (Hebrew Literature)

(2) compatibility with Dewey for general topics and tables

(3) auxiliary symbols from the Universal Decimal classification for breakdown by language and place

The Scholem system has been criticized by Meir Wunder. He feels that there are minor points in the Scholem system that are philosophically unacceptable to certain Jewish groups i.e. the equation of Jewish nationalism with Zionism240 and the juxtaposition of Hassidism with Sabbateans-believers in a false Messiah. Shabbetai Zevi, a false messiah, is given the number 296.66 which immediately precedes the number 296.67 for Hassidism. Scholem's interest in Shabbetai Zevi, which culminated in a two volume book on the subject, influenced this placement.241 Wunder also objects to the

240 For the relationship between Zionism and Jewish nationalism and other nationalisms, see Wachtel, Yoel, “Jewish Nationalism” PHD dissertation, BHU, 2004
241 I this book Scholem diagnoses Shabbatai Zevi as suffering from manic depressive illness. Evidence marshalled on the docket includes “delusions of grandeur” where Shabbatai Zevil remained awake for periods of many days in which he was ecstatic and davened and learned on a constant basis with high energy euphoria state peaks. This is moot. Would Scholem suggest Moshe Rabbenu suffered from manic depression, when it is reported, “Hu lo yanum ve-lo yashan arba’em Yamim.” In fact for Rambam Hashem Himself is constantly awake and aware “Hu yodei kol
construction of the Judaism schedule which places general works on Judaism (296.01 -296.06) after the Bible (221-296) instead of what the Elazar brothers call "classical Judaism" which is constituted by Mishnah and Talmud. Wunder further objects that Scholem breaks down Jewish philosophy too much, and Jewish law not enough.

The Scholem system has been revised and updated and is used to this day in a number of particular libraries, requiring much enumeration in Jewish mysticism.

Scholem worked tirelessly on behalf of the JNUL. This is also seen in his contribution of numerous articles in the journal Kiryat Sefer. This publication was the JNUL bibliographic quarterly and the oldest still active Hebrew journal, which originated soon after Scholem’s appointment to the library’s board of directors. Scholem not only encouraged the publication of this journals issues but contributed extensively to articles on authors and works of Kabbala, both in print and in manuscript (ms.), as well as book reviews and bibliographical notes of keen acumen, discernment, and analysis. Along with historian Ben-Zion Dinur (changed from Dinaburg), there was also publication of important book list titles. Scholem wrote and prepared most of the issues for Kiryat Sefer in the first 3 years. All of Scholem’s early Hebrew language articles and book reviews (22 in #) appeared in the early issues.

In 1930 Scholem published a catalogue of the Kabbalistic manuscripts (ms.) owned by the JNUL prepared with the help of scholar Issachar Yoel which is an essential research source to this day.

Scholem throughout his life devoted countless hours and energy on behalf of the JNUL library alongside his busy teaching and lectureship career. Not only publishing scores of articles in Kirjath Sefer, but "sitareinu" as a manifestation of infinite and complete cognition that for an Aristotlean the Unmoved mover thinks Himself in the perfectio of what it is to ideally think/cognitize, being sui generis, nothing but more of the same. Perfection, is the source of contemplation as pure actuality and energia. On the Moreh Nevukhim Rambam writes that for Moshe the chief of the prophets (Lo kam biyisrael moshe oed navai u-ma beit et temunato), Moshe was in constant cognitive illumination. That is it was day when it was night, and day when it was day. Moshe’s was chief of the prophets according to Rambam because he made his imagination (dimeon) ministerial to divine reason. While other prophets employ wonderful metaphors and imaginative visions in states of dreams and trance, Moshe was totally lucide in his prophetic revelation, of Judaism as a form of law. This law was not mere nomos, as Spinoza misinterepreted it. But rather divinely revealed halakah, that continues to today as torah she b’al peh. Scholem also finds Shabbatai Zevi engaged in delusions of grandeur when for instance serving as a Shamash in smirna, he would announce the reward of the 1st Aliyah to the Cohen as “the kingdom of Spain.” The second reward for the 2nd Aliyah for the Levy “the kingdom of France” and the 3rd reward of the 3rd Aliyah to the Yisrael as the Kingdom of England etc. Thus Scholem was not adverce to drawing on very avant garde and new subjects of his day, in this case Freudian Psychology, as applied to analysis of Jewish history. Scholem’s thesis that Shabbatai Zevi followed the catastrophe of Tach ve Tat, that is offering hope after great devastation, was later adopted by scholars such as David Berger in the Rebbe Mesiah, and scandal of Orthodox Indifference. In Berger’s case, messianic contenders arise after periods of evil and catastrophe because they too offer hope out of the depths. The test cases on the docket include Bar Kokbah, who Rabbi Akiva thought was the real deal for acts such as providing his soldiers with lulavim and etrogim on Sukkot, as documented in Sukenics discoveries of texts from Masada, and repulsing the Roman oppressors. Thus Bar Kokbah gave after Hurban of the Beit Sheni. Like wise the contemporary case of Chabad Lubavitch Messiaism is argued to arise out of the depths of despair and devastation as resulting from the Shoah. This typological interpretation of Jewish history within the throes of theodicy is characterized by Berger as tending to the rise of false messiahs.

242 Title originally spelt Kirjath Sepher, providing a title field of a different “access point” for database searchers.
always involved in the libraries projects and acquisitions, and expansion of the collection. This was a calling for Scholem to perpetuate, preserve, and transmit the complete written record of Jewish history and culture ensuring Jewish continuity.

The relationship of Scholem’s research and teaching to his bibliographic and library activities are essential to each other, working in tandem. Two of Scholem’s works are devoted completely to bibliography. As early as 1927 he published his Bibliographia Cabbalistica. It contains 1302 entries on Kabbalah and a list of 273 editions of Sefer Zohar and its addenda and pirushim. How the young 14 year olds first purchase of a set of Sefer HaZohar in Berlin grew into a definitive editions of its recencions and offshoots is remarkable. Malachi Beit Arie notes that Sholems own working copy is so marked up with hundreds of additional handwritten entries, that it itself is a treasure trove of insights.

Further in 1928 Scholem published an annotated bibliography of the literature of Bratslav Hassidim. He dedicated this as a 50th anniversary birthday present to his friend Martin Buber. 243 This booklet was playfully endowed with an apposite gematria for the year of the books publication. 244 Scholem’s dedication of the annunciation of the published work to his friend Martin Buber was a way Scholem linked bibliography and academic scholarship in general not as a game with words but as an act of friendship, friendship of like minded individuals commited to the life of the mind, and scholarship. This is what Rambam following Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics, notes it he highest kind of friendship, called friendship united by quest knowledge. It is not utilitarian in nature as is pleasure freindships, money business friendship, or even reciprocal friendship based on reciprocity of “interest” i.e. I will scratch your back if you scratch my back. Rather it is caught up in the eternal, as G-d’s first attribute is that of not being ignorant for Rambam. We would not say G-d is all wise or omniscient, because that would be hubris and chutzpah and geiva to assume we can transcend the limits of human intellect to the divine all knowing wisdom. Thus negative theology proceeding with caution posting: Hashem is not a body, not finite, and not ignorant. Positive attributes however can be possitted such as “Hu Chanum, ve Rachum, ve-arukh hapayim.” Thus the friendship the likes of Scholem-Agonon-Buber etc. partakes in a Platonic, 245

243 Scholem also welcomed gifts of books for himself rather than the fleeting honor of verbal praise. For example see Dov Sadan Archives, JNUL, No. 03086, n.d.; In this entry literary critic Dov Sadan once offered to give Scholem a work on Rabbi Yonathan Eybeschuetz. Eybeschuetz who was involved in a controversy with Rav Yakov Emden over an amulet made with the name o Shabbatai Zevi, figured in Scholem’s research on the False messiah from Smirna, figuring prominently in the history of later Sabbateanism. Scholem responded, “I don’t have a (certain book on Rabbi Eybeschutz)... and if you wish to honor me with it, I am willing and ready to accept... for such a book belongs in my library.”

244 Shenat le-martin Buber le-yom ha-yovel lifrat, i.e. [5]688 (=1928). Scholem published addenda to this list in Kirjath Sepher, 6 (1929)

245 In the Lysis Socrates notes that it is common for the many to chase after insubstantial things over friendship. Socrates comments, "All people have their fancies, some desire horses, and others dogs; and some are fond of gold, and others of honour. Now I have no violent desire of any of these things; but I have a passion for friends; and I would rather have a good friend than the best cock or quail in the world: I would even go further, and say the best horse or dog. Yea, by the dog of Egypt, I should greatly prefer a real friend to all the gold of Darius, or even Darius himself: I am such a lover of friends as that." (see Plato, Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb classical Library), volume 4, 1925) Here we see Socrates in all the splendor of Socratic irony disparaging those things held by the many to be good in the utilitarian sense. The many have a lack of experience in things beautiful. The Greeks called vulgarity, apeirokalia. Socrates' martyrdom in light of a life
Aristotelian, and even Ciceronian dimension. Scholem’s magnanimous generosity in donating his private library to JNUL even resonates with some of C.S. Lewis’ notions of the highest form of Friendship. Yet Scholem’s passion for book collecting and more importantly learning the books lived in pursuit of love of wisdom reveals Socrates' beautiful soul. The Lysis goes on to identify the friend with the Good and the good with virtue (arete). The above passage cited from Plato’s Lysis finds correlations with the following from Xenophon’s Memorabilia where we read, "Just as others are pleased by a good horse or dog or bird, I myself am pleased to an even higher degree by good friends. And if I have anything good I teach it and recommend them to my friends from whom I believe they will be benefited somehow in regard to virtue" (see Xenophon, Memorabilia and Oeconomicus, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992). It is the excellence of intellectual virtue that is presented in the passage cited from Xenophon’s Memorabilia where Socrates is said to have shared (literally picked out or selected, from ek-legein) enlightening passages from good books. Socrates in the Memorabilia continues, "And the treasures of the wise men of old which they left behind by writing them in books, I unfold and go through them together with my friends, and if we see something good, we pick it out and regard it as a great gain if we thus become useful to each other." The man who reports this utterance of Socrates adds the remark, "When I heard this, it seemed to me both that Socrates was blessed and that he was leading those listening to him toward perfect gentlemanship (Kalokagathia)." The Greek gentleman possessess the virtues of megaloprepeia (magnificence), megalopsychia (greatness of soul), and epikeia (decency).

Love between friends, friendship, in Aristotle is the highest of natural goods. Its being a natural good is apparent in Aristotle’s comparison of it to water in the Politics. As a good it is said to hold the state together (1155a,1.23). As a good for individuals according to Aristotle "No one would choose to live without friends, even if he possessed all other good things (1155a,5-6). Friendship as a natural good even transcends the good that is justice (dike), for "when people are friends they have no need of justice (1155a,1.26). According to Aristotle the highest kind of friendship is friendship of virtue which is devoted to a good that friends have in common, namely knowledge (episteme). Perfect friendship is the friendship of men who are good and who pursue intellectual virtue (1156b7-8). While utility friends conceive of themselves as profit seekers and pleasure friends conceive of themselves as pleasure seekers, virtue friends conceive of themselves as seekers of virtuous activity. True friendship involves befriending the friend in the name of the good. Friends strive to perfect one another through sharing in discussion and thought (1170b,10-12). When Aristotle notes that "even study is done better with co-workers" he conceives of the sun ergos who is not a friend in the ideal sense. Aristotle notes that the true friend becomes one’s other self united in the quest for truth (aletheia) which will ultimately have to be ascended towards alone, even though Aristotle rejects Plato’s conception of the forms (eidos). Nonetheless the good man is related to his friend as to himself, his friend being a second self or allos autos (1166a29-32). Aristotelian friends strengthen one another through mutual care and love in the name of the good which is wisdom, understanding, and knowledge. In that the eudaemon life is self-sufficient, the philosopher must leave the circle of his truth friends and contemplate the truth in solitude (1177132-4). (see Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, Harvard, Mass.: Harvard University Press (Loeb classical Library), 1956). Translations by Martin Ostwald, Richard McKeon, Terence Irwin, and Sir David Ross can also be found.

Unlike Aristotle friendship for Cicero is an adequate resting place that need not be surpassed. Cicero finds a stabilitas in the friendship of virtue (arete/virtus). When Cicero remarks that est enim is qui est tamquam alter idem (for he is, as it were another self) he clearly has Aristotle in mind who refers to the self as the allos autos. Laelius asks, "In the first place, how can life be what Ennius calls the life worth living if it does not repose on the mutual goodwill of a friend? What is sweeter than to have someone with whom you may dare discuss anything as if you were communicating with yourself." Cicero makes the analogy that just as good wines improve with age, the oldest friendships ought to be the most delightful.

For C.S. Lewis in The Four Loves, affection, friendship, and eros must be converted into charity by surpassing their limits as natural goods and becoming assumed in the gift love of the gospel as divine gift. Lewis refers to Emerson when suggesting that the question, "Do you love me (as a friend)" means "Do you see or care about the the same truth." Friendship is born when man says to another, "What! You too? I thought no one but myself..." Yet the true Christian must put the love of G-d, agape over love for the friend. Thus Lewis calls for the Christian wisdom of love to order his loves and convert his natural loves into charity. Divine gift love in man enables the Christian to love what is not naturally lovable such as the leper, animals, enemies, morons, and the sulky, the
substantive contents not as museum pieces or antiquarian objects of curiosity, but because we want to know the truth, and live a life redeemed by the life of the mind and dedication to the sekel hapoel, perhaps shares with some later distant echoes of what Jacques Maritain calls, amour fou, boundless, mad, infinite love. \textsuperscript{249} Scholem’s dedication to the life of sefarim as an extension of the loves of his soul certainly is some form of a life dedicated to acting selflessly lifnei misharat ha-din, especially when Scholem put himself at risk, to retrieve and bring back to JNUL confiscated Nazi “loot” of the treasury of the Rabbinic library that the Nazis wanted for “display” (learning about, rather than from) a Museum to the murdered Jewish race. Scholem risked all to bring back these “captive books” likened in Jewish law to having “gone over a waterfall” in a mabual (see gemarah\textsuperscript{250}) to the Jewish homeland, rather than let them sit unused unconsulted, merely as so much investment capital on libraries in Europe, whose host culture has played a significant role in the eradication of the living culture to which these books in part testify to long living and vibrant cultural presence in Europe. Scholem is reported for instance to have “wept” while walking in the Jewish chetami of Prague home to gedolim such as the Maharal, Rabbi Isaiah Horowitz (author of Shneu Luchot Ha-Brit), the Tosofot Yom Tov, and even Franz Kafka,\textsuperscript{251} because

\begin{quote}
Lewis comments, "We are all receiving charity. There is something in each of us that cannot naturally be loved." (182). Lewis continues, "the natural loves can hope for eternity only in so far as they have allowed themselves to be taken into the eternity of charity." (187) (in Lewis, C.S., The Four Loves, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1960)

\textsuperscript{249} For Maritain the mad boundless love, amour fou involves giving oneself over totally to God rather than the friend. The wisdom of the love of friendship has passed into the realm of amour fou when the desire for the good of one’s friend is so boundlessly mad as to involve sacrificing oneself totally for her. According to Maritain when the limits of sexual passion are surpassed and the soul passes under the regime of mad, boundless love for God, then the soul has passed to the mystical state. Maritain writes, “the perfection of human life or the perfection of charity considered in the pure and simple sense, or under all relations, clearly presupposes the passage to the predominant regime of mad boundless love for God, or the mystical life.” (231) Amour fou for Maritain renounces the lusts of the flesh.

\textsuperscript{250} Cited by Rabbi Frann on Shabbos spent on campus at Ner Israel Rabbinical Academy

\textsuperscript{251} See Scholem’s extensive interaction with Walter Benjaim and discussions on secular literature such as Kafka’s oeuvre in works such as A Story of A Friendship. Exerpts of the Kakfa discussions can be found in part abridged and Reprinted recently in the Schocken editions of Illuminations and Reflections of Benjamin. Scholem has much history with Benjaim. For instance both “feigned” madness to get out of military service in WWI in order to pursue their research in Basel Switzerland in fact duping the German military board into thinking both of them completely meshugah and ferucht. Such deception of feigned madness is also noted in the author of the book _The Madman_ and the Professor, none other than the author of the OED. This man returned home on evening to find his wife cheating on him in bed with another man. The Professor promptly as a “crime of passion” shot the adulterer in his own bed with his wife. In order to avoid a prison sentence, the Professor feigned madness in order to be stationed in a mental facility that had a good working library from which on index cards he composed the OED. Ezra Pound is said to have also pleaded insanity for his anti-semitic radio broadcasts from Italy that linked world conspiracy with the Jewish kosher butchers. Pound thus ended up in St. Elizabeth’s hospital free to work on his interests in Provençal Poetry, Sanskrit, and Chinese pictograms. In the recent important film, One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s nest, a Native American Indian, also feigns madness to be stationed with free room and board in the mental facility where Jack Nicholson tries to spike up the lives of patients, only to be punished for his rebelliousness by being forced to undergo a Labotomy, a clear critique of the cruel and inhumane treatment of mental facilities populated by Nurse Rachets’, a critique long before those of Michel Foucault in works such as _The Birth of the Clinic_ and _Madness and Civilization_ etc. Scholem with his astounding memory would certainly locate the primary source for such notable successes of “feigned madness” to avoid unjust situations, in the example of David HaMelech Himself, who in Tehillim 34 feigned madness to escape the murderous grips of Avimelekh recited each Shabbos, proclaims:

\end{quote}

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Sholem took to heart his dedication and love of the cultural legacy of the Jewish people and Rabbinic elites.

Sholem dedicated countless years to various bibliographic projects out of love for Hebrew printed books and manuscripts (ms.) and the importance he placed on securing their preservation to future generations of scholars. Sholem was one of the fathers of the Hebrew Bibliography Project housed in JNUL. For 22 years from its inception in 1960 he was head of the editorial board of a great effort to investigate and record every item of Hebrew printed trace in history. At the boards last meeting
Scholem noted that due to age he resigned from all other scholarly public projects except this one of immense importance.

Scholem also in his lifetime supervised the committee of the Hebrew Palaeography Project. In 1965 his proposal to the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities to study all dated medieval Hebrew manuscripts (ms) and gather information about their technical, technological, and graphic features, and then to computerize this data, for further analysis, to arrive at knowledge of Hebrew typology was a mission in which Scholem invested great enthusiasm.

Thirdly Scholem supported the project of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts (ms.) from collections around the world in order to identify and catalogue them. 25 years before David ben Gurion, initiated the establishment of this Institute, Scholem wrote to his friend Chaim Nachman Bialik, “the requisite ms.,..., must be photographed... and assembled in a special collection under the aegis of the JNUL, so that those which are not published (by scholars) will yet be available for all the generations to come.”252

According to Moshe Idel Scholem was Scholem (1898–1982), the most important scholar of Jewish mysticism and a towering figure in Jewish intellectual life.253 Born to an assimilated family in Berlin, he was attracted in his youth to Judaism and Zionism and studied major Hebrew Jewish texts and Kabbalah by himself. After completing a Ph.D. thesis in 1923 on Sefer ha-Bahir, he arrived in Israel, and taught at the Hebrew University, becoming the first professor to devote all his studies and teaching to the topic of Jewish mysticism. His achievement in surveying all the major stages and writings belonging to this topic is staggering. In the difficult times of the 1920s and 1930s, he traveled to all the major European libraries and systematically studied all the available manuscripts. In 1939 he delivered a series of lectures in New York, which became the first comprehensive analysis of the historical and phenomenological aspects of the entire range of Jewish mysticism: Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, which is also his most influential and widely read book. One of the chapters of this book, dealing with the Heikhalot literature, was complemented by a collection of studies printed in New York, under the title Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism, and the Talmudic Tradition.

Building upon his perusal of manuscripts, he published from the mid-1920s a series of articles in Hebrew in which he identified many anonymous manuscripts, and from 1948, a series of analyses about the beginning of Kabbalah. In its most elaborated form, it appeared in English posthumously as Origins of the Kabbalah, translated by A. Arkush and edited by R.Z.J. Werblowsky (1987).

Alongside those studies he identified, published, and analyzed in detail the main documents pertinent to Shabbateanism, and in 1957, he published in Hebrew the most important synthesis of the historical and religious aspects of the Shabbatean movement in the lifetime of *Shabbetai Ževi. Sixteen years later,

252 Devarim be-go, p.61
253 See [ EJ, Moshe Idel (2nd ed.)] URL http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?id=GALE%7CCX2587517767&v=2.1&u=nysl_me_touro&it=r&p=GVRL&sw=w&asid=03093274bd50babf1843e9f0fb2a3b2 Gale Document Number: GALE|CX2587517767

From 1948, Scholem was a permanent participant in the Eranos encounters in Ascona, Switzerland, where he lectured and interacted with the major scholars of religion of his generation, such as Carl G. Jung, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin. The lectures he delivered there in German were printed in the volumes of Eranos Jahrbuch and collected in two German volumes, translated into English by R. Manheim as On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism (1969) and On the Mystical Shape of the Godhead (1991), and into Hebrew by Joseph ben Shlomo as Pirkei Yesod be-Havanat ha-Kabbalah u-Semaleha (1976). These studies represent the most important articulations of Scholem's phenomenology of Kabbalah, treating seminal matters in Jewish mysticism. In 1972 he formulated his last summary of his understanding of Kabbalah in the various entries he contributed to Encyclopedia Judaica, which were collected in the volume Kabbalah (1974).

The main themes that represent his thought are the emergence of Kabbalah in Europe in mid-12th century as the result of a synthesis between Gnostic and Neoplatonic elements; the rise of messianic interest among the kabbalists after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain; the reaction to the trauma of the expulsion in the theories of the Safed kabbalists, especially the Lurianic one; the spread of this type of messianic Kabbalah among wider audiences, which prepared the way for the emergence of the Shabbatean movement, and last but not least, the assumption that the wide influence of the Shabbatean movement had an impact on the emergence of three main religious developments since the 18th century: Hasidism, Enlightenment, and Reform. Scholem was especially interested in Messianism and dedicated much of his energy to writing seminal studies about the "messianic idea" in Judaism in all its forms: see especially The Messianic Idea in Judaism (New York, 1972). A leitmotif in his writing is the importance of antinomian, paradoxical, and dialectical forms of thought in Kabbalah on the one hand, and the absence of mystical union in Jewish mysticism, on the other.

His deep involvement in the intellectual life in Israel and in the Jewish world generated numerous articles, most of which have been collected in three Hebrew volumes edited by Abraham Shapira, and in some English ones.

Scholem established a school of scholars in Jerusalem which he described as historical-critical, and directed a series of doctoral theses by renowned scholars such as Isaiah Tishby, Efraim Gottlieb, Rivka Schatz-Uffenheimer, Meir Benayahu, Joseph ben Shlomo, Amos Perlmutter, Yehuda Liebes, and Amos Goldreich. His impact on a long line of Israeli and American scholars and intellectuals was tremendous. Among them we may enumerate Zalman Shazar, S.Y. Agnon, Isaac Baer, Nathan Rotenstreich, Chaim Wirszubski, and R.J.Z. Werblowsky; and in America, Harold Bloom, Robert Alter, and Cynthia Ozick.
Scholem was widely recognized as the leading scholar in Judaica in the 20th century and was accorded numerous prizes and honorary titles, among them the Israel Prize, the Bialik Prize, and the Rothschild Prize, and served as the head of the Israeli Academy of Science and Humanities.

He wrote an autobiography, From Berlin to Jerusalem, and corresponded with many persons, including Walter Benjamin. Several monographs have been dedicated to his life and thought: e.g., David Biale, Gershom Scholem, Kabbalah and Counter-History (Cambridge, MA, 1979), and Joseph Dan, Gershom Scholem and the Mystical Dimension of Jewish History (New York-London, 1988).

His rich library is indubitably the best one in the field of Jewish mysticism, and it became part of the Jewish National and University Library, serving as a major resource for studies in the field. A catalogue raisonné of his library has been printed in two volumes, edited by Joseph Dan and Esther Liebes, The Library of Gershom Scholem on Jewish Mysticism (Jerusalem, 1999).


9. Jacob Dienstag

Dr. Jacob I. Dienstag, י”ר, served as the Librarian of Yeshiva University’s Mendel Gottesman Library of Hebraica/Judaica for thirty years, from 1940 to 1970. The office of the Head Librarian was dedicated in his memory. Speakers at the ceremony recalled Dr. Dienstag’s personality, his close friendship with the YU roshei yeshiva, among them Rav Soloveitchik, his political orientation as expressed in his strong support for the views of Jabotinsky, his involvement with the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry, and especially his contribution to building the Library’s collections. A dedicatory plaque and a photograph may now be seen at the entrance to the office, on the fifth floor of the Library.

Dr. Dienstag was a scholar-librarian par excellence, and a bibliographer who was well known for his chosen field of research, Maimonidean scholarship. Dienstag served as the first president of AJL.

Dienstag’s wife Claire was head of cataloging at NYPL in the Dorot division.

Ms. Tova Friedman of the Lander College for Women, remembers Dr. Dienstag very fondly, “He was a scholar, a religious Zionist of Mizrahi, and bought an apartment in Jerusalem. I remember when the couple came to The Religious Zionists of American convention and dinners of the Mizrahi. Dr. Dienstag was present when keynote speakers such as Rav Soloveitchik and Dr. Lamm spoke. He was devoted to his research one after another, working on many projects at the same time. I used to speak with Claire concerning the cataloging of Jewish books. Dr Deinstag was the first president of AJL and all conventions had kosher meals which I really looked forward to.”

———. “Interview, “With Tova Friedman: Remembering Dr. Dienstag”, on 5/19/16, at 3:45 pm.
The following is an interview with Dr. Dienstag’s wife Clair Dienstag conducted on June 6th, 2016

11:30 am. To 12:30 pm

. Interview with Claire Dienstag on Monday June 6th

DBL: Please tell us what it was like being married to a scholar librarian, your husband Dr. Jacob Dienstag?

CD: Books were his life as a bibliographer and he was a work aholic but in the good way that Rabbi Tarfon notes in Pirke Avot, “The day is short, the work is great, the workers are lazy, the reward is great, and the Master of the house presses.” Librarianship for my husband was not a 9 am. To 5 pm. Job, but a calling and mission. He just did and did not talk or waste words. He spoke with his scholar colleagues in collaboration about his work. I helped edit various publications. That was my task to help. I called his attention to new Jewish studies works that appeared in the scholarly community

DBL: What do you mean by a work aholic?

CD: He was enthralled with the sense of intellectual discovery and would work late into the hours of the night and every free moment. He was always surrounded by sefarim and as a bibliographer his notes for scholarly projects. Every night before sleep he worked on his scholarly projects and right after havadalah as a calling that drove his search for intellectual attainment. He understood lifum zara agra, that according to the effort is the reward and time must be invested to engage with texts, and that means effort must be apportioned to set aside and make the time for scholarship research. I remember a professor in College who remarked that before sitting down to write he would start to perspire and have to wash his hands and take deep breaths and get in the right frame of mind first. For my husband he thought of his scholarship 24/7 so he was always in the state of kavanah to just get to work and sit down for hours on end, not to talk, He just did it. He made a pact with the Ribono Shel Shalom that if Hashem gave him life, he would do something with it and work every day in behalf of a higher cause-scholarship and research. His father had installed a work ethic.

DBL: Please tell us about some of your husband’s scholarly interests

CD: They were wide but did not skimp on depth in our age of narrow specialization. He cast a wide net in many areas of Jewish studies. Although recognized as a preeminent Rambam scholar he knew and published in the field of Jewish studies relating to philosophy, the sciences, and the whole gamut.

DBL: Can you give us some examples?

CD: For example he published an essay on St. Thomas Aquinas in relationship to his knowledge of Maimonides the non-Jewish medievalist scholarly journal, the Monast. He also published outside of Medieval the Jewish period on the GRA which is a lifetime endeavor. For example he published on the GRA in relationship to the RAMBAM in Talpiyot in Hebrew. Another area representing his wide scope and breadth of knowledge is that he was familiar with the scholarship of early Reformers like Abraham Geiger, Leopold Zunz, Steinschneider, and Wolfe. These scholars knew Maimonides work. Because my
husband valued knowledge he did not let politics in matters of learnin cloud his censorship of scholars work just because he disagreed with their ideologies. In this way he was a free thinker. He was a lover of Klal Yisrael and was willing to accept the findings of scholarship from whatever political camps, if it was true knowledge.

DBL: Did your husband have interaction with other denominations of Judaism?

CD: When my husband left the army he expected to go back to YU but he was offered a very nice lucrative post as head librarian of HUC. The terms were very pleasing financially. He asked the Rav for advice. The Rav said, “Will you be happy in that environment?”. My husband had to think about it. The Rav always put thinks in existential terms. My husband decided that HUC was not the place for him and he went back to YU.

DBL: You mention your husband’s army service? Where did he serve, in what capacity? and did he talk about it?

CD: In 1946 he left the army service. He was stationed in North Africa against Rommel the Nazi leader. He was also present at the invation of Naples in Italy. He served in the medical division. There he had access to the records of Jewish wounded soldiers. In the invasion of Normandy many Jewish boys were injured in the invasion. My husband pulled the record of Yonkel Cohen so that when he was discharged he would not be put in harms way so quickly etc. He always watched out for Jewish soldiers. He kept Jewish boys alive and was sensitive to their needs. One Jewish soldier was not so appreciative. You see if you were in the sick bed you were not paid and this soldier wanted to get back in combat. He did not appreciate Yakov’s keeping him out of harms way. To keep him quite my husband paid from his own pocket his salary as if he had been readmitted for combat. After the war my husband’s brother went to Williamsburg and met a Jewish person who owned a hardware store as my husband’s brother was fixing up his home and needed supplies. The storeowner recognized the name “Dienstag” and acknowledge how my husband has saved his life and said that he owed him some monies that my husband paid to keep him out of harms way. My husband was also a PoW but he rarely talked about it. He just said he was captured and escaped. If you dig in the YU archive you will see that he was a PoW. I was married to my husband 42 years and he never talked about being a PoW. In the last years before his passing he opened up about it and became teary eyed and wept. He confessed that in order to escape he killed a German. This bothered him very much. While pilots drop bombs and eat steak dinners, it is different when it is hand to hand combat.

DBL: Did your husband’s expert interest in Rambam influence his hashgafa and life?

CD: As a rationalist the Rambam influenced his Hashgafah, and even some of the Rambam’s medical advice is relevant as much today as in the Middle ages. But he recognized the existence of sifrei Kabbalah

DBL: What motivated your husband to devote his life to learning the oeuvre of the Rambam?
CD: Yakov’s father sparked his interest in the RAMBam. His father was a regular Shaliach Zibur and knew how to learn. Yakov took great care of his father towards the end of his father’s life fulfilling Kavod Et Avkikha veEimekhah making sure his father had all he needed for his care. My husband spoke about his father, and my husband was not a talker. His father came from Barnev western Poland, now known as Baronow. The family was from Sanz, a Hasidic sect. My husband was a child when he came to America. He was born in 1912 and came over in 1920 just before WWI. His father came here first as a greenhorn as did many Jewish immigrants to save up enough money to bring the family over and secure affidavives. My husband was the youngest child In the family in Europe. His mother wandered around a bit before coming over to join her husband in NYC. Life was not easy. His father Bairish Dienstag sold knishes to earn a living. If you make 3 knishes you can eat the 4rth was the joke. No but really it was not easy and to the end my husband always liked knishes and later in life we would go to the lower east side to seek out Bistreicher’s kosher restaurant to order a knish. They moved to the Lower East side where my husband attended Yeshivot. At that time Rabbi Moshe Feinstein was the Rav of the Lower East side most respected etc. There is also Rabbi Yakov Yosef. The family lived at 99 Norfolk street. They attended a Hasidic shul Nano Nanzyer(?). My husband told me a story of his first year in Yeshiva. The Menahel has a Litvish Yiddish which my father could not understand. The Menahel asked my husband, “Was ist deinen Namen”? My husband was only familiary with the question, “Was heist du?” When my husband paused to consider the question In unfamiliar loshon to him, the Menahel said, “Er is ein grosse I idiot!” This is just because my husband could not understand his Yiddish.

DBL: In what ways are you and your husband Zionists?

CD: We have an apartment in Israel 27 years and much of his time would be spent in the JNUL library there. Although he went to many Jewish libraries such as the British Museum library, he loved being in Israel. We attended Mizrahi gatherings. When my husband was a little child in yeshiva he tells the story later in his life how the Melamed actually took his talis that had a picture of “zion” on it, and cut it out. That was in the 1920s when it was not usual that frum Yeshivot were avidly Zionist. The rabbis of the Yeshiva expressed reluctance for their children of the same age to “mix with Zionists” i.e. to socialize. Haven nisht Mit Dem! They would say. Many years later my husband met this rebbe who did not want his children playing with Zionists.

DBL: I recall that Bialik was thrown out of Volozhin for being a Zionist and writing poems like El HaTzipor?

CD: Yes, it was not common for Yeshivah bucherim then to be openly and avidly Zionistic. There was Mizrahi of Rabbi Reines and Rav Kook, but very Haredi Yeshivot still were cautious about Zionisms.

DBL: What sort of Zionist activities did your husband do?

CD: As a College student he organized the Young Judea club and ran the meetings. He collected dues for Zionist causes.
DBL: What sort of Zionist was your husband as there are many stripes of religious Zionists not to mention the secularist labor Zionists like Ber Berochov, cultural Zionists like Ahad Haam, Political Zionists like Herzl.

CD: My husband was a Jabatinskite.

DBL: Did you read the 2 volume set Lone Wolf on Jabitinski

CD: We have that on our shelves. You see My husband was a fighter. Did you see the movie Bielski?

DBL: Yes

CD: My husband had Bielski’s temperament with regards to Zionism. He did not believe in being Meoffenes. He believed in resistance.

DBL: Do you mean that he would be opposed to Ben Gurion drinking tea with the British to secure their withdrawal from Palestine by diplomacy? Was your husband like Stern Gang and LEchi intent on bombing the british out?

CD: He was a religious Zionist but not meoffenes.

DBL: Can you speak of some of your and your husbands intellectual friendships?

CD: We were often hosted in the home of Ursala Merkin. Rabbi Yosef Breuer was the Rav of Breuer’s in Washington heights, the Frankfurt on the Hudson they called it. Rabbi Yakov Vreuer was Ursula Merkin’s father (ztsl). My husband was an admirer of his work. He knew it well and this enhanced the friendship. He was also very close with Rabbi Leo Jung. Leo Jung gave him the health tip that he followed his whole life. Rambam says one should take a small nap each afternoon day to promote long life. We had an apartment on 181st street filled with sefarim. My husand would go there to take a little nap every day to have his soul commune with his sefarim. He lived to 95 years old and he took to heart the Rambam’s medical advice on rest.

DBL: Can you share with us some of your husbands friendships at YU

CD: Rav Soloveitchik came over to America around 1945 and taught Talmud to the bucherim. The bucherim however thirsted also for the Rav’s wide in depth knowledge of philosophy and general science knowledge. The rav agreed to meet with the students after the shiurim to share his knowledge in philosophy. Rabbi Belkin who was a scholar of medieval Jewish philosophy and even wrote on Philo, however decided to lock the classrooms after 5 pm. So where would the Rav meet with the students to share general academic interests in Rudolf Otto, Kant, and Kierkegard and the like always in relation to the eternal Torah teachings. My husband volunteered the library for these informal seminars. These meetings with the students actually were still very much on traditional Jewish texts. It was my husbands job to bring varous volumes, some exoteric, but some rather obscure from the shelves to help the Rav illustrate his informal shiurim in the library with examples from Jewish texts. My husband had to know the placement of texts on the shelf by pure memory as there was not time to consult the catalog as the
Rav needed texts quickly to illustrate his post 5 pm. Shiurim. The Rav recognized something special about my husband the librarian, with his knowledge of the contents of the sefarim requested to bring for the informal seminar. We came to host the Rav for meals.

DBL: What was that like?

CD: Often in attendance was Rabbi Noman Lamm and Rabbi Tuvia Prechet. My husband and me were sometimes invited to the Rav’s summer home on the ocean. We also became friendly with the Soloveitchk mishpachah. What glued the friendships was respect and cherishing and love for learning and reverence for Jewish texts.

DBL: Thus a good scholar librarian must know the contents of the sefarim besides merely knowing how to access the books via the tool of the cataog?

CD: Exactly, there is no substitute for knowing the contents, rather than just knowing how to “access information”. My husband did not like the term “information” when regarding Jewish learning. The contents of the texts is not “information” but words of the living G-d handed down to us via the masorah. I’ve been out the librarian loop for 16 years when I retired from the NYPL but I know that the trends in technology put at risk scholarly librarians who are not as valued as in the past. A good Jewish scholar librarian “enables” the scholarship of scholars, and creatively helps that process of the community of scholarly activity. This is not mere pushing buttons on a computer. It is a living relationship to texts that one knows. Even by heart and taking them to heart. A good librarian develops a “2nd sense” of knowing where to look for sources by knowing the contents of the tomes on the shelf. Thus the good librarian can help patrons in ways that a machine, heaven forbid can’t. Jewish learning is different from lets say reading a secular Newspaper. Today there is a forgotten type of learning that prevents going to the depths. A good Jewish scholar knows how to go to sources and to the depths of the origin and beginning of sources.

DBL: Did your husband ever work with online databases and the internet”

CD: He encountered the internet late in his career. He did not get into it. He worried it would make learning based on memory at risk. He distrusted it.

DBL: Can you tell us more about your husband’s relationship with Rav Soloveitchik?

CD: They had a great friendship based on Torah knowledge as an intellectual good.

DBL: Did you husband ever mention any of the politics at YU?

CD: In the 1960s the yeshiva was blackmailed that if it wanted government monies for funding assistance it would have to become non-denominational. The Rav and my husband where against such changes in the curriculum. The government bureaucrats proposed relegating the Judaica library to the basement- out of sight. The Gottesman collection B”H today is on the 4th and 5th floors a crowning glory of the library collection, and not ancillary to it. The Judaica library of a Jewish organization ist he heart of any educational curriculum. The government funding influenced the reorganization of the
Rabbinic school as an affiliate of YU. My husband fought with the Rav against this. In 2009 the first yahrzeit of my husband I dedicated the office of head librarian to my husband with a plaque next to the door.

DBL: Who were some of the scholars your husband as a scholar influenced in helping creatively with research?

CD: There are so many hard to recall but David Corcos comes to mind. He is a rambam scholar. His son is married to a cousin’s daughter.

DBL: I see the time is getting towards the end of our allotted interview and I want to thank you so much Rebbetzin Dienstag for your wonderful sharing of your memories about your husband and the life you shared together. Truly a wonderful interview.

CD: My husband never let anyone call him a rabbi and I am not a Rebbetzin.

DBL: I guest Rabbi Yakov Berab in Israel also aknowledge that real semichah requires the reinstitution of the Sanhedrin which he sought to reestablish in Sfat in the 16th century.

CD: Really my husband was much to modest to let people call him a rabbi but he had many students who he helped with their research. Yet he was no Rabbi Akiva and I am no Rabbi Akiva’s wife

DBL: I guarantee you your husband knew much more in the world of torah learning than many beknighted rabbis today and your and his modesty is truly admirable for its magnanimity and great souledness. Thank you again for sharing your memories of your husband truly a scholar librarian.

10. Haim Maccoby 1924-2004

British scholar of ancient Judaism. Born in 1924 in Sunderland the son of a mathematics tutor and the grandson of the Maggid of Kamenets Poland, Hyam Maccoby was educated at Oxford. He became a schoolteacher and was then the librarian of Leo Baeck College, London. In 1998 he was made research professor at the Centre for Jewish studies at Leeds University. Maccoby was widely known for his writings on Jesus, and his milieu in Roman Judea. In _Jesus and the Jewish Resistance_ (1980), Maccoby argued that Jesus should be viewed as a liberal but torah observant Pharisee, who opposed the Romans but not other Jews as Dan Brown has argued in the _Birth of the Messiah_. Maccoby also saw the origins of Christian Anti-Semitism as beginning in the separation of Christianity as a separate religion, a view put forward in Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish evil (1992) and in Paula an Hellinism (1991). His most important book was _The Talmud on Trial_ which dealt with medieval disputations of 1240 in Paris with Rabbi Yehiel, 1263 in Barcelona with Ramban, and 1414 in Tortosa with Rabbi Yosef Albo- all of which ended in persecution for the Jews. Maccoby was widely known through his many appearances on television; he was frequently attacked by both Christians and Orthodox Jews.

11. Dina Abromowitz
Longtime librarian at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research whose firsthand and encyclopedic knowledge with a formidable memory of the lost Yiddish world of Eastern Europe made her a treasured resource for hundreds of scholars and writers for more than half a century. Her mind according to Yosef Berger was a mental card catalog for hundreds of rare and obscure books and historical materials in the YIVO stacks. She knew things off the top of her head said Zachary Baker who succeeded Abramowicz as YIVO’s head librarian and now curator of Judaica at Stanford University. Her friend Esther Hautzig who also grew up in Vilna said of her, “No computer on earth can store the information she had in her brain because she lived through it. She insisted on historical and linguistic accuracy.

She was from Vilna. Vilna was fiercely loved by its Jewish inhabitants as the “Jerusalem of Lithuania” a city of writers like Chaim grade and Abraham Sutzkeever. Ms Abromowicz was the librarian of Vilna’s Jewish children’s library [Kinderbibliotek] from 1939-1941 and then after the Nazis herded 56,00 Jews into ghettos of the ghetto library headed by Herman Kruk. She worked in the ghetto library from 1941-1943. In the first year the library circulated 100,00 books to its starving brutalized readers mostly it turned out escapist fiction. When the ghetto was liquidated in 1943 she escaped into the woods and joined the Jewish resistance fighters as a nurses helper. She came to NY in 1946 and went to work for the transplanted version of one of Vilna’s most important institutions, the YIVO library many of whose thousands of books and artifacts had been smuggled out by a ragtag band of slave laborers and parians known as the paper brigade. She met Max Weinreich a surviving YIVO founder. She was YIVO’s head librarian for 25 years until 1987 then in her late 70s she was eased off as a research librarian a position she held until her passing. Zachary Baker writes, “renowned for her remarkable skills as a reference librarian Dina Abramowicz build an impressive library collection at YIVO Institute for Jewish research.” Abramowicz areas of expertise included Yiddish literature, modern Eastern European Jewish history and culture, and the Nazi Holocaust. She published numerous studies, bibliographies, and book reviews, and topical articles. During her tenure at YIVO she greatly expanded the libraries collection adding books and journals in many languages.

12. Stefan Reif (1944- )

Stefan Reif’s response to AJL ward made in June 2008

Once upon a time dear colleagues, it was not unusual-it was perhaps even perfectly regular-for those with responsibilities for great libraries or outstanding collections of books to function all at once as librarians, bibliophiles, bibliographers, researchers, scholars, and managers. What is more some of the greatest names in the history of modern Jewish scholarship including Moritz Steinschneider, Abraham Berliner, Adolf Neubauer, Alexander Marx, and Gershom Scholem, played such a variety of roles not so much because they were imposed upon them but rather in response to what ‘book learning’ meant to them.

Alas at some point in more recent decades libraries and educational institutions of which they are a part have taken to splitting such functions and assigning each of them to a different post, while at the same time adding additional breeds of librarians whose sole function is
“technology” or fund raising. When seen in the broader bibliographical context, this may or may not be a favorable development. What is beyond question is that it has led to a most unfavorable suspicion of any member of the profession who attempts to be a kind of factotum that was once the norm.

For reasons which I have attempted to explain elsewhere my career led me to a commitment to a multi-faceted librarianship and a dogged determination to combine scholarship with bibliography, research with cataloguing, lecturing with fundraising, and paleography with technology. Because this was not always understood or appreciated by the colleagues, institutions and societies with which I came into contact in the world of learning, I sometimes seriously doubted whether I had made the right decision or whether I could have recorded greater achievements had I pursued a more conventional interpretation of a librarians role.

13. Dr. Menachem Schmelzer

Interview with Dr. Menachem Schmelzer, 5/18/16 from about 5 pm. to 5:45 pm.

What do you consider some of your major achievements in Judaica Librarianship?

I would like to be remembered for my role in preserving the collection after the fire of 1966 and how I worked very hard to restore the collection as much as possible and to modernize it. Before the fire the collection was in the time of the 20th century. It used a primitive system of classification for books and ms. After the fire we implemented a new classification system. I would like to the one who is regarded as the librarian who took the collection out of the 20the century into the 21st century and in this transition enhancing order, access, and substance.

What were some of your most satisfying contributions to Judaica Librarianship?

The intellectual satisfaction of reading Haskamot by great rabbis, and even the introductions of rare manuscripts (Hakadma) where one is introduced into entering the world of the author and being

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255 Brief Bio given at: http://www.jtsa.edu/menahem-schmelzer University of Budapest; The Jewish Theological Seminary of Hungary; MA, Copenhagen University; Library Diploma, State Library School, Denmark; DHL, The Jewish Theological Seminary; DHL (hon.), Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies
Menahem Schmelzer is Albert B. And Bernice Cohen Professor Emeritus of Medieval Hebrew Literature and Jewish Bibliography at The Jewish Theological Seminary. He has been a full-time member of the JTS faculty since 1961 and served as librarian from 1964 to 1987.
In addition to writing numerous articles and reviews for scholarly journals, Dr. Schmelzer was associate division editor of the "Modern Jewish Scholarship" section of Encyclopaedia Judaica. He has lectured at the Leo Baeck Institute, Yeshiva University, and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. In 1992, he received a Guggenheim Fellowship. In 1999, he was the recipient of an honorary degree from the Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies in Chicago. He was appointed distinguished visiting senior scholar at the Kluge Center in the Library of Congress for a four-month period in 2004.
becoming acquainted with the living past, and the eternal ideas of those scholars is immensely rewarding and satisfying in the realm of the mind’s quest for wisdom.

Can you please describe some of your research, perhaps your interest in Rabbi Isaac Giat?

Dr. Chaim Shimon suggested to me to do work on the subject of the writings of this rabbi for my dissertation. Rabbi Giat wrote poetry in the 11th century Spain. I started my research into the oeuvre 60 years ago and realize now I should have done much more. As a halakhist and piytan Rabbi Isaac ibn Giat made a huge contribution. The cycle of poems that the rabbi wrote on Yom Kippurim is truly wonderful and deserves to be more widely known.

Will Ebooks and digitization adequately substitute for physical printed books and ms.? What are your thoughts on the recent JTS library decision to move many printed works off site and reduce the library to a digital open commons of ETEXTS?

The new move is a balanced and carefully considered decision that provides a very good selection of reference books still basically carrying over the same reference collection and adding to it. Older researchers may find the etexts and digitized interfaces more difficult to work with and to navigate. The pride of the seminary is over 10,000 manuscripts. Older scholars may find it difficult to read digitized pages that sometimes are juxtaposed and images that are blurred and less clear.

Has the scholar librarian as scholar, been compromised as the result of the ever increasing trends towards technocracy in librarianship, the fusion of bureaucratic utilization of managerial techniques to supervise people and technological instrumentality to effectively use sophisticated computer databases and the web, etc?

In the last few decades the trend is that scholarly librarians are ever becoming in the minority although they may never have been in the majority in the modern era. Scholarly bibliographers that I admire include Chaim Lieberman of Chabad, Mandelbaum who wrote Saref ha-eff, Shimon Brisman. I am not sure how much modern technology played in their professional development but their scholarly knowledge foremost enhanced the quality of their Bibliographies. It is very becoming more of a rarity to unite both technological skill with scholarship due to developments in technology, particularly in cataloging where there are so many rules and fields to keep track of in immense details. Judaica Librarianship is developing in such a way that Gershom Scholem gravitated from librarianship and bibliography to teaching as a professor. In the increasing technological developments the profession is going in such a way that it is difficult to find persons possessing expertise in both area of scholarship and technology. This is regrettable. They are two different channels. Ideally today Judaica librarians should have both assets, but practically in today's world making use of the tools in the library in tandem with scholarship is becoming and “endangered species.” In todays world a Judaica librarian ideally should have scholarly appreciation for the book and the contents therein. We must strive however hard that is to know both areas- technology and scholarship. Unfortunate today technology is destining the profession. Scholars are not equipped to do what librarianship demands. In the past Steinschneider used
to copy down by hand and later Bibliographers like Marx typewrote annotated entries. That seems like dinosaur history today in the age of etext and digitization. Ideally and philosophically I am in total agreement with you but practically the trends is the divorcement between technologically proficient librarians and the chance of their being scholars. In todays librarian world one must use sophisticated tools in addition that is constantly changing and evolving and soon outdated so one must learn another modality of the tools. We should as you say and must have an appreciation for the contents of the scholarly books and journals which is an admirable thing. However technological forces driven by economics are precluding that most librarians can be both excellent at both scholarship and technology. From the point of view of heading and directing libraries I wonder given the technological revolutions we are witnessing if it will ever be possible for librarians who are scholars to head major collections. As you say such a confluence is unlikely as Plato doubted if a philosopher King would ever arise. Please take me off your list with Moritz Steinschneider, Gershom Scholem, Alexander Marx, who were exceptional scholars. Although Scholem did construct a Scholem Classification system, strong for enumerating Jewish mystical texts, he did not head a major library and neither did Steinschneider with assets to manage in the form of priceless manuscripts. I truly respect the achievements of such great scholars whose scholarly contributions are greater than merely serving as administrators. I do think you should add to your list however after telling me the story told over by Rosenzweig, that “Scholem was a sacrifice worthy of the altar of being the greatest bibliographer of Jewish mysticism” Malachi Beit Arie who headed the JNUL and combined just those abilities as an exceptional scholar with technological know how in the practical realm. Under Beit Arie the SFARDATA was constructed that allowed researchers to access immense reams of data regarding what you mentioned in the bibliographic record such as Provenance, orthography, script, colophons etc. by the use of a SFARDATA database with a broad scope from the Mishnah on. There are numerous great scholars today who draw on web technology, etexts, and digitization of manuscripts. It is true that an average student exposed to contemporary mores may often not have the right approach to study, desiring what the popular culture validates what you described as the “quick fix”, “sound byte generation”, “reducing learning to a game show with material payoffs”, and the illusive myth that learning is as easy as the click of a mouse when the Talmudic dictum is “lifum zarah agra” as you said, but I am optimistic. I am optimistic because there are some great books of scholarship being written and published.

What are some of your most favorite scholarly texts that have recently appeared?

Maos Kahana wrote a wonderful book on the Nodah biYehudah to the Hatam Sofer describing some of the social, political, and cultural influences of those times that influenced these rabbis work. Another wonderful work I really enjoyed was written by Shulamith Elitzor and Michael Rant bringing to light the poems of the piyyut Rabbi Eliezer Kallir from Rosh Hashanah. These books make a positive contribution and the appearance of such books makes me happy and optimistic that scholarship continues.

Are you saying you look forward to waking up each day because there may be another great book to read and study?

Yes, In Israel, the U.S., and Germany the production of great scholarly Hebraica and Judaica is inspiring.
Obviously your intellectual contribution to scholarship and Judaica librarianship is immense. In what ways to you conceive of the Judaica librarian playing a moral role in the realm of ethics?

The moral role in part is played by preserving our heritage. In our first dialogue on Monday ((5/16/16 @ 9:30 am.) you wonderfully cataloged and told over acts of censorship in the Middle ages that resulted in Burning sefarim. Resisting this censorship that you mentioned resulting from the disputations in 1240 in Paris where Rabbi Yehiel debated, 1263 in Barcelona where the Ramban debated, and 1414 in Tortosa where Rabbi Yosef Albo was forced to debate, all outcomes ending in censorship of Jewish texts, up until the burning of books during the Holocaust, is something worthy to devote one’s life towards resisting.

Not only to preserve but to disseminated these texts and make them accessible is the Judaica librarian’s role in the spreading of knowledge. To help others in research, to promote the cultivation of scholarship, and to encourage real learning is a moral act upon which the continuity of our people is indebted, without which the survival of our people cannot endure.

14. Malachi Beit-Arie see http://huji.academia.edu/MalachiBeitArie

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3 The Barcelona Haggadah. The Barcelona Haggadah (1992) 1992
8 Beit-Arié, Malachi Commissioned and owner-produced manuscripts in the Sephardi zone and Italy in the thirteenth-fifteenth centuries. The Late Medieval Hebrew Book in the Western Mediterranean (2015) 15-27 2015
9 Beit-Arié, Malachi The contribution of medieval Hebrew manuscript fragments to Hebrew codicology "Fragmenta ne pereant" (2002) 83-88 2002
10 Beit-Arié, Malachi The cryptic name of the scribe Abraham b. Yom Tov ha-Cohen Israel Oriental Studies 2 (1972) 51-56 1972
11 Beit-Arié, Malachi I frammenti ebraici della "Genizah" di Bologna La "Genizah italiana" (1999) 241-244 1999
13 Beit-Arié, Malachi Gershom Scholem as bibliophile Gershom Scholem, the Man and His Work (1994) 120-127 1994
Malachi Beit-Arie’s scholarly research is a Kiddush ha-shem for the world of Jewish scholarship, Jewish Paelaeography, and Codicology. Born in Petach Tikvah in 1937 this world class international scholar has made a mark wherever there is knowledgeable understanding of medieval Jewish manuscripts.

The SFARData Hebrew codicological database is a practical result of Beit Arie’s work. In 1965 the Hebrew Palaeography Project, established by the Israel Academy of Sciences and Madei HaRuach (Humanities) and the Institut de Recherche et d’Histoire des Textes of the CNRS (France) forged tools for the systematic, detailed, and comprehensive description of all the dated manuscripts as a basis for

29 La paléographie hébraïque médiévale. La paléographie hébraïque médiévale (1974) 1974
31 Beit-Arié, Malachi Production and shaping of Hebrew medieval manuscripts in Latin Italy : from cultural resistance to acculturation. L’interculturalité dell’ebraismo (2004) 139-146 2004
32 Beit-Arié, Malachi The production of Hebrew scientific books according to dated medieval manuscripts. Science in Medieval Jewish Cultures (2011) 106-110 2011
38 Beit-Arié, Malachi Some codicological observations on the early Hebrew codex. Quinio 1,1 (1999) 25-40 1999
creating a typology of the handwritten Hebrew book and providing criteria for localizing and dating the many thousands of manuscripts without colophons. This allowed for the study and recording of all the physical, technical, graphic, and aesthetic features involved in producing handwritten medieval Hebrew books, including scribal formulas.257 Drawing on the experience of Latin palaeographers, the project allows scholars to also pose and address questions related to the social context, the technology, and the aesthetics of written Hebrew texts, as a reflection of their historical time and place, and the spirit of that epoch in which they were written. The constructors of the database attempted to include fields relevant to Hebrew manuscripts for the purposes of describing as many aspects of dated Hebrew manuscripts. These aspects/features/facets were determined by the Jewish scholars experience, consultation with distinguished non-Hebrew palaeographers, and codicological elements by Latin and Greek palaeographers. All visible data was scrutinized on Hebrew manuscripts recorded in details. For example type of writing materials and inks, quiring, means for ensuring the right order of the quires, sheets, leaves or columns, pricking and ruling techniques, format and layout, density of letters, devices for producing even left margins, graphic para-script elements and auxiliary signs, substitutes for the tetragrammaton, decorations, illumination, scribal formulas at the beginning and end of copying and formulations of colophons, including rendering of dates, names, etc. and much more was noted and data entered into the database that allows for sophisticated statistical analysis of reams of specific data. Findings from the computer analysis allowed for determination of “typical practices of the times”, “locating areas of production”, “criteria for palaeographical identification,” the immigration and travel patterns of immigrant scribes”, and obviously patterns in “provenance” and “dating”, and much more. From the database analysis of reams of data of the aggregate large groups of texts entered it was seen that patterns emerged regarding the many codicological practices grouped along geo-cultural areas, and chronological factors. Within the warp and woof of the singularity of Jewish history. The mobility of Jews as individuals often due to frequent expulsions of communities or entire populations and migration by choice out of seeking economic necessity, undermind the effectiveness of script typology in identifying the origin of manuscripts, since immigrant scribes and copyists retained their homeland script, but could find themselves commissioned in a distant land to copy a text in a milieu that was accustomed to another type of script. Some books produced by immigrant scribes and copyists reflected entirely or in part, on codicological practices of the geo-cultural regions of their new localities, in particular the writing materials, composition of quires and ruling techniques, as the scribe in the new land to which he fled, had to be provided with or buy the local writing materials, probably acquired as ready-made ruled quires. While the script usually reflected the origin of the scribe and not necessarily the actual location of the copying, the physical materials usually came from the area of commissioning. The statistics regarding manuscripts written by immigrant scribes and copyists are differentiated by the computer according to script, which differes from that employed in the area of production. They constitute about 19% of the extant or studied palaeographical units. The only area were non-local script are found to a considerabl extent is Italy. Manuscripts copied by immigrant scribes hardly exist in Sefard, Ashkenaz, and Yemen, but in Byzantium and the orient such manuscripts written mostly by Sefardic copyists constitute

a significant portion (about 16% of the studied Byzantine units, and 14% of the Oriental ones). In short most of the immigrating scribes were active mostly in Italy.258

The database analysis and statistical patterns it can bring to light have significant implications for the history of the Hebrew handmade book, and the intellectual and social history of the Jews in the late middle ages, as well as for the validity of the database and its probability limitations in serving the mapping of the typology of the handwritten book, and as a tool for dating and localizing undated manuscripts.

The practical details of how the database worked is an area for computer science. However in a nutshell after several years of scholars studying dated manuscripts and recording their codicological data it was realized that due not only to the quanitity but the complexity of data types the only way to process, classify satisfactorily and retrieve hits would be by the most recent techniques in computerization. Questionnaires were converted into coded forms and data keyed information into an electronic database. Having started computerization in the age of dinosaur punched cards, all this data had to be converted to the most recent and up-to-date modes of computation. A flexible retrieval system beyond the old main-frame computer was planned and after much trial and error, the database was installed on a 25 MHZ 80386 based computer with 4mb RAM and 80 mb hard disk. The data base was conversed into d-base format. A user-friendly system was developed and large numbers of application programs to match the scholars research specific requirements and to perform various statistical analyses and modes of searching, data correlations, and combinations, was devised and set in place.

The database constructed for specific codicological features and codicalogical analysis incorporated the ability to discern patterns from “names of scribes”, owners of texts, localities, countries of production, scribal formulas, etc. of most dated manuscripts studied by the Hebrew Palaeography Project. It included the data of 2194 manuscripts dating up to 1540, recorded in situ. 1540 was the cut off date for the latest of written texts. However the number of manuscripts is actually higher than 2194 because 1/10th of the manuscripts were copied by more than one scribe,259 and because each of these scribes was studied and described in a separate questionnaire. Ergo the database at this stage in fact held 2487 dated palaeographcial units ie. Ms. As well a separate file was kept of 800 unstudied dated manuscripts

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258 Ibid, 171.; Sephardic and Ashkenazic scripts make a considerable and consistent appearance in dated ms. In Italy. Of the 540 studied ms. Produced in Italy between 1396 and 1500, 256 were written in non-Italian scripts; 177 of them in Sefardic, 77 in an Ashkenazic type of script. In the 50 years preceding the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, the proportion of the studied ms. Produced in Italy in Sephardic script grows to 34 % of the total, while after the expulsion in 1492 it drops to 23%. To the ms. Written in a Sefardic type of script should be added 372 extant ms. Produced outside Sefardic terriotries; or 328 studied. To those written in an Ashkenazic type of script should be added 152 produced outside Ashkenaz (or 120 studied).From the total of Italian ms. 418 (347 studied) should be substracted. Thus the number of ms. Written in Sefardic type script is 1080 extant units, 855 studied)l the number of ms. Written iin Italy in Italian script decreases from 1091 to 698 (547 studied); the number of ms. Written in Ashkenazic script approaches that of Italian (598 units, 508 studied) and to the Byzantine ms. 25 ms. Are added (22 studied) (p. 173).

259 Of the 2194 studied dated ms. 189 were copied by seveal (2-9) scirbes together, i.e. about 9%. In Ashkenaz particularly in the 13th and 14th Centuries, an in Byzantium, the rate of multi-scribe copies is a little higher and amounts to 13%, while in Yemen such a phenomenon is rare and is found only in 3.5 % of the dated manuscripts (167).
but at the same time with capability of this set of 800 ms. Being able to be retrieved with the larger aggregate set of the formerly studied manuscripts. The indentified studied accessible manuscripts were recorded on the basis of microfilms in the institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts of the Jewish National Library, while others were recorded according to catalogues, handlists, and references in literature. The database came to hold elementary data on 600 unstudied existing and 165 lost dated manuscripts. The sum total came to about 3300 manuscripts. To this set is being added about 1500 medieval manuscripts with undated colophons which contain scribal names or localities out of which about 500 have been studied and the rest recorded on basis of microfilms. Thus the database will comprise over 5000 Hebrew medieval manuscripts, and will continue to grow if more are identified in the future.

Beit-Arie was able to convincingly argue as a result of the statistical analysis provided by the SFAR computer database that “while Latin books from the late 7th until the mid 13th century were produced mainly in institutional copying centres of monastic multi-scptoria, and were later reproduced by university stationers employing the pecia system, and in the late Middle Ages to a large extent in commercial urban and lay ateliers, medieval Hebrew books were not produced and disseminated by the intellectual establishment or upon their initiative, whether in religious, academic, or secular institutional copying centres, but privately and individually. The individual nature of the production of Hebrew books is clearly demonstrated by the statistical data provided by the data-base with regard to the destination of the dated copies.” Ergo Beit-Arie concludes that at least half of the medieval Hebrew manuscripts were personal user-produced books, copied by the scholars who were going to use them, and only half or less were impersonal, but not institutional books, produced by hired scribes either professional or occasional. Beit Arie argues that the individual nature of private Jewish learning and the higher extent of Jewish literacy than its Christian host, was carried on privately and not necessarily located to academic centers. Thus learning was more of a family affair. That is dynasties like the ibn Tibbon family and countless other private rabbinic families if they needed a text copied did so outside of an institution but as a private matter. The differentiation between a hired scribe who was a copiest versus a scholar-copiest should be noted as the scholar-copist was more likely to comment upon and perhaps alter and interact with the text of transmission, revise his exemplar, amend and reconstruct the text, add to it, and modify it according to his knowledge, memory, conjecture or familiarity with other exemplars, and regard copying not as a rote act, but as a critical editing and redaction process, rather than mere duplicating. There is also the distinction to be made between commissioned and owner-produced manuscripts in the Sephardic Zone and Italy in the 13th to 15th centuries.

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260 Ibid., p.167.
261 Ibid., 167.; Of the manuscripts whose colophons state explicitly or implicitly for whom they were made, 65% were written by hired scribes for owners, and 35% by copyists for their own use (or, to a small extent for members of their own family). The rate of non-professional scribes was higher, since many of the multi-hand manuscripts were copied for one or the copyists, and all the other copyists were most likely not professional scribes but rather his relatives or students.
262 See Beit-Arie, Malachi, “Commissioned and Owner Produced Manuscripts in the Sephardic zone and Italy in the 13th to 15th Centuries”, in The Late Medieval Hebrew book in the Western Mediterranean: Hebrew Manuscripts and incunabula in context, Leiden: Boston: Brill, 2015, p. 15-17; In this article Beit-Arie focuses on scribal activity in
Interestingly the SFAR database revealed that notation of place of copying in the colophon appears in 56% of Italalina manuscripts, 60% of Yeminite manuscripts, and 21% of Ashkenaz manuscripts. In all areas the rate increases from the 2nd half of the 14th century onwards. However Beit-Arie astutely concludes that “since the survival of dated manuscripts was surely accidental their geographical division cannot be representative.”263

Regarding the chronological findings from the SFAR database Beit Arie notes, “the chronological distribution of the dated manuscripts is far from being balanced: the number of surviving dated Hebrew books increases chronologically, reaches a peak in the 2nd half of the 15th century and naturally decreases in the 1st half of the 16th (until the year 1540, the chronological limit of the Hebrew Palaeography Project), which overlaps the spread of Hebrew printing.”264 The geo-chrono-loical distribution of the manuscripts shows that their chronological deployment is not even in all the areas. For instance until 1350 there are more Ashkenazic manuscripts extant than Italian, while in the 15th and first half of the 16th centuries the number of manuscripts produced in Italy is much greater than in Ashkenaz. The chronological distribution of Oriental manuscripts is completely different to that of other areas, and unlike others, it does not show significant growth. Both in the Orient and Yemen, the number of extant manuscripts decreases in the first half of the 15th century.265

The SFAR database also sheds light on the genre of texts that exist and the subjects that they treat. Thus the database is able to statistically shed light on the genres of Bible, Bible commentaries, Halakhah and midrash, Luturgical works, Sciences, Linguistics, Philosophic, Kabbalistic, Literary, and Varia compilations. Thus Dr. Chaim Soloveitchik’s thesis that while Medieval Ashkenaz in general was more devoted to

the Iberian Peninsula, Provence and Bas Languedoc, the Maghreb, and Sicily- which form the Sephardi geo-cultural zone- and the Italian Peninsula, leaving aside some regional variations that are manifested beyond the Iberian Peninsula for example in Provence (see Leopold Zunz study of Avignon liturgical particularities) and North Africa. Beit Arie raises the question of how writing material used, and the genres of the reproduced texts reveal whether production by commission and self-production influenced the choice of materials and whether the two different kindsof production were bound to particular genres of texts. Beit Arie argues that the surviving colophons clearly demonstrate that the making of Hebrew books was the result of private initiative, motivated by personal needs and aimed at private use. The colophons provide evidence not only of the individual nature of book production but also the private consumption and keeping of Hebrew manuscripts themselves (16).

263 Beit-Arie, Malachi, “The codicological database of the Hebrew Palaeography Project: a tool for localizing and dating Hebrew Medieval Manuscripts,”, 169.; Beit Arie notes further, “This distribution does not necessarily indicate the rate of book production (in relation to the size of the Jewish population) or the intellectual level of each area, but it does reflect the different historical conditions of the Jewish communities which resulted in differing rates of survival of medieval books. The fact that more than 1/3% of the surviving manuscripts were produced in Italy, whose Jewish population in the late Middle Ages is estimated to have constitute about 1/3 of that in the Iberian peninsula and Provence, hile the number of surviving ms. From the areas of the Sefardic book tradition (which included North Africa) amount to hardly a quarter of the total surviving manuscripts, or again, the small quantity of Ashkenazic dated ms (about 1/7 of the total number) does not necessarily reflect greater literacy among Italian Jewry, but rather different historical circumstances which affected the physical survival of their books (169). Perhaps the extent of use in each area also affected the preservation of books?

264 Ibid., 170.; Beit Arie points out the number of extant dated pre-1200 manuscripts is meagre; of these still fewer belong to the 10th century. Indeed more than 100 pre-1200 ms. Are known to have survived, but many of these are fragments from the Cairo Geniza which may represent the oriental book script, but hardly the codicological practices. Only 21 known units (15 manuscripts dating before 1200 were clearly produced outside the Middle East.

265 Ibid., 171.
halakhah and Sephardic Jews of the Mediterranean basin more “open” to philosophy can be proven correct. The ratio of halakhic and midrashic books in Ashkenaz before 1300 is only 21% while the ratio of philosophical and kabbalisti books in Italy for instance in the 16th Century (until 1540) increases to 36%.

In summary the SFAR database of Beit Arie serves and promotes the Paleagraphic project in three ways:

(A) It yields lists of dated manuscripts, scribes, original owners, localities of copying, and scribal formulas, as well as searching facilities according to such textual data and their combinations

(B) It sets up a precise and detailed codicological typology of the handwritten Hebrew book.

(C) It provides a so far unique and pioneering tool for the scientific indentification of the provenance and period of undated and unlocalised manuscripts

The database in part allows identification of Hebrew medieval books palaeographically by distinguishing categories such as codicological features including: sort of parchment, composition of quires, pricking and ruling techniques, layout devices, scribal formulas etc. and requests the computer to “match” and sort out from the database all those manuscripts which share the same combination of features. The list is immediately generated and displayed on the screen and can be printed out. Any listing comparison will include basic data such as date, locality, and geographical identification, the scribes name, and origin, whether he copied for himself or for somebody else (a family member of patron), the type of script (Byzantine, Italian, Sephardic, Ashkenaz, Italian) when it differs from that employed in the area of production, quiring, writing materials and whether the genre of the text (Biblical, liturgical, halakhic etc). In addition the inquirer can compare the script of the ms. With the natural-size bromide reproductions of the selected pages of the manuscripts retrieved by the computer and to establish the identification on the basis of shared codicological practices and similiarity of script.

Post-Modern Library and Archival Sciences

20th Century librarianship was on the window of technological revolutions that changed the function, scope, and purpose of librarians to become more techno-crats rather than scholar librarians. We thus heed well the speech emailed in by Stefen Reif to the aJL convention in Cleveland where Reif notes some of these sea changes. However the magnitude of technological revolution in librarianship is making the like of scholar librarians like Reif who hail from a long line of scholarly librarian traditions, where it was not uncommon for librarians to hold a position in the faculty of Professors along with their duties as librarians.

Groundwork of Continental Philosophy Noting the Dangers of the Technological Revolutions that Have effected Librarianship for the worse

(a) Friedrich Nietzsche266

266 As Walter Kaufman has argued while there is no denying that the Nazis hijacked Nietzsche and perverted his message to serve their ideology, particulary at the encouragement of Nietzsches’s sister who was a Nazi, Nietzsche was made into the Nazi poster-child against his own will as Nietzsche lived before the Nazi rise to power. Kaufman argues that Nietzsche loathed German militarism and anti-Semitism. Nietzsche had hopes for a multicultural
The topic of technology and its dangerous trends, consequences, and influences is central to post-modern thought. Nietzsche looked into "the abyss" of post-modernity, shuddering at the epistemological consequences regarding "the state of learning and creativity" in higher education, and saw "the foundation spinning/vertigo."

Much of the ground for the field of media archeology was laid by work in continental philosophy stemming from Heidegger’s work, “The Question Concerning Technology” (Die Frage nach der Technik) in which Heideger warns of the risks of technological thinking that can reduce causality into a reporting, yet (based on a verse in Holderlin’s poem Patmos) where the danger is there is the saving power too (Woe die Gefahr ist wachste die Reten de auch).

(b) Jean Francois-Lyotard

Lyotard’s 1977 book The Post-Modern Condition (La Condition postmoderne: rapport su le savoir) further suggested that how we conceive of what knowledge is radically altered as the result of certain technological revolutions. Lyotard (_The Post-Modern Condition_) notes that our times are characterized by a technological revolution and as a consequence the inability to distinguish between “data” and critical analysis whereby everything is lumped together as “information.” To filter, sift, and critically evaluated database hits, separating the wheat from the chaff, is a skill that is disappearing amongst the many. A good librarian can teach these skills.

(c) Jacques Derrida

Derrida’s 1995 work, Archive Fever (Mal d’archive: une impression freudienne), is another attempt to understand the drive to collect, organize, and conserve the human record for the future as a promise of the present to the future so that “history and memory” are shaped by the technical methods of archivization. Derrida returns to the attic Greek etymological meaning of arche as “what is first or originary” which Derrida feels relates the illusion that the archive allows one the hope of somehow connecting to a past as origin, but in reality can never be fully known. For Derrida only the philosophical discipline of ontology, allows return to the origin. It is the homesickness (heimlosskeit) for originary home, that fuels philosophy beginning in wonder. If this search for home becomes merely “nostalgia” as so much Broadway kitch, for Derrida then philosophy has failed its purpose to return the soul to the most archaic place of absolute rejuvenating commencement. Derrida develops further this theme that the methods for transmitting information shape the nature of the knowledge that can be produced and interpreted in the future so that archival choices based on interpretation collection development policies destine what can be studied by future generations. Thus archivization produces by influencing the afterlife of events, as much as it records the event. Thus the archive like a laboratory are sites for knowledge production by destining and serving as a center for future interpretation. Derrida following on Foucalt’s essay, “what is an author?” (in the age of technological revolution), in his writings redefines “what a text is?”. A text for Derrida is not a print document. Rather it is a field of force.

International Europe, not one fueled by xenophobia. Nietzsche’s case against Wagner, was that Parsifal in the opera bowed down the the cross. Nietzsche sought to forge and anti-christiaity and anti-religion that had been anticipated indeed by Spinoza long before in Spinoza’s TTP.
can show a patron how to access and tap into this field of force, and more importantly deploy its benefits. A benefit of utilizing this field of force of “text” is that librarians can teach how to cite primary unpublished archival holdings (i.e. box #, folder #, ms. #) via digitization. See for example: http://libguides.tourolib.org/jewisharchives

(d) Michelle Foucault

Foucault’s oeuvre has great impact for understanding the revolutions in technology in library science, especially the 1969 book The Archeology of Knowledge (L'archéologie du savoir). Foucault showed how archival generated knowledge is shaped by social, political, economic, and technological forces. For example what is considered a legitimate contribution to the archive changes over time and political regime and the shifting boundaries of academic disciplines. Further what the archive references is already a reconstruction and interpretation, more than a raw record of history as van Ranke would wish: Wie es eigentlich gewesen ist. Rather what the archive references is from a particular political perspective, and thus not a transparent window to access the events of the past objectively. Foucault showed that the archive is never raw because it is assembled so as to lead later researchers in a particular direction of conclusions that are destined by the political assumptions of the archivists who organized the material in the first place. Not only is transforming archival data into historical narrative a subjective act, but the data itself is far from purely objective. Ernst attempts to take Foucault “out of the library” into the realm of technical media. Ernst like Foucault wants us to be free from our own biased subjectivity (69). Further the archival contents can be used for political means and thus the archive is not neutral or innocent. For example it is well known that the Nazis identified European Jews for total annihilation (das vernichtung) by use of genealogical records housed in archives and governmental police archives. Foucault for Ernst is the mediating philosopher as the last historian and first archeologist. Foucault [ _Archeology of Knowledge] and his other writings notes that post-modern technology is constituted by power-knowledge-regimes which most often are forms of control whereby minority and marginalized groups are often displaced by the will of the stronger, where stronger means the most adept at deploying new technologies for their own agendas and often nefarious purposes in a social Darwinianism, adapt or become extinct environment. Adaptation ends up leading to a situation similar to that imagined in the film Lego, where people are “lego figures” without individuality, ideals, and ability to think, whereby creativity has been eradicated, and evil risks trumping over good if it were not for the “special”. “Everything is NOT awesome” in the technological society of post-modernity! A good librarian is not a 2 dimensional lego figure but can find interdisciplinary connections not apparent from homogenized database hits, and foster creative research, seeing back-stretched connections, and encouraging intellectual discovery and exploration, as a guardian of the well springs of knowledge. An automated “user friendly” reference system cannot do this no matter how sophisticated.

[e] Yeshaya Leibowitz

Yeshaya Leibowitz argues that technology poses the external threat of nuclear escalation and subsequent nuclear annihilation, and the internal thread of eradicating the ability to think, really think, which also alarmed Hannah Arendt. Heidegger made a controversial statement that today in essence (in Wessen) the production of Hydrogen Bombs, blockading of cities, and production of corpses in gas...
chambers because they all employ a kind of control that exploits, what Heidegger calls (Gestell) which is a form of framing, limiting, and making a boundary that can delimit freedoms in the “will to power.” Icon making is made possible by enframement. Technology may be just another form of iconography, that is worshiped as a post-modern idolatry. A good librarian can teach patrons that “boundry setting and frame setting “ [when seeking knowledge] may be a form of control but without organizational discernment of the infinite body of ever expanding knowledge, we may never be able to answer the epistemological questions, “what can I know, and what are the methods by which I can know something.” Librarians however can make patrons aware of their own assumptions, biases, and personal subjectivity that may influence even the best attempt to be objective when constructing and arguing a thesis, by exposing the frame of reference of everyone’s different perspectives [people often wear different perceptual lenses] based on their differing experiences and way they see things, not necessarily a Fredrick Jameson, political unconscious.

[f] Hannah Arendt

Arendt notes further that the thoughtlessness of our technocratic age is one whereby the bureaucratization, systematization, and institutionalization of thought leveled out by homogenous makes mediocrity of expression trump substance in the name of form. We see this in the information field where a website may look nice and glitzy but the substance or content is very suspect i.e. form over substance. Richard Rubenstein following in the footsteps of Arendt notes that at the time new technologies (rail transport and engineering showers to poison by xycian b gas conceived at Wansee, and crematoria ovens) coupled with expert bureaucratic organizational skills of the Nazis was what allowed the mass murder of so many groups during the Holocaust. While teaching organizational skills (i.e. how to save database hits to different named folders, to name one of many techniques) A good librarian can encourage ethical use of organizational enframement.

[g] Eiezer Schweid

Eliezer Schweid at HUJ recently wrote in Hebrew on the Deceptive Illusions of the benefits of the post-modern electronic virtual village: which are warnings for our foreboding technocratic age. Schweid argues that the post-modern technological revolutions of social media create a false impression of “community” that is ephemeral, mediocre, and at times even harmful and nefarious. A good librarian gives patrons a real connection to a “scholarly community” by teaching concepts such as what is a peer reviewed article, one that makes a positive and substantive contribution to the state of knowledge in a discipline, as evaluated by a panel of experts who find the understanding of subject is fostered further by the scholarly contribution to the scholarly community of what Aristotle calls “knowledge seekers.”

[h] Leo Strauss

Amongst Straussians (those influenced by the political thought of Leo Strauss), Paul Cantor (Univ. of Va) has written a most insightful essay on the "state of reading (or miss reading) in the age of technocracy", what Cantor titles, "a forgotten type of reading" (replaced with Newspaperease of filling space instead of reading and writing cirtaly) in a collection titled, _Leo Struass: Towards a critical Engagement edited
by Alan Udoff. Teaching the skills of a forgotten type of reading, forgotten type of analyzing, which can leads to remembering a powerful form of thinking and analysis.

[i] Alan Bloom

Alan Bloom in his book, _The Closing of the American Mind_ notes that the post-modern technocratic culture has ruined education whereby axes to grind, political agendas, and pet peaves turn the sophisticated virtual classroom into a bully pulpet, replacing educational commitment to eternal verities and noble moral purposes, with nihilism, indifference, apathy, and moral relativism. Bloom notes that students are under the false opinion that they can complete their assignments at the click of a mouse, when in fact the hard work of organizing, sifting, analyzing, discerning and critical thinking often has not even begun. Librarians can teach against the fallacy of “the click of a mouse” and show the limits to which the click of the mouse can take the student, after which they must kick the ladder of ascent out from under their mountain ascent, and scale the heights by critical thinking, perhaps aided by the grace of god for divine inspiration and intercession for “understanding/bina.”

The miss understandings, and quite bluntly ignorance, of those who propose disbanding and dismantling libraries misconceived as obsolete is a function often of looking at technology as the panacea that can replace human interaction, what Buber calls Das Schwischenmentschlich. In the 19th century wild west in America, there where many hawkers of special potions that would make one age slower and do all sorts of magical actions, but in the end they were quacks for there is no key-to-all mythologies elixir panacea, even in technology. Part of the problem is that technocrats who argue for libraries being obsolete have little historical conciousness and understanding of the importance of libraries and what “good” librarians do and in general no cultural exposure to the benefits of libraries over the millenium. Preserving the function and purpose of good librarians and libraries is not just “self serving of the profession,” rather the fate of the west externally by nuclear extinction, and resisting against the internally corrosive nature on the soul from the risks of nihilism, ability to think critically and deeply, and moral relativism. Those who ignore the library and the abilities of a good librarian do so at their own risk. The making obsolete of libraries, also makes the world at risk.

Technology is a 2 edged sword for on the one hand in the bio-technology field advances in medicine are making it possible to live longer more quality lives and pain medications are wiping out suffering. Further stem cell research, cloning, and genetic engineering have potential not only to eradicate certain diseases and ailments but possibly pull off resurrection for conceivably with a skin cell or piece of hair we can re-clone a being back to life with the same genetic makeup. Science fiction has proven to become reality over and over again and as Herzl noted, if you will it it is not fiction. Who would have thought that kidney, heart, lung transplants were conceivable 50 years ago while now the recipients often can lead a normal life etc. The creation of a Golem is becoming a reality in robotics as the transhuman future of altering the genetic species is an ethical concern. The flip side of the positives of bio-technology are of course some of the concerns who voice in the above rif on technocracy.
[Wolfgang Ernst]

Wolfgang Ernst is a major theoretician today in media archeology who can also be seen on Ernst building upon the work of post-modern historian Hayden White’s concept of meta-history and the ground laying work in media archeology by Friederich Kittler. Ernst’s technical exegesis is in debt to Kittler. Parikka coins the term “the Kittler effect” as “fostering a whole debate on media materialism and technodeterminism” (3). Ernst’s German media theory with its focus on hardware with a purpose to offer technologically specific accounts of media machines that might serve as a “transatlantic bridge” (23-36), thus appears at odds with the Anglo-American media studies approach which is more concerned with cultural studies critique and culture’s relationship to social politics. Thus characteristic of Ernst’s media archeological focus is to reveal the “technicality of media, not to reduce culture to technology but to reveal the techno-epistemological momentum of culture itself (72-73). While the Canadian media theorist Innis (The Bias of Communication, Univ. of Toronto Press, 2008) is only mentioned once in passing (100) Innis’ influence is also seen. There is also drawing upon by Ernst of Jacques Lacan’s notion of “the mirror stage.” Ernst argues that that archival media produce “multimedia mirror effect(s)”. This distorts linear temporal order. The insistence on media artefact provides a center of analysis with theory as an amplifier.

Wolfgang Ernst’ s book Digital Memory and the Archive, (Electronic Mediations, Volume 39), Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013, 268p. (9780816677665) will be of interest to media studies, communication studies, information sciences, the digital Humanities in general, documentography, bibliography, computer sciences, memory studies, historians of technology, historians in general, and continental philosophers and philosophy of science. It is the first major collection of essays, serving as an entry point for the English reading public, by influential German media archeologist Wolfgang Ernst. Ernst’s materialist discussion of digital memory and the post-modern archive is important for the emerging field of media archeology. Ernst’s emphasis on the role of specific technologies and mechanisms, rather than content in shaping post-modern transitional cultural microtemporality and new regimes of memory will be controversial and irksome to some who hold onto more traditional classical understandings of archival curation, conservation, preservation, and safeguarding of “cultural memory and histories.” Ernst’s analysis amplifies, echoes, and sheds light on the Foucaultian understanding of the Archeology of knowledge that reflects the underwriting of shifting hierarchies of power. Ernst draws attention on how media devices govern ways of seeing and hearing and thus framing modes of constructed Kantian knowledge.

Ernst pioneers the field of media archeology (archivology) which uncovers and excavates not the role of specific technologies, infrastructures that structure what is possible for humans to do and achieve in potential for arriving at media historical knowledge, and mechanisms in shaping culture and memory in digital culture. Media archeology is a kind of epistemological “reverse engineering” (55) that “makes us aware of discontinuities in media cultures as opposed to the logocentric reconciling narratives of culture history (25). The discontinuities of media archeology allow one to “excavate the technological conditions of the sayable and thinkable in a culture (195). Thus media archeology must understand the signal processing of machines. It thus must be proficient in interpreting the assemblages of “nonlinguistic agencies” (42) such as electromagnetic waves apart from the cultural semiotic systems of Saussaurian...
signs signifying signs of language discourse. That makes it allied with mathematics (72) and concerned more with “counting than telling” (147-157). A goal of media archeology is to reveal the “non discursive infrastructure and hidden programs of media” (59) that often frame and condition perception of how they destine and frame how we are led see ‘the nature of things.’ Ernst argues, “it is worth remembering that the archive as the condition for our knowledge of history becomes dependent on the media of its transmission. The mechanisms that regulate entry into the discourse of history or exclusion from cultural memory are therefore part of the media archaeological investigation (42).” Media archeology is not a “digging out of forgotten machinic visions of the past” (55), but rather a way to access “the technological beginnings (archai) of operativity on the microtechnological level (57). Media archeology is a way to attempt to understand the changes in archival logic in an internet, soft-ware, digital culture undergoing technological revolutions. The purpose of media archeology as a techno-ascetic approach is a method we can use to get closer to understanding what we love in culture (72).” While Ernst is historically informed of the history of science from for example Pythagoras, to Hertz, to Turing his eyes are open and his mind wide awake to new paradigm shifts that our post-modern culture is undergoing in science and technology and its implications for digital memories and the new post-modern ubiquitous archive in flux of constantly updated, reorganized, and shifting data in ever changing “cloud storage.”

The book raise questions such as: (1) How has the radically different notion and reconfiguration of (a) what an archive is[?] - no longer a static body of knowledge but rather an ever changing interactive fluid, dynamic, outside of human control shifting adapting global record of the simulation of online activities on the internet highway where there are no rest stops but there are electronic footprints preserved seemingly by users in the electronic fast-lane, captured even while users sleep?, (2) what is the digital archives new formulated purpose?, (3) whose interests and which power-regimes does the digital archive serve? (4) what is the digital archives relationship to phenomenal time criticality and how do archivists archive and attempt to access, organize, and preserve its changing nature? (5) how does the digital archive relate to memory preservation, no longer as a function of the Greek goddess pantheon of ‘muses of memory,’ but a frenetic, fragmentary, post-modern condition of hyperlinks tending to loss of historical context, lost in cyberspace, with the accelerating digitization of culture? (6) how does the digital archive capture, frame, and limit the traces (what Derrida calls spurs) of digital memory and cultural flux?, How does digital memory store traces of the past in layers below the symbolically expressed culture (61) so that they might be interpreted as rings in a tree-trunk later in time? (7) How does the ever changing nature of the contents of the digital archive point to a James Joycean simulacrum, Kafkesque reality of ambiguity & flux, and Becket like plotless anticlimactic En Attendant Gedot post-modern condition?, (8) How has the digital archive changed the notion of authorship altogether as a form of post-modern collaboration, rather than individual authorship aka Foucault’s “What is an author?” (“Qu’est ce qu’un auteur?”), (9) Does digital reality based in part on computation, mathematics of algorithms, and coding replacing and making obsolete the quest for narrative reality so that non-narrative modes of media history will trump the print and written word? Ernst is thus led to ask if the future of cultural studies will be essentially tied to “signal processing” that may “replace discourse and cultural semiotics in the age of new media? (39), (10) How can digital media archeologists develop methods to excavate “Media Archaeological rubble”? based on the distinction of Gadamer’s Truth and Method (Wahrheit und Methode)?, (11) How does the post-modern spirit of the times in our
fragmented age of technological changes that occur at dizzying velocities, present risks and dangers that warrant caution for fostering critical thinking, also a concern of Hannah Arendt?, (12) As Merleau Ponty suggests in Humanism and Terrorism, have the traditional way Humanities were studied superceded by the inability to no longer be capable of offering a comprehensive picture of historical change and dynamism?, (13) How can the studies of the Berlin Media Archaeological Fundus, a laboratory at Humboldt University that is devoted to study of the significance of operational “dead” media and obsolete machines. The Fundus provides the way in which media theories can be tested against hardware evidence (60). A question thus arises relating Koheleth’s (Book of Ecclesiastes) observation of the rise of and fall of civilizations within the cyclical and linear cycles of the Nietzschean eternal recurrence of the same, namely how can obsolete out dated machines in the archival junk heap of the past, shed light on the historiography of past technologies and the historical regimes that produced them? How can “transitional objects” shed light on the transitional nature of all cultures that rise and fall in general? How do the media structures and infrastructures that obtain in any given past historical moment reflect on that past regimes’ modes of thinking and the nature of the spirit of that time? Do for instance the diverse array of imaging formats today (JPEG, PDF, TIFF, html) tell us about the nature of the historical technological revolutions we are living through?, (14) How do the ways that data is displayed, shaped, stored, processed, transmitted, measured, limited by time, by media technics, ultimately conscript the epistemological limits of what we can know and how we can know it?; (15) What comes first the way the past is recorded in the digital age or the stories about history, past media cultures, and lost ideas that have been traced?, (16) How can new technologies not only record time and events, but act as a time machine between the current present with the past, through the afterlife of the machine apres la letttre, even if obsolete or out-dated?; (17) What is the consequence of the ruptures/fissures/breaks that separate modernity from post-modernity and age characterized by technological revolutions? ; (18) Will the written word eventually become more and more of a relic from the epoch of the age of print in the Gutenberg Galaxy whereby the visual etext continues to predominate in an age that prefers pictures to narrative arguments. Will the new infrastructure of communicating through digital technologies usurp written dialogue and discourse (196) so that new tools of communication will supplant writing itself whereby the ability to download media, audio, and photo files that can be flipped in cyberspace with the ease of a few clicks of the mouse making writing in print obsolete? That is to say when we look beyond alphabetic writing to technical media such as the phonograph and cinematograph and see that signs of or in time can be registered , how do they “maintain a symbolical relationship to macro and micro time (such as historiography) but inscribe and reproduce functions of time themselves (30)? (19) Does the digital archival inaugurate a new regime of algorithmic time as a new modality of measuring, recording, and destining the perception of post-modern conditions of ‘time’?; (20) Is there such as thing as digital archival consciousness, archival reason, and the poetics of the archive? How has the changed notion of what an archive is and does in the digital age effect consciousness in general?; (21) What is the relationship of the Archive to different forms of memory?

The book is in three parts with a total of 10 essays by Ernst. One essay is an original essay for the volume. Given the coherence of Ernst’s related themes of discourse there is a consistency to the book. There is an excellent opening essay by Parrika gives a good overview of media archaeology. At the end
of the book there is an appendix that gives a personal interview of Ernst by Geert Lovink. Part One is titled “The Media-Archaeological Method”. Parts two and three focus on media archaeological analysis developing a theory of the temporal logic of archives.

Groundwork of Continental Philosophy

Much of the ground for the field of media archaeology was laid by work in continental philosophy stemming from Heidegger’s work, “The Question Concerning Technology” (Die Frage nach der Technik) in which Heideger warns of the risks of technological thinking that can reduce causality into a reporting, yet (based on a verse in Holderlin’s poem Patmos) where the danger is there is the saving power too (Woe die Gefahr ist wachste die Retende auch).

Lyotard’s 1977 book The Post-Modern Condition (La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir) further suggested that how we conceive of what knowledge is radically altered as the result of certain technological revolutions.

Derrida’s 1995 work, Archive Fever (Mal d’archive: une impression freudienne), is another attempt to understand the drive to collect, organize, and conserve the human record for the future as a promise of the present to the future so that “history and memory” are shaped by the technical methods of archivization. Derrida returns to the attic Greek etymological meaning of arche as “what is first or originary” which Derrida feels relates the illusion that the archive allows one the hope of somehow connecting to a past as origin, but in reality can never be fully known. For Derrida only the philosophical discipline of ontology, allows return to the origin. It is the homesickness (heimlosskeit) for originary home, that fuels philosophy beginning in wonder. If this search for home becomes merely “nostalgia” as so much broadway kitch, for Derrida then philosophy has failed its purpose to return the soul to the most archaic place of absolute rejuvenating commencement.

Thus Ernst develops further this theme that the methods for transmitting information shape the nature of the knowledge that can be produced and interpreted in the future so that archival choices based on interpretation collection development policies destin what can be studied by future generations. Thus archivization produces by influencing the afterlife of events, as much as it records the event. Thus the archive like a laboratory are sites for knowledge production by destining and serving as a center for future interpretation.

For Ernst however the most influential impact of all is seen from Foucault’s oeuvre especially the 1969 book The Archeology of Knowledge (L’archéologie du savoir). Foucault showed how archival generated knowledge is shaped by social, political, economic, and technological forces. For example what is considered a legitimate contribution to the archive changes over time and political regime and the shifting boundaries of academic disciplines. Further what the archive references is already a reconstruction and interpretation, more than a raw record of history as van Ranke would wish: Wie es eigentlich gewesen ist. Rather what the archive references is from a particular political perspective, and thus not a transparent window to access the events of the past objectively. Foucault showed that the archive is never raw because it is assembled so as to lead later researchers in a particular direction of conclusions that are destined by the political assumptions of the archivists who organized the material
in the first place Not only is transforming archival data into historical narrative a subjective act, but the data itself is far from purely objective. Ernst attempts to take Foucault “out of the library” into the realm of technical media. Ernst like Foucault wants us to be free from our own biased subjectivity (69). Further the archival contents can be used for political means and thus the archive is not neutral or innocent. For example it is well known that the Nazis identified European Jews for total annihilation (das vernichtung) by use of genealogical records housed in archives and governmental police archives. Foucault for Ernst is the mediating philosopher as the last historian and first archeologist.

Influence can also be seen on Ernst building upon the work of post-modern historian Hayden White’s concept of meta-history and the ground laying work in media archeology by Friederich Kittler. Ernst’s technical exegesis is in debt to Kittler. Parikka coins the term “the Kittler effect” as “fostering a whole debate on media materialism and technodeterminism” (3). Ernst’s German media theory (of which there is no such thing (19)) with its focus on hardware with a purpose to offer technologically specific accounts of media machines that might serve as a “transatalantic bridge” (23-36), thus appears at odds with the Anglo-American media studies approach which is more concerned with cultural studies critique and culture’s relationship to social politics. Thus characteristic of Ernst’s media archeological focus is to reveal the “technicality of media, not to reduce culture to technology but to reveal the techno epistemological momentum of culture itself (72-73).

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From a broader scope and perspective all these post-modern works develop from the modern project of Kant who in the 3 Critiques sought to demonstrate the social construction of Knowledge and subsequently perceptions of subjective realities. Ernst is aware of the foundational nature of Kant’s oeuvre who he cites directly. Ernst like Derrida understands “the archae” of archaeology as the very Kantian a priori of media, as a condition for the possibility of the performance to take place at all (95). Kantsequentially “media archeology” is not a mode of historical research per se, but a way of seeing “what has remained from the past in the present like archeological layers, operatively embedded in technologies (57) and how an understanding of that status of the technological “artifact” in hindsight sheds light on how media machines are literally archives of past epistemologies, although mostly intended to function for purposes of usefulness in a certain time and historical place, but now allowing the media archeologist to gain understanding of the technoepistemological configurations of knowledge underlying the discursive surface of mass media of civilizations past. Media machines thus not only function to perform a job, but are archives of past epistemologies. Thus ‘the archive’ is not a “static repository for memory” or even a junkyard of past outdated machines but an ontological category that both records and shapes the world in its operation, in the present task at hand, and more importantly as a trace to be deciphered in its future out-datedness. In this sense the machines civilizations produce and later cast off when no longer of use, contain signals that are clues regarding the nature of those
civilizations themselves as Kantian constructs of the changing nature of Pure Reason and Pure judgment within the warp and woof of historical developments. Thus if human knowledge is a social construct, its evolution reflects on the changing nature of the cultures and human beings as representatives as the spirit of their times.

Changed Status of the purpose and function of the post-modern Archive

For many millennia archives where thought to be fixed places or repositories that housed static primary archival documents of the records and official memories of civilizations, state secrets, stored up to be preserved beyond the existence of the civilizations that have come and gone on the blip of the radar off the stage of human history. Post-modern archives are now ubiquitous signs of digital activities, media software, and cloud storage allowing for instantaneous cataloging. Ernst awakens readers to the new realities of archives as a result of new technologies such as digitization, E-texts, social media, new software[s], browsers, and operating systems have changed the archive as a physical loci for collecting material objects to an electronic future of dynamic and fluid hubs of amorphous virtual cyber information stored remotely “in the cloud”. Digital time is processual, operational, and discrete, re-inscribing the symbolic simply as binary 1s and 0s instead of the place of alphanumeric letters, rather than static and linearly continuous like narrative time. As a consequence the digital archive is an amorphous entity in flux continuously in formation and re-formation, unlike the traditional Aristotelian Unmoved Mover as the locus of all truth. Rather change, flow, process are designated as the loci of truth-knowledge regimes. The classical archives of the written word that transmits through space storage represent static Aristotelian time versus the digital archive founded on operative time based on algorithms and coding which executes processing-storage-and transmission simultaneously. Thus truth in the post-modern condition is not a function of media historiography, mythologies, or even [Charles] Pearcean semiotics but reduced to mathematics and computation based not only telling stories but on counting units and registering signals. Ernst is offering for better or for worst a new age glimpse of a way of processing cultural experience that does not need stories (149) that have become obsolete. The cold eye of the camera lays bare an infrastructure of computing which processes, stores, and transmits data about the past that eradicates the bias, agendas, and points of view that even an Impressionist painter might attempt to reveal thereby causing a crisis in narrative memory of cultures. A technological digital culture deals not with narrative memory and the battle of interpretations, but with calculating memory by objective modes of representation, counting memory rather than recounting memory thereby giving rise to archeological excavation versus historical interpretation (71). Opening up the “black box of media recording devices” trump eye witness narrative testimonies so that hardware evidence trumps human accounts. Ernst shows that as archives increasingly make their materials available online in formats including sound, images, and multimedia, as well as text, it no longer makes sense to limit archives to the subtotal of physical items they house. As archives collect virtual culture of cyberspace, the notion of knowledge itself is changed from something static to something with live connections that are ever evolving.

The post-modern condition is one characterized as lacking “historical context.” Hypertext technologies have influenced this condition. Unlike the traditional archive repertoires, archives are no longer static and passive but documents are linked to pertinent data records, a finding aid in the documents
themselves as cognitive skeletal structure, so that “everything is connected” in the hypertext archive of the future (84). The past source of knowledge “the written Encyclopedia, gives whay to a new kind of never ending encyclopedia that is constantly added to, updated, and changed in constant flux whether it be popular Wikipedias or “the grey web” of unpublished writings. Because the web functions by means of user activity, archives “become cybernetic systems” as “repositories are no longer final destinations but turn into frequently accessed sites” (99). Thus Ernst asserts, “The real archive of the Internet (in the sense of arch) is its system of technological protocols” (85). Thus the post-modern archive is fluid, constantly in the process of reconfiguration, based on the feedback of interactive users, who continue to change the Internet archive, even while one side of the world sleeps. For Ernst the changed nature of what the archive is and its purpose relating to the epistemological status of knowledge in the post-modern age is no less than a Thomas Kuhnian “paradigm shift” emblematic of the structure of scientific revolutions.

Archives of the Past as Records of Power Knowledge Regimes

In the past archives collected objects that were static. For example Archives of the Ancient Near East and Mesopotamia date to the origins of human recorded history (see such as the archives excavated in the birthplace of the Biblical patriarch Abraham in Ur of Chaldea where cuneiform tables dating from 2100 BCE were classified by topic and stored in in boxes called sadupu to the Egyptian archives of Cheops (2600 BCE) to Ramses II (1350 BCE) most likely the Pharoah of the Hebrew slavery oppression, to King Assurbanipal (668- 627 BCE) in Ninevah excavated by Austen Layard in 1849 where tablets were grouped by series (iskaru) and subsseries (pirsu) arranged by numbers indexed at the rims, the city to which the prophets Jonah and Nahum went, to the archives in Ashur Assyria around 1000 BCE founded by Tiglath Pilesar I and elsewhere in the ancient Near East in Egypt, to the Maria archives excavated in ancient Syria, to Chief Librarian Calamachus’ (305-240 BCE) 120 volume catalog called the Pinakes of the Library and Archive of Alexandria where halls were lined with lockers called armania, for safeguard scrolls, to the Essene sect scriptorium/archive in Qumran that stored and generated the production of a vast array of texts that have come down to us know as the Dead Sea scrolls. The British archives of the Victorian period underwent Romanticization. For example in George Elliot’s book, Middlemarch, the character Causabon on his honeymoon to the young vibrant Dorothy Brooke, travels to the Vatican archives in Rome to do research while abandoning his new bride all in the name of his quest for a “key to all mythologies.” Causabon to Dorothy Brooke and the author Mary Evens represents a set of interests and agendas that represent a previous regime and order- one that to the youthful Dorothy Brooke appears as ancient history and the seared harvests of past generations” (Emerson).

Archival Preservation as “resistance” Sounding the void and giving voice to censored silences

During the Holocaust the Oneg Shabbos group headed by Emanuel Ringelbaum sought to defy the attempt to erase memory of the Jews from the earth by often burying archival documents hoped to reach posterity after the war, as so many messages in the bottle to hold the Nazi persecutors responsible and accountable for the suffering inflicted on their victims. Rabbi Efraim Oshry also buried his responses to halakhic questions from Orthodox Jews in the Kovno ghetto as messages in a bottle to future generations to document that even in the depths of hell of the ghettos, the Jewish halakhic
process continued as a redemptive process and testament to the strength of the spirit of Judaism. What is implicit in the secular Yiddish archival impulse of the Oneg Shabbos groups and Rav Oshry’s burying of his halakhic rulings is an attempt to defy the silencing of the voices of the victim. For Ringelbaum and Oshry the governmental archives of the Nazis is a lie in what it excludes. There is thus a relationship between information gathering and collecting and political power. Nazi archives documented the empire as a way of bolstering the Nazi political power and reach as a monopoly of the master story as a form of political power. In this way the archive of the Oneg Shabbos group and Oshry buried canisters that later were reassembled into the book Mi MaMakim, served as a form of resistance to the blotting out of memory. If the archival records of the Oneg Shabbos group or Oshry’s archived Responsa had not survived researchers would be limited to searching Nazi constructed archives for what “is not there, the silences and absences of documents.” Therefore historians must be vigilant to seek out the “holes” in the archival record and how that records organization reflects the biases of the power-regimes that funded its perpetuation. For Foucault thus the archive is more easily described by what it is not than the sum total of all that is deposited and preserved by a power regime. Foucault calls this the “system of discursivity” thereby raising the question between knowledge and power, and justice and power, but on the terms of “whose justice?”.

Foucault traces the political dimensions of decisions about acquiring cataloging, digitizing, and preserving and providing access to certain documents. Thus for Foucault the processes of institutionalization of the archive- who builds it? and for what purpose?, how is it organized, and made accessible, and for which audiences? Becomes a question of political power. How a political regime employs political technology influences its success or failure at governmentality that is destined by archival hubris. For the Oneg Shabbos group archival transmission is a way nations not only preserve national identity but set the historical record straight, by resisting persecution by refusing to be silenced from the archives of history by burying records that in the future after the War would fill in silences and echo the silent holes of abyss that the intended archives sought to snuff out.

Ernst shows that living in today’s post-modern condition archives are no longer static places of fixed memory but ubiquitous digital repositories reflecting the flux, change, and evolution of the flow of time. For example rather than being deleted emails, tweets, posts to social media, changes to websites, and computer files are archived Media software and cloud storage allow for instantaneous cataloguing and preservation of data and personal information.

Afterword- Reservations with Ernst’s book and digital archeological media project: The the Techno-Crat as the dangerous fusion of Technologist with Bureacrat for potential Totalitarian Control via Gestell

The notion of a classic is something that is of enduring worth, substance, and quality true for all persons at all times across all geographical divides and socio-economic-cultural differences. The World Wide web is unprecedented in giving popular voice in image and other format to millions of persons who would never have been published before although the average existence of a document on the WWW is 75 days and then it appears to “disappear.” But is it disappearing? When one encounters the message “404 Document not found”? only to be potentially accessed again by media archeologists. How does this apparent unstable & unreliable WWW that seems to be the epitome of a fly by night, here today gone
tomorrow, ephemeral type of democratic expression to all culture(s) in the post-modern age shed light or for some “shadow” on the spirit of our “post-modern cultures” lost in hyperspace outside of traditional historical context, just flitting from hyperlink to the next in a frenetic fragmentized culture? The flood of digital information risks overwhelming and with the drop in costs for digital storage the mabul of information being aggregated in the new digital libraries is taking shape in cloud formations, whereby one risks being able to discern the data of “information” from true wisdom-understanding and knowledge. Public materials posted on the Internet are being included often unknownst to their authors in a world wide “Internet Archive” of a digital world culture. Media archeologists are gaining skills to preserve the contents of such a large new changing and amorphous body of data which will include all publicly accessible WWW page, the gopher hierarchy, the Netnews bulletin board system, and downloadable software. Thus enter the media archeologists to offer insights into the human endeavor based on interpreting this technological detritus as suspended in cyberspace- artifact.

Apart from historical and scholarly research uses, these digital archives risk being used by totalitarian governments to deny basic human rights to privacy and because totalitarian governments operate as if the law does not apply to them…. By means of surveillance and intimidation, even the existence of human life, or life on the planet as we know it at all, in the age of weapons of mass destruction is at risk. Totalitarian governments that employ a computer savvy drone force of “technocrats” will easily be able to “ethnically cleanse” “naturally selected data” so that “survival of the designated eugenic fittest” have a right to perpetuate “their genetic and digital files”. The physical security of desired verses undesired data will be thus under the laws of Darwinian natural selection and survival of the fittest, where fittest is defined as most techno-bureacratically savvy. Political ideologies change over time making what was once legal become illegal and what was illegal become legal etc. Data can be not only annihilated but tampered with and changed to further the self interests of any political regime which will employ technocrats to package meta-data (information about the information) in ways to inform future users. The efforts to amass as so much Heideggerian “standing reserve” the terabytes of information that were publically accessible on the Internet, may be paving the way for the ease by which a totalitarian government can more effectively implement its reign of terror by essentially buying off “technocrats” to manage its information gathering and systems. Gathering these distributed files requires computers to probe 24/7 the servers looking for new or updated files leading to data breaks, hacking, and potential for cyberwarfare. The relatively large size in bytes, turnover ( on average 75 days existence for a page to exist the internet), and constant exponential growth of the public interent proves challenging to media archeologists to “control” because of its hight rate of volatile growth and being filled with transient information. Technocrats hired to “control the interent” data explosion employ computers programmed to “crawl” the net by downloading pages, then finding links to the graphics and other pages on it, in a continuing process that occurs 24/7 while most people are asleep. While this technique can be used to create indices for search engines like Altavista, these technocratic processes can also be used for nefarious purposes. With intellectual property issues aside of “stolen documents” aggregated by totalitarian governents for nefarious purposes or aggregated by terrorist gorilla cyberwarriors interested in cyber war take down of WWW computer systems leading to financial instability and overturning of political regimes. Because of the velocities of change and rapid ways in which the fabrications of our technological inventions can reduce and destin events to happen on the political
state the control of the massive amounts of information of digital memory and internet archives becomes a matter of control which is always a function of what in German is called “Gestell” or enframing.

In simplest terms the pentagon and other large defense organizations relay on computer systems to protect citizens of their regimes. These computer systems in turn are often based on protocols, algorithms, and other computer simulated operations, that can occur much more quickly than human decision making can allow for. Thus because of the nature of causality that has shrunken to “reporting” that in potential influences what will happen on the political stage due to: (1) intelligence collecting, disseminating, and acting upon intelligence, (2) news that is staged sometimes in “the theater” of war, by contracted by the government news media, by which news is reported by government constructed contraction (by digital contract), and indeed the news is created by the news for the government (whether as propaganda on the Stalinist left or Nazi totalitarian right), and public opinion for that matter “is made” by paid “spin doctors” to configure at will on the mindsets of masses of people, the olim ist ein golam, the hoi polio, to fabricate public opinion at will, the job description of the spin doctors, we live at time of risk when the arean of “ACCOUNTABILITY” and “RESPONSIBILITY” is relegated to machines and other fabrications of the instrumental Marcusian reason, rather than human beings, who for many millennia in philosopher where thought to possess a unique soul, now reduced and homogenized by computer processing in the “same” at the expense of Derridean “diffferance”. Aschylus writes in the Orestea via the words of the Chorus:

Institutions are Shells/ It is human beings who are responsible for moral accountability/ Institutions as systems only execute decisions by the mechanical workings of a machine (Deus ex machina) or what the Greeks call MOREH, which means fate

Today big decisions such as whether a government should respond by use of weapons of mass destructions are “rigged” and executed by algorithms implicit to the protocols of the defense industries computer systems. This is Aeschylus’ institution that is a shell when not controlled by human beings who are the only ones who can make “morally responsible and accountable decisions.” One cannot hold a machine accountable and counter to Turing, no a machine can’t think, and therefore it can’t make a decision, and certainly not a moral and ethical decision. To replace anyone, including librarians with machines will be fatal for civilization. Already the reasoning capacity of our top governmental generals and military leadership has been relegated to machines represented in our computer defense systems. Quickly “control” in the hands of the morally responsible” to “control” in the hands of an outside machine (just magnets, electricity, and plastic) leads to a precarious fate on the political stage of human history. When Ernst argues that narrative or language and discussion is “superfluous” because machines and like fabrications with their cold eyes and hard recording capabilities absent of bias, will usurp the human “telling the tale” then quickly “INSTRUMENTALITY” reigns not just in the banal realm of our contraptions working to get a task done or executed, but Instrumentality reigns in more magnanimous areas such as the fate of human life on the planet. We hear the Greek Aeschylian Chorus today louder than it spoke in chants in the theater of Epidarus where Aristotle watched the tragedies of Sophicles, Aeschylus, and Euripides from which his tract _The Poetics_ and anatomy of the structure of tragedy sprung. Today we hear the chorus of Aescylus warning against the “reign of instrumentality” that can
lead us down a very dark and gloomy fate if only what in German, Die Schicksall laddenheit Des Languesprache, might save us from. Unless even this “destiny laddeness of language” ends in Apoclyptic CHAIASMUS, represented in the banality of existence as the the joy of solving the “Crossword” puzzle, the loss to human control that the post-modern technologies pose, and that is described by Ernst is a danger looming on the ever receding horizon back to the future.

You see joining the band wagon of hype concerning technological “change” can lead to a truncated vision of the denuded scope of technocracy which relates to librarianship in a manner of the function of technocratic access/control/manipulation/challenging forth/manipulation etc.

The essence of librarianship or archival sciences for that matter, "once upon a time" was much more noble, expansive, and caring than the truncated technocrat librarianship that risks looming on the future and has effected the profession in its essence (ti ti esti/wesen/ikar). The threat of the technocratic reduction of librarians into technology specialists (including media archeologists) is not only the threat that is the essence of nuclear armagedon, but the threat has effected the majority of librarians already in their besouledness and consciousness when the rule of technocratic "enframing" (gestell) that reduces everything into standing reserve (Bestand) and denies the librarian the ability to enter into a more original revealing relationship with the world and hence to experience the call of more primal revealed G-d centered truth instead of the artificial constructed apparatus ofinstrumentum that reigns in technocracy which the field of librarianship is being reduced to. Technocracy which Eliezer Schwied notes is a kind of modern idolatry in that it exalts the technocrat of "master of technology and bureaucracy" as l-rd of the earth and everything that the technocrat encounters exists only insofar as it is controlled by the technocrat. Marcuse had warned of this storm on the horizon in his book _One Dimensional Man_. The technocrat is incapable of hearing (Shamati!) the call of ek-sistence, and worse the technocrat’s control and manipulation of the fusion of bureaucracy and technology coterminously risks "destining" for catastrophe on the human political stage. Nur eine gott kont unser erlosung Jetz?

The technocrat in essence as a mode of being, shares with the totalitarian the manipulation of human beings as his victims by ersemmelde Schiccken (sending that gathers) and destining the fate of her victims (die Schicksall-laddenkeit von technologie uber die anderern). The technocrat archives their power by Gestell which means to enframe, put a border around, limit, or make an artificial boundary that puts in a cuby hole or categorizes tyrannically in a will to control, and blocks and damns the shining forth of the holding sway of truth. Only G-d cannot be put in a box because He is Transcendent and breaks the frame of any control or limit, a circle whose circumference is infinite.[1] The technocrat employs gathering together of that setting upon (the belongings and assets of Jews for example) with the same ease of "downloading a file" and controls the victim by challenging forth their ordering as a form of submission of instrumentatum, the sum total of its focus as Bestand or standing reserve via Gestell.

Technology is a contrivance. Technology is not just its products such as machines, computers, tools, weapons (waffenstullen), etc. it is a way of controlling das zwischenmentschliche via Gestell or
enframing. Technocrats can shrink causality to a reporting and if this reporting is motivated for political alterior motives, axes to grind, or private agendas such as Nazi ideology, than injustice arises and holds sway. The Nazis were excellent technocrats. They systematized the fate and choices of Jews by employing the techniques and outcome of technocratic processes. Nazism brought forward into appearance (iiberlegein, ver anlassen) of making vice (murder) a virtue as Himmler said, "sie wissen was ist zu sehen millioner Judischen Korpsen vor dein Augen, und nicht mitleid haben, dass ist unserer Hochste tugende". Very quickly the Nietzschean transvaluation of values is obtained although Nietzsche lived well before the Nazis, and also warned in his work _The Case against Wagner_ of hatreds that are without limit that fuel ideologies and seek to annihilate the other (vernichtung die Anderen) as Walter Kaufmann has demonstrated. As a technocrat the Himmlers, the Eichmannmanner, and Goebels were supreme technocrats, idealistic ones who believed that their control of technology (employing engineers to make showers and crematoria and produce xylicon b gas and manipulate rail transport etc) for the "gathering" and challenging forth of "human material" for the “special treatment” of processing (sonderbehandlung), a euphemism for their technocratic mechanisms of mass murder. The Nazis enframed the fate of Jews to escape from danger. They cut off borders, by controlling and enframing them via gestell etc. The Nazis brought forth (Her-vor-bringen) an apparatus of technocracy that willfully was manipulated to the project of endlosung zu die Juedische Frage. The expert technocratic skill that is employed in making a Mercedes or Leica camera was used by the Nazi technocrats for the final solution of the Jewish problem. . The nazis set upon (stellte) the mechanism by which mass murder drew on technocracy and bureaucracy by challenging forth (Herausforder) the machinery of mass murder. As technocrats expedited (fordern) the mass murder of Jews as Eichmann diverted trains from the Russian front to murder the Hungarian Jews towards the end of the war. His hatred was greater than his desire for Darwinian self-preservation to win the war on the Russian front. Eichmann's technocratic expertise maximized yield (murdered Jewish corpses) at the least expense (employ cattle cars in cheap train transport) and maximized profit (fleezing the Jews of their assets). The characteristic of mastering technocracy and using it for one's end whether that be Nazi Judeocide or in essence the same bureaucratic harnessing of technology for the running and ordering of a library lihavdil which are two radically different things it goes without saying,) are however both in their essence (in wesen) employ technocracy which via Gestell is a setting upon that challenges everything ordered as "stand by" (Bestand) on call for further ordering (downloading), stockpiled data, to be flipped in hyperspace, by setting upon it with computer "steps". The danger is when human beings are reduced into human resources or standing reserve (Bestand) and ordered by challenging forth. The characteristic of modern technocracy whether in a library or elsewhere is the character of setting upon and challenging forth, unlocking Bestand transforming it, storing it, organizing it, distributing and disseminating it, with today the click of a mouse.

When I note that Nazi tecnocracy is in essence the same (in wesen die selbe) as technocratic processes used by any technocrats I do not equate the two realms. That would be an Aristotelian category error[2] (see Topic, Categorica, and Posterior Analetics). I mean by essence (ti ti esti/das wesen/ ha-ikar) a strict philosophic understanding of what we call in Greek ti ti esti, in Latin quid Quidditas, in German"wesen".
The essence of something is its whatness. In genetics the DNA and genotype are the essence of genetic destining. Stem cell research and cloning which have great benefit for wiping out disease and correcting harmful genetic mutations has great potential to elevate pain and suffering of disease in the world etc. However when man in genetic engineering feels he can usurp the place of G—d by eugenic fashioning of “designer babies” great dangers loom. The essence of a thing, reveals the destining of what a thing can become and defines it, as in mysticism a name has a destining power. The essence in philosophy (from German Waehren) also means the last to endure, a tenacious persistence of what in Greek is known by the aei on (eternity) which for Plato is the eidos or form of the idea or Ausehren. In greek we say ti ein einai or that which any particular thing has always been is its essence. The essence (wahren) is what endures as das ding an sich. This relates to the essence of technocracy (the combination of technology and bureaucracy) that enabled the Nazi project of Judecide as demonstrated by Richard Rubenstein, as an essence of technho-enframing i.e. techno-gestell that set itself up as final (fortgewaehren) and destroyed the dignity of human beings in the process. So long as one understands technology as machines, computers, cars, airplanes, or things that are constructed one misses and misunderstands the essence of technology which is a haltung, a way of relating to das Zwischenmenschliche in an instrumental manner. Nazi technocracy made Jews and other victims superfluous in Hannah Arendts sense in the Origins of Totalitarianism. That on some level is what will happen if technocracy reigns in libraries whether it be via “out-sourcing” or reducing workers to a vein of coal to be mined or a disposable part in a machine to be used and not-recycled humanly.

Gestell (enframent i.e. control] is the essence of modern technology which has the potential of manifesting itself as a banality of evil (Arendt) in its “setting in order” by reducing everything to “standing reserve” (Bestand) for the theater of war. Even human beings reduced to “resources” are degraded from being in the essence of Hashem (Bitzelem Elokim) to mere veins of coal to be manipulated, ordered, and transformed through exploitation. No longer is the Human being conceived of within the ethical horizon (that particularly of deontological ethicists like Kant and Maimonides) as a “kingdom of ends” but rather as a resource to be exploited in the concentration camp is used as a spare part to be disgarded when efficiency drops

“The hour is late” (and the work of archival preservation qua human preservation) in the history of civilization with all its Freudian “discontents,” but "once upon a time" the best librarians were scholar librarians who wore many hats, and had great care for their wellsprings (die Quellen) which they guarded for the benefit of mankind and "Safekept" for the coming to presence of truth/aletheia/wahrheit/veritas/emet. When we look into the ambiguous essence of technology and how it is employed via technocracy in the library we behold the constellation , the stellar course of mystery appears and unfolds upon our philosophically trained minds which are able to distinguish dangers in thought and praxis.
Once there was a time when the bringer forth of the true not the beautiful was called techne. In ancient Greece of Plato techne referred to the arts of craftsmanship (Kunst). In Ancient greece art was the handmaiden of the Greek mythology. Art was not just Bildung or tarbut, it was a way of revealing or the holding sway of truth of nature, of the human being to dwell (wohnen) poetically and make their life into a work of art. Art is techne and likened by Nietzsche to heilkundige Zauberin who can make a zauberKreis (holy circle). [3] Poesis is the art of bringing forth like Homotzi lechem is the art of transforming planting and agriculture into a challah or bringing forth, what Plato in the Phaedrus callsekphanestaton.

The frenziedness of modern technology and the totalitarian grasp of technocracy put human beings at great risk today, not just in reducing a library to a form of technocratic control or enframing (gestell) but by denuding the essence of man’s freedom. The products of technology, the apparatus of machines, risk controlling human beings who are plugged into making their artificial technocratic worlds idolatrous. There is no “global electronic village” there are only real communities if in at all they exist today. When technology and technocracy control the human being, then the human being risks becoming a slave to his human artificial creations and worshiping the work of his hands which he thinks he has created when in reality only G-d creates ex nihilo and anything that we have is not from human making but from the goodness of G-d’s gifts. Technocracy in any form, in Nazi ideology and implementation of the final solution or in the running of a bureaucratic state or particular libraries for that matter that orders everything to Bestand, risks denuding the essence of what once was a more noble calling of the pantheon of scholar librarians like Alexander Marx, Moritz Steinschneider, Gershom Scholem, Efraim Oshry, Chaim Macaby, Stefen Reif who before they were great librarians, they were scholars first and foremost. Technocracy in libraries or elsewhere has no place for true scholarship. It only has a place for practical “know how” of Gestell or enframent. If Technocracy comes to reign in the library world, then the library world and its profession will be the less for it. Technology may “appear” in the phenomenal world as change, but if it change mans’ essence for the worse, then it will have robbed the human being being Bitzelem Elokim.

(k) Kantian Legacy of Kritik of Technology

From a broader scope and perspective all these post-modern works develop from the modern project of Kant who in the 3 Critiques sought to demonstrate the social construction of Knowledge and subsequently perceptions of subjective realities. Ernst is aware of the foundational nature of Kant’s oeuvre who he cites directly. Ernst like Derrida understands “the archae” of archaeology as the very Kantian a priori of media, as a condition for the possibility of the performance to take place at all (95). Kantsequentially “media archeology” is not a mode of historical research per se, but a way of seeing “what has remained from the past in the present like archeological layers, operatively embedded in technologies (57) and how an understanding of that status of the technological “artifact” in hindsight sheds light on how media machines are literally archives of past epistemologies, although mostly intended to function for purposes of usefulness in a certain time and historical place, but now allowing the media archeologist to gain understanding of the technoeipistemological configurations of knowledge.
underlying the discursive surface of mass media of civilizations past. Media machines thus not only function to perform a job, but are archives of past epistemologies. Thus `the archive` is not a “static repository for memory” or even a junkyard of past outdated machines but an ontological category that both records and shapes the world in its operation, in the present task at hand, and more importantly as a trace to be deciphered in its future out-datedness. In this sense the machines civilizations produce and later cast off when no longer of use, contain signals that are clues regarding the nature of those civilizations themselves as Kantian constructs of the changing nature of Pure Reason and Pure judgment within the warp and woof of historical developments. Thus if human knowledge is a social construct, its evolution reflects on the changing nature of the cultures and human beings as representatives as the spirit of their times.

*Changed Status of the purpose and function of the post-modern Library and Archive*

For many millennia archives and libraries where thought to be fixed places or repositories that housed static primary archival documents of the records and official memories of civilizations, state secrets, stored up to be preserved beyond the existence of the civilizations that have come and gone on the blip of the radar off the stage of human history. Post-modern archives are now ubiquitous signs of digital activities, media software, and cloud storage allowing for instantaneous cataloging. Ernst awakens readers to the new realities of archives as a result of new technologies such as digitization, E-texts, social media, new software[s], browsers, and operating systems have changed the archive as a physical loci for collecting material objects to an electronic future of dynamic and fluid hubs of amorphous virtual cyber information stored remotely “in the cloud”. Digital time is processual, operational, and discrete, re-inscribing the symbolic simply as binary 1s and 0s instead of the place of alphanumeric letters, rather than static and linearly continuous like narrative time. As a consequence the digital archive is an amorphous entity in flux continuously in formation and re-formation, unlike the traditional Aristotelian Unmoved Mover as the locus of all truth. Rather change, flow, process are designated as the loci of truth-knowledge regimes. The classical archives of the written word that transmits through space storage represent static Aristotelian time versus the digital archive founded on operative time based on algorithms and coding which executes processing-storage-and transmission simulateneously. Thus truth in the post-modern condition is not a function of media historiography, mythologies, or even [Charles] Pearcean semiotics but reduced to mathematics and computation based not only telling stories but on counting units and registering signals. Ernst offers for better or for worst a new age glimpse of a way of processing cultural experience that does not need stories (149) that have become obsolete. The cold eye of the camera lays bare an infrastructure of computing which processes, stores, and transmits data about the past that eradicates the bias, agendas, and points of view that even an Impressionist painter might attempt to reveal thereby causing a crisis in narrative memory of cultures. A technological digital culture deals not with narrative memory and the battle of interpretations, but with calculating memory by objective modes of representation, counting memory rather than recounting memory thereby giving rise to archeological excavation versus historical interpretation (71). Opening up the “black box of media
recording devices” trump eye witness narrative testimonies so that hardware evidence trumps human accounts. Ernst shows that as archives increasingly make their materials available online in formats including sound, images, and multimedia, as well as text, it no longer makes sense to limit archives to the subtotal of physical items they house. As archives collect virtual culture of cyberspace, the notion of knowledge itself is changed from something static to something with live connections that are ever evolving.

The post-modern condition is one characterized as lacking “historical context.” Hypertext technologies have influenced this condition. Unlike the traditional archive repertoires, archives are no longer static and passive but documents are linked to pertinent data records, a finding aid in the documents themselves as cognitive skeletal structure, so that “everything is connected” in the hypertext archive of the future (84). The past source of knowledge “the written Encyclopaedia, gives way to a new kind of never ending encyclopedia that is constantly added to, updated, and changed in constant flux whether it be popular Wikipedias or “the grey web” of unpublished writings. Because the web functions by means of user activity, archives “become cybernetic systems” as “repositories are no longer final destinations but turn into frequently accessed sites” (99). Thus Ernst asserts, “The real archive of the Internet (in the sense of arch) is its system of technological protocols” (85). Thus the post-modern archive is fluid, constantly in the process of reconfiguration, based on the feedback of interactive users, who continue to change the Internet archive, even while one side of the world sleeps. For Enst the changed nature of what the archive is and its purpose relating to the epistemological status of knowledge in the post-modern age is no less than a Thomas Kuhnian “paradigm shift” emblematic of the structure of scientific revolutions.

Archives of the Past as Records of Power Knowledge Regimes

In the past archives collected objects that were static. For example Archives of the Ancient Near East and Mesopotamia date to the origins of human recorded history (see such as the archives excavated in the birthplace of the Biblical patriarch Abraham in Ur of Chaldea where cuneiform tables dating from 2100 BCE were classified by topic and stored in in boxes called sadupu to the Egyptian archives of Cheops (2600 BCE) to Ramsees II (1350 BCE) most likely the Pharaoh of the Hebrew slavery oppression, to King Assurbanipal (668- 627 BCE) in Ninevah excavated by Austen Layard in 1849 where tablets were grouped by series (iskaru) and subseries (pirsu) arranged by numbers indexed at the rims, the city to which the prophets Jonah and Nahum went, to the archives in Ashur Assyria around 1000 BCE founded by Tiglath Pilesar I and elsewhere in the ancient Near East in Egypt, to the Maria archives excavated in ancient Syria, to Chief Librarian Calamachus’ (305-240 BCE) 120 volume catalog called the Pinakes of the Library and Archive of Alexandria where halls were lined with lockers called armania, for safeguard scrolls, to the Essene sect scriptorium/archive in Qumran that stored and generated the production of a vast array of texts that have come down to us know as the Dead Sea scrolls. The British archives of the
Victorian period underwent Romanticization. For example in George Elliot’s book, Middlemarch, the character Causabon on his honeymoon to the young vibrant Dorothy Brooke, travels to the Vatican archives in Rome to do research while abandoning his new bride all in the name of his quest for a “key to all mythologies.” Causabon to Dorothy Brooke and the author Mary Evens represents a set of interests and agendas that represent a previous regime and order - one that to the youthful Dorothy Brooke appears as ancient history and the seared harvests of past generations” (Emerson).

Archival Preservation as “resistance” Sounding the void and giving voice to censored silences

During the Holocaust the Oneg Shabbos group headed by Emanuel Ringelbaum sought to defy the attempt to erase memory of the Jews from the earth by often burying archival documents hoped to reach posterity after the war, as so many messages in the bottle to hold the Nazi persecutors responsible and accountable for the suffering inflicted on their victims. Rabbi Efraim Oshry also buried his responses to halakhic questions from Orthodox Jews in the Kovno ghetto as messages in a bottle to future generations to document that even in the depths of hell of the ghettos, the Jewish halakhic process continued as a redemptive process and testament to the strength of the spirit of Judaism. What is implicit in the secular Yiddish archival impulse of the Oneg Shabbos groups and Rav Oshry’s burying of his halakhic rulings is an attempt to defy the silencing of the voices of the victim. For Ringelbaum and Oshry the governmental archives of the Nazis is a lie in what it excludes. There is thus a relationship between information gathering and collecting and political power. Nazi archives documented the empire as a way of bolstering the Nazi political power and reach as a monopoly of the master story as a form of political power. In this way the archive of the Oneg Shabbos group and Oshry buried canisters that later were reassembled into the book Mi MaMakim, served as a form of resistance to the blotting out of memory. If the archival records of the Oneg Shabbos group or Oshry’s archived Responsa had not survived researchers would be limited to searching Nazi constructed archives for what “is not there, the silences and absences of documents.” Therefore historians must be vigilant to seek out the “holes” in the archival record and how that records organization reflects the biases of the power-regimes that funded its perpetuation. For Foucault thus the archive is more easily described by what it is not than the sum total of all that is deposited and preserved by a power regime. Foucault calls this the “system of discursivity” thereby raising the question between knowledge and power, and justice and power, but on the terms of “whose justice?”. Kritallnacht267 had meant the beginning of censorship not only of Jewish books, which the Nazi boyscouts (HitlerJugend) enjoyed burning in large camp fires at rallies, but also censorship of the Jewish people. Yet the Jewish people are inseparable from the Sefer. War against the sefer is war against the Jewish people.

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Foucault traces the political dimensions of decisions about acquiring cataloging, digitizing, and preserving and providing access to certain documents. Thus for Foucault the processes of institutionalization of the archive—who builds it? and for what purpose?, how is it organized, and made accessible, and for which audiences? Becomes a question of political power. How a political regime employs political technology influences its success or failure at governmentality that is destined by archival hubris. For the Oneg Shabbos group archival transmission is a way nations not only preserve national identity but set the historical record straight, by resisting persecution by refusing to be silenced from the archives of history by burying records that in the future after the War would fill in silences and echo the silent holes of abyss that the intended archives sought to snuff out.

An important collection of ghetto reportage accounts that attempts to fill in those sciences has recently been released in a work titled, In Those Nightmarish days: The ghetto reportage of Peretz Opoczynski and Josef Zelkowicz edited by S. Kassow and David Suchoff.

Both Yiddish folk-ethnographic journalistic writers for whom writing was a mission and calling like Jeremiah’s scribe Baruch ben Naryiah to store up and preserve archivally a lasting record to the horrific events they witnessed, and not merely a career, (1) Rabbi Peretz Opoczynski who wrote for the secret Oyneg Shabes archive founded in the Warsaw ghetto by historian Emanuel Ringelblum, and (2) the scholarly Josef Zelkowicz, editor of Lodz Academic Writings (1938) and leader of the Yididish Cultural Society (Yidisher Kultur Gezelschaft), who wrote for the archive of the Lodz ghetto... both sought to leave a testament for posterity to hold accountable and responsible the perpetrators by documenting the harsh life of disease and starvation in these two Nazi ghettos- Warsaw and Lodz by creating and gathering and collection (zaml) documents to bear witness apres la letter against the Nazi persecutors. Both Opoczynski and Zelkowicz drew on the literary and linguistic models of Yiddish writers such as Mendele Moykher Sforim, Solomon Rabinovitsh, I.L. Peretz, and S. Ansky who before WWII nurtured a vision of Yiddish folk cultural awakening. In some ways Opoczynski and Zelkowicz continued the archival work of Historians of the Jewish people (Juedische Volk) like Simon Dubnow, founder of the Jewish Literature and Historical-Ethnographic Society and edited the Jewish Encyclopedia, and Emanuel Ringelblum one of the founders of the Yiddish Scientific Institute in Vilna YIVO), albeit from the front lines of deprivation, suffering, and catastrophe in the Nazi Ghettos, trying to make sense of the rupture-fissure-caesura-break of disaster that had overtaken the Jewish people during these terrible years of Nazi persecution, but refusing to despair. Both Opoczynski and Zelkowicz showed sympathy, compassion, and feeling (Herzenkeit) for the Jewish victims in the ghetto whom they described, rather than critical analysis manifested by Bialik in his Hebrew poem, “The City of Slaughter” commemorating the 1903 pogrom of Kishinev, where Bialik laments the Jews passivity like sheep to slaughter, and their failure to fight back more in resistance. Opoczynski as a mail “Jewish letter Carrier” documented in his meanderings to deliver letters in the Warsaw Ghetto the poverty, disease, and suffering he saw first hand for instance how since the ghetto received little coal for heating, pipes froze, toilets broke, and feces and frozen urine piled up everywhere. Opoczynski also criticized the corruption of the Polish speaking Jewish administrators and police (shmendrikes). Like Sholem Aschs story “Kola Street” written

268 See Israel Efros translation at: http://faculty.history.umd.edu/BCooperman/NewCity/Slaughter.html Bilingual edition exists by Ezra Spicehandler
in 1906 which did not look down at the less well educated tough Jews who lived on Kola street, Opocynski recognized the dignity of these type of tough Jews who risked their lives to smuggle in food into the ghetto. Opocynski also refused to despair at the examples of social Darwinianism that the Nazis created as an experiment where they wanted Jews to betray and stab in the back other Jews, in what Hobbes calls a state of nature that is nasty brutish and short, of each against each, by looking for examples of heroism, decency, dignity, and kindness however few they were of Jews reduced to such deplorable conditions. The name of this collection dervies from Zelkowicz work titled, “In Those Nightmarish Days” that describes September 1942 when the Germans demanded of the head of the Lodz Judenrate help deporting all children under the age of ten and all adults over sixty five for immediate gassing which was preceded by demanding that the Judenrate help deported for certain murder all patients in hospitals and “non productivbe elements.” Zelkowicz also contributed archivally important works to the Chronicle of the Lodz Ghetto (Jan. 1941), the Ghetto Encyclopedia (1942), dozens of reports for the Lodz archive on ghetto factories, strikes, street scenes, folklore, a smuggling scheme that backfired titled, “twenty-five Chickens and One Dead Document” in which 24 Jews were shot, and the struggle of Jews to stay alive.

Thanks largely to the efforts of Henryk Neftalin Lodz documents were hidden and buried to be discovered after the liquidation of the ghetto after the war. When members of the Oyneg Shabes in Warsaw buried the first boxes of documents in August 1942 their hope was that after the war someone would find these documents so that the truth would be known and the conscience of the world not lost. In 1970 Tzvi Shner edited a Hebrew edition of Opocynski’s essays published in Hebrew. Some of Zelkowicz’ reportages were published in Isaiah Trunk’s _Lodz Ghetto_ which appeared in Yiddish in 1962. Yad VAshem published a Hebrew edition of Zelcowicz’ essays in 1994 and this appeared in English in 2002 und the title _In Those Terrible Days_. Many historians may know of Zelkowicz via excerpts sited by Lucy Dawidowitz’s _Holocaust reader_ (1976) and Milton Teichman’s _Turht and Lamentation_ (1993). It is hoped that this one volume abridged edition containing a small fraction of the archival record will win the attention that these writers and witnesses deserve as a clarion call to all Humanity to learn the moral and ethical lessons from the Holocaust.

Partial Conclusion on Post-modern condition and libraries

Today’s post-modern condition archives are no longer static places of fixed memory but ubiquitous digital repositories reflecting the flux, change, and evolution of the flow of time. For example rather than being deleted emails, tweets, posts to social media, changes to websites, and computer files are archived Media software and cloud storage allow for instantaneous cataloguing and preservation of data and personal information.
Afterword

(a) Post-modern New Age: Trashing the notion of the “classic” as a form of imperialistic power-knowledge regimes

The status of the Classic is challenged in post-modernity as is the eternal enduring quality of anything of highest merit considered as mere flowerings of imperialistic power-knowledge regimes.

The notion of a classic is something that is of enduring worth, substance, and quality true for all persons at all times across all geographical divides and socio-economic-cultural differences. Libraries for Liberal Arts Colleges in the Sciences and Humanities often want to have on their shelves “classics.” The word classic often connotes best. It has been used for either Greek and Latin literatures in toto or the greatest authors of these and other languages. Sometimes classic implies “highest praise” or merit, and excellence. T.S. Elliot notes that a quality of a classic is maturity. A classic can occur when a civilization is mature; when a language and a literature are mature; and it must be the work of a mature mind. According to Cicero a classic is like good wine it gets better with age. For Frank Kermode If a person is mature and educated she can easily recognize her quality of maturity and substance in an author or a literature. Maturity of mind, maturity of manners, maturity of language, perfection of a common style can all characterize a classic which is foundational to the evolution of literature of a culture that shares a common geographic setting or culture. For Immanuel Kant A classic will manifest comprehensiveness of vision along with discernment of mind and fair judgment.

Maturity in part means the artist will

269 For Kant in his 1790 Kritik des Urteilschaft, argues that a classic can embody “beauty” and or the “the sublime’ (das erhaben). Kant(sequently) beauty is defined as conducive to balance, symmetry, quietude and meditative contemplation, mirroring a great soul which whose waters runs deep. Alex Huxley in Point and Counterpoint, refers to Beethoven’s four Quartets as inducing this state of being. The beauty of Symmetry can be found in art like an oriental rug or geometrical design or Bach’s Cantatas and for Romantic poets like Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Keats in England or Lamartine in France or Goethe in Germany in nature/physics/teva although Alfred Lord Tennyson rejects this notion of a benevolent nature In Memoriam A. H. H., 1850 Canto 56 refers to “nature, red, in toothe an claw.” For Kant on the other hand “the sublime” represents an omnipotent force that can threaten to annihilate the ego like a raging storm, such as the one Shakespeare’s King Lear is subjected to on the heath. For Kant the sublime, like G-d, embodies the infinite and can be found even in an object that has no form. Kant transforms the sublime from a terrifying object of nature to something intricately connected to the perceiving and cognitive rational mind which recognizes that there is “nothing more sublime than the starry heavens above and the moral law within, which serves as a basis of Kant’s Metaphysics of Morals.” Edmund Burke’s A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful (1757) defines the sublime as “whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain and danger.” William Butler Yeats referred to a similar concept of “tragic joy”. Sigmund Freud took the literary and philosophic sublime and examined the psyche behind it, resulting in what he termed "sublimation" which means a process of redirecting psychical energy from ego-desire (e.g., sexual gratification) to the satisfaction of cultural aims (e.g., work, art, music, culture). Religious Jews argue however against Freud that the sublime is not dependent on social conditioning for G-d Himself is referred to as Ayum VeNorah, particularly in the liturgy of the High Holy Days, and G-d is not a fiction or artistic Construct. In ontological terms, G-d is the thought beyond which thought cannot proceed, He is a tautology, of Perfection that thinks Himself in the perfection of what it is to think, and sui generis, He is a circle whose circumference is infinite, and whose omnipotence Created all that exists, and he watches over his Creation with omniscience, directing history by the YadHashem.
engage in a process of selection and elimination. It means the development of some possibilities to the exclusion of others.

In the post-modern world “nothing is sacred” except technological change and the changing gadgets that come along and fade out with those changes, so that the notion of an enduring eternally valid text under the category of “classic” is also challenged as the domain of imperial interests to impose one culture over another. Relativism characterizes this post-modern age. For example Spinoza in the Tractatus Logico-Politicus considered the “bible” just one of many other great works of “literature” yet the Tanakh as a sacred text is surely more than a work of great literature such as Goethe, Shakespeare, Racine, Corneille, Cervantes etc. In librarianship certain encyclopedias and lexicons used to be considered classics. They were essential for a collection. But now that libraries and archives are not static places for texts, including encyclopedias, but hubs for constructing-adding to-changing documents that are collaborative team efforts, even these standard reference books are being deaccessioned in greater numbers and their status as classics confounded by stupid decisions to get rid of them.

In the 19th and 20th century the word classic was used in the sense of as opposed to romantic. Thus in music the classical style according to Charles Rosen of Mozart and Hayden obeyed certain patterns. Beethoven however as the transitional bridge between classicism to romanticism. However it can be argued on the side of post-modern multi-culturalism, that there is a political agenda and consciousness to the particular person who defines “what is and is not a classic.” “Whose classic?”

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270 Tehillim is a classic in a limited sense only because King David expresses the whole range and gamut of human emotions there, and represents a genius conception of how poetry with a theological purpose can express this gamut of emotions and truths of the spirit. However Psalms expresses a universal experience of every person, not just King David, or the Jewish people. A classic expresses the maximum possible of the whole range of feeling which represents the character of the people who understand that language but a universal classic expresses ideas true for all peoples at all times across all history. It is not coincidental that a classic like Psalms has the power to destin the unique fate of a whole people across time as an example of its influence. Psalms as a form of confessional literature also expresses moral truths as for instance David’s recognition of his mistakes, brought to David’s attention via the prophet Nathan. Psalms is a classic on all levels in that it also came to be the universal means of communication between peoples of all tongues and cultures across history. Longinus in his Greek essay the “peri-hupsous’ (on the sublime) referred to the Hebrew Bible including Psalms, which he read in the Alexandrian Library, as the most sublime text he had ever encountered in his career as a librarian and homes de lettres.

271 Lexicographical works such as the OED (history of the English language via literature), Le Petit Roget (History of French language via literature), and Rabbi Eleizer Ben Yehudah’s Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew language (History of the Hebrew language via sacred texts and literature) all provide a multivolume overview with regards to the millennial maturity and evolution of whole languages across cultures in literature. One may trace glimpses of a Zeitgeist across time in a culture by these reference works.

272 The term “Classic” has also been used as an antithesis to the term “Romantic”. Thus Leo Baeck pairs in dialectic what he calls “classical Judaism” based on reason with “Romantic Christianity” based on emotion and feeling i.e. stimmung. So too the musicologist Charles Rosen differentiates between the baroque style of Bach, Buxtahude in Germany, Rameau, Coperain, and de Lully in France and Vivaldi and Clementi and De Rossi in Italy with that of the classical style of Mozart and Hayden as opposed to the Romantic style of Schuman, Brahms, and Liszt. These styles are representations of the Zeitgeists of their age and cultural milieu. Cultures may return to former styles, as Koheleth says, ’what was will be, and what will be was, there is nothing new under the sun” which should not be equated with Nietzsche’s notion of “eternal recurrence of the same.”
which is a question that speaks of the politicization of academia bemoaned by Alan Bloom in the Closing of the American Mind. As early as Ralph Waldo Emerson, David Thoreau, and Walt Whitman, the rugged American spirit was seen to champion “individualism,” “independence of mind”, and “free thought.” Emerson in his essay, “The American scholar” resented American culture being beholden to what he called the classics of “harvests of yester year.” Rabbinic culture it can be argued is the antithesis of this fierce bravado and individualism in that a sacred texts is always learned via “the authoritative reception history” of the text across the millennia by rabbis in each generation who interact with the text not as a dead dusty artifact of antiquity but as a real living text relevant to their lives and behavior each day of history.

Post-modern Multiculturalists argue that what is one person’s classic is not another persons’ classic as we all may have a set of cultural biases, perhaps agendas, and predilections that we carry as a result of the socio-economic-religious communities we choose to belong to and the political views we may hold, or just the period of history in which we find ourselves enmeshed as each work of culture and science may be an expression of the spirit of its times as noted by Hegel and Walter Benjamin. It is politically correct to feel that many groups’ classical texts have been marginalized in history by the teaching establishment at elite institutions.Womens’ history and literature, Native American oral folklore, African American Literature, Assian Studies, Jewish studies, and other groups were marginalized according to the multiculturalists. One persons’ core may not be another persons’ core set of classics as was implemented by the revamping of the core-curriculum at the progressive Stanford University.

It could be argued that the 1960s challenging of “the status of the classic” helped fuel the inclusion of Jewish studies programs that as Neusner notes expanded exponentially during this 1960s as a time of upheaval and unrest. Even within the Jewish studies discipline the urge to canonize classics in any given Jewish studies sub field is illustrated by the making of bibliographies in various fields of Judaica. In post-modern form this is illustrated in the library guides273 at TC, 55 in Jewish studies authored by David B Levy on behalf of the College.274 However these guides contain not only canonized bibliographies in pathfinders usually created on behalf of library patrons, but also include: Power points, charts, graphs, exercise, original essays etc.

For instance In Jewish Studies the cannon and what constitutes a Jewish classic is a cause for exegesis In the research of academics like Ruth Wisse (Yiddish studies), Zeev Safrai (Rabbinics), Hasidism (Norman Lamm, Louis Jacobs, Rossman), Ancient Second Temple Judaism (Shaya Cohen, Menachem Stern, Dinur), Medieval Jewish History (Israel Abrams and Marcus), Modern Jewish history sources (Mendes Flohr and Judah Reinharz), Ezra Fleischer and Israel Davidson (medieval Hebrew Poetry), Isaac Husik, Collette Sirat, Isaac Heinemann, Julius Gutman (Jewish Philosophy), Moritz Steinschneider, Herbert Zafren, Alexander Altmann (Booklore and Bibliography), Kabbalah (Gershom Scholem, Moshe Idel, Josef Dan, Rachel Elior) etc. Gershom Scholem for example pioneered the field of Jewish mysticism after the Haskalah an age

273 See http://libguides.tourolib.org/prf.php?account_id=19198
that did not feel the subject merited specific academic focus. As Dr. S. Lieberman noted when introducing Scholem who was giving a lecture on “Jewish Gnosticism and Rabbinic Merkavah mysticism”, “Kabbalah is complete non-sense, but the academic study of non-sense is scholarship.” Thus Jewish scholars are also at odds with what constitutes a classic within the field of Jewish studies, with the Rabbinics studies “die hards” affirming a Rabbinic central core canon spanning from the formation of the Mishnah, Talmudim, Midrashim, Codes (Tur, MT., Shulchan Arukh), and Responsa texts. The shift from text (Biblical scripture) to tradition is what Schiffman noted occurred after the Hurban, whereby what Baruch Levine defined as “the priestly caste’ of antiquity was replaced by the authority of “the rabbinic class.”

In short, as librarians, we should be aware not only of the characteristics and traits that may define “what is and is not a classic” but perhaps the political socio-economic-cultural forces that may frame each individual or groups’ view of what is a classic text, but not to the extreme of relativistic nihilism. This awareness may effect ordering policies, weeding policies, mission statements, and indeed the whole manner in which we relate to the educational curriculum.

(a) From Classic to Ephemerality: Lost-in-Hyper-Space: an adverse Symptom of Post-modernity

The World Wide web is unprecedented in giving popular voice in image and other format to millions of persons who would never have been published before although the average existence of a document on the WWW is 75 days and then it appears to “disappear.” But is it disappearing? When one encounters the message “404 Document not found” only to be potentially accessed again by media archeologists. How does this apparent unstable & unreliable WWW that seems to be the epitome of a fly by night, here today gone tomorrow, ephemeral type of democratic expression to all culture(s) in the post-modern age shed light or for some “shadow” on the spirit of our “post-modern cultures” lost in hyperspace outside of traditional historical context, just flitting from hyperlink to the next in a frenetic fragmentized culture? The flood of digital information risks overwhelming and with the drop in costs for digital storage the mabul of information being aggregated in the new digital libraries is taking shape in cloud formations, whereby one risks being able to discern the data of “information” from true wisdom-understanding and knowledge. Public materials posted on the Internet are being included often unknow stif to their authors in a world wide “Internet Archive” of a digital world culture. Media archeologists are gaining skills to preserve the contents of such a large new changing and amorphous body of data which will include all publically accessible WWW page, the gopher hierarchy, the Netnews bulletin board system, and downloadable software. Thus enter the media archeologists to offer insights into the human endeavor based on interpreting this technological detritus as suspended in cyberspace-artifact.

(c) Post-modern technology leading to Totalitarian Control and Despotism

Apart from historical and scholarly research uses, these digital archives risk being used by totalitarian governments to deny basic human rights to privacy and because totalitarian governments operate as if the law does not apply to them.... By means of surveillance and intimidation, even the existence of human life, or life on the planet as we know it at all, in the age of weapons of mass destruction is at risk.
Totalitarian governments that employ a computer savvy drone force of “technocrats” will easily be able to “ethnically cleanse” “naturally selected data” so that “survival of the designated eugenic fittest” have a right to perpetuate “their genetic and digital files”. The physical security of desired verses undesired data will be thus under the laws of Darwinian natural selection and survival of the fittest, where fittest is defined as most techno-bureacratically savvy. Political ideologies change over time making what was once legal become illegal and what was illegal become legal etc. Data can be not only annihilated but tampered with and changed to further the self interests of any political regime which will employ technocrats to package meta-data (information about the information) in ways to inform future users. The efforts to amass as so much Heideggerian “standing reserve” the terabytes of information that were publically accessible on the Internet, may be paving the way for the ease by which a totalitarian government can more effectively implement its reign of terror by essentially buying off “technocrats” to manage its information gathering and systems. Gathering these distributed files requires computers to probe 24/7 the servers looking for new or updated files leading to data breaks, hacking, and potential for cyberwarfare. The relatively large size in bytes, turnover (on average 75 days existence for a page to exist the interent), and constant exponential growth of the public internet proves challenging to media archeologists to “control” because of its high rate of volatile growth and being filled with transient information. Technocrats hired to “control the internet” data explosion employ computers programmed to “crawl” the net by downloading pages, then finding links to the graphics and other pages on it, in a continuing process that occurs 24/7 while most people are asleep. While this technique can be used to create indices for search engines like Altavista, these technocratic processes can also be used for nefarious purposes. With intellectual property issues aside of “stolen documents” aggregated by totalitarian governments for nefarious purposes or aggregated by terrorist gorilla cyberwarriors interested in cyber war take down of WWW computer systems leading to financial instability and overthrowing of political regimes. Because of the velocities of change and rapid ways in which the fabrications of our technological inventions can reduce and destin events to happen on the political state the control of the massive amounts of information of digital memory and internet archives becomes a matter of control which is always a function of what in German is called “Gestell” or enframing.

In simplistic terms the pentagon and other large defense organizations relay on computer systems to protect citizens of their regimes. These computer systems in turn are often based on protocols, alogrithms, and other computer simulated operations, that can occur much more quickly than human decision making can allow for. Thus because of the nature of causality that has shrunken to “reporting” that in potential influences what will happen on the political stage due to: (1) intelligence collecting, disseminating, and acting upon intelligence, (2) news that is staged sometimes in “the theater” of war, by contracted by the government news media, by which news is reported by government constructed contraction (by digital contract), and indeed the news is created by the news for the government (whether as propaganda on the Stalinist left or Nazi totalitarian right), and public opinion for that matter “is made” by paid “spin doctors” to configure at will on the mindsets of masses of people, the olam ist ein gholm, the hoi polio, to fabricate public opinion at will, the job description of the spin doctors, we
live at time of risk when the arean of “ACCOUNTABILITY” and “RESPONSIBILITY” is relegated to machines and other fabrications of the instrumental Marcusian reason, rather than human beings, who for many millennia in philosopher where thought to possess a unique soul, now reduced and homogenized by computer processing in the “same” at the expece of Derridean “diffferance”. Aschylus writes in the Orestea via the words of the Chorus:

Institutions are Shells/ It is human beings who are responsible for moral accountability/ Instituions as systems only execute decisions by the mechanical workings of a machine (Deus ex machina) or what the greeks call MOREH, which means fate.

The only resistence to the institutionalization, bureaucratization, and systematization of decision making that uproots accountability from human beings to machines or any kind of bureaucratic mechanism... is the resurgence of ethics.275

Today big decisions such as whether a government should respond by use of weapons of mass destructions are “rigged” and executed by logrythms implicit to the protocols of the defense industries computer systems. This is Aeschylus’ institution that is a shell when not controlled by human beings who are the only ones who can make “morally responsible and accountable decisions.” One cannot hold a machine accountable and counter to Turing, no a machine can’t think, and therefore it can’t make a decision, and certainly not a moral and ethical decision. To replace anyone, including librarians with machines will be fatal for civilization. Already the reasoning capacity of our top governmental generals and military leadership has been relegated to machines represented in our computer defense systems. Quickly “control” in the hands of the morally responsible” to “control” in the hands of an outside machine (just magnets, electricity, and plastic) leads to a precarious fate on the political stage of human history. When Ernst argues that narrative or language and discussion is “superfluous” because machines and like fabrications with their cold eyes and hard recording capabilities absent of bias, will usurp the human “telling the tale” then quickly “INSTRUMENTALITY” reigns not just in the banal realm of our contraptions working to get a task done or executed, but Instrumentality reigns in more magnaniomous areas such as the fate of human life on the planet. We hear the Greek Aeschylian Chorus today louder than it spoke in chants in the theater of Epidarus where Aristotle watched the tragedies of Sophicles, Aeschylus, and Euripides from which his tract _The Poetics_ and anatomy of the structure of tragedy sprung. Today we hear the chorus of Aescylus warning against the “reign of instrumentality” that can lead us down a very dark and gloomy fate if only what in German, Die Schicksall laddenkeit Des Languesprache, might save us from. Unless even this “destyiny laddeness of language” ends in

275 ethical behavior:

(a) Jewish Ethics http://libguides.tourolib.org/jewishethics
(b) Jewish Business Ethics http://libguides.tourolib.org/c.php?g=127684
(c) Ethical Monotheism http://libguides.tourolib.org/ethicalmonotheism
(d) Internet and online ethics http://libguides.tourolib.org/netiquette
(e) Humanistic ethical medicine http://libguides.tourolib.org/humanisticmedicine
Apocalyptic CHAIASMUS, represented in the banality of existence as the the joy of solving the "Crossword" puzzle, the loss to human control that the post-modern technologies pose, and that is described by Ernst is a danger looming on the ever receding horizon back to the future.

(d) “After the Tale has been Told”: The Type of the Typisch Techno-Crat as the fusion of Technologist with Bureaucrat for Totalitarian Abusive Control via Gestell

You see joining the band wagon of hype concerning technological “change” can lead to a truncated vision of the denuded scope of technocracy which relates to librarianship in a manner of the function of technocratic access/control/manipulation/challenging forth/manipulation etc.

The essence of librarianship or archival sciences for that matter, "once upon a time" was much more noble, expansive, and caring than the truncated technocrat librarianship that risks looming on the future and has effected the profession in its essence (ti ti esti/wesen/ikar). The threat of the technocratic reduction of librarians into technology specialists (including media archeologists) is not only the threat that is the essence of nuclear armagedon, but the threat has effected the majority of librarians already in their besouledness and consciousness when the rule of technocratic "enframing" (gestell) that reduces everything into standing reserve (Bestand) and denies the librarian the ability to enter into a more original revealing relationship with the world and hence to experience the call of more primal revealed G-d centered truth instead of the artificial constructed apparatus ofinstrumentum that reigns in technocracy which the field of librarianship is being reduced to. Technocracy which Eliezer Schwied notes is a kind of modern idolatry in that it exalts the technocrat of "master of technology and bureaucracy" as l-rd of the earth and everything that the technocrat encounters exists only insofar as it is controlled by the technocrat. Marcuse had warned of this storm on the horizon in his book _One Dimensional Man_. The technocrat is incapable of hearing (Shamati!) the call of ek-sistence, and worse the technocrat’s control and manipulation of the fusion of bureaucracy and technology cotermiously risks "destining" for catastrophe on the human political stage. Nur eine gott kont unser erlosung Jetz?

The technocrat in essence as a mode of being, shares with the totalitarian the manipulation of human beings as his victims by ersemblde Schiccken (sending that gathers) and destining the fate of her victims (die Schicksall-ladenheit von technologie uber die anderern). The technocrat archives their power by Gestell which means to enframe, put a border around, limit, or make an artificial boundary that puts in a cuby hole or categorizes tyrannically in a will to control, and blocks and dams the shining forth of the holding sway of truth. Only G-d cannot be put in a box because He is Transcendent and breaks the frame of any control or limit, a circle whose circumference is infinite.\textsuperscript{276}[1] The technocrat

\textsuperscript{276} Essence (ousia) is a technical term in philosophy with a long developmental history but in short Maimonides posits that G-d’s perfect essence is unknowable for the more we think we know G-d the more we realize the infinite divide between human limited intellect and infinite wisdom. That is to say Rambam employs negative theology positing "Hashem is not a body (i.e. amachine), not finite (i.e. ayn sof), not ignorant (i.e. omniscient) for if
employs gathering together of that setting upon (the belongings and assets of Jews for example) with
the same ease of "downloading a file" and controls the victim by challenging forth their ordering as a
form of submission of instrumentatum, the sum total of its focus as Bestand or standing reserve via
Gestell.

Technology is a contrivance. Technology is not just its products such as machines, computers, tools,
weapons (waffenstufen), etc. it is a way of controlling das zwischenmentschliche via Gestell or
enframing. Technocrats can shrink causality to a reporting and if this reporting is motivated for poltical
alterior motives, axes to grind, or private agendas such as Nazi ideology, than injustice arises and holds
sway. The Nazis were excellent technocrats. They systematized the fate and choices of Jews by
employing the techniques and outcome of technocratic processes. Nazism brought forward into
appearance (überlegein, ver anlassen) of making vice (murder) a virtue as Himmler said, "sie wissen was
ist zu sehen millioner Judischen Korpsen vor dein Augen, und nicht mitleid haben, dass ist unserer
Hochste tugende". Very quickly the Nietzschean transvaluation of values is obtained although Nietzsche
lived well before the Nazis, and also warned in his work _The Case against Wagner_ of hatreds that are
without limit that fuel ideologies and seek to annihilate the other (vernichtung die Anderen) as Walter
Kaufmann has demonstrated. As a technocrat the Himmlers, the Eichmannmanner, and Goebels were
supreme technocrats, idealistic ones who believed that their control of technology (employing engineers
to make showers and crematoria and produce xylicon b gas and manipulate rail transport etc) for the
"gathering" and challenging forth of "human material" for the “special treatment” of processing
(sonderbehandlung), a euphamism for their technocratic mechanisms of mass murder. The Nazis
enframed the fate of Jews to escape from danger. They cut off borders, by controlling and enframing
them via gestell etc. The Nazis brought forth (Her-vor-bringen) an apparatus of technocracy that
willfully was manipulated to the project of endlosung zu die Juedische Frage. The expert technocratic
skill that is employed in making a Mercedes or Leica camera was used by the Nazi techocrats for the
final solution of the Jewish problem. . The nazis set upon (stellt) solving this problem by getting in order
(bestellte) the mechanism by which mass murder drew on technocracy and bureacracy by challenging
forth (Herausfordern) the machinery of mass murder. As technocrats expedited (fordern) the mass
murder of Jews as Eichmann diverted trains from the Russian front to murder the Hungarian Jews

were to claim we know of G-d’s incorporeality, infinity or all knowingness that would be hutzpah or arrogance. As
Descartes holds we have an idea of a perfect infinite being in our minds and that perfect being is what we call G-d
who is unchanging for if he was to change He would no longer be perfect. For Rambam the perfect Being thinks
himself in the perfection of what it is to think, sui generis, as a tautology, not as a perpetual motion machine that
did set the heavenly bodies in machine, for G-d is not a machine or system. If we make G-d into a system or
machine we are idolaters worshiping the work of our own noetic constructs.
towards the end of the war. His hatred was greater than his desire for Darwinian self-preservation to win the war on the Russian front. Eichmann's technocratic expertise maximized yield (murdered Jewish corpses) at the least expense (employ cattle cars in cheap train transport) and maximized profit (fleezing the Jews of their assets). The characteristic of mastering technocracy and using it for one's end whether that be Nazi Judeocide or in essence the same bureaucratic harnessing of technology for the running and ordering of a library lihavdil which are two radically different things it goes without saying,) are however both in their essence (in wesem) employ technocracy which via Gestell is a setting upon that challenges everything ordered as "stand by" (Bestand) on call for further ordering (downloading), stockpiled data, to be flipped in hyperspace, by setting upon it with computer "steps". The danger is when human beings are reduced into human resources or standing reserve (Bestand) and ordered by challenging forth. The characteristic of modern technocracy whether in a library or elsewhere is the character of setting upon and challenging forth, unlocking Bestand transforming it, storing it, organizing it, distributing and disseminating it, with today the click of a mouse.

When I note that Nazi tecnocracy is in essence the same (in wesem die selbe) as technocratic processes used by any technocrats I do not equate the two realms. That would be an Aristotelian category error[2] (see Topic, Categorica, and Posterior Analetics). I mean by essence (ti ti esti/das wesen/ ha-ikar) a strict philosophic understanding of what we call in Greek ti ti esti, in Latin quid Quidditas, in German"wesen". The essence of something is its whatness. In genetics the DNA and genotype are the essence of genetic destining. Stem cell research and cloning which have great benefit for wiping out disease and correcting harmful genetic mutations has great potential to elevate pain and suffering of disease in the world etc. However when man in genetic engineering feels he can usurp the place of G—d by eugenic fashioning of “designer babies” great dangers loom. The essence of a thing, reveals the destining of what a thing can become and defines it, as in mysticism a name has a destining power. The essence in philosophy (from German Waehren) also means the last to endure, a tenacious persistence of what in Greek is known by the aei on (eternality) which for Plato is the eidos or form of the idea or Ausehren. In greek we say ti ein einai or that which any particular thing has always been is its essence. The essence (wahren) is what endures as das ding an sich. This relates to the essence of technocracy (the combination of technology and bureaucracy) that enabled the Nazi project of Judecide as demonstrated by Richard Rubenstein, as an essence of technho-enframing i.e. techno-gestell that set itself up as final (fortgewaehren) and destroyed the dignity of human beings in the process. So long as one understands technology as machines, computers, cars, airplanes, or things that are constructed one misses and misunderstands the essence of technology which is a haltung, a way of relating to das Zwischenmenschliche in an instrumental manner. Nazi technocracy made Jews and other victims superfluous in Hannah Arendt’s sense in the Origins of Totalitarianism. That on some level is what will happen if technocracy reigns in libraries whether it be via “out-sourcing” or reducing workers to a vein of coal to be mined or a disposable part in a machine to be used and not-recycled humanly.
Gestell (enframement i.e. control) is the essence of modern technology which has the potential of manifesting itself as a banality of evil (Arendt) in its “setting in order” by reducing everything to “standing reserve” (Bestand) for the theater of war. Even human beings reduced to “resources” are degraded from being in the essence of Hashem (Bitzelem Elokim) to mere veins of coal to be manipulated, ordered, and transformed through exploitation. No longer is the Human being conceived of within the ethical horizon (that particularly of deontological ethicists like Kant and Maimonides) as a “kingdom of ends” but rather as a resource to be exploited in the concentration camp is used as a spare part to be discarded when efficiency drops.

“The hour is late” (and the work of archival preservation qua human preservation) in the history of civilization with all its Freudian “discontents,” but “once upon a time” the best librarians were scholar librarians who wore many hats, and had great care for their wellsprings (die Quellen) which they guarded for the benefit of mankind and "Safekept" for the coming to presence of truth/aletheia/wahrheit/veritas/emet. When we look into the ambiguous essence of technology and how it is employed via technocracy in the library we behold the constellation, the stellar course of mystery appears and unfolds upon our philosophically trained minds which are able to distinguish dangers in thought and praxis.

Once there was a time when the bringer forth of the true not the beautiful was called techne. In ancient Greece of Plato techne referred to the arts of craftsmanship (Kunst). In Ancient Greece art was the handmaiden of the Greek mythology. Art was not just Bildung or tarbut, it was a way of revealing or the holding sway of truth of nature, of the human being to dwell (wohnen) poetically and make their life into a work of art. Art is techne and likened by Nietzsche to heilkundige Zauberin who can make a zauberKreis (holy circle).²⁷³ Poesis is the art of bringing forth like Homotzi lechem is the art of

²⁷³ For Nietzsche art is a saving sorceress (heilkundige Zauberin). Nietzsche asserts that art is a metaphysical supplement that makes life bearable. Nietzsche writes, "wenn anders die Kunst nicht nur Nachahmung der Naturwirklichkeit, sondern gerade ein metaphysisches Supplement der Naturwirklichkeit ist, zu deren
transforming planting and agriculture into a challah or bringing forth, what Plato in the Phaedrus calls ek-phanestaton.

The frenziedness of modern technology and the totalitarian grasp of technocracy put human beings at great risk today, not just in reducing a library to a form of technocratic control or enframing (gestell) but by denuding the essence of man's freedom. The products of technology, the apparatus of machines, risk controlling human beings who are plugged into making their artificial technocratic worlds idolatrous. There is no “global electronic village” there are only real communities if in at all they exist today. When technology and technocracy control the human being, then the human being risks becoming a slave to his human artificial creations and worshiping the work of his hands which he thinks he has created when in reality only G-d creates ex nihilo and anything that we have is not from human making but from the goodness of G-d’s gifts. Technocracy in any form, in Nazi ideology and implementation of the final solution or in the running of a bureaucratic state or particular libraries for that matter that orders everything to Bestand, risks denuding the essence of what once was a more noble calling of the pantheon of scholar librarians like Alexander Marx, Moritz Steinschneider, Gershom Scholem, Efraim Oshry, Chaim Macaby, Stefan Reif who before they were great librarians, they were scholars first and foremost. Technocracy in libraries or elsewhere has no place for true scholarship. It only has a place for practical “know how” of Gestell or enframent. If Technocracy comes to reign in the library world, then

Überwindung neben sie gestellt” (Die Geburt der Tragodie, (Stuttgart: Alfred Kroner Verlag,1976), p. 186. Nietzsche recognizes that we need art, the beautiful illusion, the redeeming untruth, the bewitching lie, to endure the false, cruel, contradictory, the meaninglessness of the real. For Nietzsche art is the affirmation that counters Schopenhauerian pessimism. For Nietzsche art has the task to save (erlosen) the eye from gazing into the horrors of the night, and to deliver the subject by the healing balm of shining from the spasms of the agitations of the will. Underlying Nietzsche's thinking that "nur als ein asthetisches Phaenomen das Dasein und die Welt gerechtfertigt erscheint" is the assumption that we have a necessary need for illusion because reality is too terrifying. Nietzsche views the Greek religion as the apex of the power of the artistic impulse when he writes, "Der Griechen kannte und empfand die Schrecken und Entseltzlichkeiten des Daseins: um ueberhaupt leben zu koennen, musste er vor sie hin die glaenzende Traumgeburt der Olympischen stellen" (p. 58). The whole pantheon of of the Greek deities was the Greek's answer to the terror and horror of existence. Nietzsche urges one to make one's life a work of art. Nietzsche is against the degeneration of art whereby the journalist triumphs over the professor in all matters pertaining to culture. Nietzsche writes, "Es gibt keine andere Kunstperiode, in der sich die sogenannte Bildung und die eigentliche Kunst so befremdet und abgeneigt gegenubergestanden hatten, als wir das in der Gegenwart mit Augen sehen" (163). Nietzsche is against art reduced to "a pleasant sidel ine" when he writes, "Vielleicht aber wird es fuer eben dieselben ueberhaupt anstoessig sein, ein asthetische Problem so Ernst genommen zu sehnn, falls sie namlich in der Kunst nicht mehr als ein lustige Nebenbei, als ein auch wohl zu missendes Schellengklinkel zum Ernst des Daseins zu erkennen imstande sind: als ob niemand wusste, was es bei dieser Gegenuberstellung mit einem solchen Ernst des Daseins auf sich habe" (p. 16). Nietzsche asserts that science needs art when he writes, "Wenn er hier zu seinem Schrecken sieht, wie die Logik sich an diesen Grenzen um sich selbst ringlet und endlich sich in den Schwanz beiss- da bricht die neue Form der Erkenntnis durch, die tragische Erkenntnis, die, um nur ertragen zu werden, als Schutz und Heilmittel die Kunst braucht" (p. 130). Since Socrates for Nietzsche represents science the ideal of an artistic science is embodied in a music practicing Socrates.
the library world and its profession will be the less for it. Technology may “appear” in the phenomenal world as change, but if it change mans’ essence for the worse, then it will have robbed the human being being BiTzelem Elokim.