

The Jewish National and University Library From Past to Future

Recommendations
of the
VISITING COMMITTEE
for the
JEWISH NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Under the Auspices of
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport
Yad Hanadiv

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STATEMENT OF VISION

The Jewish National and University Library ("JNUL"), as one of the outstanding libraries of the Jewish people, embodies the heritage and history of this people throughout the ages, both in terms of Jewish cultural achievement per se and within the context of human civilization. As such, it is a precious national asset and a unique cultural treasure, to be protected, nurtured and developed as one of the primary expressions of Israel's vision of itself in relation to the world. The mission of the Library is to preserve the spiritual, intellectual, artistic and moral expressions of Jewish culture throughout history, while representing in its collections and core orientation the openness of Jewish civilization to broad humanistic currents of the past and present.

The Library is one of the finest repositories of Judaica, very widely defined, in the world. Its role is not only to collect and care for these treasures but also to make them available to future generations along with knowledge of the cultural contexts in which they were produced. The Library thus has a dynamic and creative purpose, facilitating the emergence of new forms of learning, fostering cultural creativity through research in many domains of the humanities and by imaginative dissemination of knowledge.

The origins and development of the JNUL reflect the early maturity and vision of this society and its commitment to the ongoing cultural tasks of ingathering the scattered heritage, and fostering new forms of creative thought and imagination in continuity with the rich and vital experience of the past. As the primary research library in the humanities in the State of Israel, linked to the world of scholarship at the Hebrew University and to other institutions of higher learning, and as the national library of the state, the leader among all libraries in Israel, the JNUL must integrate, mould and nurture the culture of the book.

Recent years have seen a decline in the Library's functioning. Acquisition budgets have shrunk dangerously. Massive cuts in staff have affected cataloguing, preservation and other areas. Too little has been done to take advantage of developments in information technologies. Services to the public have been curtailed.

The governance of the Library is loose and inadequate to the challenges. Reinforced by severe budgetary constraints, conflict has sharpened between the Library's Jewish and university roles even as the Library has failed to function as an effective national library. The Library's place as a university library is not simply a function of the Library's connection to the Hebrew University, but rather reflects its position as the finest humanities library in the State. The need to sustain and enhance collections in areas outside Judaica is not being met. Nor can the Library be said to be living up to its responsibilities in the ongoing cultural life of the community.

Against this background, the Committee was requested by the Minister of Education, the President of the Hebrew University and the Chairman of Yad Hanadiv to prepare recommendations concerning the Jewish National and University Library. The text of that request and the terms of reference for the Committee appear in **Appendix A** to this report. The Committee met in Israel in March 1997 and again in August 1997. A list of those individuals with whom the Committee met is set out in **Appendix B**.

The recommendations below have been formulated by the Committee after careful consideration of the Library's historical mission, its multi-faceted mandate, its current difficulties and its potential. These recommendations give expression to the Committee's vision of the Jewish National and University Library's potential role in the twenty-first century incorporating state-of-the-art information technologies, a storehouse for the literary treasures of the Jewish People, a guardian of Jewish and Israeli cultural continuity, a leader of Israeli and Judaic libraries, and as the central library of the Hebrew University, the State of Israel and the Jewish People.

The JNUL cannot continue as is. The promise of the JNUL's potential role in the twenty-first century is in stark contrast to its current decline. Rather than tailor our recommendations to the inadequate budgets now made available to the Library, we have chosen to recommend library operations befitting a modern state and a prestigious National Library. Without a commitment to set matters right, this great resource will no longer be in a position to serve the needs of Israel's scholarly community and Israel will find itself without a national library in all but name.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

MANDATE

The Committee recommends that the JNUL serve as:

- The national library of the Jewish people, responsible for the in-gathering of the literary treasures of the Jewish people, and a guardian of Jewish and Israeli cultural continuity,
- The national library of the State of Israel, and
- The main research library in the humanities for the Hebrew University and a significant humanities library available to Israeli scholars.

In each of these areas there is a minimum standard below which the Library must not be permitted to fall.

GOVERNANCE

Legal Status

The Committee recommends that the Knesset enact legislation according the Jewish National and University Library status as a national institution charged with fulfilling important national needs.

Board of Governors

The Committee recommends that a Board of Governors be established having full fiduciary responsibility for the Library with regards to finances, policy and operations. The Board shall appoint the Director of the Library, who shall be accountable to it, and approve the annual budget.

The Board shall consist of three professors of the Hebrew University, including ex-officio, the Rector of the Hebrew University, three professors from other Israeli universities, one member of the Israel Academy of Sciences, one senior librarian from a university library in Israel other than the Hebrew University, one prominent Judaica scholar or librarian from abroad, one publisher and three members from the public-at-large.

Members of the Board shall be appointed jointly by the President of the Hebrew University, the Minister of Education, and the President of the Israel Academy of Sciences. Members of the Board shall serve equal but initially staggered terms.

The Board shall select its chairman and vice-chairman.

ANNUAL BUDGETS

The Committee regards the JNUL as seriously underfunded and therefore recommends that the Government explicitly recognize and accept responsibility for those portions of the JNUL's budget which relate to its functions as the national library of Israel and the library of the Jewish people. As an initial estimate, on this basis approximately 75% of the Library's annual budget would be provided by the Government directly, with the Hebrew University responsible for providing some 25% of the Library's annual budget.

COLLECTION BUILDING

The Committee found existing acquisition levels and policy to be worrisome and in need of correction.

The Director shall submit a written acquisition policy to the Board for its approval.

The acquisition policy shall clearly state acquisition requirements and also set out those areas to be expanded or contracted to reflect increases or decreases in the annual budget.

Acquisitions shall be discussed by the Board in connection with the annual budget and the acquisition policy shall be subject to review by the Board not less frequently than every five years.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND READER SERVICES

The Committee recommends that a new building for the JNUL be constructed adjacent to the existing Lady Davis building and that the Lady Davis building be extensively renovated.

The Committee recommends an expansion of the current reading rooms to accommodate approximately 20% of the Library's collections on open-shelves and the creation of a new multi-media reading room.

The Committee recommends that the Library adopt a non-circulation policy, maintaining its collections on its premises.

ROLE VIS-A-VIS OTHER ISRAELI LIBRARIES

The Committee recommends that the JNUL assume a leadership role vis-a-vis libraries in Israel.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The National Bibliography

The Committee recommends that the national bibliography, to include forthcoming publications, be published in a timely manner and be accessible electronically as well as in print.

CIP

The Committee recommends that an effective Cataloguing-in-Publication service be implemented to include all publishers, minimally those relevant for academic libraries, that the CIP database be merged with the Union List of Monographs and that it be universally accessible.

Retrospective Conversion of Catalogue Records

The Committee recommends that the JNUL undertake an immediate retrospective conversion of its card catalogues to electronic format, and that a special budget allocation be made for this purpose.

Central Catalogue

The Committee recommends that the JNUL assume a leadership role in establishing cataloguing standards, particularly for records included in the union catalogues, and that the Library develop a plan for the cooperative cataloguing of Judaica.

Digitization

The Committee recommends that the JNUL develop a comprehensive plan for the digitization of key elements of the Jewish cultural heritage and its electronic dissemination.

MANAGEMENT

Strategic Plan

The Committee recommends that the Director be asked to formulate a long-range strategic plan for the Library. This plan should be reviewed by the newly constituted Board of Governors as a matter of highest priority.

Internal Management Structure

The Committee recommends that the Director appoint two Deputies, one with primary responsibility for the National aspects of the Library, including information technology and electronic resources of Israel-wide significance, and the other with primary responsibility for the University aspects of the Library, including coordination of Hebrew University libraries.

The Committee recommends that an academic advisory committee be established to advise the Director concerning the Library's acquisition policy.

An executive committee should be established consisting of the heads of the Library's major departments. The Director will serve as chair and convene the committee on a regular and frequent basis. This body will advise the Director on all matters concerning the Library's professional operations.

The Committee recommends that the departments at the Library be more rationally organised, perhaps to include an aggregation of departments with compatible functions. A new Department of Information Technology is necessary if the Library is to move beyond the archaic tools on which it currently relies.

Profile of Director

The Committee recommends that the Director be chosen from among the most qualified available candidates and that s/he devote full-time to her/his Library responsibilities. The search for a Director should not be limited to the professorate. The Committee recommends that the Director serve a five-year term.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Committee recommends that personnel policies, including matters of hiring, advancement and compensation, be revised and no longer tied to Hebrew University regulations.

The Committee recommends a substantial expansion in the hiring of outstanding young graduates of the Hebrew University's library school, and of other qualified programmes.

The Committee recommends the immediate implementation of a system of apprenticeship to those experts who will soon retire.

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

The Committee recommends an immediate and major increase in the budget allocation for preservation and restoration of the Library's collections. The Committee also recommends that a full-scale inquiry be undertaken, as soon as possible, in order to quantify and prioritize the Library's needs in this field.

MUSEUM OF THE JEWISH BOOK AND GENERAL EXHIBITIONS

In keeping with its vision of the Library as a guardian of Jewish culture, the Committee recommends the establishment within the Library of a Museum of the Jewish Book, and the expansion of the Library's exhibitions, displays, cultural and educational programming.

PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

The Committee recommends the development of an enhanced public relations capability for the JNUL.

MANDATE

The Committee recommends that the JNUL serve as:

- **The national library of the Jewish people, responsible for the in-gathering of the literary treasures of the Jewish people, and a guardian of Jewish and Israeli cultural continuity,**
- **The national library of the State of Israel, and**
- **The main research library in the humanities for the Hebrew University and a significant humanities library available to Israeli scholars.**

In each of these areas there is a minimum standard below which the Library must not be permitted to fall.

As the national library of the Jewish people, the JNUL must be responsible for:

- Collection of all material in Judaica and Hebraica, wherever published.
- Exhibiting its treasures of Jewish and Israeli cultural heritage and providing a locus for the transmission of that heritage.
- Publishing the Index to Articles in Jewish Studies (RAMBI), which should be expanded and 'broadcast' out.
- The conservation, preservation and restoration of its special collections.

As the national library of the State of Israel, the JNUL must be responsible for:

- Collection of all material published in Israel, regardless of form or subject.
- Maintaining archives of material of national significance.
- Leadership of libraries in Israel, including by improvement and enhancement of the National Bibliography, Cataloguing in Publication service and the union catalogues, and coordination of acquisition policies for secondary items.

As a highly significant humanities library in Israel, and the principal humanities library of the Hebrew University, the JNUL must be responsible for:

- Collection of general humanities with particular specialization in Islamic, Middle Eastern, Asian and African studies.
- Coordination of the library system of the Hebrew University.

GOVERNANCE

Legal Status

The Committee recommends that the Knesset enact legislation according to the Jewish National and University Library status as a national institution charged with fulfilling important national needs.

The JNUL suffers from the 'informality' of its current status. The impression prevails that Israel maintains a worthy national library. Yet Government funds are made available to the Library exclusively within the framework of support for institutions of higher education. Upholding the national responsibilities of the JNUL - vis a vis the Jewish people and the State of Israel - requires commensurate financial support.

The JNUL is a national institution and should be recognized as such through legislation which establishes the status of the Library and the responsibility of the Government of Israel to assume financial responsibility for the national tasks of the Library (see below, **Annual Budgets**).

Board of Governors

The Committee recommends that a Board of Governors be established having full fiduciary responsibility for the Library with regards to finances, policy and operations. The Board shall appoint the Director of the Library, who shall be accountable to it, and approve the annual budget.

The Board shall consist of three professors of the Hebrew University, including ex-officio, the Rector of the Hebrew University, three professors from other Israeli universities, one member of the Israel Academy of Sciences, one senior librarian from a university library in Israel other than the Hebrew University, one prominent Judaica scholar or librarian from abroad, one publisher and three members from the public-at-large.

Members of the Board shall be appointed jointly by the President of the Hebrew University, the Minister of Education, and the President of the Israel Academy of Sciences. Members of the Board shall serve equal but initially staggered terms.

The Board shall select its chairman and vice-chairman.

The creation of an independent Board of Governors with full control and authority over the Library is a keystone for the revitalization of the JNUL. Such a body will allow

for long-term continuity in the Library's acquisition policy (see below, **Collection Building**), provide a much needed source of guidance and support for the Director, and greatly enhance accountability for daily operations.

It is important to safeguard the autonomy of the Library, both from Government and from the University where it is physically located. In formal terms, this means that the Library is *at* but not *of* the Hebrew University, and that its 'extra-territorial status' must be reflected in the composition of its governing body. We believe that the recommended composition of the Board provides the Hebrew University with sufficient reassurance for its continued voice in JNUL decisions, while enabling the JNUL to function as a national institution in the fullest sense.

ANNUAL BUDGETS

The Committee regards the JNUL as seriously underfunded and therefore recommends that the Government explicitly recognize and accept responsibility for those portions of the JNUL's budget which relate to its functions as the national library of Israel and the library of the Jewish people. As an initial estimate, on this basis approximately 75% of the Library's annual budget would be provided by the Government directly, with the Hebrew University responsible for providing some 25% of the Library's annual budget.

The JNUL is a national resource. Primary responsibility for its funding rests with the Government. To require that the cost of addressing those of the JNUL's responsibilities which extend beyond its role as the principal humanities library of the Hebrew University be met from resources available to the University, is to decree their negligent discharge.

The Hebrew University has in the past submitted to the Planning and Grants Committee of the Council for Higher Education an estimate of the cost of the national functions of the Library. An agreed upon formula should be developed to identify the national (State of Israel and the Jewish People) functions, as distinct from the university functions of the JNUL, establishing the respective funding responsibilities of the Government and the University. Professional auditors should be engaged to assist as necessary.

COLLECTION BUILDING

The Committee found existing acquisition levels and policy to be worrisome and in need of correction.

The Director shall submit a written acquisition policy to the Board for its approval.

The acquisition policy shall clearly state acquisition requirements and also set out those areas to be expanded or contracted to reflect increases or decreases in the annual budget.

Acquisitions shall be discussed by the Board in connection with the annual budget and the acquisition policy shall be subject to review by the Board not less frequently than every five years.

The Committee considers four areas of acquisitions to be in particular need of prompt action:

- The legal deposit law should be extended to include non-print and electronic materials.
- Greater efforts should be made to increase the collections in Islamic, Middle Eastern, Asian and African studies.
- Periodicals in these and other fields of humanities and social sciences, many of which were initiated in recent years, should be urgently added to the Library's collections.
- General humanities acquisitions should be expanded.

Efforts should be continued to acquire from abroad current publications of Jewish scholars and of scholars publishing works in Jewish philosophy, history and culture. Contrary to the Library's policy in recent years, the Committee believes that a complete Judaica collection requires collecting of sources of cultural backgrounds within which Jewish history unfolded.

The present situation, where, on a routine basis, choice has to be made between collecting works relating to Jews and Judaica, and acquiring important texts and secondary works relating to other civilizations, which would otherwise not be available in Israeli libraries, must be avoided.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS AND READER SERVICES

The Committee recommends that a new building for the JNUL be constructed adjacent to the existing Lady Davis building and that the Lady Davis building be extensively renovated.

The Committee recommends an expansion of the current reading rooms, to accommodate approximately 20% of the Library's collections on open-shelves, and the creation of a new multi-media reading room.

The Committee recommends that the Library adopt a non-circulation policy, maintaining its collections on its premises.

The Lady Davis building, in which the JNUL is currently housed, was dedicated in 1960. The plans called for it to serve the Library's anticipated needs for twenty years. The stacks and reading rooms were designed to hold approximately two million volumes. Today, the Library's collections contain more than three million volumes and tens of thousands of other items (e.g. microforms).

The Library has been constrained to transfer a substantial part of the collections to storage sites outside the Lady Davis building. None of these remote sites is designed for the storage of books; they are not air-conditioned, nor even ventilated. Approximately one-third of the collections are stored under improper conditions. Improper storage has an irreversible detrimental effect on those parts of the Library's collections.

A number of the building's physical systems are in need of replacement or repair. These include temperature and humidity control systems, book delivery systems (elevators, conveyor belts, etc.), passenger elevators, electricity and plumbing systems. The Library's spaces are alarmingly below optimal, both in terms of size and quality. This applies to all spaces: reading rooms, storage, restoration, and to processing of new acquisitions, and maintenance of old books.

We believe the Library should be an attractive, 'friendly', and lively place, and that it should enhance, as part of its primary mission, the potential for cultural creativity. The Library should be transformed from its present, rather guarded status into a much more extroverted and dynamic self-presentation. To this end, it is essential to make a major part of the collection available to the public in open shelving. One can imagine a space (on several levels) in which readers could wander through the open shelves, with the immense advantages of serendipity at their disposal, and the constant possibility for making new discoveries. Such a space should be warm, civilized, and inviting, with easily available photocopying facilities, sufficient computer outlets, tables and carrels for comfortable work and reading, and open spaces to allow both readers and books to breathe. Opening a substantial part of the collection in this way need not negatively affect the present reading rooms, which are invaluable assets (although choked for space). Creative architectural planning will be required so that a significant part of the collection will be kept on open shelves. The JNUL has an opportunity to play a leading and innovative role among world libraries in this regard.

As the Library becomes more accessible electronically, we anticipate greater interest in the Library. Rather than diminishing the number of visitors to the Library, greater familiarity with the Library and its collections, which will result from an expanded

Internet presence, will increase the desire of scholars and others to examine those collections in person. Services for on-site users should also be expanded. This should include a two- to three-fold increase in reading room space.

Enlargement of the reading rooms should be accompanied by renovation of their facilities, including new furniture and the necessary electronic equipment for a dramatic increase in the number of computer terminals and access to databases and the use of laptops by the Library's users. The reading rooms should be designed to sustain the feeling of intimacy with books which is characteristic of the current reading rooms, and provide an inspiring environment in which to work. User input should be solicited concerning redesign of the three main current reading rooms - Judaica, Oriental Studies and General Humanities - and the creation of a modern multi-media reading room. Periodicals should be integrated into the reading rooms as appropriate, taking advantage of new technologies.

There is a pressing need for the JNUL to exercise leadership in arranging for the collection, preservation and documentation of the history of Israeli expressive achievements in photography, film, music and art, and proper facilities for active research on these materials. This may involve the creation of a new audio-visual centre at the Library. Such collections, wherever located, should form part of the national collection relating to Israel and to Jewish cultural production.

As a national library and a research library, the JNUL's responsibility is for the preservation and security of its collections. It is imperative that the Library's collections be available for examination, study and research on the premises. Circulation of books outside the Library building is incompatible with the Library's mandate.

Three alternatives for physical infrastructure suggest themselves:

1. Building adjacent to, if possible adjoining, the existing Lady Davis building in Givat Ram.
2. Building on Mount Scopus, close to the existing Hebrew University Library of Humanities and Social Sciences.
3. Building outside the two University campuses, for example close to the Supreme Court building.

We prefer the first alternative. Adopting the second alternative, i.e. placing the Library on Mount Scopus, may convert the JNUL to just another University library. The third alternative, placing the JNUL outside the two campuses, may detach the Library from active interaction with the scholarly academic community of the University.

Building adjacent to the Lady Davis building will reduce the inconvenience to Library users by minimizing the disruption of Library services during the transfer to new facilities. An adjacent building will also allow for the continued utilization of the current structure (after proper renovation). Hence we prefer to see the Library grow by extending its present structure.

The question of which components of the JNUL should be located in the new extension and which remain in the Lady Davis building should be decided at a later stage. One thing should be self-evident: the new building, and the renovation of the Lady Davis building, should incorporate state-of-the-art systems (e.g. temperature and humidity control, electricity, computers, etc.). An integrated automated library system, such as will allow for immediately locating any item held by the Library, should be installed. Current book-delivery systems are antiquated, putting the books at risk of damage as well as causing physical hazard to the staff. Storage areas should be equipped with good moveable shelving units and automated book retrieval systems to minimize delivery time of requested material. If these physical transformations are concomitantly associated with changes in services, e.g. increased hours, non-circulation of books outside the Library, retrospective conversion of the card catalogues to machine-readable format, etc., the Library will achieve a significantly higher level of service to prospective users from the academic and general communities, supplying in the shortest time most of the requested material in proper shape for reading and studying under the most attractive physical conditions.

The design of new facilities for the JNUL would best involve a two-stage competition. In the first stage, entries will be solicited and judged with regard to architectural creativity, aesthetics, etc. In the second stage, the top entrants will be requested to rework their designs under greater constraints of functionality. Clearly, the architectural design of the new and renovated facilities will have a decisive impact on the Library's success in attracting the general public. Modern technologies make it perfectly possible to protect books on open shelves from theft and damage. This should be given serious consideration in the design process. Rare parts of the collection would, of course, remain in storage elsewhere.

ROLE VIS-A-VIS OTHER ISRAELI LIBRARIES

The Committee recommends that the JNUL assume a leadership role vis-a-vis libraries in Israel.

In keeping with its mandate as the national library of Israel, the JNUL must assume leadership of the library world in Israel. This includes libraries of the Hebrew University, libraries of the other universities and academic institutions in Israel, as well as Israeli public libraries. Specifically and most immediately, the JNUL must provide machine-readable Hebrew catalogue records in a timely manner so as to be of practical value to other libraries (see below, **Information Technology and Electronic Resources**). Leadership might also entail guidance and assistance to other libraries in development of acquisition policies, collection preservation and library administration.

In addition, we strongly recommend that the JNUL develop a plan for cooperatively cataloguing Judaica. Such a viable cooperative arrangement will result in considerable cost savings.

The JNUL should maintain a central national union catalogue of items held by other Israeli libraries and archives. Beyond its own acquisition policy, the JNUL should coordinate a national acquisition policy concerning areas of secondary importance, with distributed collection responsibility. Other institutions in the country should be officially designated and mandated with a national responsibility for the collection of material in specific fields. This includes the development of collections relating to Jewish and Israeli art, architecture, photography, etc.

The Hebrew University houses a number of libraries. Particularly relevant to the activities of the JNUL are the Mount Scopus libraries in the humanities and social sciences. These are primarily teaching libraries for undergraduate students, whereas the JNUL functions as a research library for graduate students and faculty. There has been some coordination with the JNUL as regards computerization and policy related to databases. There has been very little coordination with regard to book acquisition. This ought to be remedied by establishing a committee of the directors of the relevant Hebrew University libraries headed by the appropriate deputy director of the JNUL (see below, **Management – Internal Structure**).

Until Hebrew University and other university libraries come to consider that the JNUL is of significant value to their own operations, the JNUL will not be functioning as it should.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

The National Bibliography

The Committee recommends that the national bibliography, to include forthcoming publications, be published in a timely manner and be accessible electronically as well as in print.

By means of the national bibliography, the Jewish National and University Library fulfills the important task of informing a national and international clientele about new publications appearing in Israel. Libraries in and outside Israel need to be informed about new publications at the earliest opportunity and to receive complete bibliographic data. This basic service reduces considerably the administrative overhead associated with their acquisition expenses.

Compilation of the national bibliography flows from the legal requirement that the country's publishers submit copies of new publications to the JNUL. The system has problems not unknown to other national libraries but too serious to be accepted. Publishers often do not meet their legal obligation to submit copies of new works to the Library in a timely fashion. The JNUL typically takes too long to process new titles and list them in the national bibliography.

The cataloguing process must be modernized so that all incoming publications are listed in the national bibliography within thirty days of receipt. It is not enough for a national bibliography to list new publications *after* they have appeared; rather, it should announce forthcoming publications. Even before the national bibliography appears in print, the bibliographic data should be accessible in an electronic data bank. For the national bibliography to meet the necessary standard, a plan must be drawn up to clear the backlog of uncatalogued publications. Specific numerical targets can have a bracing and productive effect.

Speedy processing of the national bibliography and its availability in an electronic as well as a printed version will encourage publishers to submit new publications to JNUL as soon as possible because they will derive economic benefit from the listing. Administrative costs at JNUL associated with reminding negligent publishers of their obligation can thereby be reduced.

CIP

The Committee recommends that an effective Cataloguing-in-Publication service be implemented to include all publishers, minimally those relevant for

academic libraries, that the CIP database be merged with the Union List of Monographs and that it be universally accessible.

The bibliographic tasks of national libraries worldwide have been extended in recent decades to include Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) services. Through CIP a national library establishes for each newly published book, in cooperation with the publishers, a bibliographically correct library catalogue entry which then can be printed on the verso of the title page. This internationally standardized imprint of the bibliographic data enables acquiring libraries to catalogue incoming books at considerably reduced administrative expense.

Efforts need to be made to include in the service all titles, or at least all those relevant for Israel's academic libraries. The first step towards improvement is to establish a data bank which makes bibliographic data universally available before the books are published.

The Committee recommends that CIP bibliographic data created as part of JNUL's CIP service be merged into the Israeli union catalogue of academic libraries. This approach provides better service to users searching for the latest and most comprehensive bibliographic information.

The JNUL may want to consider whether there is a role for an International Standard Book Numbering (ISBN) with the active involvement of book publishers. In the United States, for example, the ISBN agency facilitates the publication of *Books in Print* and *Forthcoming Books in Print* through commercial publishers.

Retrospective Conversion of Catalogue Records

The Committee recommends that the JNUL undertake an immediate retrospective conversion of its card catalogues to electronic format, and that a special budget allocation be made for this purpose.

The transition from conventional to electronic library administration has produced a fundamental change in catalogues and databases over the past generation. The heart of a modern library is its electronic catalogue, known as the Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), which functions as an instrument of administration and inventory control, and as a catalogue for the general public.

The JNUL's OPAC only contains data on those books processed since the beginning of the transition to electronic cataloguing in 1985. Thus, only about 10 percent of the JNUL's holdings are included in its OPAC. Retrospective conversion, that is electronic transcription of the printed card catalogue can be completed most rapidly and economically by using the resources of other institutions as much as possible. University

libraries in Israel have merged their older holdings in their electronic catalogues by converting their traditional card catalogues into electronically readable format. The JNUL should take advantage of this work and not duplicate conversion that has already been done by others. The JNUL should draw on transcribed records already available in internationally accessible electronic databanks. In addition, work can be delegated to commercial providers who specialize in the conversion of catalogues so that the day-to-day work of the library is not significantly impaired.

After inventorying the availability and cost of acquiring converted records from other sources, such as are outlined above, the JNUL needs rapidly to establish a comprehensive strategic plan which will outline the internal organizational needs and costs associated with the conversion of its catalogue record. The overall cost of converting its catalogue represents a major, one-time (in effect, capital) cost that should be made available to JNUL as an addition to its regular budget.

Retrospective conversion of the pre-1985 volumes of RAMBI (the Index to Articles in Jewish Studies) is also desirable.

Central Catalogue

The Committee recommends that the JNUL assume a leadership role in establishing cataloguing standards, particularly for records included in the union catalogues, and that the Library develop a plan for the cooperative cataloguing of Judaica.

No library is able to provide all literature needed by its patrons. Therefore, in many countries central catalogues with off-site electronic accessibility are being established that allow users to find out which of the various libraries owns the specific book which he or she needs. In Israel, these central catalogues take the form of the Union List of Serials (ULS) and the Union List of Monographs (ULI, formerly ULM).

The JNUL should exercise leadership in establishing the cataloguing standards for records included in these databases, as is done by the national libraries all over the world. For this purpose, a separate administrative unit has to be established at JNUL which, in cooperation with Israel's university libraries, should establish the norms for the entries so that all libraries submit data in the same format.

Digitization

The Committee recommends that the JNUL develop a comprehensive plan for the digitization of key elements of the Jewish cultural heritage and its electronic dissemination.

Today, more and more, bibliographic data and traditional full-text information is converted into electronically readable form, a process called digitization. This method of publishing thus finds its place side-by-side with information that originated in electronic format, e.g., CD-ROMs, electronic journals, multimedia texts. In many countries projects exist to digitize key elements of the national literary heritage and make them available in an electronically readable format to a potentially larger audience.

Since the JNUL owns the most comprehensive collection of texts representing the Jewish literary heritage, it is predestined to be the centre for developing a plan to digitize the Jewish cultural heritage. Indeed, in cooperation with publishers in Israel, it has already begun pilot projects.

However, this national task should not be limited to projects that find the interest of a publisher. In cooperation with scholars at universities in Israel, JNUL must develop a comprehensive concept for the digitization of the Jewish heritage and work on appropriate projects in a step-by-step but ongoing fashion. Digitization has great potential educational value and can make an important contribution to cultural pride.

Remote electronic distribution of textual and multi-media materials may not be quite as essential for a geographically compact nation like Israel as for larger countries, but it would forge a stronger link between the scholarly world, which is often perceived to have exclusive use of the primary materials, and the broader population, whose taxes must ultimately support the national library.

MANAGEMENT

Strategic Plan

The Committee recommends that the Director be asked to formulate a long-range strategic plan for the Library. This plan should be reviewed by the newly constituted Board of Governors as a matter of highest priority.

Internal Management Structure

The Committee recommends that the Director appoint two Deputies, one with primary responsibility for the National aspects of the Library, including information technology and electronic resources of Israel-wide significance, and the other with primary responsibility for the University aspects of the Library, including coordination of Hebrew University libraries.

The Committee recommends that an academic advisory committee be established to advise the Director concerning the Library's acquisition policy.

An executive committee should be established consisting of the heads of the Library's major departments. The Director will serve as chair, and convene the committee on a regular and frequent basis. This body will advise the Director on all matters concerning the Library's professional operations .

The Committee recommends that the departments at the Library be more rationally organised perhaps to include an aggregation of departments with compatible functions. A new Department of Information Technology is necessary if the Library is to move beyond the archaic tools on which it currently relies.

The JNUL has not succeeded at balancing and keeping its multiple roles in focus. Each must be clearly understood and addressed. To this end, managers within the Library must have well-defined responsibilities. The appointment of two deputy directors, one for the national aspects of the Library and one for the University aspects, will assure continuity and accountability.

The Committee's impression was of little ongoing consultation of department heads and senior staff, whose professional experience and accumulated wisdom should be utilized in formulating policy. The pace of organizational change necessary for the Library's success exceeds the capability of a top-down organizational structure to respond. An organizational structure and a leadership style which encourage the participation of staff and the development of leadership on all levels are essential.

The number of departments at the JNUL is unwieldy and inefficient. Departments with related, similar or overlapping responsibilities should be combined into single administrative units.

A new department of Information Technology should be created, its head responsible for (a) the implementation and integration of the new electronic technologies, (b) educating Library users in the proper use of these technologies, and (c) developing remote access to Library materials.

Profile of Director

The Committee recommends that the Director be chosen from among the most qualified available candidates and that s/he devote full-time to her/his Library responsibilities. The search for a Director should not be limited to the professorate. The Committee recommends that the Director serve a five-year term.

Past directors have been chosen from among the faculty of the Hebrew University and have served the JNUL in a part-time capacity, continuing their research and teaching

responsibilities while attempting to administer the JNUL. This is a precarious situation which has created conflicting demands of time and energy. The JNUL requires and deserves directors who are devoted full-time to the Library and committed to realizing its goals. Limiting the directorship of the JNUL to the professorate, and to the faculty of the Hebrew University, are inconsistent with attracting the best possible candidate.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Committee recommends that personnel policies, including matters of hiring, advancement and compensation, be revised and no longer tied to Hebrew University regulations.

The Committee recommends a substantial expansion in the hiring of outstanding young graduates of the Hebrew University's library school, and other qualified programs.

The Committee recommends the immediate implementation of a system of apprenticeship to those experts who will soon retire.

It is axiomatic that the key to success of any institution is the human factor. Creating and maintaining a top quality professional staff depends upon a delicate balance of training, motivation, compensation (including job security and advancement) and institutional pride. A well-trained, motivated and remunerated staff is an essential ingredient in realizing the goals of the JNUL and in creating a Library in which everyone can take pride. The current situation is in dire need of improvement.

Currently, the JNUL is bound by the directives of the Hebrew University in matters regarding personnel such as hiring, pay scales and tenure. A new JNUL, appropriately funded and with an 'extra-territorial status' will be able to, and must, revise its personnel policies in order to properly compensate its staff and recognize individual merit and achievement.

There are two categories of issues concerning personnel policy which should be addressed: those flowing from budgetary constraints, and those which are systemic.

Personnel policy issues resulting from budgetary constraints include non-replacement of retiring staff, cuts in the size of existing staff, delay of tenure of eligible staff, and reduction of staff hours. Among other things, these policies have direct repercussions for public services (e.g. reduction in the number of hours during which reference, circulation and photocopy services are available, and the reading rooms are open to the public) as well as for staff morale.

Systemically, while current personnel policies can provide a measure of job security (when not in conflict with overriding budgetary constraints), they fail to provide a sufficient base level of compensation, and to adequately recognize and reward personal merit, achievement and contribution. A better balance between 'seniority' and 'merit' should be found.

A significant number of the personnel currently employed at the JNUL are close to retirement. Yet, there is hardly a young generation at the JNUL which is professionally prepared to replace the old generation. Although there exists at the Hebrew University a graduate school for librarianship and information technology, in recent years people trained at that school have been employed at the libraries at Mount Scopus, and at libraries of other universities in Israel, but hardly by the JNUL. There is an urgent need to recruit young talented people, educated at the Graduate School of Library, Archival and Information Sciences of the Hebrew University (or at similar schools abroad) and to prepare them to eventually assume senior positions at the JNUL (e.g. head of department) which require a high level of professional training.

One of the most pressing concerns is the impending retirement of in-house experts who have acquired world-class expertise in their particular fields of specialization. The training of new staff qualified to carry on the work of these experts can only be achieved through a system of mentoring. This necessitates the hiring of new staff in advance of the departure of those who will retire.

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

The Committee recommends an immediate and major increase in the budget allocation for preservation and restoration of the Library's collections. The Committee also recommends that a full-scale inquiry be undertaken as soon as possible in order to quantify and prioritize the Library's needs in this field.

The JNUL's multiple status as a major research library in the humanities, as a legal deposit library for the State of Israel, as the foremost library in the country for Islamic and Judaic studies, as the holder of exceptional special collections of rare books as well as of unique manuscripts, and as a leader amongst libraries documenting the cultural resources and achievements of the Jewish people, not only on paper and parchment but on audio-tape, film and photograph, imposes upon it a heavy responsibility to conserve its holdings and preserve them for future generations. Two developments make the Library's responsibility even more important, and its implementation more expensive: (a) the acidic

nature of the paper on which much of modern material has been printed (which accelerates its rate of decay); and (b) the availability of electronic catalogues world wide (which, by advertising the existence and availability of an item, increase the demand to access and handle it).

At present, the Library's ability to fulfill its obligations in this area - to its present users, to the scholars of the future, and to the Jewish people - falls far short of what is required.

Ideally other libraries in the country should look to the JNUL for leadership in coordinating a national preservation program and as a focal point in practical preservation activities.

The existing staff complement consists of three conservators and five and a half binders (five tenured positions). In recent years the number of binders has been reduced by over 50% and some work has been outsourced. Although outsourcing of binding is frequently desirable, strict quality control is essential. The 'retention for ever' standards necessary for libraries require a higher standard of materials and workmanship than is the norm for commercial binders. The number of conservators has been reduced from five to three because of budget pressures; this represents a very substantial cut in conservation work. All the conservators have formal conservation qualifications but the staff complement is now not large enough to cope with the needs.

A coherent strategy of substitution should be developed in order to reduce handling of older and more valuable materials. In the last half-century microfilming (either in-house or in cooperation with a commercial publisher) has been the standard substitute offered, and the JNUL has benefited from this. In future years, digitization is expected to offer a viable substitute. The JNUL's new facilities should be equipped to take advantage of this technology when it becomes economically viable. Similarly, the JNUL should be prepared to take advantage of mass deacidification techniques as such opportunities arise.

The bedrock of good preservation is properly controlled temperature and humidity, in the storage areas, throughout the building, and in off-site storage facilities. (For example, paper degradation of library materials is four times faster at 80°F and 50% relative humidity than it is at 68°F and 40% relative humidity). Current conditions in this regard are grossly inadequate and render efforts to preserve the Library's collections a losing battle. The Library's new and refurbished facilities (see above, **Physical Requirements and Reader Services**) should incorporate the highest standards of temperature and humidity control in all parts.

Pursuant to the Committee's recommendation for an expanded program of exhibitions (see below, **Museum of the Jewish Book and General Exhibitions**), one conservator will be needed whose work is solely concerned with preparing materials for exhibition.

MUSEUM OF THE JEWISH BOOK AND GENERAL EXHIBITIONS

In keeping with its vision of the Library as a guardian of Jewish culture, the Committee recommends the establishment within the Library of a Museum of the Jewish Book, and the expansion of the Library's exhibitions, displays, cultural and educational programming.

Books play a most important role in the cultural heritage of the Jews. The very birth of the Jewish People is connected with the Torah, received at Mount Sinai. The Bible enabled the Jews to preserve their national identity throughout the long centuries of their exile, but not only because of the Bible are the Jews called "The People of the Book". One of the characteristic features of Jewish life has been a deep respect and reverence for books in general. Jews have considered book-writing, and subsequently book-printing, the "crown of all knowledge", and the writer's and printer's work a "holy craft".

Moreover, Jewish publishers and book-traders played an important part in the development of the book trade in the countries where they lived. With this background of books as the material embodiment of the national spiritual heritage, it is puzzling why neither Israel nor any country in the Diaspora possesses a museum to depict the unique relationship of the Jewish People with books.

The purpose of the proposed museum is to reflect the history of Jewish manuscripts and printed books, to display the contribution of Jewish printers and publishers to world culture, to exhibit the vast literature about the Jewish People, and to illustrate the popularity of the Bible in world printing. An additional goal of the museum is to familiarize visitors with the history of printing generally.

National libraries customarily host permanent displays and temporary exhibits, in which original items from their collections are presented to the public-at-large. The Library's present building does not permit the display of manuscripts and antiquarian printed works, as it does not contain proper accommodations and equipment to ensure appropriate conditions of lighting, temperature and humidity. Under current conditions, even the physical security of such items is far from optimal. Although sometimes, for special occasions, individual items are displayed, this is only for a very short duration. The present building also wants for adequate floor space for the proper presentation of such displays and an ongoing involvement in the cultural life of the community, with lectures, concerts, seminars and perhaps publications. In line with the vision of the Library as an important cultural asset of the nation, we encourage the development of those facilities necessary for the mounting of general and special exhibits and displays of the Library's magnificent treasures on an ongoing basis.

PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

The Committee recommends the development of an enhanced public relations capability for the JNUL.

With the realization of the vision of the Library as a vital institution of cultural continuity, it will be imperative that the Library greatly expand its promotional efforts among the general public. Its literary treasures, together with its cultural and programmatic activities (special exhibitions and displays, lectures, seminars, etc.), constitute the Library as a tremendous resource for spiritual enrichment and intellectual edification which must be publicized and promoted among the public-at-large. The Library must reach out to inform potential patrons of its offerings and to attract them to partake. Similar to other cultural institutions (museums, theatres, orchestras, etc.), professional public relations methods should be employed for this purpose.

CONCLUSION

The Jewish National and University Library was founded in Jerusalem, in embryonic form, more than one hundred years ago. It was envisioned as a storehouse for the literary treasures of the Jewish People, the repository for "the redemption of Hebrew books and their ingathering from the Diaspora". The Library was successful in realizing the vision of its founders. It indeed accumulated the largest collections of Hebraica and Judaica in the world: printed, handwritten or microfilmed, and became the storehouse of the many-faceted national memory.

The JNUL has preserved for posterity the intellectual and artistic record of the Jewish People and must continue to do so; this function alone requires substantial ongoing investment and support. But the Library can and must also play a central role in maintaining and enhancing Jewish cultural continuity, in Israel and in the world, and in shaping the identity of this people. We would like to see the Library assume this generative and active role.

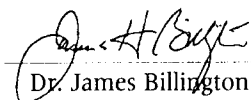
If this is to happen, the Library must modernize itself: it must open its collections more widely and efficiently to scholars and to the community at large; it must offer the public the services only this library can truly supply and create a working environment suited to its place within the world of learning, the State of Israel, and modern Jewish civilization. Instead of simply storing books (mostly underground), the Library should make them present and available to users in a physical setting which is inviting, gracious, and

efficient – like so many excellent libraries abroad. Such an “environment of the book” will serve the national function, broadly defined in light of the Library’s position as the finest library in the country in all humanistic disciplines, in addition to its task of preserving all evidence of Jewish civilization throughout history.

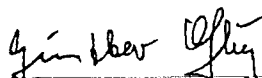
No other institution in Israel can assume this burden. The basis is already in place in the JNUL, with its historic collections and existing infrastructure. At present, however, this library is in decline. Our recommendations aim at a major reorganization in all areas – governance and administration, financing, long-term policy and planning, technology and physical plant. In effect, the Library must be reborn. Only then will it achieve its place as a matrix of creative cultural and scholarly activity proper to the People of the Book, where the resonant voices of the past can come alive to speak, in all their richness, to future generations.



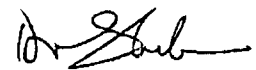
Prof. Michael Feldman



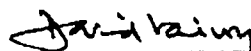
Dr. James Billington



Prof. Dr. Gunther Flug



Prof. David Shulman



Mr. David Vaisey

1 June, 1998

APPENDIX A

Letter of Appointment

Terms of Reference for Visiting Committee

LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

בית הספרים הלאומי והאוניברסיטאי THE JEWISH NATIONAL & UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

P.O.B. 34165 Jerusalem 91341
Tel. (02)6584651 Fax 972-2-6511771

ת"ד 34165 ירושלים 91341
טלפון 6584651 פקס 6511771

9th December 1996

Professor Michael Feldman
The Weizmann Institute of Science
76100 Rehovot

Dear Professor Feldman,

Thank you on behalf of Yad Hanadiv, The Hebrew University and the Ministry of Education, for your willingness to serve on the Visiting Committee for the Jewish National and University Library.

The Members of the Committee will be: you as Chairman; Dr. James Billington, Librarian of the United States Congress; Professor Dr. Gunther Pflug, retired Director of Die Deutsche Bibliothek; Professor David Shulman, Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Mr. D.G. Vaisey, Librarian of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

It is expected that the Committee will meet in Israel in Spring, 1997 to conduct its initial sessions.

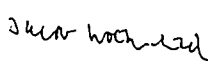
Enclosed are the terms of reference for the Visiting Committee. Prior to the visit, a set of background material will be sent for your review.


Yad Hanadiv will make the necessary reservations for your travel and stay in Israel, once the date of visit is set. Needless to say, all of your expenses will be covered and an honorarium will be paid.

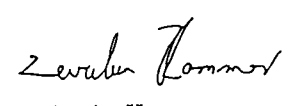
Your report will be confidential, and directed to the undersigned. With your permission, we might consider making all or parts of it more broadly available.

Once again, many thanks for your participation and for your willingness to assume this responsibility.

Yours sincerely,


Lord Rothschild
Chairman, Yad Hanadiv


Prof. Hanoach Gutfreund
President, The Hebrew University


Mr. Zevulun Hammer
Minister of Education, Culture & Sport

THE JEWISH NATIONAL & UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A VISITING COMMITTEE

The JNUL is expected to serve as:

- the national library of Israel serving the general public
- the library of the Jewish people
- the central library of the Hebrew University

The Committee will be asked to:

- assess how effectively the Library performs these tasks
- recommend how this multiple mission can best be fulfilled in the future.

The following questions should take into account the answers to the above.

1. National and University Status

- 1.1 What legal status is appropriate to the Library's role? What are the appropriate institutions of governance for a National Library? What should be the organizational structure and hierarchy?
- 1.2 What level and combination of government and other support are necessary and fitting to the Library's purpose and roles? How should the government share be provided?
- 1.3 How can the status of the Library within the Hebrew University and its relationship with the university and with other Israeli libraries be made compatible with its role as the National Library?

2. Collection policy

- 2.1 By what mechanism should a collection policy be fixed? How frequently should it be updated?
- 2.2 What is a proper combination between specialized collections of a Jewish National Library and general collections?
- 2.3 What range of annual acquisitions (including periodicals) is necessary to ensure effectiveness of the Library's roles?
- 2.4 With limited resources, what should be the priorities for acquisitions? How frequently should they be reassessed?

3. Maintenance of Collections

- 3.1 What steps are necessary to assure adequate preservation of existing materials?
- 3.2 What should the Library's de-accession ('weeding') policy be?

4. Services and Education

- 4.1 Are the accessibility and availability of the collections for scholarly and other users appropriate? Is the cataloguing system and schedule adequate? Should books be permitted to circulate?
- 4.2 What type of bibliographical services and publications should the Library provide?
- 4.2 What steps should be taken to bring the collections to the awareness of the public and to encourage their use in the educational system? To what extent should the Library engage in such activities as exhibitions, periodicals, public lectures, etc.?

5. Information Technology

- 5.1 How should the Library plan for, integrate and contend with new information technologies?
- 5.2 What role, if any, should the Library exercise in educating its users in, and making available to them, electronic research materials?
- 5.3 What are the most efficacious ways to permit access to library material from remote locations?

6. Manpower and Physical Infrastructure

The staff of the Library will provide the Committee with all the necessary background material. The Committee will be able to resort to professional advice on specific topics.

APPENDIX B

List of Meetings Held by the Committee in March and August 1997

Mr. Elchanan Adler, Coordinator, Israel Inter-University Library Network
Prof. Malachi Beit Arie - former JNUL Director, (Executive Chairman, The International Advisory Board of the Jewish National Library)
Prof. Yehoshua Ben-Arie - Rector, Hebrew University (until 1997/98)
Prof. Menahem Ben Sasson, Rector, Hebrew University (from 1997/98)
Prof. Haggai Ben Shammai (Hebrew University)
Ms. Shelley Benvenisti, Selector, Head, General Reading Room, JNUL
Ms. Rosalind Duke, Head, European Language Catalogue Dept., JNUL
Prof. Yohanan Friedman (Hebrew University)
Prof. Hanoch Gutfreund - President, Hebrew University (until 1997/98)
Dr. Jonathan Joel, Deputy Director, JNUL
Mr. Tzvi Kidron, Head of Computation Centre, Hebrew University
Prof. Arie Levin (Hebrew University)
Ms. Gail Levin Head, Asia-Africa Dept, JNUL
Prof. Nehemia Levtzion (Director, Planning and Grants Committee)
Mr. Nimrod Luz
Prof. Menahem Magidor, President, Hebrew University (from 1997/98)
Prof. Amnon Pazy (ex-Director, Planning & Grants Committee; Mathematics)
Prof. Bluma Peretz, Head, Grad. School of Library, Archival & Inf. Sciences
Attorney General Elyakim Rubinstein
Prof. Shmuel Sever (Director, Haifa University Library)
Justice Meir Shamgar
Prof. Israel Shatzman, Director, JNUL
Ms. Karen Sitton (Director, Bloomfield Library for Humanities and Social Sciences, Mount Scopus)
Prof. Daniel Sperber (Bar Ilan University)
Ms. Vardit Tokatli
Dr. Elisheva Yaron

Also consulted:

Prof. Marcelo Dascal, Tel Aviv University

Prof. Feldman had the opportunity of visiting the Library of Congress and the Library at the Jewish Theological Seminary, holding useful meetings with members of their staff.