

# COLLECTANEA

## IN BRIEF:

The Alexander Grass Chair in Jewish History and the Price Library of Judaica are inviting applications for a short-term research fellowship "Jews in the Americas" during the 2017-2018 academic year. [More information](#) can be found on our website.

The Library has been awarded a [Fanny Landwirth Foundation](#) grant of \$10,000 to process and digitize the [Henry Landwirth Collection](#) and in support of our other NEH Challenge Grant collecting initiatives in Florida.

HAPPY ANIVERSARY! 2017 marks the 40th year since the Price Library of Judaica was awarded its first NEH Challenge Grant to help purchase one of the best private libraries in the US: the Rabbi Leonard C. Mishkin Collection.

## NEW IN THE LIBRARY:

A small collection of letters, shipping inventories, and a printed broadside relating to the early Jewish merchant of the Atlantic and Caribbean, Moses Myers (1735-1835). For more information, see the [Moses Myers Papers Finding Aid](#).

**UF** UNIVERSITY of  
**FLORIDA**

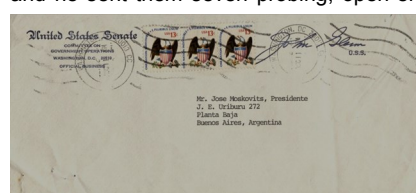
## Library Acquires Major Anti-Semitism Collection



José Moskovits during an [oral history interview](#)

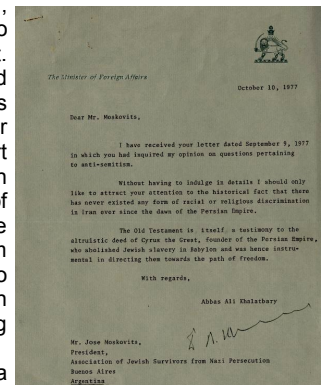
An extraordinary collection of letters responding to a survey on the problem and nature of anti-Semitism has recently been acquired by the Price Library of Judaica. The survey and letter collection was created by a Holocaust survivor and prominent Argentinean reparations lawyer, José Moskovits. Moskovits was born in Hungary in 1926, during a period of rising anti-Semitism. During WWII, Moskovits fled a forced labor battalion to join the Jewish resistance in Budapest. He was subsequently captured and held in the same prison as Hannah Szenes until the Soviet liberation in 1945. After the war, Moskovits helped transport Jewish survivors to Palestine, and in 1948, he fought in the Israeli War of Independence. In the 1950s, he married Halina Feldberg, and the couple relocated to Buenos Aires where Moskovits opened a law firm to assist Holocaust survivors with their [reparation claims](#). He also helped Simon Wiesenthal identify Nazi war criminals hiding in Argentina, and he provided safe houses for the Mossad agents during the capture of Eichmann.

In the 1970s, during Argentina's Dirty War, Moskovits witnessed a disturbing increase in anti-Semitism. He was equally perturbed by the 1975 UN Resolution which declared that Zionism was a form of racism. At this point, he decided to undertake an ambitious project to conduct a worldwide survey of attitudes towards anti-Semitism by individuals of influence. He drew up a list of leading statesmen, scientists, journalists, artists and religious leaders in over 150 countries, and he sent them seven probing, open-ended questions. For example, one question asked: *Do you agree that the Jews, because of their weakness, have often been chosen as scapegoats by governments and political bodies in order to divert the attention of the masses from other, more pressing problems? In other words, that anti-Semitism practiced in any of its forms, has been used as an unholy political weapon?* Moskovits invited recipients to freely express their opinions, suggesting that their viewpoint could help find a solution to the problem. He received nearly one thousand responses to his survey, from countries across the Americas, Europe, Middle East, and Asia, ranging from simple yes/no responses to lengthy excursions. The responses include autographed letters from the likes of Joseph Ratzinger (later Pope Benedict XVI), Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, Lady Margaret Thatcher, and the foreign minister of Iran. Moskovits had intended to use the survey to write a book; unfortunately, he was forced to leave Buenos Aires in 1977 due to the Dirty War, and his plans were permanently derailed. As the Honorary President of the Argentinian Jewish Association of the Survivors of Nazi Persecution, Moskovits continued to raise awareness of the Holocaust until his death in 2014.



Former Senator (and astronaut) John Glenn sealed his letter to Moskovits in a signed envelope.

The Moskovits Anti-Semitism Collection is currently being processed and re-housed, and it will be available for consultation from the Fall semester. Its wide-ranging contents will be of great interest to scholars across a broad range of disciplines, particularly human rights documentation and research.



One of the letters in the collection from the Foreign Minister of Iran.

## The Donor's Story: How We Created the Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection

The Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection was donated to the Price Library by Aileen Josephs, daughter of the late Hyman Walborsky. Along with photographs, personal documents, letters, prayer books, and other items related to the history of the Walborsky family and Josephs' own personal and professional life, she provided written accounts and personal remembrances of her family's history. It is a story that takes place across three continents over a period of three generations. Her grandfather, Israel Walborsky (the o was later changed to an a) left Lodz, Poland for New York in 1923. His son,



The Walborsky men (Israel and his father and brothers) at work in Lodz, Poland

Hyman, travelled to Latin America for his work, and Hyman's daughter, Aileen, was born in Mexico. After graduating high school, Aileen travelled to the United States to study and work as a successful immigration lawyer and activist. She is the honorary consul of Guatemala in West Palm Beach.

Aileen's family history illustrates the saliency of global migration in modern Jewish history and, thus, the intricate and dynamic connections between the historical experience of Eastern European, North and Latin-American Jewries. It also lends sensitivity to her work as an immigration lawyer. The legacy of the family history plays an important role in her approach to immigration, civil rights, and the amelioration of the conditions of disadvantaged women and children around the globe.

Josephs' passion to commemorate her late father inspired the idea of a special digital collection, which also uniquely includes her narration of the visuals. Together we chose photographs from the album to accompany her short vignettes about each one. Josephs' narration provides information about who or what is in each photo and what the picture meant to her both on a historical and personal level.

Thus, the digital version of the Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection is akin to a digital exhibition: Josephs' voice becomes a guide leading from picture to picture, and "the visitor" learns to see the collected pictures through her eyes.

This narrated online collection (soon to be available on the Price Library's website) contains only a fragment of the [full physical Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection](#) available for patrons at the library. Nonetheless, it is a unique initiative in which the donor becomes a storyteller and participates in the curatorial process of creating a digital collection. We hope this will inspire other similar collections.

We are grateful to Aileen Josephs for her passion and support for our NEH Challenge Grant collecting initiative, and we truly appreciate her willingness to share her family's history with the Library and, thus, with future researchers and students across the world.



Israel Walborsky at night school in New York

## On First Editions and Forgeries

The Jerusalem Talmud (Yerushalmi), compiled in the Land of Israel in the 4th century CE, predates the standard Babylonian Talmud by 200 years. Unfortunately, the written text of the Yerushalmi was handed down incomplete with some tractates missing. The most comprehensive manuscript of the Yerushalmi is from 1289 CE, which was printed by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1523.

Some of the missing portions of the Yerushalmi only came to light in the 19th century with the discovery of the Cairo Genizah (an enormous repository of Hebrew manuscripts hidden in an Egyptian synagogue). And in 1907, an edition of the missing tractate *Kodashim*, purportedly based on further Genizah discoveries, was published in Hungary by a Lithuanian-born rabbi, Shlomo Yehuda Algazi Friedlaender (1860-1924). Friedlaender's meticulous edition of this long-sought-after text was highly praised by leading rabbinic authorities. Friedlaender's work was widely distributed among yeshivot and academic libraries. However, seven years after its celebrated release, tenacious detective work by [a number of rabbinic scholars](#), based on their encyclopedic knowledge of the Talmud, finally proved Friedlaender's tractate *Kodashim* to be [a master forgery](#). Friedlaender had cobbled it together by rearranging and modifying existing texts. Most Library copies were subsequently discarded in disgust, but the [Price Library retains its copy](#), now a very rare book indeed, with pride. Aside from its extremely interesting story, the book has other unusual merits: it provides a wonderful example of the depth of learning involved in rabbinic study, particularly when one considers the linguistic prowess it takes to falsify a rabbinic text and then the knowledge it takes to identify a fake text among the Talmud's approximately one million words. The book also serves as an uncommon and engaging way through which to introduce a student to the complex world of Jewish textual history.

## NEH Challenge Grant



The Judaica Library's [NEH Challenge Grant](#) is near the end of its third year. To date we have raised over \$800,000 towards building our Endowment Fund to collect, preserve and provide open access to Jewish heritage materials from Florida, Latin America and the Caribbean. **Please help us maximize the federal funding match by reaching this year's goal.** No gift is considered too small: for every \$3 you donate, we receive \$1 in matching funds from the federal government. Thanks to your help, we can provide the resources and knowledge for vital and groundbreaking scholarship into the global Jewish experience. Please see our [NEH Grant webpage](#) to learn more.

## Further Information

To inquire about the Judaica Library and how you can assist with the preservation and study of its materials, please contact Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, Head of the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at [rjefferson@ufl.edu](mailto:rjefferson@ufl.edu) or Dr. Katalin Rac, Jewish Heritage Coordinator at [katalin.rac@ufl.edu](mailto:katalin.rac@ufl.edu).

To visit the Judaica Suite, please see our website at: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/judaica> for opening hours and visitor information. We look forward to giving you a tour!

Wherever you live in the world, you can explore our Library collections and those of our many partners through more than 180,000 pages of digital content in our Jewish Diaspora Collection (JDoC): <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/judaica>