

COLLECTANEA

NEWS IN BRIEF:

JEWS IN THE AMERICAS SPEAKER SERIES

Each of the seven scholars invited to the University of Florida as part of the "Jews in the Americas" short-term fellowships, will be giving a public talk beginning in January 2018. The schedule of talks can be viewed here: <http://uflib.ufl.edu/Judaica/events/>.

NUEVA SIÓN

The first stage of a partnership between the Judaica Library and Tzavta in Buenos Aires to digitize their long-running and still current Jewish newspaper, Nueva Sión has been completed. 183 issues from 1988 to 2001 can now be read online in our [Jewish Diaspora Collection](#).

JEWISH CALENDAR COLLECTION

The Price Library of Judaica's calendar collection, which includes mid-19th century yearbooks from Europe and early 20th century almanacs from South America, has been processed and is ready for researchers to consult. A description of its contents is available in the [online finding aid](#).

UF UNIVERSITY of
FLORIDA

Vital Project: Digitizing Mexico's Jewish Newspapers and Archives

Exactly thirty years ago, in 1987, the [Grupo Editorial Keshet](#) publishing house was founded to amalgamate all Jewish publications printed in Mexico. The Spanish-language Jewish newspaper, *Keshet* was established at the same time. With additional sections in Yiddish, Hebrew and Ladino, *Keshet* aimed to cover all local and world news of pertinence to the Jewish community. By 2012, it had reached a print-run of 10,000 and was being sent not only to readers in Mexico but also elsewhere in Latin America, the US, Israel, Turkey, Switzerland and England.

In 2016, the University of Florida established an international partnership with the *Centro de Documentación e Investigación Judío de México* (CDIJUM) in Mexico City to digitize the complete run of the *Keshet* newspaper. CDIJUM was first established in 1990 as



Front page of the first issue of *Keshet* in June, 1987

CDICA: the *Centro de Documentación e Investigación de la Comunidad Ashkenazí*, with the aim of rescuing, preserving and providing access to the documents, archives, and books that used to be in the building of the Ashkenazi community. However, the 1985 earthquake in Mexico City compromised the building, and its holdings were scattered across different community store houses. Access was restored in 1993, and in 2009, the center's holdings were officially recognized as a UNESCO [Memory of the World Collection](#). On March 9, 2015, CDICA expanded its mission to include the cultural heritage of all the Jewish communities in Mexico and changed its name to CDIJUM to reflect this broader vision. Today, the UF Libraries (specifically, the Latin American and Caribbean Collection, the Digital Library of the Caribbean and the Price Library of Judaica) in partnership with CDIJUM are working to complete the digitization of *Keshet*. The UF holdings, which amount to 275 issues, can be viewed online in our [Jewish Diaspora Collection](#). Follow-up projects to digitize the wealth of Mexican Jewish periodicals such as *Der Weg* (1931-1977), *Di Shtime* (1939-1981), and *Prensa Israelita* (1945-1986) are in planning. Funding for these projects has been provided by the Latin Americanist Research Resources Project (LARRP) and through the UF Libraries' [NEH Challenge Grant](#).

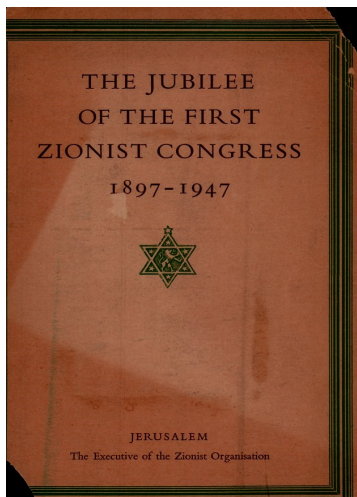
The devastating 7.1 magnitude earthquake in Mexico City in September this year, which killed over 300 people and damaged over 3,000 buildings, has highlighted the vital need for such projects. Thankfully, hard copies of CDIJUM's Jewish newspapers had been taken off site for digitization, but meanwhile the CDIJUM building suffered irreparable damage and their precious archives had to be transferred to temporary storage while a new building is constructed. We wish the community well with its rebuilding efforts, and we look forward to ensuring these important materials are digitally preserved in the future.

Dr. Margarita Vargas-Betancourt
Latin American and Caribbean Special Collections Librarian, University of Florida



One of over 3,000 collapsed and damaged buildings in Mexico City in 2017

2017: A YEAR OF MANY ANNIVERSARIES



The Judaica Library's digital and hard copy of the 50th anniversary of the First Zionist Congress in Basel in 1897.

As 2017 reaches its end, we would like to commemorate events that shaped Jewish history all over the world. The first Zionist Congress was organized 120 years ago (1897) in Basel, Switzerland. Twenty years later, in 1917, the Balfour Declaration signaled to Zionist leaders and world Jewry that the hope to establish a national home in Palestine had been acknowledged by Great Britain, one of the most powerful nations of the world, and not least important, the future mandatory power of Palestine. The ensuing decades, however, brought

disappointment: the radicalization of Central Europe and the increasing anti-Jewish legislation, Great Britain's strict immigration policy, as well as the rest of the world's refusal to relax strict immigration quotas, only when seen in retrospect, were a bad omen of what awaited European Jews. The destruction that World War II brought to them was unfathomable and unprecedented. In 1947, amidst the postwar recovery and fifty years after the congregation of the first Zionist Congress, the hope to resurrect the Zionist dream was strengthened. On November 29, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the plan for the partition of Palestine (resolution 181). Although the plan was never realized, Israel was founded as military conflict engulfed the former British mandate. Twenty years later, during the Six-Day-War of 1967, the Jewish state enlarged its borders to the east and for the first time during its existence, Israeli soldiers were able to pray at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Despite being hailed as an illustrious military victory, the 1967 war did not bring the much desired peace to the region.

With its recent acquisition of the [José Moskovits Antisemitism Collection](#), the Price Library of Judaica commemorates a lesser-known anniversary as well. A century ago, in 1917, the Hungarian sociologist and journalist Oszkár Jászi's progressive periodical *Huszadik Század* (Twentieth Century) conducted a survey among leading intellectuals, political, and religious leaders about the Jewish Question in Hungary. This survey, sent to about hundred and fifty addressees, could be the historical precedent of Moskovits's monumental project. Unfortunately, Moskovits' accompanying notes are rather short and do not reveal the immediate incentive to initiate his survey. However, the parallel is reinforced by the fact that both Moskovits and Jászi were born in Hungary (and both emigrated: Jászi to the United States after the failed revolution in 1919-1920, Moskovits after the Holocaust, first to Palestine, then to South America). Perhaps Moskovits was relying on a historical precedent, well-known in Hungary but little talked about elsewhere. The acquisition of this unique collection in a year of multiple anniversaries carries a special significance to our library, reminding us of all that inter-connects Jewish history across centuries and vast geographical divides.

MEMORY AND MEMORIALIZATION

This fall semester the Price Library offered its course "Beyond the Memory of the Holocaust" through the university's Honors program for the second time. Students majoring in various disciplines took the course to learn about the Holocaust through the archival sources, literary works, communal publications, and academic studies held in the Price Library, with a particular emphasis on local resources. Guest



Reversed tzedakah box by Brianna Steidle

lecturer Stacey Goldring conducted interviews with second generation survivors from Jacksonville and the director of the animated film, *The Last Flight of Petr Ginz*, Churchill L. Roberts. Students were invited to participate in these conversations, which revealed how survivors hand down the memory of the Holocaust to family and how artists whose family had not experienced its horrors represent it. Based on the broad-ranging readings, lectures, and personal encounters, students prepared their final projects in a freely chosen medium. Through their work, they contribute to the study and commemoration of the Holocaust. The students' works were touching and thought provoking. One piece by Brianna Steidle is a reversed *tzedakah* (charity) box. The viewer is not asked to contribute a coin, but to take one. The portrait of a Holocaust victim is engraved on each coin; by holding one, the viewer feels the weight of the memory of the murdered victim. The project pays tribute to the memory of the millions killed and suggests that commemoration is the least among the subsequent generations' duties to try to rectify in the future the evil of the past.

NEH Challenge Grant



During this penultimate year of our five-year [NEH Challenge Grant](#), the federal government will give us **\$1 in matching funds for every \$1 you donate, up to a total of \$90,000. No gift is too small!**

Thanks to your generous support, we can provide the resources and knowledge for vital and groundbreaking scholarship into the global Jewish experience and help preserve endangered materials.

Further Information

To inquire about the Judaica Library and how you can assist with the preservation and study of its materials, please contact the curator, Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, at rjefferson@ufl.edu, or our Jewish Heritage Coordinator, Dr. Katalin Rac at 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 189,000 pages of digital content in our [Jewish Diaspora Collection](#).