NOTES ON THE LIBRARY OF THE
ANNENBERG RESEARCH INSTITUTE

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The archival and manuscript holdings of the Annenberg Research Institute library are, for the most part, unknown to the scholarly world. The only publication to treat some of these holdings in detail is B. Z. Halper's catalogue of genizah fragments which appeared in 1924. Since then the library has acquired new fragments and has discovered some that had escaped Halper's notice. Jacob Reider, the former librarian of Dropsie College, compiled a catalogue of the library's non-genizah manuscript holdings. Unfortunately, however, this catalogue was never published, and exists only in incomplete typewritten form. With regard to the archives, there are no finding aids to speak of, excepting what follows in these Notes.

For decades Dropsie College was the only academic institution in the United States devoted to the study of Judaism at the graduate level, and as such it acquired many important archival collections of the early twentieth and even the nineteenth centuries, such as the papers of Isaac Leeser, Sabato Morais, Mayer Sulzberger, Cyrus Adler, etc. By means of an occasionally appearing "Notes on the Library of the Annenberg Research Institute," the editors of JQR intend to bring to the attention of the scholarly world the contents of the ARI library and to comment upon some of its holdings.

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In 1986 the Annenberg Research Institute acquired as a gift the library and archives of the late Elias Schulman. These materials, together with the B. Z. Goldberg papers which had been contributed in 1976, form a significant collection of unpublished material
relating to Yiddish literature and twentieth-century American Jewish history. The Schulman collection was arranged and catalogued with the financial assistance of the H. W. Wilson Foundation, New York. Dr. Felicia Figa, the archivist in charge, wrote a detailed description of the archives in an article which appeared in Unser Tsait 4 (555), April 1988, pp. 34–39. Following is an abridged translation of that article.

Elias Schulman was a writer, critic, and scholar of Yiddish literature. He was born in the Russian city of Slutsk in 1905, and his early education included traditional study of Bible and Talmud, as well as the Hebrew language, history, and literature. In 1922 his family emigrated to the United States and settled in New York, where he eventually graduated from City College. These were the years of great development of Yiddish literature and the Yiddish press in America, and Schulman began his lifelong involvement with the history of Yiddish literature and culture. He continued his studies at the YIVO Institute in Vilna (1935–36), concentrating on the Yiddish language and the economic history of Eastern European Jewry. Schulman’s archives on these subjects contain abundant statistical material on East European and Soviet Jewry.

In 1936 Schulman traveled to the Soviet Union where he met with Jewish writers and gathered research material about Yiddish culture and educational methods in the Soviet Union. This material became the basis for his Ph.D. thesis at Dropsie College (1965), later published as A History of Jewish Education in the Soviet Union, 1918–1948 (New York, 1971). In 1967 Schulman became the editor of the periodical Der Veker, and in 1971 assumed a faculty position at Queens College, New York.

Schulman began his career as a writer in 1931 in the New York Yiddish newspaper Freie Arbeiter Shtimme, then an important medium for Yiddish writers and intelligensia. From that point on he published hundreds of articles, essays, and studies on literary–historical themes and activities, and on critical analyses of novels in a large number of periodicals and newspapers in the U.S., Israel, and Europe.

His books include History of Yiddish Literature in America 1870–1900 (New York, 1943); Young Vilno 1929–1939 (New York,

For more than half a century Schulman was occupied with Yiddish literature, not only as a critic but also as a literary historian and chronicler who observed and recorded its development. He attempted to comment on every new Yiddish book published anywhere in the world. He particularly followed carefully the development of Yiddish literature in the Soviet Union.

In his discussions of one Yiddish work or another, Schulman often deviates from a literary-critical analysis of the text and discusses the work as a window to the *Weltanschauung* of the writer and of the Jewish world as seen in the Yiddish culture and life depicted in the work. Thus Schulman, in his role as literary critic, became the chronicler of Yiddish literature. He listened daily to its breathing and registered its pulse. In 1979 Schulman was awarded the Atron Prize, and in 1986 the Itsik Manger Prize, the latter considered to be the highest distinction awarded for Yiddish writings.

The Schulman collection joins another large Yiddish collection at the Annenberg Research Institute, the B. Z. Goldberg archives. Schulman’s papers consist of the following: personal documents, correspondence, manuscripts, printed material in Yiddish, English publications (original and translations from Yiddish), materials relating to Schulman’s pedagogical, editorial, and social activities; writings by various authors about Schulman and his works, varia, and photographs. Among the personal documents and photographs are materials from Schulman’s days in Warsaw (1935) and Vilna (1936). The correspondence includes letters from poets and prose writers, as well as from literary critics and academics. Some of the correspondents are Matis Olitsky, Hirsh Osherovich, Israel Berkowitz, Chaim Grade, Binem Heller, Meyer Kharitz, Wolf Tambor, Joseph Leftvich, Abraham Sutskover, Aaron Zeitlin, G. Katsenelson, Melech Ravich, and Jacob Shargel.

The number of manuscripts is considerable and includes articles, essays, speeches, biographies of writers, and larger works. Also included are notes of lectures in the Vilna YIVO in 1935–36. Not all of the manuscripts were printed, and of those that were, some differ from the printed form. Among the printed materials in
Yiddish are included also a number of pamphlets written by Schulman under the pen name of Ilia Falkow. Also in these archives are works of various writers—some in manuscript, some printed—which were sent to Schulman for his evaluation or for publication in periodicals which he edited.