Historical Jewish Press Website-2012

Name of program
Historical Jewish Press Website

Year of activity
2012

Name of the report's writer
Professor Yaron Tsur

Function of the report's writer
Founder and co-Director, Historical Jewish Press

Phones & Emails
Tel / Fax: 972-3-6475951
ytsur@post.tau.ac.il

Status of program
Give the actually state of the program (where the program stands at the date of the activity report, no more than ten lines):
HJP includes 4 Moroccan Jewish newspapers that were uploaded in 2006 and 2009 on the project's account. Having the Matanel's funding for 2012 we planned to upload the following newspapers:
1) Maguid Micharim (Alias Le Tetouanais - Oran 1895-6)
2) A Tunisian newspaper from the late Robert Attal's collection.
We scanned and processed Maguid Micharim and uploaded it in December 2012. As for the Tunisian newspaper, after a long negotiation with the late Attal's family, we unfortunately both discovered that Attal's private collection of newspapers' microfilms had disappeared. I assigned one of my research assistant the mission to follow its traces and he is still working on it. Meanwhile we looked for another candidate, and decided to upload Information Juive, CJM monthly in the crucial years of 1948-1977. Due to some legal problems concerning the
rights to upload IJ on the internet we were able to accomplish the work only by June 2013.

Main achievements during the last year of activity

Our main achievement is clear – the uploading of "Maguid Mecharim", about which I allow myself to quote from my last year letter of thanks to Matanel:

"il s’agissait du journal qu’on croyait perdu et dont la bibliothèque de Jérusalem ne possédait qu’un seul numéro. Ce journal est rédigé en judéo-arabe et il donne des informations précieuses sur les communautés et sur les érudits juifs qui pratiquaient cette langue en Algérie de 1895 à1896. Jusqu’à présent, la plupart des documents sur les juifs d’Algérie pour cette époque sont normalement en français, c’est donc la première fois qu’on trouve un ensemble de documents reflétant le milieu non-francophone de la communauté et qui permettra d’écrire une une historiographie plus pertinente des Juifs d’Algérie."

Maguid Micharim which changed its name to Le Tetouanais is not only in Algerian Judeo-Arabic but in Rashi letters as well which made its OCR process especially difficult. In addition, as it's not known among scholars, our mission to present it to the public demanded some independent translation and research.

Evaluation

Since this is the 1st year of the program we have not yet developed tools to evaluate our specific program within Jpress overall project. But the website’s daily unique users is about 500 people which is 15,000 by month and close to 200,000 by year.

Provisional guide lines for the advancement of the program in the next year:
We wish to upload another Algerian newspaper in Judeo Arabic "Kol Ha-Tor" and to start uploading a selection of AIU North African list of periodicals (attached). In case that our investigation concerning Attal’s microfilms and Tunisian Jewish press will be fruitful we shall notify you and may change our priorities.

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