

The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures (CSMC)
announces a Lecture
by

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Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bavarian State Library Munich – Close Associations between Jews and Christians

1) Passover Haggadah, Germany, late 15th C. (Munich, BSB, Cod. hebr. 200, fol. 24v)



In January 2008 the Illuminated manuscripts section of the Center for Jewish Art at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, began a project supported by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation. The project entailed the documentation and research of 85 Hebrew illuminated manuscripts housed in the Bavarian State Library in Munich. The documentation and research team includes besides myself, three MA graduates and one Ph.D. candidate.

The Hebrew manuscripts collection in the Bavarian State Library is of utmost importance, especially because it unravels the intricate close associations between Jews and Christians: Jewish scribes and converts writing for Christian patrons; Christian artists painting for Jewish clients, and Jewish artists working in Christian workshops.

During our research in the Bavarian State Library some extraordinary findings came to light. They concern a group of 55 manuscripts which belong to the collection of the Augsburg Patrician, Johann Jakob Fugger (1516-1575), copied especially for him. Indeed, we discovered a Jewish scribal workshop active in Venice between 1548 and 1552. The manuscripts produced in this workshop were copied by 59 Jewish scribes who shared the work between them and could be identified in several manuscripts of this group (figs. 2-3).

- 2) Mordechai Raphael Rosello (Ruscelli), Sha'arei Hayyim, Venice, 1552 (BSB, Cod. hebr. 49, fol. 1).
- 3) Alive, son of Awake, Venice, 1552 (BSB, Cod. hebr. 59, fol. 50v).



Another important collector was Hartmann Schedel, a medical doctor (1440-1514), who was the author of the Latin *Liber chronicarum* (*weltchronick*). The State Library has 8 Hebrew manuscripts of his collection, all liturgical texts: Pentateuchs and Prayer books, which he acquired in 1504. The manuscripts were found in Bamberg, in the synagogue which was destroyed in 1349. As far as we know, Schedel did not know any Hebrew.

A third important collector was Johann Albrecht von Widmanstetter (1506-1557), whose knowledge of Hebrew was excellent. His collection is varied: a 14th century Bible, a Book of Fables of the 15th century, and a most intriguing *Bellifortis* in Yiddish, also of the 15th century.

I would like to introduce a few interesting manuscripts of these collectors, as well as their production methods.

Thursday, 23 October 2014 at 6 pm

Room 0001

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