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The Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures &  
the Chair of Jewish Philosophy and Religion

Hamburg University

ABSTRACTS

**Javier del Barco, Dr. phil., Instituto de lenguas y culturas del Mediterráneo (ILC), CSIC, Madrid**

Cataloguing Hebrew Manuscripts in the Twenty-First Century: Theory and Method in the *New Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts* in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century, pioneering catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts focused mainly on the description of texts. The birth of codicology as a discipline by the mid-twentieth century led to the production of the first “codicological” catalogues, focusing on the description of the material aspects of manuscript production and transmission, and developing into an actual archaeology of the manuscript. The impact of the computer revolution and the ability to retrieve large amounts of data evolved into a quantitative study of the medieval book, prompting new and fundamental questions, such as the progressive or regressive character of medieval book production. These different theoretical and methodological approaches have shaped the many different types of catalogues that cataloguers now have to choose from, ranging from inventories to detailed studies of individual manuscripts, and from codicological or textual catalogues to holistic ones. The New Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bibliothèque nationale de France is a project aimed at balancing the three aspects that are fundamental to understanding a manuscript: the material, the textual and the historical. Theoretically grounded on a neo-historicist approach, but also encompassing practices from the quantitative and comparative methodologies, the descriptions in this catalogue offer many new insights concerning Hebrew manuscript production, consumption, dissemination and reception. One example comes from the study of Hebrew Bibles, where this catalogue is contributing to a new understanding of their form and function, as will be detailed through the analysis of a few examples.

**Malachi Beit-Arié, Prof. Dr., The Hebrew University Jerusalem, Ludwig Jesselson Professor of Codicology and Paleography**

The *Status quaestionis* of Hebrew Manuscript Studies: The Materiality of the Text and its Contribution to Historical Research and its Implications on the Study of Textual Transmission and Criticism.

**Zsófia Buda, PhD, Oxford Centre for Hebrew and Jewish Studies – Bodleian Library**

Sacrifice and Redemption in the Hamburg Miscellany (Cod. hebr. 37)

The Hamburg Miscellany is an Ashkenazi festival prayer book containing also a *sefer ibbur* and a collection of *minhagim* by Abraham Hildiq. It was produced by and for the same person, Isaac bar Simhah Gansman at slightly different stages in the 1420s-1430s. Isaac can be identified as a disciple of the Maharil, a great halakhic authority of fifteenth-century Rhineland.

The illustration program of the Miscellany is remarkable from an iconographical point of view. Many of its elements may be interpreted in the context of Ashkenazi martyrdom. They emphasize sacrifice, redemption and revenge – key motifs in medieval literature on *kiddush ha-Shem*. Jewish notions of martyrdom, redemption and revenge *ipso facto* clashed with the Christian definition of the same notions; consequently, they exhibited a polemical side. The Miscellany proves that these ideas were manifested not only in written sources, but also in the visual culture. My paper will discuss the martyrological and polemical aspects of the illustration program of the Miscellany in relation to its patron Isaac and the circle of the Maharil.

**Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, Prof. Dr., The Hebrew University Jerusalem, Center for Jewish Art, Director, Index of Jewish Art**

Christian Collectors and their Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

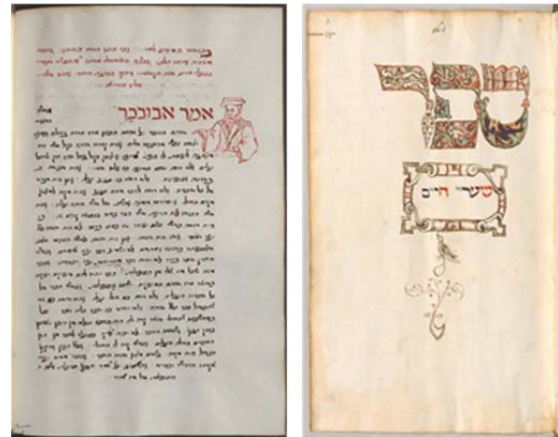
- 1) Passover Haggadah, Germany, late 15th C. (Munich, BSB, Cod. hebr. 200, fol. 24v)



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 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich. The documentation and research team includes besides myself, three MA graduates and one Ph.D. candidate.

The Hebrew manuscripts collection in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 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 Bayerische Staatsbibliothek 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 Staatsbibliothek 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 14<sup>th</sup> century Bible, a Book of Fables of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and a most intriguing *Bellifortis* in Yiddish, also of the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

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

### **Florian Dunklau, MA, Universität Hamburg, Institut für Jüdische Philosophie und Religion**

#### **An Unnoticed Autograph of Ovadyah Sforno's *Or Ammim* (St. Petersburg IOM B 169)**

The Institute of Oriental Manuscripts of the Russian Academy of Sciences possesses a unique autograph manuscript of the Jewish Italian exegete Ovadyah Sforno (1475(?)–1550). It comprises – besides a raw version of his complete Torah commentary – the *Sumarium* of his philosophical work *Light of the Gentiles* (Hebrew: *Or Ammim*, Bologna [1537]; translated into Latin by the author and published under the title *Lumen Gentium*, Bologna [1548]). Within the framework of a new critical edition, translation and commentary of this last work of Hebrew Scholastic philosophy, the comparison of the manuscript and the print version reveals the author's search for exactness in terms. This study intends to show the close relationship between his philosophical and exegetical oeuvre concerning the use of rational argument and Hebrew philosophical terminology.

### **Katrin Kogman-Appel, Prof. Dr., Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, and Israel Institute for Advanced Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (2014-15)**

#### **Social and Cultural Contexts of the Medieval Illuminated Hebrew Book**

The triangular relationships between patrons, artists, and viewers pose crucial methodological questions considered repeatedly and intensely in the recent art-historical discourse on illuminated manuscripts. If we are to decipher meanings, or explicit messages of images, who within this triangle would have determined these meanings and messages, and who designed the overall appearance of

these images and their specific features? An artistic mind aware of the full potential of the impact the visual has on any viewer's mind? An erudite viewer as much as an uneducated one? A patron with a particular theological or political agenda? Art can function as an active message bearer on the one hand; or as a more passive reflector of social and cultural circumstances, on the other. My paper will discuss several test cases and put them within the framework of recent methodological considerations in the field.

**Michael Kohs, MA, Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Graduate School "Society and Culture in Motion"**

The Interplay of Images and Writing in the Manuscripts of *Mafteah Shelomoh*

*Mafteah Shelomoh*, the Hebrew adaptation of the well-known Renaissance *grimoire Clavicula Salomonis*, bears a remarkably high amount of visual elements including images and other para-textual text structuring means. In my presentation I will compare the use of images and image captions of one *segulla* (an instruction for a magical procedure) in two different manuscripts of the *Sefer Mafteah Shelomoh*: Ms British Library Or. 14759 and Ms Gollancz. I will try to elucidate the scribes' different strategies for implementing and, potentially, transforming their Vorlage and how the scribes of the manuscripts thus were involved in a kind of meta-textual criticism. They arranged the textual material anew, added captions to images and obtained missing material from alternative sources. This creative process led to development and evolution of the textual material. A thorough look at those meta-textual structures like images and image captions can thus contribute to our knowledge of the manuscript's history.

**Andreas Lehnardt, Prof. Dr., Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Seminar für Judaistik**

Newly Discovered Hebrew Binding Fragments in Germany

Since the start of the Mainz project called "Genizat Germania" in 2004, the project has brought to light a great deal of important and not only statistically relevant material. Hundreds of new and unexplored Hebrew parchment fragments have been identified and catalogued. Most of the newfound fragments contain well-known texts and compositions, such as *Mahzorim*, Bible codices, Talmudic literature, and Halakhic compendia and codices. Very few fragments include otherwise unknown material, like an unknown Ashkenazic *maqama* that was published by me in the new Festschrift for Peter Schäfer.

Among the other recently published fragments from my project are pieces of a seemingly lost Geonic work on money lending, mentioning the names of Rav Nahshon Gaon and Moshe Gaon. This fragment was discovered on the shelves of the Diocesan Library of Mainz and is according to Simha Emanuel one of the important discoveries in Germany in the last years. Other fragments published within the frame of "Genizat Germania" contain a leaf of a medieval commentary on the book of Chronicles and an illuminated page from a Mahzor with the special Piyyutim for Purim depicting a Haman-tree – one of the few instances that an illumination on a parchment leaf survived within on glued on a wooden book cover.

The newly found Hebrew parchment fragment I will present in Hamburg is an unknown and seemingly lost mystical-philosophical composition. It shares characteristics with several other works from the Middle Ages without being identical to any of them. The fragment was uncovered a few months ago in a host volume dated to the 14th century. Despite several conversations with my colleagues, the Hebrew text of this piece remains a mystery.

**Reimund Leicht, Dr. phil., The Hebrew University Jerusalem, Dep. of Jewish Thought**

Reuchlin's Collection of Hebrew Books – Its Influence and Afterlife

Johannes Reuchlin's (1455-1522) collection of Hebrew books was unique in its time. After his death, it was transferred to the Stiftskirche St. Michaelis in Pforzheim and later reached the library of Karlsruhe, where it was – at least most of the time – accessible to (mainly Christian) scholars. This paper will concentrate not so much on the story of the creation of this collection of Hebrew books – fascinating in itself, but rather on its impact on later generations of Christian (and later also Jewish) Hebraists.

**Hanna Liss, Prof. Dr., Hochschule für jüdische Studien, Heidelberg, Jüd. Bibel**

A Pentateuch to Read in? The Secrets of the Regensburg Pentateuch

The Regensburg Pentateuch (MS Jerusalem IM 180-52 [#34698]) was written about 1300 in Regensburg by two scribes, and has been dealt with mainly by Art historians because of its five full-paged illuminations. Besides the Torah, the Regensburg Pentateuch contains the Megillot, the Haftarot, the book of Job, and the passages of doom from the book of Jeremia. The manuscript exhibits a variety of peculiarities, among them its *mise-en-page* in the Pentateuch in the style of *wawe-ha-ammudim*, i.e. that except six pages the verso page always starts with the letter *waw*. In addition, it contains *tagin*, but not the *tagin* as known from today's Torah scrolls, but the extraordinary *tagin* as listed in the so-called *Sefer Tagi* (included in the *Mahzor Vitry*, ed. Hurvitz on the basis of MS London 27,200-27,201, Margoliot 655; 13th cent.). Furthermore, the Regensburg Pentateuch displays the *Masora parva* in a perpendicular style in up to nine parallel rows. Recent investigations show that the *masora parva* contains not only Masoretic material, but midrashic and esoteric material as well. The paper discloses some of the secrets of the Regensburg Pentateuch and tries to give some new answers to the question why the manuscript was written in such a peculiar way.

**Claire MacDonald, BSc, Universität Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures**

POSTER: Multispectral Imaging in the Realm of Hebrew Manuscript Studies

**Diana Matut, Dr. phil., Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Seminar für Judaistik / Jüdische Studien**

Editing Old-Yiddish Manuscripts. Variants in Techniques, their Implications and Recent Examples

**Gidena Mesfin Kebede, MA, Universität Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures**

On the Hebrew *Vorlage* for some Ethiopian Magic

**Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, Prof. Dr., Directeur d'études, École Pratique des Hautes Études Paris**

Talmud Manuscripts on Scrolls from the Cairo Geniza: 'from Scroll to Codex' Question Revisited

**Nurit Pasternak, Dr. phil., The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Hebrew Palaeography Project**

On Persecution and Expurgation of Hebrew Manuscripts in Fifteenth-Century Italy: The Case of the Florentine Censorship

**Mauro Perani, Prof. Dr., Università di Bologna, Dipartimento di Beni Culturali**

Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts Recently Discovered in Italy and the New Light they Shed on the Birth and Development of Italian Hebrew Script in the 11th-12th Centuries

**Boryana Pouvkova, MA, Universität Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures**

POSTER: Multispectral Imaging in the Realm of Hebrew Manuscript Studies

**Ira Rabin, Dr. rer. nat., BAM Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing, Berlin, and Universität Hamburg, Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures**

Building a Bridge from the Dead Sea Scrolls to Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts

Within the Qumran project conducted in Berlin, we developed a new integrated methodology for determining the original and acquired properties of highly heterogeneous Dead Sea Scrolls. This methodology aims to help scholars address such questions as the provenance, sorting and comparison of fragments. Since our protocols allowed us to differentiate between the minerals originating from the production processes and the sediments accrued during storage in the caves, we were able to reconstruct skin treatments and discover that at least two distinct parchment production technologies coexisted at the turn of the era.

The reconstruction of skin workmanship in Antiquity raised doubts about the validity of the current definition of parchment, which is based on the production technique known from the Middle Ages. We hope that our current work will also lead to understanding the characteristic properties of *gewil*, *qelaf*, and *duksustos*.

The evolution and socio-geographic distribution of writing inks in late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages are the second focus of the BAM group. We use X-ray fluorescence analysis (XRF) to determine the chemical composition of the inks and NIR-reflectography for their typology. We are amply assisted in our ambitious enterprise by codicologists and paleographers who adopted our methodology and conduct field studies on their own.

**Bill Rebiger, Dr. phil., Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Seminar für Judaistik**

‘Write on Three Ribs of a Sheep.’ Writing Materials in Ancient and Medieval Jewish Magic

Writing materials in ancient and medieval Jewish magic include metals, stones, animal skins and bones, papyri, paper, textiles, pottery and more. Inscribed finished products designated for magical purposes like amulets, magic bowls, gems, rings, pendants, seals, and even skulls have been found. Moreover, there are numerous instruction texts describing the process of writing and the producing and use of material artifacts. These instructions are attested in unsorted collections of various instructions as well as in applied manuals arranged in a more systematic manner. First and foremost, the fragments from the Cairo Genizah provide us with thousands of these texts. The question the paper tries to answer is whether there is a relation between the choice of writing material and the intended purpose of the magical act. Another focus is on the correspondence between material artifacts and instruction texts.

## **Gottfried Reeg, Dr. phil., Berlin**

### Big Data and the Studying of Manuscripts

Studying Hebrew manuscripts data bases are quite helpful. Just to mention *Sfardata*, the *Catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts* and the different data bases of watermarks. Furthermore the number of libraries presenting their catalogues of manuscripts on the Internet is increasing, some of them even put images on the Web. You have, however, to load each website by itself. Using data bases you will detect their different guidelines of input. *Sfardata* for instance is mainly concerned with colophons, the scribes and the patrons, but not with the topics of the works of the manuscripts or their owners. For this information you would have to load another website.

There is trend in digital humanities towards big data. Loading the website of the *Karlsruhe Virtual Catalogue* you can search in different catalogues of libraries with one query. The National Library of Israel offers a new search engine to connect all kind of catalogues such as *Rambi*, the catalogue of the IMHM or the classical catalogue. In the field of digital humanities the project of DARIAH-EU (Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities) is to be mentioned. Their aim is to 'improve research opportunities through linking distributed digital source materials and tools'.

The challenge that lies in store for the scholars of manuscript studies is to present their material in data bases which can be linked for a detailed query, and not simply in text documents or pdf files.

## **Emile Schrijver, Prof. Dr., Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, University of Amsterdam, Jew. Book History**

### Hebrew Manuscripts since the Invention of Printing: the *status quaestionis*

In the past half century the study of the Jewish book has developed from a traditional, descriptive bibliographical discipline into an independent field of research in which the book is studied as an expression of Jewish culture and as an instrument for the transmission of Jewish and non-Jewish knowledge. The foundations for this new field of Jewish Book History were laid in medieval book research. In particular Malachi Beit-Arié and Colette Sirat have defined new fundamental research questions, which are closely related to and often anticipate the current research agenda into non-Jewish medieval books.

For the study of the Jewish book, handwritten and printed, in the centuries since the invention of printing a comparable development may be observed, but the results are not as definitive yet. Part of the reason for this may be the fact that many questions asked by modern researchers of Jewish Book History were taken from the broader field of Book History and do not take the peculiarities of the Jewish book into full account. The singularity of the Jewish book can only be understood in full if it is studied in its own cultural and intercultural context. This goes further than a mere application of research questions from the general field of Book History to the Jewish book or a comparison of certain phenomena found in non-Jewish, usually Christian, books with their Jewish counterparts.

In older literature the Jewish book has almost always been sub-classified into separate entities, defined by a number of modifiers, handwritten or printed, chronological, geographical, decorated, illustrated, etc. A true understanding of the Jewish book, however, involves a permanent awareness of the complex interrelations between the various techniques, carriers, localities, manufacturers, etc.

This lecture will discuss the results of the most recent research into Hebrew manuscripts since the invention of printing within this methodological framework and will try to outline future developments, opportunities and problems.

**Ilona Steimann, MA, Hebrew University Jerusalem, History of Art Dep.**

Hebrew and Multilingualism in German Hebraist Manuscript-Compilations

The presentation focuses on an important development in the history of Christian Hebraism: the production of Hebrew manuscripts by Christians in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth-century German milieu. Presenting one of the earliest attempts of Christians to produce their own Hebrew manuscripts which would meet their scholarly needs and interests, this phenomenon embodies the encounter between Jewish and Christian views of the Hebrew text and book.

The manuscripts at the core are compilations of different texts and excerpts with Hebrew as their main language, brought together by German Hebraists. Though they contain a wide range of Hebrew texts, they also present different extracts and annotations in other ancient/exotic/Eastern languages as well as in Latin, Greek, and German. On the basis of examples of such manuscript-compilations, the presentation, then, aims to examine the role of Hebrew in its multilingual context and to suggest what such compilations as a whole could possibly mean in the Hebraist hands.

**Ilana Tahan, M.Phil., Lead Curator, Hebrew and Christian Orient Studies, British Library London**

Matters of Provenance: Hebrew Manuscripts from the Library of a Distinguished French Archbishop

In 1946 the British Museum acquired six important Hebrew manuscripts that now form part of the British Library's manuscript collection. All six manuscripts were written in the 15th century, most probably in Italy. Among these are: Ibn Pakuda's philosophical work *Hovot ha-levavot* (Duties of the Heart) and Joseph Gikatilla's cabbalistic treatise *Sha'are orah* (The gates of light). This paper will explore: a) the manuscripts' main characteristics and the background to their acquisition; b) their fascinating provenance and their illustrious former non-Jewish owners.

**Emanuel Tov, Prof. Dr., Hebrew University Jerusalem, J. L. Magnes Professor of Bible**

Scribal Aspects of the Manufacturing and Writing of the Qumran Scrolls

The documents from the Judean Desert (often named the 'Dead Sea Scrolls') constitute the largest corpus of texts in non-lapidary scripts providing information regarding scribal habits in early Israel relating to biblical and nonbiblical texts. These practices may be compared with other texts in Hebrew and Aramaic in nonlapidary texts, both those contemporary and earlier, especially the large corpora of Elephantine papyri and other Aramaic texts from the fifth and fourth centuries bce. These two groups of texts are very significant as comparative material for the present analysis; among other things, the evidence shows that the texts from the Judean Desert continue the writing tradition of the Aramaic documents from the fifth century bce in several practices.

From the large area of the scribal aspects of the manufacturing and preparation of the Qumran scrolls we single out the following areas for the purpose of this study: (1) writing materials, (2) sheets, (3) scrolls, (4) ink, (5) ruling and guide dots, (6) conventions used at the beginnings and ends of compositions.



**Ronny Vollandt, PhD, Freie Universität Berlin, Research Unit Intellectual History of the Islamicate World**

German Hebraists and their books. On Jacob Georg Christian Adler's und Petrus Kirstenius's Nachlass at the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg

The Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg preserves an interesting set of early-modern manuscripts. In the light of the unique juxtaposition of texts and languages contained (German, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Syriac) these booklets appear to be scholars' copies. On a closer look, which I shall present in my contribution, they prove to have been part of the Nachlass of two German Hebraists and scholars of Semitic languages: Petrus Kirstenius and Jacob Georg Christian Adler. Their notebooks give an unprecedented insight into their scholarly interest and scope of expertise.

**Falk Wiesemann, Prof. Dr., Heinrich Heine Universität Düsseldorf, Institut für Geschichtswissenschaften**

Calligraphy und Micrography in Hebrew Manuscripts of the Eighteenth Century