

Marvin J. Heller

Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book

STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY AND CULTURE

Studies in the Making of the
Early Hebrew Book

Studies in Jewish History and Culture

(Formerly Studies in European Judaism)

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Marvin J. Heller



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CONTENTS

HEBREW BOOK ARTS

Preface	vii
1. Mars and Minerva on the Hebrew Title Page	1
2. The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and its Later Influence	18
3. Mirror-image Monograms as Printers' Devices on Title Pages of Hebrew Books Printed in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries	33
4. The Cover Design, "The Printer's Mark of Marco Antonio Giustiniani and the Printing Houses that Utilized It"	44
5. Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud	54
6. <i>Adderet Eliyahu</i> ; a Study in the Titling of Hebrew Books	72
7. Designing the Talmud: The Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page	92

MAKERS AND PLACES OF HEBREW BOOKS

8. Early Hebrew Printing from Lublin to Safed: The Journeys of Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi	106
9. "There were in Padua almost as many Hebrew printers as Hebrew books." The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Press in Padua	121
10. Ambrosius Froben, Israel Zifroni, and Hebrew Printing in Freiburg-im-Breisgau	131
11. A Little Known Chapter in Hebrew Printing: Francesco dalle Donne and the beginning of Hebrew Printing in Verona in the Sixteenth Century	151
12. Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai and the First Decade of Hebrew Printing in Livorno	165
13. Abraham ben Raphael Meldola and the Resumption of Printing in Livorno	178

14. David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida and his <i>Migdal David</i> : Accusations of Plagiarism in Eighteenth Century Amsterdam	191
15. Moses Benjamin Wulff—Court Jew	206
16. Moses ben Abraham Avinu and his Printing-Presses	218
17. Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi's <i>Dictionary of Hebrew Authors</i> (<i>Dizionario Storico degli Autori Ebrei e delle Loro Opere</i>)	229

MISCELLANEA

18. The Hebrew Book-Trade as Reflected in Book Catalogues	241
19. Observations on the Worker to Book Production Ratio in an Eighteenth Century Hebrew Printing-House	257
20. And the Work, the Work of Heaven, was Performed on Shabbat	266
21. His Hand Did Not Leave Hers Until He Was Grown: Two Little Known Works from Moses Cordovero (Ramak)	278
22. The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina Salonika Edition of <i>Berakhot</i> : An Unknown Attempt to Circumvent the Inquisition's Ban on the Printing of the Talmud in 16th-Century Italy	284
23. Observations on a Little Known Edition of Tractate <i>Niddah</i> (Prague, c. 1608) and its Relationship to the Talmudic Methodology of the Maharal of Prague	298
24. Observations on the Reprinting of <i>Kesef Nivhar</i>	315
Index	323
Plates	347

בס"ד

PREFACE

Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book is a portal into the book world of the past. Consisting of twenty-four articles on various aspects of book arts, production, and miscellaneous book history in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, it provides insights into an earlier, little known, and fascinating period. As with all travelers' itineraries, two possible approaches to our subject are available. Tours may be rapid, covering much territory in a brief period, so that the tourist needs to keep a record to know where he or she has been. Alternatively, travel can be at a slower, more leisurely and detailed pace, the traveler lingering in a location, getting a feel for the people, language, and place, so that a deeper familiarity is acquired and retained long after.¹ *Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book* falls more closely into the second category. It does not purport to give the reader an overview of Hebrew book production in the subject period. Rather, it consists of a series of studies and vignettes of particular book arts, places, and people. The subject matter encompasses little known printing-presses, makers of Hebrew books, and book arts.

The articles in this collection were, with one exception, printed previously, primarily in academic or other scholarly journals. These journals, of high repute but limited distribution, are often not readily available. However, even those with access to the journals will find this collection of value. The articles are not mere reprints. In some instances they vary considerably from the originals. Many of the articles were published without accompanying illustrations. This has been corrected, and in some cases, illustrations have been added to articles already accompanied by facsimiles. Material has been added as necessary; in one instance a third more information on a pressmark is included than appeared in the original article. A small number of articles, alas, contained errors, albeit mostly but not always minor, that

¹ A third possibility is to make a detailed review of the period. In this category is my *The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Book: An Abridged Thesaurus* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

have now been corrected. With some minor exceptions, the format in which the original articles were published has been maintained; in those articles the punctuation follows the European format rather than that of American journals. In one article, “The Printer’s Mark of Marco Antonio Giustiniani and the Printing Houses that Utilized It,” which appeared as the “The Cover Design” in *The Library Quarterly*, a distinction is made by the journal between references and citations, a distinction maintained here. In all other instances endnotes have been converted to footnotes.

Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book is divided into three parts. The book begins with book arts, discussing aspects of the Hebrew title page, beginning with a frame that today would offend religious sensibilities, consisting of a pagan motif, but was widely used in the sixteenth and into the seventeenth century. “Mars and Minerva on the Hebrew Title Page” describes the books and printing-presses that employed this frame in such disparate locations as Sabbioneta, Italy; Salonika, Greece (then part of the Ottoman Empire); and Cracow, Poland. Three articles discuss pressmarks and their widespread usage. Two, on the crest with lion and tower of Immanuel Benveniste and on the reproduction of the Temple of Marco Antonio Giustiniani, were, as with the Mars and Minerva frame, copied and used by other presses. The mirror-image monograms article describes an unusual, attractive, and often complex type of pressmark that was popular for a brief period before ceasing to be employed by the printers of Hebrew books.

Books are almost always dated. Hebrew books are unusual in that dates are frequently given in a manner that is anything but straightforward. Verses were often employed to date a book, selected to allude to the volume’s contents or the circumstances that the publisher wishes to emphasize. In “Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud” all of the chronograms on three editions of the Talmud are discussed, as well as the background and relationships of those editions.

Hebrew book titles are a fascinating and much discussed subject. “*Adderet Eliyahu*; a Study in the Titling of Hebrew Books,” not previously published, is unusual, if not unique, in that it departs from the usual discussion of varied book titles to concentrate on one title only. More than thirty disparate books are entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*, having little in common other than their title, so that the unifying theme of the article is that there is no common thread other than the shared book name. This section of the book concludes with “Designing the Talmud: The

Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page.” It describes how the layout and composition of the printed Talmud page, accepted today as traditional and not to be readily modified, came into being and variants employed as late as the nineteenth century.

The second section is concerned with the makers and places of Hebrew books. It describes little known print-shops and individuals, whether printers or makers of Hebrew books in other capacities. For example, the first press in Padua issued but two books, whereas the first Livorno press began a book publishing tradition that, with some interruptions, continues to the present. In addition to the Padua and first two Livorno presses *Studies* is concerned with presses in Freiburg-im-Breisgau and Verona. The former, established by the renowned Basle printer, Ambrosius Froben, publisher of the much censored Basle Talmud; the latter, the Verona press, unusual for having issued more Yiddish than Hebrew books. Among the book people are the peripatetic printer Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi, who after a career in Lublin resettled in Constantinople and Safed, in the latter location printing the first book in any language in the Holy Land. Another printer is the convert to Judaism, Moses ben Abraham Avinu, who printed in Amsterdam and Halle, possibly concluding his career incarcerated for printing books, including Talmudic tractates, surreptitiously. Books were also printed under the auspices of Moses Benjamin Wulff, a Court Jew, whose life in many ways typifies a world and an environment that no longer exists.

Two other personalities dealing with the Hebrew book were neither printers nor were they sponsors of presses. Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi was a Catholic priest, a bibliophile and a bibliographer, who wrote books on Hebrew bibliography that are still referenced. His *Dictionary of Hebrew Authors* (*Dizionario storico degli Autori Ebrei e delle Loro Opere*) is the subject of a prolegomenon to Mayer Sulzberger's translation of that work into English. Finally, we come to R. David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida, perhaps the most interesting personality in the book. He served as chief rabbi of the Ashkenazic community of Amsterdam, only to be accused of slander, Sabbateanism, and finally of plagiarism. His *Migdal David* is attributed to R. Hayyim ha-Kohen, student of R. Hayyim Vital and rabbi in Aram Zova, whose difficulties and adventures are addressed in the first Livorno article.

The final section of *Studies* is Miscellanea with seven articles, three on general but little or infrequently addressed aspects of book publication, four on individual works. The book publication articles deal with the

sale of books through catalogues, the worker to book production ratio, and working on Hebrew books on Shabbat. In the worker to book production ratio article the premise questioned is that the primary purpose of an early printing-press was to print books. This perception is reinforced by the absence of evidence to the contrary. It is suggested, however, that a careful study of staffing and book production will lead to a different conclusion. The last of these studies addresses the well-known phenomenon, that work on Hebrew books was done by non-Jews, who worked on Shabbat. This is reflected in the plaint of many editors, writing in their colophon, that they should be forgiven errors, for they could not check work done on Shabbat. What has not been previously recognized was that in a small number of instances that this work was done on Shabbat could be gleaned from a careful reading of a small number of the dates on the title pages, entries certainly made unwittingly by the typesetter.

Four articles deal with individual books, each providing an unusual insight into the world of Hebrew books. R. Moses Cordovero (Ramak), known as the philosopher of Kabbalah, had several of his books brought to press by his son R. Gabriel Cordovero. The article concludes with the colophon to *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim* (Venice, 1587), possibly the most poignant in Hebrew literature. It is followed by a discussion of a *unicum* of tractate *Berakhot* (Salonika, 1592). I suggest that that tractate represents a previously unknown attempt to circumvent the Church's ban on the Talmud. A second *unicum*, *Niddah* (Prague, c. 1608), is extant in a small fragment only. This unusual tractate was printed at the behest of the Maharal of Prague without the usual accompanying commentaries. A review of and comparison to the imprints of contemporary Prague presses fails to determine the identity of the printer. More important, however, is that the article does identify the Maharal's purpose in having the tractate printed in this format. *Studies* concludes with "Observations on the Reprinting of *Kesef Nivhar*." That title, by R. Avi Ezri Zelig ben Isaac Margoliot (Amsterdam, 1712), was reissued in 1995. The article addresses issues in the publication of the first edition and in the handsome reprint.

Considerable assistance was provided in the preparation of these articles by many librarians and other individuals. I am indebted to all of them for their support and help. Their names can be found with the articles to which they made a contribution. E. J. Brill and its staff have, as usual, been a pleasure to work with. In *Studies in the Making of the Early Hebrew Book* I had the good fortune to work with Michiel Klein

Swormink, Acquisitions Editor; Igor Nemirovsky, Editor; and Michael J. Mozina, Production Manager. Joseph I. Lauer, independent of Brill, was my text editor, indefatigable, once again reviewing the text as a legal brief and assiduously removing “thorns and thistles” from the text. I am also grateful to Mrs. Rachel Lewis for preparing the index.

My family, beginning with my wife, Shoshanah (Reizel), and our children have lived through all of this. The latter, now all married, have been able to finally escape their father’s obsession. Perhaps to no avail, for, while still young, several of my grandchildren have begun to express an interest in their *zaidē*’s old books.

CHAPTER ONE

MARS AND MINERVA ON THE HEBREW TITLE PAGE¹

In an article on the use of non-Jewish motifs in early Hebrew books, Joseph Reider observed that, “As to printed books, it is almost certain that the woodcuts used for general works in Greek and Latin were employed also for Hebrew works...” Among the examples he cites is R. Solomon ben Isaac’s (Rashi) commentary on the Torah (1487), printed by Soncino.²

First employed by the Italian printer Francesco Del Tупpo in his 1485 edition of *Aesop’s Fables*, this beautiful frame was sold to the Soncino family who employed it on the initial page of the Rashi noted above and afterwards on other works.³ Another and earlier example of the transfer of borders is the “most delicate of all the Iberian borders on

¹ The original version of this article was published in *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 98:3 (New York, N. Y., 2004), pp. 269–92.

I would like to express my appreciation to Rabbi Jerry Schwarzbard, Henry R. and Mariam Ripps Schnitzer Librarian for Special Collections, and Mr. David Wachtel, Research Associate, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary; Rabbis Shalom Ber Levine and Yitzhak Wilhelm, Library of Agudas Chassidiei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak; and Mr. Marvin Taylor, Fales Librarian, and Mr. Mike Kelley, Assistant Fales Librarian, Bobst Library, New York University, for their assistance.

² Joseph Reider, “Non-Jewish Motives in the Ornaments of Early Hebrew Books,” in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Abraham Solomon Freidus (1867–1923), late chief of the Jewish Division, New York Public Library* (New York: Alexander Kohut Memorial Foundation: Distributed by the Jewish Division, New York Public Library, 1929), 159. This paper is concerned with title-pages only, the first examples not withstanding. For examples of the varied use of pressmarks see my “The Printer’s Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and its Later Influence,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (1994): 3–20; “Mirror-image Monograms as Printers’ Devices on the Title-Pages of Hebrew Books Printed in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” *Printing History* 40 vol. 20:2 (2000): 2–11; and “The Cover Design, ‘The Printer’s Mark of Marc Antonio Giustiniani and the Printing Houses that Utilized It,’” *The Library Quarterly*, 71:3 (2001): 383–89.

³ The frame, described by Cecil Roth, *Studies in Books and Booklore* (Farnborough, U. K.: Gregg International Publishers, 1972), 45, as “one of the loveliest specimens of fifteenth century Italian book production,” consists of “a splendid white-on-black engraved border, of typical Renaissance design, depicting naked and winged putti, who are deporting themselves on an intricate floral background.” Concerning the difficulties the Jewish printer encountered in employing this frame because its sides are of unequal width—being designed for a Latin page which reads left to right, as opposed to a Hebrew page which reads right to left—see, Avraham Habermann, “The Jewish Art of the Printed Book,” in *Jewish Art, an Illustrated History* (Tel Aviv: Massadah—P. E. C. Press, 1961), 463–66.

black background,” first used by Alfonso Fernández de Córdoba of Valencia in his *Manuale Caesaruagustanum* (Hijar, c. 1487), a Catholic liturgical work. Shortly after, it came into the possession of Eliezer ben Abraham ibn Alantansi and Solomon ben Maimon Zalmati, who, at the same location, printed a Bible. It is believed that de Córdoba also cut the Hebrew letters used by Alantansi, a service that brought him the wrath of the Inquisition, forcing him to flee for his life. The border next became the property of Eliezer Toledano in Lisbon and afterwards of David and Samuel ibn Nahmias in Constantinople, appearing on books printed in both locations.⁴

Yet another decorative frame of interest, and that the subject of this paper, was first employed by Francesco Minizio (Giulio) Calvo, a printer of Latin and Italian books in Rome (1521–34) and Milan (1539–45). It is comprised of an architectural border with standing representations of the mythological Mars and Minerva with shields, above them vines and fruits. At the center bottom is a wreath with a representation of Roma. Ruth Mortimer describes it as “the finest of Calvo’s border designs.”⁵

The frame takes two forms—there are folio and quarto woodcuts—with minor differences between them, most prominently in the composition of the fruit in the vines along the sides and in the depiction of Roma. Calvo used the quarto almost twenty times in Rome, beginning with Maximilianus Transylvanus’s *A secretis Epistola, de admirabili* (1523) and concluding with Luis Gomez’ *De prodigiosis Tyberius* (1531), excluding undated works. He would use it again in Milan with, for example, O. Lupano’s *Torricella* (fig. 1) and Isidoro Chiari’s *De modo divitis adhibendo homini christiano oratio* (1540). The first use of the folio was with Jacques Fonteyn’s *De bello rhodio libre tres* and Paolo Giovio’s *De piscibus*

⁴ Concerning this border see, Joshua Bloch, “Early Hebrew Printing in Spain and Portugal,” in *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography. Studies by Joshua Bloch and Others, Reprinted from the Publications of the New York Public Library on the Occasion of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Establishment of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library. Selected and with a Pref. by Charles Berlin.* (New York: New York Public Library and Ktav Publishing House, 1976), 22–25; Habermann, “The Jewish Art of the Printed Book,” 456–63; and Arthur M. Hind, *An Introduction to the History of the Woodcut 2* (London: Constable and Company, Ltd., 1935, reprint New York, Dover Publications, 1963), 744–46.

⁵ Ruth Mortimer, *Harvard College Library Department of Printing and Graphic Arts Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts, Part II: Italian 16th Century Books* (Cambridge, Ma.: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 1974), 282 n. 194. Concerning Calvo see Marco Menato, Ennio Sandal, Giuseppina Zappella, *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori Italiani: Il Cinquecento* (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 1997), 1: 234–37.

(1524) (fig. 2).⁶ These borders would soon after appear on the title-pages of Hebrew books, often reused, not only in Italy, but in locations as far apart as Venice and Salonika and, in a copy, in Cracow.

At some point after 1540 Calvo, or whomever had possession of his typographical equipment, sold or provided these frames to the partners who established a Hebrew press in Sabbioneta, in the duchy of Mantua, in the dominion of Duke Vespasian Gonzaga. The transfer of this material, and their usage by a Jewish printer, not at all unusual, can be attributed to several factors.⁷ Calvo, even if he had remained active, might have been prepared to discontinue the use of these frames, having, in a manner of speaking, saturated his market after using them for two decades. The frames were well known to the Italian market, and would therefore be less valuable to another Italian printer. They would, however, be new, and therefore of value, to the Hebrew book market.

While the theme of the frames, that is, the representation of mythological figures, is not consistent with Jewish beliefs, they obviously were not offensive to Renaissance Jewish sensibilities, although this would not be the case at other times or in different places.⁸ Here, and in other

⁶ Francesco Barberi, "Le edizioni romane di Francesco Minizio Calvo," in *Miscellanea di scritti di bibliografia ed erudizione in memoria di Luigi Ferrari* (Florence: Olschki, 1952), 57–98. Many of these title-pages are reproduced in A. F. Johnson, *The Italian Sixteenth Century* (New York: Scribner, 1926), pl. 8; Mortimer, 1: 171 n. 121, 282–83 n. 194, and 2: 555 n. 386; Max Sander, *Le Livre a Figures Italien depuis 1467 jusqu'a 1530: essai de sa bibliographie et de son histoire* (New York: G. E. Stechert, 1941), 2: 551 n. 3168 pl. 806.

⁷ This was not the only border used and afterwards sold by Calvo, to be subsequently reemployed by the Hebrew press in Sabbioneta (see Mortimer, 2:422 n. 186). Calvo's floral border block appears on such titles as R. Judah ben Samuel Lerma's *Lehem Yehudah*, R. Shem Tov ibn Shaprut's *Pardes Rimmonim*, and R. Moses ben Isaac ibn Alashkar's *She'elot u'Teshuvot* (1554). It too was also later transferred to Salonika.

⁸ For example, in 1697, Johann Wust printed the responsa of R. Joel b. Samuel Sirkes (Bach, 1561–1640), *She'elot u-Teshuvot Bayit Hadash*. The title-page had an ornate frame with forms which aroused rabbinic opposition, for those authorities considered the title-page inappropriate and offensive to Jewish sensibilities. The quire had to be reprinted with a new title-page, now with two cherubim holding a floral wreath with grapes. A similar situation occurred in Hanau in 1630. *Sefer ha-Roke'ah*, by the saintly R. Eleazer of Worms, was issued in a small format, 12 × 16 cm., due to the economic restrictions resulting from the Swedish War. On the title-page "Venus rises naked from the waters on a seashell—a common pagan motif" (Raphael Posner and Israel Ta-Shema, ed. *The Hebrew Book: An Historical Survey* [Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House, 1975], 133). The book was issued by a press belonging to a non-Jew, Hans Jacob Hena, so that, it has been suggested, no attention was initially given to the title-page. When the book was sold, "many Jewish purchasers tore out the offending page" (Posner and Ta-Shema, 133). There does not appear to have been any opposition to this last title-page in Venice, for the Venus rising from the waters motif appears in Hebrew works

instances, as noted above, the non-Jewish printer disposed of his wood cut borders after having used them for a period of time. The Jewish printer acquired the frame because the smaller market for Hebrew books did not justify the expense of commissioning a new woodcut.⁹

As noted above, the first usage of this frame on the title-page of a Hebrew book is in Sabbioneta, in the duchy of Mantua. Duke Vespasian Gonzaga permitted R. Joseph Shalit ben Jacob Ashkenazi of Padua and R. Jacob ben Naphtali ha-Kohen of Gazzuolo, both having worked previously in Mantua, to establish a Hebrew printshop at the home of R. Tobias ben Eliezer Foa. Although the Sabbioneta press is commonly associated with Foa, Joseph Shalit appears initially to have been the motivating force behind the press. Other partners provided financial support, while Foa provided the physical quarters, Gonzaga's patronage, and limited financial assistance. From 1552, however, Foa is the principal owner, although Shalit remained with the press until 1554, for his name appears as an editor in R. Judah Lerma's *Lehem Yehudah* (1554).¹⁰ Also associated with the press in a similar capacity were Cornelius Adelkind and R. Joshua Boaz Baruch (d. 1555).¹¹ The print shop, although relatively short lived (1551–59), published about fifty titles, and has a distinguished reputation.

printed there, where it was the press mark of Alessandro Gardoni (Venice, 1577–78) and can be found in the *Mishneh Torah* printed by Meir Parenzo at the press of Alvisè Bragadine in 1574.

⁹ The Sabbioneta press belonged to and was operated by Jews, who had to acquire their own typographical material. When the presses issuing Hebrew books belonged to non-Jews, the standard practice in Italy in the second half of the sixteenth century, the non-Jewish partner provided his Jewish associate with decorative material, most obvious on the title-page. For examples, see my, "A Little Known Chapter in Hebrew Printing: Francesco dalle Donne and the Beginning of Hebrew Printing in Verona in the Sixteenth Century," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 94, no. 3 (2000), 333–46 and my, "There were in Padua almost as many Hebrew printers as Hebrew Books.' The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Press in Padua," *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (2003), 86–92.

¹⁰ Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem: Hevrah le-Hotsa'at Sefarim al Yad ha-Universitah ha-Ivrit, 1943), 132 no. 19 [Hebrew]. On the Sabbioneta press see, David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Philadelphia: J. H. Greenstone, 1909, reprint London: The Holland Press, 1963), 288–95; Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal and Turkey, from Its Beginning and Formation about the Year 1470* (Tel Aviv: Bar-Yuda, 1956), 76–80 [Hebrew]; and Avraham Yaari, "The Printers B'nei Foa," in *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1958), 345–48 [Hebrew].

¹¹ Cornelius Adelkind, master printer for Daniel Bomberg and Marco Antonio Giustiniani, became available with the closing of the Hebrew printshops in Venice. He joined the Sabbioneta press after Shalit's departure in 1552, remaining until 1554,

The first Hebrew title printed in Sabbioneta was *Mirkevet ha-Mishneh*, a commentary on Deuteronomy by Don Isaac ben Judah Abrabanel (1437–1508). The title-page (fig. 3) has the folio border with the mythological representations of Mars and Minerva. It is dated 5311 *Rosh Hodesh* Sivan (Wednesday, 16 May 1551).¹² The verso of the title-page has a long preface from R. Joseph ben Jacob Ashkenazi [Shalit]. On the final unfoliated leaf are two devices (fig. 4), on the right that of Foa, a palm tree with a lion rampant on each side and affixed to the tree a *Magen David*, about it the verse, “The righteous flourish like the palm tree” (Psalms 92:13), all within a circle, and to the sides the letters *tet* ט and *peh* פ for Tobias Foa. On the left is the device of Shalit, a peacock standing on three rocks, facing left, with a fish in its beak within a cartouche. The letters *yod bet yod shin* יביש about this device stand for Joseph ben Jacob Shalit. It is reported that a small number of exemplars exist with Foa’s mark only.¹³

Abrabanel, among the best known of the Jewish exiles from Spain, a noted statesman, philosopher, and author of a monumental biblical commentary, explains here, more than in his other biblical commentaries, in a methodical fashion, his political and constitutional views. He is also critical of Christianity, more so than in any other Hebrew book published previously in Italy, with the result that *Mirkevet ha-Mishneh*,

his name appearing on either the title-pages or colophons of about twelve titles. R. Joshua ben Simon Boaz Baruch, also employed by the Giustiniani press as an editor, is best remembered for the indices he prepared for their Talmud edition (1546–51), that is, *Torah Or*, *Ein Mishpat-Ner Mizvah*, and *Mesorat ha-Talmud* (now referred to as *Mesorat ha-Shas*) and the sole tractate printed in Sabbioneta, *Kiddushin*, described by Raphael Natan Nuta Rabbinovicz, *Ma’amar al Hadpasat ha-Talmud with Additions*, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1952), 55–59 [Hebrew], as “most becoming and beautiful. If the entire Talmud had been printed, it would have been the glory and most beautiful jewel of Israel. All the editions before and after would not have compared to it. However, ‘if the Lord will not build a house, in vain did its builders labor on it’” (Psalms 127:1).

¹² The common era dates in this article are according to the Gregorian calendar, introduced in 1582 by Pope Gregory XI, replacing the Julian calendar, introduced by Julius Caesar in 46 B.C.E. Since dates from both periods are mentioned in this article it seems, for the sake of consistency, preferable to use one dating system only, and that the one in use today. In some instances there may be a +/- one day error in conversions. An example of the difference between the two dating systems can be seen from *Mirkevet ha-Mishneh*, which would be 6 May 1551 in the Julian calendar.

¹³ Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers’ Marks from the Beginning of Hebrew Printing to the End of the 19th Century* (Jerusalem: Hevrah le-Hotsa’at Sefarim al Yad ha-Universitah ha-Ivrit, 1943, reprint Farnborough, U. K., Gregg International Publishers, 1971), 132 n. 19 [Hebrew].

together with similar works, was responsible for the eventual closing of the press.

Abrabanel began this work when still in Lisbon, unlike the remainder of his commentary on the Torah, which was written much later. Its completion was postponed, however, due his responsibilities at the Portuguese court. The incomplete manuscript of *Mirkevot ha-Mishneh* was lost when Abrabanel was forced to flee Portugal in 1483. However, on his peregrinations after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, Abrabanel came to the island of Corfu (1493), where he serendipitously (miraculously) found a copy of the manuscript. Leaving aside other work he turned to completing this commentary, but after the departure of French troops from Naples, Abrabanel went to Monopoli (Apulia), where *Mirkevot ha-Mishneh* was finally concluded in the first part of 1496.

Another folio work with this frame is R. Moses ben Maimon's (Maimonides, Rambam, 1135–1204) philosophical masterpiece, the *Moreh Nevukhim*. Work began, according to the title-page, on *Rosh Hodesh Shevat*, 313 (Monday, 26 January 1553). The *Moreh Nevukhim* was a controversial work from the time that it was written in the twelfth century. It was attacked for its scientific and Aristotelian approach to the concepts of Judaism, being publicly burned in Paris and Montpellier in 1233. Nevertheless, it is among the first printed Hebrew books, having been issued in Rome in c. 1469. This is the second printing in the sixteenth century, but the last for almost two hundred years, the *Moreh Nevukhim* not being again republished until 1742, when Israel ben Abraham, authorized by R. David ben Naphtali Hirsch Fraenkel (c. 1707–62), rabbi of Dessau and author of *Korban ha-Edah* on the Jerusalem Talmud, printed it in Jessnitz.¹⁴ In this work Foa's pressmark appears on the title-page within the wreath.

The quarto frame appears on the title-page of R. Isaac ben Moses Arama's (1420–94) *Hazut Kashah*. Arama, also born in Spain, is better known for his *Akedat Yizhak*, a philosophic Torah commentary. *Hazut Kashah*, on philosophy and religion, was begun, according to the title-page, on 26 Marheshvan, 312 (Thursday, 11 October 1551) and completed, according to the colophon, on Monday, 18 Kislev, 312 (26 November 1551), a period of forty six days, less Sabbaths, to set this work of 38 folios.

¹⁴ Concerning the controversy in the twelfth century over the *Moreh Nevukhim* see Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Censorship and Freedom of Expression in Jewish History* (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press, 1977), 27–36.

Among the other quarto works with this border are an Ashkenaz rite *mahzor* (holiday prayer book, 1552), *Ateret Zekenim* on Providence and prophecy, and Rashi's commentary on the Torah, both in the year, "For I will pour water upon the thirsty land, and floods upon the dry ground **יבשה** (317=1557); I will pour my spirit upon your seed, and my blessing upon your offspring" (Isaiah 44:3), the first two orders of Mishnayot, *Zera'im* and *Mo'ed* (1559) with the commentaries of Maimonides and Obadiah Bertinoro (c. 1450–c. 1516) begun in Sabbioneta but completed in Mantua. Work began on the first volume on "Let the arrogant be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause; but I will meditate **אשיח** (319=1559) on Your precepts" (Psalms 119:78). *Mo'ed* and the remaining four orders of Mishnayot were completed in Mantua by 1563 (the remaining orders have an architectural border on the title-pages), Foa's press having been closed due to the disfavor several of its works aroused in Rome.¹⁵ In the quarto works information as to the printers' identity is placed within the wreath.

Foa's fonts and ornaments, in great demand, reflecting the high regard in which that press was held, went primarily to Mantua, to the press of Messer Venturin Ruffinelli, but some also to Cremona, as did members of his staff. Amram notes that the Foa "title-pages were used by Di Gara in Venice and by Turkish publishers [Bath-Sheba] in Salonika."¹⁶ As we shall see, the influence of Foa's (Calvo's) title-pages, based on the copy made of the quarto, reached as far as Cracow.

The two decorative frames with Mars and Minerva eventually came into the possession of the presses of Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba in Salonika and Giovanni Di Gara in Venice. Meir Benayahu writes that the typographical material belonged to Ruffinelli until 1593, when it was acquired by the Venetian Zanettis, and that Bath-Sheba in turn acquired them from Zanetti.¹⁷ Some of the material clearly went to Di Gara, for he makes use of the quarto frame. That typographical material was transferred between presses is certainly not novel. In addition to the instances cited at the beginning of this article, another case of interest to us is cited by Isaac Rivkind, who notes that an ornamental

¹⁵ Concerning the completion of this edition of *Mo'ed* see Isaiah Sonne, "When was Tobias Foa's Press at Sabbioneta closed," *Kiryat Sefer* 7 (Jerusalem, 1930): 275–76 [Hebrew].

¹⁶ Amram, 294–95.

¹⁷ Meir Benayahu, ed. "The Books Printed in Venice at the Zanneti Press," *Asufot* 12 (2000): 24–25 [Hebrew].

border first used by Bomberg was later employed in Mantua, Riva de Trento, returned to Venice, and finally can be found in books printed in Salonika by Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba. The border referred to by Rivkind was used as a frame for initial words in large format books and on title-pages for very small works. Rivkind wonders, however, at a gap in the usage of this border of about twenty-five years, from 1567 to 1593.¹⁸ With the Calvo frames we are dealing with an apparent break in usage of almost forty years, after which we find the quarto in Venice and the folio at the Bath-Sheba press in Salonika.

An exception to this hiatus in the employ of the folio frame, and there may well be others, is its appearance on the title-page of a Pass-over *Haggadah* published in Mantua in 1568. It was printed by Shalit for the sons of Filippon, that is, Filotarsi and Calidono Filipponi, who had succeeded their father Francesco as the head of the Filipponi press in Mantua. This press was located “in the clock tower adjoining the building of the commune and next to that of Rufinelli.”¹⁹ The title-page states that it was printed for Ashkenazim and Lo’azim, that is native language (Italian) speakers and their wives. The text is accompanied by the marginalia of R. Joseph of Padua (Shalit), entitled *Nimukei Yosef*, and is profusely illustrated with numerous woodcuts. Shalit’s pressmark, the peacock device noted above, appears on the title-page within the wreath and again on the last page. This *Haggadah* is a reprint of the *Haggadah* printed earlier in Mantua (1560) without Shalit’s commentary. To accommodate the commentary part of the margins in the earlier edition were eliminated and illustrations moved.²⁰

I would hazard to suggest that the frames were not used or were used less frequently during this period, excepting the *Haggadah* and, perhaps, other unknown titles, for several reasons. Jewish life was more conservative in the second half of the sixteenth century in Italy; the use of nonfigurative frames on title-pages is pervasive in contrast to the earlier period.²¹ Secondly, the well established Ruffinelli press, with its

¹⁸ Isaac Rivkind, “The Migration of Frames,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 5 (1961): 1–11 [Hebrew section].

¹⁹ Shlomo Simonsohn, *History of the Jews in the Duchy of Mantua* (Jerusalem, 1977), 682.

²⁰ Cecil Roth, “The Illustrated Haggadah,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 7 (Cincinnati, 1965), 44; and Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Haggadah and History: A Panorama in Facsimile of Five Centuries of the Printed Haggadah from the Collections of Harvard* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975), nos. 28–31.

²¹ The mid-sixteenth century witnessed a deterioration of Jewish life in Italy. The Talmud was burned in 1553, oppressive legislation was enacted, Jews were forced into

pillared architectural frame, had neither the need nor the desire to use a border that suggested the Sabbioneta press. More likely and certainly less conjectural is the mundane possibility that the frames went into inventory (storage) in Mantua and were simply forgotten or ignored for an extended period of time.

For the reuse of the Calvo frames we first turn to Di Gara, whose press was founded in 1564 when printing resumed in Venice; it had ceased for ten years after the burning of the Talmud due to the charges of the Inquisition. Di Gara apparently had worked earlier for the press of Daniel Bomberg and saw himself as a successor to Bomberg, a fact that he frequently emphasized. The Di Gara press primarily printed books in Hebrew letters, and only infrequently in non-Jewish languages. It remained active until 1611, by which time it had printed more than 270 titles.²² Of that number, three books only are known to have title-pages with the Calvo border, and that the quarto frame, that is, *Arzei Levanon* (1601), *Shulhan ha-Panim*, and *Sefer ha-Mikkah ve-ha-Mimkar* (1602). Here the wreath contains the name of the printer and the information that the books were printed in Venice, “Con Licentia de’ Superiori” (fig. 5), that is, with Church approval, reflecting the fact that all Hebrew books were now reviewed by representatives of the Inquisition.

Arzei Levanon, a small book (50 fols.), is a compendium of seven smaller works. On the verso of the title-page are verses in praise of the work from R. Leone (Judah Aryeh) Modena (1571–1648), perhaps the most prominent Jew of the Renaissance. The works comprising *Arzei Levanon* are *Midrash Konen*, based on the verse, “by understanding has he established (*konen*) the heavens” (Proverbs 3:19); R. Moses ben Nahman’s (Ramban, 1194–1270) *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon*, located among the treasures of R. Simeon Romano; R. Joseph ben Abraham Gikatilla’s (1248–c. 1325) *Sefer ha-Nikud* and *Sod ha-Hashmal*; [R. Jacob

ghettos, expelled from several cities, and there was an increase in missionary pressure. In the larger society, the intellectual atmosphere also changed, evidenced by the ratio of secular to religious books, going from 13.1 percent religious and 32.7 percent secular in 1550–54 to 35.5% religious and 16.7% per cent secular in 1590–94. Concerning the latter phenomena see Paul F. Grendler, “The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540–1605,” *Journal of Modern History*, reprinted in *Culture and Censorship in Late Renaissance Italy and France*, (London: Variorum Reprints, 1981), 9.

²² A. M. Habermann, *Giovanni Di Gara: Printer, Venice, 1564–1610*, ed. Y. Yudlow (Jerusalem: Mekhon Haberman le-Mehkere Sifrut, 1982), ix–xvi [Hebrew].

ben Sheshet Gerondi's] *Ma'in Hokhmah*; R. Ishma'el Kohen Gadol's *Pirkei Heichalot*, and, in an abridged form, R. Abraham ben Solomon ibn Akra's *Klalei ha-Midrash*. The attribution on the title-page of *Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon* to R. Moses ben Nahman is incorrect, the author being R. Jacob ben Sheshet.

Ha-Mikkah ve-ha-Mimkar is a work on business transactions by Rav Hai ben Sherira Gaon of Pumbedita (939–1038). Originally written in Arabic (*Kītab al-Shira wa-al-Baye*), it was translated into Hebrew by R. Isaac ben Reuben al-Bargeloni (b. 1078). Work began, according to the title-page, “‘Open נל (33) my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things in your Torah’ (Psalms 119:18) למב"י (According to the enumeration of the children of Israel), [that is, the thirty-third day of the Omer, 18 Iyyar], in the year 362 (Thursday, May 9, 1602).” The verso of the title-page has a brief preface from R. Moses ben Isaac Menahem Levi Minz, identifying him as the printer (publisher) of the book. The text is preceded by an introductory paragraph from the translator and a table of contents (2a–3a); it is followed by a related work, *ha-Mashkon* (93a–97a), approbations from leading rabbis and, on the last page (98a), two epilogues, the first from Minz, the second from R. Israel ben David Zifroni.

Minz identifies R. Obadiah ben Jacob Sforno (c. 1470–c. 1550), as the editor. Sforno, a prolific writer whose most popular work remains a much reprinted commentary on the Torah (Venice, 1567), is here credited with completing many halakhot hidden from the eyes of the scribe because, after many days and years, the manuscript had become blurred. Israel Zifroni, a master printer, best known for his work on the expurgated Basle Talmud (1578–81), provides the completion date of *ha-Mikkah ve-ha-Mimkar*, Friday, 17 Tamuz, 362 (6 July 1602), [in the week of the Torah reading] “How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, and your tabernacles, O Israel!” (Numbers 24:5). Parenthetically, Hai Gaon's *Mishpetei Shevu'ot*, on oaths, was printed the same year, also in Venice, by Daniel Zanetti.

The most interesting of these works, for us, is *Shulhan ha-Panim* (*Misa de El Almah*), a Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) translation and abridgment of R. Joseph Caro's (1488–1575) authoritative halakhic compendium, *Shulhan Arukh*, by R. Meir ben Jacob ibn Me'iri. *Shulhan ha-Panim* is primarily the laws in the first two parts of the *Shulhan Arukh*, that is, *Orah Hayyim* (5a–113b) and *Yoreh De'ah* (114a–166b), with selections from *Even ha-Ezer* (177a–180b) and *Hoshen Mishpat* (181a–187a). There is a preface

on the verso of the title-page in Ladino and there are both Hebrew and Ladino introductions, as well as an index at the end (187b–188a). The text is in vocalized square letters, the Hebrew introduction in a considerably smaller rabbinic type.

Shulhan ha-Panim was printed previously in Salonika at the Jabez press (1568), with introductory remarks by ibn Me'iri. He defends translating the work, noting that Maimonides wrote in Arabic, that many do not know Hebrew, and perhaps this will encourage them to learn the Holy language. Ibn Me'iri forbids with an oath the reprinting of this book in Latin letters, even if the intention is well meant, out of a concern that it will then be reproduced by someone unfamiliar with Hebrew writing, as has been done with the prayer book, and he makes that one swear by His holy name not to do so, so that non-Jews will not read it. Ibn Me'iri further includes in this oath a prohibition on printing the book anywhere in Italy because the censors alter the text, and unsuspecting readers will be unaware that this has been done.²³

In this edition the editor, R. Joseph ben David Franco, omits any mention that *Shulhan ha-Panim* was printed previously. However, as ibn Me'iri's introduction is of value, Franco includes it, but not wishing to show that he has transgressed the translator's oath prohibiting printing the book in Italy, he has modified the prohibition to a restriction on printing anywhere in Italy but Venice, since there the censors only remove that which is explicitly against their religion, so that nothing has to be removed. The reference to non-Jews has been modified to read Ishma'elim.

The folio frame reappears in Salonika on the title-pages of books printed at the press of Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba (Basevi in Italian). Scion of an Italian-Jewish family from Verona of German origin, Bath-Sheba was accompanied to Salonika by his wife Fioretta and his two sons, Abraham Joseph (or Joseph Abraham) and Abraham. Their press is credited with about forty titles from 1592 to 1605.²⁴ The sponsor and patron of the Bath-Sheba printing-house was R. Moses de Medina, a wealthy scholar and prominent philanthropist. De Medina, the son of R. Samuel ben Moses de Medina (Maharashdam, 1506–89), one of

²³ Meir Benayahu, *Copyright, Authorization, and Imprimatur for Hebrew Books Printed in Venice* (Jerusalem, Mekhon Ben-Zvi, 1971), 218–22 [Hebrew].

²⁴ Concerning the books printed by the Bath-Sheba press see Israel Mehlman, "Hebrew Printing in Salonika," in *Genuzot Sefarim: Ma'amarim Bibliyografiim* (Jerusalem: Bet ha-Sefarim ha-Le'umi ve-ha-Universit'i 1976), 73–89 [Hebrew].

the greatest rabbinic sages of Salonika, was motivated to establish the press to print his father's responsa, support the local Talmud Torah, and print Talmudic treatises, the last in response to the burning of the Talmud in Italy.

Among the most interesting titles with the Calvo frame is tractate *Berakhot*, dated on the title-page, "In His goodness He renews (המחד"ש = 357) daily, [the work of creation]," from the prayer book. A second date, in a brief colophon states "finished and completed, praise to God, Creator of the universe, in the year; Thou hast put gladness (השמחה = 358) in my heart" (Psalms 4:8). The 'heh,' ה (5) represents the millennium (ג"פ or full era), so that the correct readings are 5352 (1592) and 5353 (1593).

It was long known that Bath-Sheba wished to print Talmudic tractates. A member of the family, Abraham, was sent to Italy to raise funds, and Leone Modena wrote and circulated "A letter to the communities on the printing of the Talmud," entreating "all who see and hear" to provide support. Until recently, however, de Medina's motivation and Modena's letter notwithstanding, there was no evidence that any tractates had actually been printed. The discovery of a Bath-Sheba edition of *Berakhot*, handsomely printed, measuring 30 cm. and with Rashi and Tosafot, extant in a *unicum* copy now in a private collection, has necessitated a reassessment of the activities of the Bath-Sheba press.

I have suggested elsewhere that this tractate, and possibly others no longer extant, based on allusions from other title-pages, were printed to be smuggled into Italy, where the Talmud was a prohibited work.²⁵ In addition to the arguments presented there I would further suggest that the Calvo frame indicates that the tractate, as well as other works with this title-page, officially permitted in Italy, were meant for that land. The Calvo frame, with its mythological representations of Mars and Minerva, is a highly unlikely title-page for a press in a Sephardic community in a Moslem country. It is well known, however, that books were exported from Salonika and Constantinople to Italy. Books printed in the Ottoman Empire with typographical material brought from Italy and intended to be marketed there could certainly be printed with

²⁵ See my, "The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina Salonika Edition of Berakhot: An Unknown Attempt to Circumvent the Inquisition's Ban on the Printing of the Talmud in 16th Century Italy," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 87 (1996): 47-60.

such a frame, whereas it might be inappropriate for books directed to a purely local market.²⁶

Among the other books on which the Bath-Sheba press employed this frame on the title-pages are the responsa of the Maharashdam (1594–97), here in three volumes covering the gamut of Jewish law; *Bereshit Rabbah* with the commentary *Mattenot Kehunnah* (1595) by R. Issachar Ber ben Naphtali Katz (Berman Ashkenazi, 16th century); *Sefer ha-Terumot* (1596), a halakhic code dealing with monetary matters, the first comprehensive work solely devoted to the civil and commercial laws of loans and debts, by R. Samuel ben Isaac ha-Sardi (c. 1190–1255); and the responsa of R. Joseph Caro (1597), here on *Even ha-Ezer*, that part of the *Shulhan Arukh* dealing with marital laws.

Berakhot, *Bereshit Rabbah*, and the first volume of the responsa of Maharashdam contain the statement, within the wreath, “In the house of the young [Rabbi] Abraham Joseph [May his Rock and Redeemer watch over him] from the seed of Bath-Sheba.” The third volume of the responsa of Maharashdam (the second was not seen), *Sefer ha-Terumot*, and the responsa of R. Caro have Bath-Sheba’s device, a crowned lion on the left and half a crowned eagle on the right, back to back (see fig. 6).²⁷

We find the Calvo frame, this time copied, first employed by the Cracow press of Isaac ben Aaron Prostitz, and several decades later in that location by Menahem Nahum Meisels. Prostitz, born in Prossnitz (Prostitz), Moravia, was sent at an early age to Italy by his father to

²⁶ An example of another work to be marketed in Italy is R. Jacob ben Solomon ibn Habib’s (c. 1445–c. 1515) collection of talmudic aggadah, *Ein Ya’akov* (Salonika, 1516). Burned and proscribed together with the Talmud in 1553, the Council of Trent permitted the publication of expurgated editions of the Talmud and other proscribed works in 1564, but only after imposing onerous conditions, primarily concerning the expurgation of passages seen as inimical to Christianity, and the substitution of acceptable terms for objectionable ones, but also prohibiting reprinting Hebrew books under their original names. The title *Ein Ya’akov* was permitted as *Ein Yisrael*, and was so printed by the Bath-Sheba press (Salonika, c. 1601), although it could just as well have been printed in Salonika as *Ein Ya’akov*. They printed it as *Ein Yisrael* so that it might be exported to Italy. This work has a pillared architectural frame used earlier in Mantua. For a discussion of the usage of this frame see Meir Benayahu, “Turkish Imprints that Were Really from Italy,” *Sinai* 72 (1974): 638–42 [Hebrew].

²⁷ This pressmark also appears in books printed by Abraham Bath-Sheba in Verona. Moshe N. Rosenfeld, *The Book of Cows: A Facsimile Edition of the Famed Kuhbuch* (London: Hebraica Books, 1984), n.p., observes that it has been suggested that the lion represents Bohemia and the eagle Austria, commenting that he does not see “any immediate family ties with these countries.” Perhaps this device was selected to emphasize the family’s Ashkenazic origins, given their now being situated in Salonika, a Sephardic center.

learn the printing trade. He traveled through Italy and came to reside in Venice where he worked with Giovanni Grypho. When the Grypho press closed in 1568, Prostitz acquired its typographical equipment, which he brought to Cracow. He petitioned King Sigisimund II Augustus (1548–72) in October, 1567, for the privilege to establish a Hebrew press, the first Hebrew press in Cracow in three decades, which was approved for him, “and his seed after him,” for a period of fifty years.²⁸ In the following three decades Prostitz would print several hundred Hebrew and Yiddish titles.

Among those books are a small number of titles with a copy, somewhat crudely done, of Calvo’s quarto frame with mythological figures on the title-page. Among them are R. Moses Mordecai ben Samuel Margoloth’s (c. 1540–1616) *Hasdei HaShem*; R. Issachar Ber ben Naphthali Katz’s (sixteenth century) *Mareh Kohen*, an index of the subjects and biblical verses in the *Zohar*, according to the Cremona edition (1559) of that work; *Yözerot* according to the Polish and Bohemian rite, that is, liturgical poems to be inserted into the daily and Shabbat prayers with a commentary by R. Zevi ben Henoch (1589); R. Moses ben Israel Isserles’s (Rema, c. 1530–72) *Torat ha-Hattat*; R. Moses ben Abraham Mat of Przemysl’s (c. 1540–c. 1606) *Matteh Moshe* (1591) (see fig. 7); the *Arukh ha-Kazar* (1592), an abridgement of R. Nathan ben Jehiel of Rome’s (he-Arukh, 1035–c. 1110) comprehensive lexicographical work *he-Arukh*; and R. Caro’s *Bedek ha-Bayit* (1610), additions and amplifications to his *Beit Yösef*, as well as responses to criticism of that work. Within the wreath in these books is the date, place of publication, and the name of the printer.

Margoloth’s *Hasdei HaShem* is a small book (54 fols.) on the Thirteen Attributes of God (Exodus 34:6–7) and Psalm 62:13. The purpose of the book is to explicate the lessons learned from the Thirteen Attributes affecting the actions of man. These lessons are obligatory in application; for example, just as God is gracious and compassionate, so too should man be gracious and compassionate (*Shabbat* 133b). The title, *Hasdei HaShem*, is followed by the verse, “How excellent is your loving kindness, O God! Therefore the children of men take refuge under the shadow of your wings” (Psalms 36:8), and below in a still smaller font, versified text, which states,

²⁸ Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Poland from the Beginning in the Year 1534, and Its Development up to Our Days... Second ed., enlarged, improved and revised from the sources* (Tel Aviv: n.p., 1950), 5–6 [Hebrew].

“What is sweeter than honey?” (Judges 14:18) a honeycomb of delights.
And what is more to be desired than “gold, and a multitude of rubies?”

(Proverbs 20:15):

This precious treatise of great worth.

Included in it are twenty-six paths:

And within them are explained many *ma’amarim* (discourses).

More than gold and even fine gold to be desired and precious:

Many verses are explained.

Like silver refined, purified sevenfold.

Many concealed reasons are revealed.

On the thirteen attributes of mercy.

Two crowns for each and every attribute.

Honor and majesty for each decorated diadem.

And the verse

“And to you, O Lord, belongs loving kindness; for you render to every man according to his work” (Psalms 62:13)

Bearer of all crowns

“on which hang one thousand bucklers, (with) all (the) [of them] shields of mighty men” (Song of Songs 4:4)

Torat ha-Hattat is on the laws of *Issur ve-Hetter* (dietary laws) according to *Sha’arei Dura* (R. Isaac ben Meir of Dueren, late thirteenth century) with additions according to the customs of Polish and German Jewry, and abbreviated laws of *middah* by R. Moses ben Israel Isserles. The Rema is, of course, the decisor for Ashkenazic Jewry, based on his glosses to the *Shulhan Arukh*, which add the halakhic practices and customs of Ashkenazim to that work, thereby making it the authoritative code of Jewish law to the present. In the introduction to *Torat ha-Hattat* Rema informs that he wrote this work precisely because of the popularity of *Sha’arei Dura*, which, due to its brevity, people wish to learn while [standing] on one foot. *Torat ha-Hattat* is not, however, merely a clarification of *Sha’arei Dura*, although arranged according to and following that work, but its purpose is to add contemporary customs, to which Rema placed great weight and to teach practical halakhah. This is the third edition of *Torat ha-Hattat*, it having been printed previously in Cracow in 1569 and 1577.

Five years after the publication of *Torat ha-Hattat*, R. Hayyim ben Bezalel (c. 1520–1588), the older brother of R. Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague (Maharal), a close colleague of the Rema, both having studied by R. Shalom Shakhna (d. 1558) of Lublin, and a person of considerable erudition, piety, and stature, expressed disapproval of *Torat ha-Hattat*, and, to a lesser extent of R. Caro’s *Shulhan Arukh*. His

language in the introduction to *Vikku'ah Mayim Hayyim* (Amsterdam, 1712), although always referring to the Rema respectfully, is so vehement that later editions omitted the introduction. He writes that *Torat ha-Hattat* תהטתה, entitled from, “This is the law of the sin offering (*Torat ha-Hattat*)” (Leviticus 6:18) is aptly named, for it causes people to sin אטת, comparing it to the serpent of bronze made by Moses (Numbers 21:9) for good purpose but which later had to be destroyed. *Torat ha-Hattat*, as with other halakhic digests, is a threat to the proper study of Torah and encourages the unlearned to decide the law for themselves. There is undue reliance on custom, particularly that of Polish as opposed to German Jewry, in place of halakhah, and Rema, on a subject of serious consequence, *issur ve-hetter*, is too often lenient in his rulings. R. Hayyim was not the only one to object to *Torat ha-Hattat*, among the others were R. Solomon Luria (Maharshah, c. 1510–64). However, the Rema and *Torat ha-Hattat* had defenders. More importantly, European Jewry decided in favor of the Rema, for, with his glosses to the *Shulhan Arukh*, he became, as noted above, the decisor for all Ashkenazim to the present.

Matteh Moshe is by R. Moses ben Abraham Mat of Przemysl. The family name, Mat (מת), presumably stands for *Marbitzei Torah* or *Machzikei Torah* (spreaders or supporters of the Torah). However, given a reading of מת (*met*, that is, dead, corpse), contemporaries preferred to call him *Moshe Ish Hai* (Moses, a living man, based on II Samuel 23:20).

Matteh Moshe is a halakhic work encompassing daily routine, the Jewish year, and occurrences, such as birth, death, and matters between them. It has ethical content and descriptions of customs, to which Moses places great value, providing sources and reasons. Sections are introduced by considerable expository material, including *gematriot* (numerical value of words). These last features, unusual for such a work, add to its interest and value. The halakhic positions and customs expressed in the book follow the decisions and practices of Mat's teacher, R. Solomon Luria.

Mat entitled *Matteh Moshe* (the staff of Moses) for four reasons: 1) “with this my staff I crossed the stormy sea of this world...;” 2) as the rabbis said “Happy is he who comes here with his learning in his hand,” that is, everyone has to give an account of themselves. When asked what he has in his hands he will reply a staff, as the staff of Moses; 3) every man must inscribe his name in a book; and 4) the book is divided into three parts, Torah [study], service [of God], and kind deeds (*Pirkei Avot* 1:2). Service, dealing with prayers, benedictions, and

holidays, has, as Mat constructs it, a numerical value of *Matteh Moshe*. The book concludes sadly, for the colophon states that Moses Mat has called the book after his name for a remembrance and a comfort for the loss of his son.

The final work to be addressed is *Ẓok ha-Ittim* by R. Meir ben Samuel of Shcherbreshin (mid-17th century) and published by Menahem Nahum Meisels in Cracow in 1650. R. Meir was a *paytan* (liturgical poet) in Shcherbreshin, Poland. *Ẓok ha-Ittim* is an eyewitness account of the sufferings of the Jews of eastern Europe during the Chmielnicki massacres of *tah ve-tat* (1648–49). The title page of *Ẓok ha-Ittim* (sufferings of the times), has the Calvo frame, now much worn. It states,

Recalling the troubles and sufferings of the times that we experienced, year after year, *tah ve-tat*. On “the two tails of these smoking firebrands” (Isaiah 7:4), harshly desolate. “If the Lord had not left us a very small remnant” (Isaiah 1:9) all of us would have perished, Heaven forbid. In order that it not be forgotten to later generations, by one special in his flock, and he raised his *kinah* (dirge) for the thousands slain....

In his introduction, the printer writes that he entitled this *megillah Ẓok ha-Ittim* for it is a time for mourning over the bitter destruction. The text, in two columns in square letters, begins with several pages written in the form of a dirge, the initial letters of paragraphs forming an acronym of Meir ben Samuel’s name. The remainder of the text is more historical. An example of the first part is,

“**וּמִי** A day of darkness, clouds, and of gloominess” (cf. Joel 2:2), “trouble and anguish” (Isaiah 30:6, Proverbs 1:27), fear and panic, with the entry of the mutineers to greater Poland, slaughtering young men and maidens, elderly men, young girls and married woman, slaughtered in the thousands from a treasured people, the blood went up by way of the windows.

The transfer or copying of material as described here, between presses in several cities in Italy, Salonika in the Ottoman Empire, and Cracow in Poland, was not an isolated but more a common occurrence. With this in mind, one might consider, when hearing about contemporary transfers and pirating of software and technology, the words of Ecclesiastes (1:9) “That which has been, is what shall be; and that which has been done is what shall be done; and there is nothing new under the sun.”

CHAPTER TWO

THE PRINTER'S MARK OF IMMANUEL BENVENISTE AND ITS LATER INFLUENCE¹

In the early centuries of printing, the makers of Hebrew books adorned the title pages of their works with an insignia to represent their printing house. These emblems or marks referred to the printer's "name, vocation, place of residence, ancestry, the quality of his work, the sovereign of the country, or simply a symbol of prosperity and good luck."²

One of the symbols most widely used in printers' marks to represent family origin and current status is the raised hands with spread fingers representative of the priestly blessing of the Kohen, used by diverse printers over many centuries. The most popular emblem, however, was the lion, with its implications of aristocracy and Davidic descent. An unusual symbol is the printer's mark of Giovanni Grifio, that is, a griffin holding a stone from which a globe is suspended.

A number of these devices achieved widespread recognition and status that has lasted over the centuries. Among them are the tower employed by Gershom Soncino, the representation of the Temple by Marco Antonio Giustiniani, and the three crowns of Alvise Bragadini. These ensigns graced the title pages of works printed centuries later by printers who shared no relationship to the original printer who first adorned his title page with the device.

Another prestigious printer's mark, widely utilized over time in several lands, is less well recognized and its printer's name less well known than many other devices used less extensively on the title pages of Hebrew books. The printer's mark is that of Immanuel (Manuel) Benveniste, who printed Hebrew books in Amsterdam from 1641 to 1659.

Little is known of Immanuel Benveniste's antecedents, although his family is believed to have been among the Jewish refugees from Spain or Portugal, that he was descended from the illustrious Sephardic family of that name, and that Benveniste came to Amsterdam by way of Venice,

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (Cincinnati, 1994), pp. 3–20.

² Abraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem, 1943), p. vii [Hebrew].

which explains why he signed his name in the Italian form, Imanoel Benveniste. He moved to Amsterdam because that city offered better opportunities for the distribution of Hebrew books than any city in Italy.³

In Amsterdam Benveniste's printing house issued, according to Fuks's enumeration, forty-eight Hebrew and six non-Hebrew titles, and, according to Zafren, based on Moses Marx's unpublished bibliographies, a total of eighty-eight titles. The variance in the two enumerations is not as great as it seems, however, for Marx counted Benveniste's talmudic treatises as books.⁴ Benveniste's output encompassed the major works of Judaism, including *Midrash Rabbah* (1641–42), all four parts of the *Shulhan Arukh* (begun 1642), *Hilkhot Rav Alfasi* (1643), a complete Talmud (1644–47), Pentateuch and Prophets, prayer books, and a variety of smaller works.

Immanuel Benveniste's escutcheon was an upright lion facing inward towards a tower; a star is above the lion and the tower. The lion is on the viewer's right, the tower on the left. Fuks writes that Benveniste's mark was an ancestral insignia, but acknowledges that he is unable to trace its origins.⁵

At least six forms of Benveniste's device have been identified. In all cases, excepting his talmudic treatises, Benveniste's insignia is set in a crest above an architectural frame (*sha'ar*) surrounding the text of the title page. On the title pages of the Benveniste tractates his mark appears at the bottom of the page in an ornamental shield, with a helmet in the crest (fig. 8 Berakhot, Amsterdam, 1644). At the lower right hand corner of the frame of all the non-talmudic works are the initials 'CVS', representing the artist who prepared the woodcut, Christoffer (Cornelis) van Sichem.⁶

³ A. M. Habermann, *The History of the Hebrew Book. From Marks to Letters; From Scroll to Book* (Jerusalem, 1968), p. 155 [Hebrew].

⁴ L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815*, (Leiden, 1984), pp. 155–184; Herbert C. Zafren, "Amsterdam: Center of Hebrew Printing in the Seventeenth Century" In: *Jewish Book Annual*, XXXV (New York, 1977–78), p. 51.

⁵ L. Fuks, pp. 146–47.

⁶ There were actually four, closely related, woodcut artists named Christoffel van Sichem. They employed the same monogram on their work, overlapped in time, and, as might be expected, given their collaboration, had similar styles. The frames for Benveniste's title pages, based on the period they were active, were prepared by either van Sichem II or III. Discussion of the van Sichem's woodcuts do not mention the frames for Benveniste's Hebrew books, although they claim to provide comprehensive listings of the output of the van Sichems. Ref. Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt, *An Introduction to the Woodcut of the Seventeenth Century* (New York, 1977), pp. 39–72.

Benveniste's device appears on almost all of his imprints; at least one exception exists, the Mishnayot with the commentary of R. Isaac Gabbai, entitled *Kaf Nahat* (1643).

In many of Benveniste's non-talmudic works, for example, *Hilkhot Rav Alfaz* (1643), *Mashmia Yeshu'ah* (1644),⁷ and *Nevi'im Ahronim* (1653) the frame is comprised of ten oval—and four-bullet shaped segments. The crest is simpler than in the Talmudic treatises and a point rises from the top of the crest. A book with a similar frame and device is *Bet Elokim* (1655) (fig. 9 Bet Elokim). In this work, however, the frame varies in its dimensions from the preceding titles, and there are minor variations, easily noticeable, in the form of the lion, the frame, and the crest. Greater variation in Benveniste's coat of arms can be found in a small (16^o) *Selihot* (1642) (fig. 10 Selihot), printed as part of a multi-volume daily, festival and fastday prayer book. Here the number of ovals and bullets are reduced, and a face can be seen at the bottom of the crest.

A somewhat larger book (4^o), *Shevet Yehuda* (fig. 11 Shevet Yehudah), printed thirteen years later (1655), also has a face in the crest, more clearly defined here, as well as several minor variations. The castle, for example, has a smooth exterior, lacking the brickwork apparent in the previous works. Most obvious, however, is the frame, where the ovals and bullets have been replaced by pillars. Here, too, facial features can be discerned at the bottom of the crest. Another architectural frame, composed of rectangular boxes in place of the ovals and bullets, but with a crest closer in appearance to *Hilkhot Rav Alfaz*, was employed on *Midrash Rabbah* (1641–2) (fig. 12 Midrash Rabbah), *Emek ha-Melekh* (1648) and *Musaf he-Arukh* (1655). The title pages of these works have two faces; one at the apex of the crest and the second, somewhat lower, below Benveniste's shield at the top of the frame.

It is not only on the title pages that the Benveniste ensign appears. For example, it appears in R. Isaiah ben Abraham ha-Levi Horowitz's

⁷ Fuks (p. 159 no. 213) describes the title page of *Mashmia Yeshu'ah* as "though the title-p. does not give the name of Benveniste and the place of printing, Benveniste's coat of arms, which is also his printer's mark stands on the top of the title-p." The title page, as described by Fuks, is reproduced in A. M. Habermann's *Title pages of Hebrew Books*, (Tel Aviv, 1969), p. 107. I have seen a copy of *Mashmia Yeshu'ah* with a title page identical to the one described by Fuks and reproduced by Habermann, except that it does give the omitted information, stating "printed at the press of Immanuel Benveniste. Here, Amsterdam." The entry for *Mashmia Yeshu'ah* in Ch. B. Friedberg's *Bet Eked Sefarim* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1951), *mem* 3947, states, "The Amsterdam edition was printed with three different title pages."

(Shelah ha-Kodesh, c. 1565–1630) *Shenei Luhot ha-Berit (Shelah)*, a multi-part comprehensive work, with considerable kabbalistic content, encompassing *halakhah*, ethics, discourses, and novellae on Talmudic tractates. The pressmark, in this case the ornamental shield with a helmet in the crest that appears on tractates, is at the end of the book, after the name of the compositor, Reuben ben Eliakim from Mainz.

Immanuel Benveniste is well regarded as a printer. Fuks concludes that “his outstanding work gave him great renown in the world of the Hebrew book and helped to establish the name of Amsterdam as a centre of Hebrew printing.”⁸ Abraham Yaari writes in a similar vein in *Hebrew Printers' Marks*, adding that it was precisely due to the esteem of Benveniste's imprints that subsequent printers, both in Amsterdam and elsewhere, copied Benveniste's insignia, placing it on the title pages of their books “in order to enhance their wares.” Yaari continues, identifying the following works with the lion and tower insignia on their title pages and the printers of those books:

Naftali Seva Razon (Amsterdam, 1708).

Babylonian Talmud. Printed by Samuel ben Solomon Marquis (Amsterdam, 1714).

Sefer ha-Hinnukh. Printed by Aaron di Solomon Antonius (Amsterdam, 1721).

Shevut Ya'akov, responsa. Printed by the proselyte Moses ben Abraham (Halle, 1710).

Marot ha-Tsovot, by R. Moses Alshekh. Printed by the proselyte Israel ben Abraham (Jessnitz, 1722 [sic]) (this convert, as well as Moses ben Abraham, had initially worked at printing houses in Amsterdam).

Seder le-Arba'ah Tsomot according to the custom of the community of Carpentras by Hertz Levi and his son-in-law Kosmann (Amsterdam, 1762).

Midrash Rabbah (1927). One of a number of facsimile editions issued in this century by Horev.⁹

In another entry in the same work, Yaari observes that when Uri Phoebus ben Aaron ha-Levi established his own printing house in Amsterdam in 1658, he employed Benveniste's mark on the title pages of his early

⁸ Fuks, p. 152.

⁹ Yaari, pp. 145–46.

imprints. Phoebus had, prior to printing on his own account, worked for several printers, the last being Immanuel Benveniste. Among the titles printed by Phoebus with Benveniste's ensign is R. Solomon ibn Melekh's philological work, *Mikhlah Yofi*, issued in 1660–61 with Latin and Hebrew title pages. The first Latin title page has an intricate design in a "V" shape which includes the heads of two birds among its whirls. This mark was later used by Moses Frankfurter on several of his works. The second Hebrew title page has Benveniste's mark.¹⁰

The form of the frame used by Phoebus in the *Mikhlah Yofi* (see fig. 12) appears to be identical to the frame in Benveniste's *Midrash Rabbah*. Fuks informs us that after Benveniste's death an inventory was made of his possessions. Among them are a list of farmer's tools—Benveniste had bought a farm when he retired from printing—and "one box of forms and types belonging to the printing shop' which reminds us of the activities of Benveniste during his stay in Amsterdam."¹¹ Fuks does not inform us, however, as to the final disposition of Benveniste's typographical material.

Yaari's list is far from complete, lacking a number of important and interesting books. It is the purpose of this article to present a more comprehensive picture of the printing houses that made use of Benveniste's printer's mark or copies that resemble it. It is recognized that this article, too, is likely to be deficient, neither providing a complete list of the names of the printers who embellished their works with Benveniste's device nor citing all the titles that they issued. Nevertheless, it may be regarded as a first step in that direction and an interesting footnote in the history of the Hebrew book.

The first book printed with Benveniste's printer's mark at a press other than that of Immanuel Benveniste is the *Asarah Ma'amarot*, printed in Amsterdam in 1649 by Judah [Leib] ben Mordecai [Gimpel] and Samuel bar Moses ha-Levi. The *Asarah Ma'amarot* are ten cabalistic treatises by R. Menahem Azariah of Fano, also known as Menahem Immanuel; this was the third edition of that work, including for the first time the commentary of R. Joel Moses ben Solomon ha-Levi of Frankfurt.¹² I have examined a minority only of the works of these partners and have found only this title that bears the Benveniste insignia.

¹⁰ Yaari, p. 147.

¹¹ Fuks, p. 153.

¹² Ch. B. Friedberg remarks, in the *Bet Eked Sefarim ayin* 1221, that the introduction to *Megine Shelomoh* (Amsterdam, 1715) states that the commentary *Yo'el Mosheh* was not

Judah Leib ben Mordecai Gimpel, originally from Posen, worked for Manasseh ben Israel in Amsterdam from 1632 to 1640, and, based on the appearance of his name at the end of the *Midrash Rabbah*, as a compositor for Benveniste beginning in 1642. He worked on the Talmud edition, setting twenty-three volumes of that work, and Fuks describes him as “Benveniste’s most important assistant” until he left to establish his own printing house. Samuel bar Moses ha-Levi (Levy Marcus) was also employed by Immanuel Benveniste, his position being given in one work as a foreman.¹³

In 1648 Judah Leib and Samuel ha-Levi opened their own Hebrew press in Amsterdam, printing twenty, primarily small, titles in Hebrew and Yiddish. In 1651, the partnership came to an end. Samuel bar Moses ha-Levi printed an additional four titles with another partner, Reuben bar Eliakim, while Judah Leib, together with his son Mordecai, returned to Benveniste’s printing-house where they resumed work as compositors. Judah Leib subsequently worked for Uri Phoebus (1658) and Joseph Athias (1661–64).¹⁴

It seems strange that the partners should utilize Benveniste’s mark, in his own city, while he was active, without Benveniste’s concurrence, and then one should return to his employ. It is difficult to imagine that Benveniste was unaware that his printer’s mark appeared on the title page of the *Asarah Ma’amarot*, given the relatively small size of the Jewish community, and the even smaller size of the Hebrew printing community. Unfortunately, this work is not mentioned by Yaari, while Fuks, who discusses the history of both presses and describes their imprints in some detail in *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815*, does not mention the appearance of Benveniste’s mark on the *Asarah Ma’amarot*, nor does he note a relationship between the two printing houses.

Perhaps the explanation is that the year in which the *Asarah Ma’amarot* was printed was a slack period for Benveniste. The only works that he issued in 1649 were *Shenei Luhot ha-Brit*, begun the previous year, and an Ashkenaz rite prayer book. Judah Leib had worked closely with Immanuel Benveniste for several years, and Benveniste may have

written by R. Joel Moses ben Solomon, but that the author of the commentary was the *Megine Shelomo*, that is, R. Joshua ben Joseph of Cracow.

¹³ Fuks, pp. 149–50.

¹⁴ Fuks, pp. 184–86. In the chapter on Benveniste (p. 149). Fuks suggests an earlier date, 1647, for the opening of the partners’ press.

decided to extend Judah Leib and Samuel ha-Levi assistance with their press. Acknowledgement of Benveniste's support may possibly be found on the verso of the title page of the *Asarah Ma'amarot*, which includes an introductory poem, followed by the words Immanu El. While the significance of this entry—and whether it refers to Immanuel Benveniste—is unclear, Benveniste's mark was presumably used with his concurrence.

A little more than five decades later another Amsterdam printing house, that of Asher Anshel ben Eliezer Chazzen and Issachar Ber ben Abraham Eliezer of Minden, made use of Benveniste's escutcheon.¹⁵ In this instance the mark appearing on the title page of a talmudic treatise, *Bava Batra* (1702), is either a very good likeness or actually the same woodcut crest used on Benveniste's tractates (see fig. 13 *Bava Batra*, Amsterdam, 1702). Asher Anshel and Issachar Ber had begun printing in 1692, and, in 1695, after a brief hiatus, resumed printing with *Zevah Pesah*, the Passover Haggadah with the commentary of Don Isaac Abrabanel. This Haggadah is noteworthy for its copper engraved illustrations, the first such use in a Haggadah, prepared by the convert Abraham ben Jacob Avinu, which became a model for subsequent editions of the Haggadah.

Asher Anshel and Issachar Ber printed two folio tractates, *Bava Batra* (1702), noted above, and *Bava Mezia* (1705). The title page of *Bava Batra* mentions Asher Anshel only, giving his name as 'Anshel Shoheit,' reflecting a prior occupation as a ritual slaughterer. The text of the title page of *Bava Batra* is taken from the title pages of the Benveniste Talmud, which in turn was taken from the Cracow 1602–05 Talmud, and was the text commonly used on the title pages of folio tractates. Of greater interest, however, is that the printer's mark on the title page is Benveniste's motif, the crest with the lion and tower, with no apparent modifications; here too, as noted above, it is such a good likeness that it may well be the original, used by Benveniste on his tractates.

The title page of *Bava Mezia*, printed three years later, differs from *Bava Batra* and later folio tractates printed elsewhere as well in that it makes mention of the Benveniste Talmud rather than the more standard reference to the Giustiniani Talmud. Nevertheless, the text of the title page consists of excerpts only from the text of the Benveniste Talmud's title page. *Bava Mezia* does not have a printer's mark on its title page.

¹⁵ The printing house of Asher Anshel and Issachar Ber, as well as the presses in Halle, Koethen, Jessnitz, and Zolkiew are addressed in greater detail in my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750*, (Leiden, 1999), *var. cit.*

In 1714, Judah Aryeh Leib ben Joseph Samuel arranged to have a complete Talmud edition printed in Amsterdam by Samuel ben Solomon Marquis and Raphael ben Joshua de Palachios. Founding a press for the specific purpose of issuing a new edition of the Talmud, they began with *Berakhot* (fig. 14 *Berakhot*, 1714) and continued through Order *Mo'ed*. Two tractates in Order *Nashim*, *Ketubbot* and *Yevamot*, had been completed, when, in 1717, objections to this Talmud were raised by the Frankfort on the Oder/Berlin printer, Michael Gottschalk. Gottschalk had previously printed a Talmud in Frankfort on the Oder (1697–99), and had begun the second of his three editions of the Talmud in 1715, which was not completed until 1722.

In 1717, relying on the unexpired authority of printing privileges obtained for his first Talmud, Gottschalk was able to force the Amsterdam printers to cease publication of their Talmud edition. Judah Aryeh Leib was able to resume printing in Frankfort on the Main in 1720 with *Kiddushin* at the press of Johann Koelner, not only completing his Talmud there, but also reprinting the volumes previously issued in Amsterdam.

Perhaps to demonstrate the continuity of the two editions, the volumes issued in both cities are alike, the title pages showing minor textual variations only, such as the new place of publication, the inclusion of accompanying Latin text on some but not all of the Frankfort tractates, and variations of the printer's mark. The treatises printed in Amsterdam have the Benveniste motif but a new woodcut (figure 8) for a printer's mark, whereas the Frankfort volumes, although retaining the outer crest with helmet, replace the lion and tower with the double headed eagle of the Hapsburgs. One distinguishing characteristic of this copy of the lion and castle motif is that the battlement of the castle does not extend from the body of the castle as it does in the Benveniste tractates.

Although we can sympathize with Judah Aryeh Leib's difficulties, there is a certain appropriateness to his situation, for in the same year that he began his Talmud in Amsterdam, another edition was also begun in that city. The second Talmud begun in Amsterdam in 1714 was the project of Solomon Proops, book dealer, maecenas to numerous Amsterdam publishers, and the founder of the famous Proops press. Solomon Proops was able to print only tractate *Berakhot* before Marquis and de Palachios, relying on prior rabbinic prohibitions secured for their edition, prevented Proops from continuing. An examination of the title page of Proops' *Berakhot* reveals that he too embellished his title page with a copy (fig. 15 *Berakhot*, Amsterdam, Proops, 1714) of the printer's mark Immanuel Benveniste had used on the title pages of his

tractates, however a much better one than the Marquis and Palachios edition (fig. 14).

This edition of *Berakhot* is not well known, and even Yaari was unaware that Proops had used this mark on the title page of his tractate, for, concerning Solomon Proops, Yaari writes:

...he founded his printing-house in Amsterdam in 1704 and printed numerous works over thirty years until his death in 1734. He did not use any printers' marks on any of his titles, and all we find [on any of his title pages] are general ornamentation.¹⁶

Solomon Proops may not have employed a printer's mark on the majority of works he printed. However, a significant number of his titles are distinguished by the presence of what may be considered a printer's device, in addition to the Benveniste coat of arms on *Berakhot*. Among them are: *Zeh Yenahamenu* on the *Mekhilla* by R. Moses Frankfurter (1712); the responsa of R. Zevi Hirsch Ashkenazi (Hakham Zevi) (1712); *Ozen Shmu'el* by R. Samuel de Avila (1715); *Tsuf Devash* on Torah, Esther, Ruth, and Psalms by R. Vidal ha-Sarfaty (1718); *Ir David*, by R. David Lida, *Av Bet Din*, Amsterdam, (1719); *Kol ha-ReMeZ* on mishnayot by R. Moses Zacuto (1719); *Selihot* (1720); *Sefer Ma'anah Lashon* in Yiddish by R. Eliezer Liebermann ben Leib (prayers to be said at the grave in Yiddish translation) (1723); *Keter Torah* on ethics and with corrections and variant readings to *Nazir* by R. Samuel de Avila (1725); and *Gevul Binyamin* by R. Benjamin ha-Kohen Vitale (1727). The printer's marks vary, including a floral arrangement with two prominent feathers in an inverted triangular shape, which appears on most of these title pages. Other marks are a dissimilar floral arrangement, and, on *Kol ha-ReMeZ*, a face with two wings.

The use of Benveniste's printer's mark was not restricted to Amsterdam, for we find reproductions of his device on the title pages of works printed in several locations in Germany and even in Poland. The first printing house to make use of Benveniste's mark outside of Amsterdam was that of Thomas Rose, a Christian printer of Hebrew books in Hamburg from 1686–1709. Rose was joined by his son Johann, who printed Hebrew titles together with his father in 1709, and afterwards separately in 1711, and from 1715 to 1721.¹⁷ Among

¹⁶ Yaari, p. 162.

¹⁷ Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (CB, Berlin, 1852–60), nos. 9504 and 9506.

the titles printed by Thomas Rose that employ a mark similar to that of Benveniste are *Abrabanel on the Early Prophets* (1686) (fig. 16 Perush al Nev. 1686), the title page being, according to Steinschneider, “*cum Frontisp. ad instar Benveniste (Leo cum stella etc.)*,” *Siftei Kohen* (1690), *Divrei Hakhamim* (cum frontisp.) (1692–93), *Kavod Hakhomim* (1703) and *Koved ha-Bayit* (1707).¹⁸

Another title page with the lion and tower mark is R. Naphtali Herz Ginzburg's *Naftali Seva Razon* (1708) on Pentateuch, Megillot, and Haggadah, attributed by Yaari, as noted above, to Amsterdam, but, most likely, also printed by Rose. The confusion may be attributed to the statement on the title page that the work “is printed with AMSTERDAM letters,” juxtaposing large and small fonts so that only Amsterdam is prominent. The place of publication is not noted, although the printer's name, Thomas Ruhyn (Rose), is given. The catalogues of the major collections and of Hebraica listings attribute this work to Hamburg, and the style of the architectural frame with lion and castle insignia is that of Thomas Rose.¹⁹

Thomas Rose copied the Benveniste's mark with the small crest at the top of the architectural frame. The model for the Rose title page is not the title page used most frequently by Benveniste, that is, the architectural frame with the oval and bullet shaped segments, but rather was the *Midrash Rabbah* arch with rectangular boxes. The copy is easily distinguishable from the original, as the Rose arch is not as finely cut as the Benveniste model and Christoffer van Sichem's initials have been omitted. Friedberg remarks that Thomas Rose enhanced his imprints by acquiring new fonts and attractive frames that became a model for other printing presses, among them Dessau and Berlin.²⁰

The printing house in Dessau, in Anhalt-Dessau, belonged to Moses Benjamin Wulff, the court Jew of Prince Leopold I (Old Dessauer). Permitted to open a press to issue Hebrew works, Wulff's output was eventually curtailed by financial and related difficulties resulting from

¹⁸ Steinschneider, no. 9504.

¹⁹ Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna, 1880), nun 259 [Hebrew]; A. E. Cowley, *Concise Catalogue of Hebrew Printed Books in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1971), p. 501; Friedberg, *Bet Eked Sefarim*, nun 623; Joseph Zedner, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Books in the British Museum* (London, 1964), p. 275.

²⁰ Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography of the following Cities in Central Europe: Altona, Augsburg, Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt M., Frankfurt O., Fürth, Hamburg, Hanau, Hedderheim, Homburg, Ichenhausen, Neuwied, Wandsbeck, and Wilhermsdorf; Offenbach, Prague, Sulzbach, Thannhausen, From its Beginning in the Year 1513* (Antwerp, 1935), p. 52 and note 4 [Hebrew].

loans made to the nobles of other localities. Moses Benjamin Wulff, too, modelled his title page after that of Benveniste, selecting, as did Rose, the architectural border with the rectangular boxes used in the *Midrash Rabbah*.

Wulff's title page is distinguished from his predecessors' by the relation of the lion and the tower within the crest, here transposed, the lion now on the left facing the tower which is situated to the right, the reverse of the relationship on the Benveniste and Rose title pages. Among the Dessau imprints with the Benveniste ensign are *Beit Yehuda* (1698) (fig. 17 Hiddushe Bet Yehudah), the novellae of R. Judah ben Nissan, and *Zayit Ra'anan* (1704) on the *Yalkut Shimoni* by R. Abraham Abele Gombiner (*Magen Avraham*). Wulff subsequently loaned his typographical equipment to other Hebrew presses, primarily in Anhalt-Dessau, but in Berlin as well, so that the modified Benveniste title page reappears in several locations.

Friedberg writes that in 1706 Moses Benjamin Wulff loaned his typographical equipment to his brother-in-law, Reuben Poarsht in Berlin, who used it to print *Hiddushei Halakhot* by Samuel Eliezer Edels (Maharsha) in that year. Although, according to Friedberg, it was surely the Berlin printer's intent to print additional Hebrew works, Wulff's brother-in-law died that year. However, Friedberg, in his chapter on Berlin, specifies additional titles—*Nahalat Shivah*, *Sefer ha-Bahir*, *Ma'ayin Hokhmah*, and a prayer book with Psalms—which were printed prior to the return of the typographical material to Dessau.²¹ I have not been able to examine these books and do not know if they were printed with the lion and castle device.

The next press supported by Moses Benjamin Wulff is that of one of the most picturesque of Hebrew printers, Moses ben Abraham Avinu. A proselyte from Nikolsburg or Prague, Moses settled in Amsterdam, worked as a compositor in the printing presses of Uri Phoebus ben Aaron ha-Levi and David de Castro Tartas, acquired the printing house of Moses Kosman, went bankrupt twice, and subsequently was employed in printing houses in various locations in Germany. Moses ben Abraham eventually found his way to the university town of Halle,

²¹ Friedberg, *Central Europe*, pp. 89–90; Friedberg, Ch. B. *History of Hebrew Typography of the Following Cities in Europe: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Avignon, Basle, Carlsruhe, Cleve, Coethen, Constance, Dessau, Deyhernfurt, Halle, Isny, Jessnitz, Leyden, London, Metz, Strasbourg, Thiengen, Vienna, Zurich. From its Beginning in the Year 1516* (Antwerp, 1937), p. 74 [Hebrew].

where he was employed by J. H. Michaelis in about 1706 on the *Biblia Hebraica*.

During a period when Michaelis was incapacitated, Moses began to print Hebrew titles independently, using Wulff's typographical equipment. He issued approximately sixteen Hebrew works, beginning with R. Jacob Reisher's responsa, *Shevut Yà'akov*, a *Selihot* (1709), followed by a prayer-book, two Yiddish works on the destructive fires in Altona and Frankfort on the Main, a Yiddish work on the Ten Tribes entitled *Tela'ot Moshe* (1712), and several Talmud tractates. A number of these titles, for example *Shevut Yà'akov*, have the Wulff version of Benveniste's emblem on the title page. Moses ben Abraham was eventually reported to the authorities and imprisoned. The typographical equipment eventually was returned to Moses Benjamin Wulff in Dessau, and he again provided it to another Hebrew printer, Israel ben Abraham.²² This printer, too, was a proselyte, one who reputedly had previously been a priest, eschewing after his conversion the sobriquets common among converts, such as "Avinu" or "Ger". Israel ben Abraham converted to Judaism in Amsterdam, where he wrote a Hebrew lexicon. After leaving Amsterdam he printed in various locations in Germany, including Koethen, Jessnitz, and Wandsbeck.

Israel ben Abraham first printed in Koethen, beginning in 1717 with R. Joseph ben Jacob of Pinczon's *Rosh Yosef*. That title has the Wulff form of Immanuel Benveniste's printer's mark, the architectural frame described above, on the title page. Difficulties in getting accommodations for his Jewish workers forced Israel ben Abraham to forsake Koethen for Jessnitz, where he began printing in 1719 with *Hokhmat Nazir Kodesh* by R. Jechiel Michael Glogau. Among the Jessnitz titles with the Benveniste frame are R. Isaac ben Meir of Duren's *Sha'are Dura* (1724) and, according to Yaari, as noted above, R. Moses Alshekh's *Marot ha-Zovet* (1720), as well as a number of additional titles making use of other ornamentation previously used on Wulff's Dessau imprints. Competition from Frankfort on the Oder and Berlin forced Israel ben Abraham to close his press in Jessnitz in 1726. Relocating to Wandsbeck, he printed until 1733, when competition from a Hebrew press in Altona forced him into temporary retirement.

Shortly after a second press was opened in Altona in 1732 by Ephraim Heckscher, assisted by Aaron ben Elijah Kohen. Israel ben Abraham

²² Friedberg, Amsterdam . . . p. 76.

became associated with this printing house, bringing his typographical material to Altona. The Benveniste style device appears on *Levyat Hen*, novellae by R. Ephraim ben Samuel Zanvil Heckscher (Altona, 1733), reflecting the influence of Israel ben Abraham.

The identity of a Wandsbeck printer who brought the lion and castle insignia to Altona is unclear. Friedberg writes that Heckscher was joined in Altona by Israel Halle from Wandsbeck, “the renowned printer Israel Halle ben Abraham Avinu, who had previously printed in Koethen and Jessnitz...,”²³ who brought with him attractive typographical material and new fonts. This appears to be incorrect, contradicting what Friedberg wrote in his chapter on Jessnitz, where he observes that Israel ben Abraham, after printing in Koethen and Jessnitz, relocated to Wandsbeck, without any suggestion that the printer shared a relationship with Moses ben Abraham Avinu.

Friedberg gives his source for identifying the Wandsbeck printer with Israel ben Moses Halle, Moses ben Abraham Avinu’s son, as Max Freudenthal’s *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns*.²⁴ However, not only does that work not support Friedberg, but rather Freudenthal lists Israel ben Moses as a setter for Israel ben Abraham in Jessnitz.²⁵ In fact, Israel ben Moses Halle printed in Offenbach, until 1733, in Homburg in 1734, and, at intervals, in Neuwied. He also worked as a typesetter for Israel ben Abraham in Jessnitz (1739).²⁶

We have already remarked on Uri Phoebus’s association with Immanuel Benveniste, and that Phoebus had made use of Benveniste’s printer’s mark when he established his printing press in Amsterdam. After printing approximately a hundred titles in Amsterdam over three decades, Phoebus, reputedly invited by John Sobieski, King of Poland, determined to relocate to Zolkiew in Poland. Polish Jewry was an important market for the highly competitive Hebrew presses of Amsterdam, and Phoebus felt that he would have an advantage in that market by resettling in Poland, which, at the time, lacked a local Hebrew printing industry.

In 1691 Phoebus moved to Zolkiew, printing his first book in that city the following year, and continuing to issue Hebrew titles there until his

²³ Friedberg, *Central Europe*, pp. 104–05.

²⁴ Max Freudenthal. *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns. Moses Benjamin Wulff und seine familie, die Nachkommen des Moses Isserles*, (Berlin, 1900), p. 189.

²⁵ Freudenthal, p. 275 no. 43.

²⁶ Freudenthal, p. 275 no. 43; Steinschneider, no. 8263c.

death in 1705.²⁷ No titles printed by Phoebus in Zolkiew, including a small number of Talmud tractates, are known to have the Benveniste design on their title pages. Phoebus was succeeded at the press by his son Hayyim David, who died shortly after his father, leaving the press in turn to his sons, Aaron and Gershon. Due to their young age, management of the press initially passed to a guardian; but, in 1716, upon assuming his maturity, Aaron ben Hayyim David Segal, assumed control of the printing-house, issuing tractate *Bezah* in that year.²⁸

At the bottom of the title page of *Bezah* is the printer's mark (fig. 18 *Bezah* 1716), the lion and castle configuration of Immanuel Benveniste, still another imperfect facsimile of the crest used on the title pages of the Benveniste tractates. It is not known whether Aaron ben Hayyim David employed this emblem on other titles. The use of this mark in Zolkiew is not mentioned in bibliographical sources.

Among the books with a copy of the Benveniste coat of arms mentioned by Yaari is the *Seder le-Arba'ah Tsomot* (fig. 19 *Seder le Arb'ah*) according to the custom of the community of Carpentras, printed by the physician Naphtali Hertz Levi of Emden and his son-in-law Kosmann ben Joseph Baruch (Amsterdam, 1762). Benveniste's mark appears on both volumes of this *mahzor* according to the rite of Carpentras, one of the four carriers—the others being Avignon, Lisle, and Cavaillon—comprising the Comtat Venaissin in northern Provence. The Jewish inhabitants of these papal enclaves in France shared several distinguishing features, among them a rite that differed in several particulars from current Jewish liturgy.²⁹ The placement of the lion and castle device in the *Seder le-Arba'ah Tsomot* is not on the title page, as in the preceding works, but instead is to be found with the approbations. The usage of Benveniste's mark here is also unusual in that the form employed is the one that elsewhere was reserved for talmudic treatises.

Another eighteenth century work not noted by Yaari is *Divrei David* by R. David ben Raphael Meldola (Amsterdam, 1757), the Benveniste device appearing on f. 24 after the approbations.

²⁷ Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Poland from its beginning in the year 1534 and its development to the present* (Antwerp, 1932), p. 54 [Hebrew]; Ref. Fuks, who suggests a slightly different chronology, II p. 242.

²⁸ Friedberg, *Poland*, p. 54.

²⁹ For a general work reference Marianne Calmann, *The Carriers of Carpentras* (London, New York, Toronto, 1984) and, concerning the liturgy, Cecil Roth, "The Liturgies of Avignon and the Comtat Venaissin," *Journal of Jewish Bibliography* I no. 4 (New York, 1939), pp. 99–105.

After a hiatus of more than a century-and-a-half the Beneveniste device reappeared on *Der Babylonische Talmud* (Berlin, 1929–36), a translation of the Babylonian Talmud into German by Lazarus Goldschmidt. Printed in two formats, the nine-volume edition has the text of the *gemara* in the center of the page but omits Rashi and *Tosafot*. Goldschmidt's translation, accompanied by variant readings and explanatory notes, surrounds the text. The twelve-volume edition, printed in a smaller format, contains only the German text. The pressmark on the title pages is the Benveniste device, an upright lion facing inward towards a tower; a star is above the lion and the tower. The surrounding crest is absent. One other usage was by the Horev press (fig. 20 Midrash Tanhuma), which issued facsimile imprints in the 1920s.

It is quite possible, however, that this celebrated printer's device will again adorn the title page of a new Hebrew book, for, like the famed Soncino tower, its associations are too proud and distinguished to be permanently and prematurely retired.

CHAPTER THREE

MIRROR-IMAGE MONOGRAMS AS PRINTERS' DEVICES ON TITLE PAGES OF HEBREW BOOKS PRINTED IN THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES¹

Hebrew printers' devices take a variety of shapes and forms, seemingly limited only by the printers' imagination and good taste. Some themes and even some specific marks recur more than others, over a period of centuries. Within Hebrew books printed over the last several centuries, one form of printers' escutcheon employed rather sparingly is the monogram made up of the printer's or publisher's initials.

Many marks commonly referred to as monograms are actually ciphers, the two forms being distinct: "A monogram is a combination of two or more letters, in which one letter forms part of another and cannot be separated from the whole. A cipher is merely an interlacing or placing together of two or more letters, being in no way dependent for their parts on other of the letters."² Nevertheless, we will follow common usage and not distinguish between the two forms in this paper.

Monograms have a long history. Many ancient Greek and Roman coins were struck with the monogram of the issuing ruler or locality, and the signatures of the Frankish kings were in the form of monograms. Monograms and ciphers were widely used in the Middle Ages for ecclesiastical, artistic, and commercial purposes; most artists and every person of substance had one. Christian merchants, lacking heraldic emblems, arranged their initials in monogram form, generally combined with religious symbols, either for protective purposes or to differentiate their wares from those of Moslem traders in the East. Henry II (1519–1559), king of France, and Dianne de Poitiers (1499–1566), duchess of Valentinois, formed a famous monogram from

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Printing History* 40 (Rochester, N. Y., 2000), pp. 2–11.

The author is grateful to Ms. Carol Perlmuter, graphics and publications director, Federal Reserve Bank of New York and to Mr. Roy Benessere for their assistance in reproducing and analyzing the monograms in this paper.

² A. A. Turbayne, *Monograms and Ciphers* (Edinburgh, 1906; reprint New York: Dover Publications, 1968), xiv.

the interlaced 'H. D.', which can be found stamped on every building erected by the king.³ As early as 1457 printers' marks appear with the double shield of Fust and Schoeffer, and not long after the invention of printing with moveable type monograms begin to be employed as printers' devices.

Curiously, given the widespread use of monograms in the general community and the variety of Hebrew printers' marks, there are no monograms on the title pages of Hebrew books made up of Hebrew letters, although instances of monograms formed from intertwined Hebrew letters are found on ancient inscriptions, such as tombstones. The monograms on the title pages of Hebrew books are made up from the Latin initials.⁴ In most cases the letters in the monogram are the only Latin letters on the page, the text of the page being entirely in Hebrew except where it was necessary to include a censor's statement.

It has been suggested that a prayer book printed in Prague (1512) and the Hebrew books printed by Paulus Fagius in Isny (1541–42) have monograms comprised of Hebrew letters on their title pages.⁵ The title page of the prayer book, the first book printed in Prague and the first such work printed in central Europe, has the names of the partners in the publication of that book entered in various places in a *Magen David* (shield of David, sexagram), which serves as the printers' signet. One name, Meir ben David, is followed by the letters מכת"ם, referring to his activity as a scribe. The letters are not joined or intertwined and cannot, for our purposes, be said to form a monogram. The second signet, comprised of the letters פ"ב, is also not a monogram, for the letters stand independently on each side of Paulus Fagius's device, a tree, below which is the phrase, in Hebrew, "Every good tree gives forth good fruit." It would seem, therefore, that Yaari's observation as to the absence of Hebrew monograms on the title pages of Hebrew books is correct.⁶

³ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. 11th Edition (New York, 1910–11) 18:731.

⁴ Abraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem, 1956; reprint Westmead: Gregg International Publishers, 1971) xii [Hebrew].

⁵ Abraham Habermann, *The History of the Hebrew Book. From Marks to Letters: From Scroll to Book* (Jerusalem: Reuben Mass, 1968), 193 [Hebrew].

⁶ If standalone initials are to be considered monograms, a number of additional early Hebrew printers' devices should be mentioned. Among them are Joseph ben Jacob Shalit (Sabbioneta, 1551–56), whose mark was a bird (perhaps a peacock) with a fish in its mouth, set in a crest, with his initials ישי"ב displayed along the sides of the device; the ensign of Tobias Foa (Sabbioneta, 1551–59), represented by a palm tree with a *Magen David* and two rampant lions, with the initials טפ, similarly detached; and Zevi ben Abraham Kalonymus Jaffe (Lublin, 1604–28), whose device, a deer

The use of monograms or ciphers allows, in addition to the artistic possibilities, a considerable number of variables in arrangement. For example, the letter AA has one reading only, AB two readings, and any three letters can be read in six ways. A total of 676 different two-letter combinations can be formed utilizing the complete alphabet, whereas 15,600 three-letter combinations can be formed without repeating letters.⁷

What may have been the first monogram to appear on the title page of a Hebrew book is not a printer's emblem but the signet of the woodcut artist Cristoffel van Sichem. Van Sichem (II or IV)—there are four woodcut artists, close family members with the same name and employing the same monogram—prepared the frames employed on the title pages of the books printed by Immanuel Benveniste.⁸ Van Sichem's initials 'CVS' appear in the lower right hand corner of the frames of those books, except for the Talmudic tractates, which bear Benveniste's crest rather than the frame.

Abraham Yaari reproduces 208 printers' devices in *Hebrew Printers' Marks*; nine of them, representing seven printers, are mirror-image monograms or, more precisely, ciphers.⁹ Mirror-image monograms can be read directly and in reverse (mirror) image. They result in more attractive and certainly more complex marks than the simple interlacing of letters. They are, however, more difficult to interpret; the undiscerning reader is often unaware that the mark is a signet rather than an ornamental device.

A small number of Hebrew printers utilized mirror-image monograms as their devices. This paper will attempt to give an overview of the use of these monograms by Hebrew printers, emphasizing the most important printers, a selection of mirror-image monograms, and those devices not represented in *Hebrew Printers' Marks*.

with raised forelegs, above a crown atop a shield with two fish, is surrounded by the Hebrew letters צבא־קִי ז, the *zayin* at the end standing for "may he be remembered for a blessing." David de Pomis (Venice, 1587) placed the Latin letters 'DP' on either side of his mark, rampant lions about a tree.

⁷ Turbayne, ix–xi.

⁸ Concerning the various frames used on Benveniste's books and their further use by later printers see Marvin J. Heller, "The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and Its Later Influence," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (Cincinnati, 1995), 3–20.

⁹ In an article in *Kiryat Sefer* (Jerusalem, 1957), 501 [Hebrew], Yaari recorded an additional nine printers' marks, one a monogram but not a mirror-image monogram.

The earliest monogram to function as a printers' device on a Hebrew book is that of the Frankfurt-am-Oder printer, Michael Gottschalk. As early as 1502, perhaps due to the favorable environment created by the presence of a university, books had been printed in that city by Martin Tretter, who issued two titles. The first Hebrew book printed in Frankfurt, a Hebrew Bible, was issued by the Christian printers Joachim and Friedreich Hartmann (1594–1631), in 1595–96. Somewhat less than a century later, Johann Christoph Beckman, professor of Greek language, history, and theology at the University of Frankfurt-an-Oder, who been operating a printing press from 1673 and issuing Hebrew books from 1677, found that his responsibilities at the university left him with insufficient time to manage his press. Beckman therefore, in 1693, contracted with Michael Gottschalk, a local bookbinder and book dealer, to manage the printing house, transferring all of the typographical equipment and material to Gottschalk. Their arrangement was noted on the title pages of the books issued by the press, which stated “with the letters of lord Johann Christoph Beckman, Doctor and Professor . . . at the press of Michael Gottschalk.”

Gottschalk was the moving spirit of the press for almost four decades. Shortly after assuming control of the print shop and issuing a number of books, he approached Beckman, requesting that he obtain permission to reprint the Talmud. Beckman petitioned Frederick III (1657–1713), elector of Brandenburg (and, as of January 18, 1701, king of Prussia), who granted a license to print the Talmud on the condition that the source for this edition be the much censored Basle Talmud. Beckman and Gottschalk were granted a copyright, forbidding any other competing editions. This copyright, supported by rabbinic approbations, was the first instance of a restrictive privilege limiting the reprinting of the Talmud being issued for commercial reasons. The Bermann Talmud—as it is referred to after the Court Jew Issachar ha-Levi Bermann, known as Berend Lehmann of Halberstadt, who financed the edition—was printed from 1697 to 1699.

Michael Gottschalk's printer's mark on the title pages of the tractates (there is a preceding volume title page), is a monogram formed from the interlaced letters of his initials MG, which can be read in straight and reverse images (fig. 21). It is the sole ornamentation on the title page. On at least one title page, that of *Seder Mo'ed*, the cipher is slightly different, being surrounded by a wreath. This device also appears on at least two title pages in Gottschalk's second Talmud edition (1715–22),

that is, *Berakhot* and *Seder Mo'ed*. In the latter instance, the monogram is again encompassed by a wreath. In both Talmud editions which employ the ensign with wreath, it is on a title page of an order of Mishnayot, which has less text than that of a Talmudic treatise (fig. 22). Perhaps that is why Gottschalk's mark, in contrast to the use of such marks on other title pages in these editions and elsewhere, is large enough to take up about one third of the page.

The remaining volumes of the second Talmud edition employed another, more intricate and elongated, mirror-image monogram, also of the printer's initials (fig. 23). On most of his other imprints Gottschalk seems to have favored ornamental frames with depictions of biblical persons and vignettes over placing his monogram on the title pages. There are exceptions, however, such as the Ashkenaz rite *mahzor* (1712) with prayers by R. Isaiah Horowitz (*Shenei Luhot ha-Berit*), where the monogram with wreath is utilized.

Gottschalk's place in Frankfurt was taken by Professor F. Grillo, who, in association with the Berlin printer Aaron ben Moses Rofe of Lissa, printed the Talmud between 1734 and 1739. The printer's device on the title pages of this edition is the second Gottschalk monogram. It is correctly placed on most tractates but inverted on tractate *Niddah*. The error was quickly corrected, for on the title page of *Seder Tohorot*, printed immediately after and bound with *Niddah*, the monogram is right side up. Rofe employed the Gottschalk monogram, correctly positioned, on at least one other title, *Be'it Avraham* (1753), the responsa of R. Abraham Kohen of Zamosc. We also find this device inverted on the title page of *Givat Shaul*, the responsa of R. Saul ben Moses of Lonzo, printed in Zolkiew (1774) by David ben Menahem Mann.

The elongated Gottschalk monogram appears on the title page of part two of *Melekheth Makhshevet*, a book on mathematics compiled from earlier works by R. Moses Eisenstadt (*Hokhmat ha-Mispar*), R. Elijah Mizrachi (*Melekheth ha-Mispar*), and others. The first title page of this small work (the entire book is only 55 pages) is simple, with a thin ornamental border and an ornamental strip between the text and the place of printing and the date (Ostrog, 1806) and the name of the printer, Aaron ben Jonah. The title page of the second part, with the monogram (page fifty of the complete work) lacks the name of the printer, and states that it was printed in Berlin in 1779. In an article printed posthumously, Abraham Yaari writes that this part, of six pages, must have been printed in Ostrog, for not only are the letters

and paper uniform between the two parts, but even the signatures are continuous. He cannot explain the reason for Berlin being given as the place of printing on the second title page.¹⁰

The reader may find it difficult, without prior knowledge as to the letters comprising the Gottschalk monogram, to discern the printer's initials or to even realize that it is a monogram. Perhaps this explains why later printers placed a monogram with the initials of an earlier printer on the title pages of their books. This must have been the case when the typesetter for Rofe inverted the device on tractate *Niddah*, and even more likely so when it was reversed at the Mann press, suggesting that the device was seen merely an attractive ornament rather than as the monogram of an earlier printer.

Another late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century press was that of the Amsterdam publishers and printers Joseph (c. 1635–1700) and Immanuel Athias (c. 1664–1714). The firm was established by Joseph Athias in 1658; in 1685, he turned management of the Hebrew section of his press to his son Immanuel, concentrating on the other activities of the print shop and his newly acquired type foundry. The family's origins were in Spain and Joseph's father, Jorge Mendez de Castro, was burned alive at an *auto-da-fé* in Cordova in 1665. Joseph Athias, unlike the other Hebrew printers of that time, also printed books for the non-Jewish market. Relying on the stereotype process, in which pages are composed and fixed in an iron frame which can be stored for future use, Athias was able to print 250 Bibles in four hours.¹¹ In 1687 Athias claimed, in the introduction to his Yiddish Bible, to have printed more than a million Bibles for the English and Scottish market. The stereotype method was not employed for Athias's Hebrew books; their market was insufficient to justify the expense of the process.

Immanuel Athias, unlike his father, concentrated on Hebrew books, issuing his last, a Sephardic rite prayer book, in 1709. Although Joseph is more renowned, especially for his scholarly Bible editions, it is Immanuel who was responsible for the family's high repute in the world of Hebrew books. His four-volume edition of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* (1702), of which 1,150 copies were printed, was described by M. Steinschneider

¹⁰ Abraham Yaari, "The Hebrew Press in Ostrog," *Alei Sefer* 1 (Ramat Gan, 1975), 121.

¹¹ I. H. Van Eeghen, quoted in L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815. Historical Evaluation and Descriptive Bibliography* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1987), 2:288–89.

as “one of the most elegant and beautiful Hebrew editions to have ever appeared.”¹² Much of the Athias’s printing material, which was highly regarded, became the property of the Proops family in 1761. Immanuel Athias, who was known as Manuel, used as a device on the folio books he printed made up of the mirror-image of his initials, MJA, for Manuel ben Joseph Athias (fig. 24).

Among the prominent family names in the history of Hebrew printing is that of the Proops. Solomon ben Joseph Proops, a well known bookseller in Amsterdam prior to establishing a print shop in that city in 1704, issued Hebrew books until his death in 1734. Solomon Proops was succeeded by his sons, Joseph (d. 1786), Jacob (d. 1779), and Abraham (d. 1792), who, until they reached their maturity, gave their names on the title pages of the books that they printed as the “Orphans of the late כהר"ר [honorable R.] Solomon Katz זצ"ל [May the righteous be remembered for a blessing] Proops bookseller.” The printers’ devices used by the Proops family were variations of the Kohen’s spread hands at the time he pronounces the priestly blessing. This mark was utilized by a number of printers who were Kohanim (of priestly descent), beginning with Gershom ben Solomon ha-Kohen in Prague in 1514, and the Proops used it against different backgrounds accompanied by the name Proops in Hebrew letters. Members of the Proops family continued to print books in Amsterdam until 1869, when the widow of David Proops sold the press to the Levissons, who printed books until 1917.

Joseph and Jacob Proops issued an especially fine and attractive Talmud from 1752 to 1765.¹³ Its printing was interrupted due to a dispute with the Sulzbach press, which brought out a rival edition in violation of Proops’ restrictive approbations. Each volume has an engraved copperplate title page with the Kohen’s spread hands and the name Proops

¹² Quoted in Fuks, 307.

¹³ There was a hiatus in printing in the years 1755 and 1759–62. Raphael Natan Nuta Rabinovicz, *Ma’amar al Hadpasat ha-Talmud* with additions, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1952), 119 [Hebrew], attributes the 1755 interruption in printing to the appearance of the first volumes from the Sulzbach Talmud and the second, longer pause to the disruption of the Proops’ primary market in Poland. Haim Liberman, “The Babylonian Talmud, Fourth Amsterdam Printing” in *Ohel Rahel* 1 (Brooklyn, 1980–84): 377–80 [Hebrew], does not concur, writing that the disruptions are much exaggerated, the true cause of the interruption being competition from the Sulzbach Talmud. It should be noted that although the Proops denounced the Fraenkels for violating their copyright, the Fraenkels printed prior to the expiration of Rofé’s privilege, receiving rabbinic sanction to do so because the Rofé edition was not highly regarded.

at the head of the page. The tractate title pages, however, instead of the standard Proops' device, use one of two mirror-image monograms. These devices are certainly the most ingenious of the mirror-image monograms discussed in this paper. They are made up of all the letters in the names Jacob and Joseph, but most of the letters are not in mirror-image. In the monogram on the title pages of the first tractates the monogram is printed without the ornamental background used by Gottschalk and Athias (fig. 25). On the title pages of the later tractates, the monogram is printed within an ornate rococo framework (fig. 26). Here too, all the letters in Jacob and Joseph's names are employed, but in a new device.

A contemporary and rival Hebrew print shop of the Proops was the Fraenkel press in Sulzbach. This small Bavarian community was for over two centuries the site of Hebrew presses that printed many important titles. Duke Christian-Augustus, due to his interest in Kabbalah, permitted the opening of Hebrew print shops in the 1660s. Sulzbach was subsequently home to Hebrew presses belonging to Isaac Kohen Gersonides, Isaac ben Judah Loeb of Prague, Moses Bloch, and afterwards the Fraenkel-Arnstein family, which printed Hebrew books there from 1699 to 1851. The Fraenkel printing house was established by Aaron Fraenkel, who had worked previously for Bloch. His son, Meshulam Zalman ben Aaron Fraenkel, operated the press from 1722 to 1764, being succeeded in turn by his sons Aaron and Naphtali Fraenkel.

Meshulam Zalman's devices are, according to Yaari, made up of the initials SA for Salman Aaron (fig. 27).¹⁴ In his first monogram, which seems to have been used more extensively, the letter A is in the center, accompanied by the letter S in standard and reversed forms. Immediately above is the printer's name in Hebrew, given as 'the Printer Zalman' זלמן מדפיס, all of which are enclosed in a cartouche. This monogram appears on title pages with elaborate ornamentation, including that for *Menorat ha-Ma'or* (1755), which has depictions of the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac and small biblical vignettes. In the second monogram the letter A is clearer than the S and the background is more embellished. While not immediately evident, it is possible to find in both devices the letter M, resulting in a device comprised of the letters MSA for the printer's full name, Meshulam Zalman [ben] Aaron (fig. 28).

¹⁴ Yaari, 82 and 166, no. 131–32.

It is the second device that appears on his Talmud edition, printed from 1756 to 1763. In the first volume, tractate *Berakhot*, the title page is followed by a permission to print, in Latin, issued by the “Regimem Electorale Palatinum Sulzbacense.” The permission, dated “Sulzbaci die XIX, Octobr. Anno MDCCLIV,” is granted to “Salomoni Aaroni, typographo Judæo Sulzbacensi.” At the top of the page is Meshulam Zalman’s monogram, here accompanied by two cherubim and topped by a crown (fig. 29). This Talmud, known as the Sulzbach Red because the first title page in the volume was printed with red ink, is not highly regarded. It is smaller and physically less attractive than the Proops Talmud and has numerous errors. Shortly after printing the Sulzbach Red, Meshulam Zalman, in order to be able to devote more time to preparing the press for another Talmud edition, turned the print shop over to his sons, Aaron and Naphtali. They in return agreed to pay their father a weekly pension of ten florin for the rest of his life. He died in 1781.¹⁵

Aaron and Naphtali Fraenkel printed Hebrew books in Sulzbach from 1764 to 1771. Their monogram, which appears on the title pages of other books as well as the Talmud edition printed by them from 1766 to 1770, is made up of the letters ANMS, representing Aaron [and] Naphtali [ben] Meshulam Salman (fig. 30). The permission to print, issued in 1754, is printed here too, with their father’s device and monogram. This edition, known as the Sulzbach Black because all the title pages are in black ink, is considered inferior to the Sulzbach Red. The printing of contemporaneous Talmud editions by the Proops and Fraenkels resulted in the eighteenth century’s most acrimonious dispute concerning Hebrew printing.¹⁶

The second of the two monograms employed by Meshulam Zalman was employed by his grandson Seckel ben Aaron Fraenkel, who printed Hebrew books in Sulzbach from 1796 to 1819. He replaced the Hebrew name above the monogram, ‘Zalman,’ with ‘Seckel.’ The monogram did not have to be modified, both Zalman and Seckel being represented by an S. The earlier monogram was also employed by Seckel in at least one instance, his edition of *Bezah*, printed in 1800.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography of the Following Cities in Central Europe: Altona, Augsburg, Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt M., Frankfurt O., Fürth, Hamburg, Hanau, Heddernheim, Homburg, Ichenhausen, Neuwied, Wandsbeck, and Wilhermsdorf. Offenbach, Prague, Sulzbach, Thannhausen, From its Beginning in the Year 1513* (Antwerp, 1935), 76 [Hebrew].

¹⁶ Concerning the dispute between the two printers see Rabbinoicz, 119, 121–124.

¹⁷ Yaari, 175–76, no. 167.

Mirror-image monograms are also found on books printed in Fürth. Hebrew printing begins here in 1691 with the presses of Hirsch Frankfurter, brother-in-law of Mordecai (Marx) Model, court Jew to the margrave William Frederick of Brandenburg-Ansbach, and that of Joseph ben Solomon Zalman Schneur. Within a decade both print shops were closed, but a new press, which lasted until 1730, was established by the latter's son, Samuel Bonfed (d. 1728/29) in 1722. Another Hebrew print house, that of Hayyim ben Zevi Hirsch, opened in Fürth in 1737. Between eighty and a hundred titles were issued in the next three and a half decades, until Hayyim ben Zevi Hirsch's death in 1772, and subsequently under his widow's management until 1774. She then married Isaac ben David Zirndorfer, whose family managed the press until 1868. The Buchbinder family also printed Hebrew books in Fürth, Isaac Itzik ben Leib Buchbinder from 1761 to 1792 and his brother, Henoeh Buchbinder, from 1762 to 1767.

The devices on the title pages of the folio books printed by the Buchbinders are mirror-image monograms. They are very much alike except that one says "the Printer Itzik" **איצק מדפיס** and is made up of the letters IL and the other says "the Printer Henoeh" **הענך מדפיס** and employs the letters HL (figs. 31 and 32). The monograms are within a tentlike structure. On the lower-right-hand corner of Henoeh's mark are the letters SW, the initials of the craftsman who made this mark.¹⁸ The brother's devices seem to have been much influenced by the second mark of the Sulzbach printer, Meshulam Zalman. In turn, the device of Aaron and Naphtali Fraenkel appears to have been modeled after that of the Buchbinders.

An additional use of this pattern is to be found on the title pages of the later works issued by the longtime Fürth printer, Hayyim ben Zevi Hirsch, among them *Ṣera Yà'akov* by R. Jacob ben Pesach Konitz (1765); *Minhagim de-Kehilasenu* by the brothers R. Israel and Koppel ben Mordecai Gompel; the Yiddish work "*Keter Malchut*, which is the second part of *Sefer Yössiphon*" (both 1767); and *Hemed Moshe*, by R. Gedalia Moses (1769). Löwenstein informs us that there are instances when Hayyim ben Zevi Hirsch also made use of his device within a setting with cherubim like that of Meshulam Zalman.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ibid., 167, no. 133–34.

¹⁹ Leopold Löwenstein. "Zur Geschichte der Juden in Fürth. III. Der hebräischen Druckerei in Fürth," *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* 10 (Frankfurt, 1913),

The style of mirror-image devices may be divided into two groups. The first is comprised of interlaced letters against a plain background of the sort used by Gottschalk, Athias, and the Proops and Fraenkels in their earlier devices, as opposed to the later, more rococo signets used by the Proops, Fraenkels, Buchbinders, and Hayyim ben Zevi Hirsch. These devices were not widely used, being limited to Amsterdam and the Hebrew presses in the German cities of Sulzbach and Fürth.

Mirror-image monograms lost favor in the latter part of the eighteenth century, for subsequent monograms are straightforward and none are mirror-image devices. The Sulzbach and Fürth printers were the last to employ interlaced mirror-image monograms as their printers' devices, excluding the use of the Gottschalk monogram in Zolkiew noted above. The decline in the popularity of these complex ornate signets reflects popular usage, for the "copper plate engraving decorative initials in the rococo era of the 18th century... adorned with exuberant curves and delicate leaf and flower ornamentation" gave way to italic initials.²⁰

This trend is clearly evident in the choice of signets by Hebrew printers. Twelve mirror-image monograms employed by nine printers are described in this article. All, excepting Seckel ben Aaron's adaptation of his family's device, precede the first use of straightforward initials. The new style of employing letters as Hebrew printers' marks begins in 1781 with the use of the interlaced italic letters *ḤAK* by Johann Anton Krueger in Nowy Dwor as his signet.

176–77. "Die Kartouche trägt den Druckerstempel חיים מדפיס. Monogramm: ein doppelt verschlungenes H. Oben am Titelblatt zwei Engel, die eine Krone halten."

²⁰ Erhardt D. Stiebner and Dieter Urban. *Initials and Decorative Alphabets* (Poole, Dorset: Blanford Press, 1985), 19.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PRINTER'S MARK OF MARCO ANTONIO GIUSTINIANI AND THE PRINTING HOUSES THAT UTILIZED IT¹

Representations of the Temple in Jerusalem are among the cherished images of the Jewish people. The Temple is recalled in the daily liturgy, a tractate of the Talmud describes its dimensions, while another tractate details the daily priestly routine, and yet others address specific activities or services that took place there. It is not surprising, then, that a printer should select a representation of the Temple as his printer's device. Marco Antonio Giustiniani ("Justinian"), who printed Hebrew books in Venice, did so, with a representation that was imitated by other printers for a century and a half.

Giustiniani—the wealthy son of Niccolo Giustiniani, scion of a patrician family that traced its descent to the tribunes who governed Venice before the election of the first Doge in 697—opened his Hebrew publishing firm on the Calle delli Cinque alla Giustizia Vecchia, close to the Bridge of the Rialto, in 1545 [1 p. 252]. Marco Giustiniani was not the first to print Hebrew books in Venice. He was first preceded by Aldus Manutius (1449–1515; LQ 1 [January 1931]:91) and then by Daniel Bomberg of Antwerp. Manutius issued a proof sheet of a projected trilingual edition of the Bible in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew (the languages of classical scholarship) and employed Hebrew words in a small number of other works. Bomberg printed Hebrew books of considerable quality from the second decade of the sixteenth century for more than four decades, among them the first rabbinic Bible [2], the *editio princeps* of the Talmud [3], and the first Karaite book (*Prayer Book*) [4], ensuring his reputation to this day.

Giustiniani began printing with R. Moses ben Nahman's (Nachmanides, Ramban, 1194–1270) *Perush ha-Torah* [5], and Don Isaac ben Judah Abrabanel's (1437–1508) *Rosh Amanah* [6]. Neither of these two works

¹ The original version of this article was published under the title "The Cover Design" in the *The Library Quarterly*, 71:3 (Chicago, July, 2001), pp. 383–89.

has a printer's mark. The titles that followed, however, *Ze'vah Pesah* [7] (Abrabanel's commentary on the Passover Haggadah) and Abrabanel's *Nahalat Avot* on *Pirkei Avot* [8], and R. Moses ben Maimon's (Maimonides, Rambam, 1135–1204) *Iggerot ha-Rambam* [9], all have the Temple device on their title page, as do the other titles begun in 1545, such as *Midrash Rabbah al ha-Torah* [10]² and R. Menahem ben Benjamin Recanati's (late 13th-early-14th centuries) *Perush ha-Torah* [12].

Indeed, after this printer's mark (fig. 33) and another larger representation (see fig. 34), appears on almost all of Giustiniani's imprints until his press closed in 1552, including the title page of every tractate of his Talmud [13], although there are instances where it appears on the verso of the title page or on the last page of the volume [14].³ Giustiniani's printer's device is most often the only ornamentation on the title page, although for a number of folio books, such as R. David Kimhi's (Radak, c. 1160–c. 1235) *Sefer ha-Shorashim* [17] (1547), the anonymous medieval halakhic work *Kol Bo* [18], and Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* [19], there is a decorative frame. In some instances—for example, *Halakhot Gedolot* [20], which is attributed to R. Simeon Kayyara, (second half of the ninth century)—the text did not leave sufficient space for the Temple representation on the title page.⁴

Giustiniani's printer device is a conventional representation of the Temple that is architecturally much closer to the Moslem Mosque of Omar than it is to the Temple in Jerusalem. Medieval travelers to Jerusalem returned with drawings of the "Dome of the Rock," often copied in both Jewish and Christian books, and thus well known to the general public [22, plate 18]. The Hebrew words *בית המקדש* (*Bet ha-Mikdash*, the Holy Temple) appears on the structure's dome and top level, and a banner furled over it states, "The glory of this latter House shall be greater than that of the former, says the Lord of hosts"

² The *Midrash Rabbah* exists in two enigmatic editions, one with the title page and emblem of Giustiniani, the other with a title page attributing the work to the Bomberg press. Excepting the title pages, decorative frames about initial words to books, and minor typographical differences, the two editions are identical, including the colophon attributing, in both cases, the work to Cornelius Adel Kind, reflecting the "rather chaotic conditions of Hebrew printing in Venice in the 1540s." [11, pp. 432–33 n. 29].

³ Among the titles printed without the Temple device see [15] and [16].

⁴ See [21, Part I Index p. 451]. Vinograd enumerates 105 titles by the Giustiniani press. This number, however, includes individual tractates and Orders of Mishnayot in Giustiniani's Talmud, more than forty entries.

(Haggai 2:9) [23–24].⁵ According to Hebrew bibliographers such as Joshua Bloch and many others, the intent of the verse is that Giustiniani's press would one day overshadow that of his great rival, Daniel Bomberg. Giustiniani's press, however, did not surpass that of Bomberg in either quality or number of books issued. Nevertheless, the high quality of many Giustiniani books sufficiently secured his reputation as a printer and made his name and printer's mark attractive enough to other printers to want to emulate him [25, p. 79].

In this second, larger version of the Temple representation (fig. 34), used with such books as R. Jacob ben Asher's *Arba'ah Turim Orah Hayyim* [26] with the first printing (1550) of R. Joseph Caro's commentary *Beit Yosef*, Giustiniani's printer device appears on the title page and at the end of the work. In the latter instance the Temple is surrounded on three sides by the complete verse from Haggai, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, says the Lord of hosts; and in this place I will give peace, says the Lord of hosts." On the fourth side, to the right, is the text, "in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which your hands have established" (Exodus 16:17) [14]. There are a small number of instances when the verse "I have waited for your salvation, O Lord" (Gen. 49:18) appears above the depiction, for example, in *Haftarot* (1551) [27].⁶ There are yet other instances where the placement varies and another verse appears, for example, Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* (noted above), where the device is on a page following the title page and the verse is, "I have surely built you a house to dwell in, a settled place for you to abide in forever" (I Kings 8:13).

Giustiniani's relationship to his device, however, has been challenged. The late noted Hebrew bibliographer, Abraham Yaari, disputes the previously unquestioned assumption that the Temple device is actually that of Marco Antonio Giustiniani, assigning it instead to Giustiniani's associates—the partners Judah ben Isaac ha-Levi Ashkenazi (Loeb Kulpa) and Jehiel ben Jekuthiel ha-Kohen Rapa. Among Yaari's proofs are that the Temple symbol is more appropriate to the Ashkenazi and

⁵ The phrase "The glory of this latter Temple" appears elsewhere without the Giustiniani device. For example, Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai, the first printer of Hebrew books in Livorno, Italy, began with the midrashic work *Yalkut Shimoni* [23]; the book is dated, in the colophon, with a chronogram based on this verse. The verse from Haggai had been used previously in Constantinople in the colophon of R. Abraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi's (ha-Zaken, c. 1440–c. 1528) *Mashreh Kitrin* (1510) printed by the "aged David ben Nahmias and I, Astruc de Toulon, a man of Provençal."

⁶ In a reproduction of the title page of this edition of *Haftarot*, the verse reported by Yaari, and reputedly the source of his reproduction of the device, is not evident.

Kohen Rapa partners—the former a Levite (a descendant of the tribe of Levi) and the latter a Kohen (priestly family)—are that both Levites and Kohanim were participants in the Temple service, and the phrase “The glory of this latter House” does not, according to Yaari, but allude to Bomberg’s press, rather to the third Temple (the first having been destroyed in Babylonian times, the second by the Romans; the third Temple is anticipated to be built in Messianic times). Furthermore, Yaari contends, two books printed by Giustiniani’s master printer, Cornelius Adelkind, do not include this pressmark or mention either of the partners’ names [28; see also 14].

Yaari’s reevaluation of the attribution, however, did not go unchallenged. Isaiah Sonne responded that the reproduction of the Temple is not the partners’ mark. The Kohen’s symbol is most often the spread hands at the time of benediction, and the Levi is usually represented by a hand with a laver pouring water. Moreover, sixteenth-century printers, jealous of their prerogatives, generally did not permit workers to place their marks on the title pages of books. The Temple pressmark is also not Giustiniani’s family symbol, for in the early years of the sixteenth century, printers’ marks displaced family crests on title pages. Sonne asserts that Giustiniani (a non-Jewish printer of Hebrew books) specifically selected the Temple device not as a family symbol but as a printer’s mark that would find favor with his Jewish customers. Sonne reinforced this claim with the observation that the partners printed books without this printer’s device, yet the majority of Giustiniani’s books have it without mention of either partner. Sonne concludes that the Temple device, as is commonly understood, is indeed that of Marco Antonio Giustiniani, and that the phrase “The glory of this latter House” does refer to his boast that his press would surpass that of Daniel Bomberg [29–30; see also 14].⁷

If Giustiniani did not surpass Bomberg, he did, as noted above, secure his reputation with the variety and quality of the books he printed, foremost among them his edition of the Talmud [13]. Though most later editions of the Talmud were based on a Bomberg edition (the Giustiniani edition was rare and usually unavailable due to its proximity in time to the burning of that work in 1553–54), later printers often claimed that their Talmud was based on the Giustiniani edition. [31, pp. 135–92; 32, pp. 68–70].⁸

⁷ For Yaari’s response, see [30].

⁸ On the Bomberg and Giustiniani Talmud editions, see [31].

Imitations of Giustiniani's Printer Device

The first imitation reproduction of the Giustiniani device occurred in Prague, at the press of Mordecai ben Gershom Katz. Mordecai, a son of Gershom ben Solomon Kohen (Katz)—whose press was begun and operated by his descendants, known as the Gersonides—printed in Prague from 1514 until the mid-1600s. Mordecai printed a number of books with a reproduction of the Temple mark: R. Moses ben Israel Isserles' (Rema, c. 1530–1572) *Torat ha-Olah* [33], and the anonymous *Orhot Zaddikim* (1581) [34].

In *Torat ha-Olah*, Isserles (one of the greatest Jewish sages of that generation) explains the symbolism, meaning, and purpose of the Temple, its measurements, and the sacrifices offered there. Giustiniani's printer device appears at the end of Parts I and II of this work. *Orhot Zaddikim*—a popular ethical work emphasizing the development of good character traits, which to date has gone through almost a hundred editions—has the Temple representation on the final page of the volume. Additional books were printed by Gershom ben Joseph Bezalel Katz in Prague fifteen years later (1595). One volume, made up of two titles (*Sibbuw* [35] and *Midrash Yonah* [36]), has Giustiniani's printer mark. The first title, *Sibbuw*, is a late twelfth-century travel narrative by Pethahiah ben Jacob of Regensburg; the second is a midrash on the book of Jonah. Here the Giustiniani printer mark appears after the colophon at the end of the volume. The printer's device used in this volume, however, is not only not nearly as fine as the Giustiniani original; it also differs in several particulars from its usage in Venice. In the imitation reproduction the structure is smaller and cruder relative to the whole device. The banner is enhanced, slightly different in shape, and has increased shading. Though it is not clear what relevance the verse from Haggai has to the Prague printers, it is likely that this imitation press-mark appears in other works as well, in addition to those noted here.⁹ Other Prague printers to use the device are Solomon ben Mordecai Katz, in R. Judah ben Bezalel Loew's (Maharal, c. 1525–1609) *Derash* (1593), Moses ben Katriel Weisswasser, on the title page of Bahya ben Asher's *Shulhan shel Arba* (1596), and Moses ben Abraham Schedel in his *Helkat Mehokek*, a commentary on the *Pesah Haggadah*, the Temple device appearing by *dayenu*.

⁹ I would like to thank Mr. Roy Benessere for bringing some of these details to my attention.

One additional Prague usage must be noted. In two instances, at the presses of Hayyim ben Jacob ha-Kohen and Abraham Lemberger a variant form of the Temple pressmark was used. Hayyim ben Jacob ha-Kohen utilized the Temple pressmark on several books from 1604 to 1612. While the representation of the temple is like that of Giustiniani, several other obvious modifications are present. The banner is now above and detached from the pressmark; below the mark is a strip with two reclining lions at the outer ends, facing in, and between them a small animal, presumably a sheep (fig. 35). About it is "Ariel, Ariel, the city where God encamped," derived from "Woe to Ariel, Ariel, the city where David encamped" (Isaiah 29:1). This version of the pressmark appears on several titles printed by Hayyim ben Jacob ha-Kohen [14, p. 31]. Lemberger too used this form of the pressmark, it appearing in R. Manoah Hendel ben Shemaria's *Manoah Matsa Hen*, placed below the introduction.

Another press to make use of the Giustiniani device was the printshop established in Lublin, Poland, by the family of the peripatetic pioneer printer, Hayyim ben David Shahor (Schwarz, d. c. 1547). His son-in-law, Joseph ben Yakar, and Hayyim's son Isaac, established a press that, through descendants and collateral members, was active for over a hundred and fifty years. The family had originally worked in Prague and their books show the influences of the Prague presses. The founders did not operate the press for long, however, for Isaac Shahor died in c. 1554 and Joseph ben Yakar, who had left Lublin to work for Giustiniani, returned in 1554 but is reported to have died shortly afterwards. Kalonymous ben Mordecai Jaffe, the husband of Hayyim Shahor's granddaughter Hannah and a second cousin of the famous Talmudic scholar and codifier, R. Mordecai ben Abraham Jaffe, replaced Isaac. Joseph ben Yakar's position was filled by Eliezer ben Isaac, a well-known printer from Prague, possibly a grandson of Hayyim Shahor. Eliezer remained with the press until 1574. The year before, in his last book, *Pahad Yizhak*, Eliezer bemoans the state of Polish Jewry, and he determined to leave Poland, although it is not yet clear whether his objective was Erez Israel, where he could fulfill the *mitzvah* (precept) of residing in the Holy Land.

Kalonymous ben Mordecai Jaffe acquired much of Eliezer ben Isaac's¹⁰ typographical equipment when the latter departed for Con-

¹⁰ Concerning Eliezer ben Isaac and his use of this pressmark in the books he printed in Constantinople and Safed, see [37].

stantinople in 1575. In sole charge of the Hebrew press in Lublin [38, p. 50], Kalonymous printed a large variety of books and works from local authors, such as the Talmud and *Zohar* [39], halakhah, and philosophical (or antiphilosophical) works. Kalonymous' use of the reproduction of Giustiniani's Temple device is irregular, so its frequency is not known with certainty. Among his first titles to bear the imitation pressmark, however, is *Sha'arei Dura* [40] by R. Isaac ben Meir of Dueren (late thirteenth century). Printed previously, reprinted frequently, and the subject of numerous commentaries, *Sha'arei Dura* is about *issur ve-hetter* (laws of forbidden food). This edition is undated, and estimates of its date of publication vary from 1575 to 1590.¹¹ On the bottom of the final page of the introduction (p. 3b), however, is a reproduction of the Giustiniani device.

After fifty years as a printer of distinction, Kalonymous died in 1603. Several months of inactivity at the press followed, at which time he was succeeded by his grandson, Zvi Hirsch ben Abraham.¹² *Seder Zera'im* [41], printed in 1617, and at least two tractates, *Nazir* and *Nedarim* [42 and 43, respectively], printed in 1619, all have Giustiniani's pressmark. A small number of other works, very rare, are reported to also have this device as well. Among the additional Lublin imprints reported to have this pressmark are *Hilkhot Rav Alfis* (1619) and R. Moses Kimhi's (Remak, d. c. 1190) grammatical work, *Mahalakh Shevilei ha-Da'at* (1622) [see 14].

Eliezer ben Isaac, noted above, together with his son Isaac, had left Lublin by 1575, after printing in Poland for more than a decade and a half. His immediate destination was Constantinople, where he printed *She'elot u-Teshuvot ha-Geonim* (1575) and a prayer book, *Seder Tefillot Minhag Kehillot Romania* (1576), with a Romaniot (Byzantine) Jew, David ben Elijah Kashti, as partner. In these works he uses the surname Ashkenazi for the first time, thereby indicating his origin and differentiating himself from the local Romaniot and Sephardic Jewish communities. That same year Eliezer printed, independently, *Mekor Barukh* (1576), a commentary on Song of Songs (*Shir ha-Shirim*) by R. Baruch ibn Ya'ish [44]. The title page of this last work has a reproduction of the Giustiniani device, the Temple in Jerusalem (fig. 36). It is particularly

¹¹ See [21, Part II, p. 358, n. 32] and [14, p. 131].

¹² Zvi Hirsch ben Abraham's pressmark, which appears on the title page of several Talmudic treatises, is a deer with raised forelegs, above a crown atop a shield with two fish, the upper facing left and the lower facing right. This pressmark, however, is not on all the title pages.

appropriate here, for it is in this book that Eliezer explicitly states his intention to continue on to Erez Israel.

By 1577 Eliezer is in Safed, in the Holy Land. His first book, the first book printed in Erez Israel, is *Lekah Tov*, a commentary on the book of Esther by R. Yom Tov ben Moses Zahalon (Maharit Zahalon, 1558–1638). This commentary was written at an early age by R. Yom Tov, seventeen or eighteen, to send, as stated on the title page, for *mishlo'ah manot* (Purim gifts) to his father. It is completed with a copy of Giustiniani's device. Two small works appeared next, *Kohelet Ya'akov* (1577), a Kabbalistic-homiletic commentary on Ecclesiastes by R. Moses ben Mordecai Galante (Maharam Galante, c. 1520–c. 1610), and *Sar Shalom*, on Song of Songs (1579), by R. Samuel ben Isaac ben Yom Tov Aripul (Arepol, c. 1540–c. 1586). These were followed by a hiatus in printing in Safed until 1587. Eliezer was again briefly in Constantinople, where he printed, again with David Kashti, R. Samuel Aripul's *Lev Hakham* (1586), a lengthy philosophical commentary on Ecclesiastes [45]. The following year, Eliezer returned to Safed, where he printed three small books, beginning with *Zemiroth Yisrael*, religious poetry by R. Israel ben Moses Najara (c. 1555–c. 1625), considered by many the outstanding sacred poet of the period. Giustiniani's device here appears on the verso of the title page. These books are the last printed by Eliezer; it is assumed that Eliezer died shortly afterwards, perhaps due to an epidemic. [46]. Eliezer's copy of the Temple device is the form of the ensign used in Prague rather than the Giustiniani original.

Not all of the usages of the Temple reproduction noted here are reported in Yaari's *Hebrew Printers' Marks* [14]. It is likely—perhaps in a great many instances, particularly where the Temple printer's device does not appear on the title page—that the representation is unrecorded. Also not addressed in this article are other uses of the Temple motif as well, such as can be found in printed *haggadot* and *ketubot* (handwritten marriage contracts).¹³ What *is* certain, however, is that Marco Antonio Giustiniani, when selecting his printer's mark, he surely could not have anticipated its popularity and widespread usage, which, given the quality of his imprints and the appeal of its motif, has served to make that woodcut image one of the more popular ones in the history of Hebrew printing.

¹³ For a discussion of various forms of the Temple motif in a Haggadah, including mention of the Giustiniani form, see [47].

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CHAPTER FIVE

CHRONOGRAMS ON TITLE PAGES IN SELECTED EIGHTEENTH CENTURY EDITIONS OF THE TALMUD¹

The publication dates of Hebrew books were traditionally represented on their title pages by chronograms based on verses from either the Bible² or another familiar Hebrew source such as the *mahzor*. The reader calculated the date by adding the numerical value of letters highlighted in various ways. This method of dating books was widely practiced until the mid-nineteenth century and is still employed in some circles.

The verse selected customarily alluded to the work's subject matter, or to another event or circumstance the publisher wished to emphasize. The choice of verses required erudition and imagination on the part of the publisher or editor. It also assumed a knowledgeable reader capable of appreciating the publisher's selection, especially when only a truncated phrase was used instead of a full quotation.

An especially challenging application of this system is to date the Talmud's multiple volumes. Each tractate is unique. When verses are chosen for their association with the tractate's subject matter, numerous selections are required to express the same date. By representing the publication date with a verse, the publisher adorned his title page with a biblical phrase, transforming a mundane and commonplace fact into a poetic, even poignant statement.

Chronograms were not, however, employed in the earliest editions of the Talmud. The first tractates printed by the Soncinos lacked title pages; and the dates, when given, were found in the colophons. The earliest complete edition of the Talmud (excluding the first tractate, *Pesahim*, which was undated), was printed by Daniel Bomberg in Venice from 1519/20 to 1523. This edition, as well as the subsequent Italian and Basle editions, stated the date on the title page in a straightforward manner, as a date. The verses on the title pages of many of the tractates of the Basle Talmud are not used for dating purposes.

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 18 (Cincinnati, 1993), pp. 3–14.

² Biblical verses in this article are from the Jewish Publication Society edition of *The Holy Scriptures (Tanakh)* (Philadelphia, 1974).

The Talmud was printed several times in Poland in the first half of the seventeenth century. Verses were used as chronograms on the title pages of tractates in the Lublin edition of 1617–39 and also on the title pages of some individual tractates which were not part of an entire Talmud. In Amsterdam, Immanuel Benveniste printed the Talmud from 1644–47. He did not date each tractate separately, but rather represented the date with a separate biblical verse for each year of printing, from 1644–6, and with a line from the prayer book for the final year, 1647. The word or letters expressing the date are printed in enlarged letters. The verses are:

Israel is the Lord's hallowed (קדש = 404 = 1644) portion (Jeremiah 2:3)

You (אתה = 405 = 1645) will arise and show compassion to Zion (Psalms 102:14)

The ways of my God, my King, in holiness (בקדש = 406 = 1646) (Psalms 68:25)

Show us a sign (אות = 407 = 1647) for good and gather our dispersed (*Tahmun*)

In the next hundred and fifty years, several editions of the complete Talmud, as well as numerous editions of individual tractates, appeared. Generally, the date was shown on the title page, with a different verse suitable to the tractate's contents, even when multiple volumes were printed in the same year. I have selected three editions to demonstrate the ingenuity employed in the selection of these verses. They are the Amsterdam 1714–17, Frankfort on the Main 1720–23, and Amsterdam 1752–65 editions of the Talmud. These editions were chosen because of their importance in establishing the present text of the Talmud,³ because of use of the same verse for different dates, and to contrast the selection of verses.

In 1714 Judah Aryeh Leib ben Joseph Samuel arranged to have the Talmud printed in Amsterdam by Samuel ben Solomon Marquis and Raphael ben Joshua de Palachios. Their first tractate, *Berakhot*, was dated “the testimony (עדת = 474 = 1714) of the Lord is sure” (Psalms 19:8). This verse was preceded by the phrase “And the beginning of his work” ותהי ראשית ממלאכתו which also precedes the date for each of

³ Raphael Natan Nuta Rabbincvitz. *Ma'amar al Hadpasat ha-Talmud with additions* (Hebrew), ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem, 1952), pp. 102–3 and 111 [Hebrew].

the tractates printed in this and in the Frankfort Talmud. It is a play on Genesis 10:10 “And the beginning of his kingdom” ותהי ראשית ממלאכתו. *Berakhot* was printed together with *Seder Zera'im*, which deals with agricultural laws. The title page of that volume reads “Wholly a right seed” (Jeremiah 2:21).

Another edition of the Talmud was begun the same year in Amsterdam by Solomon Proops, the founder of the famous Proops press. He dated his edition of *Berakhot* as “In the year that all the peoples of the earth may know (דעת = 474 = 1714)” (Joshua 4:24). Proops was constrained from continuing his Talmud because of prior rabbinic prohibitions obtained by Marquis and de Palachios for their edition. They too, however, were unable to complete their edition of the Talmud. Michael Gottschalk, who had previously printed the Talmud in Frankfort on the Oder in 1697–99, began the second of his three editions of the Talmud in 1715. In 1717, Gottschalk, relying on the authority of printing privileges obtained for his editions, was able to prevent the Amsterdam edition from being completed after *Yevamot*, the second tractate of *Seder Nashim*, had been published.

Three years later, however, Judah Aryeh Leib resumed printing in Frankfort on the Main at the press of Johann Kölner. Judah Aryeh Leib began with *Kiddushin*, possibly with the intent of publishing only those tractates not printed in Amsterdam. In fact, whether due to greater demand than originally anticipated, or for other reasons, the entire Talmud was printed in Frankfort on the Main. To demonstrate the continuity of the two editions the title pages of the Amsterdam and Frankfort on the Main editions are alike, except for minor textual variations, the place of publication, and the printer’s mark. The same verses were used, with three exceptions, to date the tractates. This, however, required a modification of the letters highlighted, as several years had elapsed since the original printing.

There are instances where the same verse was employed on the title page of more than one treatise within an edition, for example, on *Bezah* and *Ta’anit*. The biblical phrase is utilized in such a manner, however, as to impart different meanings. In *Bezah*, which deals with festival laws, the date is given as “shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons” (Zechariah 8:19). In *Ta’anit*, which is concerned with fast days, the verse is given in a more complete form as “and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons”.

Tractates *Berakhot* and *Eduyyot* also share the same verse on their title pages. Here, however, variant spellings are used for the word testimony (עדות) in “the testimony of the Lord is sure.” In *Eduyyot* the vowel *vav* is included, which is the standard spelling in Psalms, the source of the verse. The phrase is, therefore, appropriate to the tractate, which deals with the laws of testimony. In *Berakhot* the letter *vav* has been dropped. The verse might now be read as “the congregation (עדת) of the Lord (that is the children of Israel) is faithful [to recite benedictions]” which is the subject matter of *Berakhot*.

The subject matter of *Erubin* is the complex laws of Sabbath boundaries. The date on the title page of that tractate is given as “then shall the offering of Judah [and Jerusalem] be pleasant unto the Lord” (Malachi 3:4). The only apparent relation between the tractate’s subject matter and the phrase on the title page is the shared Hebrew root in the words ערב (limits) and ערבה (pleasant). The verse was reused in a more harmonious manner on the title page of *Menahot*. That tractate’s subject matter is meal offerings.

Only three tractates in the 1714 Amsterdam and Frankfort Talmuds employ different verses for dating purposes. They are *Berakhot*, *Shabbat*, and *Ketubbot*. The phrase used on the title page of the Amsterdam *Berakhot*, as has already been noted, is “the testimony of the Lord is sure” (Psalms 19:8). In the Frankfort edition it appears as “Take, I pray thee, my gift” (Genesis 33:11). In *Shabbat* the Amsterdam and Frankfort verses, respectively, are “[For it is] time to be gracious unto her, for the appointed time is come” (Psalms 102:14) and “Ye shall keep the Sabbath” (Exodus 31:14). In *Ketubbot* the respective verses are “Above women in the tent shall she be blessed” (Judges 5:24) and “Even every one that is written unto life [in Jerusalem]” (Isaiah 4:3). This last usage is based on the shared root of the word to write כתב and *Ketubbot* כתובות.

The date on the title page of *Seder Tohorot* appears as “And I will purify you of your uncleanness.” This line, which is not a biblical phrase, is the only chronogram in all three of the editions under consideration which is not taken from the Bible.

The next complete edition of the Talmud printed in Amsterdam was that of Joseph and Jacob Proops, published between 1752 and 1765. The publication of this Talmud, too, was punctuated by disputes over the right to publish, in this case with the Frankel press in Sulzbach. Nevertheless, the Proops’ Talmud was a large, attractive, and well edited

edition, possibly the finest Talmud edition of the eighteenth century. The verses used on its title pages are more clearly related to the subject matter and do not rely on allusion or wordplay as in the editions published by Judah Aryeh Leib.

The only verse that appears on more than one title page in this Talmud is “And he shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken” (Deuteronomy 24:5) both on *Ketubbot* and *Kiddushin*. These treatises deal with different aspects of marital relations. *Avodah Zarah* has a title page in this Talmud. This tractate, which is concerned with idolatry, was the subject of even greater opposition from the Church than other treatises in the Talmud. As a result, it was omitted entirely from the Basle Talmud and was printed in Frankfort without a title page. In the more tolerant climate prevailing in Amsterdam, the tractate could not only be printed, but could be printed with a title page. The date is represented by “Thou shalt not bring an abomination into thy house” (Deuteronomy 7:26).

Occasionally, the Amsterdam printers used the same verse as had appeared in the Frankfort Talmud. For example, in *Sotah*, the phrase “And then she shall be cleared and shall conceive seed” (Numbers 5:28), and in *Horayot*, with “The early rain clotheth it with blessings” (Psalms 84:7). The applicability of the verse to *Sotah* is obvious, as the treatise deals with the laws of the suspected adulteress. *Horayot* addresses erroneous rulings by the court and the selection of “The early rain . . .” is not as immediately apparent. In fact, the choice is appropriate. The verse from Psalms may alternately be translated, “even with their blessings they enwrap their teacher”, which, as explained by Rashi, refers to transgressors, who, having seen the folly of their ways, praise and bless God for his justice. This phrase also appears on the title page of tractate *Berakhot* in the 1616–20 edition of the Talmud printed in Cracow.

Joseph and Jacob Proops also dated *Nazir* with the same verse used in the Frankfort edition. Here, however, a different portion of the phrase appears on the title page. In the Frankfort edition the chronogram on the title page of *Nazir* appears as “A Nazirite, to consecrate himself to the Lord” (Numbers 6:2). In the Amsterdam edition of *Nazir* the preceding portion of the line is given, “When [either man or woman] shall clearly utter a vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to consecrate himself [unto the Lord].” Another instance where the two printers used different portions of a biblical line is *Temurah*, which discusses substitution offerings. In the Amsterdam edition the verse begins “He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for bad.” The verse continues “[or a bad for

good and if he shall at all change beast for beast, then both],” and is completed in the Frankfort on the Main edition with “it and that for which it is changed [shall be] holy” (Leviticus 27:10).

The Amsterdam-Frankfort editions of *Shekalim* are dated with “And all thy valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary” (Leviticus 27:25). This verse is used for the date of *Arakhin* in the 1752 Amsterdam Talmud. The subject matter of *Shekalim* is the shekel dues for the Temple, whereas the subject matter of *Arakhin* is vows of valuation.

Dissimilar biblical phrases were generally selected to date the same tractate from the Talmud editions under consideration, that is, the Amsterdam-Frankfort on the Main and the 1752 Proops’ Amsterdam editions. From the relationship of the verses to their respective tractates, it would appear that the selection criteria also varied. In the Amsterdam 1752 edition the association of verses with the subject matter of the tractate is clearer, whereas the selections in the Amsterdam-Frankfort editions are more creative and, in some cases, more poignant. For *Shabbat*, however, the verse appearing on the title page of the 1714 Amsterdam edition was replaced by a less subtle phrase from Exodus when that tractate was reprinted in Frankfort. The following examples are, respectively, from the 1714 Amsterdam, Frankfort, and the 1752 Amsterdam editions of *Shabbat*:

[For it is] time to be gracious unto her, for the appointed time is come
(Psalms 102:14).

Ye shall keep the Sabbath (Exodus 31:14).

Wherefore the Children of Israel shall keep the sabbath (Exodus 31:16).

The phrase on the title page of *Shabbat* in the 1714 Amsterdam Talmud is appropriate to the tractate’s subject matter. However, the verse, in context, does not refer to the Sabbath. The biblical phrase in Psalms begins “Thou wilt arise and have compassion on Zion.” It is followed by “For thy servants take pleasure in her stones. . . .” In contrast, the phrases on the title pages of the Frankfort and Proops’ *Shabbat* editions are unambiguous, referring directly to the Sabbath.

Mo’ed Katan deals primarily with the intermediate days of festivals. However, it also includes material concerned with mourning. Both printers chose to represent the date with a verse referring to the latter aspect of the tractate’s contents: the Amsterdam-Frankfort edition with “That ye may suck, and be satisfied With the breast of her consolations”

(Isaiah 66:11), and the Amsterdam 1752 edition with “For I will turn their mourning unto joy” (Jeremiah 31:13).

There are many instances where both editions refer directly to the subject matter. Even for *Pesahim*, which is about Passover and is mentioned on the title pages of each of the editions, the verse selected by Judah Aryeh Leib from Second Kings requires greater sophistication on the part of the reader to be appreciated than does the verse from Exodus for the 1752 Amsterdam edition of *Pesahim*. The verses are “For there was not kept such a Passover” (II Kings 23:22) and “This is the ordinance of the Passover” (Exodus 12:43). The verse used on the Amsterdam-Frankfort title pages of *Pesahim* does not refer directly to the laws of Passover or the related sacrifices. Instead it refers to the Passover ordained by Josiah, based on “the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the Lord” (II Kings 23:2).

While Jacob and Joseph Proops obviously preferred to represent the date with unambiguous verses, they did show imagination in many of their choices. Contrast the way the date for *Ta’anit* is expressed in the Amsterdam-Frankfort edition “and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons” (Zechariah 8:19), with the Proops date “And at the evening offering I arose up from my fasting...and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God” (Ezra 9:5). Or, contrast their use of the well known line from Esther “The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honor” (Esther 8:16) with the Frankfort phrase “And fill thy bowels with this roll” (Ezekiel 3:3), “roll” being a play on the word “Megillah,” for tractate *Megillah*.

As noted above, the reader must calculate the date from the chronogram used for that purpose. The biblical phrase appears on the title page as a combination of juxtaposed larger and smaller letters. The date is determined by adding the numeric value of the larger letters. Frequently, the enlarged letters receive greater emphasis by being crowned with asterisks. The 1714 Amsterdam edition employs asterisks above the enlarged letters for date purposes beginning with tractate *Erubin*, whereas the 1752 Amsterdam Talmud used asterisks on the early title pages and most, but not all, of the later ones. The 1752 Amsterdam further differentiates between the letters to be included in the computation and those to be excluded, by printing the latter in Rashi, rather than square, type.

An example of how disparate dates were derived from the same verse is exemplified by “And all thy valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary” (Leviticus 27:25). This verse appears on

the title pages of treatises from all three editions. They are, as we have already observed, *Shekalim*, printed in Amsterdam in 1716 (476), and in Frankfort on the Main in 1721 (481), and *Arakhin*, printed in Amsterdam in 1764 (524). Below is the verse, with the emphasized letters presenting the dates from their respective editions (see figures 37, 38, and 39).

וכל צרכך יהיה בשקל הקודש
 וכל צרכך יהיה בשקל הקודש (° = * is omitted over enlarged letter,
 see fig. 38)
 וכל צרכך יהי' בשקל הקודש

Hebrew title pages often include the letters **לפ"ק**, or less frequently **לפ"ג**, after a date, to distinguish between the abbreviated and full era. Dates given in the abbreviated form (**לפ"ק**) omit the first digit which represents thousands (millennium). For example, the Hebrew date 476 is the abbreviated form of 5476. Conversely, the full form (**לפ"ג**) includes the thousands. In computing a Hebrew date it is important to know whether a date is for the full or abbreviated era, to determine whether a five is to be counted as five thousand or is to be included in the calculation of the date other than thousands. The current millennium began in 1240, so that all subsequent secular dates are derived by adding that number to the Hebrew date, for example, 476 plus 1240 equals 1716. The result is only approximate, however, as the Hebrew year actually begins three to four month earlier than the secular year. For instance, the year 476 (1716) began on September 28, 1715. All of the dates in these editions are for the abbreviated era. In the Amsterdam-Frankfort edition, however, **לפ"ק** has been included after the date on some treatises, but omitted from the title page of others, for no discernable reason.

Two title pages from the Frankfort edition are misdated. The numerical value of the enlarged letters on *Erwin* equals 475, or 1715, and on the title page of *Sotah* the highlighted letters have a value of 468, or 1708. Both of these dates are prior to the actual start of the printing of the Talmud in Frankfort. The Frankfort *Pesahim* lacks asterisks over the first two of the seven enlarged letters on its title page. However, it is clear that those letters, with a numeric value of thirty-one, are necessary to calculate the date correctly. Similarly, the edition of *Sotah* from that Talmud has no asterisk over the enlarged *shin*, which, with a value of three hundred, is also necessary to arrive at the date of publication. There is a misprint in the 1752 *Hullin*, a *tav* being substituted for a *mem*. The error does not influence the date.

The biblical verses gracing the title pages of these tractates come from twenty-one books of the Bible. Nine verses were taken from Deuteronomy and Exodus, eight from Isaiah and Psalms, and seven from Leviticus. Eleven books, Amos, Esther, Ezra, Hosea, Joshua, I and II Kings, Malachi, First and Second Samuel, and Zechariah contributed only one verse each. The phrase from Malachi, however, was the most widely used, recurring on four title pages. One line in the Frankfort Talmud, as previously mentioned, is not a biblical verse and could not be identified.

The biblical phrases used to calculate the dates of publication are listed in Appendix I. The 1714 Amsterdam and the Frankfort on the Main editions generally utilize the same verse for those tractates printed in both cities. They illustrate how the same verse can be manipulated to arrive at different dates. The dates in the Proops edition of the Talmud contrast the selection of verses for the same tractates. This appendix is followed by a list of the verses by source (Appendix II).

APPENDIX I

CHRONOGRAMS BY TRACTATE AND EDITION

Amsterdam 1714-17

- Berakhot*: The testimony of the Lord is sure.—Psalms 19:8.
- Seder Zera'im*: Wholly a right seed.—Jeremiah 2:21.
- Shabbat*: [For it is] time to be gracious unto her, for the appointed time is come.—Psalms 102:14.
- Erwin*: Then shall the offering of Judah [and Jerusalem] Be pleasant unto the Lord.—Malachi 3:4.
- Pesahim*: For there was not kept such a Passover.—Second Kings 23:22.
- Shekalim*: And all thy valuations shall be according to the shekel of the sanctuary.—Leviticus 27:25.
- Yoma*: And this shall be an everlasting statute unto you, to make atonement for the children of Israel.—Leviticus 16:34.
- Sukkah*: I will raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen.—Amos 9:11.
- Bezah*: Shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons.—Zechariah 8:19.
- Rosh Ha-Shanah*: God is gone up amidst shouting, the Lord amidst the sound of the horn.—Psalms 47:6.
- Ta'anit*: And the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful seasons.—Zechariah 8:19.
- Megillah*: And fill thy bowels with this roll.—Ezekiel 3:3.
- Mo'ed Katan*: That ye may suck, and be satisfied With the breast of her consolations.—Isaiah 66:11.
- Hagigah*: And ye shall keep it a feast to the Lord; throughout your generations ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance forever.—Exodus 12:14.

Yevamot: Then his brother's wife shall go up to the gate unto the elders.—Deuteronomy 25:7.

Ketubbot: Above women in the tent shall she be blessed.—Judges 5:24.

Frankfort 1720

Berakhot: Take, I pray thee, my gift.—Genesis 33:11.

Seder Zera'im: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Shabbat: Ye shall keep the Sabbath.—Exodus 31:14.

Eruvin: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Pesahim: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Shekalim: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Yoma: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Sukkah: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Bezah: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Rosh Ha-Shanah: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Ta'anit: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Megillah: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Mo'ed Katan: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Hagigah: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Yevamot: Same as Amsterdam 1714.

Ketubbot: Even every one who is written unto life [in Jerusalem].—Isaiah 4:3.

Nedarim: And after vows to make inquiry.—Proverbs 20:25.

Nazir: A Nazirite, to consecrate himself unto the Lord.—Numbers 6:2.

Sotah: Then she shall be cleared, and shall conceive seed.—Numbers 5:28.

- Gittin*: Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement.—Isaiah 50:1.
- Kiddushin*: Israel is the Lord's hallowed portion.—Jeremiah 2:3.
- Bava Kamma*: They shall not hurt nor destroy.—Isaiah 11:9, 65:25.
- Bava Mezia*: For whoso findeth me findeth life, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.—Proverbs 8:35.
- Bava Batra*: Peace be within thy walls, And prosperity within thy palaces.—Psalms 122:7.
- Sanhedrin*: And I will restore thy judges as at the first.—Isaiah 1:26.
- Makkot*: And I will heal thee of thy wounds.—Jeremiah 30:17.
- Shevu'ot*: I have sworn, and have confirmed it.—Psalms 119:106.
- Eduyyot*: Same as *Berakhot*, Amsterdam 1714..
- Avodah Zarah*: no title page.
- Horayot*: The early rain clotheth it with blessings.—Psalms 84:7.
- Zevahim*: To offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord.—I Kings 12:27.
- Menahot*: Same as *Eruvin*, Amsterdam 1714 and Frankfort.
- Hullin*: And slay them here and eat.—First Samuel 14:34.
- Bekhorot*: Sanctify unto Me all the first-born.—Exodus 13:2.
- Arakhin*: As thou the priest valuest it, so shall it be.—Leviticus 27:12.
- Temurah*: It and that for which it is changed [shall be] holy.—Leviticus 27:10, 33.
- Keritot*: Neither shall all flesh be cut off.—Genesis 9:11.
- Me'ilah*: Ye have not committed this treachery against the Lord.—Joshua 22:31.
- Niddah*: It shall be purified with the water of sprinkling.—Numbers 31:23.
- Seder Tohorot*: And I will purify you of your uncleanness (Ezekiel 36:25).

Amsterdam 1752–56

Berakhot: [And] through Thy blessing let the house of Thy servant be blessed for ever.—II Samuel 7:29.

Seder Zera'im: Sow to yourselves, according to righteousness, reap according to mercy.—Hosea 10:12.

Shabbat: Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath.—Exodus 31:16.

Erwin: Abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.—Exodus 16:29.

Pesahim: This is the ordinance of the Passover.—Exodus 12:43.

Shekalim: And I will make justice the line, And righteousness the plummet.—Isaiah 28:17.

Yoma: Howbeit on the tenth day of this seventh month is the day of atonement.—Leviticus 23:27.

Sukkah: All that are home-born in Israel shall dwell in booths.—Leviticus 23:42.

Bezah: They shall prepare that which they bring in.—Exodus 16:5.

Rosh Ha-Shanah: And it shall come to pass in that day, That a great horn shall be blown.—Isaiah 27:13.

Ta'anit: And at the evening offering I arose up from my fasting... and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God.—Ezra 9:5.

Megillah: The Jews had light and gladness, and joy and honor.—Esther 8:16.

Mo'ed Katan: For I will turn their mourning unto joy.—Jeremiah 31:13.

Hagigah: Seven days shalt thou keep a feast unto the Lord thy God.—Deuteronomy 16:15.

Yevamot: Same as Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort.

Ketubbot: And shall cheer his wife whom he hath taken.—Deuteronomy 24:5.

Nedarim: [Unto] the heads of the tribes [...saying...When a man voweth a vow.]—Numbers 30:2.

Nazir: When [either man or woman] shall clearly uttereth a vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to consecrate himself [unto the Lord.]—Numbers 6:2.

Sotah: Same as Frankfort.

Gittin: That he writeth her a bill of divorcement.—Deuteronomy 24:1, 3.

Kiddushin: Same as *Ketubbot*, Amsterdam 1752.

Bava Kamma: Then he shall give for the redemption of his life.—Exodus 21:30.

Bava Mezia: And so shalt thou do with every lost thing of thy brother's, which he has lost, and thou hast found.—Deuteronomy 22:3.

Bava Batra: And possess the land.—Deuteronomy 4:1, 8:1, 11:8.

Sanhedrin: And let them judge the people at all seasons.—Exodus 18:22, 26.

Makkot: If [the wicked man] deserve to be beaten.—Deuteronomy 25:2.

Shevu'ot: Same as Frankfort.

Eduyyot: I will also speak of thy testimonies.—Psalms 119:46.

Avodah Zarah: Thou shalt not bring an abomination into thy house. Deuteronomy 7:26.

Horayot: Same as Frankfort.

Zevahim: [Then wilt] Thou delight in the sacrifices of righteousness.—Psalms 51:21.

Menahot: Same as Amsterdam 1714, *Erwin*, Frankfort, and *Menahot*, Frankfort.

Hullin: Same as Frankfort.

Bekhorot: All the firstling males that are born.—Deuteronomy 15:19.

Arakhin: Same as Amsterdam 1714 and *Shekalim*, Frankfort.

Temurah: He shall not alter it, nor change it, a good for a bad, [or a bad for a good].—Leviticus 27:10.

Keritot: I will give them an everlasting memorial, that shall not be cut off.—Isaiah 56:5.

Me'ilah: [And the priest] shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt-offering, and he shall be forgiven.—Leviticus 5:16.

Niddah: Same as Frankfort.

Seder Tohorot: And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. Ezekiel 36:25.

APPENDIX II

LISTING OF VERSES BY SOURCE

- Amos 9:11—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Sukkah*.
- Deuteronomy 4:1, 8:1, 11:8—Amsterdam 1752. *Bava Batra*.
- Deuteronomy 7:26—Amsterdam 1752. *Avodah Zarah*.
- Deuteronomy 15:19—Amsterdam 1752. *Bekhorot*.
- Deuteronomy 16:15—Amsterdam 1752. *Hagigah*.
- Deuteronomy 22:3—Amsterdam 1752. *Bava Mezia*.
- Deuteronomy 24:1, 3—Amsterdam 1752. *Gittin*.
- Deuteronomy 24:5—Amsterdam 1752. *Ketubbot, Kiddushin*.
- Deuteronomy 25:2—Amsterdam 1752. *Makkot*.
- Deuteronomy 25:7—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Yevamot*.
- Esther 8:16—Amsterdam 1752. *Megillah*.
- Exodus 12:14—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Hagigah*.
- Exodus 12:43—Amsterdam 1752. *Pesahim*.
- Exodus 13:2—Frankfort 1720. *Bekhorot*.
- Exodus 16:5—Amsterdam 1752. *Bezah*.
- Exodus 16:29—Amsterdam 1752. *Erwin*.
- Exodus 18:22, 26—Amsterdam 1752. *Sanhedrin*.
- Exodus 21:30—Amsterdam 1752. *Bava Kamma*.
- Exodus 31:14—Frankfort 1720. *Shabbat*.
- Exodus 31:16—Amsterdam 1752. *Shabbat*.
- Ezekiel 3:3—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Megillah*.
- Ezekiel 36:25—Amsterdam 1752. *Seder Tohorot*.

- Ezra 9:5—Amsterdam 1752. *Ta'anit*.
- Genesis 9:11—Frankfort 1720. *Keritot*.
- Genesis 33:11—Frankfort 1720. *Berakhot*.
- Hosea 10:12—Amsterdam 1752. *Seder Zera'im*.
- Isaiah 1:26—Frankfort 1720. *Sanhedrin*.
- Isaiah 4:3—Frankfort 1720. *Ketubbot*.
- Isaiah 11:9, 65:25—Frankfort 1720. *Bava Kamma*.
- Isaiah 27:13—Amsterdam 1752. *Rosh Ha-Shanah*.
- Isaiah 28:17—Amsterdam 1752. *Shekalim*.
- Isaiah 50:1—Frankfort 1720. *Gittin*.
- Isaiah 56:5—Amsterdam 1752. *Keritot*.
- Isaiah 66:11—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Mo'ed Katan*.
- Jeremiah 2:3—Frankfort 1720. *Kiddushin*.
- Jeremiah 2:21—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Seder Zera'im*.
- Jeremiah 30:17—Frankfort 1720. *Makkot*.
- Jeremiah 31:13—Amsterdam 1752. *Mo'ed Katan*.
- Joshua 22:31—Frankfort 1720. *Me'ilah*.
- Judges 5:24—Amsterdam 1714. *Ketubbot*.
- Kings I 12:27—Frankfort 1720. *Zevahim*.
- Kings II 23:22—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Pesahim*.
- Leviticus 5:16—Amsterdam 1752. *Me'ilah*.
- Leviticus 16:34—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Yoma*.
- Leviticus 23:27—Amsterdam 1752. *Yoma*.
- Leviticus 23:42—Amsterdam 1752. *Sukkah*.
- Leviticus 27:10, 33—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Temurah*.
- Leviticus 27:12—Frankfort 1720. *Arakhin*.

- Leviticus 27:25—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Shekalim*, Amsterdam 1752. *Arakhin*.
- Malachi 3:4—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Erwin*, Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Menahot*.
- Numbers 5:28—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Sotah*.
- Numbers 6:2—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Nazir*.
- Numbers 30:2—Amsterdam 1752. *Nedarim*.
- Numbers 31:23—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Niddah*.
- Proverbs 8:35—Frankfort 1720. *Bava Mezia*.
- Proverbs 20:25—Frankfort 1720. *Nedarim*.
- Psalms 19:8—Amsterdam 1714. *Berakhot*, Frankfort 1720. *Eduyyot*.
- Psalms 47:6—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Rosh Ha-Shanah*.
- Psalms 51:21—Amsterdam 1752. *Zevahim*.
- Psalms 84:7—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Horayot*.
- Psalms 102:14—Amsterdam 1714. *Shabbat*.
- Psalms 119:46—Amsterdam 1752. *Eduyyot*.
- Psalms 119:106—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Shevu'ot*.
- Psalms 122:7—Frankfort 1720. *Bava Batra*.
- Samuel I 14:34—Frankfort 1720, Amsterdam 1752. *Hullin*.
- Samuel II 7:29—Amsterdam 1752. *Berakhot*.
- Zechariah 8:19—Amsterdam 1714, Frankfort 1720. *Bezah*, *Ta'anit*.

CHAPTER SIX

ADDERET ELIYAHU; A STUDY IN THE TITLING OF HEBREW BOOKS

He took up also the mantle of Elijah (*adderet Eliyahu*) that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and struck the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had struck the waters, they parted to one side and to the other; and Elisha went over.
(II Kings 2:13–14)

In an article entitled “Some Odd Titles of Hebrew Books,” Joshua Bloch (1890–1957), observes that “The study of the titles of Hebrew books has not yet been given the attention the subject deserves.” Bloch continues, quoting R. Isaac Samuel Reggio (1784–1855), who, in his edition of R. Elijah del Medigo’s (1460–97) *Behinat ha-Dat* (Examination of Religion), remarks that, “the book in addition to its other good qualities carries a title corresponding to its contents.” We are further informed that in Hebrew literature titles are better known than authors’ names, the latter often being referred to by the former.¹

Somewhat earlier, Solomon Schechter (1847–1915), addressing the same subject, suggests that the titles of Hebrew books can be divided into six categories.² The final category, “Titles taken from the Bible or Fancy titles,” has several subdivisions, among them, “Titles taken from the Bible but also fulfilling the purpose of indicating the name of the author.” The most extensive work on Hebrew book-titles is that of Menahem Mendel Slatkine (1875–1965), who devoted an entire book to the subject.³ In sixteen chapters he addresses allusions to authors’

¹ Joshua Bloch, “Some Odd Titles of Hebrew Books,” *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 41:10 (New York, October, 1937, reprinted in *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography*, New York, 1976), p. 151.

² Solomon Schechter, “Titles of Jewish Books,” in *Studies in Judaism, First Series* (1896, reprint Philadelphia, 1938), pp. 270–281. The categories are: simple titles, which indicate the contents of the book; titles taken from the first word with which the book begins; pompous titles, that is books which “profess to know what is going on in the heavens above and the earth beneath;” titles suggested by other titles; euphemistic titles; and titles taken from the Bible or Fancy titles.

³ Menahem Mendel Slatkine, *Shemot ha-Sefarim ha-Ivrîm: Lefi Sugehem ha-Shonim, Tik-hunatam u-Te’udatam* (Neuchâtel-Tel Aviv, 1950–54) [Hebrew].

names from words taken from the Bible, from the initial letters of words, *gematriot* (numerical values and hermeneutical interpretation based on the numerical value of letters), parent's or relative's names, initial words, and other naming devices.

Our subject is the subcategory of titles taken from the Bible. However, before addressing that naming device, it is worthwhile to note how books were first entitled and afterwards, when authors' names were employed in book-titles, how that subject was addressed by early rabbinic authorities. Abraham Berliner observes that initially Hebrew books took their names from their opening words. Examples begin with books of the Bible, *Bere'shit* (Genesis), *Shemot* (Exodus), etc., and include early Midrashim, such as *Midrash Shohar Tov* on Proverbs, which begins, *שׁוֹחֵר טוֹב יִבְקֶשׁ רִצּוֹן* ("He who diligently seeks good (*shohar tov*) procures favor," Proverbs 11:27).⁴

Berliner remarks that other conventions soon appeared, including naming books with *gematriot*. For example, R. Eleazar ben Judah of Worms (*Roke'ah*, c. 1165–c. 1238) states at the beginning of his introduction to the *Roke'ah* that everyone should inscribe his name in his book, as we find in the *Tanna de-Vei Eliyahu*.⁵ Indeed, the *Sefer ha-Roke'ah*, is so entitled because the numerical value of the family name, Roke'ah (רִקְח=308), equals his personal name, Eleazar (אֵלְעָזָר=308). This practice was not, however, universally approved, for no less a personage than R. Judah ben Samuel he-Hasid of Regensburg (c. 1150–1217) in his *Sefer Hasidim* informs that early sages did not place their names in their books, for example, the authors of *Torat Kohanim*, *Mekhilta*, and Midrashim. They did not do so, so as not to benefit from this world and thereby decrease their portion in the world to come, or to not reduce their offspring and the good name of their progeny in this world.⁶ R. Joseph Lewy suggests that there is no contradiction in the positions of the *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Roke'ah*, the former referring to explicit mention of one's name, the latter to references through allusions and *gematriot*.⁷

⁴ Abraham Berliner, "Shemot Seforim Ierim," in *Ketavim Nivharim II* (Jerusalem, 1969), pp. 147–48 [Hebrew].

⁵ Eleazar ben Judah, *Sefer Roke'ah ha-Gadol* (Jerusalem, 1967), ed. Barukh Shimon Shneurson, p. 1 [Hebrew].

⁶ Judah he-Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim* (Jerusalem, 1973), ed. Re'uven Margalio, pp. 210–11, n. 367 [Hebrew].

⁷ Joseph Lewy, *Minhag Yisrael Torah V* (Brooklyn, 2001), p. 211 [Hebrew].

Nevertheless, many titles do bear explicit mention of the author's name. In some instances, such as the *Sefer Abudarham*, composed by R. David ben Joseph Abudarham in about 1340 in Seville, the book's title was given later and not by the author. In other occurrences when the author's name appears, it is as part of a biblical verse. For example, R. Abraham ben Isaac Shalom's (d. 1492) *Neveh Shalom* (Constantinople, 1539) is from, "And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation (*neveh shalom*)" (Isaiah 32:18), and R. Solomon ibn Verga's (15th–16th century) *Shevet Yehudah* (Adrianople, 1554) is from, "The staff shall not depart from Judah" (Genesis 49:10), which also implies the family name, Verga, which means staff (*shevet*). Names are also added to verses, as in R. Judah ben Samuel Lerma Sephardi's *Lehem Yehudah* (Venice, 1553), so entitled because "the bread (*lehem*) from which I have benefited is the bread of Torah, for we find the Torah is called bread, as it states, 'Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mixed'" (Proverbs 9:5).

R. Moses ben Abraham Mat of Przemyśl (c. 1540–c. 1606) included his name in the title of *Matteh Moshe* (Cracow, 1591) for poignant reasons. He writes in the colophon that *Matteh Moshe* is entitled after his name for a remembrance and a comfort for the loss of his son.⁸ An author's name can also be alluded to by the pronunciation of Hebrew letters. Shabbetai ben Joseph Bass (1641–1718), author of *Sifte Yeshenim* (Amsterdam, 1680), the first bibliography of Hebrew books by a Jewish author, and *Sifte Hakhamim* (Amsterdam, 1680), a super-commentary on Rashi, writes in the introduction to the former work that *sifte* שפתי is an allusion to his name, for as the letters *pe* and *bet* have a similar sound, *sifte* שפתי and Shabbetai שבתאי are two words that sound alike.

Not all titles are obvious. For example, *Hilkhot Yom Tov* (Livorno, 1794), is not, as its name suggests, on the laws pertaining to festivals (*yom tovim*), but rather on Nahmanides' *Hilkhot Bekhorot ve-Hallah* discovered in manuscript and annotated by R. Yom Tov ben Israel Jacob Algazi (1727–1802), the title referring to Algazi's name. *Mazzah Shemurim* (Venice, 1660) by R. Nathan Nata Spira (d. 1662) does not, as its name implies, have anything to do with the festival of Pesah, but is on the laws of *mezuzah* מ, *zizit* צ, and *tefillin* ת, the initial letters spelling *Mazzot* מצות. *Ma'amar Esther* (Ofen, 1823), sermons on the Bible and

⁸ A later work by Mat, *Ho'il Moshe* (Prague, 1611), was brought to press by and has an introduction from Abraham ben Moses Mat. Apparently, after the publication (or completion) of *Matteh Moshe* a second son, Abraham, was born to Moses Mat.

aggadah by R. Benjamin Ze'ev (Wolf) ha-Levi Boskowitz (1740–1818), is named for his wife, Esther, to whom Boskowitz wished to publicly show appreciation.⁹

Very frequently we find the repeated employ of a title that incorporates an author's name but does not indicate the contents of a book. Judah David Eisenstein (1854–1956) remarks that that this is “a source of annoyance and confusion to the bibliographer.” Eisenstein observes that in Benjacob's *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (up to 1863), there are

no less than 27 books entitled “Ez Hayyim”; 20 entitled “Shir Yedidut”; 16 entitled “Zofnat Pa'aneah”; 15 entitled “Leshon Limmudim”; 14 each entitled “Keter Torah,” “Lekah Tob,” “Ma'amar Mordekai,” “Mekor Hayyim,” “Sefat Emet”; 13 each called “Heshek Shelomoh,” “Safah Berurah”; 12 each entitled “Eben Bohan,” “Derek Hayyim,” “Mikweh Yisrael”; and there are twenty other titles each of which is used for from 8 to 12 books.¹⁰

This article departs from all of the articles noted above, with their description of the variety of titles of Hebrew books, to examine the varied books that share the same title. One of those “other titles” referred to in the *Ozar ha-Sefarim*, among those with 8 to 12 books, is *Adderet Eliyahu*, with nine entries.¹¹ That title has been selected as the book label to explore in this article as an example of how a single book name can be (and has been) employed to encompass a wide variety of works. *Adderet Eliyahu* serves our purposes well, the number of books employing that name as the title or subtitle has grown, to date, to about thirty books. The variety of works so entitled covers the gamut of Hebrew literature, encompassing *derashot* on the Torah, *halakhot*, both Karaite as well as rabbinic, Talmudic novellae, Kabbalah, reference works, and even a historical narrative.

What is the significance of the mantle of Elijah (*adderet Eliyahu*), that has made it so attractive to authors named Elijah? Perhaps, the answer is to be found in an earlier verse, “And he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth; and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle (*addarto*) upon him” (I Kings 19:19). Don

⁹ Berliner, pp. 154–56.

¹⁰ Judah David Eisenstein, *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Isadore, Singer, Ed. (New York, 1901–06), XII p. 160. Also, <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/index.jsp>.

¹¹ Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna, 1880, reprint New York, n. d.), p. 17 nos. 329–37.

Isaac Abrabanel, (1437–1508) comments that Elijah, by casting his mantle on Elisha, shared a portion of his glory with Elisha, thereby indicating that Elisha was a prophet of the Lord. Similarly, R. David Altschuler (18th century, *Mezudat David*) writes that Elijah’s mantle is an allusion to prophesy, as does R. Levi ben Gershom (Rabag, Gersonides, 1288–1344).¹² By employing the title *Adderet Eliyahu* an author implies that the contents of his book, even if not partaking of prophesy, are a matter of considerable import. Indeed, this concept is, as we shall see, expressed by several authors.

Adderet Eliyahu first appears as the title of a Hebrew book in 1531 with the work of the Karaite, Elijah ben Moses Bashyazi (Bashyatchi, c. 1420–90), printed in Constantinople by Gershom Soncino.¹³ In 1460, Bashyazi succeeded his father as *hakham* of the Karaite community of Adrianople, and from about 1480 was the head of the Karaite community in Constantinople. In addition to studying Karaite texts under the tutelage of his father and grandfather, Bashyazi also studied rabbinic literature under R. Mordecai Comtino (1420–c. 1487), whom he later attacked in one of his polemical works, and attained proficiency in mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy.

The most important of Bashyazi’s many books is *Sefer ha-Mitzvot* entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*, written to elevate the level of Karaite scholarship, bring conformity to and establish an authoritative halakhic work for the Karaites, as well as to justify the lenient Bashyazi family interpretations of Karaite law. Examples of the last purpose are permitting benefit from light on the Sabbath, beginning the Torah reading cycle in *Tishrei*, and other practices more in conformity with rabbinic

¹² See also R. David ben Joseph Kimhi (Radak, c. 1160–c. 1235) on I Kings 19:19. For a Hassidic interpretation of this verse see Y. Hasidah, *Be’ure ha-Hasidut la-Nakh: mi-Tokh Sifre Admurim* (Jerusalem, 1980), pp. 152–53 [Hebrew]. Altschuler repeats this definition of the mantle in his *Mezudat Zivyon*, on the verse “And Elijah took his mantle (*addarto*), and wrapped it together, and struck the waters, and they parted to one side and to the other, so that the two went over dry ground” (II Kings 2:8), where he writes that the mantle is a precious garment specifically for prophets. The Radak writes on Jonah 3:6, “And word came to the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he took off his robe (*addarto*),” that is, “the [symbol of] royalty that was on him...”

¹³ Karaites are descended from Jews who broke away from rabbinic Judaism in the late 8th century, following the teachings of Anan ben David, who denied the validity of the Oral law. Gershom Soncino is the greatest of the pioneers of Hebrew printing, active from the late fifteenth century to the third decade of the sixteenth century. He printed in several locations in Italy until forced to flee that land for the Ottoman Empire in 1527. From 1502 he printed almost 70 Hebrew books as well as about 95 Latin, Italian, and Greek books, all well done and attractive.

Judaism than traditional Karaite convention. Bashyazi succeeded, in that *Adderet Eliyahu* quickly became and remains to this day the authoritative Karaite code.

The title page has a much used decorative woodcut frame, first used by the Soncino family on their incunabula books, and within it, below the text, the famed Soncino tower (fig. 40). The verso has verse from the author, beginning with an acrostic that spells out his name, all set within another ornamental frame, this from the *Decachordum Christianum*, followed by Bashyazi's introduction.¹⁴ *Adderet Eliyahu* is divided into subjects and subdivided into chapters. The subjects are organized in traditional Karaite order. Bashyazi died before he could complete the work, the last three parts being completed by his student and son-in-law (or brother-in-law) Caleb Afendopolo (1464–1525), a prolific writer in his own right and known for his poetry. The need for Bashyazi's *Adderet Eliyahu* was so great that it was distributed by chapters as they were completed. It has been since been republished several times and portions have been extracted, abridged, and published separately for the Karaite community.

Ninety-one years later, in 1622, another, very different, *Adderet Eliyahu* was published in Venice by Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadin at the press of Giovanni Caleoni. It is a small volume (4^o 72 ff.), comprised of two introductions (2a–b, 3a–5b) by the author, R. Rabbino ben Elijah [ben Moses ben Elijah Moses], and four of his discourses (6a–72a), delivered from 1609 to 1617, two in Kastoria (the first a eulogy for R. Hayyim Baruch of Kastoria), the others in Salonika, and Monastir.

Rabbino is described on the pillared title page (fig. 41) as a descendent of the Kabbalist author of *Zeror ha-Mor* (R. Abraham Saba, d. c. 1508), and he, Rabbino ben Elijah, calls this book by his father's name, as it states, "a son causes merit for his father" (*Sanhedrin* 104a). The book is dated in the colophon as, "Keep judgment, and do וְעָשׂוּ (382=1622) justice" (Isaiah 56:1). At the end of the second introduction the author writes that

¹⁴ The *Decachordum Christianum* (the Christian ten-stringed harpsichord, Fano, 1507), by Cardinal Marcus Vigerius (Marco Vigerio), Bishop of Sinigaglia in Rome. Printed by Gershom Soncino, the *Decachordum* is a beautiful work noteworthy for its ten woodcuts surrounded by ornamental borders, in addition to the title page. The woodcuts have been attributed to Florio Vavassore, but this is uncertain as the *Decachordum* predates other appearances of his name. These frames would be reused by Gershom with his Hebrew books in Italy and Constantinople, by his son Eliezer after him, and then by additional printers in Constantinople, appearing on the title page of a book as late as 1552–53 (R. Moses Figo's *Zikhron Torat Moshe*).

the merit of this Torah should stand for me for a stay on the day of my troubles. And for my lord my father for “a buckler and shield” (Jeremiah 46:3) for his old age. And after him for the departed “a shining wake” (Job 41:24) to go in the land of the living בארץ החיים to be under להסתופף the shadow of His wings, may He be blessed, to his eternal home. Therefore I have named this book *Adderet Eliyah*. It should be acceptable and of good merit for him, a covering and a place of refuge, from storm and from rain (cf. Isaiah 4:6) on the Day of Judgment. . . .

R. Elijah ben Kalonymus of Lublin (second half of 17th century), the next author of a book entitled *Sefer Adderet Eliyahu* (fig. 42), was a preacher and rabbi. This, his only known work, is a commentary on the Torah, “sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb,” (Psalms 19:11), comprised of homilies, built upon the Talmud, Midrashim, kabbalistic works such as the *Zohar*, Rashi, and more contemporary titles, such R. Ephraim Solomon ben Aaron of Luntshits’ (1550–1619) *Keli Yakar*, and R. Nathan Nata ben Solomon Spira’s (c. 1584–1633) *Megalleh Amukkot*. The book begins with approbations signed by sixteen rabbis and errata, and concludes with a supplication to be recited daily over the exile and destruction of the Temple.

Printed in Frankfort a. Oder by Michael Gottschalk, “with the letters of lord Johann Christoph Beckman, Doctor and Professor,” this *Adderet Eliyahu*, also small in size (4° 64, 71–106 ff.), is dated, on the title page, as “the beginning of the work was on the day that it says two times, [and God saw that] it was good” (cf. Genesis 1:10–12), the ninth day of the month of Ziv, which is Iyyar, [in the year] ‘Behold, I will send you Elijah 454’ אנוכי שולח לכם את אליהו = Tuesday, May 4, 1694)’” (Malachi 3:23).¹⁵

In the introduction, Elijah ben Kalonymus informs that he entitled this work *Adderet Eliyahu* for two reasons. First, he has written 657 [interpretations, homilies], the numerical equivalent of *Adderet Eliyahu* אדרת אליהו (657). However, due to the considerable expense of publication, beyond his means, only a fraction of his insights could be published. He has found sponsors, to whom Elijah expresses his gratitude, enabling him to publish this abbreviated edition of his book. The second reason is that this book should be a mantle, a remembrance for him.

¹⁵ The date of books employing chronograms is derived by adding 1240, the year the fifth millennium in the Hebrew calendar began, to the numerical value of the enlarged or emphasized letters, in this case 454, resulting in 1694 for the year of publication.

Not every work entitled *Adderet Eliyahu* has its name on the title page. R. Elijah ben Judah Covo (1630–88), rabbi and *rosh yeshivah* in Salonika, was the author of responsa named *Adderet Eliyahu*. He, together with two of his sons, died in a plague that ravaged Salonika. Covo's responsa, collected in his *Tanna de-Vei Eliyahu* תנא דבי אליהו, *Tanna* (451) equaling the number of responsa, were, unfortunately, lost. Parts of the manuscript were preserved by R. Solomon Amarillo and his son Moses until brought to press by Covo's grandson in Constantinople at the press of Jonah ben Jacob Ashkenazi in the year, "So the Lord was with Joshua; and his fame spread throughout ויהי שמעו בכל (499=1739) the country" (Joshua 6:27). The verse appears to refer to R. Joshua Handali, whose responsa, *Penei Yehoshu'a* are also noted on the title page and included in the volume, which bears the title, *Shene Me'orot ha-Gedolim*. Despite the fact that the title page refers to *shene me'orot*, that is two lights, also included in the volume, and also mentioned on the title page, is a third work, the novellae of R. Isaac Almida.¹⁶

Adderet Eliyahu is the first work in the book, with 14 responsa from 1a–84a, followed by a blank page (84b), an additional responsum (no. 27) on folios 85a–88b, preceded by the comment that this responsum was found later. Foliation then begins anew, from 1a to 63a, for the remainder of the 26 responsa, here on *Hoshen Mishpat*. After Handali's responsa (63a–155b) is a fourteen-folio index to *Adderet Eliyahu*, followed by a brief index to Handali's response and Almida's novellae. Two interesting features of the volume are the woodcut floral frontpiece with cornucopias on the volume title page, there are no individual title pages for the three works in the volume, which has in its center the famed Foa pressmark, a palm tree with a lion rampant on each side and affixed to the tree a *Magen David*, in this format most like the device of Nathan Foa in Amsterdam (fig. 43).¹⁷ Secondly, the introduction to *Adderet Eliyahu*, by the author's grandson, is comprised of seventeen paragraphs, each concluding with Elijah.

R. Raphael Immanuel ben Abraham Hai Ricchi (1688–1743), Italian rabbi and kabbalist, lived a tumultuous life. Orphaned at the age of six,

¹⁶ Hersh Goldwurm, *The Early Acharonim* (Brooklyn, 1989), p. 196; Heimann Joseph Hayyim Michael, *Or ha-Hayyim* (Frankfort a. M., 1891, reprint Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 177–78 no. 382 [Hebrew]; and Avraham Yaari, *Ha-Defus ha-Ivri be-Kushta* (Jerusalem, 1967), p. 191 no. 378 [Hebrew]. Yaari notes a title page for Almida's novellae; the copy seen by me had only a volume title page but no individual title pages.

¹⁷ Avraham Yaari, *Diglei ha-Madpisim ha-Ivriyim* (Jerusalem, 1943, reprint Westmead, 1971), pp. 56 no. 87, 133 nos. 20–21, 154 nos. 87–88 [Hebrew].

he was raised by his maternal uncle, R. Jedidiah Rabbino of Rovigo. Ricchi subsequently moved from city to city in Italy, supporting himself as a teacher of the children of wealthy Jews. In 1718, Ricchi, a student of Kabbalah, went up to Erez Israel, to more intensely study the works of kabbalistic masters in Safed.¹⁸ An outbreak of plague in 1720 forced him to return to Italy. Captured by pirates, Ricchi was taken to north Africa, returning, after being ransomed, to Italy. He served in the rabbiniate in Florence for several years, afterwards relocating to Livorno where, for twelve years, Ricchi engaged in business. He next traveled between Amsterdam, London, Salonika, and Constantinople, spending three years in Jerusalem. In 1741, Ricchi returned to Italy, traveling about to sell his books. On one such journey, on *Rosh Hodesh Adar I* 5503 (Monday, February 25, 1743), Ricchi was murdered by robbers, who hastily buried his body by the sea shore. Six days later Jews from Modena discovered Ricchi's body and reburied him in Cento amidst great mourning.¹⁹

Ricchi's *Adderet Eliyahu* was published in Livorno and dated, on the title page, "O you who dwell in the gardens, the companions listen **מקשיבים** (502=1742) to your voice; let me hear it," (Song of Songs 8:13). The book is in two parts (4° 129, 57), the first comprised of the elucidation of and commentary on difficult Talmudic passages, which is further divided into four parts, *Miktav Eliyahu*; *Kiryat Hannah*, after the wife of R. Elijah Silvirah; *Avdei Yitzhak*; and *Peh Eliyahu*. The second part is made up of *Me Niddah*, on tractate *Niddah* (2a–12a), with necessary calculations; twenty four responsa (12b–38b) (fig. 44); *Sofe Anavim*, seventy-six homilies on biblical verses (39a–48a); concluding with *Parpera'ot le-Hokmah*, riddles accompanied by illustrations, and verse (49a–57a). The volume has several rococo copperplate tail-pieces and Italian coats of arms, including, at the end of part one, the Ricchi family device, a two-tailed lion salient facing left. with a stalk of wheat in its mouth (fig. 46).²⁰

¹⁸ Among Ricchi's kabbalistic titles are *Hoshev Mahashavot* (Amsterdam, 1727), *Mishnat Hasidim* (Amsterdam, 1727), and *Yosher Levav* (Amsterdam, 1737). It has been suggested that these works contain Sabbatean allusions. Concerning charges of crypto-Sabbateanism against Ricchi see Bezalel Naor, *Post-Sabbatian Sabbatianism: Study of an Underground Messianic Movement* (Spring Valley, NY, 1999), pp. 53–57, 177–84.

¹⁹ Mordechai Margalioi, *Entsiklopedyah le-Toldot Gedole Yisra'el* IV (Tel Aviv, 1986), col. 1200–03 [Hebrew]; and Avraham Yaari, *Sheluhei Erez Yisrael* (1951, reprint Jerusalem, 1997), pp. 394–96 [Hebrew].

²⁰ Yaari, *Diglei ha-Madpisim ha-Ivriyyim*, pp. 73, 162 n. 115. Yaari notes that this device was also used by other Italian Jewish families.

An example of the riddles is that of a couple lying on a sword (53b). The detailed solution refers to *Sandhedrin* 7a, which states: When our love was strong we could have lain together on the width of a sword. Now that our love has waned, a bed the width of sixty *amos* (= c. 120 feet) is insufficient. It includes in the Hebrew text the Latin word *AMOR* (fig. 45).

In the introduction Ricchi thanks his sponsor Elijah Silvirah and the latter's wife, Hannah, who have one son, named Isaac. After praising Silvirah's beneficence, Ricchi writes that,

when the thought came to me to write this work on the Talmud, I said "With what shall I come before my lord" (cf. Micah 6:6), by whose mouth I subsist, but to pay with the fruit of my lips, by calling his distinguished name on my book for a remembrance, for he was a causative factor [in its being written]. Therefore I have called it *Adderet Eliyahu* on his name, for in this merit it should be for him "honor and majesty" (Psalms 21:6, 96:6, 104:1, 111:3, I Chronicles 16:27), and a garment for the world to come, as is known.

R. Elijah ben Solomon Zalman of Vilna (Vilna Gaon, Gra, 1720–97) is a dominant figure in Jewish intellectual thought, his importance and prestige undiminished, as great today, if not greater, than in his own time. The Vilna Gaon's extraordinary intelligence, expressed by his expertise in Torah at the age of three, outdistancing his tutors while a young child, his incredible proficiency over the entire expanse of the written and Oral Torah by nine, by which time he was already studying Kabbalah, accompanied by complete piety, are attested to by numerous reputable sources. More than seventy works, encompassing Bible, halakhah, Talmud, and Kabbalah, are attributed to the Vilna Gaon, among them a Torah commentary entitled *Adderet Eliyahu* (Dubrovna, 1804). Published posthumously by his sons and son-in-law, it encompasses both *peshat* and *remez* (literal and allusive meanings), and is intended to prove that not there is not a single superfluous letter in the Torah. There are multifaceted explanations of *parshiot*, for example, *parashat* Balak is elucidated six different ways. Volumes on other books of the Bible, also entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*, were published, beginning with Joshua (Shklov, 1802).

Given the Gaon's prominence, it is not surprising that books related to him have appeared over the years, several entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*.²¹ Among them, and preceding the Gaon's own work by that name, is a

²¹ Among those works, but not strictly entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*, is a super-commentary on the Gra's commentaries on the Midrashic works, *Mekhilta* (Vilna, 1844), *Sifre* (1866), and *Sifra* (1911). In 1995/96, R. Elijah Moses Blokh published his *Ha-Adderet*

eulogy for him by R. Aaron ben Moses, *maggid* (preacher) of Kolshin (Warsaw, 1798). At the conclusion of the eulogy is a *kinah* (lamentation, dirge) composed in the style of *kinot* for the ninth of Av (date of the destruction of the Temple), with the initial letter of each line forming an acrostic of the Gaon's name, Elijah ben Solomon Zalman of Vilna, the last words of each line sharing the same refrain **אוי אמ"הל** "Woe, what has befallen us," as the *kinot* "Recall, O Lord, what has befallen us" and that of R. Baruch ben Samuel (d. 1221), "My fingers are humbled."

Additional works concerning the Vilna Gaon with the title *Adderet Eliyahu* have been published. There is a historical narrative (Tel Aviv, 1964), by Abraham Samuel Stein (Shtain, 1912–60), a descendant of R. Moses Diskin (1817–98), which includes descriptions of the old *yishuv* (early pre-Zionist settlement) in Israel founded by the Gra's disciples. The book includes more than fifty portraits of rabbinic figures, and at the end a detailed table of contents (pp. 371–76) of the personalities mentioned in the text.

Most recently a bilingual (Hebrew-English) exhibition catalogue, *The Gaon of Vilna. The man and His Legacy*, was issued to mark the bicentennial of the Gaon's death. The illustrated catalogue includes three essays on aspects of the Gaon's influence and the time in which he lived. In the introduction to the catalogue the editor, Rachel Schnold, writes, "In Vilna, after the death of the 'Vilner Gaon,' there was a Yiddish saying: 'Vill—nor Gaon' (If you want it—you too can be a Gaon)... To quote Abba Kovner of Vilna: 'There was not a single Jewish home in Vilna which was not touched by something of the Gaon.'"²²

Not every *Adderet Eliyahu* is an original work. The *Adderet Eliyahu* of R. Jehiel Michael ben Judah Leib of Kalveria (Novy Dwor, 1805), discourses on appointed times in the Jewish year, such as Pesah, Rosh Ha-Shanah, and Shabbat *Nahamu*, is compiled from another work, as noted on the title page, which begins,

ve-ha-Emunah, subtitled *ve-hu-Be'ur al ha-Nigleh shebe-Sefer Adderet Eliyahu al ha-Mekhilta, Sifra ve-Sifre me-et Rabbenu ha-Gra*. Parenthetically, Blokh's work provides another example of how Hebrew books are named, for *Ha-Adderet ve-ha-Emunah והאדרת והאמונה*, as Blokh informs us in the introduction (p. 11) stands for his father, Abraham David (דא), and for him, Elijah Moses (מא).

²² Beth Hatfusoth, The Nahum Goldman Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, *The Gaon of Vilna. The man and His Legacy*, (Tel Aviv, 1988) p. 89. The three essays are Arie Morgenstern, "R. Elijah, the Gaon of Vilna, and His Historical Influence"; Israel Bartal, "Urbanism and Scholarship: Vilna in the Gaon's Era"; and Rachel Schnold, "Elijah's Face: The Portrait of the Vilna Gaon in Folk Art."

Adderet Eliyahu

Compiled from the book *Hadrat Eliyahu* written by the author of *Ma'aneh Eliyahu*, *Nivhar me-Haruz*, *Berure ha-Middot*, and *Meleket Mahshevet*. And Elijah “wrapped his face in his” (I Kings 19:13) glory, the holy glory, full and overflowing. And behold, “the voice of the Lord walking” (cf. Genesis 3:8) in the gaon, for the gaon, glorious and beautiful, established with ten discourses, “[Open] rebuke is better than secret love” (Proverbs 27:5)...

And Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle (cf. I Kings 19:13) וילט אליהו פניו באדרתו (565=1805).

Surprisingly, given the title page, Jehiel Michael does not name the author of *Hadrat Eliyahu* on the title page or elsewhere in the book. Nevertheless, it is clear that the author of *Hadrat Eliyahu*, the source for this edition of *Adderet Eliyahu*, is R. Elijah ben Moses Gershon [Zahalon] of Pinczow (18th century), a Talmudist, physician, and mathematician. He is the author of the works noted on the title page, which encompass such varied subjects as algebra and geometry, novellae on *Bava Mezi'a* and *Bezah*, a work on R. Joseph Albo's *Ikkarim*, and responsa. *Hadrat Eliyahu* (Prague, 1785), the source for *Adderet Eliyahu*, is comprised of ten homilies on Talmudic subjects.²³ The title page is followed by an approbation from R. Jonah ben Isaac Kahana Rapaport, who informs that Jehiel Michael was also the author of a number of works, mentioning *Derekh ha-Melekh* on the *Masorah* (Shklov, 1798), *Pe'ari Halakhah* (1798) novellae, and on the Rambam, *Margenita Tova* (Fuerth, 1791) on ethics, and *Havi Shoded* (Novy Dwor, 1805) a eulogy.

Among the prominent halakhic works of the middle ages is the *Sefer Mitzvot Gadol* (*Semag*) of the Tosafist R. Moses ben Jacob of Coucy (13th century). Divided into positive and negative precepts, the *Semag* is built upon Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, and the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds. Extant in numerous manuscripts, often reprinted, the *Semag* has also been the subject of commentaries, including one by R. Elijah Mizrahi, (c. 1450–1526). Mizrahi, the leading rabbinic authority of the Ottoman Empire, although he did not have the formal title of *hakham*

²³ *The Bibliography of The Hebrew Book*, Institute for Hebrew Bibliography, in association with The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, no. 093062 [Hebrew]; M. Seligsohn, *Jewish Encyclopedia*, V p. 132.

bashi, wrote *Tosefot ha-Semag* (Constantinople, 1521), the only one of his many books published in his lifetime. Another commentary on the *Semag* and a supercommentary on *Tosefot ha-Semag*, is the *Adderet Elyahu* of R. Elijah ben Moses Israel (c. 1710–84).

Elijah Israel was born in Jerusalem, but from an early age was raised in Rhodes where his father served as rabbi. He returned to Jerusalem after the death of his father in 1744, becoming, in 1763, as had been his father and uncle, an emissary for the Jewish community in Jerusalem to the Jewish communities in Western Europe. Elijah eventually returned to Rhodes and from there was appointed rabbi in Alexandria. He was not hesitant to rebuke his congregation when necessary, for *Shenei Elyahu* (Livorno, 1806), Elijah's homilies, records a number of those admonitions.²⁴

Elijah's *Adderet Elyahu* was published in Livorno by the partners Judah, Joseph, Hayyim, and Eleazar Raphael Sadon ט"ס (pure Sephardi) in the year, "he shall bring forth judgment to truth לְאִמְתָּ יוֹצִיא" (588=1828). The book was brought to press by Elijah's son R. Jedidiah Solomon who also published his father's other works, many also including Elijah in the title. This *Adderet Elyahu* is a small book (4° [3], 62 ff.); its subject matter encompassing *Hilkhot Erev Pesah and Yom Tov, hametz, shofar, and Yom ha-Kippurim*. The text also includes glosses on Maimonides' *hilkhot shofar*.

Another rabbinic figure of stature and influence is R. Joseph Hayyim ben Elijah al-Hakam (1834–1909), known as the Ben Ish Hai after his most famous work. Rabbi in Baghdad for fifty years, the Ben Ish Hai instituted many reforms in prayers and customs adhered to by Sephardim to the present, many based on Kabbalah. He was the author of approximately sixty books encompassing biblical exegesis, Talmud, halakhah, Kabbalah, responsa, ethics, prayers, parables, and riddles, as well as *piyyutim* (liturgical poetry).²⁵

²⁴ Avraham Yaari, *Sheluhei Erez Yisrael* (1951, reprint Jerusalem), pp. 402–04 [Hebrew]. Almost all of Elijah Israel's other titles, many yet in manuscript, also include the name *Elyahu*. Among them are *Kol Elyahu*, responsa (I Livorno, 1792; II Livorno, 1807); *Kisse Elyahu*, glosses and novellae on the *Shulhan Arukh O.H.* (Salonika, 1811); *Uggat Elyahu*, responsa (Liv., 1830); *Azor Elyahu*, on Rav Hai Gaon's *Sefer ha-Mikkah ve-ha-Mimkar*; and *Devar Elyahu*, homilies. Books by Elijah Israel without the name *Elyahu* include *Kunteres Ar'a de-Yisrael*, on Talmudic methodology.

²⁵ Abraham Ben Ya'akov, *Ha-Rav Yosef Hayyim mi-Bagdad: Toldot hayav u-Reshimat Ketavav* (Or Yehuda, 1984), pp. 25–26 [Hebrew].

The *Adderet Eliyahu* (Livorno, 1864) of the Ben Ish Hai, printed in the year, “Both riches and honor והעשר והכבוד (624=1864) [come from you]” (I Chronicles 29:12) homilies on the Torah, comprised of *peshat* and Kabbalah. In the last paragraph of the introduction, the Ben Ish Hai informs us that the book was so named because,

I have chosen to call this book *Adderet Eliyahu* אדרת אליהו after my lord, my father, and also in that the phrase *Adderet Eliyahu*, the letters, and the entirety of the words (the phrase) are a *gematria* for R. Elijah Moses Hayyim ר"ב אליהו משה חיים. Also, it equals R. Moses ben Hayyim ר"ב משה בן חיים. It is, therefore an allusion to my lord, my father, and my grandfather, may their souls be “be bound in the bundle of life” (I Samuel 25:29) in paradise above.²⁶

A number of the above books have kabbalistic content. We turn now to several works that deal with the Kabbalah in their entirety, being on or built about the *Zohar*. The first of these books is by R. Elijah ben Moses Ashkenazi Loanz of Worms, (1564–1636). Loanz, scion of a family that traced its descent to Rashi, had a distinguished career as rabbi and *rosh yeshivah* in a number of communities in Germany,—Fulda, Hanau, Friedberg, and Worms—and engaged in disputations with prominent Christian clergyman. A kabbalist of repute, Loanz wrote amulets, is credited with many miracles, and is the subject of legends, among them that he made a *golem* (homuncule) so that he acquired the epithet Elijah Ba'al Shem.²⁷ Although a prolific writer, only *Rinnat Dodim*, on the Song of Songs (Basle, 1600) and *Vikku'ah ha-Yayin ve-ha-Mayim* (Basle, 1599), a poetic dispute between wine and water as to their relative merits, were printed in his lifetime.

Most of his works remain in manuscript, although several have been printed posthumously, including his edition of *Adderet Eliyahu* (Jerusalem, 1998), a lengthy commentary on the *Zohar*. A feature of this work are references by Loanz to the commentary on the *Zohar* prepared by R. Moses ben Israel Isserles (Rema, c. 1530–1572). The latter, the decisor for Ashkenazic Jewry, is known to have written such a work

²⁶ This *gematria* is to be understood as follows. *Adderet Eliyahu* אדרת אליהו = 657 plus the sum of the letters (9) plus the entirety of the words, that is, the phrase (1) for a total of 667. R. Elijah Moses Hayyim ר"ב אליהו משה חיים = 667 as does R. Moses ben Hayyim ר"ב משה בן חיים.

²⁷ Elijah ben Moses Ashkenazi Loanz, *Adderet Eliyahu* (Jerusalem, 1998), ed. Aaron Dov Shotland, p. 5 [Hebrew], where this is based on responsa of R. Zevi Hirsch Ashkenazi (Hakham Zevi) and R. Jacob Emden (Yavez), descendants of Loanz.

but it is no longer extant. Loanz, while in Cracow, helped prepare the Rema's *Darkhei Moshe* for publication. Loanz writes in his introduction that "it [*Darkhei Moshe*] was difficult to work with, for it was the first edition of the righteous author who had gone to the *yeshiva shel ma'alah* (heavenly reward) before he had an opportunity to remove the errors and thistles." Numerous annotations had to be read and understood by Loanz, who was the first to work on the manuscript. For his efforts and due to his great admiration for it the Rema's brother, Eliezer, gave him a copy of that commentary as a gift.²⁸

Loanz named his work *Adderet Eliyahu* for "it is splendor and glory to God, for the honor of the Blessed One," as well as splendor to R. Simeon bar Yohai, for due to this work many will have access to his work, not as before when many were reluctant to learn *Zohar* due to the lack of a commentary.

Furthermore, it is a mantle, attire, and glory, with which I will enwrap myself, "my bones and my flesh" (Genesis 29:14, II Samuel 19:13–14) in a holy place and not be ashamed or embarrassed and I will merit to dwell in Zelzah (*cf.* I Samuel 10:2) and it will be for me a shield and shelter, "from storm and from rain" (Isaiah 4:6), and a crown for my head, as it says, "[the righteous sit] with their crowns on their heads" (*Berakhot* 17a).²⁹

An encyclopedia on the *Zohar* and related works, also called *Adderet Eliyahu*, was prepared by R. Elijah David Slotki. Printed in Jerusalem and dated the 33rd day of the Omer, 18 Iyyar 734 (Friday, May 10, 1974), it is a comprehensive listing of terms and concepts, arranged alphabetically. The book concludes with graphs and charts related to kabbalistic principles.

The *Zohar*, so central to Kabbalah, was not free from criticism, which in turn engendered works in its defense. *Adderet Eliyahu* (Livorno, 1855) of R. Solomon ben Elijah Nissim of Mantua, printed at the Belforte press in the year, "Who is the man who fears the Lord?" **מי זה האיש** 'ירא ה' (615=1855, Psalms 25:12), is one such work. It is, as the title page states, a polemic, for the author was "zealous for the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel and His holy Torah, for the honor of the

²⁸ Loanz, *Adderet Eliyahu*, pp. 4 and ה-ד; Also see Hayyim Yosef David Azulai's (Hida) *Shem ha-Gedolim Ma'arekhet Gedolim* with additions by Menachem Mendel Kregel (Jerusalem, 1979), p. 140 *mem* 98 [Hebrew]; and Asher Siev, *Rabbi Moses Isserles* (New York, 1972), p. 174 [Hebrew].

²⁹ Loanz, *Adderet Eliyahu*, p. ז.

‘excellent majesty’ (Esther 1:4) of our holy and faithful rabbis against the *Sefer ha-Vikkuah* on the antiquity of the *Zohar*, the wisdom of the Kabbalah, and the vowels and accents.” The object of this polemic is the *Vikkuah al Hokhmat ha-Kabbalah ve-al-Kadmut Sefer ha-Zohar* (Gorizia, 1852) of R. Samuel David Luzzatto (Shadal, 1800–65), who denies the antiquity of the *Zohar*, basing his arguments, to a large extent, on the later origin of vowels and accents and also declaring the tenets of mysticism alien to Judaism.

Nissim, in *Adderet Eliyahu*, proposes to refute the arguments of *Vikkuah al Hokhmat ha-Kabbalah*. His tone can be seen from the introduction to this small book ([2], 47 ff. 8^o), where, while acknowledging the stature of Luzzatto, Nissim writes that he (Luzzatto) has done this evil among the Israel, and he (Nissim) would sin before God if he did not respond, for all the words of the Kabbalists are true and upright in their entirety, nothing false or twisted is in them. All the arguments assembled against them are mere drivel and of no consequence. Nissim then provide his proofs for the validity of the *Zohar* and Kabbalah in thirty-two letters (sections, alphabetically numbered). Here too, Nissim names the book after his father, Elijah Nissim.

At every *berit milah* (circumcision), there is a chair (*kisse shel Eliyahu*) for the prophet Elijah, who, according to tradition, attends that ceremony. It is appropriate than, that there should be an edition of *Adderet Eliyahu* that is concerned with verses to be recited in conjunction with the *berit*. The book is, however, concerned with much more than *berit milah*, as the title page states:

I found in *Midrash Talpiot*, *Sodei Razayya*, *ha-Rokeah*, and the *siddur* of the righteous, the Kabbalist, R. Jacob Koppel (may his merit protect us), author of *Sha'arei Gan Eden*, and also the Hida (R. Hayyim Joseph David Azulai) (may his...) that it is necessary to say at the conclusion of the Sabbath all the verses in which Elijah the prophet is mentioned, for to do so is an extraordinary treasure for opening the heart, for remembrance, and for prosperity.

The title page further informs that every mention of Elijah in the Babylonian Talmud is noted, and references the *Sha'ar Naftali* and *Semikhat Hakhamim* of the renowned kabbalist R. Naphtali ben Isaac Katz (1645–1719), to whom these post-Sabbath readings are credited.³⁰ The

³⁰ R. Naphtali ben Isaac Katz (ha-Kohen) was born in Stepan Volhynia, where his father was rabbi. He was taken captive by the Tatars as a youth but managed to escape after several years. He succeeded his father as *av bet din* of Stepan and afterwards served

volume is dated, “He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him” וירם את אדרת אליהו אשר נפלו מעליו (619=1859) (II Kings 2:13).

This edition was printed in Jerusalem by Israel Bak, founder, in 1841, of the first Hebrew press in Jerusalem.³¹ One of the signature woodcuts of Bak’s press, a vignette of the Western Wall, appears on the verso of the title page (fig. 47). The text, as described on the title page, includes all the verses referring to Elijah in the Babylonian Talmud. The second part of this small book (24 ff. 16°), from 16b, is entitled *Kisse Eliyahu* and is the *Zohar* on *berit milah* and the order to be followed at the ceremony.

R. Elijah Hayyim ben Nahum Rabbinovitz of Turets completed, according to the colophon of his edition of *Adderet Eliyahu*, his work on the laws of *Shehita*, on Tuesday, 23 *Marheshvan*, כַּאֲדֶרֶת (625=Tuesday, 22 November 1864). The book is comprised of the text of the *Shulhan Arukh Y.D.* and two commentaries, *Yad Eliyahu* and *Mekor Hayyim*, the former Rabbinovitz’s novellae on the subject, the latter his explanation of the subject based on their sources from the Talmud to the present, arranged about the text like Rashi and Tosafot. The book’s numerous approbations are followed by a long introduction by Rabbinovitz, in which he informs that,

due to בעוה"ר [my many iniquities] I did not merit to have any children, neither a son nor a daughter; therefore my heart trembled (cf. I Samuel 4:13) and “the hair of my [head] stood up” (cf. Job 4:15) for how will I come before the King, Lord of hosts “clothed with sackcloth” (Esther 4:2) that I have made for my soul with my wicked deeds. I am impoverished, without Torah, wisdom, or good deeds to safeguard me. What will He

as rabbi in Ostrow and Posen, and from 1704 in Frankfort on the Main. In 1711 a fire broke out in his house, destroying the whole Jewish quarter of Frankfort. Katz was charged with preventing the extinguishing of the fire by ordinary means because he wanted to test the efficacy of his amulets, remaining, as a result, imprisoned until he resigned his post. Kohen was the author of a number of highly regarded works, including *Semikhat Hakhamim*, of which he reputedly was so proud that he ordered it to be buried with him. He later became involved in the controversy over the Sabbatean Nehemia Hiyya Hayon (c. 1665–c. 1730). *Encyclopedia Judaica*, CD version 1.0 Jerusalem, Judaica Multimedia (Israel) Ltd (7:1501–03 and 10:826, E7); and *Jewish Encyclopedia*, IV pp. 153–54. Jacob Koppel ben Moses of Mezshirech (d. c. 1740) was a Polish kabbalist, whose work was influenced by the Sabbatean movement in Poland and who, in turn, influenced Hasidism. Among his works are *Sha’arei Gan Eden* (Korets, 1803) and *Ha-Kol Kol Ya’akov* (Slaviuta, 1804), the latter a formulation of the Lurianic *kavvanot* (the mystical intentions and meditations during prayer), serving as a basis for later hasidic prayer books. (EJ, 9:1231, 10:552, 14:1251)

³¹ The *Bet Eked Sefarim* (1931, reprint Tel Aviv, 1951–56) alef 659, records an earlier 1842 Jerusalem edition of this *Adderet Eliyahu*, but it has not been possible to locate that edition.

make of a “rotten wood” (Job 41:19) such as I on the day that I have to give an accounting in the underworld. What Torah and *mitzvot* will shield me? And who will be for me for a remembrance for I did not merit children occupied in Torah and *mitzvot*, that their merit should raise me “up from the gruesome pit, out of the miry clay” (Psalms 40:3)...

And I searched to find any cure or remedy for the affliction of my desolate soul and spirit, until the Lord enlightened my eyes and I found a modest alleviation to my abject condition in the words of our sages (*Yevamot* 96b), “R. Judah said in the name of Rav ‘I will abide in your tent for ever’ (Psalms 61:5). Can a person reside in two worlds? What David said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, May it be Your will, that something be said in my name in this world, so that my lips will move in the grave, for as R. Johanan stated in the name of R. Simeon ben Jehozadak, every sage in whose name something is repeated in this world, his lips, etc. R. Isaac ben Ze’ira said, from the verse, ‘And the roof of your mouth like the best wine [for my beloved, that goes down sweetly, causing the sleepers’ lips to murmur]’” (Song of Songs 7:10)....”

We conclude with the *Adderet Eliyahu* of R. Elijah Zev Wolf ben Eliezer Kochin of Pittsburg (1872–1946), printed in three parts in Pittsburg from 1916 to 1933. The title pages describe the contents as discourses on the physical and spiritual life of the Jews in exile from the time they were expelled from their land to the present. Within these discourses many of the sayings of our rabbis are explained according to the *peshat* (literal meaning). These discourses are for festivals, Shabbat and other significant days.

Each volume has an introduction. In the first book Kochin provides considerable biographical information. He was born in Rumsisock, Lithuania, to a distinguished rabbinic family and learned in the famed Slobodka yeshiva and afterwards under R. Isaac Elhanan Spektor (1817–1896). Kochin’s stature is reflected in the approbations from the greatest of Lithuanian rabbis, among them R. Hayyim Soloveichik (1853–1918), R. Hayyim Ozer Grodzinski (1863–1940), and R. Jehiel Michal Epstein (1829–1908). Kochin served as rabbi for approximately seven years in Dambrovitz when pogroms destroyed his community. Following the Russo-Japanese war Kochin came to America, eventually accepting a position in Pittsburgh. The discourses in *Adderet Eliyahu* were delivered by him “at the bimah.” The subject matter is varied and the end of the volume has both responsa and novellae.

In the introduction to the second volume (Pittsburgh, 1928) (fig. 48) we are informed that publication was delayed due to the World War and about Kochin’s efforts to assist European Jewry. The third volume (Pittsburgh, 1933) has approbations from contemporary rabbis, among

them one from R. Abraham Isaac Kook (1865–1935), the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Erez Israel. In the introduction to this volume Kochin comments that,

I am aware that these are not great things nor lofty and exalted concepts, merely unvarnished matters spoken in truth and correctly, for my purpose is to understand the present. It is necessary to speak about education, “for it is exposed [a matter of] disgrace” (cf. Exodus 32:25) and we are obligated, each and everyone, to do according to his ability, for it is the principle of religion and faith.

Kochin’s emphasis on education in the introduction were not idle words, for his efforts in that field were considerable. He founded the Pittsburgh Hebrew Seminary and the yeshiva Mishkan Yisrael, as well as several Talmud Torahs.³² The full text of all three volumes of Kochin’s *Adderet Eliyahu* is available today on the internet.³³

About thirty books, both those described in the text and others noted below, have been entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*.³⁴ It is not unlikely that there are yet additional titles, not recorded in this article. It is even more likely, indeed probable, that in the future new authors will assign the title *Adderet Eliyahu* to their books.

Is there a common thread to all of these books entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*? Certainly not in terms of subject matter. Eisenstein was correct when he wrote that a book such as these “incorporates an author’s name but

³² Sch. N. Gottlieb, *Oholei Shem* (Pinsk, 1912), pp. 312–13 [Hebrew].

³³ <http://www.hebrewbooks.org/>.

³⁴ Besides the works in the text there are additional books entitled *Adderet Eliyahu*. However, considerations of space, and perhaps the weariness of the reader, limit the number of books to be addressed in the text of the article. Among those other *Adderet Eliyahus* are the homilies of R. Elijah ha-Levi Kordonska, *Adderet Eliyahu: Derushim le-Parashat ha-Shavu’a* (Odessa, 1906) on *Bereishit* and *Shemot* only; R. Elijah ha-Sarfaty, *Adderet Eliyahu: drushim u-be’urim al seder parshiyot ha-Torah* (Jerusalem, 1996); and R. Elijah ben Ezra Vidal, *Adderet Eliyahu* (Jerusalem, 1974); responsa and novellae of R. Elijah Guttmacher, *Adderet Eliyahu: She’elot u-Teshuvot, Hiddushim, Be’urim ba-Shas u-ve-Arba’at Helke Shulhan Arukh* (Jerusalem, 1984); the novellae of R. Elijah Tufik, *Adderet Eliyahu: al Masekhet Erwin* (Jerusalem, 1989) and on *M. Niddah* (Jerusalem, 1995); two memorial books, *Adderet Eliyahu: Sefer Zikaron li-Khevodo shel... Maran Rabbi Eliyahu Re'em...* (Jerusalem, 1991); and Tenenhoiz family, *Adderet Eliyahu: Reshumot le-Zekher Avinu be-Yekar be-Adam, Eliyahu Binyamin Tenenhoiz va-Avot ha-Mishpahah le-Ma’alah ba-Kodesh* (Jerusalem/Bnei Brak, 1999).

Still other books were not included because they were not seen, either in the original or facsimile, but are recorded in bibliographical works. Among them are R. David Zamosc, *Shir Hadash: le-Shorer be-Hitasef Yahad Atsile Bene Yisrael Anshe ha-Hevrah...: ha-Nikret Adderet Eliyahu: be-Lel ha-Rishon shel Hanukah* (1839/40); R. Naphtali ben Isaac, *Adderet Eliyahu im Likute ha-Shas* (Jerusalem, 1859); and R. Pinhas ben Tsevi Grayevski, *Adderet Eliyahu: Toldosov ve-Po’alot shel Eliyahu Moshe Panziel* (Jerusalem 1938).

does not indicate the contents of a book.” Whether they are, however, as Eisenstein further remarks, “a source of annoyance and confusion,” is a less certain matter. I would suggest that the assignment of a name such as *Adderet Eliyahu* is not a “source of annoyance and confusion,” but rather a reflection of pride and a sense of accomplishment by the author in his labors, reflected by the joining of the author’s name or that of a close and dear relative to the title without violating the proscription of *Sefer Hasidim*.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DESIGNING THE TALMUD: THE ORIGINS OF THE PRINTED TALMUDIC PAGE¹

The Talmud is indisputably the most important and influential non-biblical Jewish work.² Its redaction was completed at the end of the fifth century and the most important commentaries were written in the middle ages. Studied without interruption for a millennium and a half, it is surprising just how significant an effect the invention of printing, a relatively late occurrence, had upon the Talmud.

The ramifications of Gutenberg's invention are well known. One of the surprising consequences not foreseen by the early practitioners of the 'Holy Work' (*Meleket ha-Kodesh*) and commonly associated with the Industrial Revolution, was the introduction of standardization. The spread of printing meant that distinct scribal styles became generic fonts, erratic spellings became uniform, and sequential numbering of leaves became standard.

The first printed books (incunabula) were typeset copies of manuscripts, lacking foliation or pagination and often not uniform. As a result, incunabula share many characteristics with manuscripts, such as leaving a blank space for the first letter or word to be embellished with an ornamental woodcut, a colophon at the end of the work rather than a title page, and the use of signatures but no foliation or pagination.³ The Gutenberg Bibles, for example, were printed with blank spaces to be completed by calligraphers, accounting for the varying appearance of the surviving Bibles. Hebrew books, too, shared many features with manuscripts; A. M. Habermann writes that "Conat's type-faces were cast after his own handwriting... this is immediately obvious when his type-faces are compared to his manuscript writings."⁴

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Tradition* 29:3 (New York, 1995), pp. 40–51.

² All talmudic references are to the Babylonian Talmud. Although the invention of printing also affected the Jerusalem Talmud the history of that work is not addressed by this paper.

³ D. C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship. An Introduction* (New York and London, 1992), pp. 225–26.

⁴ Abraham M. Habermann, "The Jewish Art of the Printed Book" in *Jewish Art. An*

Codices with a common text are, unless the scribe consciously intended otherwise, manifestly unique. Among the features that distinguish manuscripts from printed books is the absence of pagination, which is defined as “a: the numbers or marks used to indicate the sequence of pages (as of a book) b: the number and arrangement of pages or an indicator of these.”⁵ Sequential numbering is used to permit multiple readers of a common work to reference their location within that work. Pagination is absent from codices, and, indeed, if present would be superfluous, because the very uniqueness of each codex renders such a reference system, based on the uniform physical construction of a book, meaningless. Instead, cross referencing is accomplished by referring to text markers, such as chapters and subheadings.

These features are also true of the Talmud. What makes the Talmud unique, however, both among Hebrew and Latin titles, is neither the existence of these conditions among codices and incunabula, nor the subsequent application of modern standards and methodologies to printed editions of the Talmud, but the adoption of a fixed foliation from which current editions may not deviate. Every student of the Talmud knows that the Talmud has fixed foliation, each tractate beginning at 2a and an established page composition (*tzurat ha-daf*). This was not always the case. Well after the adoption of standards, variances occurred, with greater frequency and by more printers than might be expected.

Scribes were not constrained by the need to adhere to either preset pagination or page composition. The physical placement of identical text is inconsistent, so that the same passage in two codices of a tractate could, and more often than not did, have a different number of lines to a page and words to a line, with the text beginning and ending at different positions on the page, resulting in varying number of leaves for two copies of the same tractate. Furthermore, the organization of the text varied, with all of the *Mishnayot* for a chapter placed at the beginning rather than distributed throughout the chapter. Where *Mishnayot* are distributed in a codex they often are in a different order from the current sequence.

Illustrated History (Tel Aviv, 1961), p. 456. For a discussion of the relationship between Hebrew manuscripts and printed books, as well as a dissenting opinion from Habermann's conclusion, ref. Malachi Beit-Arie, “The Relationship Between Early Hebrew Printing and Handwritten Books: Attachment or Detachment,” in *The Makings of the Medieval Book* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 251–77.

⁵ *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass. 1973), p. 817.

Codices of the Talmud were customarily written without any commentaries, those being separate books, although later manuscripts not infrequently include *Rashi*. The Talmud, unlike many works which are little changed in their printed forms from their manuscript predecessors, was physically transformed by printing.

The first dated Hebrew book to be printed was Rashi's commentary on the Torah, completed on 10 *Adar*, 5235 (February 18, 1475) in Reggio di Calabria by Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac. Within a decade, the first tractate, *Berakhot*, had been printed in the year G'MRA (1483/84) by Joshua Solomon Soncino, in the northern Italian town of Soncino. *Berakhot* was quickly followed by *Bezah*, and, in the ensuing decades, additional tractates were issued from the presses of Joshua Solomon and, in even greater number, his nephew, Gershom Soncino. These incunabula and post-incunabula tractates are remarkable, apart from the quality of their text and physical attractiveness, because of the commentaries the Soncinos included with the text, and their arrangement of those commentaries.

The text, *Rashi*, and *Tosafot* are printed together on the same page, with the text in the middle of the page, Rashi on the inner margin towards the binding, and *Tosafot* along the outer margin of the page. Throughout the volume, *Rashi* and *Tosafot* begin at the top of the page, and four lines below begins the text. The text is printed in square letters, while Rashi and Tosafot are in semi-cursive script. With rare exceptions, subsequent editions of the Talmud have adhered to this arrangement, selection of commentaries, and structure initiated by Joshua Solomon Soncino. While there are instances where *Rashi* and *Tosafot* intermittently occupy more than four lines above the text in individual Soncino and occasional Bomberg tractates (first edition only), this arrangement has become part of the standard rules of composition of the Talmud (except where it is not possible due to the absence or limitedness of a commentary for a particular text).

Of greater significance, however, is the selection of *Tosafot* to be printed with the text. On the title page of the *Mikhlol Yofi* (Constantinople, 1532–34) Gershom Soncino recounts how, many years earlier, he had travelled throughout “France, Chambéry and Geneva” seeking the *Tosafot* of Touques, from whom he was descended. Many commentators have observed that what are now considered “our *Tosafot*,” as opposed to those *Tosafot* printed apart from the Talmudic text or still

in manuscript, results from the selection of *Tosafot* by the Soncinos to be printed with the text.⁶

Soncino tractates lacked a title page. In its place the first treatises, in the same manner as other incunabula, were bound with a blank leaf, which was counted as the first leaf in the numeration of the signatures. The following leaf, the second leaf in the volume and the first text page, is therefore the second page of the quire. When Gershom Soncino printed *Yevamot* in 1509, the first tractate with a title page (he also printed the first Hebrew book with a title page, the *Sefer ha-Roke'ah*, in Fano, 1505) he counted the title page as the first signature. This numeration was continued in the subsequent Pesaro treatises; it is responsible for the practice, which carries over to the foliation in the Bomberg Talmud, of the title page being counted as not only the first leaf in the signature, but also the first leaf in the enumeration of the foliation, with the result that the first text page of a tractate is numbered 2a.

In 1519/20 Daniel Bomberg, the most prominent Hebrew printer in Venice, the international center of printing in the sixteenth century, with R. Hiyya Meir bar David as his editor, began printing the first complete Talmud, the *editio princeps*, utilizing the layout introduced by the Soncinos. This Talmud is of considerable importance in the development of standards for future Talmud editions. The text organization and pagination of Bomberg's *editio princeps* are the model and touchstone for subsequent editions of the Talmud. *Berakhot* only follows the second Bomberg Talmud (sixty-four leaves for the text) rather than the first Bomberg *Berakhot* (sixty-eight leaves for the text), whereas the Soncino *Berakhot* has one hundred text folios. Two tractates from the last Bomberg Talmud, *Eruvin* and *Keritot*, have an innovation that was not repeated, a letter marker to cross-reference the text and *Tosafot*.

Two additional editions of the Talmud were printed in Italy. The first, a complete Talmud published by Marco Antonio Giustiniani from 1546–51, is a beautiful and influential edition, which contributed the indices *Torah Or*, *Ein Mishpat Ner Mizvah*, and *Mesorat ha-Talmud* (now referred to as *Mesorat ha-Shas*), prepared by the editor, R. Joshua ben Simon Baruch Boaz.

⁶ Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud. A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn, 1992), pp. 102–103, 132 (“Earliest Printed Editions”).

The final Italian printing occurred in 1554 at the Sabbioneta press of Tobias ben Eliezer Foa. One tractate only, *Kiddushin*, is extant, if indeed more were ever printed. Here too, the editor was Joshua Boaz. He appended to the margins of the now standard page with indices the commentaries of R. Yom Tov ibn Abraham (Ritba) and the *Tosafot* of R. Isaiah di Trani. Accents were added to the letters in the Mishnah and references to the Mishnah in the Talmud text were printed in large letters. Rabbinovicz described this edition of *Kiddushin* as “most becoming and beautiful. . . It would have been the glory and most beautiful jewel of Israel. All the editions before and after would not have compared to it.”⁷

Hebrew printing in Italy, excluding undated books attributed to a press in Rome ca. 1470, antedates the appearance of Hebrew titles in the Iberian peninsula by one year only, the first Iberian work known with surety being, as in Italy, *Rashi* on the Torah, printed in Guadalajara and dated 16 Elul 5236 (September 5, 1476). During the brief period left to the Jews of Spain prior to their expulsion from that land, Hebrew-Iberian presses issued many fine imprints, among them Talmudic tractates, which were contemporaneous to and may even have preceded the first Soncino imprints.

Among the imprints from an unidentified press is an edition of *Hullin* (fig. 49), remarkable for its lack of any commentaries. Only the text of the tractate, without accompanying glosses, was printed. An early date is ascribed to this edition, extant in limited fragments in three copies, due to its similarity to codex tractates. It is printed in square letters in a Sephardic font, thirty lines to a page, covering an area of 204:131 mm. Initial marks and abbreviation marks are above the line, slightly after the letter. Stop marks are two dots; two dots above the letter or three, horizontal (*segol*). Only three treatises, in addition to this edition of *Hullin*, are known to have been published without any accompanying commentaries. The others are an edition of *Niddah* (Prague, c. 1608), *Bava Mezia*, apparently printed in conjunction with but not part of the 1616 to 1620 Cracow Talmud, and a miniature edition of *Sukkah*, dated 1722, but without the name of the printer or the place of printing.⁸

⁷ Raphael Nathan Nata Rabbinovicz, *Ma’amar al hadpasat ha-Talmud with additions*, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem, 1952), p. 59 [Hebrew].

⁸ Concerning *Niddah*, see my “Observations on a Little Known Edition of Tractate *Niddah* (Prague, c. 1608) and its Relationship to the Talmudic Methodology of the Maharal of Prague,” *The Torah u-Madda Journal* 8 (New York, 1998–99), pp. 134–50; For *Bava Mezia* and *Sukkah* see below.

The Guadalajara press of R. Solomon ben Moses ha-Levi Alkabez, the eponymous grandfather of the author of *Lekhhah Dodi*, issued a number of tractates. Printed with *Rashi* but not *Tosafot*, these tractates are representative of the Sephardic tradition of learning *Rashi* and the novellae of R. Moses ben Nahman (Ramban) rather than *Tosafot* (fig. 50). Here too, the text is in square letters, and *Rashi* is in a distinctive Sephardic cursive script. In what is assumed to be the first Guadalajara tractate, *Berakhot*, *Rashi* is printed on the left side of the page, dividing the text. In subsequent tractates, *Rashi* is positioned along the outer margin, so that it surrounds the text.⁹ There is no foliation in these treatises.

Hebrew printing in Portugal, introduced into that country in 1486–87 from Spain, precedes Latin and vernacular printing, which begin in 1494 and 1495, respectively. Two treatises, *Berakhot* and *Gittin*, were printed in Faro by Don Samuel Gacon and Don Samuel Porteira, and *Shevu'ot* and *Bava Mezia* at an unidentified printing-house. Both the text and *Rashi* are printed in square letters, distinguishable by the smaller fonts used for *Rashi*. At one time it was believed that these treatises had all been issued by the same press. Distinctions such as the use of different size fonts, catchwords, and the representation of the tetragrammaton have caused a reevaluation of that position. The placement of Mishnayot in both the Guadalajara and Portuguese tractates varies from the current order. These tractates, as well as other Sephardic treatises, are significant for textual variations from standard Talmud editions.

The expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal resulted in the establishment of Hebrew presses in many lands with no prior history of printing, and in many cases no subsequent history of printing in the vernacular for many years. (Hebrew printing in Constantinople antedates Turkish printing by more than two centuries.) In three locations, the Jewish refugees from the Iberian peninsula printed volumes from the Talmud notable for our purposes, for their departure from the Venetian standard. These centers are Fez, Salonika, and Constantinople.

Samuel ben Isaac Nedivot founded a Hebrew printing-house in Fez in ca. 1516. Among the titles issued by his press are several tractates, the most interesting being *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, in which both the text and *Rashi* are printed entirely with semi-cursive (“*Rashi*”) letters (fig. 51). It is assumed that this was done because of insufficient square letters to set

⁹ Haim Dimitrovsky, *S'ridei Bawli: An Historical and Bibliographical Introduction* (Hebrew) (New York, 1979), p. 71.

the text. Although all the tractates attributed to the Nedivot press lack *Tosafot* and are clearly Sephardic imprints, the layout of a later tractate, *Hullin*, reflects the influence of the Soncino and Pesaro treatises.¹⁰ After issuing seven to fifteen titles in Fez, Nedivot ceased to print, primarily due to a Spanish prohibition on the sale of paper to the press.

The first tractates printed in Salonika by Don Judah Gedaliah continue the Sephardic tradition described above. By the time that Joseph Jabez began to print tractates in 1563, *Tosafot* were included, together with *Rashi*, on the page of the Talmud. Joseph Jabez did not, however, initially adopt the accepted foliation. The first three treatises printed by Jabez, *Kiddushin*, *Ketubbot*, and *Bava Mezia*, do not conform to the standard foliation. By the time the fourth tractate, *Bava Kamma* was printed, Jabez had become aware of the advantages of standard foliation, that tractate as well as the remaining treatises printed by Joseph Jabez in Salonika, were printed in conformity with the standard introduced by Daniel Bomberg. This was not done without some expense, as smaller *Rashi* fonts were needed to have his pages agree with the ‘Venetian’ foliation.¹¹

Subsequent Salonika Talmud imprints, issued as individual tractates by small presses for local use, did not always adhere to the now accepted standard. *Berakhot* and *Gittin*, printed by David Azubib in 1580, reflect the influence of Joseph Jabez’s first tractates, *Berakhot* having 76 leaves and *Gittin* 106, in contrast to the respective accepted foliation of 64 and 90 leaves. A later press, that of the brothers Solomon and Moses Shimon, printed a small number of treatises from 1610–20, again not in conformity with the accepted foliation. The Hebrew press of Abraham ha-Ger printed three tractates between 1651 and 1655, while the press of Abraham ben Yedidah Gabbai printed at least five tractates between 1705 and 1707. None of these tractates adhere to the standard foliation. In 1758 and 1767/68, respectively, *Bezah* and *Berakhot* were printed without *Tosafot* and with non-standard foliation (*Bezah* has 36 leaves and *Berakhot* has 101 leaves), for the local Talmud Torah. Finally, *Ketubbot* and *Bava Mezia* are known to have been printed for the local Talmud Torah by Raphael Judah Kalai and Mordecai Nahman between 1774 and 1781. These treatises, too, vary from accepted norms.¹²

¹⁰ Dimitrovsky, pp. 68–70.

¹¹ Israel Mehlman, “Hebrew Printing Houses in Salonika,” in *Genuzot Sefarim* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1976), p. 48.

¹² Mehlman, pp. 48–53.

The widespread adoption of printing *Tosafot* as well as *Rashi* is reflected in the earliest known Constantinople imprints, dated to the first decade of the sixteenth century. These tractates, although designed primarily for a Sephardic audience, reflect the Ashkenazic tradition of printing *Tosafot*, motivated by market considerations. In 1583 the Jabez brothers, Joseph and Solomon, began to print the Talmud in Constantinople, using the first Bomberg Talmud as their model. This is clear from a comparison of those two editions with later treatises. The Constantinople Talmud varies from editions printed afterwards, as does the first Bomberg Talmud, in such instances as the number of lines of *Rashi* or *Tosafot* at the top of the page. The Jabez brothers employed a type that was larger than the fonts used by Bomberg. As a result, they found it necessary to compensate for the additional space required by their type by cramping the text and using abbreviations to ensure that their foliation remained consistent with the accepted standard.¹³

Acknowledgment of the ‘Venetian’ standard is evident in all of the Talmud imprints from the Hebrew printing-houses of Lublin and Cracow. Acknowledgment is not the same, however, as compliance. The first printing of the Talmud in Poland is the Lublin edition of 1559–77. The title page states:

The pages are marked in accordance with the great edition printed previously in Venice: In order to be able also to find the pages in this edition we have marked the [Venetian] foliation in our edition on the side of the page in large square letters as in the great edition. That is, where an *aleph* is found on the side of the page, there begins *daf aleph* from the great edition and so with *bet*, etc.¹⁴

Although a smaller format was used for these tractates, a full-size font was employed. As a result, the foliation does not conform to the *editio princeps*. To compensate, the standard foliation is noted, although not consistently, twice on a page, on the top of the page and along the outer margin where a new leaf (*daf*) begins according to accepted usage. Only the leaf is noted, but not the page (*amud*).

The acceptance of the great ‘Venetian’ standard is also evident from the first Cracow tractates, *Avodah Zarah* and *Ketubbot*, printed in 1578–79 in accordance with the first Bomberg Talmud. *Avodah Zarah* was printed to complete the Basel Talmud which, under the guidance

¹³ Rabbinovicz, p. 73.

¹⁴ Heller, *Earliest Printed Editions*, p. 329.

of the censor, omitted the entire tractate from that Talmud. Although the next Cracow Talmud, issued by Isaac Prostitz from 1602–05, also conformed to accepted practice, the following Prostitz edition deviated in several particulars.

The 1616–20 Talmud edition was printed by Aaron and Mordecai ben Isaac Prostitz as a small (20 cm.) portable edition. The title page of *Berakhot*, one of the few tractates with a title page, states:

Therefore, our purpose is to print the Talmud with *Rashi's* commentary, small in size but of great quality. We have omitted *Tosafot*, and in its place added the *Arukh's* commentary throughout the Talmud... With references on the page to the great edition...¹⁵

Tosafot, as stated on the title page, is indeed absent. The *Arukh's* explanation of terms, however, only appears intermittently throughout this Talmud. The standard foliation is noted by large square letters throughout *Seder Mo'ed* but is absent from most of the later tractates. The most unusual tractate in this edition, one that differs markedly from the other treatises, is the second edition of *Bava Mezia*. That tractate was printed with the text only, lacking both *Rashi* and *Tosafot*. This edition too has its own foliation, noting the 'Venetian' foliation, with the same fonts as the text, within the text in parentheses.¹⁶

The last printing of a Talmudic treatise in Poland prior to the catastrophic Chmielnicki massacres of 1648–49 was begun but not completed in Lublin. Unlike the 1617–39 Lublin Talmud, which conforms to the accepted standard, *Bava Kamma*, begun in that city in 1646, does not adhere to that foliation, and includes the same statement on the title page as to cross-referencing to "the great edition printed previously in Venice" as does the first Lublin Talmud. Before the tractate could be completed, however, a fire destroyed the Jaffe Hebrew printing house, forcing the famed press to close. Sixteen quires of *Bava Kamma* which had already printed were saved and sold to the Cracow printer Nahum Meisels, who completed the tractate at his press.

In the remainder of the tractate, Meisels printed all biblical verses in the text with vowels. He must have anticipated opposition to this innovation, for Meisels began the seventeenth quire, his first, with a long defense of his innovation. Although Meisels hoped to print a complete

¹⁵ Quoted in Heller, *Earliest Printed Editions*, pp. 381–82.

¹⁶ Heller, *Earliest Printed Editions*, pp. 381–88.

Talmud, the suffering and impoverishment of Polish Jewry also affected the Hebrew printing houses, and no further tractates were issued.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the layout of the Talmudic page and its foliation appeared to be settled. All printers of new editions of the Talmud and individual tractates had to either adhere to accepted standards or structure their modifications so that their imprints were, in some manner, consistent with the now accepted foliation. The constraints of an established standard, however, became evident at the beginning of that century.

In 1697–99, the Talmud was printed in Frankfort on the Oder at the press of Michael Gottshalk, under sponsorship of Issachar ha-Levi Bermann. This was the first Talmud to be issued with approbations, one which specifically forbade the publication of rival editions, including individual tractates. The prohibition encompasses printing the Talmud in any form, as one approbation states:

... whether in its entirety or in part, even for one tractate only, whether for oneself or for others, and it is not to be done by means of guile or ruse.

Rabbinovicz notes the chilling effect of these licenses, which, although well intentioned, caused serious disputes and resulted in the Talmud being printed less frequently.¹⁷ In this case, the civil authorities, elector Friedreich Augustus and Kaiser Leopold, granted a license for twelve years, while the rabbinic authorities issued approbations for twenty years.¹⁸

Although the prohibition extended to individual tractates, these ‘yeshivot’ editions continued to be issued. Approximately one hundred individual tractates were issued during the first half of the eighteenth century alone. These ostensibly prohibited individual tractates satisfied a clear and obvious need of students or less affluent individuals who could not afford an entire Talmud.

In many cases, the prohibition appears to have simply been ignored. In 1721, the Offenbach printer of tractate *Sanhedrin* was granted permission by R. Jacob ha-Kohen, *Av Bet Din* (head of the rabbinical

¹⁷ Rabbinovicz, pp. 100 and 155–56.

¹⁸ The rabbinic authorities were R. Naftali ha-Cohen, *Av Bet Din* of Pozna, R. Joseph Samuel of Cracow, *Av Bet Din* of Frankfort on the Main, R. David Oppenheim, *Av Bais Din* of Nikolsburg, and R. Moses Judah ha-Cohen and R. Jacob Sasportas of Amsterdam.

court) at Frankfort on the Main, to print the tractate for the reasons noted above. The formal basis of the exemption, however, was that by omitting commentaries normally appended to tractates, that is, *Piskei ha-Rosh* and the Rambam's Mishnayot commentary, this edition would not be called a tractate but a *kunteres* (pamphlet). Nahum Rakover writes, however, that in fact the excluded commentaries were printed.¹⁹ The copy I examined did not include either of the excluded works.

Another way of circumventing the prohibition on printing individual treatises was to print tractates in a smaller format. Approximately fifty percent of the individual treatises issued during the first half of the eighteenth century were either small format quarto or octavo editions, rather than the folio size volumes associated with complete Talmud editions, with a standard page (*amud*) often covering two pages (double pages). The numeration of the pages remained unchanged, the top of the page repeating the leaf number and page number, thus retaining the accepted foliation (fig. 52). These small tractates generally measured between 16–21 cm., frequently towards the lower end of this range.²⁰

The new small format tractates were very popular. Almost sixty treatises in this one-*amud*-on-two-pages format were issued in the first half of the eighteenth century. They were primarily printed in Amsterdam and in a number of cities in Germany, but also at several locations in eastern Europe, in Zolkiew, Slavita, and Warsaw, well into the nineteenth century. Small format tractates found favor in a wide variety of circles, it being reported that even such sages as R. Akiva ben Simhah Bunim Eger, R. Joseph David Sinzheim, and R. Abraham ben Judah Berlin possessed and used them.

In addition to their obvious utility, an additional rationale for small tractates was expressed in an approbation to the 1770 edition of *Niddah*, printed by Moses May in Metz. It states that although the approbations and excommunications issued extended to the printing of individual tractates, in reality “it was not their [the rabbinical authorities] intent to prevent the printing of these small volumes which were not part of complete editions.”

In at least two locations the standard foliation was abandoned, reverting to the practice described earlier of only noting that numeration in the text. This occurred at the printing-houses of Zevi Hirsch ben

¹⁹ Nahum Rakover, *Copyright in Jewish Law* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1991), pp. 220–21

²⁰ Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud, A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (Brill: Leiden, 1999), *var. cit.*

Hayyim, who printed in Wilhermsdorf from 1712 to 1739 and afterwards in Fuerth until 1753. Zevi Hirsch issued both folio and small format tractates, eschewing, in the latter instances, the use of double pages, noting instead the standard foliation at the top of the page and in the text where the new page begins. In *Sanhedrin* (Feurth, 1739) the volume ends on 264b, in contrast to 113b in the standard foliation.²¹

Another innovation in these small tractates is the addition of the halakhic novellae of R. Samuel Edels (Maharsha) to the text page. This commentary was printed in many of the smaller volumes into the nineteenth century, and even appears with the text of some folio tractates.

The most unusual tractate issued in the eighteenth century is a small edition of *Sukkah*—it fits comfortably into the palm of one’s hand—which measures approximately 9 cm (fig. 53).²² The title page of this palm-sized edition of *Sukkah* states:

Done as a small volume in order that a person should be able to carry it in his bosom, so that it should be fluent in the mouth of all Israel, to keep and to make a SUKKAH as is the law:

Based on the leaves to a signature—each leaf with a signature followed by seven unmarked leaves, for a total of eight leaves, or sixteen pages to a quire—Steinschneider would appear to be correct in describing the tractate as an octavo. This is not the case, however, for based on the placement of the watermark and the chain-lines in the paper, the volume is a sextodecimo (16°). The chain-lines in the volume run horizontally, and the watermark, which is in the form of the ears and ball of a foolscap, is in the upper right-hand corner, or “near the top of the fore-edge,” representative of a sextodecimo. The folds of the leaves in the quire are indicative of half-sheet imposition.²³

²¹ Heller, *Individual Treatises*, pp. 164–68.

²² Quoted in Heller, *Individual Treatises*, pp. 191–96.

²³ Heller, *Individual Treatises*, pp. 191–96; Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin, 1852–60), col. 272 no. 1909. Concerning the determination of the format, see D. C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship. An Introduction* (New York, 1992), pp. 64, 127–28; and Roy Stokes, *Esdaile’s Manual of Bibliography* (New York, 1967), pp. 63, 239–40. In half-sheet imposition, according to D. C. Greetham, a half-sheet is “imposed in a single form, the paper then turned after one side had been printed, and the other side then printed from the same form, the sheet then being cut to produce two identical copies. The advantage of half-sheet imposition was that it would halve the number of pages the printer would have to keep in type at one time, and thus cut down the most expensive part of the printing process, standing type.” (*Textual Scholarship*), pp. 127–8.

Apart from its small size, the tractate is notable for the absence of any commentaries. Standard foliation is noted at the top of the recto of a leaf (*amud a*) and in the text, in which case the page (*amud*) is also noted. Dated 1722, it lacks the place of printing and the name of the printer. Bibliographers have assigned it to different printing-houses, but most describe it as a Frankfort on the Oder and/or Berlin imprint.²⁴ The only important exception is Rabbinovicz, who suggests a Halle origin, but this seems improbable.²⁵

In 1897, a compact one-volume Talmud was published in Berditchev by H. Sheftel. This Talmud, printed with *Rashi* but not *Tosafot*, has exactly one thousand leaves. The Berditchev Talmud contains on a single page the same amount of text normally found on three standard leaves. References to the standard foliation are interspersed in the volume. Due to its small type and thick size its primarily value is as a reference tool.

In the nineteenth century new marginal annotations were appended to the text in a number of Talmud editions. It was not until the 1880–86 ‘*Vilna Shas*,’ however, printed at the press of the Widow and the Brothers Romm, under the direction of Samuel Shraga Feigensohn, that significant additions were made to both the tractate volume and the now traditional Talmud page. Numerous commentaries were added for each treatise, among them *Rav Alfás*, which had previously been printed as a large separate work, and the margins of the page were filled with important glosses. A complete Talmud here consists of twenty oversized volumes, in contrast to the Bomberg and most subsequent Talmud editions, which were bound in twelve volumes. This Talmud is now the accepted standard. Nevertheless, the accepted Talmud page remains essentially unchanged from Talmud editions printed in Italy in the first half of the sixteenth century.

²⁴ A. E. Cowley, *Concise Catalogue of Hebrew Printed Books in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1971), p. 683; Ch. B. Friedberg, *Bet Eked Sefarim* (Tel Aviv, 1951), *tav* 1342 [Hebrew]; Isaac Metz (Hebrew) and Eliezer Emden (Latin), *Kohelet David* (Hamburg, 1826), p. 56; Isaac Seligman Berend Salomon (Izak Cohen), *Reshimat Tama* (Hamburg, 1782), pp. 676–77; Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus, op. cit.*; Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book Part II Places of print sorted by Hebrew names of places where printed including author, subject, place, and year printed, name of printer, number of pages and format, with annotations and bibliographical references* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 113 no. 92, and p. 153 no. 25; Joseph Zedner, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Books in the British Museum* (London, 1964), p. 743.

²⁵ Rabbinovicz, p. 101.

The face of the Talmud was established in Italy beginning with Joshua Solomon's edition of *Berakhot*, continued by Gershom Soncino in his many Pesaro tractates and Daniel Bomberg in the *editio princeps*, and completed with the Giustiniani edition. Although additional commentaries and annotative material were added, the form, structure, basic commentaries, and pagination were all in place. Alternative structures and pagination were considered, but, with rare exceptions, by the seventeenth century, even these non-normative editions had to acknowledge the existence of the 'Venetian standard' for Talmud imprints.

There is no necessity in the composition of the contemporary Talmudic page, which was first composed in the late fifteenth century. Its acceptance may be attributed to the influence of the Soncinos, the adoption of their layout by Daniel Bomberg, and the failure of alternate models to be widely accepted, partially due to the unfortunate circumstances of the Jews in the Iberian peninsula. The acceptance of this format, however, must also be attributed to the aesthetic and functional qualities of the talmudic page introduced by Joshua Solomon Soncino in 1483/4 in the small Italian town of Soncino, a format that utilized the potential of the printing press to modify the manuscript talmudic page, and thereby benefited countless generations of Jews.

CHAPTER EIGHT

EARLY HEBREW PRINTING FROM LUBLIN TO SAFED: THE JOURNEYS OF ELIEZER BEN ISAAC ASHKENAZI¹

Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi, an itinerant printer, plied his trade for several decades in the second half of the sixteenth century in eastern Europe and the Middle East. Active in Lublin, Constantinople, and Safed, Eliezer was the first to print books in *Erez Israel*. His ability to move between and function in these disparate locations is an example of the fluidity of contemporary Jewish society. Eliezer's motivation in relocating reflects both the political and economic reality of sixteenth-century Jewish life as well as Eliezer's personal circumstances. The wide spectrum of the books printed by Eliezer reflects the diverse interests and needs of these Jewish communities, encompassing Talmudic treatises, Kabbalistic commentaries, and poetry.

Printing, in its first decades, was a peripatetic profession. This is especially true of Hebrew printers, given the exigencies facing the Hebrew book. Gershom Soncino, for example, among the most prominent of the pioneers of Hebrew printing, moved about Italy, more often than not printing in out of the way places, and at the end was forced to leave the land he was born in for Salonika. Similarly, Hayyim ben David Shahor (Schwarz) printed in Prague from 1515 to 1526, becoming, after a royal privilege granted Gershom Kohen a monopoly on Hebrew printing in that city in 1527, an itinerant printer until 1529, when he opened a Hebrew press in Oels, Silesia. A year later he was in Augsburg, followed by Heddernheim near Frankfurt am Main (1545). Hayyim died in c. 1547. His son-in-law, Joseph ben Yakar, and his son Isaac, who had worked in the press with Hayyim, relocated the family press to Lublin, establishing a print-shop that, through descendants and collateral members, was active for over 150 years.²

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Jewish Culture and History* 4:1 (London, summer, 2001), pp. 81–96.

² Ch. D. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Poland from its beginning in the year 1534 and its development to the present . . .*, enlarged, improved and revised from the sources (Tel Aviv: n.p., 1950), 2nd edition, 45 [Hebrew]. In the first edition of this work Friedberg expresses doubt as to the date of death of Hayyim Shahor, noting that he might have been the founder of the Lublin press. In the second revised edition he no longer entertains this possibility.

In 1550 the two brothers-in-law secured from King Sigismund Augustus permission to open a Hebrew press in Lublin. The following year they issued a Polish rite *mahzor* [holiday prayer book] for the entire year. They did not operate the press for long however, for Isaac Shahor died in c. 1554. Joseph ben Yakar, who had left Lublin to work for the famed Venetian printer, Marco Antonio Giustiniani, returned in 1554 but is reported to have died shortly afterwards.

Family members replaced them at the press. Kalonymous ben Mordecai, the husband of Hayyim Shahor's granddaughter Hannah and a second cousin of the famous Talmudic scholar and codifier, R. Mordecai Jaffe, author of the *Levushim* [Attires] operated the press until his death in 1603, and his descendants managed the printing house until the last decades of the century. Joseph ben Yakar's position was filled by Eliezer ben Isaac, a well-known printer from Prague, possibly a grandson of Hayyim Shahor.

It is Eliezer ben Isaac (he has not yet adopted the surname Ashkenazi) with whom we are concerned. His career, spanning more than three decades, in cities in distant lands, is an example of the fluidity of contemporary Jewish society and the ability of an eastern European Jew to function in disparate locations.³ We are concerned too with the books he published, several, although little known, being of considerable interest, and with his use of ornamentation, copied from well known earlier presses.

A Pentateuch with Rashi, Megillot and Haftarat, completed on 24 *Heshvan* (18 October 1557), printed with partners, was Eliezer's first

³ Eliezer's ability to relocate without undue difficulty from an Eastern-European Ashkenaz society to a middle-Eastern Sephardic one is not unique. Examples of this movement between communities, within the printing trade alone, are numerous. The Soncinos—Ashkenazim, descendants of the Ba'alei Tosafot—printed in Italy and various locations in the Ottoman Empire, including Egypt. Sephardic refugees founded presses throughout the Mediterranean littoral, from Morocco to Constantinople; Abraham ben Samuel ha-Kohen Ashkenazi came from Italy to Constantinople; and another émigré from Poland, Jonah ben Jacob Ashkenazi, founded a press in Constantinople that lasted three generations (from 1710 to 1768). When R. Moses de Medina established a press in Salonika to print the responsa of his father, R. Samuel ben Moses de Medina, (Maharashdam, 1506–89), he recruited Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba (Basevi in Italian), scion of an Italian-Jewish family from Verona of German origin. Most interesting is Samuel ben Hayyim Ashkenazi, one of three Halicz brothers who had established the first Hebrew printing press in Poland, but subsequently apostatized. Samuel (Andreas) returned to Judaism and resumed printing in Constantinople, where in a Bible (1551–52) he writes, “do not call me Samuel but Shuvu'el for he returned to his God.” For non-print examples, see below, note 13.

Lublin imprint. On the title page he alludes to the hardships encountered by Bohemian Jewry, particularly those in Prague. Eliezer would, after the Pentateuch, print a variety of titles, among them liturgical works and Talmudic treatises. The latter, beginning with *Shevu'ot* [on oaths] in “Make haste **חושׁה** (319 = 1559) to help (us), [O Lord my salvation]!” (Psalms 38:23), and *Pesahim* [on Passover] begun in “Sing **הרנינו** (321 = 1561) aloud to God our strength; make a joyful noise to the God of Jacob” (Psalms 81:2), and completed on Wednesday 23 *Tevet* (10 January 1562), were the first in a series that would, upon completion in 1577, be the first Lublin Talmud, a fine and attractive edition.⁴ These tractates, as well as other books printed by Eliezer in Lublin, were printed with partners, named either on the title page or in the colophon. *Pesahim* and also tractate *Gittin* [on divorce], completed on the eve of Pesach (Passover) 14 *Nissan* (30 March 1562), were not printed in Lublin, but rather in Konska Vola, a neighboring village, to which the press had been relocated due to an outbreak of plague in Lublin. The plague must have soon subsided, for soon after *Gittin* was completed, the press was again in Lublin printing an Ashkenaz rite *mahzor*.⁵

Both tractates are relatively small, measuring approximately 27.9 × 18.4 cm. (11” × 7¼”) but attractive in appearance due to the employment of standard size fonts. The result is non-standard foliation. *Shevu'ot* ends on 64b in contrast to the accepted foliation, which ends on 49b. The printers explain how they dealt with this variance on the title pages, which state:

The pages are marked in accordance with the great edition printed previously in Venice: In order to be able to find the pages in this edition we have marked [the Venetian foliation] in our edition on the side of the pages in large square letters as in the great edition. That is, where an *alef* (א) is found on the side of the page, there begins *daf alef* [folio א] from the great edition, and so with *bet* (ב) etc.

⁴ The date of books employing chronograms, and it was a common practice at this time, can be derived by adding 1240, the year the fifth millennium in the Hebrew calendar began, to the numerical value of the selected letters, in *Shevu'ot*, for example, 319 results in 1559, the year of publication. This computation is for the abbreviated era, which does not enumerate the millennium, that is, the 5 in 5319, is understood. In other chronograms, noted below, the date given is for the full era, so that the [], representing the millennium, shown in brackets, must be subtracted, or not included in the computation, to arrive at the common era date. On the use of chronograms to date books see my “Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 18 (Cincinnati, 1993), 3–14.

⁵ Friedberg (see note 2), 47–48.

From the publication of the first complete edition of the Talmud in Venice (1519/20–23) by Daniel Bomberg, the foliation in that *editio princeps* was quickly accepted and became a standard adhered to until the present. *Shevu'ot* and *Pesahim* do not adhere to that convention. To enable users of their Talmud to reference the standard foliation the publishers, as noted on the title page, indicated the standard [Venetian] foliation twice on a page in which a new page begins in a Venetian Talmud. Large letters were placed at the top of the page and along the outer margin against the line where the page begins.⁶

Another feature of the tractates printed by Eliezer and his partners, beginning with *Pesahim*, is the phrase, on the title page,

With the approbation of the *Geonei Olam* [exalted and learned Excellencies] and *Roshei Yeshivot* [heads of *yeshivah*] of the three countries, Poland, Russia, and Lithuania, who together agreed and initiated a strong enactment, signed in their hand, that all the *yeshivot* in the three countries should learn tractate after tractate, as they are printed, [God willing] [with the help of God] in order to spread Torah in Israel and to strengthen and encourage our hand in the work of Heaven.

This refers to an enactment in 1559 of the *Va'ad Arba Arazot* [Council of the Four Lands], a super-*kehilla* organization recognized by the Polish state and representing and uniting the disparate Jewish communities in Poland-Lithuania. Among its enactments were ordinances regulating the tractates to be learned in *yeshivot*, in the order of the Talmud, so that all the *yeshivot* studied the same treatise. This had several beneficial results. It increased *halakhic* discourse, enabled students to transfer between schools, provided printers with advance notice as to the books required for the coming year, insured a market for their imprints, and assisted them in the publication of the first Lublin Talmud. Another

⁶ Concerning the development of the Talmudic page my, “Designing the Talmud: The Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page,” *Tradition* v. 29:3 (New York, 1995),” 40–51. Concerning this Lublin Talmud edition see my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn: Im Hasefer, 1992), 329–42 and Raphael Natan Nuta Rabinovicz, *Ma'amar al Hadpasat ha-Talmud with additions*, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1952), 60–67. The other tractates printed by Eliezer are *Bezah* [egg, after its opening word, on the laws of festivals] (1567), *Sukkah* [booths, on the festival of Sukkot] and *Eruvin* [on Sabbath boundaries] (1568), *Kiddushin* [on matrimonial matters] (1572), and *Niddah* [on menstrual laws] (1573). *Gittin* is an exception, the title page omitting the phrase “approbation of the Geonei Olam and Roshei Yeshivot.” The text of that title page is reprinted by A. Freimann, “Elieser ben Isak und seine Druck in Lublin, Konstantinople und Safed,” *Zeitschrift für Hebräische Bibliographie* 11 (Frankfurt a. M., 1907), 152–55.

enactment of the *Va'ad Arba Arazot* in support of local Hebrew presses was the prohibition of Hebrew books printed in Poland from being reprinted in Italy, and, if reprinted there, prohibiting their sale in Poland for ten years after their publication. If the Italian presses had printed the title first, however, they decreed that the Polish edition could not be sold for a fixed period of time.⁷

The printers' difficulties did not cease with their return to Lublin after the plague had abated. Unrest in Poland, resulting from strife between king and nobles, forced them to take up arms on the monarch's behalf, from whom, the previous year, Eliezer and his partners had secured a renewed privilege for their press. Idle until 1567, printing resumed that year with a Polish rite *mahzor* with the commentary of R. Abraham ben Avigdor of Prague.⁸

In 1571 the press issued the *Ta'amei ha-Mitzvot* [Reasons for the Precepts] of R. Menahem ben Moses ha-Bavli (d. 1571), a *dayyan* [judge] in Trikkola, Greece until 1525, and afterward resident in *Erez Israel*, in which he sets forth the categories of and reasons for the commandments. Menahem, a correspondent of R. Joseph Caro, was, despite his name, apparently from Italy. Also published that year was the *Minhagim* [Book of Customs] of R. Isaac Tyrnau (late fourteenth century), a compilation of the customs followed in the communities of central Europe, and, to a large extent, based on *Sefer ha-Minhagim* (Riva di Trento, 1558) of his teacher, R. Abraham Klausner (d. 1407/8); *Avodat ha-Levi* [Service of the Levi] of R. Solomon ben Eleazer ha-Levi, also on the number and reasons for the commandments; and, in the following year, *Orhot Hayyim* [The Path of Life] of R. Asher ben Jehiel (Rosh, 1250–1357), an ethical work with precepts organized by the days of the week.

In 1572, Eliezer also published *Masoret ha-Mikra* [Biblical traditions, that is readings], a folio size index of biblical passages in the Talmud by R. Simeon ben Isaac Aschaffenburg (d. 1598). The author, from Frankfurt am Main, resided in the Bavarian community of Aschaffenburg, and later settled in Jerusalem, where he died.⁹ He is better known for his *Devek Tov* [A Good Attachment] (Venice, 1588), an often reprinted super-commentary on Rashi. A little more than a decade after the

⁷ Simha Assaf, "The Inner Life of Polish Jewry," in *Beohelai Ya'akov* (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1943), 70–71. [Hebrew].

⁸ Friedberg, (see note 2), 48.

⁹ *Encyclopedia Judaica: Das Judentum im Geschichte und Gegenwart*, III (Berlin: Verlag Eschkol A–G, 1928–34), col. 434.

publication of *Masoret ha-Mikra*, in 1583–84, a corresponding work, *Toledot Aharon*, also a concordance of biblical passages in the Babylonian Talmud, by R. Aaron of Pesaro (d. 1563), was published by Israel Zifroni in Freiburg-im-Breisgau. On the title page of that work Zifroni cautions prospective buyers against thinking that *Masoret ha-Mikra* is a comparable work.

Eliezer printed his last title in Lublin in 1573, the *Pahad Yizhak* [Fear of Isaac] of R. Isaac ben Abraham Chajes (1538–c. 1615) on the *aggadot* [homiletic portions of the Talmud] in tractate *Gittin* dealing with the destruction of the Temple. Chajes, rabbi in Prossnitz and, from 1584, in Prague, was the author of works on the laws of Passover (*Si'ah Yizhak* [Meditations of Isaac], Prague, 1587), and on *Yoreh De'ah* [dietary laws] (*Penei Yizhak* [the Countenance of Isaac], Cracow, 1591), in rhyme with commentaries. The text of the title page of *Pahad Yizhak* is set in an ornamental arabesque frame. This border was designed and first used by Jean de Tournes (1504–64) in Lyon. It is employed here, as in several other books printed by Eliezer, that is, *She'elot u'Teshuvot ha-Geonim* [responsa of the Geonim] (Constantinople, 1575), and R. Moses ben Mordecai Galante's *Kohelet Ya'akov* [Sermons of Jacob] (Safed, 1578), inverted from the manner in which it was used by de Tournes. This appears to be Eliezer's first use of such material. As we shall see, Eliezer was a copyist, using ornamental material employed earlier by other printers. It should be noted, on his behalf, that this was not an uncommon practice.

In his preface to *Pahad Yizhak*, Eliezer bemoans the state of Polish Jewry and explains Chajes' intent in writing this work.

We remain, due to our iniquities, in exile, our enemies prevail, and our travails increase. Our hearts and reasoning have weakened. For this reason, and due to a lack of works containing the wisdom of earlier sages, the author has written this book, small in size, but of great value, on the *aggadot* in chapter *ha-Nezikin* [on torts] (ch. 5, *Gittin*) dealing with the destruction of the Temple.

Chajes entitles it *Pahad Yizhak* because of the words of R. Yochanan (*Gittin* 55b), "Praiseworthy is the man who always fears (*pahad*)," (Proverbs 28:14)."

Eliezer has determined to leave Poland. It is not clear, however, whether his destination is *Erez Israel* or not. Influenced by R. Isaac ben Abraham of Safed, Eliezer's intent may have been to relocate there, to fulfill the *mitzvah* of residing in the Holy Land. He could pursue his craft in *Erez Israel*, and it did not seem unreasonable to assume that

European Jews would be eager to purchase books printed there. If this was his objective, however, it is not expressed in either *Pahad Yizhak* or in his first Constantinople imprints.

In any case, Eliezer, with his son Isaac, left Lublin the following year, after printing in Poland for more than a decade and a half. They took typographical material and workers with them, hoping to defray expenses by printing books along the way. We find father and son in 1575 in Constantinople, a city with a rich printing tradition dating back to 1493 when the Nachmias brothers printed the *Arba'ah Turim* [Four Rows].¹⁰ When Eliezer arrived, he found a well-established Hebrew press in Constantinople, that of the Jabez brothers, Solomon and Joseph, active from 1559 to 1593.¹¹ Eliezer and his son were not, then, pioneers, but rather skilled craftsmen, coming to a place where their skills were valuable but not essential. Perhaps that is why Eliezer and his son Isaac did not tarry in Constantinople. They printed, both alone and with David ben Elijah Kashti as partner, a small number of titles, before continuing on to Safed. Although Eliezer had brought fonts and ornamental material from Lublin, he lacked the financial resources to purchase paper. It was for that reason that he entered into partnership with Kashti.¹²

Eliezer's first title was the *She'elot u'Teshuvot ha-Geonim*, "printed by the partners, together, the wise and honorable David Kashti and Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi." This is the first use by Eliezer of the surname Ashkenazi, thereby indicating his origin and differentiating himself from both his Romaniot (Byzantine) partner, David Kashti, and the surrounding Sephardic community.¹³ The title page is dated Tuesday, 15

¹⁰ Concerning the dating of the *Turim* to 1493, a matter of some controversy, see A. K. Offenberg, "The first printed book produced at Constantinople," *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 3 (Amsterdam, 1969, 96–112, reprinted in *A Choice of Corals: Facets of Fifteenth-Century Hebrew Printing* (Nieuwkoop, 1992), 102–32; and *idem*, "The Printing History of the Constantinople Hebrew Incunabula of 1493; A Mediterranean Voyage of Discovery," *The British Library Journal* 22 (London, 1996), 221–235.

¹¹ The Jabez brothers first printed in Salonika, from 1543. Forced to relocate to Adrianople due to an outbreak of plague in 1555, Solomon continued on to Constantinople, while Joseph returned to Salonika when conditions permitted. He joined Solomon in Constantinople sometime after 1570.

¹² Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printing at Constantinople* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 1967), 30 [Hebrew].

¹³ Yaari, *Constantinople* (see note 12, 31. Eliezer was not alone in taking the surname Ashkenazi to distinguish himself in a new environment. Examples of rabbinic and kabbalistic figures named Ashkenazi, either because they moved from an Ashkenaz community to a predominantly Sephardic one or were descended from a family that

Iyyar, in the year, given in the chronogram, “[And the Lord answered] the angel who talked with me with good words **בִּי דְבָרִים טוֹבִים** (335 = May 5, 1575) [and comfortable words]” (Zechariah 1:13). It is a small quarto work, measuring 21 cm. and consisting of only 46 pages. The title page is adorned with the arabesque frame of Jean de Tournes, used earlier with *Pahad Yizhak*. Pages 2 to 8 are a listing of the responsa, at the end of which Eliezer employs a device—a crowned, two tailed lion *passant*, the symbol of Bohemia (see fig. 54). In the colophon Eliezer informs that if it should occur that errors are found, he should be held blameless, for the copy from which the book was set was faulty and no other could be found. Nevertheless, every possible effort was made to correct the text, to the extent that his eyes did not see sleep at night. Eliezer requests, therefore, that he be judged favorably. The reader should correct any errors he may find, which certainly will be few.

The responsa of the geonim was quickly followed by *Seder Tefillot ha-Shanah Minhag Kehillot Romania*, that is, a Romaniot rite prayer book, printed at the initiative of R. Elijah Galmidi, rabbi of the Romaniot community and sponsored by Kashti, a member of that community.¹⁴ This two-volume prayer book was begun in 1573 at the press of the Jabez brothers. Dissatisfied, Kashti gave the second volume to Eliezer to print. Kashti however reconciled with the Jabez brothers and the work was completed at the Jabez’s press in 1576. This is evidenced by Kashti’s harsh references to Joseph Jabez in the introduction, printed on the title page, where he complains about the prolonged delays in publishing, how his money has been squandered, having heard about changes in paper, then the ink, yet other excuses, and two years have passed. He has, therefore, given the second volume of the *mahzor* to

had done so earlier are: R. Bezalel ben Abraham Ashkenazi (*Shitah Mekubbezet* [An Anthology of Novellae], c. 1520–1591/94); R. Joseph Ashkenazi (known as “*ha-Tanna*” of Safed, 1525–1577); R. Saul ha-Kohen Ashkenazi (*She’elot le-Hakham* [Rabbinic Responsa], 1470–1523); R. Eliezer ben Elijah Ashkenazi (*Ma’aseh HaShem* [Work of the Lord], 1513–86); and R. Samuel Jaffe ben Isaac Ashkenazi (*Yefeh Mareh* [Of Goodly Appearance], c. 1525–1595). Most prominent, however, are R. Isaac ben Solomon Luria, (*ha-Ari* [that is, the [sacred] lion], 1534–1572), the preeminent kabbalist, and R. Zevi Hirsch ben Jacob Ashkenazi (1660–1718), known as the Hakham Zevi, the Sephardic equivalent of rabbi.

¹⁴ The Romaniot rite, an ancient liturgy once used throughout the Balkans, was largely supplanted by the influx of Sephardim in the sixteenth century and is almost unknown today. It contains variant wording from, and many *piyyutim* not said in other rites. Concerning this rite see Daniel Goldschmidt, “The Mahzor Romania,” *Sefunot* 8 (Jerusalem, 1964), 205–36 [Hebrew].

Eliezer Ashkenazi to print. In the colophon, however, Kashti retracts his earlier complaints and expresses criticism of Eliezer. The portions printed by Eliezer and by the Jabez brothers are distinct, the first 42 pages being set with type from Lublin, the remaining two-thirds of the volume with the Jabez type.¹⁵ The Jabez portion is further distinguishable by their use of the ornamental florets characteristic of the books printed by them in Salonika and Constantinople.

Eliezer printed his next work, *Mekor Barukh* [Source of Blessing], also in 1576, independently, that is, without Kashti or any other partner, except for his son, Isaac. *Mekor Barukh* is a commentary on Song of Songs (*Shir ha-Shirim*) by R. Baruch ibn Ya'ish, a great-grandson and namesake of R. Baruch ibn Ya'ish ibn Isaac, the fifteenth-century philosopher and translator. This too is a small book, folio in format, consisting of only 19 pages. The title page states that *Mekor Barukh* is a commentary on Song of Songs, Ecclesiastics, Proverbs, and Job. However, only the commentary on Song of Songs was printed. On the verso of the title page is a brief introduction, made up of an acrostic spelling *Mekor Barukh ibn Ya'ish*. Beside it, to the left, is a paragraph by ibn Ya'ish, in which he states that after spending much time in writing this commentary on four books, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastics, Proverbs, and Job, and much money to publish them, he traveled from his home in Damascus to Venice, Salonika, and Constantinople to print this book, forbidding, with oaths, others from publishing it.

In an opening paragraph to the Song of Songs ibn Ya'ish informs us that he will elaborate, in great detail, in his commentary on Job, on the three reasons he wrote this work; insights were revealed to him not seen by previous commentators, who erred somewhat in their commentaries, not fully explaining deeper [*sod*] meanings. Ibn Ya'ish relates that he was undecided for many years as to whether to publish, until he had a dream "from Heaven" that he would be blessed and should publish. In the dream he is digging a pit, from which came a well of running water, from which ibn Ya'ish would build a channel that others would draw from. Therefore he called his book *Mekor Barukh*. Ibn Ya'ish continues, describing another dream, and again promising to go into greater detail in his commentary on Job. A much longer introduction

¹⁵ Yaari, Constantinople (see note 12), 124–25 no. 188. Kashti's criticism must be tempered by the fact that just as he returned to the Jabez brothers, he also printed again with Eliezer (see below, *Lev Hakham*, 1586).

to his commentaries begins on the next page. It is clear that ibn Ya'ish wrote on more than Song of Songs. It is not clear, however, why these other works were not printed at this time, for, based on the title page, that was certainly the intent.

Whether Ashkenazi originally intended to continue on to the Holy Land or not, he firmly expresses that desire in *Mekor Barukh*, perhaps indicated by his use of a copy of the famed Giustiniani device on the title page—that is, a reproduction of the Temple in Jerusalem.¹⁶ This mark would be again employed by him in Safed. It was used also by Kalonymous Jaffe, the printer who inherited Eliezer's place in Lublin, in *Sha'arei Dura* [Gates of Dura] (undated, but estimated to have been printed in approximately 1574), in 1617 in *Seder Zera'im* [on agricultural laws], and in 1619 on the title pages of tractates *Nazir* [on the Nazir] and *Nedarim* [on vows].¹⁷ It has been suggested, therefore, that Eliezer must have employed this mark previously in Lublin, although no example of his having done so is known.¹⁸ His use of the device of the Italian print-house, active from 1545 to 1552, can be attributed to the high regard in which its books were held, so much so that in some instances printers of Talmudic treatises claimed on their title pages that they were printing from the Giustiniani Talmud when that was not the case. Eliezer, too, must have had the advantages of this association in mind when he chose to employ the Temple device on his title pages.

On the title page of *Mekor Barukh*, Ashkenazi verbalizes his desire to continue on to *Erez Israel*, writing, "Printed by Eliezer ben Isaac, may the righteous be remembered for a blessing, a man from Ashkenaz, who desires the beautiful land, [God willing]." He expresses similar feelings in a brief colophon, describing himself as one "who sits in great pain, may the Lord have mercy on him, on the merit of his fathers." After completing *Mekor Barukh*, Eliezer and his son Isaac left for Safed, where

¹⁶ Yaari, *Constantinople* (see note 11), 30–31 and 126–27 no. 191. Concerning the widespread use of this device see my "The Printer's Mark of Marc Antonio Giustiniani and the Printing Houses that Utilized It" (*Library Quarterly*, (Chicago, 71:3, (2001) captioned "The Cover Design," 383–89). Concerning another mark, also widely used by printers over an extended period of time, see my "The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and its Later Influence" *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 19 (Cincinnati, 1994), 3–20.

¹⁷ For the dating of *Sha'arei Dura* see I. Rivkind, "Variants in Old Books," in *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume*, Hebrew Section (New York, 1950), 401–32, 422 n. 26).

¹⁸ Heller, *Earliest Printed Editions* (see note 6), 349–50 and Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem, 1943); reprint Gregg International Publishers, Farnborough, 1971, 11, 129–31 no. 16–17 [Hebrew].

they founded the first press not only in the Middle East but in all of Asia, excluding Chinese imprints.

Eliezer Ashkenazi's partner in Safed was Abraham ben Isaac Ashkenazi, apparently not a relative—a resident of that community whom he had met in Constantinople.¹⁹ Abraham Ashkenazi was an emissary of the Tiberias Yeshivah; his travels included Yemen, where, in addition to raising funds, he sold books.²⁰ Eliezer was to supply the expertise and typographic material, Abraham the location and the financing. It is likely that all of the work was done by Eliezer, for no other names are mentioned in conjunction with the books, in any capacity. Furthermore, the time to set and print the books, none large works, was unduly long. For example, *Kohelet Ya'akov*, the largest book printed by Eliezer in Safed, at 103 pages, was begun, according to the date on the title page, on Tuesday, 25 *Heshvan* (15 November 1577) and completed, from the date in the colophon, on Wednesday 10th of the month, "I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine [*Elul*]" (Song of Songs 6:3), that is, 23 August 1578, nine and a half months later.²¹

The first book printed at the Safed press, in 1577, was *Lekah Tov* [Good Doctrine], a commentary on the book of Esther by R. Yom Tov ben Moses Zahalon (Maharit Zahalon, 1558–1638).²² Zahalon was only 17 or 18 when he wrote *Lekah Tov*, to send, as he states on the title page, to his father for *mishlo'ah manot* [Purim gifts].²³ In a brief introduction

¹⁹ A contrary opinion was expressed by Joseph J. Rivlin, "A History of Printing in Erez Israel and Syria," *Mizrah u-Ma'ariv* I (Jerusalem, 1920), 104–9, 294–7 (104) [Hebrew], who writes that "the press was founded by two brothers, Eleazer and Abraham ben Isaac."

²⁰ Concerning Abraham ben Isaac Ashkenazi see Abraham Yaari, "Emissaries from Erez Israel to Safed," *Sinai* 2 (1938), 393–404 [Hebrew]; *idem*, *Sheluhei Erez Yisrael* (Jerusalem; Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1951), 77 and 256–58 [Hebrew]; and *idem*, "The Sale of Books in Yemen by Emissaries of Erez Israel", in *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1958), 163–64 [Hebrew].

²¹ Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printing in the East: Part I* Special Supplement to *Kiryat Sefer*, 17 (Jerusalem, 1936), 10–11 [Hebrew].

²² A number of bibliographers, most notably Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin, typis A. Friedlaender, 1852–60), col. 33 no. 180, Freimann (see note 5), 155, and Rivlin (see note 19), 105, attribute *Havazzelet ha-Sharon* [Rose of Sharon] on Daniel (1563), by R. Moses Alshekh, to Safed, with Abraham ben Isaac Ashkenazi as a printer. The error is based on a reference on the title page to Alshekh as a resident of Safed, which was, in the absence of the place of printing, taken as the location of the press. *Havazzelet ha-Sharon* was, in fact, printed in Constantinople at the Jabez press. See A. Tauber, "The History of Printing in Erez Israel," *Bibliographical Studies*, Special Supplement to *Kiryat Sefer*, 9 (Jerusalem, 1932), 1–14 (3–4) [Hebrew].

²³ Other instances of contemporary commentaries on Megillat Esther written for

on the verso of the title page, the author comments on the burning of the Talmud and Eliezer's establishing the Safed press, writing, "Great was the cry of the Torah before God and when He remembered the covenant that He made with us at Horeb (Sinai), the Lord roused the heart of the printer Eliezer [so that] honor dwelled in our land." He encourages others to also print their books at the press in Safed. In a second longer introduction, Zahalon relates that the book was named *Lekah Tov* because it has a reference to his name and because of the words of earlier sages on "For I give you good doctrine לִקְחָ טוֹב, do not forsake my Torah" (Proverbs 4:2). The volume is completed with a copy of Giustiniani's device. Although Zahalon achieved considerable recognition later as a *halakhic* decisor from his contemporaries, who often requested his opinion on complex issues, this work, written at an early age, has not found great favor, and was not reprinted until a facsimile edition was issued 400 years after the original, that is, in 1977.²⁴

Kohelet Ya'akov, a Kabbalistic-homiletic commentary on Kohelet (Ecclesiastes) by R. Moses ben Mordecai Galante (Maharam Galante, c. 1520–c. 1610) followed, in the year "for my salvation is near to come [כי קרוב] (338 = *Heshvan* (November) 1577)" (Isaiah 56:1). The title page, with the ornamental arabesque frame of Jean de Tournes (see fig. 55), states that the many contradictions in Kohelet are resolved by Galante with good reasons and proofs. Furthermore, he brings, on each and every verse, the words of the *Zohar*, "More to be desired are they than gold, even very fine gold" (Psalms 19:11). In *Kohelet Ya'akov* Galante expresses his opposition to the study of both philosophy and other secular studies, and discusses redemption, exile, and martyrdom [*kiddush ha-Shem*]. Another ornament that appears in *Kohelet Ya'akov*, after the introduction, is the two-tailed lion *passant*. The next Safed imprint, *Sar Shalom* [Prince of Peace] by R. Samuel ben Isaac ben Yom Tov Aripul (Arepol, c. 1540–c. 1586) on Song of Songs (Shir ha-Shirim), appeared in 1579. Aripul, was, as stated on the title page, a member of the Safed community. Although a prominent preacher and rabbinic scholar of repute and the author of several works, few details of his life are available.²⁵

mishlo'ah manot include *Mehir Yayin* [Price of Wine] (Cremona, 1559), by R. Moses ben Israel Isserles (Rema), and *Manot ha-Levi* [Portion of the Levi] (Venice, 1585), by R. Solomon ben Moses ha-Levi Alkabez.

²⁴ David Tamar, *Sefer Lekah Tov* (Jerusalem: Bet ha-Sefarim ha-Le'umi, 1977), 25 [Hebrew].

²⁵ Samuel Aripul is perhaps best known for his *Mizmor le-Todah* [Song of Thanks]

A hiatus in the press's operations, from 1579 to 1587 followed, for reasons that are not known with surety. Perhaps selling books in Europe from Safed was more difficult than anticipated. Transportation was not readily available and no infrastructure for marketing books from Safed was in place. In addition, at this time Eliezer's partner, Abraham ben Isaac, left for Yemen.²⁶ Eliezer too left Safed, for we find him, in 1586, in Constantinople where he printed, again partners with David Kashti, Samuel Aripul's *Lev Hakham* [Heart of the Sage], a lengthy philosophical commentary on Ecclesiastes. Here, as in his other works, Aripul emphasizes the book's ethical contents.

The next year, 1587, Eliezer was again in Safed, where he would print three more books. Printing resumed with *Zemiroi Yisrael* [Songs of Israel], religious poetry by R. Israel ben Moses Najara (c. 1555–c. 1625), considered by many the outstanding sacred poet of the period. Najara's *oeuvre* is primarily sacral, but includes poems in a secular and romantic style. As a result, Najara was strongly criticized by R. Menahem Lonzano and R. Hayyim Vital but was defended by R. Isaac Luria (ha-Ari). Eventually, Najara became rabbi in Gaza. It was later suggested by Nathan of Gaza, the prophet of the false messiah, Shabbetai Zevi, who made use of Najara's poetry for his own purposes, that Israel Najara's soul had been a spark of King David.²⁷ I would suggest that Eliezer, in printing Najara's poetry, selected the work of a popular poet, not previously published, hoping thereby to overcome the unanticipated but by now obvious liabilities of publishing far from the centres of the Hebrew book industry. Najara, in turn, born in Damascus and later rabbi of Gaza, agreed to Eliezer being his printer, thus encouraging a Hebrew press in *Erez Israel*.

Zemiroi Yisrael is dated “[Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes;] and I shall keep it to the end [וְאֶצְרֵנִי] (347 = 1587)” (Psalms 119:33).

(Venice, 1576), a commentary on Psalms 112–34 written as a “*Korban Todah*” [Thanks offering], upon his recovery from an illness lasting from 1569 to 1571. That part of the book on Psalms 120–34 (*Shir ha-Maalot*, Songs of Ascent) was reprinted in Cracow (1576) as *Ne'im Zemiroi*. Concerning *Kohelet Ya'akov* see David Tamar, *Studies in the History of the Jewish People in Erez Israel and Italy* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass, 1972), 150–54 [Hebrew], and for *Sar Shalom* see David Tamar, *Studies in the History of the Jewish People in Erez Israel and the Lands of the East* (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1981), 37–43 [Hebrew].

²⁶ A. M. Habermann, *The Hebrew Press in Safed* (Safed: Rubin Mass, n.d.; reprint in *Studies in the History of Hebrew Printers* (Jerusalem, 1978), 315 [Hebrew].

²⁷ Gershom Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi, the Mystical Messiah, 1626–76* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 355.

The poetic devices employed by Najara include alliteration and refrain. This, the first edition of *Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl*, includes 108 *piyyuṭim* (poems) set to Arabic and Turkish tunes. (In his youth, Najara frequented Arab inns and composed poems in fluent Arabic and Turkish). Najara defends their use, noting that people sing these tunes with immodest lyrics, and that he is performing a service by replacing them with more appropriate content. Among Najara's well known *piyyuṭim*, adopted into the prayer-book, is *Yah Ribbon Olam ve-Alemayya* [God of the world, eternity's sole Lord]. The Giustiniani device appears on the verso of the title page of *Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl*.²⁸ *Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl* is a small book—quarto in format, 41 pages—that has proven to be popular, being reprinted twice with additions in the sixteenth century (Venice, 1597 and Salonika, 1599).

Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl was quickly followed by *Baraita de-Rabbi Eliezer* and a small ethical work, *Mesaheket ba-Ṭevel*, also by Najara. It has been suggested that the latter title and *Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl* are actually one work, part 1, *Ẓemiroṭ Yisraēl*, being completed on 4 *Adar* II (14 March 1587), and part 2, *Mesaheket ba-Ṭevel*, on the 12th of that month (22 March).²⁹

These are the last books printed by Eliezer. His partner, based on the title page of *Mesaheket ba-Ṭevel*, is deceased, and it is assumed that Eliezer too died shortly afterwards, perhaps due to an epidemic.³⁰ It would be 245 years before another book, the prayer book *Sefat Emet* [Lips of Truth], would be printed in Safed, by Israel Bak, in 1832. Eliezer's fonts passed to the sons of his partner, Abraham ben Isaac Ashkenazi. They made them available, 18 years later, to Abraham ben Mattathias Bath-Sheba, who came from Salonika to Damascus to print the first book in that city, R. J. Pinto's *Kesef Nivhar* [Choice Silver]. The letters were worn and the author displeased with the typography, so work was discontinued before the book was completed.³¹

²⁸ Meyer Waxman, *A History of Jewish Literature* (1933, reprint Cranbury: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), II, 93–97.

²⁹ Habermann, *Studies* (see note 25), 316 no. 8; Joseph Zedner, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Books in the British Museum* (London, 1867; reprint Norwich: the Trustees of the British Museum, 1964), 390.

³⁰ Jewish National and University Library (JNUL), *Four Hundred Years of Printing in Erez Israel 1577–97: Exhibition* (Jerusalem, 1977), viii–ix [Hebrew with English introduction].

³¹ Apart from any dissatisfaction with the worn letters and typography a prejudice in favor of Italian printing existed in Safed and its environment. Meir Benayahu, *The Relation Between Greek and Italian Jewry* (Tel Aviv: Menahem Press, 1980), 98–100 [Hebrew], remarks that several decades after the Talmud had been burned in Italy in the mid-sixteenth century scholars in Salonika once again chose to have their works

Eliezer left Poland to seek a better environment and success as a printer in the Middle East. Like many others, he seems to have established himself fairly easily in his new location. A master printer, Eliezer's failure to achieve success must be attributed to the fact that successful Hebrew presses already existed in Constantinople and that Safed proved to be a more difficult location in which to print Hebrew books than envisioned by Eliezer. His difficulties notwithstanding, Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi remains an important and interesting early Hebrew printer who, over a period of decades, issued significant and central Hebrew titles.

printed in Venice because of the high quality of the imprints of the Venetian presses. Furthermore, Venice was always preferred by the sages of Safed, notwithstanding the hazards of a long journey by sea and typesetting and editing by strangers in the absence of the author, all justified by the superiority of Venice's presses. As a personal aside, with rare exceptions the press work of the Polish, Salonika, and Constantinople print-shops in no way compares with that of their Italian counterparts.

CHAPTER NINE

“THERE WERE IN PADUA ALMOST AS MANY HEBREW PRINTERS AS HEBREW BOOKS” THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY HEBREW PRESS IN PADUA¹

The sixteenth century is the most important and influential in the history of Hebrew printing. It is characterized by an exponential growth in the number of books printed and, in Italy where the first Hebrew books were printed in about 1469–70, by great presses in cities such as Mantua and Venice. These presses have to their credit numerous achievements; the quality of their imprints are appreciated and often unequaled to the present. Inevitably, however, not all presses were equally successful or memorable. These latter presses, not surprisingly, do not receive the same attention as their larger and more successful counterparts. Among the smaller sixteenth century print-shops issuing Hebrew books is one in Padua, which put out a mere two books. Padua's failure to become an important Hebrew printing center is somewhat surprising, for it had advantages that would have suggested otherwise.

A look at this little known print shop is of value not only for its own sake, recalling a less well remembered moment in the history of the Hebrew book, but also because, for the brief period that it was active, the Padua press was a microcosm of the confluence of varied interests often found in the Hebrew book industry in Italy during the Renaissance. As we shall see, the authors of the books printed in Padua were Sephardim, the printer was an Ashkenazi, and the press belonged to an Italian non-Jew.

Padua is situated twelve meters above sea level in the lower Venetian plain between the Brenta and the Bacchiglione rivers, about twenty kilometers from the lagoon of Venice. Now capital of Padova province, Veneto region, Padua is an ancient city that attributes its founding to Antenore, a mythical Trojan prince. Livy, the Roman historian, who was born there, notes that it was mentioned as early as 302 B.C.E. Much later a free city, Padua became the property of Ezzelino da Romano

¹ The original version of this article was published in the *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (Mainz, 2003), pp. 86–92.

(1237), followed by the Scaligeris and the Carraras, until, in 1405, it became part of the Republic of Venice, which held it until 1797. The University of Padua is the oldest in Italy after the University of Bologna. Founded in 1222 by the secession of about a thousand students from the latter institution, it was, by the fifteenth and through the sixteenth century, one of the leading universities in Europe.

Padua has an early and distinguished history as a printing center. Bartholemaeus de Valdezoccho printed several works, beginning with Giovanni Boccaccio's (1313–75) *Fiammeta*, dated March 21, 1472, with Martinus, de Septum Arboribus (a Prussian), and in the next two years additional works alone. Bartholemaeus is but one of thirteen printers in Padua in the incunabula period.² A further twenty-six Padua printers are recorded by Adams from 1506 through 1600, although two names, and those of interest to us, appear to be for the same person.³

There are no records indicating an early Jewish community in Padua. The surname Judaeus appears in twelfth century documents, but it is not certain that it refers to Jews. By 1255, however, Jewish settlement is known with greater certitude, for in that year Jacob Bonacosa, a Jewish physician, translated a medical text, Averroes' *Colliget*, from Arabic into Latin. A hundred years later we hear of Jewish loan banks, as well as merchants, jewelers, and second-hand dealers, attracted to Padua by the tolerant Carrara court and the university. However, under Venetian rule the condition of Jewish life began to deteriorate. The community's experience was not dissimilar from many other Jewish communities in Italy and need not be addressed here, except to note that a ghetto was established in the first half of the sixteenth century, although residence in it was not strictly enforced, and that the Talmud was burned in Padua in 1556.⁴ Padua also had the distinction of being home to a yeshivah led by the eminent R. Judah Minz (c. 1408–56).⁵

There is good reason, in light of the above, to suggest that Padua would be a likely site for a Hebrew press. It is a city with an early and

² Robert Proctor, *An Index to the Early Printed Books in the British Museum: From the Invention of Printing to the Year 1500. With Notes of those in the Bodleian Library* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1898–1903, reprint Mansfield Centre, Ct.: Marino Fine Books, 1999), pp. 454–60.

³ H. M. Adams, *Catalogue of Books Printed on the Continent of Europe, 1501–1600 in Cambridge Libraries II* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 779.

⁴ *Encyclopedia Judaica* 8 "Padua" (Jerusalem, 1972), 9, 10; Cecil Roth, *The History of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia, 1946), *var. cit.*

⁵ Robert Bonfil, *Rabbis and Jewish Communities in Renaissance Italy* (London, 1993), pp. 26–27.

successful association with book printing; it is physically close to and was politically part of Venice, the center of the Hebrew book trade; and its Jewish community was home to a prominent yeshivah. Perhaps most significant is that the University of Padua admitted and matriculated a relatively large number of Jewish students and in that it also “afforded the opportunity for intense socialization among Jews from remarkably variegated backgrounds. . . . Graduates of the university maintained social and intellectual ties with each other and constituted a significant cultural force within their widely scattered communities.”⁶

Indeed, Padua can claim an early association with the “Holy Craft.” Amram suggests that Meshullam Cusi ben Moses Jacob, printer of the second dated Hebrew book, the *Tur Orah Hayyim* in Piove di Sacco, Padua province, on 28 *Tammuz*, 5235 (July 3, 1475) did so due to its proximity to Padua.⁷ Meshullam, a physician and perhaps an alumni of the university came to Piove di Sacco seeking seclusion to practice medicine and printing, away from the distractions of a larger city.⁸

All of this notwithstanding, Hebrew printing came relatively late to Padua. It begins in 1562, when Lorenzo Pasquato, an experienced printer of Latin and Italian books, undertook to print R. Meir ben Ezekiel ibn Gabbai’s (1480–c. 1540) *Derekh Emunah*. Adams credits Laurentius Pasquatus with 47 titles, from 1562 to 1600, five of them in 1562, the year that *Derekh Emunah* was published. One additional work is assigned to Lorenz & Co., likely Lorenzo Pasquato’s firm. None

⁶ David B. Ruderman, *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery in Early Modern Europe* (New Haven, 1995), p. 104. Concerning Jewish attendance at the University see also, Daniel Carpi, “Jewish Graduates of the University of Padua During the 16th Century,” in *Between Renaissance and Ghetto. Essays on the History of the Jews in Italy in the 14th and 15th Centuries* (Tel Aviv, 1989), pp. 96–30 [Hebrew].

⁷ The *Arba’ah Turim* was preceded by Rashi’s commentary on the Torah, printed in Reggio di Calabria by Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac and completed 10 *Adar*, 5235 (February 18, 1475). The dates in this article are according to the Julian calendar, in use until 1582 when the Gregorian calendar was adopted in Rome. The Gregorian equivalents for these two works would be, respectively, February 26, 1475 and July 12, 1475. In some instances there may be a +/- one day error in conversions.

⁸ David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Philadelphia: J. H. Greenstone, 1909; reprinted London: Holland Press, 1963), p. 26. Concerning Meshullam Cusi and the *Arba’ah Turim* see Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Poland from its beginning in the year 1534 and its development to the present. . . . Second Edition, Enlarged, improved and revised from the sources* (Tel Aviv, 1950), pp. 22–25 [Hebrew]. Meshullam Cusi died after printing the first part of the *Arba’ah Turim*, the remaining parts being printed by his widow and sons, Solomon and Moses, the last by his widow alone after their sons were imprisoned in connection with the Trent blood libel.

of the enumerated books is a Hebrew work.⁹ Pasquato's motivation in branching out to the Hebrew market, consistent with many other non-Jews who engaged in the publication of Hebrew books, was the profitability of the Hebrew book market, for "the Hebrew books sector, being unique, was rather attractive to investors, being more limited and not so wildly competitive as the Italian book sector."¹⁰

Pasquato's Hebrew printer was Samuel ben Isaac די"ה [may his blood be avenged] Boehm, (d. 13 Sivan 348 = May 29, 1588), who had worked previously in Venice and for Vincenzo Conti in Cremona. Boehm was a grandson, through his mother Hannah, of the famed grammarian, translator, and poet, R. Elijah ben Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi (Levita, Bahur, 1468–1549).¹¹ He was, most probably, also the publisher, utilizing Pasquato's facilities and name. Boehm began printing with *Derekh Emunah*.

Ibn Gabbai is among the exiles from Spain, at about age thirteen. Little is known about his life, for, being exceptionally humble, he rarely wrote about himself. In but one instance, when twenty-six, does ibn Gabbai remark on the difficulties of his life and the hardship in supporting himself and his family. He likely lived in Egypt and may have died in Erez Israel.¹² A prominent kabbalist, ibn Gabbai is also the author of *Tola'at Ya'akov* (Constantinople, 1560), where the biographical statement is found, and *Avodat ha-Kodesh* (*Marot Elohim*, Venice, 1566–68). Both are kabbalistic works, the former on prayer, the latter, considered Gabbai's most important work, on kabbalistic doctrine.

Derekh Emunah (fig. 56) is also a kabbalistic work, here an explication of the kabbalistic doctrine of the ten *Sefirot*, the ten divine emanations that are the bridge between God, the First Cause, and the world. Ibn Gabbai wrote *Derekh Emunah* in 1539 in response to a query from a student,

⁹ Adams, II, pp. 554, 614–15. In addition to the works enumerated by Adams a further nine titles printed by Pasquato are listed in the *British Library Catalogue*, <http://blpc.bl.uk>; H. J. H. Drummond, *A Short-title Catalogue of the Books Printed on the Continent of Europe 1501–1600 in Aberdeen University Library* (New York, 1979), nos. 1615, 3619–20; and the *Special Collections Catalogue*, New York Public Library.

¹⁰ Zipora Baruchson, "Money and Culture: Financing Methods in the Hebrew Printing Shops in Cinquecento Italy," in *La Bibliofilia* 92 (1990), p. 25.

¹¹ Naphtali Ben-Menahem, "The First Editions of the *Shulhan Arukh*," in *Rabbi Yosef Karo: Iyunim u-Mehkarim be-Mishnat Maran Ba'al ha-Shulhan Arukh*, ed. Yizhak Rafael, (Jerusalem, 1969), p. 104 n. 3 [Hebrew]; and Friedberg, p. 81 n. 2. Concerning Boehm's activities in Cremona see Meir Benayahu, *Hebrew Printing at Cremona: Its History and Bibliography* (Jerusalem, 1971), pp. 58–59 [Hebrew].

¹² Mordechai Margalioth, *Encyclopedia of Great Men in Israel* IV (Tel Aviv, 1986), col. 1013–15 [Hebrew].

Joseph ha-Levi, and the book is therefore in the format of ten questions and answers. It is based on the *Sha'ar ha-Sho'el* of the famed early 13th century kabbalist, Azriel of Gerona. That work was, apparently, not satisfactory to Joseph ha-Levi, who turned to ibn Gabbai requesting more detailed and clearer explanations. The contents of *Derekh Emunah* are outlined in an introduction, which, except for the first response, that the world has an Overseer, all address questions relating to the ten *Sefirot*.

The book's physical characteristics are that it is a quarto (4^o) in format of 28 leaves. The title page has a woodcut architectural frame with, at the bottom, a pensive child holding a branch in his right hand, resting his head on the other hand, his elbow on a tree stump. The text informs that *Derekh Emunah* is written as a response to questions as to the way of Kabbalah. It is small in size but great in value. Work began on Thursday, 22 *Kislev*, 5323 (November 19, 1562). The printer is given as Lorenzo Pasquato and partners. The colophon dates the completion of work to 27 *Tevet*, 323 (Wednesday, December 23, 1562).¹³ The text is in square letters in a single column. Boehm edited, corrected, and possibly set the book.

Concerning the woodcut architectural frame: it has not been possible to determine its prior usage or the identity of the responsible artist. It certainly was not prepared for Boehm. The motif, although not distasteful to Renaissance Italian Jewish sensibilities, is not Jewish. Moreover, the smaller size of the Jewish market made the commission of such woodcut frames an expense that was not, to use a modern term, cost justifiable.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the publication of Hebrew books was, as noted above, a profitable and attractive market to non-Jewish printers. This relationship was not one-sided, for it enabled Jews, not otherwise permitted to operate a Hebrew press, to print books. It also gave them access to their partners' typographical material, most obvious on the title page.

It is not unlikely than that the frame was first used by Lorenzo Pasquato or another Italian printer, who afterwards made it available

¹³ The equivalent Gregorian dates are November 29, 1562, and January 2, 1563.

¹⁴ Although writing about a slightly earlier period, Margaret M. Smith's remarks about such borders in *The Title Page. Its Early Development 1460–1510* (New Castle, 2000), p. 126, seem apropos. She writes "Re-usability seems to be important. . . . They were very costly to have prepared, and we may suppose that they were probably rarely intended not to be re-used. We can certainly observe that they *were* re-used, if not with great frequency, then over many decades."

to Boehm. Four of Pasquato's titles from this period were available for examination, Francisci Robertelli's *Ephemerides Patuinae* (1562), Diomede Borghesi's *Delle rime di M. Diomede Borghesi* (1566), Ottavio Sammarco's *Il Tempio Della Divina Signora Donna Geronima Colona* (1568), and Pietro Buccio, *Le Coronationi di Polonia* (1576), three with pressmarks or other insignia on the title page, the fourth, *Il Tempio Della Divina*, with a copper-plate title page, but not the frame on the title page of *Derekh Emunah*.¹⁵

After publication of the above, I received an e-mail from Mr. Giordano Castellani, who informed me that the vignette of the pensive child had been used by Bartolomeo Zanetti in 1539. He wrote that "the chain for the history of that vignette could be: Zanetti-Trincavelli (who taught medicine in Padua)- Lorenzo Pasquati. The child by a tree stump was Vittore Trincavelli's device which Bartolomeo Zanetti adopted to print classical works commissioned by him in the Thirties."

On the verso of the title page is a brief preface by Boehm, who writes that he came to Padua after the upheavals (in Cremona, that is, the burning of Hebrew books), and initially was idle. However, when he saw this book, "honey and milk under his tongue" (adaptation of Song of Songs 4:11), small in size but great in value, as well as ibn Gabbai's *Avodat ha-Kodesh*, he felt that the Lord had granted him the merit to edit this work. In the colophon, Boehm writes that as the world is knowledgeable about the craft of printing, it is needless to apologize for the few errors in the book. Several errata are then noted, and the colophon concludes, "May blessings from heaven come upon the head of he who judges me favorably." This is followed by the Inquisitor's

¹⁵ I have also attempted to determine the earlier usage of this frame by reviewing secondary works, among them Prince d'Essling, *Les livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XV^e siècle et du commencement du XVI^e* (Florence, Paris, 1907–15); Frans Gistelinck & Maurits Sabbe, *Early Sixteenth Century Printed Books in the Library of the Leuven Faculty of Theology* (Leuven, 1994); A. F. Johnson, *The Italian Sixteenth Century* (New York, 1926); *idem*, *One Hundred Title-Pages, 1500–1800* (London, 1928); Ruth Mortimer, *Harvard College Library Department of Printing and Graphic Arts Catalogue of Books and manuscripts Part II: Italian 16th Century Books* (Cambridge, Ma., 1974); Alexander Nesbitt, *200 Decorative Title-Pages* (New York, 1964); and Max Sander, *Le Livre a Figures Italien Depuis 1467 jusqu'a 1530* (New York, 1941), as well as a number of auction catalogues, all to no avail. This frame must assuredly have a prior usage but, all these works, notwithstanding, it has not yet been possible to determine where that occurred. I would like to thank Ms. Dupont, Head of Reader Services, The Pierpont Morgan Library, for bringing several of these works to my attention, and Mr. John Rathe, General Research Division, New York Public Library, for his assistance in attempting to identify this border.

license, a prerequisite to publishing Hebrew books in Italy, here stating the permission and the Church officials who granted it.¹⁶

This is the second printing of *Derekh Emunah*. Of the first edition, printed in Constantinople in 1560, two leaves only survive, the title page and introduction from R. Shneur ben Judah Falcon, the author's son-in-law, who brought the book to press.¹⁷ It has since been reprinted several times. Parenthetically, *Derekh Emunah* is one of three books brought to press by Shneur Falcon that year, the others being ibn Gabbai's *Tola'at Yá'akov*, noted above, and *Pesah le-HaShem* by Meir ibn Gabbai's son, Hayyim ibn Gabbai.

Five years later Pasquato's press printed a second Hebrew book, R. Shem Tov [ben Joseph] ibn Shem Tov's *Derashot ha-Torah* (fig. 57), homilies on the Torah and repentance. Shem Tov (15th century) was a grandson of the kabbalist R. Shem Tov ibn Shem (*Sefer ha-Emunot*, Ferrara, 1556) and son of R. Joseph ibn Shem Tov (*Kevod Elohim*, Ferrara, 1556). Ibn Shem Tov, a resident of Segovia and Almazan, was a student of R. Isaac ben Jacob Canpanton (Gaon of Castile, 1360–1463). In 1488, four years before the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, Shem Tov wrote a voluminous and important commentary to Maimonides' *Moreh Nevukhim*, subsequently printed with most editions of that work. His position contrasts with that of his grandfather, for whom he is named, a staunch opponent of philosophy, particularly the *Moreh Nevukhim*, as expressed in his *Sefer ha-Emunot*. This ibn Shem Tov's father, Joseph ibn Shem Tov was more moderate than his father, but less fervent than his son in his position on philosophy and the *Moreh Nevukhim*, as expressed in his *Kevod Elohim*. Our Shem Tov ben Joseph ibn Shem Tov wrote additional works on philosophy, addressing the distinction between matter and form, the cause or purpose of the world, and supercommentaries to several of Averroes' commentaries on Aristotle. Only ibn Shem Tov's commentary on the *Moreh Nevukhim* and *Derashot ha-Torah* have been printed. His other works remain in manuscript.¹⁸

Derashot ha-Torah are ibn Shem Tov's discourses, completed by him in *Nissan* 249 (March/April 1489). The book is a folio (2⁰) in format of

¹⁶ Marinus de Caballis Aequus Pad. Pot.//Magister Maximilianus Benianus Cremen-sis Inquis.//In diocesi Pataui. Licentiam concedit, ut possit//imprimi propria manu cum consultus sue//rit super hac re uir peritissimus.

¹⁷ Amram (see note 7), p. 338; Friedberg (see note 8), pp. 83–84; Brad Sabin Hill, *Hebraica (Saec. X ad Saec. XVI). Manuscripts and Early Printed Books from the Library of the Valmadonna Trust* (Great Britain, 1989), n. 39; and Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printing at Constantinople* (Jerusalem, 1967), p. 109 n. 157 [Hebrew].

¹⁸ Margalioth (see note 12), IV col. 1315–16.

81 leaves. The title page has an ornate architectural frame. Above the frame is an eagle, and in a space at the top of the arch is a vignette of *Akedat Yizhak* (binding of Isaac), with the verse, “A good name is better than precious ointment” (Ecclesiastes 7:1), below it, and at the sides of the vignette, are figurines holding cornucopias. The sides of the frame have several designs with faces and at the bottom of the frame are two squatting figures. The text of the title page is simple, adding to the basic information as to the title, author and place of printing that it was printed by Pasquato for (sponsored by) Pietro del Portelvecchio. Initial words of biblical books are set in ornamental borders. It is dated *Sivan* 367 (May/June, 1567). The name of the Hebrew printer is not given on the title page or elsewhere in the book.

Derashot ha-Torah begins with an introduction from ibn Shem Tov. He gives his full name, including ben Joseph, omitted from the title page. He remarks that these homilies are discourses given publicly;

the punishments found in the words of Torah are stern, as stated by the rabbis, “All who [causes himself to] forget something from his learning” (*Menahot* 99b) is liable to death, as the Torah states, “Only take heed to yourself, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things which your eyes have seen, [and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; but teach them to your sons, and to your grandsons]” (Deuteronomy 4:9). However, when one gets older it is impossible, for forgetfulness is the condition of the elderly, and also the troubles of the times casts a person out of his place of study (*מבית העיון*) and all the more so for the people of the Lord, pressed by daily troubles. Therefore it is necessary for all who read to write what they have acquired lest they forget it. For these reasons and in order to escape from an awesome punishment, and it is also appropriate to write matters acquired to benefit the public....

The discourses on the weekly portions conclude on 71a, followed by a number of homilies on marriage, repentance, Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. The contents are ethical and philosophical, ibn Shem Tov referencing Aristotle and offering allegorical explanations for biblical stories. Many of the discourses seek to turn the reader to repentance. This is the third edition of the *Derashot*, the first having been printed in Salonika in c. 1525, the second in Venice in 1547. It is an exact copy of the Venice edition, except that here the text is in square letters whereas the Venetian edition is in rabbinic letters.¹⁹

¹⁹ The Salonika edition, printed by Don Judah Gedalia, is also a folio, with 90 leaves. The Venice edition was published by Cornelius Adelkind.

Why did Pasquato wait five years before printing his second Hebrew book? I would suggest that Pasquato's involvement with the Hebrew side of his business was minimal, in fact nominal, for even his printer's mark, a lion, is absent from both books. In reality the printer was Boehm, whose situation is both more critical and of greater interest to us. He probably was, in the absence of a sponsor, and no name appears in *Derekh Emunah* in that capacity, the investor in that book. After printing *Derekh Emunah* Boehm turned to Venice for employment rather than invest in a second book, and he was likely the one responsible for the hiatus between the two works. In the absence of Boehm's name, however, can we say with surety that he printed *Derashot ha-Torah*?

It seems almost certain, even though his name does not appear on *Derashot ha-Torah*, that Boehm was the printer. To begin with, Boehm apparently remained a resident of Padua for he is a signatory, as a Padua resident, on a document relating to the *get* (bill of divorce) in the Tamari-Venturozzo affair.²⁰ Thus, he was in close proximity to and possibly remained in contact with Pasquato. *Derashot ha-Torah* has a sponsor, relieving Boehm of the expense of investing. Of greater weight is his relationship to the border with the vignette of *Akedat Yizhak*. That frame on the title page of *Derashot ha-Torah* was employed previously in Cremona, appearing on three titles printed there.²¹ It appears afterwards on books printed in Venice, among them the *She'elot u'Teshuvot* of Levi ibn Habib (1565), without the name of the printer and no mention of Boehm, who was employed at that time by Giovanni Grypho and Giorgio di Cavalli.²² Benayahu suggests that Conti had sold the frame to the Hebrew printer in Mantua, for it was no longer available for his folio Pentateuch (1566), and the Mantua printer resold it to Grypho

²⁰ Benayahu (see note 11), p. 58 n. 4. Concerning the Tamari-Venturozzo affair, an acrimonious dispute over a divorce that divided the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities of Italy, and, prior to its resolution, involved a wide spectrum of rabbinic authorities even beyond Italy, see Shlomo Simonsohn, *History of the Jews in the Duchy of Mantua* (Jerusalem, 1977), pp. 501–04; and Isaac Yudlov, "Bibliographic Notes on the Tamari-Venturozzo Affair," *Alei Sefer* II (Ramat Gan, 1976), pp. 105–20 [Hebrew]. See also my *The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Book* (Brill: Leiden, 2004), pp. 570–71, 653.

²¹ The titles printed in Cremona with this border are the *She'elot u'Teshuvot* of Joseph ben Solomon Colon (1567); *Arba'ah Turim* of Jacob ben Asher (1558); and the *Zohar* (1560). Concerning the ornamentation employed by Conti in Cremona see Benayahu (note 10), pp. 26–27.

²² Boehm's name appears in a number of works printed in Venice at this time, among them two of the four volumes comprising the *Arba'ah Turim*, the *Tur Yoreh De'ah* (1564) printed by Grypho, and the *Tur Even ha-Ezer* (1565) printed by di Cavalli, as well as the *Shulhan Arukh* (1567), also from di Cavalli, all without the frame.

and di Cavalli. Boehm brought the border with the vignette of *Akedat Yizhak* to Padua from Venice.

Subsequently, from 1569, Boehm is in Cracow. When an opportunity presented itself to join a new press in Cracow, a large and less competitive Hebrew book market in a land where Jewish life was, at the time, subject to less disabilities, Boehm accepted, remaining there until his death. He helped Isaac ben Aaron Prostitz establish and then worked for the Prostitz' press. Boehm brought the border with the vignette of *Akedat Yizhak* with him; it appears on the title pages of a number of books issued by the Prostitz press, from Alexander Suslin's *Sefer ha-Aguddah* (1571) to Abraham Saba's *Zeror ha-Mor* (1595), printed after Boehm's death. This frame, part of the typographical equipment in Boehm's possession, was brought by him from Venice to Padua and eventually to Cracow. Parenthetically, ibn Gabbai's *Derekh Emunah* is among the books published in Cracow (1577).

Boehm's departure for Cracow ends the first intermittent attempt to print Hebrew books in Padua. Hebrew books would again be printed in Padua, first in the seventeenth century, in 1622–23, when Gaspare Crivellari printed a *kinot* with Lamentations and Jacob Heilprin's *Nahalat Ya'akov*, and, two years later, Benjamin Slonik's *Mitzvot Nashim* (with Italian). In 1644, a Crivellari reprinted a Hebrew-Italian edition of Leon (Judah Aryeh) Modena's *Galut Yehudah* (*Novo ditionario hebraico e italiano*). Hebrew books were again printed in Padua, intermittently in the second half of the seventeenth and in the eighteenth centuries and more frequently in the nineteenth century. Commenting on the meager output of Padua's first presses, Moritz Steinschneider observes that, "...man kann daher wol sagen, dass dieser Stadt fast ebenso viel Drucker als Drucke au verdanken sind."²³

²³ Moritz Steinschneider, in Ersch and Gruber, *Allgemeine Enzyklopaedie der Wissenschaften und Kuenste. Jüdische Typographie*; reprinted as, *Jüdische Typographie und Jüdischer Buchhandel* (Jerusalem, 1938), p. 25. This phrase is translated by Amram (see note 8), p. 388, as, "there were in Padua almost as many Hebrew printers as Hebrew books."

CHAPTER TEN

AMBROSIUS FROBEN, ISRAEL ZIFRONI AND HEBREW PRINTING IN FREIBURG IM BREISGAU¹

Many of the first Hebrew printers worked in out-of-the way places. A number of locations are barely remembered as the home to a Hebrew press. Who would recall Reggio di Calabria if not for the fact that it was there that Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac printed the first dated Hebrew printed book, Rashi's commentary on the Torah (completed 10 *Adar*, 5235 = Friday, February 17, 1475), or such place names as Isny, Oels, Ichenhausen, and Heddernheim, if not for Hayyim Shahor?² What is less common, if not unheard of, is that a printer of Hebrew books for a Jewish market, a non-Jew, one of repute, should leave a major center to print Hebrew books in a less well-known place. Ambrosius Froben, printer in Basle, did just that, transferring his press from Basle to Freiburg im Breisgau.

Freiburg im Breisgau is a beautiful and historic city situated on the Dreisam at the foot of the Schlossberg, one of the heights of the Black Forest range in Baden, Germany. It is known for the Freiburg Münster, one of the finest Gothic churches of Germany, mostly built between 1122 and 1252, possessing a tower, which rises 386 feet in height. It is also home to the famed Ludovica Albertina (Albert Ludwig) University, founded by Albert VI, archduke of Austria, in 1457. Politically, Freiburg was known, from 1112, as the margrave of Baden, becoming a free town in 1120, chartered by the dukes of Zähringen. In 1219 it came under the control of a branch of the family of Urach. Attempts to throw off that yoke by force of arms were in vain, and in 1366 Freiburg purchased its freedom. Unable to reimburse its creditors, Freiburg passed into the hands of the Hapsburgs in 1368.³ Today, Freiburg is part of the state of Baden-Württemberg.

¹ The original version of this article was published in the *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (Mainz, 2005), pp. 137–48.

² Julian date. The Gregorian date would be February 26, 1475. Unless otherwise noted all dates are Gregorian.

³ Encyclopedia Britannica, 11th Edition “Freiburg im Breisgau” (1911), http://88.1911encyclopedia.org/F/FR/FREIBURG_IM_BREISGAU.htm

Printing in Freiburg began in the incunabular period. Both Pollard and Proctor, the latter based on the collection of the British Library, record two printers, Killian Fischer and Friedrich Rider, as having been active in Freiburg from 1493, the former with four titles to his credit, the latter with seven titles. More recently, that library has expanded its holdings to twelve titles, although the dates of several works are inexact, the earliest recorded work being given as Fischer's *Cursus optimarum questionum super Philosophiam Aristotelis...*, dated "1490?"⁴

The situation of the Jews in Freiburg is a different and baleful story. There must have been a Jewish presence in Freiburg from an early date, for German Jews were imprisoned there as early as 1230 by the town's overlord, but released by King Henry VII. They are recorded as being taxed in 1281, and in 1300 the Jews' ancient rights were ratified by the counts of Freiburg. In 1349, during the Black Death, Freiburg's Jews, excepting pregnant women and children, were, after a month's imprisonment, massacred by burning. Ten years later the counts were permitted by Emperor Charles IV to resettle Jews in Freiburg. They were again expelled and denied admission to Freiburg in the first decades of the fifteenth century, although allowed to dwell in neighboring villages. Jews were forbidden from conducting business there in 1453.⁵

These events notwithstanding, Hebrew books were printed in Freiburg during a short interval in the sixteenth century. That brief moment occurred when two well-known figures in the annals of Hebrew printing, Ambrosius Froben and his master printer Israel ben Daniel Zifroni, temporarily relocated a Hebrew print shop to Freiburg. They were not, however, the first to print in Freiburg with Hebrew letters, having been preceded in 1503 and 1504 by editions of Gregorius Reisch's *Margarita Philosophica*, in which the Hebrew alphabet is displayed on a page in woodcut letters.⁶ This book, and the accompanying letters, are described by Alexander Marx as "A woodcut Hebrew alphabet, fairly large... July 19, 1503, fol. 5 verso, and repeated [40] in the second

⁴ Alfred W. Pollard, *Catalogue of books mostly from the presses of the first printers showing the progress of printing with movable metal types through the second half of the fifteenth century* (Oxford, 1910), p. 97; Robert Proctor, *An Index to the Early Printed Books in the British Museum: From the Invention of Printing to the Year 1500. With Notes of Those in the Bodleian Library* (London, 1898–1903; reprint Mansfield Centre, Ct., n. d.); British Library Public catalogue, <http://blpc.bl.uk/>

⁵ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, "Freiburg im Breisgau," (Jerusalem, 1972), 7:132.

⁶ Aron Freimann, "A Gazetteer of Hebrew Printing," (1946; reprint in *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography*, New York, 1976), p. 286; Moshe Rosenfeld, *Hebrew Printing From its Beginning until 1948* (Jerusalem, 1992), p. 79 no. 807 [Hebrew].

authorized edition, ib. March 16, 1504, fol. 4 verso... This alphabet is far better than those in all later edd. of our period, especially those of Strassburg.”⁷

Returning to our printers, Ambrosius Froben was the son of Johann Froben, considered one of the most prominent of the humanist scholar-printers for which Basle was distinguished. This Froben published, beginning with an octavo Latin Bible (1491), as many as 250 titles, among them Hebrew/Latin books of the Bible and grammatical works, primarily by Sebastian Muenster (1489–1552) but also by R. Abraham ibn Ezra (c. 1089–c. 1168) and R. Elijah Levita (Bahur, 1468–1549). The first of Froben’s Hebrew/Latin books was published in 1516 (dated September 1), being Hieronymus’ *Opera*, in nine volumes with, in the appendix to volume VIII, the Quadruplex Psalterium, containing the Hebrew and Greek text as well as Jerome’s translations into Latin.⁸ In October, 1527, Johann Froben died, and, after being succeeded by a succession of other family members, the firm eventually came under the direction of Ambrosius Froben.

The Froben press’s Hebrew books had been intended for Christian theologians, to spread the Hebrew language and literature, and were frequently published with Latin introductions. In the late 1570s, under Ambrosius’ direction, the press began to print Hebrew titles for Jews. The most important production was the Basle Talmud, printed from 1578–81. The Talmud was a prohibited work, having been banned by a papal bull, dated August 22, 1553, due to the influence and efforts of Cardinal Giovanni Pietro Caraffa, the future Pope Paul IV, an extreme reactionary and bitter anti-Semite. The bull ordered the confiscation and burning of the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, which occurred in Rome on Shabbat, Rosh HaShanah (Monday, September 19, 1553), and in Venice on October 21 of that year, as well as in other locations in Italy. The Talmud was placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum* in 1559.⁹ The Council of Trent, however, permitted the Talmud’s publication in 1564, but only under restrictive and onerous conditions.

Convinced of the market value of printing the Talmud, albeit heavily expurgated, Froben secured permission from the Basle city council to proceed with the project, in a manner consistent with the

⁷ Alexander Marx, “Notes on the Use of Hebrew Type in Non-Hebrew Books, 1474–1520,” in *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore* (New York, 1944), p. 318.

⁸ Marx, pp. 334–35.

⁹ The Gregorian dates are September 29 and October 31, 1553.

Council of Trent's strictures.¹⁰ A request for a residence permit for a Jew to supervise the work—Jews were still not permitted residence in Basle—was submitted and approved, a necessity as Froben's compositors were not sufficiently well versed in Hebrew for a project of this scale. The master printer engaged by Froben was Israel ben Daniel Zifroni (Sifroni) ha-Ashkenazi, who had worked previously for Vincenzo Conti in Cremona and Sabbioneta and would work afterwards for the Di Gara press in Venice.

Zifroni was an experienced printer of good reputation, capable of managing the press's staff and dealing with purchasers. Zifroni agreed to bring skilled workers to Basle from Venice, to reside in Basle, and to train Hebrew typesetters in that city. The only worker known by name to have accompanied Zifroni from Venice is R. Jacob Luzzatto, the author of *Kaftor va-Ferah* (Basle, 1580). Zifroni was also responsible for having new letters cast and seeing to the required typographical equipment.¹¹

Froben, together with Zifroni, published about ten books, in addition to their edition of the Talmud. Among these works are a German-rite *siddur*, 1579; *Ir Gibborim*, *Seder Olam Rabbah* and *Seder Olam Zuta* with *Megillat Ta'anit*, *Seder Olam Rabbah* and *Seder Olam Zuta* with a Latin translation, and *Sefer Hasidim*, *Kaftor va-Ferah (Kavvanot ha-Aggadot)*, 1580; and *Me'ir Nativ*, 1581. Zifroni's last title in Basle was a Pentateuch in Judeo-German (1583); it was not printed for Froben, but rather at the press of Thomas Guarin.¹² In 1585, Zifroni returned to Italy but remained in contact with Froben. At the time of his departure, Zifroni left a number of books which were ready for printing and which were later printed by Conrad Waldkirch.¹³ In the interim, between leaving Basle and returning to Italy, Zifroni joined Froben in Freiburg.

Froben relocated from Basle to Freiburg in 1583. Various reasons are offered for Froben's change of location. One possibility concerns

¹⁰ Abraham M. Habermann, "The Printer Israel Zifroni and his son Elishama," in *Studies in the History of Hebrew Printers* (Jerusalem, 1978), pp. 223–24 [Hebrew]. See also Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography of the following cities in Europe: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Avignon, Basle...* (Antwerp, 1937), pp. 3–6 [Hebrew]. Concerning the Basle Talmud see my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn, 1992), pp. 241–65.

¹¹ Friedberg, p. 4; Habermann, pp. 216–17, 224.

¹² Several of the titles printed by Zifroni for Froben and Guarin, are described in my *The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Book: An Abridged Thesaurus* (Leiden, E. J. Brill, 2004), *var. cit.*

¹³ Habermann, p. 226.

his edition of the Talmud. Froben's Jewish associate, who had originally broached the possibility of printing the Talmud to Froben at the Frankfort am Main book fair, was R. Simon Levi Guenzburg. Their relationship had become acrimonious, they disputed over several issues, and there was a prolonged court case. Froben went to Rome, where he was received by Pope Gregory XIII. His objectives appear to have been, by implication, to receive the church's imprimatur for his Talmud edition, and perhaps have the Pope intercede with the Emperor on his behalf against Guenzburg. Froben's audience with the Pope had, according to unsubstantiated rumors, an unanticipated consequence. Froben reputedly promised the Pope that he would convert to Catholicism. Whether due to the rumors, which made it difficult to continue in Protestant Basle, or because he wished to print Catholic titles, forbidden in Basle, Froben relocated to Catholic Freiburg im Breisgau, taking a portion only of his typographical material with him.¹⁴

Froben and Zifroni were active in Freiburg for a short period of time, two to three years only, from 1583 to 1585, printing a mix of Yiddish and Hebrew books, made up of both ethical/halakhic works and belles-lettres, older popular titles, and first editions. The exact number of the books published is uncertain. Prijs, in his work on Hebrew printing in Basle, enumerates six titles. Vinograd records two additional books, *Shir ha-Yihud* and *Hamishah Homshei Torah*, both entries based on Benjacob's *Ozar ha-Sefarim* and uncertain. Habermann lists seven titles, the six certain works enumerated by both Prijs and Vinograd, and supplies one additional entry.¹⁵ The Froben-Zifroni press's most productive year was its first, for in 1583 it issued or began work on *Sefer ha-Yirah*, *Hayyei Olam*, *Massa'ot shel Rabbi Binyamin*, *Mishle Shu'alim*, and *Toledot Aharon*.

Sefer ha-Yirah is by R. Jonah ben Abraham Gerondi (c. 1200–1263). Jonah, born in Gerona, in Catalonia, is accounted among the sages of Spain. He was a cousin of R. Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides, Ramban, 1194–1270), and a student of the brothers R. Moses and Samuel ben Shneur Evreux and afterwards of R. Solomon ben Abraham of Montpellier (13th cent.). When the latter opposed and placed a ban on Maimonides' *Moreh Nevukhim* Jonah was a signatory. He later

¹⁴ Friedberg, pp. 5–6; Habermann, p. 225.

¹⁵ Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna, 1880) [Hebrew]; Habermann, pp. 243–46 nos. 20–26; Joseph Prijs, *Die Basler Hebräischen Drucke (1492–1866)* (Olten, 1964), pp. 231–39 nos. 138–43; Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Part II Places of print* (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 564 [Hebrew].

regretted and reputedly publicly repented doing so after Maimonides' books were burned in 1232 by the Dominicans. Jonah determined to settle in Erez Israel, but was delayed en route in Barcelona where he gave discourses for three years. He again set out for the Holy Land, but in Toledo the community induced him to stay and instruct them. Jonah founded a yeshivah there and died before he could resume his journey. Among Jonah's students are R. Solomon ben Abraham Adret (Rashba, c. 1235–c. 1310), R. Solomon ben Eli of Sarai, and R. Hillel ben Samuel of Verona (c. 1220–95).

Among Jonah's many works are novellae and commentaries; his most famous book is *Sha'arei Teshuvah*, a basic work on repentance and ethical conduct. *Sefer ha-Yirah*, too, is known as and certainly is an ethical work, addressing such subjects as penitence, morals, and correct conduct. It has, however, more halakhic than ethical content. Its ethical purpose can be seen from the opening line, which states, "It is good that a man should quietly hope for the salvation of the Lord' (Lamentations 3:26), it is good for a man to bear and to endure the yoke of the Holy One, blessed be He..." Nevertheless, the greater part of the book's contents address subjects to be found in the *Shulhan Arukh*, *Orah Hayyim*, and, to a lesser extent, other parts of the *Shulhan Arukh*. Decisors such as R. Joseph ben Ephraim Caro (1488–1575), R. Joel ben Samuel Sirkes (Bach, 1561–1640), and R. Elijah ben Solomon Zalman of Vilna (Vilna Gaon, ha-Gra, 1720–1797) reference the *Sefer ha-Yirah* as a source for the halakhic decisions in the *Arba'ah Turim* of R. Jacob ben Asher (c. 1270–1340).¹⁶ Examples of the halakhic content are laws pertaining to washing one's hands before prayers, *zizit*, *tefillin*, eating bread before prayers, sanctifying the new moon, and the prohibition against enchantment. Jonah entitled the book *Sefer ha-Yirah* because fear and awe of God is not only an ethical imperative but also one of the commandments.¹⁷

Sefer ha-Yirah was first printed in the incunabular period, together with R. Joshua ben Joseph's *Halikhot Olam* (Leira, c. 1494–1497). In the sixteenth century it was published in Fano (c. 1505) with *Sha'arei*

¹⁶ Binyamin Yehoshua Zilber, *Sefer Sha'are ha-Avodah: Sefer ha-Yirah leha-Hasid Rabenu Yonah Gerondi* (Bene Brak, n.d.), introduction [Hebrew]. In at least one instance R. Caro, in his *Beit Yosef* commentary on the *Tur O. H.* 250, references *Hayyei Olam* rather than *Sefer ha-Yirah*.

¹⁷ Zilber, *ibid.*

Teshuvah and reprinted in Salonika (1529).¹⁸ The Froben-Zifroni Freiburg edition, in Yiddish, is the first printing in that language. Physically, it is a quarto in format, consisting of only twenty-seven leaves.¹⁹ The text of the title page is set within a frame of florets, with the verse “O fear the Lord, you his pious ones; for those who fear him have no want” (Psalms 34:10) at the top of the page, separated from the remainder of the text by an additional row of florets. We are informed that the author “is the sage, the pious, the complete, Rabbi Jonah Gerondi,” and that “included in it is all the life of a man, how he should properly conduct himself, until he achieves the goal of piety.” This text is repeated below in Yiddish. The final line gives the location as Freiburg im Bresgau in the year [5]343 (1583).

Within the volume the text is in a single column, set in *Vaybertaytsh*, a type generally but not exclusively reserved for Yiddish books, so named because these works were most often read by the less educated and women.²⁰ Headings and initial words are in Hebrew, as are foliation, set in large square Hebrew letters. Signatures are given in both Hebrew letters and Latin letters with Arabic numerals, such as, B ii בב.

A number of features of *Sefer ha-Yirah* are characteristic of Froben's other Freiburg imprints. All are small books, both in format and foliation, stylistically share the same title page, both in use of ornamentation and layout, excepting *Toledot Aharon*, the sole folio work printed here by

¹⁸ Further evidence of the popularity of *Sefer ha-Yirah* may be adduced from the fact that it was the second title printed by R. Manasseh (Menasseh) Ben Israel (1604–1657) when he opened his renowned press in Amsterdam in 1627, it being preceded only by a prayer book.

¹⁹ Habermann, and Vinograd after him, report that *Sefer ha-Yirah* is an octavo. This appears to be incorrect, for the definition of quarto and octavo formats are that in the former the sheets have been folded twice, in the latter three times. The signatures for *Sefer ha-Yirah* are A-F4, indicative of a quarto. It should be noted, however, that collational formula is not conclusive. McKerrow remarks on this uncertainty, “we [can] not go by the number of leaves in a gathering, . . . in a folio we may have any number from 2 to 12, or even more, in a quarto 4 or 8, in an octavo 4, 8, or 16.” Ronald B. McKerrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (1927, New Castle; 1994), p. 165. See also Fredson Bowers, *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949, reprint New Castle, 1994), pp. 196–97.

²⁰ Concerning the early use of *Vaybertaytsh* see Herbert C. Zafren, “Variety in the Typography of Yiddish: 1535–1635,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* LIII (Cincinnati, 1982), pp. 137–63; *idem*, “Early Yiddish Typography,” *Jewish Book Annual* 44 (New York, 1986–87), pp. 106–119. Zafren suggests, in the latter article, that the origin of *Vaybertaytsh*, which he refers to as Yiddish type, was the Ashkenaz rabbinic fonts, supplanted by the more widespread Sephardic rabbinic type which prevailed in Italy (p. 112). Parenthetically, the first book known to employ this type face was *Mirkevet ha-Mishneh* (*Sefer shel R. Anshel*) printed in Cracow in 1534.

Froben, and all of the books with Yiddish texts are set in *Vaybertaytsh*. Notable by its absence from all the title pages is Froben's printer's mark, so evident in his Basle imprints, comprised of a staff with a bird facing left perched atop the staff with two crowned serpents entwining the staff, which is held by two hands extending from billowing sleeve cuffs.

The discrepancy in the number of titles printed in Freiburg noted above is due to confusion between *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam*, the latter often being recorded as an alternate title or a subtitle for *Sefer ha-Yirah*. Prijs records an edition of *Hayyei Olam* but not of *Sefer ha-Yirah*, describing *Hayyei Olam* as a free translation of *Sefer ha-Yirah*, under the title of the shorter recension of that work. Friedberg and Habermann, however, correctly record *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam* as two distinct Freiburg imprints.²¹ That *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam* are in fact the same work is explicitly stated by R. Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (Hida, 1724–1806), who writes in his *Shem ha-Gedolim* that “*Hayyei Olam* is the *Sefer ha-Yirah* of Rabbenu Yonah.” The same conclusion was reached by A. T. Shrock, who observes that “Lowenthal has, we think, conclusively proved that *Sefer HaYirah* and *Hayyei Olam* are one and the same work. His view is confirmed by the MS. in the British Museum which has the heading *ספר חיי עולם וספר היראה* . . .” and by R. M. Nigrin, who states that “In manuscripts *Sefer ha-Yirah* is called by the name *Hayyei Olam*.”²²

That the works are in reality one, a fact that appears to be fairly well known, has, together with the rarity of both editions, particularly *Hayyei Olam*, resulted in several bibliographers, but not all, reporting, incorrectly, that *Sefer ha-Yirah* was issued but once in Freiburg.²³ What

²¹ Hayyim Dov Friedberg, *Bet Eked Sefarim* (1931; reprint Tel Aviv, 1951–56) *het* 592:1, *yod* 921:26 [Hebrew]; Habermann, p. 243 nos. 20–21.

²² Hayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim ha-Shalem* with additions by Menachem Mendel Krengel (Jerusalem, 1979), *Ma'arakhet Sefarim yod* 73 n. 22 [Hebrew]; A. T. Shrock, *Rabbi Jonah ben Abraham of Gerona: His Life and Ethical Works* (London, 1948), p. 93; M. Nigrin, *Sefer ha-Yirah le-Rabbenu Yonah he-Hasid; im hagahot Mosheh Nigrin: Mahadurat Shabtai Sofer b. R. Yitshak mi-k.k. Premishla mi-shenat 372* (Baltimore, 1988), p. 7 [Hebrew]. The Lowenthal reference is to Abraham Lowenthal, “Das Buch des ‘Ewigen Lebens’ und seine Bedeutung in der Literatur des Mittelalters,” in *Festschrift zum achtzigsten geburtstage . . . (15. siwan 5667) sr. ehrwürdigen des herrn rabbiners dr. Wolf Feilchenfeld* (1907), pp. 66–76. See also the discussion in Benjacob, p. 186 no. 551, where it is noted that Zunz suggests R. Isaac he-Hasid as the author of *Hayyei Olam*. Benjacob too, however, observes that there are those who claim it is *Sefer ha-Yirah* of Rabbenu Yonah he-Hasid and that a number of manuscripts of *Hayyei Olam* begin “it is good for a man to bear . . .” as does *Sefer ha-Yirah*.

²³ In my efforts to locate copies of *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam* I was assisted,

appeared to have occurred, based on the limited bibliographic descriptions of the two editions, is that Froben and Zifroni had printed *Sefer ha-Yirah* in two formats; *Hayyei Olam* as a quarto, consisting of fourteen leaves, in contrast to *Sefer ha-Yirah*, as an octavo consisting of twenty-seven leaves. However, as noted above, *Sefer ha-Yirah*, too, appears to be a quarto.²⁴ The two books share many features. The title pages utilize the same floret border, text is set in *Vaybertaytsh* in a single column, and foliation and signatures are given in the same manner. In both works the text is set thirty-two lines to a page, about ten to twelve words to a line. Apart from the fact that it is reported that the formats vary, which may well be incorrect, it is not unlikely that the physical dimensions and format of the two titles are also alike.

There are differences between the two books. The format may vary, as already noted, from quarto to octavo. In *Hayyei Olam* initial words are in Yiddish rather than Hebrew as in *Sefer ha-Yirah*, the book name and text of the title page are modified, so that in *Hayyei Olam* the verse, “He who follows after righteousness and loving kindness finds life, righteousness, and honor” (Proverbs 21:21), replaces “O fear the Lord, you his pious ones.” The Hebrew text of the title page of *Hayyei Olam* states:

This is his name and his remembrance, because he is occupied with it and keeps His commandments, statutes, and Torah, “So shall he find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man” (Proverbs 3:4) in this world and his portion in life in the world to come: (and with this) “God be gracious to us, and bless us; and let his face shine upon us. Selah” (Psalms 67:2).

unfortunately to no avail, by Mr. Yeshaye Metal, Public Service Librarian, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research; Mr. Yisrael Dubitsky, Public Services Librarian, Jewish Theological Seminary of America; Ms. Faith Jones, Dorot Jewish Division, New York Public Library; and Ms. Noni Rudavsky, Coordinator of Special Collections and Public Services Librarian, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati. I would like to express my appreciation to all of them for their efforts. The on-line catalogues of several other libraries were also checked, without success. That I finally did get to see a facsimile of *Sefer ha-Yirah* is due to the efforts of R. Rosenes, Judaica Archival Project, Jerusalem, to whom I am indebted. *Sefer ha-Yirah* is not, however, as rare as *Hayyei Olam* or *Mishlei Shu'alim* (see below), and a copy has even appeared at auction (Sotheby's London December 6, 1993, lot 215). A copy of *Hayyei Olam* is extant in the Bayerische Stadtbibliothek, Munich. I was able to get a facsimile from the the Bayerische Stadtbibliothek with the assistance of the Dr. Hermann Leskien, Director, Mr. Thomas Jahn, and Ms. Stephanie Fischer-Schade, to whom I am most grateful.

²⁴ *Hayyei Olam* has mixed gatherings, the signatures reading A-B4 C6. Prijs supplies measurements for *Hayyei Olam*, that is, 16 × 9 cm. It has not been possible to provide measurements for *Sefer ha-Yirah* or to physically compare the size of the two works, as in both cases the copies examined were facsimiles.

The fact that there are two editions of this work by R. Yonah, initially believed to be in different formats, suggested two possibilities. First, that the type from *Sefer ha-Yirah* might have been culled to be reprinted in an abbreviated version as *Hayyei Olam*, or that the printer, having set and printed text from one issue, instead of returning any type to the case (the receptacle in which the type is kept), simply reused the type to publish a *separate issue*, that is, “the reimposition of the type pages to produce copies in different formats,” to be able to resize the book in order to sell it in both quarto and octavo formats.²⁵ Either possibility would allow the printers to easily and inexpensively increase their inventory of books for sale. These suppositions were not based on a physical autopsy of the two works.

An examination of the facsimiles of *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam* was undertaken by Mr. Joseph I. Lauer, who makes clear that the above suppositions are in fact not the case.²⁶ Indeed, unlikely as it seems, given what has been noted above, and given Zifroni’s unquestioned Jewish erudition, it appears that the two works were printed as independent titles possibly without the realization that the manuscripts from which the text was taken might be considered different recensions of *Sefer ha-Yirah*. The texts are indeed dissimilar, although the same subject matter is treated, and even where alike the Yiddish may vary. This variance is obviously the result of translators or editors using different synonyms or spellings for Hebrew words. Tellingly, Rabbenu Yonah’s name appears on the title page of *Sefer ha-Yirah* but does not appear on the title page of *Hayyei Olam*.

Mr. Lauer informs that Froben and Zifroni printed two different works based on *Sefer ha-Yirah*. One was a Yiddish translation of *Sefer ha-Yirah* under that title. The other a free rendition of that work in Yiddish rhyming couplets under the title *Hayyei Olam*, which title was, as noted above, used elsewhere for the Hebrew *Sefer ha-Yirah*. Neither the title page nor the text of this edition of *Hayyei Olam* refers to *Sefer ha-Yirah*, from which it deviates in order and, on occasion, in content, adding or

²⁵ Philip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (1972; reprint New Castle, 1995), p. 315; and also Bowers, p. 79.

²⁶ This paragraph and the next paragraph as well is based on a detailed comparison of the two texts made by Mr. Lauer. I would like to express my appreciation to him for sharing his findings with me, as well as for reading this article and offering critical comments.

subtracting material.²⁷ It would appear then, that Froben and Zifroni did not attempt to maximize their inventory by issuing the same title in complete and abridged formats, but printed two independent works. That they printed both *Sefer ha-Yirah* and *Hayyei Olam* was because there was a market for such ethical works.

Mishlei Shu'alim, also of ethical value and printed in 1583, is of a different genre from the ethical/halakhic *Sefer ha-Yirah/Hayyei Olam*.²⁸ It is a popular medieval collection of fables, written by R. Berechiah ben Natronai ha-Nakdan (12th–13th century), and, in this edition, translated into Yiddish by R. Jacob Koppelman. Berechiah was an individual of many talents. He was an author, translator, and grammarian. Berechiah translated several scientific works into Hebrew, the most important being Adelard of Bath's book on the natural sciences, *Quaestiones Naturales*, as *Dodi ve-Nekhdi*; collected and translated ethical works, such as *Sefer ha-Hibbur* and *Sefer ha-Mazref*; abridged R. Saadiah Gaon's *Emunot ve-De'ot*; and *Ko'ah Avanim*, on the magical powers in stones. Although Berechiah's literary activity is familiar, little is known of his personal life, but that he lived in Normandy, and perhaps England. It is inferred from the title *ha-Nakdan* that he punctuated Bibles and copied Masoretic rules, and that, from his works, he was a talmudic scholar.²⁹

²⁷ Two examples follow of the many that could be offered. *Sefer ha-Yirah* states that two blessings are to be said upon placing the *tefillin*, one for the arm and one for the head (39, Freiburg ed. p. 4b), and that if one speaks between placing the *tefillin*, both blessings should be said upon placing the *tefillah* for the head, resulting in the repetition of the first blessing (40, Freiburg ed. pp. 4b–5a). *Hayyei Olam* refers to the requirement to say the two blessings and to not speak during the ritual (p. 3a) but does not include a requirement to say both blessings after interrupting the ritual by speaking. *Sefer ha-Yirah* advises one to cut his fingernails as part of pre-Sabbath preparations (309, Freiburg ed. p. 25b). *Hayyei Olam* repeats this advice but adds that the cut nails should be placed in the fire (p. 13b), a detail suggested by other authorities based on T.B. *Niddah* 17a. See *Ba'er Heiteiv* O.H. 260; *Hayyei Adam*, *Hilchot Shabbat* 1(10); *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch* 72(14); *Mishnah Berurah* 260(6). *Hayyei Olam* also ends with a prayer, including for salvation, which is not the ending of the *Sefer ha-Yirah*.

²⁸ The rarity of *Mishlei Shu'alim* is testified to by Chone Shmeruk, *Sifrut Yiddish: Perakim le-Toldoteha* (Tel Aviv, 1978), p. 22 no. 21 [Hebrew], who informs that no example of that work is extant in Yiddish; Jacob Elbaum, *Openness and Insularity. Late Sixteenth Century Jewish Literature in Poland and Ashkenaz* (Jerusalem, 1990), p. 146 no. 203 [Hebrew], who writes that no copy remains; and Prijs, whose entry reads "*Fundort. Verschollen*" (Location: Missing). Here, too, I am indebted to R. Rosenes for the facsimile copy examined for this paper. The facsimile, all that was available, is comprised of the title page, introduction, first text page and the final page. Apart from these pages the description of the contents is taken from other editions or secondary sources.

²⁹ A. M. Habermann (ed.), *Mishlei Shu'alim* (Jerusalem), pp. v–ix [Hebrew]; Moses Hadas, *Fables of a Jewish Aesop, translated from the Fox Fables of Berechiah ha-Nakdan* (New

R. Jacob ben Samuel Bunim Koppelman (1555–1594), the translator of *Mishlei Shu'alim*, was born in Brisk, Poland. A Talmudic scholar, he was a student of R. Mordecai ben Abraham Jaffe (*Levush*, c. 1535–1612) and also studied astronomy and mathematics. Koppelman afterwards went to Frankfurt am Main to establish a yeshivah but was forced to leave that city in 1583 on account of the plague. Koppelman's relationship to the Freiburg press extends beyond his translation of *Mishlei Shu'alim*. As we shall see, he also translated the Targum to the five Megillot, published in Freiburg in c. 1585, and was the author of *Ohel Ya'akov*, printed there in 1584. Another of his works is *Omek Halakhah* (Cracow, 1593), in which he draws on mathematics, botany, engineering, and geography to clarify such difficult tractates as *Kūlayim* and *Erwin*. In his two original works, Koppelman, the translator of Hebrew texts into Yiddish, writes in Hebrew, perhaps due to the different public to whom they are addressed.³⁰

Mishlei Shu'alim (Fox Fables), Berechiah's most well-known work, is a collection of fables, not all are fox fables, in which the animals are the protagonists. Animal fables were a popular genre in the middle ages, and Berechiah drew on a variety of sources, as well as creating his own fables. Berechiah utilized such works as *Bidhapti*, the lost Latin translation of Aesop (Phaedrus's *Romulus*), and the French compilation of Marie de France, *Isopet*, which is based on Alfred the Englishman.³¹ Berechiah is not, however, merely a translator and compiler. He changes details, substitutes participants, and, as he states in his introduction, although these "parables are current upon the lips of earth's progeny," he has "enlarged and augmented them." Berechiah's accomplishments in *Mishlei Shu'alim* have been described by Haim Schwarzbaum as being "suffused with an artistic consciousness... [it] should be looked upon as an exquisite book of entertainment on which a highly talented writer of superior literary taste like R. Berechiah had exercised his artistic gifts in an exquisite, splendid Hebrew rhymed prose couched in a diction

York, 1967), pp. v–xi; Meyer Waxman, *A History of Jewish Literature II* (1933; reprint Cranbury, 1960), pp. 597–600; Israel Zinberg, *A History of Jewish Literature I* (New York, 1975), translated by Bernard Martin, pp. 203–05.

³⁰ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, 10:1189; Elbaum, *op. cit.*; E. Schulmann, *Sefat Yehudit-Ashkenazit ve-Sifrutah* (1913), p. 31 no. 2 [Hebrew]; and Shmeruk, p. 22.

³¹ For a comparison of Berechiah's fables to those of Marie de France see Hadas, pp. vii–viii. Concerning a possible identification of Berechiah with Benedictus le Puncteur, see Cecil Roth, *The Jews of Medieval Oxford* (Oxford, 1956), pp. 118–19; *idem*, *The Intellectual Activities of Medieval English Jewry* (London, 1949), pp. 47–50.

quite fascinating and full of Biblical and Talmudic reminiscences and parodies, which make delightful reading even today.”³²

The verse at the top of the title page is, “Foxes walk in it” (Lamentations 5:18). The text states, first in Hebrew and below in Yiddish, that it is “*Sefer Mishlei Shu’alim*, one hundred thirty-six fables, ‘full of all good things’ (Deuteronomy 6:11, Nehemiah 9:25), ethical values and morals, to give prudence to the simple and knowledge and discretion to young men (ref. Proverbs 1:4). Translated from Hebrew to Ashkenaz (Yiddish) by Koppelman from Brisk. Printed in Breisgau in the year [5]343 (1583).” After the Yiddish text the printer is given as Israel Zifroni from Italy. There is a brief introduction from Koppelman and then the text, here too, is in a single column in *Vaybertaytsh* excepting headers and initial words.

In his introduction Berechiah bemoans current moral conditions. He states his purpose as,

To impart prudence to the simple, to the young knowledge and astuteness... with parables of foxes and beasts. Verily these parables are current upon the lips of all earth’s progeny, and men of diverse tongue have set them forth in a book. But my practices are different from their practices, for I have enlarged and augmented them with like and similar manner, in verses and poems, like sapphires veiled. Who reads them will attain many things choicer than fine gold and precious rubies, as the eyes of them that look forthright will perceive.³³

The introduction concludes, “I draw parables of beasts and birds to strengthen hands that are weak, and of creeping things that crawl upon the ground; these are for a similitude for them that walk on the earth. I shall begin with the lion who rules over them all, great and small, for they changed his honor for shame. So when a rich man grows poor, his comrades make themselves strangers to him.”³⁴

Massa’ot shel Rabbi Binyamin (also known as *Sefer ha-Massa’ot*, *Book of Travels*) is the most famous of all Jewish travel accounts.³⁵ It records the travels of R. Benjamin ben Jonah of Tudela, Navarre (second half, 12th

³² Haim Schwarzbaum, *The Mishle Shu’alim (Fox Fables) of Rabbi Berechiah ha-Nakdan. A Study in Comparative Folklore and Fable Lore* (Kiron, 1979), pp. xxiv–xxx.

³³ Hadas, p. 1.

³⁴ Hadas, p. 5.

³⁵ The popularity of *Massa’ot shel Rabbi Binyamin* is attested to by the fact that this is the fourth printing in the sixteenth century; it was printed previously in Constantinople, 1543, Ferrara, 1556, and Antwerp, 1575, the last with accompanying Latin. It has been translated into Dutch, English, German, Russian, and Yiddish.

century). Benjamin visited three continents, Europe, Asia, and Africa, encompassing the Mediterranean littoral, the Middle East, and central Europe, recording what he saw in his diary. Although Benjamin is referred to as Rabbi and was certainly an educated Jew, based on the information provided and the style of the diary, it appears more likely that he was a merchant than a scholar. Nevertheless, his keen eye and curiosity has left us with one of the most valuable records of numerous Jewish communities in the Middle Ages. Benjamin does not state the purpose of his trip, but it has been variously suggested that his purpose was mercantile, for he addresses business matters and has a keen eye for how Jews support themselves. However, others see Benjamin's undertaking this journey as most likely intended to visit places holy to Jews and to see how world Jewry lived in different settings.³⁶

Physically, *Massa'ot shel Rabbi Binyamin* is a small work (fig. 58). Like *Sefer ha-Yirah*, it is an octavo in format, here consisting of 31 leaves.³⁷ It is, however, in Hebrew, set in square type (fig. 59). The title page, too, is like the previous works, and shares the same ornamentation and layout. The title appears in the space above the text. The text of the title page begins with the introductory paragraph of Benjamin's narrative, which states,

This is the book written from the matter related by a man from Navarre, whose name is Rabbi Benjamin bar Jonah of Tudela. He traveled through numerous and distant lands, as he recounts here. In every place that he came to he recorded everything that he saw or heard from truthful persons, that had [not] been heard in the land of Sepharad. He mentions some of the great and illustrious personages that he encountered in these places. And when he returned to Castile in [4]933 (1173) he brought his account with him.

This Rabbi Benjamin was a man of understanding and intellect, a man of Torah, and in each and every thing that was checked and examined his words were found to be correct, as he was a man of truth.

Benjamin left Tudela between 1160 and 1165, returning to Spain in 1173. His itinerary included Provence, Italy, Greece, Syria, Turkey, Erez Israel, Mesopotamia, Persia, India, Egypt, and Sicily. He provides

³⁶ Elkan Nathan Adler, ed., *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages: 19 First Hand Accounts* (London, 1907; reprint Mineola, 1987), pp. 38–63; J. D. Eisenstein, *Ozar Massa'ot* (1926; reprint Tel-Aviv, 1969), pp. 15–45 [Hebrew]; Meyer Waxman, *A History of Jewish Literature I*, pp. 436–41; Avraham Yaari, *Mas'ot Erez Yisrael: Shel Olim Yehudim mi-Yeme ha-Benayim ve-ad Reshit Yeme Shivat Tsiyon* (Tel Aviv, 1946), pp. 31–47 [Hebrew].

³⁷ I would like to express my appreciation to VirtualJudaic.com for making a copy of *Massa'ot shel Rabbi Binyamin* available to me for this article. This work is also available on the Internet at <http://www.seforimonline.org/seforim.html> as is the 1907 Adler translation.

information about France, Germany, Russia, and parts of India, Persia, Ceylon, and China, places that he did not reach but about which he collected data. Although world Jewry is his primary concern, his interests encompass engaging facets of the peoples and places he visited, including geography, history, politics, wars, and customs of various peoples. Not only does Benjamin note the conditions of the Jews and name their leaders and scholars, but he also often gives demographic information. He is visiting Erez Israel after the desolation of the Crusades, so that there he records the desolation of the Jewish communities. In Mesopotamia, in contrast, the Jews are flourishing. In Okbara, for example, headed by R. Chanan, Jabin, and Ishmael, the population is about 10,000. Synagogues are described, as are sects, sometimes schismatic, such as the Samaritans and Karaites.

The lives, customs, events and personalities about Jews in the locations he visited are described in considerably more detail than those in which his data is not first hand. Certain cities are addressed in great detail, among them Rome, Constantinople, Damascus, Alexandria, and, most importantly, those in Erez Israel. Among the varied subject matter are Roman palaces and their builders, the medical university at Salerno, the raids of the Wallachians upon Greek settlements, Syrian cultivation of the Mastic tree, from which a medicinal resin is derived, and the Syrian sect of Assassins.

Benjamin's descriptions of various places are corroborated by contemporary sources, and later historians considered him a reliable source. Although Benjamin records incredible accounts that he has heard, his critical reporting makes the diary an important and fascinating record of medieval Jewish life.

In 1583–84, Froben and Zifroni published R. Aaron of Pesaro's (d. 1563) *Toledot Aharon*, a concordance of biblical passages in the Babylonian Talmud. Aaron, a wealthy businessman whose later enterprises, from 1557, included a loan-bank in Gonzaga in the duchy of Mantua, was also a scholar with an interest in books. He amassed a substantial library, a collection that included a manuscript of Don Isaac Abrabanel's *Mirkevet ha-Mishneh*, the source of the first printed edition of that work (Sabbioneta, 1551). Publication of *Toledot Aharon* was arranged by Aaron's three sons, who provided Zifroni with the manuscript. *Toledot Aharon* is the sole work known to have been written by Aaron.³⁸

³⁸ *Encyclopedia Judaica* 2:22; Habermann, "Zifroni," *Studies*, pp. 225–26 and 244–45 n. 24; Hayyim (Heimann) ben Joseph Michael, *Or ha-Hayyim*, (Altona, 1891; reprint Jerusalem, 1965), p. 147 no. 310 [Hebrew].

The title page of *Toledot Aharon*, the only large format book (2°, 38 cm. [39] ff.) printed by the press in Freiburg, is devoid of ornamentation. The text of the title page begins,

“the rear guard of all the camps” (Numbers 10:25), the verses found in Shas (Talmud) to their hosts, by chapter, folio, and page. Written by a man full of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and fear of God, Aaron of Pesaro. “May the soul of my lord be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord God” (I Samuel 25:29). Because of the labor and exertion of his hands those who seek will find all their wishes, the verses, “on the day when it [she] shall be spoken for” (Song of Songs 8:8), festivals, holidays, “every new moon, and every Sabbath” (Isaiah 66:23), “day to day utters speech” (Psalms 19:3) according to the Torah and *mitzvot* that are written to instruct them in “the way where they must walk, and the work that they must do” (Exodus 18:20)...

In the final paragraph the reader is cautioned against thinking that *Masoret ha-Mikra* (by R. Simeon ben Isaac Aschaffenburg), published in Lublin in 1572, is a comparable work.³⁹ Within the text of *Toledot Aharon*, citations are arranged in five columns by the order of the verses in the Bible. An entry consists of three to four words from a verse in square letters, and immediately below it, in rabbinic letters, its location in the Babylonian Talmud, by tractate name, chapter, folio, and page (fig. 60).

The title page of the biblical concordance, *Me'ir Nativ* (Basle, 1581), printed earlier by Zifroni at the Froben press, enumerates *Toledot Aharon* among its contents.⁴⁰ That work was not, however, printed with *Me'ir Nativ*. In the colophon of *Toledot Aharon*, Zifroni informs that he had thought to print *Toledot Aharon* at the end of the biblical concordance, a vow he now fulfills. The delay is to be attributed to two unnamed Jews, may they be “confounded and put to shame” (Psalms 35:4), one resident in Prague, the other in Poland. He offers an imprecation, “Render to them a recompense, O Lord, according to the work of their hands” (cf. Lamentations 3:64). Although Zifroni does not identify the two Jews, one is known to have been Mordecai ben Moses ha-Levi of Prague,

³⁹ R. Simeon ben Isaac ha-Levi Aschaffenburg was one of the leaders of the Jewish community in Frankfurt am Main. His surname is taken from the Bavarian community of Aschaffenburg, where he resided prior to settling in Jerusalem, where he died. *Masoret ha-Mikra* is a folio-size concordance of biblical passages in the Talmud.

⁴⁰ The author of *Me'ir Nativ* is R. Mordecai Nathan, a physician in Avignon in the fifteenth century, and possibly also a teacher, or correspondent of the famed R. Joseph ben Solomon Colon (Maharik, c. 1420–1480). *Me'ir Nativ* is the first Hebrew concordance of the Bible (*Encyclopedia Judaica*, 12:854).

apparently motivated by a dispute over R. Ephraim Luntschitz's *Ir Gibborim* (Basle, 1580); suggestions as to the second are R. Jacob Luzzatto (*Kaftor va-Ferah*, Basle, 1581), and R. Jacob Polak, who published several books at the Basle press of Konrad Waldkirch.⁴¹

The quality of *Toledot Aharon* has been severely criticized by R. Aaron Hyman (1862–1937) in the introduction to his *Torah ha-Ketwah ve-ha-Mesurah*, where he writes that he never saw a work so full of errors, each and every row covered with thorns and nettles. Every subsequent printer added errors on errors, unintentionally and with premeditation, so that the work is uncorrected. It is forbidden by halakhah to keep it in one's home. No one has taken it upon themselves to correct it.⁴²

This notwithstanding, most others have found *Toledot Aharon* to be a useful work, for it was reprinted in Venice (1591–92) less than a decade after the publication of the Freiburg edition and numerous times afterwards. Several of the seventeenth-century editions have been enlarged to include references to the Jerusalem Talmud, the Zohar, *Akedat Yitzhak*, and other works. Current editions of the rabbinic Bible include an abridged version of *Toledot Aharon*.

In 1584, Froben and Zifroni published Koppelman's *Ohel Ya'akov*, a commentary on the *Ikkarim* of R. Joseph Albo. It is a quarto, made up of 34 leaves. The title page begins with the heading, "How goodly are your tents, O Jacob, [and your tabernacles, O Israel!]" (Numbers 24:5). The brief text states that it is "a commentary and elucidation of the *Sefer Ikkarim* of Albo. Written by the complete scholar and divine philosopher, Jacob bar Samuel called Koppelman from Brisk." There is an introduction by Koppelman, which begins, "'For the Lord has chosen Jacob to himself, and Israel for his own possession' (Psalms 135:4), 'The spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and in my tongue was his word (*sic*)' (II Samuel 23:2), 'and He waked me, like a man who is wakened out of his sleep' (*cf.* Zechariah 4:1) 'He taught me also, and said to me, retain my words' (Proverbs 4:4) to you. Arise, 'Gird up now

⁴¹ Habermann, p. 225 no. 24.

⁴² Aaron Hyman, *Torah ha-Ketwah ve-ha-Mesurah* (Tel Aviv, 1937–40; reprint Jerusalem, 1985), quoted in Naphtali Ben-Menahem, *Be-Sha'avei Sefer* (Jerusalem, 1967), pp. 17–18. Ben-Menahem notes that these sentiments are echoed in *Derekh ha-Tov* on *Hamishah Homshei Torah* (Muncas, 1900), where the blame is placed squarely on the printers (p. 123). Ben-Menahem informs (p. 18) that a corrected version of *Toledot Aharon* has since been published in the Pentateuch *Raw Peninim*. The introduction to the second edition of Hyman's work, "revised and enlarged by his son, Arthur B. Hyman, M.D." (Tel Aviv, 1979), does not contain the remarks quoted by Ben-Menahem.

your loins like a man' (Job 38:3)." The introduction continues, in the form of the Passover Haggadah, stating:

"from there it was divided, and became four rivers" (Genesis 2:10) comparable to the four brothers, one wise, those are the great scholars; second is the wicked, the ignorant who abhor the word of the Lord; third is the simple, of whom it is said, "be perfect with the Lord your God" (*cf.* Deut. 18:13) and they occupy themselves with the Torah of the Lord as "and Jacob was a quiet man, dwelling in tents" (Genesis 25:27). Between the first two groups there is a division. The fourth is the one who does not know to ask, and they are the young students who don't know between right and left.

Koppelman continues the Passover parable, relating his commentary to each of the four brothers, noting that he examines with the light of a candle, not a torch, of wax that does not drip, reaching into cracks and holes. The commentary is understandable without difficulty, of value to each of the groups represented by the four sons. Towards the end Koppelman mentions the advent of the plague in Frankfurt, writing, "I will, 'fall now into the hand of the Lord; for his mercies are great' (II Samuel 24:14) and I will write this book, and if I die my name will be on it for a remembrance before the Lord continuously for my intent is the public weal." Albo's *Ikkarim* was selected for its words are upright and "there is no blemish in [it]" (Song of Songs 4:7). This is followed by two commentaries on the introduction in which Koppelman discusses his commentary. *Ohel Ya'akov* was completed on *erev Pesah* (14 Nissan) [5]343 (Wednesday, April 6, 1583), when Koppelman was twenty-eight.

The text, on selected passages of the *Ikkarim*, which is a philosophic work on the principles of Judaism, is made up of four *ma'amarim*, subdivided into 105 chapters. The commentary is generally brief, with only a few long passages. Use is made of the *Moreh Nevukhim*; there are rare references to Kabbalah.⁴³ The text is accompanied by charts and illustrations (figs. 61 and 62). The colophon is brief, stating, "Until here did I see [a need] to comment, the remainder requires no commentary."

Ohel Ya'akov was reprinted in Cracow in 1599 and more recently in Jerusalem in 1994/95.⁴⁴ The Cracow edition is a copy of the Freiburg edition, line for line exact, reproducing all of the illustrations, omitting

⁴³ Elbaum, *op. cit.*

⁴⁴ Joseph Albo, *Sefer ha-Ikarim ha-Shalem; im Perushei Ohel Ya'akov le-Rabbi Ya'akov Koppelman, Eis Shatul le-Rabbi Gedalyah Lipshits* (Jerusalem, 1995) [Hebrew].

the hand pointers only. As noted above, Koppelman also wrote *Omek Halakhah* (Cracow, 1593) on various talmudic subjects, among them mathematics, and translated several works into Yiddish, all printed in Freiburg at this time.

One additional work was printed in Freiburg, *Targum shel Hamesh Megillot bi-Leshon Ashkenaz*, Koppelman's rhymed Yiddish translation of the Megillot. The volume is an octavo, measuring 19 cm. and made up of 85 leaves. The title page has the same decorative florets employed in the same pattern as in the previous Freiburg imprints. The Hebrew text of the title page and of Koppelman's glosses within the book are set in square Hebrew letters printed in red; the Yiddish text, both on the title page and within the book is set in *Vaybertaytsh* printed in black.⁴⁵ The title page states that it is the *Targum shel Hamesh Megillot* (Five Megillot)

into the Ashkenaz language [Yiddish]. Translated from the Holy tongue [Hebrew] by the sage, the astute, "known in the gates" (Proverbs 31:23), R. Jacob ben Bunim, known as Rabbi Koppelman. For the benefit of the public, "men, and women, and children" (Jeremiah 40:7), an explanation of unfamiliar words is added "As, behold, your eyes see" (Genesis 45:12). He has not spared any expense, but "has distributed freely" (Psalms 112:9) for the craftsman. "Double money" (Genesis 43:12) in order to print it in two colors, to make it attractive to purchasers [lit. to make its purchasers jump for it].

There is an introduction in which Koppelman explains his methodology in the glosses, that is, which words require explanation and to what degree. The glosses, which are generally succinct, are in Hebrew, located in the margins in red, the text is in Yiddish in black. That the glosses are in Hebrew is surprising, as they are meant to describe difficult terms in the text, which has been translated into Yiddish for the benefit of readers not comfortable with the Hebrew original. Koppelman also informs that he wrote the *Targum* in Metz, France in 1584. At the end

⁴⁵ Two-color printing was labor and time intensive, and more complex than printing in one color on a hand press, and therefore a more expensive process, done infrequently. There were different methods of two-color printing. An early technique was to remove and replace the type to be printed in a color in the forme between colors, but this was a slow process, so that by the sixteenth century the most common procedure was to make a frisket (a frame that keeps a covering sheet of paper in position and masks any portions not to be printed) enabling the printer to make two impressions on a sheet without removing and replacing the type. Gaskell, pp. 137–38, and McKerrow, pp. 329–34.

of the volume is a register, a device for insuring that the signatures have been arranged correctly when the book is being bound.

The *Targum shel Hamesh Megillot* was the last work printed by Froben and Zifroni in Freiburg. During their brief time in Freiburg they had only published a small number of books, relatively small works. Whatever Froben's expectations were in relocating here, they can not have been realized. In 1585, Froben turned over management of the press to his son Hieronymous and his son-in-law, Johann Meir, who continued to print non-Hebrew works. Zifroni returned to Italy, where he once again worked for Hebrew printing presses. In 1588, Zifroni wrote to Theodore Zwinger, Froben's brother-in-law, expressing his willingness to return to Basle. Zifroni was not, however, recalled.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Habermann, p. 226.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A LITTLE KNOWN CHAPTER IN HEBREW PRINTING: FRANCESCO DALLE DONNE AND THE BEGINNING OF HEBREW PRINTING IN VERONA IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY¹

One of the richest chapters in the long and fascinating history of Hebrew printing belongs to the Hebrew presses of Italy. It is there that the first Hebrew books were printed, that the most important pioneers plied their trade, a “Holy Work”, and that many of the innovations, standards, and formats employed to this day were introduced. In addition to the better known presses in cities such as Venice and Mantua, other locations had small print shops active for brief periods, printing a small number of titles only. The history of these print-shops and the works they printed do not, understandably, receive attention commensurate to the larger presses. Nevertheless, their history and books are often significant, deserving of greater attention. This is certainly true of the print shop that issued Hebrew books in Verona in the sixteenth century.

Verona, in northern Italy, lies at the foot of the Lessini Mountains, 65 miles (105 km) west of Venice, half-encircled by the Adige River. An independent commune from the early twelfth century, the site of Guelph and Ghibelline strife in the thirteenth and fourteenth century, Verona was ruled by Venice from 1404 to 1797, when it came under Austrian rule, until union with Italy in the nineteenth century. It is today an episcopal see and the capital of Verona provincia, Veneto regione. It was here that the romance of Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet, memorialized by Shakespeare, took place in the thirteenth century.

Jews were resident in the city from an early period. Their presence, however, was intermittent. They suffered expulsion in the tenth century, readmittance, and again expulsion. Permitted to reside in Verona when the city passed into the hands of Venice, the Jews, primarily moneylenders, were again forced out in 1490 with the establishment

¹ The original version of this article was published in *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 94:3 (New York, N. Y., 2000), pp. 333–46.

of a *Monte di Pietà* (Christian loan bank), returning at the beginning of the sixteenth century.² The Jews of Verona, at this time Ashkenazim, were restricted to a ghetto from 1599, at which time the community numbered about 400, a number that had risen to 900 persons, including Sephardim, by the end of the eighteenth century.³

Printing in Verona dates from 1472, with the appearance of Robertus Valturius' *De re militari*, printed by Joannes Nicolai de Verona, a work distinguished by 82 woodcuts of weapons and implements of war, the earliest subject illustrations in an Italian book, the designs and cutting of which are attributed to Matteo de Pasti.⁴ Six additional printers are known for the incunabular period, and twenty-two names appear in the roster of printers in Verona from 1501 to 1600, among them the dalle Donne family, beginning with Sebastiano dalle Donne in 1565.⁵

Despite the fact that printing in Verona began in the incunabular period and that so many presses were active in the sixteenth century, it was not until the last decade of that century that Hebrew books were printed in Verona. The first press to issue books with Hebrew type in Verona was that of Francesco dalle Donne, active from 1592 into the seventeenth century. His main business was not Hebrew books, which he published for about three years only.⁶ The actual publisher, at least

² Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1967), 12:165–66, observes that after expelling the Jews for their money lending, they soon reconsidered, as the Christian bankers, relieved of their competition, engaged in “far sharper practices,” so that not only were the Jews allowed to return, but that even before 1600 there were 25 Jewish banks. He further adds that due to the perceived importance of Jewish banking, little is heard of the many other careers that Jews pursued.

³ *The Encyclopedia Judaica* 16 (Jerusalem, 1972) 113–15. The population of Verona at the beginning of the sixteenth century is given as 42,000 by Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979), 168.

⁴ Arthur M. Hind, *An Introduction to a History of Woodcut* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1935 reprint New York: Dover Pub., 1963), 2:410–11.

⁵ H. M. Adams, *Catalogue of Books Printed on the Continent of Europe, 1501–1600 in Cambridge Libraries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); Marco Menato, Ennio Sandal, Giuseppina Zappella, *Dizionario dei tipografi e degli editori italiani Il Cinquecento* (Milan: Editrice Bibliografica, 1997), 1:357–359; Robert Proctor, *An Index to the Early Printed Books in the British Museum: From the Invention of Printing to the Year 1500. With Notes of those in the Bodleian Library* (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1898–1903; reprint Mansfield Centre, Ct.: Marino Fine Books, 1999), 469.

⁶ Among the other works published by Francesco dalle Donne are the *Fulmine contro de' medici* of Tommaso Zefiriele Bovio (1583); *Brenzonus* of C. Sylvestranus (1591); *Canzone ridiculosa* of Zan. Salcizza (1593); *Canzone sopra I Zaratani* of Zaratani (1594); *De indulgentiis* of Laelius Zecchus (1600); *Controversiæ* of F. Turchi; and a volume from the *Orlando* (1594) of Ludovico Ariosto (1474–1533), whose epic poem is considered one

of the Yiddish books, was Abraham ben Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba (Basevi in Italian) from Salonika, and, for one work, Jacob ben Gershon Bak of Prague. The association of the Christian printer dalle Donne and his Hebrew partners was a not uncommon one, for “the Hebrew books sector, being unique, was rather attractive to investors, being more limited and not so wildly competitive as the Italian book sector.”⁷

Abraham’s father, Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba, scion of an Italian-Jewish family of German (Ashkenazic) origin from Verona, had been recruited by Moses de Medina, the son of the Maharashdam (R. Samuel ben Moses de Medina, 1506–89), one of the leading rabbinic figures in Salonika, to establish a press in Salonika to print his father’s responsa, to support the local Talmud Torah, and to print Talmudic treatises. Their press is credited with printing about forty titles in Salonika from 1592 to 1605.⁸ Abraham Bath-Sheba was sent by his father to Italy, ostensibly to raise money for a proposed new edition of the Talmud to be printed in Salonika. R. Judah Aryeh (Leon) Modena (1571–1648) wrote a letter on behalf of the project, in which he also requests that all due consideration be extended to the representative of the printing press, including providing him provisions, for his itinerary includes both Italy and Germany.⁹ There is no evidence that Abraham Bath-Sheba did travel to Germany; it is during this period that he printed books at the press of dalle Donne. Abraham Bath-Sheba subsequently returned to Salonika where he assisted his father and brother, Abraham Joseph, at the family press.

Abraham Bath-Sheba’s device, a crowned lion on the left and half a crowned eagle on the right, back to back, appears within different

of the finest poetic and most popular works of the Renaissance. See Lorenzo Carpané Marco Menato, *Annali della tipografia veronese della Cinquecento* (Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 1992–94), 29–36.

⁷ Zipora Baruchson, “Money and Culture: Financing Methods in the Hebrew Printing Shops in Cinquecento Italy,” *La Bibliofilia* 92 (1990), 25.

⁸ On the Bath-Sheba press in Salonika see Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal and Turkey, from its Beginning and Formation about the year 1470* (Tel Aviv: M. A. Bar-Juda, 1956), 136–7 [Hebrew]; Israel Mehlman, “Hebrew Printing in Salonika,” in *Genuzot Sefarim* (Jerusalem: Bet ha-Sefarim ha-Le’umi veka-Universiti’a bi-Yerushalayim, 1976), 56–7, 73–89 [Hebrew].

⁹ Concerning *Berakhot*, the sole tractate known to have been issued by the Bath-Sheba press in Salonika, see Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 321–7; *idem.*, “The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina Salonika Edition of *Berakhot*: An Unknown Attempt to Circumvent the Inquisition’s Ban on the Printing of the Talmud in Sixteenth Century Italy,” *Jewish Quarterly Review* (1996), 87:47–60.

frames in most of these books.¹⁰ Bath-Sheba's name, again in most instances, appears about his ensign. This mark can also be found in several of the family's Salonika imprints.

The Verona press did not print a large number of books for the Jewish market. However, the number of titles printed has been underestimated, or under reported, and it is possible that we still do not know the full number of works to actually come off the dalle Donne presses. Amram, writing in 1909, attributes two titles to the press, that is, *Minhah Belulah* and *Midrash Tanhuma*. The same two works are mentioned by Benayahu, who comments, more than four decades later, "two books were printed at the press of Francesco dalle Donne."¹¹ Benayahu, who references Friedberg and perhaps Amram too, is certainly aware that other books with Hebrew letters were printed at that time in Verona. What is omitted are the Yiddish books, the majority of the titles printed in Verona in the sixteenth century. Friedberg devotes one paragraph only to this press, enumerating four titles. Shmeruk, who notes that the majority of works were Yiddish titles, enumerates only three such books out of five titles with Hebrew letters. Most recently, Vinograd lists as many as ten works, to 1600.¹² Indeed, although few in number, it is the Yiddish

¹⁰ Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem: Hevrah le-hotsa'at sefarim 'al yad ha-Universitah ha-Ivrit, 1943; reprint Farnborough: Gregg International Pub., 1971), 30, 141 no. 48 [Hebrew]. Moshe N. Rosenfeld, *The Book of Cows: A Facsimile Edition of the Famed Kühbuch* (London: Hebraica Books, 1984), n.p., observes that it has been suggested that the lion represents Bohemia and the eagle Austria, commenting that he does not see "any immediate family ties with these countries." Perhaps this device was selected to emphasize the family's Ashkenazic origins, especially as they were now situated in Salonika, a Sephardic center.

¹¹ David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Philadelphia: J. H. Greenstone, 1909; reprint London: Holland Press, 1963), 390; Meir Benayahu, "The Printing and Distribution of Books in Italy," *Sinai* (1954), 34:171 [Hebrew]. It should be noted that Benayahu's primary interest is the influence of R. Samuel Aboab on Hebrew printing in the seventeenth century.

¹² Friedberg, 84 [Hebrew]; Chone Shmeruk, "Yiddish Printing in Italy," *Italia* 3 (1982), 120 [Hebrew]; Yeschayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book...* (Jerusalem: Institute for Computerized Bibliography, 1993–95), 2:290 [Hebrew]. Two of the ten entries cannot be confirmed and are not further addressed; they are *Midrash Hazita* also called *Aggadot Hazita*, based on Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna: ha-Almanah voha-Ahim Rom, 1880; reprint New York: Jerusalem Pub., n. d.), 299–300 n. 577. That entry states that it is "*Midrash Rabbah* on Shir ha-Shirim (Song of Songs) and Kohelet (Ecclesiastes), so called because it begins with the verse *hazita ish mahir* (Do you see a man diligent [in his business]?) (Proverbs 22:29),... Verona, 1595 2^o." The other entry is from Ch. B. Friedberg, *Bet Eked Sefarim* (Tel Aviv: n.p., 1951), *heb* 803 [Hebrew], which states, "*Hallel Gadol*, Samuel Meldola, poem to commemorate the night of *Rosh Hodesh Shevat* for the miracle that occurred for the Ashkenaz community of Verona in the year 1600: 1. Verona, 1600; 2. another printing, 1759 8^o 4 pages." Vinograd lists four editions

books that make the Verona press unique; it is the only press in Italy printing for the Jewish market in which the majority of books were in Yiddish rather than in Hebrew.¹³

Ashkenazim had been immigrating into Italy from Germany from the mid-thirteenth century, forming a majority of the Jewish population in many northern Italian locations, among them, in the sixteenth century, Verona. This is evidenced by R. Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen Porto (Rappoport) Ashkenazi (1520–after 1594), author of the *Minhah Belulah*, being rabbi in Verona from 1584 to 1592. Bonfil observes that “only small communities with a high degree of cultural and ethnic homogeneity and social cohesion appointed a rabbi. . . .”¹⁴

The Yiddish books, nonrabbinic in nature, addressed the more popular reading needs of the population, a homogeneous community of Yiddish speaking Ashkenazim. Moreover, while most men were literate in Hebrew, there were others who had not been well instructed in that language, as was the case with most women, creating a need addressed by books in Yiddish.¹⁵ R. Elijah Levita’s preface to his translation of Psalms begins “Ihr Frume Frauen die andechtigen” (You pious and virtuous women).¹⁶ Indeed, the name for the type family used for these books, fonts distinct from and used primarily, although not exclusively, for Yiddish books, is referred to as *Vaybertaytsh*. The sole exception among the Verona imprints, according to Shmeruk, is *Paris un Viene*, which was actually printed with letters similar to rabbinic letters with diacritic marks being added, as is the custom with Yiddish, done because

of *Ma’amadot* (1590, 1592, 1594, and 1595), which seems excessive. However, even if several editions of *Ma’amadot* were printed during this period, we now have only five titles from the press, which leaves us in general agreement with the other accounts.

¹³ Shmeruk notes that from 1545 to 1609, 35 Yiddish works are known to have been printed in Italy, about 27 percent of all the Yiddish books printed at this time (36, 125). However, on 113 the figure is given as 33 works. He questions there (n. 4) whether two haggadot, copies of an earlier printing, included in the other totals for comprehensiveness, are to be included with Italian Yiddish books. To put these numbers in proper context, it should be noted that close to 900 books, both Hebrew and Yiddish, were printed in Venice alone in the sixteenth century (Vinograd, 2:261), of which 23 only are in Yiddish.

¹⁴ Robert Bonfil, *Jewish Life in Renaissance Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), tr. Anthony Oldcorn, 202. On the migration of German Jews into Italy, see Moses A. Shulvass, “Ashkenazic Jewry in Italy,” *Yivo Annual of Jewish Social Science* 7 (1952), 110–31.

¹⁵ Shifra Baruchson, *Books and Readers: The Reading Interests of Italian Jews at the Close of the Renaissance* (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1993), 84–5 [Hebrew].

¹⁶ Meyer Waxman, *A History of Jewish Literature* (1930–41: Bloch Pub. Co.; reprint Cranbury, N.J.: Thomas Yoseloff, 1960), 2:619–20.

the fonts normally used for Yiddish books were as yet unavailable in Verona.¹⁷

What were the books printed in Verona? The Yiddish works are liturgical (*Ma'amadot*), secular (*Paris un Viene*), and moralistic fables (*Kuhbuch*). The Hebrew titles, *Minhah Belulah* and *Midrash Tanhuma*, are rabbinic works, the first a Torah commentary based on Midrashim, the second a Midrash. The *Ma'amadot* and *Tanhuma* are relatively well known works and will be addressed here only briefly.

Ma'amadot are readings, originating from the time of the Temple, when Israelites, the nonpriestly members of a *Mishmar* (division of Kohanim [priests], Levites, and Israelites into 24 rotating divisions for the Temple service) who did not accompany their group to Jerusalem, would instead assemble to recite biblical and Mishnaic passages pertaining to the Temple service and sacrifices. These readings, varying according to the day of the week, were, after the destruction of the Temple, recited by pious individuals. The growth of kabbalistic studies in the sixteenth century renewed interest in these readings, now expanded and said by a larger portion of the community as evidenced by their publication in several locations.¹⁸ This 1592 edition, of 83 pages, was most likely the first work printed by Abraham Bath-Sheba at the press of Francesco dalle Donne.

The *Midrash Tanhuma*, called *Yelammedenu*, attributed to the fourth-century Palestinian *amora* (talmudic sage), R. Tanhuma, appeared in 1595. This was the fifth printing of the midrash, the most popular midrash after the *Rabbah* midrashim.¹⁹ The text of the title-page is set within an elaborate ornamental frame. Jacob ben Gerson Bak's (d. 1618) name appears there, apparently as the publisher in the house of dalle Donne. His father was Gerson ben Moses, a renowned printer of Hebrew books in Venice; Jacob afterwards also worked in Venice and then in Prague where he went to print the books of R. Judah Loew ben Bezalel of Prague (Maharal, 1525–1609), founding one of the most

¹⁷ Shmeruk, 121. Also see Herbert C. Zafren, "Variety in the Typography of Yiddish: 1535–1635," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 53 (1982) 155, where in a table of "A Sample of Yiddish not Printed in Yiddish Type" the type family in *Paris un Viene* is given as Rabbinic.

¹⁸ Solomon B. Freehof, "Devotional Literature in the Vernacular," *Central Conference of American Rabbis* 33 (Cape May, N.J. 1923) 409–12. Concerning *Ma'amadot* in the Temple services, see TB *Ta'anit*, 26a ff.

¹⁹ *Midrash Tanhuma* was printed previously in Constantinople, 1520; Venice, 1545; Mantua, 1563; and Salonika, 1578(?).

famous and durable Hebrew print shops in eastern Europe, active until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Abraham Bath-Sheba's name appears in the colophon as editor above his device.

The *Minhah Belulah* of R. Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen Rappoport, dated 1594, was likely the second work printed by the press. The author was, as noted above, rabbi in Verona from 1584 to 1592 and head of a highly regarded yeshiva there. Abraham Menahem Porto's family had come to Italy from Lublin; he was born in Porto. The name Rappoport is a combination of the family name, Rapa, with Porto, to distinguish this branch of the family from other branches of the Rapa family. The name Rapa stems from the German (Rappe in Middle High German) for raven. Abraham Menahem alludes to this in the introduction to the *Minhah Belulah*. His escutcheon, printed at the end of *Minhah Belulah*, consists of a raven surmounted by two spread hands giving the priestly benediction. At the sides are two scantily clad women. Below, we are informed that the work was written [completed] in Cremona on Wednesday, the twenty-fourth of *Shevat*, 342 (1582). Abraham Menahem was at the time rabbi in Cremona.

Prior to accepting a rabbinic position Abraham Menahem worked as an editor in Hebrew print shops. He was not only a rabbinic scholar, but was also well versed in secular subjects, both evident from his comments in *Minhah Belulah*. His other works are *Zafnat Pane'ah* (Venice, 1556), a cipher-code of his own invention; responsa, to be found in the writings of contemporary rabbis; and, still in manuscript, commentaries on several books of the Bible and *Avot*. Abraham Menahem prohibited reading the *Me'or Einayim* (Mantua, 1573) of Azariah de Rossi (c. 1511–c. 1578), a position he later retracted when R. David Provencal and R. Judah Moscato, both rabbis in Mantua, permitted it to be read.²⁰

Minhah Belulah is a commentary on the Torah based on midrashim. An unusual feature of the book is that the introduction, entitled *alef beis*, is comprised of a thousand (*elef*) words, each of which includes the

²⁰ The *Me'or Einayim* of Azariah de Rossi was among the most controversial works for the Jewish community in the sixteenth century. In it, de Rossi questions biblical and talmudic chronology, for which he was strongly criticized by leading rabbinic authorities, including R. Judah Loew of Prague (Maharal) in his *Be'er ha-Golah* (Prague, 1598). R. Joseph b. Ephraim Caro (1488–1575), author of the *Shulhan Arukh* (Venice, 1565), had a ban prepared proscribing the *Me'or Einayim* but died before he could sign it. As a result, the *Me'or Einayim* was not reprinted until 1794, in Berlin, after the *haskala* (Jewish enlightenment) had begun. For further details see my *The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Book* (Brill: Leiden, 2004) 624–25 and reference index for other citations.

letter *beis*. Rappoport was an eyewitness to the burning of the Talmud in Venice in 1553. He reports on this tragic event in *Minhah Belulah*, on the verse "... a fiery law unto them" (Deuteronomy 33:2):

... and this also alludes to the great destruction our eyes have witnessed, due to our many iniquities, throughout Italy. The burning of the Oral Law [Talmud] in the year **שיד** [as in] "the hand **ד** of the Lord was upon us." The decree went out from the city of Rome to use [the Talmud volumes] as fuel for the fire. In Venice, woe to the eyes that saw this, on the thirteenth and fourteenth of *Marheshvan* 1553, a continuous fire which was not extinguished. I fixed these days for myself, for each and every year, for fasting, weeping, and mourning, for this day was as bitter for me as the burning of the House of our God (the Temple).

The editor, Abraham ben Jehiel Kohen Porto, apologizes in his colophon for any errors in the book, for "Who can discern mistakes" (Psalms 19:13). He informs us that not only was he careful but that Abraham Bath-Sheba was diligent in reviewing the type setting, "letter by letter." Nevertheless, the work was done by uncircumcised workers (non-Jews), inexperienced in setting Hebrew letters, and it was not possible to avoid errors. Neither they nor the author, therefore, should be held responsible for any errors, and he requests that they be judged favorably. Abraham ben Jehiel's complaint was a common one found in many Hebrew books, for not only did cities prohibit Jewish ownership of a press, but they also forbade their employ in a number of capacities in a print shop regardless of the religion of the proprietor. As a result, non-Jewish workers did the press work, which was then edited by Jews to ensure that no errors had been made.²¹

The dalle Donne press issued *Paris un Viene* in the same year as the *Minhah Belulah*. Printed posthumously in 1594, *Paris un Viene* was until recently known only from an incomplete *unicum*, lacking the first twenty four numbered leaves, comprising about 250 stanzas, in Trinity College,

²¹ Concerning the problems arising from the use of non-Jewish workers to set Hebrew books see Avraham Yaari, "Editor's complaints regarding printing on the Sabbath by non-Jews," *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1958), 170–78 [Hebrew] and my "And the Work, the Work of Heaven, was Performed on Shabbat," *The Torah u-Maddah Journal* 11 (New York, 2002–02), pp. 174–85 and below. Concerning the restrictions on Hebrew workers in Venice see Benjamin Ravid, "The Prohibition against Jewish Printing and Publishing in Venice and the Difficulties of Leone Modena," *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), ed. Isadore Twersky, 135–53. Another difficulty faced by the printers of Hebrew books was obtaining the approval of the censor, reflected on the title pages, which state, "Con licenza de Superiori."

Cambridge. However, a complete edition was discovered in the Catholic Seminary in Verona, and yet a second copy in a library in Cleveland, Ohio.²² Although the author is not named, it has been accepted that it was Elijah ben Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi Levita (Bahur, 1469–1549), truly a renaissance figure. Levita wrote poetry; books on grammar, linguistics, and the Bible; several dictionaries; lampoons; and translated other works into Yiddish. He instructed Christian-Hebraists in Hebrew and benefitted from the patronage of Gilles of Viterbo, general of the Augustinian religious order and subsequently Cardinal Egidio d’Viterbo, even residing in his home from 1514 to 1527. Levita’s grammatical treatise, *Sefer ha-Bahur* (1518), written with Viterbo’s encouragement, proved to be a popular work, going through many editions.

Levita’s translations into Yiddish include the Book of Psalms (Venice, 1545) and secular romances. The former was done while working as a corrector for Daniel Bomberg at the prompting of Cornelius Adelkind, for, as the latter writes,

When I grew old I considered that I had done nothing for pious young women and for men that had not time to study in their youth, but who would like to spend their time on Sabbath or Festivals reading appropriate matters and not “Titrich of Bern” or the “Schoene Glueck.” And for the sake of those who want to read God’s word, for there are few [Jewish] books written in German, that are well and correctly translated, I went to Rabbi Elijah Levita and entered into agreement with him to

²² Shmeruk, 121, 125 n. 46, states that this is in fact the second edition, it assuredly having been printed earlier in Sabbioneta by Cornelius Adelkind, with whom Levita was close, at the press of Tobias Foa. However, no Sabbioneta edition is recorded by Avraham Yaari, “The Printers Bnei Foa,” *Studies in Hebrew Booklore*, 352–67, nor by Avraham Habermann, *Ha-Madpis Cornelio Adel Kind u-Beno Daniel* (Jerusalem: Rubin Mass. 1980) [Hebrew]. Furthermore, no Sabbioneta edition is enumerated in the catalogues of the major collections. On the Cleveland copy, see Chone Shmeruk in collaboration with Erika Timm, *Paris un’ Viena, Edited with Introduction, Notes, and Appendices* (Jerusalem: Ha-Akademiyah ha-Le’umit ha-Yišre’elit le-Mada, 1996). [Hebrew with English Preface], 30 n. 39. After the discovery of a complete edition of *Paris un’ Viena*, Shmeruk, based on the previously unknown introduction, adduces additional evidence for a prior Sabbioneta printing. Two other recent reprints are a facsimile edition, *Paris un’ Viena: Francesco dalle Donne, Verona, 1594*, Arnaldo Forni edition (Bologna, 1988), and reset without the woodcuts, *Paris un’ Viena: Ein jiddischer Stanzenroman des 16. Jahrhunderts von (oder aus dem Umkreis von) Elia Levita: eingeleitet, in Transkription herausgegeben und kommentiert von Erika Timm unter Mitarbeit von Gustav Adolf Beckmann* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996).

translate several books for me and first of all the Psalms according to rules of grammar.²³

This did not, however, prevent Levita from translating into Yiddish popular romances, such as *Paris un Viene* (allegedly written about 1508/09) and the Toscana version of *Buovo d'Antona* (Isny, 1541), a translation of the Anglo romance, "Sir Bevis of Hampton," later known as the *Bove Bukh*, from which is derived the expression, *bobe maa'ase*.

The long-accepted facts of authorship and publication of *Paris un Viene* have been challenged since the discovery of the complete copy. Based on the introduction to that work, Shmeruk concludes, after offering an impressive array of reasons, that the romance was written several decades later than previously believed, that there certainly was a prior Sabbioneta edition, and most importantly, that not Levita but one of his students was the author. Indeed, the author of the introduction, written after Levita's death, refers with admiration to Levita. Shmeruk's introduction is followed by a preface from Erika Timm, who suggests caution before ascribing to someone else a work long credited to Levita. One of the arguments she offers is that Levita often employed *gematrias* (ascribing numerical values to letters), for example, in his *Sefer ha-Tishbi*, a practice repeated in the introduction to *Paris un Viene*.²⁴

These romances, adaptations from the vernacular into Yiddish, were very popular. *Paris un Viene*, based on an earlier Italian work, is the tale of two lovers, Paris, a poor knight at the court of king Dolfin, and Viene, the king's daughter. The match is opposed by the king, who selects a more suitable prospect as his future son-in-law. The story, about the vicissitudes of their relationship, concludes when Vien becomes ill as a result of her love for and separation from Paris. The king announces that whoever can cure his daughter can have her hand and succeed to the throne. Paris, who has been wandering, has not only become a physician but has risen to be physician to the Sultan. Dolfin, captured in battle by the Sultan, is helped to escape by Paris, whom he does not recognize. Eventually, Paris heals Viene and wins her hand.²⁵

²³ Quoted in Amram, 187.

²⁴ Shmeruk, *Paris un' Viene*, 32–8, 41. In addition to the internal evidence for an earlier edition, Shmeruk (29–30) also relies on censor lists for 1595 in Mantua. Concerning mention of *Paris un Viene* in these lists, see Baruchson, *Books and Readers*, 156.

²⁵ Israel Zinberg, *A History of Jewish Literature*, trans. Bernard Martin (New York: Hebrew Union College Press and Ktav Publishing House, 1975), 7:77–86.

Levita's adaptation varies from the original in a number of ways. Waxman observes that "The content is borrowed but the form and the style is typically Jewish. Bahur imparted, in the recast of the narrative, Jewish characteristics to the heroes, for though they hail from an entirely different world, they act in a Jewish manner in their expressions and in their demeanor."²⁶ Stylistically, the prose has been replaced by "717 metered strophes, in the *ottava rima* rhyming scheme that was the accepted form for this genre in Italian literature, but adapted to the linguistic possibilities of Yiddish by iambic meter. Moreover, the Yiddish version adds a division into ten cantos, called *teyln*, often headed by long, clever digressions on a variety of topics."²⁷

The text, in two columns, concludes on 71b, followed on the next page by a colophon and Bath-Sheba's device. Within the book there are, in addition to the woodcuts on the title-page and verso, more than forty woodcut illustrations as well as other decorative material (fig. 63). The number of scenes is actually fewer, as many woodcuts are reused, ten of them twice; two, three times; and one, four times. These woodcuts were again used by dalle Done in 1603 in an Italian edition of *Paris e Viena innamoramento bellissimo*, and it is believed that they had been previously used in an Italian edition of that work.²⁸

The last Yiddish work printed in Verona was the *Kuhbukh* (Cow Book), a profusely illustrated collection of fables (fig. 64). It was known until recently only from bibliographic sources and references to it in later collections of fables. It exists as a *unicum*, now in a private collection, having been discovered in 1983. Prior to that serendipitous discovery, Zinberg had observed that, "the *Kuhbuch* was so thoroughly read through... that not a single copy of it has been preserved."²⁹ It has since been reproduced in a facsimile edition.³⁰

The *Kuhbuch* is referred to in the *Ma'aseh Buch* of Jacob ben Abraham of Meseritz (Basel, 1602), where, because the *Kuhbuch* is a competitive work, the author dismisses it as useless and ungodly. It was, with

²⁶ Waxman, 653.

²⁷ Shmeruk, *Paris un' Viena*, v–vi. For a detailed discussion of Levita's use of tonic-syllabic meter, see Benjamin Hrushovski, "The Creation of Accentual Iambs in European Poetry and their First Employment in a Yiddish Romance in Italy (1508–09)," in *For Max Weinreich on His Seventieth Birthday: Studies in Jewish Languages, Literature, and Society* (The Hague: Morton, 1964), 108–46.

²⁸ Shmeruk, *Paris un' Viena*, 30–1.

²⁹ Zinberg, 262.

³⁰ Rosenfeld.

modifications, published as the *Sefer Meshalim* by Moses Wallich (Frankfort am Main, 1697).³¹ The earliest mention of the *Kuhbuch* in a bibliographic work is in *Siftef Yeshenim*, the pioneer Hebrew bibliographical work of R. Shabbetai Bass (1641–1718). He attributes the authorship to Abraham ben Mattathias and describes it as “an ethical work comprised of parables and allegories about all the beasts and birds. After each fable its moral is made clear in verse in Yiddish. It is comparable to the (book *Meshal ha-Kadmoni*).” Bass concludes by erroneously giving the place of publication as Bern בערן 1556 4^o.³²

Abraham Bath-Sheba is also recorded as the author in more recent bibliographical works. Shmeruk suggests, however, that not only was Bath-Sheba not the author but that it is likely he was not even the translator but was the publisher only. The translator of the *Ma'amadot* into Yiddish was Joseph Heilperin; if translating that work into Yiddish, a simpler task, was assigned to someone else, it seems unlikely to Shmeruk that Bath-Sheba would have undertaken the translation of the *Kuhbuch* into Yiddish.³³ This is consistent with Rosenfeld's observations concerning the apparent error in the date for the *Kuhbuch* recorded by Bass, that is, that the phrase at the beginning of the introduction, “Ich der schreiber,” is adapted from earlier Yiddish works and that “neu gedruckt” on the title-page is inappropriate for a recently established press. The title-page has two inconsistent dates, one in Yiddish and a second in Arabic numerals (1595), so that, “In this context the wrong Yiddish date ‘tausend un finf un finfzig’ [1555] could well be a remnant of an earlier printed edition (which would have to be placed in Sabbioneta).” Rosenfeld concludes that this is comparable to the

³¹ More recently, the *Sefer Meshalim* was reproduced as the *Book of Fables: The Yiddish Fable Collection of Reb Moshe Wallich, Frankfurt am Main, 1697*, translated and edited by Eli Katz (Detroit: Wayne State, 1994). Katz observes that although the *Sefer Meshalim* is “in every essential respect a reprint of the Verona *Kuhbuch*,” there are differences, which he then enumerates (13). Furthermore, Wallich had the *Kuhbuch* before him for “the woodcuts of *Sefer Meshalim* were actually traced from *Kuhbuch* and reproduced in reverse (left to right) as dictated by the limited technology then available.”

³² Shabbetai Bass *Siftef Yeshenim* (Amsterdam, 1680; reprint Brooklyn: Copy Corner, 1993), 66 *kaf* 13. The *Meshal ha-Kadmoni* of Isaac ben Solomon Ibn Sahlula (thirteenth century) is a popular collection of parables, stories, and tales. First printed by Gershom Soncino (Brescia, c. 1491), it has since been reprinted several times. The place of publication of the *Ku-Buch*, Bern, or Vern, is certainly in error. Rosenfeld notes that the colophon of *Paris un Viene* gives the place of publication as “Hie in der Stadt Vern.”

³³ Shmeruk, *Yiddish Printing*, 123.

situation with *Paris un Viene*, “which Abraham Bat-Sheva reprinted from the yet unlocated Sabbioneta edition.”

There are thirty-five fables in the *Kuhbuch*, accompanied by as many as eighty-three woodcut scenes, often two to a page, each taking up almost a third of the page. The tales are fables with moralistic conclusions. The *Kuhbuch*, unlike a number of other Yiddish books, is not adapted from an Italian work, but rather primarily from two Hebrew and one German works, the *Mishlei Shu'alim* of R. Berechiah ben Natronai ha-Nakdan, the *Meshal ha-Kadmoni*, and the canon of Aesopian fables, as reflected in *Der Edelstein* of Ulrich Boner.³⁴

Physically, the *Kuhbuch* is a small book, measuring 137 × 185 mm. The text of the title-page is encompassed within a frame made up, along the sides, of two women weaving. Atop the frame are two more women engaged in embroidery and, between them in the center, a man occupied in some form of activity. This frame was used earlier by the Venetian printer, Nicholas Zoppino, who was active until 1543. At the end of the book is Abraham Bath-Sheba's device. On the sides of the emblem are two women with pitchers on their head and within the frame, in Hebrew letters, is the printer's name.

The title-pages of the *Midrash Tanhuma* and the woodcuts in *Paris un Viene* and the *Kuhbuch* were not cut for these works. The woodcuts in *Paris un Viene* were, as we have seen, supplied by dalle Donne and the title-page of the *Kuhbuch* had been used earlier by Nicholas Zoppino. Although it has not been possible to identify the source of the woodcuts in the *Kuhbuch* or the title-page of the *Tanhuma*, these too must have come from dalle Donne. The motif of the title-page of the *Tanhuma*, with its humanoid figures, and the courtly and knightly scenes of *Paris un Viene*, although not offensive, are not Jewish in either content or style. Moreover, the cost of preparing the numerous woodcuts in the *Paris un Viene* and the *Kuhbuch* could not, most likely, be justified by the anticipated sales. However, it was customary for such material to be transferred between print-shops, and dalle Donne certainly could have provided them to Bath-Sheba.

In about 1595 Abraham Bath-Sheba returned to Salonika, and Hebrew printing in Verona came to a close. In 1605, at the request of

³⁴ Katz, 10, 13, 16. The *Mishlei Shu'alim* of R. Berechiah ben Natronai ha-Nakdan (end of 12th–13th century) was first printed in Mantua in 1557–58.

R. J. Pinto, Abraham Bath-Sheba attempted, unsuccessfully, to operate a Hebrew press in Damascus. Pinto's *Kesef Nivhar* was printed through Leviticus when, due to the author's displeasure with the typography, work was discontinued. Hebrew printing was renewed briefly in Verona fifty years later by Francesco de' Rossi (1645–52), encouraged by R. Samuel Ben Abraham Aboab (1610–1694), then rabbi in Verona. About thirty Hebrew books were printed in Verona from 1645 to 1652.³⁵ Additional sporadic printing of Hebrew books occurred there in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

³⁵ Benayahu, "The Printing and Distribution of Books in Italy," 111ff.; Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography*, 84–85; and Vinograd, 290–91.

CHAPTER TWELVE

JEDIDIAH BEN ISAAC GABBAI AND THE FIRST DECADE OF HEBREW PRINTING IN LIVORNO¹

Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai printed his first book, the midrashic work, *Yalkut Shimoni*, on the Torah, with the commentary *Berit Avraham*, in Livorno, Italy, in 1650. It is a large book, well done, and attractive. We might have expected, given the quality of this work, and the location of the print-shop, in the prosperous Sephardic community of Livorno, for the press to have had a long successful life. This was not the case, however; only a small number of books were printed and the press was only open for less than a decade.

The history of the press, the books printed by it, the persons employed there, and the community it was in, given the print shop's short life span, interest us not so much because of its importance in the history of the Hebrew book, although that too, but because its books and authors provide us with an insight into Jewish intellectual activity and highlights for us many of the currents affecting Jewish life in the Mediterranean littoral at the midpoint of the seventeenth century.

Livorno is frequently described as an especially fortunate residence for the Jews. We hear, from a Brother Labant, that the Jews of Livorno are “free there . . . they are protected to the point where it is proverbial in Tuscany that it would be better to beat up the grand duke than a Jew.”² Elsewhere it is referred to as “a *mekom ha-zedek* (a righteous place), for it knew neither restrictions nor persecutions since the first Marranos founded the community at the end of the sixteenth century.” While the Jewish condition in Livorno was certainly better than in many other locales, there was also a dark side, for as Brother Labant also observes, Jewish success “makes them all the more odious to everyone else.”³

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Los Muestras*, part I no. 33 (Brussels, 1998), pp. 40–41; part II no. 34 (1999), pp. 28–30.

² Quoted in Léon Poliakov, *Jewish Bankers and the Holy See. From the Thirteenth Century to the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Miriam Kochan (London, 1977), pp. 259–60 n. 12.

³ Martin Lowenthal, *A World Passed By. Great Cities in Jewish Diaspora History* (New York, 1933; reprint 1990), pp. 257–58.

The Jewish presence in Livorno, in northwest Tuscany, Italy, dates from the sixteenth century. Jewish bankers were already present throughout the Duchy when Cosimo I, Duke of Tuscany, declared Livorno a free port on March 26, 1548, thereby implicitly permitting the presence of Marranos. Three years later, heeding the advice of R. Judah Abrabanel, Cosimo invited eastern Jews to settle in the duchy. More formal license to dwell in Tuscany dates from *la Livorna*, the letters patent issued by Ferdinand I de' Medici, on June 10, 1593, which guaranteed Marranos immunity from the Inquisition for past transgressions.⁴

The Jewish community grew rapidly, from a few hundred in the late 1500s to 1,175 in 1642 and about 5,000 (?) in 1689. The community was sufficiently prosperous and commercially successful that, on the urging of Colbert, chief minister of Louis XIV, that monarch offered the Jews of Livorno inducements to move to Marseilles.⁵

Hebrew printing came relatively late, given the history of printing in Italy, to Livorno. Nevertheless, from the founding of the first press in 1650, the city's print shops provided, intermittently, the Jewish communities around the Mediterranean with books for several hundred years, into the second-half of the twentieth century. The first of these presses was founded by Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai.

Why did Gabbai set up his own print shop? In his introduction to the *Yalkut Shimoni*, Gabbai first praises the superiority of his edition, and then informs us, in a paragraph replete with biblical paraphrases, that "I girded my loins as a warrior" (cf. Job 38:3, 40:7) after having seen all the possible impediments that can occur in the printer's craft. Nevertheless, he intends to proceed, and to bring out the most correct and attractive books possible. All other occupations have no value in his eyes. Gabbai disdains silver and gold, gives no consideration to financial loss; his entire purpose is for the communal good, for in the end it is Torah, more precious "than pearls, and all desires cannot compare to

⁴ For a general history of the Jewish community of Livorno see Flora Aghib Levi d'Ancona, "The Sephardi Community of Leghorn (Livorno)," in *Sephardic Heritage*, eds. R. D. Barnett and W. M. Schwab (Grendon, 1989), 2:180–202. Another valuable, albeit dated work is Sabato Morais, "The History of the Jewish Congregation of Leghorn," *Menorah Monthly* XI (New York, December, 1891), pp. 351–61. Also see Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* XIV (New York, 1969), pp. 91–93.

⁵ Marcus Arkin, *Aspects of Jewish Economic History* (Philadelphia, 1975), pp. 114, 124, and 128; Baron, p. 92. D'Ancona (p. 184) gives the population in 1645 as 2,000, noting that there was overcrowding.

it" (Proverbs 8:11). Gabbai's words are not mere pro forma statements, for he was previously engaged in business, dealing with precious stones and pearls, having intercourse with dukes and other people of high standing, all of which he has forsaken. All his efforts are now but for "The Lord's right hand is raised triumphantly" (Psalms 118:16), "Who will gird me with strength and make my way perfect" (Psalms 18:33) and "beside tranquil waters He leads me" (Psalms 23:2) in order to serve his beloved, the Torah, and those who study it, to bring to light that which is concealed so that the land will be full of knowledge.

Gabbai's father R. Isaac ben Solomon, author of *Kaf Nahat* (Venice, 1609), a commentary on Mishnayot, worked as a typesetter for the Bragadine press in the first part of the seventeenth century. A second work attributed to Isaac Gabbai, also entitled *Kaf Nahat*, is on *Pirkei Avot* (Altona, 1779).⁶ Jedidiah Gabbai established his print shop, called, after his father's commentary, La Stampa del Kaf Nahat, in Livorno, his place of residence, in 1650.

Although Gabbai did not publish a large number of books, the titles that he did print are an interesting mix of liturgical works, such as *azharot* and *mizmorim*; Hebrew classics, such as the responsa (*She'elot u-Teshuvot*) (fig. 66) of the Radbaz (R. David ben Solomon Avi Zimrah, 1479–1573); and *Toledot Adam*, 405 responsa of the Rashba (R. Solomon ben Aderet, 1235–1310) printed with a smaller number of responsa from R. Jacob ben Moses ha-Levi Moellin (Maharil, c. 1360–1427); and a number of contemporary works.⁷ Three of the latter, each a major work, little known today, have been selected for a more detailed discussion.

⁶ The Mishnayot were reprinted in Venice in 1614, 1617, 1625, and 1640. Other editions are Amsterdam, 1643 and Constantinople, 1643–45. The editor of the Mishnayot was Judah Aryeh (Leone) Modena (1571–1648). Mark Cohen, *The Autobiography of a Seventeenth Century Rabbi: Leon Modena's Life of Judah* (Princeton, 1988), p. 230, writes that it was Modena who "contributed the commentary on Pirkei Avot."

⁷ The Hebrew books printed by Gabbai, according to Joseph Rophe, "History of Hebrew Publishing Houses in Livorno, Italy," *Tagim* II (Bnei Brak, 1971), pp. 123–24 [Hebrew], and the Bibliographical Project of the Jewish National and University Library (Jerusalem, 1992) [Hebrew] are: *Azharot* of Solomon ben Ibn Gabirol with the commentary of Joseph Loaz, (1650); *Yalkut Shimoni* with the commentary *Berit Avraham* (1650–52 and 1656); responsa of David ben Solomon Avi Zimrah (1652); *Devar Beitto* by Judah Aryeh (Leone) Modena (1653); Mishnayot with commentary *Ez ha-Hayyim* (1653–56); *Mekor Hayyim*, *Tur Pitda* (1656); *Azharot* of Isaac ben Reuben Al-Bargeloni (1655); *Toledot Adam* (1657); and *Keneset ha-Gedolah*, *Orah Hayyim* (1658). Rophe adds *Seder Mizmorim* [1650]. Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book Part II* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 378–79 [Hebrew], adds a number of titles, based on other bibliographic works, but of questionable attribution.

The typographical material and ornamentation used by La Stampa del Kaf Nahat was that of the famed Bragadini press, acquired by Gabbai. Among this material was the three crown ornament (fig. 65), first used by Aluise Bragdine (1550–1554 and 1564–75), in *Toledot Adam ve-Havvah* (1553) the halakhic compilation of R. Jeroham ben Meshullam (c. 1280–c. 1350), and afterwards by his successors. This device, used by the Gabbai family in cities on two continents, does not appear on the title pages of their Livorno imprints, but was here used as a tail-piece. The three crowns appear with the statement “There are three crowns: but the crown of a good name surpasses them all” (*Pirkei Avot* 4:17).⁸

The first work published, as noted above, was *Yalkut Shimoni* on the Torah (the second part, on the Prophets and Writings, was printed in 1656), the popular thirteenth-century midrashic masterpiece compiled by either R. Simeon of Frankfort, as stated on the title page, or, according to others, R. Simeon Karo. Begun in November 1649—it is a large book, folio in size, with 550, [1] pages—it was not completed until 1652. The dates are given with a chronogram, as are most, but not all of the books printed by Gabbai, here, on the title page, ר"ח כסלו שנת פתחת שקי ותאזרני שמחה, that is, the first day of *Kislev*, “[You have transformed my lament into dancing for me], You undid my sackcloth and girded me with gladness” (Psalms 30:12), and in a colophon, [the completion of this work was on *Rosh Hodesh Menachem* [Av]], גדול יהיה כבוד הבית הזה האחרון מן הראשון, that is, “The glory of this latter Temple will be greater than [that of] the first, [said the Lord of Hosts]” (Haggai 2:9).⁹

⁸ Abraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks* (Jerusalem, 1956; reprint Westmead, 1971), p. 131 no. 18 [Hebrew]. This mark was subsequently used by the Gabbai family in Izmir and Constantinople. This device was also used by Asher Parenzo, who, in some instances, added a small fourth crown. Brad Sabin Hill, “A ‘Catalogue of Hebrew Printers,’” *British Library Journal* (London, 1995), p. 48, quotes from an unpublished manuscript of Van Straalen, where it is noted that “the image of the triple crowns... are seen to figure in books printed in twenty towns, from the mid-sixteenth century until the early nineteenth.”

⁹ This verse was employed earlier by Marco Antonio Giustiniani (1545–52) on the title page of his imprints. It is customarily understood there to refer to Giustiniani’s boast that his press would excel over that of the renowned Daniel Bomberg. For another interpretation see Abraham Yaari, “Drawings of Jerusalem and the Temple Place as Ornament in Hebrew Books,” *Kiryat Sefer* XV (Jerusalem, 1938), pp. 377–79 [Hebrew] and, for a refutation, I. Sonne “The Illustrations of the Temple in Hebrew Printing,” *Kiryat Sefer* XVI (1939), pp. 134–37 [Hebrew].

The date of books employing chronograms, and it was a common practice at this time, can be derived by adding 1240, the year the fifth millennium in the Hebrew calendar began, to the numerical value of the enlarged letters, in this case 410, resulting in 1649 for the year of publication. The variance in the date (1649/50) is due to the Hebrew calendar year beginning about three months prior to the solar year. This computation is for the abbreviated era, which does not enumerate the millennium, that is, the 5 in 5410, is understood. The enlarged letters in the second date equal 417. However, unlike the first date, this is for the full era (5412), so that 5, representing the millennium, must be subtracted from 417, leaving 412, which equals 1652.¹⁰

The only ornamentation on the title page is a shield with the famous five balls, the escutcheon of the Medici's, rulers of the Duchy (fig. 67). On the bottom of the title page is the phrase "Con Licentia de Superiori et privilegio," indicating that the book had been approved for publication by the censors. The volume examined bore two additional stamps. A Russian censor's seal, dated 1836, indicating that here too it had met with official approval, and another, in English, stating "Purchased in Russia," by whomever acquired this copy of the *Yalkut* and brought it to the United States, indicative of just how well-traveled a book is this Hebrew title.

The first editor was Gabbai's father-in-law, R. Abraham ben Solomon Hayyim Haver Tov (scribe of Torah, mezuzah, and tefillin), author of *Berkat ha-Nehenin* (Venice, 1637), who had more than a half-century of experience working for the Hebrew presses in Venice. He worked on several of Gabbai's imprints, but died within a few years of the opening of the press.¹¹

The title page is followed by introductory material from the editor, R. Abraham ben Samuel Gediliah (d. 1672), whose commentary, *Berit Avraham*, is printed with the *Yalkut*, approbations and forewords from

¹⁰ On the use of chronograms to date books see Marvin J. Heller, "Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore XVIII* (Cincinnati, 1993), pp. 3-14.

¹¹ This is in contrast to Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal and Turkey, from its beginning and formation about the year 1470* (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 85 [Hebrew], who writes that Abraham ben Solomon Hayyim Haber Tov died shortly after work at the press began, his place being taken by Abraham ben Samuel Gediliah. Concerning Abraham ben Solomon Hayyim see Hayyim Michael, *Or ha-Hayyim* (Frankfurt a. M., 1891; reprint, Jerusalem, 1965), p. 113 no. 241 [Hebrew].

the first editor and, as noted above, from Gabbai. The approbations for the commentary, are from R. Israel ben Azariah (Jerusalem), R. Elazar ibn Arkha (Hebron), and R. Israel Benjamin (Jerusalem). Gediliah also obtained in Italy, for part two, an approbation from R. Moses Zacuto. The text is followed by afterwords from Gediliah and Gabbai, the latter expressing his gratitude to Michael Dias Moccatto, the sponsor, and to Ferdinand II, Duke of Tuscany, for granting him the privilege to establish the press.

Abraham ben Samuel Gediliah was the scion of a distinguished Sephardic family that, after the expulsion from Spain, settled first in Turkey and afterwards in Safed and Tiberias, and later in Hebron. Many family members distinguished themselves as emissaries to the diaspora on behalf of the communities in the Holy Land. Gediliah, born in Jerusalem, left for Italy in 1648 to print *Berit Avraham*.¹²

That Gediliah traveled to Italy to print *Berit Avraham*, when there were print shops closer to the Holy Land at this time in Salonika (Abraham ha-Ger) and Constantinople (Solomon Franco), is not surprising, given the perception of contemporary authors in the Holy Land. Meir Benayahu observes that scholars in Safed, and even in Salonika, chose to have their works printed in Venice, because of the high quality of the imprints of the Venetian print-shops—the Gabbai press was an alternative for less than a decade—despite the peril of delivering their manuscript by sea, typesetting and editing by strangers in the absence of the author, and the need of approval by the censors, all because of the perceived superiority of the Italian presses.¹³

Yaari suggests that Gediliah not only supported himself, but also paid, in part, for the publication of *Berit Avraham* by his work as an editor for Gabbai. Gediliah's name does, in fact, appear as one of the editors in such works as the responsa of the Radbaz, *Toldedot Adam*, and *Keneset ha-Gedolah*. In his introduction to these works Gediliah expresses his strong desire and supplication to return to Erez Israel, realized in 1660 when he traveled, via Egypt, to Hebron.¹⁴ Gediliah's homilies are included in *Mizbah Eliyahu* of R. Elijah ha-Kohen of Izmir (Izmir (1867)).

¹² Abraham Yaari, "Two Documents on the History of the Jews in Hebron," *Kiryat Sefer* XXV: 1–2 (Jerusalem, 1948/49), p. 113 [Hebrew].

¹³ Meir Benayahu, *The Relation Between Greek and Italian Jewry* (Tel Aviv, 1980), pp. 98–100 [Hebrew].

¹⁴ Yaari, "Two Documents," p. 114.

The *Yalkut Shimoni*, popular and much reprinted, is seldom issued with a commentary, and those that do exist are brief. Indeed, Gedaliah, in his introduction, after praising the *Yalkut*, remarks on the difficulty of understanding it without a commentary. *Berit Avraham*, based on the works of *Rishonim* (early sages) addresses that need, surrounding the text in the same manner as a page of Talmud. Well regarded, it was reputedly reprinted only once, in Livorno, in 1813.¹⁵

Unlike the *Yalkut*, which was printed in its entirety in Livorno, a number of the books published by Gabbai were either begun elsewhere and completed in Livorno, or begun in Livorno and completed elsewhere. In the first category are the Mishnayot with the commentary of R. Jacob ben Samuel Hagiz, *Ez ha-Hayyim*, and the kabbalistic commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh* of R. Hayyim ben Abraham ha-Kohen, *Mekor Hayyim*. In contrast, the first part of the halakhic digest, *Keneset ha-Gedolah* by R. Hayyim ben Israel Benveniste (1603–73), on *Orah Hayyim*, was printed in Livorno in 1658. Other volumes appeared later, *Hoshen Mishpat* was printed by Abraham Gabbai in Izmir (1660); *Sheyari* on *Orah Hayyim* (Izmir, 1671), *Yoreh De'ah* (Constantinople, 1711–17 and Izmir, 1731), and the last part of *Hoshen Mishpat* (Izmir, 1734).

The Mishnayot with the commentary of Rashi and *Ez ha-Hayyim* by Jacob Hagiz was printed by Gabbai in 1653–56. Hagiz (1620–1674), who traced his descent to the exiles of Jerusalem in Spain, was reputedly born in Fez, where his father was rabbi. He spent part of his youth in Italy, and later, for several years, taught in the *bet midrash* (house of study) of R. Samuel Aboab, rabbi of Verona, with whom he had a close relationship. When, in 1657, Hagiz left Livorno for the land of Israel, a *bet midrash*, Beth Jacob, was founded for him in Jerusalem by the de Vega brothers of Verona, well known for their philanthropic works. Hagiz's published works include *Ein Yisrael* (Verona, 1645), an adaptation of R. Jacob ibn Habib's *Ein Ya'akov*; *Halakhot Ketannot* (Venice, 1704), two volumes of responsa; *Korban Minchah* (Izmir, c. 1675) on aggadah; *Petil Tekhelet* (Venice, 1652), on the commentary on the *azharot* of Solomon ibn Gabirol; *Tehillot Hokhmah* (Verona, 1647), on talmudic methodology; and *Almenara de la Luz* (1656), a Spanish translation of R. Isaac Aboab's ethical work, *Menorat ha-Ma'or*, designed as an introduction for Marranos returning to Judaism.¹⁶

¹⁵ Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna, 1880), p. 223 n. 241 [Hebrew].

¹⁶ It seems that there was another press in Livorno that issued books in Spanish for returnees to Judaism from Spain belonging to Vincenzo Bonfiglio. In addition

Ez ha-Hayyim is certainly deserving of our attention. Printed from 1653 to 1656, five of the six volumes are dated in a straightforward manner as in the year התי"ד (419) from the Creation, that is the full era, which equals 1654 (*Kodashim* is dated התי"ו (421=1656). The sole exception is *Seder Mo'ed*, the second volume in the order of Mishnayot, which is dated from the year, באתי לגני "I came to my garden" (Song of Songs 5:1), that is 413 or 1653 of the abbreviated era. *Seder Zera'im*, the first Order in Mishnayot, was printed by Francesco dè Rossi in Verona in 1650.¹⁷ It would seem that Gabbai, when he continued printing this edition of Mishnayot, began where Rossi left off, with *Mo'ed*. Whether because demand was greater than Gabbai anticipated, or to be able to provide his market with a complete set, Gabbai reprinted *Zera'im* in 1654, before continuing with the remaining orders of Mishnayot.¹⁸ Hagiz confirms in the introduction to *Mo'ed* that the printing of his commentary was begun in Verona, but that "the Lord aroused his spirit" to come to Livorno to complete this work at the press of "the beloved of my soul, the honorable Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai." He continues, thanking Abraham Israel Amnon, the sponsor, "who took in his hand the deeds of Abraham, our father, to benefit the public, may his praise stand forever."

The title page of *Zera'im* differs from that of the other volumes, not only in that it mentions Amnon, but even more so in that it contains the phrase from the *Rosh Hodesh* and holiday liturgy, "may there rise, come, reach, be seen, be favored, be heard," each entreaty beginning a phrase pertaining to Hagiz's commentary.

Ez ha-Hayyim is a large work, the six volumes total more than sixteen hundred pages, printed in a small format, it measures only 15 cm. It brought great acclaim to Hagiz. Elisheva Carlebach observes that

to the *Almenera*, Rofe and Vinograd also record a Psalms (1655). Less well known is a Haggadah (1654) belonging to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and reproduced in Yosef Hayyim Yerusahalmi, *Haggadah and History* (Philadelphia, 1975), plate 58. The sponsor of the first and third, and perhaps the second work too was David de Iacob Valencin.

¹⁷ *Ez ha-Hayyim* on *Seder Zera'im* was republished in Berlin (1716); Warsaw (1863); Brooklyn, in its entirety, together with other commentaries, in octavo (1983) and folio (1988); and on *Berakhot*, with other commentaries, in Jerusalem (1988).

¹⁸ I would like to thank R. Yitzhak Wilhelm, Library of Agudas Chassidici Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak, for bringing this to my attention. It should also be noted that, for unspecified reasons, *Seder Tohorot*, the last Order in Mishnayot, preceded *Kodashim*; mention of this being made by Hagiz in the epilogue to the latter.

Many years of toil and much intellectual energy were invested in the Mishnah commentary, which reveals Jacob Hagiz to be a masterful pedagogue, a teacher of Torah par excellence. Jacob used the commentary of Rashi on the Talmud as a touchstone to create a work which is lucid, concise, and intimately familiar with the entire range of pertinent scholarship. . . . the work quickly became so popular that, together with Jacob's *Tekhillat Hokhma*, it formed part of the fixed program of daily studies for many of Constantinople's great rabbis.¹⁹

R. Hayyim ben Abraham ha-Kohen (1585–1655), author of *Mekor Hayyim*, belonged to a family in Aleppo that traced its ancestry to the expulsion of the Jews from Spain. A leading disciple of R. Hayyim Vital, Hayyim ha-Kohen served with distinction for two decades as rabbi in Aram Zova. During that time he wrote a number of books with kabbalistic content, among them sermons, *Torat Hakham* (Venice, 1654), *Mekor Hayyim*, and a number of works still in manuscript on various books of the Bible and on prayer.²⁰

In the introduction to *Torat Hakham*, Hayyim ha-Kohen describes his travail in attempting to publish his works. Initially, he sent the manuscript of *Ateret Zahav*, on Esther, by sea to Europe to be printed. After several years, receiving no response, Hayyim ha-Kohen took all of his manuscripts, existing in single copies only, and embarked for Europe to have them printed. Encountering a storm the ship took refuge at Malta, where it was boarded by pirates. Seeing that all was lost and being in shallow water, Hayyim ha-Kohen jumped from the ship and made his way ashore, where he faced hunger and wild beasts prior to arriving at an inhabited area. All of his manuscripts, written over twenty years, were lost in one night. With thanks to the Lord for his salvation, Hayyim ha-Kohen rewrote his manuscripts from memory.

In 1650 he was in Constantinople, where the first part of *Mekor Hayyim* was published. After further travels he returned to Aleppo, and, in 1654, the same year that *Tur Bareket* appeared in Amsterdam, set out for Italy, where he is credited with introducing individuals, among them R. Nathan Nata Hannover (d. 1663), author of *Yeven Mezulah* (Venice, 1653) and *Sha'arei Zion* (Prague, 1662) to Lurianic Kabbalah, and influencing, through the latter work, the contemporary prayer-book. *Tur Piteda*, the third volume in *Mekor Hayyim*, was printed by La Stampa

¹⁹ Elisheva Carlebach, *The Pursuit of Heresy: Rabbi Moses Hagiz and the Sabbatian Controversies* (New York, 1990), pp. 23–24.

²⁰ For a listing of these works see Michael, pp. 376–77 no. 844.

del Kaf Nahat in 1655–56. That the next part, *Tur Yahalom*, was begun but not completed may be attributed to the death of Hayyim ben Abraham ha-Kohen, printing having ceased with his demise.²¹

Mekor Hayyim is a detailed extensive kabbalistic commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh*. The sub-titles of the various parts of this work *Tur Berekhet*, *Tur Piteda* and *Tur Yahalom*, are taken from Exodus 28:17–18 and 39:10–11, which, referring to the gems in the breastplate worn by the High Priest, states, “You shall fill (They filled) it with stone mounting, four rows of stone: a row of *odem*, *piteda*, and *berekhet*—the one row; the second row...*yahalom*...”

In a lengthy introduction we are told that one who studies this work will find that it is a source of life (*mekor hayyim*) for the body and for the soul, which is everlasting. Furthermore, doing so will arouse the Torah above, influencing this world for life, as it says, “For with you is the source of life” (Psalms 36:10). He emphasizes that all the deeds of a Jew in Torah and mitzvah make a great impression in all of the worlds, above and below. The consequences are everlasting, affecting a person in the present, after his death, as it says, “as you recline it will guard you” (Proverbs 6:22), and in the future, at the time of the resurrection. The Torah was given at Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting (Tabernacle), and at the plains of Moab, for the merit of a person at these three intervals, for the benefit of the body and the soul, as is explained in the *Zohar*. *Mekor Hayyim* was republished in Pietrokov (1878), and more recently in Jerusalem (1995).

Hayyim ha-Kohen’s literary trials did not cease with his death. His commentary on Ruth, *Torat Hesed*, was reputedly published by R. David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida under his own name as *Migdal David* (Amsterdam, 1680).²² Hayyim ben Abraham ha-Kohen’s difficulties should not distract us from his great stature. No less a personage than R. Hayyim Yosef David Azulai (Hida, 1724–1806) writes that when he came to Livorno “I prostrated myself on the grave of Hayyim ha-Kohen [of blessed memory], author of *Tur Berekhet*, etc.”²³

²¹ Concerning *Tur Yahalom* see Abraham Habermann, “Ill-starred books,” in *Areshet III* (Jerusalem, 1961), p. 108 [Hebrew].

²² Hayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim* (Vilna, 1854; reprint Tel Aviv, n.d.), *Ma’arakhet Gedolim het 33* and *Ma’arakhet Seforim mem 32* [Hebrew] and Michael, pp. 318–19, n. 700 and pp. 376–77 no. 844. Concerning Lida see my “David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida and his *Migdal David*: Accusations of Plagiarism in Eighteenth Century Amsterdam,” *Shofar* 19:2 (West Lafayette, Ind., 2001), pp. 117–28 and below.

²³ Hayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Magal Tov ha-Shalem* (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 4.

Gabbai and his staff did not escape involvement in the Sabbatian controversy in the second half of the sixteenth century. Gershom Scholem informs that tidings about Shabbetai Zevi's activities in Izmir (Smyrna) were brought by "one person, Yedidyah ben Isaac Gabbai, the owner of the Jewish printing house in Smyrna, who later moved his business to Leghorn." Furthermore, R. Jacob Sasportas, who later reported on these events, "probably heard these details in the fifties, on the occasion of a well-documented journey of the old printer to Amsterdam sometime before 1659. Gabbai, who started printing in Leghorn toward the end of 1649 possibly returned to Smyrna on one of his journeys, where he witnessed some of the events."²⁴ Yaari remarks, however, that Gabbai not only did not print in Izmir, but could not have had direct knowledge of what occurred in that location in the 1650s.²⁵

Abraham Gediliah became a supporter of Shabbetai Zevi, associating with Nathan of Gaza from 1665 to 1666. His letters from Gaza to Italian rabbis, particularly those of Livorno, on behalf of Shabbetai Zevi, bringing the false messiah to their attention, and validating the prophecy of Nathan of Gaza (1644–1680), who identified himself as the prophet Elijah, the precursor of the messiah, were especially effective, given Gediliah's prominence and that he was well known to the Italian rabbinate.²⁶

In contrast, Jacob Hagiz, an early and unwavering opponent of Shabbetai Zevi, was one of a group of prominent Sephardic rabbis to excommunicate the false messiah in Jerusalem in 1665.²⁷ It must have been particularly galling to Hagiz, given his vigorous opposition to Shabbetai Zevi, that one of the leading students in his Beth Jacob yeshiva, Abraham Nathan (later Nathan Benjamin, 1644–80) ben Elisha Hayyim ha-Levi Ashkenazi, better known as Nathan of Gaza (Ghazzati), became such a prominent figure in the Sabbatian movement.

Hayyim ha-Kohen, having died earlier, could not have been involved with Shabbetai Zevi. Nevertheless, even his name arises in discussions of Shabbetai Zevi, accused by Isaiah Tishby of having provided, in his *Torat Hakham*, imagery used by Nathan of Gaza. Scholem, however,

²⁴ Gershom S. Scholem, *Sabbatai Sevi: The Mystical Messiah*, (Princeton, 1973), p. 150.

²⁵ Abraham Yaari, "Hebrew Printing at Izmir," in *Areshet I* (Jerusalem, 1958), pp. 99–100 n. 11 [Hebrew].

²⁶ I. Tishby, "R. Abraham Gedalya in the Company of Nathan of Gaza," *Kiryat Sefer* XXV pp. 230–31 [Hebrew].

²⁷ The other rabbis include R. Abraham Amigo, Samuel Garmizan, and Jacob Zemah (Scholem, p. 248). Concerning the opposition of Hagiz to Shabbetai Zevi, and even more so that of his son, Moses Hagiz (1672–1751), to the Sabbatian movement see Carlebach, *op. cit.*

suggests that the original source of the imagery under discussion was not Hayyim ha-Kohen but R. Solomon Molkho (c. 1500–1532) in his *Sefer ha-Mefo'ar* (Salonika, 1529).²⁸

It is rumored that about 1655–56, Jedidiah Gabbai was in northern Europe. Amsterdam is suggested by Gershom Scholem, as noted above, and also London, by Cecil Roth. The latter finds possible evidence for such a journey in the fact that Gabbai's son, Abraham, printed two Spanish language works by R. Menasseh Ben Israel (1604–57), *Esperanza de Israel*, and his translation of Eduard Nicholas' *Apologia por la noble nacion de los Judios*. Roth speculates that as Menasseh Ben Israel is not known to have visited Italy, perhaps Gabbai worked briefly in Menasseh's printing house in Amsterdam. When Menasseh was in London a number of individuals came there to show support for his mission, among them Raphael Sofino, a sponsor of the responsa of the Radbaz, printed by Gabbai. Roth concludes that "perhaps even Gabbai accompanied [Sofino] to England, meeting Menasseh Ben Israel and becoming personally close to him."²⁹

In 1657, Gabbai sent his son Abraham, who had worked in the Livorno press, with much of their typographical equipment, to Izmir to establish a Hebrew print shop, the first in that city. Abraham Gabbai remained in Izmir until 1660, when he left for Constantinople, where he printed Hebrew books for a brief period of time. Gabbai subsequently returned to Izmir, printing until 1675, primarily Hebrew books, but also the two Spanish titles noted above. We find him, in 1684, in Salonika, establishing a new Hebrew press in that city, one that was active for several years, although not always under the control of Gabbai.³⁰

The Livorno press closed, for reasons unknown, in 1658, the last title being Hayyim Benveniste's *Keneset ha-Gedolah*. Gabbai, concludes his introduction to this work with the prayer that "as the Lord has given me the merit to print this work, so may He grant me the merit to

²⁸ Scholem, p. 309 n. 292; Isaiah Tishby, "Review of G. Scholem's *Divrei Mashiach*," *Kiryat Sefer* XXI (1944–45), p. 16 [Hebrew].

²⁹ C. Roth, "Spanish Printing at Izmir," *KS* XXVIII (1952/53), p. 392 [Hebrew]. It should be noted that L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815 I* (Leiden, 1984), make no mention of Gabbai in their discussion of that Amsterdam press.

³⁰ Concerning the talmudic treatises printed by Abraham Gabbai in Salonika see Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1999).

print many more books.” Friedberg and Rophe suggest that the closing was due to the death of the owner, Jedidiah Gabbai. Avraham Yaari, however, informs that, based on the colophon of R. Solomon Algazi’s *Halikot Eli*, printed in 1663 by Abraham Gabbai in Izmir, we know that Jedidiah Gabbai came to Izmir in that year, for it states, “Before I finish to speak I request permission from the crown of my head, my lord, my father נר"ו [may the Merciful One watch over and bless him], who has come from Livorno and stands over the press. May the Lord grant him a good old age.” Jedidiah Gabbai died in 1671, for he is referenced in the colophons of two works published that year, Moses Benveniste’s *Dovev Siftei Yeshenim* and Hayyim Benveniste’s *Sheyare Keneset ha-Gedolah*, being referred to in the former among the living נר"ו, and in the latter as among the deceased זצ"ל [blessed be the memory of the righteous].³¹

³¹ Yaari, “Izmir,” p. 99.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ABRAHAM BEN RAPHAEL MELDOLA AND THE RESUMPTION OF PRINTING IN LIVORNO¹

Hebrew print shops have been a fixture in cities throughout Europe from shortly after Gutenberg's invention of printing with movable type. A small number only of those cities, however, have long and distinguished histories in the Hebrew book field. Among that small number is Livorno (Leghorn), an important center of the Hebrew book industry for two hundred years, from the mid-eighteenth century until the beginning of World War II. This extended period of productivity was due to the activity of a series of Hebrew presses, beginning with that of Abraham Meldola and concluding with that of the Belforte family.² Although Livorno never achieved the prominence or prestige of such locations as Venice or Amsterdam, its presses succeeded in adding Livorno to the list of significant Hebrew book centers that have served Jewry so well since the invention of printing.

Before turning to the earliest imprints of the first Meldola press, the subject of this paper, it should be noted that this almost continuous period of activity was preceded, first in the mid-seventeenth century, by the short-lived press of Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai, and by the publication in 1703 of *Zikkaron Purim*, printer unknown. A small number of additional works have been attributed to Livorno at this time but whether they are Livorno imprints cannot be ascertained and they are discounted by most bibliographers. Meldola, in the introduction to *Sefer ha-Rashbash* (1742), writes that Hebrew books were not printed in Livorno from the time of the Gabbai press until he established his print-shop.

Gabbai had issued Hebrew books from 1650 to about 1658. His imprints consist of a small number of titles made up of an interesting

¹ The original version of this article was published in the *International Sephardic Journal* 2:1 (Orlando, FL, 2005), pp. 83–94.

² In 2001 the Salomone Belforte & Co. publishing house began to once again publish Hebrew books. The history of this family and their press is described in *Le Api Della Torah. Storia di una famiglia ebrei livornesi. The story of a family of Jewish Publishers from Livorno* (Livorno, 2001).

mix of liturgical works, classics, responsa, and contemporary titles.³ *Ẓikkaron Purim: Tsava'ah ve-Hashkavah shel Haman ben Hamdata u-Vanav Tsorerim ha-Yehudim*, by the satirist David Raphael ben Abraham Polido, is a parody based on the Book of Esther, in which Haman, incarcerated and awaiting execution, reads his last testament to his family. He admonishes them, in the style of the Blessing of Jacob and the Ten Commandments, to live in harmony, unified in their animosity towards the Jews, without mercy for the poor, not giving alms, threatening their creditors, and harassing their debtors. It is followed by a liturgic parody excoriating Haman, parodies of requiems, all with word play. The book is not highly regarded, however, being described as “sadly deficient in ideas. Euphony is mistaken for thought, and paranomasia for humor.” *Ẓikkaron Purim*, a small book (8^o [8] leaves), is dated, “O, cut them off in your truth באמתך (463 = 1703)!” (Psalms 54:7).⁴

Abraham ben Raphael Meldola (1705–55), who reestablished Hebrew printing in Livorno in 1740, was the scion of a prominent Sephardic family. The Meldolas traced their lineage to R. Isaiah Meldola (1282–1340), *dayyan* and *hakham* of Toledo, who, due to religious and political troubles, emigrated from there to Mantua, Italy. Successive generations of Meldolas provided Mantuan Jewry with rabbinic leadership. Abraham Meldola’s father, R. Raphael Meldola (1685–1748) was the author of ethical works and responsa. He was born in Livorno, served as rabbi in Pisa, Bayonne, and St. Spirit, remaining there until 1741, when he returned to Livorno. Raphael was named Samuel Jacob at birth, but his name was changed to Raphael due to a serious illness.⁵

³ Concerning the Gabbai press see my, “Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai and the First Decade of Hebrew Printing in Livorno.” *Los Muestras*, part I no. 33 (Brussels, 1998), pp. 40–41; part II no. 34 (1999), pp. 28–30.

⁴ Israel Davidson, *Parody in Jewish Literature* (1907; reprint New York, 1966), pp. 48–49, 195–96, 198–99; Joseph Rophe, “History of Hebrew Publishing Houses in Livorno, Italy,” *Tagim* (B’nei Brak, 1971), pp. 132–33 n. 28 [Hebrew], Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin, 1852–60), col. 855.

⁵ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, VIII (New York, 1901–06), pp. 450–53. A chart of sixteen generations of the Meldola family’s genealogy, from 1282 to the beginning of the twentieth century, can be found on p. 451. The source of the custom of changing the name of a seriously ill individual, by adding another name to the original or replacing it, is tractate *Rosh Ha-Shanah* 16b: “R. Isaac said four things nullify (lit. tear) a person’s decree of judgment. They are charity, repentance (lit. crying out), changing one’s name, and changing one’s deeds. . . . changing one’s name, as it is written, ‘As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah [will be] her name.’ And ‘I will bless her and give you a son from her’” (Genesis 17:15–16). The Maharsha

Meldola printed more than thirty Hebrew titles from 1740 to 1748, consisting of liturgical works, novellae, responsa, halakhic titles, and Bible commentaries. These books are mainly original, that is first printings, rather than new editions of old works.⁶ Meldola also published non-Hebrew books for Marranos, many of whom had settled in Livorno.⁷ Addressing all of those works is beyond the scope of this article, which is primarily interested in the Hebrew books issued in the first years that the Meldola press was active. Initially partners with Clemente Ricci, a Livornese Catholic, the two separated in 1742, Meldola afterwards worked independently.⁸ In his first year, jointly with Ricci, Meldola printed about seven titles. Among them are a *Selihot*; a book of prayers, *Bakashot Hadashot*; other liturgical works; and two titles by R. Hananiah ben Menahem Cases (Cazes, d. 1704), *Kinat Soferim* and *Hok le-Yisrael*.

Bakashot Hadashot is a liturgical work by the poet R. Aaron Hayyim Volterra, rabbi of the Italian communities in Massa e Carrara and a preacher in Venice.⁹ The title page is dated 1 Nissan ה"תק"ל, that

(R. Samuel Eliezer ha-Levi Edels, 1555–1661) explains that when a person is given another name it is to change his or her *mazal* (fortune), as if to say, “I am another person.” However, changing one’s name (and similarly changing one’s place) is dissimilar from the other measures to nullify a decree, which results from sin, for Sarah—the paradigm of this measure—was free from sin. This custom was codified in the *Shulhan Arukh*, for in the laws pertaining to the ill, *Y.D.* 335:10, the *Rama* (R. Moses ben Israel Isserles, c. 1530–1572) states: “When one has a (seriously) ill person in his home, he (she) should go to the sage (rabbinic authority) in his city, to pray for mercy for the ill person, and the custom is to bless the ill in the synagogue, and to call them by a new name, for changing the name nullifies the decree of judgment.”

The *Arukh ha-Shulhan*, *Y.D.* 335:12, notes that the new name is added, that is, it is in addition to the first name. However, according to the responsa of R. Moses Halaveh, which expresses the Sephardic custom, appropriate to Meldola, the new name not only becomes the principal name, but the original name is no longer to be used. Moshe Hershler & H. Ben Zion Hershler, *The Responsa of Maharam Halaveh*, no. 96 (Jerusalem, 1987), p. 95.

⁶ The enumeration of titles printed in Livorno are based on Rophe, pp. 124–25; Guido Sonnino, *Storia della tipografia ebraica in Livorno* (1912); and Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Part II Places of print sorted by Hebrew names of places where printed including author, subject, place, and year printed, name of printer, number of pages and format, with annotations and bibliographical references* (Jerusalem, 1993), pp. 379–80.

⁷ Meldola’s non-Hebrew titles are beyond the scope of this article. Concerning books printed for Marranos in Livorno see Cecil Roth, “Notes sur les Marranes de Livourne,” *Revue des études juives* 91 (Paris, 1931), pp. 17–21.

⁸ Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal and Turkey, from its beginning and formation about the year 1470* (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 86 [Hebrew]; Sonnino, p. 28.

⁹ Hananel Neppi and Efrayim Refa’el Gironi, *Toldot Gedolei Yisrael u-Ge’one Italyah* (Trieste, 1853; reprint Brooklyn, 1993), p. 30 [Hebrew].

is, 505 of the abbreviated era (לפ"ק), meaning that the 5 is not used to represent the fifth millennium but rather is to be included in the computation, resulting in a date of 1745. This date conflicts with the Roman numeral date, MDCCXXXV (1740), which appears below the Hebrew date. The error is in the instruction as to how to read the Hebrew date. Instead of the abbreviated era (לפ"ק) it should state the full era (לפ"ג), the five being used to represent the fifth millennium, thus reading 5500 or 1740.¹⁰ 1740 is indeed the correct date, for in that year the first day of Nissan fell on Tuesday, March 29, whereas in 1745 one Nissan occurred on Saturday April 3, the Jewish Sabbath. Work certainly did not take place on Shabbat, for not only Meldola, but also the corrector and the compositor, R. Isaac ben Moses de Pas and R. Zevi ben Joseph ha-Kohen, respectively, were Jewish.¹¹ Additionally, all of the approbations are dated 1740. This error, trivial and of little consequence, would not merit so much comment, if not for the surprising fact that a press publishing books in Hebrew letters, owned and operated by a Jewish printer, employing skilled Jewish workers, erred in the Hebrew date but not in the common era date set in Roman numerals.

The title page of *Bakashot Hadashot*, has a versified description of the text, which includes the prayer *Bakashah Hadashah*. In his introduction, Volterra states that each of its 1,000 versified lines begins with the letter *shin*, so that the prayer is known as *Elef Shin*. Volterra explains that the difficulties encountered in writing in such a manner compelled him to employ artificial word formations, justified by poetic license. In fact, only 700 words, not 1,000, begin with the letter *shin*. *Bakashah Hadashah* is in two columns, the prayer in vocalized square letters in the right

¹⁰ The common era date is derived from the Hebrew date by adding 1240, the year the fifth millennium in the Hebrew calendar began, to the numerical value of the Hebrew letters. In this instance 505 results in either 5500 (1240 + 500 = 1740) for the full era or 1745 (505 + 1240 = 1745) in the abbreviated era.

¹¹ De Pas was the author of several works. Among those published in Livorno are *Eshet Hayel* (1754), a liturgical work; *Hadrat Zekenim* (1753), a biblical concordance; *Hodat Emunat Yisrael*, on the principles of faith (1764); *Me'irat Einayim* (1753), on the enumeration of the mitzvot; and, together with Mordecai Carmi, *Mi-Hadesh Hadashim* (1761), on calculations pertaining to the calendar. De Pas also wrote *Alef Bet Hadash* (Florence, 1748), on teaching the alphabet. Concerning Shabbat work see my "And the Work, the Work of Heaven, was Performed on Shabbat," *Torah u-Maddah Journal* 11 (New York, 2002–02), pp. 174–85; Avraham Yaari, "Editor's complaints regarding printing on the Sabbath by non-Jews," *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem, 1958), pp. 170–78 [Hebrew].

column, accompanied by a commentary explaining difficult terms in the facing column in rabbinic letters. A second poem, in the style of R. Jedaiah ben Abraham Bedersi (ha-Penini, c. 1270–1340), forms an eightfold acrostic of Volterra's name.¹² A second introduction concludes with the phrase, "and He will deliver us a second time from our distress (*mezarim*) with a mighty hand," *mezarim* being vocalized, for otherwise it would read "out of Egypt (*Mizraim*) with a mighty hand" (Deuteronomy 6:21, 9:26, 26:8). This employ of *mezarim*/*Mizraim* is mentioned here because it will reappear in another Meldola work, *Shever ba-Mezarim*, where its use will be of greater significance.

Also printed in 1740 are two works by R. Hananiah ben Menahem Cases. Cases was from a distinguished family with roots in Mantua. His father, R. Menahem ben Elijah Cases, is recorded as being in Mantua as early as 1642, and, in 1656, in Ferrara, where he headed a yeshivah. Hananiah was born in the latter location, becoming a physician and serving as rabbi in Florence. He wrote responsa, included in the responsa of his contemporaries, and an epistle to R. Nehemiah ben Baruch concerning musical harmony in the recitation of the priestly benediction (*Birkat Kohanim*), included in R. Nehemiah's *Meliz u-Meliz* (Venice, 1715). His most important works, however, are *Kīnat Soferim* (fig. 68) and *Hok le-Yisrael*.

These two titles share several characteristics. Both are small quarto works (ff. [4] 39 [1]; and 23, respectively), with their text printed in two columns in rabbinic letters, excepting headers which are in square letters. Their title pages inform that both titles were brought to press by the author's son, Menahem Cases, and that they were printed, as were all the books published by Meldola, *CON LICENZA DE' SUPERIORI, E PRIVILEGIO DI S. A. R.*, that is, with the permission of the censor to publish. Of greater importance, however, is that both *Kīnat Soferim* and *Hok le-Yisrael* are responses to criticism of the works of earlier leading Jewish *halakhists* (legal authorities).

The title page of *Kīnat Soferim* informs us that its purpose is to communicate the importance of the words of the great eagle, Maimonides, in his *Sefer ha-Mitzvot*, "and like a hammer that breaks the rock into pieces" (Jeremiah 23:29), that is, the rock of dispute, "that you might

¹² *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, XII, pp. 450–51.

answer the words of truth to those who send” (cf. Proverbs 22:21) a hand upon it with criticism of the voice made beautiful by his pen.¹³ The title page is dated, “[For the Lord will not cast off his people], nor will he forsake his inheritance וְנִחַלְתּוֹ” (500 = 1740; Psalms 94:14).

The title page is followed by an approbation from R. Eliezer ha-Kohen ס"ט (Sephardi Tohor, that is, of pure Sephardic lineage), R. Jacob Lusina ס"ט, and R. Malachi ben Jacob ha-Kohen ס"ט, rabbis in Livorno, dated 10 Tamuz 499 (Thursday, July 16, 1739), the author’s introduction and then the text. The phrase *kinat soferim* appears in the Talmud in the statement, “jealousy between sages (*kinat soferim*) increases wisdom” (*Bava Batra* 21a, 22a). In the introduction Cases gives several reasons for entitling the work *Kinat Soferim*, beginning with,

its purpose is to open the eyes of the blind by way of the gemara (Talmud), to reveal that which is concealed, and to bring out from darkness to light. Therefore I have called it *Kinat Soferim*, derived from the enumeration (number, book) I have hewn it מְסַפֵּר חֲצַבְתִּיו, as our sages say, why were they (early sages) called *sofrim* (those who count), “for they counted all the letters of the Torah” (*Hagigah* 15b, *Kiddushin* 30a). All the more would they enumerate the *mitzvot* (commandments) to take (for it was to them) a reward for the inquiry and interpretation greater “than gold, even very fine gold” (Psalms 19:11).

As suggested by the title page, *Kinat Soferim* is a defense of R. Moses ben Maimon’s (Maimonides, Rambam, 1135–1204) *Sefer ha-Mitzvot*, an enumeration of the *taryag mitzvot* (613 commandments) in the Torah, from the criticism of R. Moses ben Nahman (Nahmanides), expressed in the latter’s *Hassagot ha-Rambam*.¹⁴ The text, in two columns in rabbinic type, excepting headers and initial words, is divided into forty *mitzvot*. *Kinat Soferim* concludes with a colophon with the supplication that the Lord grant them the merit to complete *Hok le-Yisrael*, an index of the contents, and a disclaimer stating that wherever terms of opprobrium, such as *akum*, *goi*, or idol worshipper appears it should be known that

¹³ This last part includes two homophones based on “He has made everything beautiful in his time” (Ecclesiastes 3:11), substituting קול, voice, for כל, everything, and בעטו, by his pen, for בעתו, in his time.

¹⁴ Nahmanides was, in turn, defending earlier compilations of the *taryag mitzvot*, particularly the *Halakhot Gedolot* of R. Simeon Kayyara (second-half ninth century), *Sefer ha-Mitzvot* of R. Hefez Ben Yazli’ah (10th century), and the *Azharot* of R. Solomon ibn Gabirol, all strongly criticized by Maimonides.

it does not refer to the gentiles among whom the Jews currently dwell, who are not idol worshippers, nor are they living in violation of the commandments of the Torah. Rather, contemporary non-Jews, their neighbors, are God-fearing and upright. The corrector of *Kīnat Soferim* was R. Isaac ben Moses de Pas. One last feature of the book should be noted, that is, the use of ornamentation at breaking points in the book, a characteristic of many of Meldola's other imprints.

Hok le-Yisrael, the second title of Cases printed by Meldola, is dated, “[You shall arise, and have mercy upon Zion;] for it is time בִּי עַתָּה (500 = 1740) to favor her, the set time has come” (Psalms 102:14). It is a defense of R. Joseph Karo's *Shulhan Arukh* from the *Peri Hadash* of R. Hezekiah ben David da Silva (1659–1695). Da Silva had criticized the *Shulhan Arukh*, already accepted in his time as the primary *halakhic* work for all Jews, in exceptionally stringent terms. There is no introduction, but rather the text begins with Cases's statement that he will enumerate every place that he comments on a criticism of the *Peri Hadash*.¹⁵

Kīnat Soferim and *Hok le-Yisrael*, as noted above, share a number of characteristics. The absence of approbations or an introduction to *Hok le-Yisrael*, and the fact that the approbation to *Kīnat Soferim* references *Hok le-Yisrael*, and the colophon to the latter work is brief, omitting the disclaimer found at the end of *Kīnat Soferim*, strongly suggest that the two titles were printed together. Nevertheless, not only do both works have individual title pages and foliation, but the quires of these two works also have separate enumerations, so that although generally bound and recorded together, it is possible that they were printed separately. Books at that time were more often than not still sold disbound, to be bound by the purchaser. Furthermore, the colophon to *Kīnat Soferim* referring to *Hok le-Yisrael* may be understood as meaning that having finished setting the first work their entreaty is that they should be able to continue and complete the second work as well.

In 1742 Meldola printed R. Joseph ben Emanuel Ergas's (1685–1730) *Divrei Yōsef*, sixty eight responsa collected and published by his disciple R. Malachi ben Jacob Ha-Kohen (d. 1785–1790). Ergas, born in Livorno, was of Marrano descent, possibly from a patrician Spanish family, suggested by the presence of the headdress of a knight on his tomb. He was a student of R. Samuel of Fez and R. Benjamin ha-Kohen Vitale

¹⁵ Concerning da Silva and his *Peri Hadash* see Chaim Tchernowitz, *Toledot ha-Posekim*, 3 (New York, 1947), pp. 175–84 [Hebrew].

of Reggio, studying *halakhah* with the former and Kabbalah with the latter. After traveling and preaching through Italy, Ergas settled first in Pisa, where he founded the yeshivah, Neveh Shalom, and afterwards, having been appointed rabbi there, in Livorno, where he remained until his death. Ergas, a kabbalist, was the author of *Shomer Emunim* (Amsterdam, 1736), a dialogue on the principles of Kabbalah; *Minhat Yosef*, also a kabbalistic work; and *Tokhahat Megullah*, with an addition entitled *Ha-Ẓad Nahash* (London, 1715), against Nehemiah Hayon (c. 1665–c. 1730), in which, with harsh invective and kabbalistic arguments, he refutes the beliefs of the Sabbatean movement.

Divrei Yosef is a handsome book, comprised of [1], 110 leaves and measuring 110 cm. The title page of *Divrei Yosef* has a decorative border, and it too has several front and tail pieces (fig. 69). The title page is dated “[Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth,] shall become times of joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts to the house of Judah יהיה לבית יהודה (502 = 1742) [therefore love truth and peace]” (Zechariah 8:19) (fig. 70). The volume begins with an introduction (1a–7a) from Malachi, followed by an introduction (7b–8a) from Ergas’s son, who edited the work. The responsa cover all four parts of the *Shulhan Arukh*.

That same year, 1742, Meldola printed *Adderet Eliyahu* and *Hozeh Ẓiyyon* (fig. 71), both by the Italian kabbalist, R. Raphael Immanuel ben Abraham Hai Ricchi (1688–1743).¹⁶ Much of our knowledge about Ricchi comes from the introduction to *Hozeh Ẓiyyon*, in which Ricchi supplies biographical information and describes the books that he has written. Orphaned at the age of six, Ricchi was raised by his maternal uncle, R. Jedidiah Rabbino of Rovigo. He subsequently moved about in Italy, supporting himself in various locales as a teacher of the children of wealthy Jews. In 1718, to more intensely study the works of kabbalistic masters in Safed, Ricchi went up to Erez Israel.

An outbreak of plague in 1720, however, in which his daughter died, forced him to return to Italy. En route, Ricchi was captured by pirates and taken to North Africa. After being ransomed, he returned to Italy,

¹⁶ Among Ricchi’s other titles are *Hoshev Mahashavot* (Amsterdam, 1727), *Mishnat Hasidim* (Amsterdam, 1727), and *Yosher Levav* (Amsterdam, 1737), kabbalistic works which, it has been suggested, contain Sabbatean allusions. Concerning charges of crypto-Sabbateanism against Ricchi see Bezalel Naor, *Post Sabbatian Sabbatianism: Study of an Underground Messianic Movement* (Spring Valley, NY, 1999), pp. 53–57, 177–84.

served in the rabbinate in Florence for several years, and afterwards relocated to Livorno where, for twelve years, Ricchi engaged in business. He next traveled between Amsterdam, London, Salonika, and Constantinople, spending three years in Jerusalem. In 1741, Ricchi returned to Italy, traveling about to sell his books. On one such journey, on *Rosh Hodesh Adar I* 5503 (Monday, February 25, 1743), Ricchi was murdered by robbers, who hastily buried his body by the sea shore. Six days later Jews from Modena discovered Ricchi's body and reburied him in Cento amidst great mourning.¹⁷

Adderet Eliyah, dated "O you who dwell in the gardens, the companions listen **מקשיבים** (502 = 1742) to your voice; let me hear it" (Song of Songs 8:13) is divided into two parts, the first an elucidation of and commentary on difficult Talmudic passages; the second comprised of novellae on tractate *Niddah*, twenty-four responsa, seventy-six homilies on biblical verses, and riddles (with illustrations) and verse.¹⁸ *Hozeh Ziyyon*, a commentary on Psalms, is dated "[He shall pour the water out of his buckets, and his seed shall be in many waters, and his king shall be higher than Agag,] and his kingdom **מלכותו** (502 = 1742) shall be exalted" (Numbers 24:7). It too is a folio ([2], 138 ff.). *Hozeh Ziyyon* was written in Jerusalem, alluded to in the title for, as Ricchi writes in the introduction, *hozeh ziyyon* ("Look upon Zion," Isaiah 33:20) is what he has brought forth (**חדשתי**) in Jerusalem and "furthermore, it is known that Zion is the *sod* of Rachel."¹⁹ Psalms are in the center of the page in square vocalized Hebrew, the commentary on the sides in rabbinic type, excepting headers and initial words. Both *Adderet Eliyah* and *Hozeh Ziyyon* have the Ricchi family device, a two-tailed lion salient facing left with a stalk of wheat in its mouth. This device appears on the title page of *Hozeh Ziyyon* and on the final page of part one of *Adderet Eliyahu*.²⁰

¹⁷ Mordechai Margalio, *Entsiklopedyah le-Toldot Gedolei Yisra'el* IV (Tel Aviv, 1986), col. 1200–03 [Hebrew]; Avraham Yaari, *Sheluhe'i Erez Yisrael* (195; reprint Jerusalem, 1997), pp. 394–96.

¹⁸ Ricchi's *Adderet Eliyahu* is addressed in greater detail in my "Adderet Eliyahu; A Study in the Titling of Hebrew Books," together with approximately 30 other works bearing the same title (see above).

¹⁹ Rachel is one of the two divine feminine powers, the other is Leah, associated with the rebuilding of Zion and Jerusalem. See Moshe Idel, *Messianic Mystics* (New Haven & London, 1998), pp. 310–14.

²⁰ Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printers' Marks. From the Beginning of Hebrew Printing to the End of the 19th Century* (Jerusalem, 1943; reprint Westmead, 1971), pp. 73, 162 n. 115 [Hebrew]. Yaari notes that this device was also used by other Italian Jewish families.

In January 1742, from the 5th (Friday, 29 *Tevet* 5502) through the 16th (Tuesday 11 *Shevat*) Livorno experienced a series of earthquakes which, it is reported, left no major building undamaged. These earthquakes were significant enough to be the subject of a pamphlet by a Mr. Horton, Schoolmaster at Hampton, then Chaplain to the British factory in Leghorn, published in London, and noted in another pamphlet by Z. Grey on earthquakes published in Cambridge, both in 1750.²¹ The Jewish community memorialized the earthquakes in a small book (16^o, [22] ff.) of prayers (*tehinnot*) in 1742, the year of the earthquakes, entitled *Shever ba-Mezarim*. The title word, *mezarim* (troubles, distress) is vocalized, for unvocalized it can be read as *Mizraim* (Egypt), as the title page elaborates:

prayers and supplications at a time of wrath, in the days of earthquakes. It is entitled *Shever ba-Mezarim*, an allusion that in the year *Shever* (502 = 1742), שבר that is here in *Mizraim* (Egypt), from the implication that *shever* is a language of hope, expectation, of trust, that even though a sharp sword rests on the neck of a person he should not despair of mercy, for as our eyes saw how the Holy One, blessed is He, broke the strength of the *Mizrim* (Egyptians) and delivered and redeemed us from all “trouble and anguish” (Isaiah 30:6, Proverbs 1:27); furthermore, that *shever* is a language of acquisition as it says of Jacob, our patriarch, when he “saw that there was grain in Egypt (*shever ba-Mizraim*) [Jacob] said to his sons [Why do you look one upon another? And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is grain in Egypt (*shever ba-Mizraim*)]; get down there, and buy for us from there; that we may live, and not die (Genesis 42:1–2). As there was grain (hope) for you in Mizraim so this book, *Shever ba-Mezarim*, informs that Israel has no strength but in his mouth (prayer), “The voice is Jacob’s voice” (Genesis 27:22), and the Holy One, blessed is He, desires the prayers of the righteous.

The author (editor) of *Shever ba-Mezarim* is R. Raphael ben Eliezer Meldola. He begins with a detailed and moving account of the earthquake, describing it in the first thirteen leaves of the book, mentioning several times the activities and prayers of R. Malachi ben Jacob, one of the community’s *parnasim*, as well as that of the Duke, lord of the land. Meldola’s account is followed by *selihot* and prayers, and includes *piyyutim* written at the time of earlier earthquakes, in Lugo (1688) and in

²¹ Rev. Mr. Horton, *An account of the earthquakes which happened at Leghorn in Italy, between the 5th and 16th of January, 1742* (London, 1750); Zachary Grey, *A Chronological and Historical Account of the Most Memorable Earthquakes that have Happened in the World, from the Beginning of the Christian Period to the Present Year 1750* (Cambridge, 1750), pp. 76–78.

Ancona (1690), by R. Johanan Ghiron (1646–1716), rabbi in Florence, and known as *Alluf Torah* due to his great erudition. The colophon records the corrector as R. Moses ben Raphael Meldola.

In 1745, Meldola printed *Shivah Einayim*, comprised of three works by Nahmanides (R. Moses ben Nahman, Ramban, 1194–1270), novellae on *perek Zeh Borer* of tractate *Sanhedrin*, on tractate *Makkot*, and his *Sefer ha-Zekhut*, a defense of Alfasi (R. Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi, 1013–1103) against the criticisms of R. Abraham ben David of Posquieres (Ravad, c. 1125–98), and four selections of responsa. *Shivah Einayim* was sponsored by R. Jacob [ben Moses Judah] London (first half 18th century), who brought this previously unpublished work to press. London was born either in Germany and taken to London at an early age when his father secured a position as *hazzan* there or born in that city, accounting for his name. There is an approbation, signed by rabbis from Livorno, R. Eliezer Meldola, R. Jacob Lusino, and R. Adam Bundi, each name followed by ט"ט. The colophon gives the name of the worker as Joseph ben Abraham of Fuerth. Here, too, the title page has both Hebrew and Latin dates; the former based on the chronogram “And the work was sufficient for all והמלאכה היתה דים (505 = 1745)” (Exodus 36:7) with the corresponding date in Latin letters at the bottom of the page is MDCCXLV (1745).

An interesting aspect of Meldola’s publications is the emphasis, beginning in 1742, with books by eminent Algerian rabbis. Among these titles are works from the renowned Duran family. This family, originally from Provence, went via Majorca to North Africa, where they produced many distinguished rabbis who held the rabbinate in Algiers. R. Solomon ben Simeon Duran (Rashbash, c. 1400–1467), who succeeded his father, R. Simeon ben Zemah (Rashbatz, 1361–1444) as rabbi in Algiers, was the author of several works, among them *Milhemet Mitzvah*, a vigorous defense of the Talmud against the charges and slander of the apostate Joshua Lorki (Hieronymus de Sancta Fide), written in 1438 and first printed together with his father’s *Keshet u-Magen*, also a polemic work, in Livorno sometime after 1750, without the date or place of printing. Meldola printed Solomon Duran’s responsa, *Sefer ha-Rashbash*, in 1742.

The title page of *Sefer ha-Rashbash* has an ornamental border, and the volume employs many of the decorative devices used in other works. It is dated with the same chronogram as Ergas’ *Divrei Yosef*, “[Thus says the Lord of hosts: The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of

the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth,] shall become times of joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts to the house of Judah יהודה לביית יהודה (502=1742); [therefore love truth and peace]" (Zechariah 8:19). The title page notes that almost three hundred years have passed and this work has not yet been seen. The manuscript is in the library of R. Malachi ha-Kohen who, for the public benefit, has brought it to press. The volume begins with three pages of approbations; a page entitled *Tehillah le-David* sent by R. David Meldola from Amsterdam in praise of the work; a preface from the printer (Abraham Meldola); eight approbations with ten signatories, as well as a page of supporting statements in Portuguese from the *parnassim* of the community, and then the responsa. In his preface Meldola apologizes for the many errors in the book, noting that the manuscript he used was faulty and difficult to read, so that it was a considerable task to correct it and bring it to press.²²

Sefer ha-Rashbash is Duran's most important work. It is comprised of more than six hundred responsa encompassing the normal spectrum of halakhic issues addressed by such works, but here also including philosophical issues. There is considerable information within these responsa as to the customs and liturgical practices of Algerian Jewry, and responses to queries from Marranos on such issues as how to observe Passover.²³ In a number of instances he refers to his father, with whom he discussed the issue, in one case noting that he is now permitting what he would otherwise have prohibited. There is also a case, however, in which Rashbash disagrees with his father. Duran's responsa were highly regarded. R. Joseph Caro (1488–1575), relying on a manuscript, quotes him frequently, and inquiries were submitted to Duran from afar, including Jerusalem.²⁴

Solomon ben Simeon Duran was neither the only Duran nor the only Algerian rabbi published by Meldola. In 1744, the press published in one volume R. Simeon ben Zemah's *Yavin Shemu'ah* on *Hilkhot Shehitah u-Vedikah* (on ritual slaughtering and porging); *Ma'amar Hamez* on the halkakhot of mazah and hametz; *Afikomen*, a commentary on the Hagadah; *Tiferet Yisrael*, on *kiddush ha-hodesh* and the calendar; *Perush*

²² A new and corrected edition was issued by Moses Sobel, *Sefer ha-Rashbash* (Jerusalem, 1998).

²³ Solomon B. Frechhof, *The Responsa Literature* (Philadelphia, 1955), pp. 219–20.

²⁴ Sobel, p. 12.

Eizehu Mekoman (commentary on *Mishnah Zevahim* ch. 5); and *Baraita* of R. Ishmael; and Rashbash's *Tikkun Soferim*. The following year saw the publication of Simeon Duran's responsa, *Hiddushei ha-Rashbatz*. Meldola also printed two works of another Algerian rabbi, R. Judah ben Isaac Ayash (1690–1760), that is, *Lehem Yehudah* (1745), glosses on Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, and *Beit Yehudah* (1746), responsa and customs of the Jews of Algiers. In 1748, the press issued *Peri Zaddik*, the responsa of R. Raphael Jedidiah Solomon ben Joshua ben Solomon Seror (1681–1737), a native and subsequently chief rabbi of Algiers. Yet another title by an Algerian resident is the physician Abraham ben Jacob Gavison's (d. 1578) *Omer ha-Shikhhah*, on Proverbs (1748). *Omer ha-Shikhhah* was edited and completed by Abraham's son Jacob (1586–1605), who added verse to the work, and brought to press by Jacob's sons.

These last works, and other Meldola titles as well, are beyond the scope of this article, which is concerned with the first imprints of the Meldola press. Nevertheless, they represent a connection with North African Jewry, initiated by Meldola and continued with subsequent Livorno print houses, establishing Livorno as a center of printing for the Sephardic world that continued well into the twentieth century.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

DAVID BEN ARYEH LEIB OF LIDA AND HIS *MIGDAL DAVID* ACCUSATIONS OF PLAGIARISM IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY AMSTERDAM¹

David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida (c. 1650–96) was chief rabbi of several communities, among them the Ashkenaz community of Amsterdam, and the author of highly regarded books. His career was clouded, however, by charges of slander, Sabbateanism, and plagiarism. Although exonerated of the first two charges, the cloud of literary piracy has cast a continuing shadow over Lida's reputation. Two of Lida's works, *Migdal David* and *Divrei David*, are attributed to other writers. The article addresses the validity of those charges, finds that Lida himself alluded to the fact that he was not the author, and suggests that he expressed regret, albeit in an enigmatic manner, in a later work.

Hayyim ha-Kohen... *Migdal David* on Ruth, printed by others but certainly [written] by him.

Migdal David commentary on Ruth. In truth, the author was Hayyim ha-Kohen, author of *Tur Bareket*... (*Shem ha-Gedolim*).²

R. David ben Aryeh of Lida (c. 1650–96) is an arresting but enigmatic figure. A person of considerable stature, chief rabbi of several communities, among them the Ashkenaz community of Amsterdam, he was the author of highly regarded books, often reprinted to this day.³ This image is offset, however, by the controversy and charges that tarnished his reputation, foremost that he was a follower of Shabbtai Zevi, and, secondarily, that he was a slanderer and plagiarist.

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Shofar* 19:2 (West Lafayette, Ind., 2001), pp. 117–28.

² Hayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim ha-Shalem* with additions by Menachem Mendel Krenkel (Jerusalem, 1979), *Ma'arakhet Gedolim het* 33 and *Ma'arakhet Seferim mem* 32 [Hebrew].

³ Lida's other works, many printed posthumously, include *Sod HaShem* (Amsterdam, 1680); *Be'er Esek* (Frankfort on Oder/ or Lublin, 1684); *Shomer Shabbat* (1687); *Ir Miklat* (Dyhernfurth, 1690); *Helkei Evenim* and annotations to Jehiel Melli's *Tappuhei Zahav* (Feurth, 1693); *Ir David* (Amsterdam, 1719); and *Yad Kol Bo* (Frankfort on Main, 1727). He also wrote a commentary, *Be'er Mayyim Hayyim*, on the *Tur Shulhan Arukh O. H.*, for which he received approbations but it was never printed.

Given Lida's prominence, and that his books are still current and available, it is somewhat of an anomaly that he is so little known. It is the purpose of this article to briefly recount the essential features of David ben Aryeh of Lida's life, the charges and disputes that clouded his reputation, and, in greater detail, to review the charge of plagiarism brought against him. Lida has had both defenders and detractors; it has not, however, been previously recognized that he clouded the issue, issuing disclaimers, informing readers that a text was not original, while, simultaneously and more prominently, taking full credit for a disputed work's authorship.

Lida was born into a family with rabbinic antecedents in the Lithuanian community of Zwollen. His father had been rabbi in Zwollen,⁴ and he was a nephew of R. Moses ben Naphtali Zevi Rivkes,⁵ and among the leading students of R. Joshua Hoeschel ben Jacob of Cracow, one of the preeminent rabbinic figures of the time.⁶ Lida officiated as rabbi in a number of communities in eastern Europe, beginning, in 1671, with Lida, in Grodno, Byelorussia, the source of the family name—his son R. Pethahiah and his grandson, R. David Benjamin, also served there in the same capacity—and subsequently in Ostrog and Mainz, Germany. These were followed by his appointment, in 1681, as the chief rabbi of the Ashkenazic community in Amsterdam, succeeding R. Meir Stern of Fulda (d. 1679).

The Jewish community of Amsterdam, originally of Sephardic composition, saw an influx of Ashkenazim after the Thirty Years War in Germany and the Chmielnicki massacres in Poland, so that by 1674 the Jewish population of Amsterdam numbered 2,500 Sephardic and 5,000 Ashkenazic Jews.⁷ In addition to the existence of separate Sephardic and Ashkenazic communities, the latter were, if formally united, riven

⁴ Abraham Abba Eisner, *Toledot ha-Gaon Rabbi David Lida* (Breslau 1938), p. 8, who also notes that Lida quotes Torah in the name of his grandfather in *Helkei Evenim*.

⁵ Moses ben Naphtali Zevi Rivkes (d. 1671–72) was the author of *Be'er ha-Golah* (Amsterdam, 1660–61) on the *Shulhan Arukh*, reprinted in all subsequent editions of that work.

⁶ R. Joshua Hoeschel ben Jacob (1595–1663), rabbi and rosh yeshiva in Lublin and afterwards in Cracow, numbered among his students R. Shabbetai ben Meir ha-Kohen (Shakh) and R. Samuel Koidanover. Among his published works are *Toledot Aaron* (Lublin, 1682), republished with additions as *Hiddushei Halakhot* (Frankfort, 1725), and *Hanukkat ha-Torah* (1880). Other works remain in manuscript. Concerning Lida and Joshua Hoeschel see Hayyim M. Dembitzer, *Kelilat Jofi* (Cracow, 1893), I, p. 68a, and II, p. 59a–59b [Hebrew].

⁷ Concerning Jewish immigration to Amsterdam see Joseph Kaplan, "Amsterdam and Ashkenazic Migration in the Seventeenth Century," pp. 22–44, and Jonathon Israel,

by dissension between the German and Polish elements. The Poles had, in 1660, formed their own congregation, but in 1673 the Amsterdam authorities ordered them to rejoin the German community.

Lida was only thirty-one when he became chief rabbi of the Ashkenaz congregation of Amsterdam. He had achieved a degree of prominence and had begun to publish his works. Lida, however, soon became embroiled in a dispute with leaders of the congregation, foremost among them R. Nissan ben Judah Leib, brother-in-law of R. Isaac Benjamin Wolf ben Eliezer Lipman, chief rabbi in Berlin and later in Landsberg and Slotzk, and author of *Nahlat Binyamin* (Amsterdam, 1682). At one point in their altercation, Nissan ben Judah Leib claimed that he had found, on a trip to the city of Wessel, defamatory letters of a most serious nature written about him and Wolf Lipman, which he attributed to David Lida. Copies of the letters were submitted to the Sephardic rabbinic court of Amsterdam. Noting that Lida denied writing the letters, they requested more complete information from Wessel. Subsequently, in a responsa written by R. Jacob Sasportas and signed by R. Isaac Aboab da Fonesca and R. Solomon de Oliveyra, hakhamim of the Portuguese community, Lida was found innocent of the charges, and the letters were proclaimed forgeries.⁸

These accusations were followed by charges of literary piracy and Sabbateanism, based on allusions in his writings to Shabbetai Zevi, made in the synagogue and printed for public distribution. The rabbis of the Amsterdam Portuguese, who had initially supported Lida, now opposed him on the basis of these later charges.⁹

“Sephardic Immigration into the Dutch Republic,” pp. 45–53, *Studia Rosenthaliana (Str)*, special issue published together with 23:2 (Amsterdam, 1989).

⁸ R. Jacob Sasportas, *Ohel Ya'akov* (Amsterdam, 1737; reprint Bnei Brak, 1986), no. 75. Sasportas (1610–98), head of the yeshiva Etz Hayyim and rabbi of the Portuguese community. Sasportas wrote *Toledot Ya'acov*, an index of the Aggadic material in the Jerusalem Talmud, responsa *Ohel Ya'akov*, edited and published by his son R. Abraham Sasportas. An unrelenting opponent of the Sabbatean movement, his correspondence against that movement are recorded in *Zizit Novel Zevi*, reissued in abridged form by R. Jacob Emden as *Kizzur Zizit Novel Zevi* (Altona, 1757). Parenthetically, *Migdal David* is dedicated, at the end of the introduction, to the “sage, the complete Torah scholar, *Av Bet Din* and *Rosh Mesivta* of the holy community of Amsterdam, the honorable R. Isaac Aboab.”

⁹ Concerning the early phases of the dispute, public complaints, and excommunications within Amsterdam, see Eisner, *Toledot ha-Gaon Rabbi David Lida*, p. 12. For a recent discussion of the charge of Sabbateanism made against Lida see Bezalel Naor, *Post-Sabbatian Sabbatianism. Study of an Underground Movement* (Spring Valley, 1999), pp. 37–45.

Forced to leave his position in Amsterdam, Lida appealed to the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* (Council of the Four Lands) in Poland.¹⁰ Their support and vindication of Lida, which included excommunicating his opponents within the Ashkenazic community, resulted in Lida being restored to his position. Although he returned to Amsterdam, his position was untenable, and he left, after reaching a financial settlement, for Lemberg (Lvov), where he died in 1696.¹¹ Lida defended himself in a small work entitled *Be'er Esek* (Well of Contention), based on “and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him” (Genesis 26:20), printed in either Lublin or Frankfort on Oder, Monday, 4 Elul, **מד"ת** **הד"ן** (attribute of justice, 444 = 1684). The title page concludes with verses reflecting Lida’s bitterness, the first letters forming an acrostic of his name,

ט“My soul cleaves to the dust; revive me according to your word” (Psalms 119:25)

י“So shall I have an answer for him who insults me; for I trust in your word” (Ps. 119:42)

יט“My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word” (Ps. 119:28)

Be'er Esek, is comprised of Lida’s preface, but for the most part is a compilation of the pronouncements of the *Va'ad Arba Aratzot* and letters written by prominent rabbis on Lida’s behalf. In the preface, based on midrashim and kabbalistic concepts, Lida compares his persecution to that of King David. The involved discourse addresses David’s having to flee from his son Absalom, and then, referring to the issue of Bathsheba, notes that there are two interpretations in the Talmud as to the relationship of the snake with Eve, whether the snake actually came upon her in a language of marriage and cohabitated with her, or in the second interpretation, whether the snake incited Eve without cohabitation. In the first interpretation, David did not sin for it was really a *tikkun*, a correction for the sin of Adam; in the second case

¹⁰ Israel Halperin, *The Records of the Four Lands. I: 1580–1792* (Jerusalem, 1989), p. 179 no. 394, pp. 186–93 no. 410, and pp. 198–201 nos. 417–419. Also see L. Fuks, “The Amsterdam Rabbi David Lida and the Council of the Four Countries (1680–1684),” *Str* VI, pp. 166–79; *idem.*, *Str* (1972), X pp. 189–194; and Sasportas, no. 76.

¹¹ Fuks, *Str* VI p. 174. Concerning the correct date of Lida’s death see Solomon Buber, *Anshe Shem* (Cracow, 1895), p. 56 [Hebrew], and Gabriel b. Isaac Polak, *Kol bat Gallim* (Amsterdam, 1867), pp. 2–3 [Hebrew].

David's cohabitation with Bathsheba was a grievous sin, for which he grieved his entire life, especially when he had to flee Absalom, for it was not in the category of *tikkun*. Lida notes comparable instances, mentioning the Patriarchs and Moses, all correcting the sin of Adam. After much elaboration, Lida writes, "and so I fled as they did, but my fleeing is not as theirs... the *Aron*, Sanhedrin, and all Israel were with me, as it says in the *Zohar*, so we find that all my troubles were not due to sin..."¹²

Lida remained highly regarded in rabbinic circles, even after his troubles in Amsterdam. This is evidenced by the fact that his approbations appear in the works of important rabbinic figures, most significantly R. Abraham Gombiner's *Magen Avraham* (Dyhernfurth, 1692).

These are, in brief, the main points of Lida's biography. While the other charges have faded with time, it is the accusation that he was a plagiarist that has haunted his reputation. The first such charge was leveled against his authorship of *Migdal David*, a kabbalistic commentary on the book of Ruth. Its acceptance by authoritative sources such as R. Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (Hida, 1724–1806) and Hayyim Michael (1792–1846), the former using terms such as "certainly" and "in truth," in ascribing that work to R. Hayyim ha-Kohen, has resulted in the widespread acceptance of the charge, so that it is often repeated, and the entry for *Migdal David* found in major bibliographic works makes mention of its disputed authorship.¹³

Migdal David was published in 1680, when Lida was still rabbi in Mainz, at the Amsterdam press of Uri Phoebus. The title page (fig. 72) informs us that it was written and brought to press **חיבר והביאו לדפוס** by the rav, the great, the lamp of Israel, "a valiant man of many achievements from Kabzeel" (Samuel II 23:20), the honorable rabbi David **נר"ו** [may the Merciful One watch over and bless him], who has spread Torah in numerous holy communities in the lands of Poland and Lithuania and now is *Av Bet Din* and *Rosh Mesivta* (Head of the Rabbinical Court and Yeshiva) in... Mainz.

¹² The text of *Be'er Esek* is reproduced in Aaron Freimann, "R. David Lida and his apologetics in *Be'er Esek*" in *Sefer ha-Yovel le-Koved Nahum Sokolow* (Warsaw, 1904), pp. 455–80 [Hebrew].

¹³ Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim ha-Shalem*, and Hayyim Michael, *Or ha-Hayyim* (Frankfort on Main, 1891; reprint, Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 318–19, n. 700 and pp. 376–77 n. 844. [Hebrew].

The book has seventeen approbations from leading rabbinic figures from central and eastern Europe.¹⁴ Several of the approbations do not specifically mention *Migdal David*, but rather praise Lida. Even a cursory reading of the other approbations indicates that the writers believe *Migdal David* is an original work. R. Aaron Samuel ben Isaac of Cracow describes Lida as “‘a fast writer’ (Psalms 45:2) in his work, the work of the Lord, and he builds for him a tower of David (*migdal David*)....” Similarly, R. Isaac ben Abraham of Posen, “a tower of David (*migdal David*) that he builds with turrets, ‘loving kindness is poured into your lips’ (Psalms 45:3),” and R. Nachman ben Solomon Naphtali of Vilna, “he called it *Migdal David*, built with turrets for the generations, for,” paraphrasing Psalms 12:7, “his words are pure words, purified seven times....”

The book was prepared for press several years prior to its publication. It has been noted that R. Nachman ben Solomon Naphtali’s approbation, although not dated, appears to have been written in 1673–74.¹⁵ Although a majority of the approbations are close to the publication date; there are still other early approbations, for example those of R. Israel ben Nathan Shapiro of Kalisz, explicitly dated 1674, R. Mordecai ben Benjamin Wolf Ginzberg of Brest-Litovsk, dated ת"ל גימל (1673), and R. Jacob ben Mordecai of Lubomla, given as “Your neck is like the tower of David” כמגדל דויד צוארך (= 438 = 1678) (Song of Songs 4:4).

Lida confirms his authorship of *Migdal David*, on the title page of *Ir Miklat* (Dyhernfurth, 1690), which states, “[our teacher the Rav and Rabbi] David ben Aryeh Leib, author of *Migdal David* and *Ir David* that he built and planted while he was *Av Bet Din* and *Rosh Mesivta* (Head of the Rabbinical Court and Yeshiva) in Mainz,” and in the introduction

¹⁴ The approbations are from R. Aaron Samuel ben Isaac of Cracow; R. Isaac ben Abraham of Posen; R. Zevi Hirsch ben Zechariah of Lemberg; R. Isaac ben Zev Wolf of Apt; R. Mordecai ben Benjamin Wolf Ginzberg of Brest-Litovsk; R. Moses ben Abraham of Grodno; R. Moses ben Israel Jacob Isserles of Pinsk; R. Nahman ben Solomon of Vilna; R. Eisik ben Eliezer Lipman Heilprun of Tiktin; R. Israel ben Nathan Shapiro of Kalisz; R. Jacob ben Mordecai of Lubomla; R. Mordecai ben Nathan Note Kohen of Amstibovo; R. Isaiah Aboab of Amsterdam; R. Isaiah ben Shabbetai Sheftel Hurwitz of Frankfort on Main; R. Benjamin Wolf ben Jacob Epstein of Friedburg; R. Süsskind ben Moses Rothenburg of Witzenhausen; R. Judah Leib ben Solomon of Rotterdam.

¹⁵ Nathan Simha Straschun, *ha-Carmel* (Vilna, 1861), I: no. 47, p. 377 n. 3 [Hebrew].

to *Ir David*, homilies on the Torah, where he concludes with the supplication that he not encounter the difficulties that befell him with “my book *Migdal David*,” for he relied on the editors, being preoccupied with communal matters, and when he looked into it afterwards found it to be replete with nettles and omissions, beyond number.¹⁶

What truly befell Lida was that R. Nissan ben Judah Leib also accused him of “wearing a Talit that was not his own,” that is, he identified *Migdal David* as *Torat Hesed* by R. Hayyim ben Abraham ha-Kohen (1585–1655).¹⁷ Hayyim ha-Kohen, a leading disciple of R. Hayyim Vital, was for two decades rabbi in Aram Zova, and author of a number of books with kabbalistic content, among them sermons, *Torat Hakham* (Venice, 1654) and *Mekor Hayyim*, a kabbalistic commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh* (various locations), as well as a number of works still in manuscript.¹⁸ His commentary on Ruth, *Torat Hesed*, the work Lida is accused of plagiarizing, was also never published.¹⁹

It has been suggested that there are allusions to Hayyim ha-Kohen in the introduction to *Migdal David*, where Lida writes that one who wishes to relieve his spiritual thirst may do so with this small work, which “gushes (derives) from *mekor mayyim hayyim...kahana raba* (*Kohen Gadol* = high priest).” The Hida, who ascribes this book to Hayyim ha-Kohen, questions the allusion, noting that it does not explicitly say “*mekor hayyim kahana raba*.”

¹⁶ *Ir David*, begun in 1683, was discontinued after a third only had been printed. Lida writes, at the end of *Helkei Evenim*, “The enemies of the Lord pursued me and overtook me in the midst of [my] distress (cf. Lamentations 1:3). They destroyed my house and caused me monetary loss of many thousands,” lamenting his inability to complete the printing of *Ir David*. The first edition, than, is that of Solomon Proops (Amsterdam, 1719).

¹⁷ Freimann, “R. David Lida and his apologetics in *Be'er Esek*, p. 457.

¹⁸ Concerning Hayyim ha-Kohen’s adventures, or more correctly travail, in printing his works, see my “Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai and the First Decade of Hebrew Printing in Livorno, part II,” *Los Muestras*, no. 34 (Brussels, 1999), pp. 28–30.

¹⁹ It has not been possible to determine how Nissan ben Judah Leib identified *Migdal David* as *Torat Hesed*. Given the very scarce, or, possibly, now not extant literature, ephemera really, plentiful and widely distributed during the dispute, it is worthwhile to repeat Freimann’s remarks on the rarity of such works in his introduction to the reprinting of *Be'er Esek* in *Sefer ha-Yovel for Nahum Sokolow*. He compares them to Jonah’s gourd, “which lived one night and perished after one night” (Jonah 4:10). So are these pamphlets, widely distributed and read, which afterwards perish and are lost. Freimann, p. 455. It has also not been possible to locate a copy of the manuscript of *Torat Hesed* for comparison purposes. That work is not listed in the catalogue of the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, Jewish National and University Library, which has copies of more than 90 percent of known Hebrew manuscripts.

I would suggest another allusion, to be found in the introduction, where Lida informs us why the book is entitled *Migdal David*, and states that there is another, closer, redeemer:

I named it (MIGDAL DAVID) for in it will be explained, “He is a tower of [our] king’s salvation” (II Samuel 22:51), our anointed, the breath of our nostrils, David, or a son of David, and He will redeem us. “Now while it is true that I am a redeemer, there is also another redeemer closer than I.” (Ruth 3:12)...

R. Jacob Emden attacks Lida’s authorship of *Migdal David* in his *Torat ha-Kena’ot* while simultaneously finding Sabbatean references in Lida’s *Shir Hillulim*, bound with the former work.²⁰ *Shir Hillulim* (fig. 73), a poem comprised of verses to be recited responsively by a cantor and congregation, was written in honor of the dedication of a Torah scroll (Amsterdam, 1680). It consists of a title page and three pages of text. The first word of each line forms an acrostic, spelling out David ben Leib זצ"ל. Between the lines beginning the initial letters *daled* and *lamed* is a line beginning with a *mem*; its purpose is unclear. The printer was David de Castro Tartas, who, parenthetically, notes on the title page, together with his name, that his brother Isaac was burned at an auto-de-fe sanctifying the name of God.²¹

The cantor’s last line concludes with the words, תשבי יגאלנו (Tishby will redeem us). It has been suggested that these references were not in Lida’s manuscript but rather were added by the printer.²² Emden comments, “also Tishby תשבי is called Shabbetai שבתי, as can be seen in *Shir Hillulim*,” a play on Hillulim הלולים (song of praise, with a *heh*),

²⁰ Jacob Emden (Yavets, 1697–1776), son of the Hakham Zevi, and one of the outstanding Jewish personalities of the eighteenth century. He served as rabbi in several communities, was a prolific writer, operated a printing-press, and was an indefatigable opponent of Sabbateanism, which resulted in his engaging in several highly public disputes with members, real and perceived, of that movement.

²¹ Jacob Emden, *Torat ha-Kena’ot* (Altona, 1752), pp. 71b–72a, notes that the *Shir Hillulim* he saw was bound with *Migdal David*. Hayyim Michael, *Or ha-Hayyim*, p. 319, says the two works were printed together. The two copies of these works examined for this article were also bound together. M. Landshuth, *Ammude ha-Avodah* (reprint New York, 1965), p. 59 suggests that *Shir Hillulim* was printed both with *Migdal David* and separately. The predominant practice at the time, as in earlier periods, was to sell books unbound, to be bound by the buyer. For another work printed in two print shops and bound together see my “Observations on the Reprinting of *Kesef Nivhar*,” *Stt*, 31 no. 1–2 (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 168–74.

²² *Tiferet Yisrael Zuta*, quoted in Buber, p. 55. I have not been able to locate a copy of this work. Also Eisner, p. 12. The printer, David de Castro Tartas, was, in fact, an ardent supporter of Shabbetai Zevi. Nevertheless, it is difficult to accept that a printer

by calling it חלולים (song of blasphemy, with a *het*) “at the end of *Migdal David*, as the one who brought the book to press misleadingly calling it by his own name, and mumbles and does not know what he mumbles, for the name of the true author signed it at the end, concluding ‘*le-hayyim*,’ and he signs himself to death, where he writes: ‘Tishby will redeem us’ who he explains as David, who is Tishby, but where do the sages ever mention the redeemer as Tishby”²³

It has been suggested that a defense of Lida can be found in the approbations to *Ir David*, printed decades after his death, and written by leading rabbinic figures, such as R. Gershon ben Isaac Ashkenazi (Ulif, d. 1693), chief rabbi of Metz, and author of *Avodat ha-Gershuni* and *Tiferet ha-Gershuni* (Frankfort on Main, 1699), and *Hiddushei ha-Gershuni* (1710).²⁴ Ashkenazi compares Lida and his books to an expert in the writing of amulets, having proven both himself and his works, so that he may be called an expert (*Shabbat* 61b), which should be proclaimed publicly. Ashkenazi continues (ref. Song of Songs 4:4), that Lida’s books are “desirable as ‘the tower of David (*migdal David*)’ built as a ‘magnificent structure,’ and he displays his strong hand in hidden knowledge (kabbalah) and in the writings of the Ari ל"א, which is his style. . . . I can say with surety, that the benefit of the public is dependent upon the publication of his writings. . . .” The later publication date of *Ir David* notwithstanding, these words, and similar language in other accompanying approbations, were written in 1681.

A more recent defense against the charge of plagiarism is provided by Abraham Abba Eisner, a descendant of Lida. Eisner writes that he did not actually see *Migdal David*, due to its rarity. He attempts to discredit Jacob Emden, and argues that the fact that the other charges against Lida were dismissed as groundless is proof that the charge of plagiarism too was found to be without substance. Eisner observes that Lida’s reputation as a kabbalist is attested to by the notorious anti-Semite Johann Andreas Eisenmenger (1654–1704), who, in his

would so obviously modify a small work, written by one of Amsterdam’s chief rabbis, and meant for immediate distribution. Even more unlikely is that if Tartas had supplemented Lida’s text with Sabbatean material, that Lida would have allowed him to print another of his works, which he did with *Shomer Shabbat* (1687).

²³ Jacob Emden, *Torat ha-Kena’ot* 71b (1697–1776), reprinted in Straschun, pp. 377–378 n. 3.

²⁴ Azulai, with additions by Menachem Mendel Krenkel *Ma’arakhet Seferim mem* 32 n. 17.

Entdecktes Judentum (Judaism Unmasked, [Frankfort on Main, 1700]), reports that he visited Lida in Amsterdam in 1681 and found him to be a scholar and great kabbalist.²⁵

These defenses and allusions are unnecessary. Lida himself, despite the attribution on the title page and elsewhere of *Migdal David* to himself, informs us, by parable and even more explicitly in the introduction to that book, that it is not an original work.

The allegory, taken from the *Zohar* and elsewhere, is of a rooster pecking about seeking food, that uncovered a beautiful, bright pearl. Startled by the pearl's brightness and beauty, the rooster recoiled, wondering how such a beautiful object, fit to be in a place of honor, came to be concealed. A man, observing the rooster recoil, came to see what had disturbed it and, finding the pearl, took it in his hand. Appreciating its great value he presented the pearl to the king to be placed as a diadem on his crown. The king, too, rejoicing in this precious stone, honored the rooster, who had not found the pearl of his own volition, but by chance while seeking food.

Lida continues, "so is this matter, for I found in this scroll blossoms and fruit which give forth a brightness, delightful to the sight and desirable to the eye, its fruit is 'good for food' (Genesis 2:9)...when this distinguished book comes to the hand of one who appreciates its value...and also he who publishes it will be remembered for good before the King, King of the universe," language understood to refer to a publisher rather than an author.

Migdal David is not the only book by Lida where his authorship is suspect. Questions have been raised concerning his first title, the ethical treatise *Divrei David* (Lublin, 1671). The authorship of *Divrei David*, or perhaps more correctly, the work from which it was taken, is a fascinating subject in its own right. Lida concludes the title page of the first edition with, "these are the words of David (*divrei David*), the insignificant, son of the honorable Aryeh Leib, currently in Lida...." We are then informed, in a brief introduction:

And I called it **DIVREI DAVID**, as it is culled from the words (*divrei*) of the *rishonim* (early sages), with additions of my own, which draw the

²⁵ Eisner, *Toledot ha-Gaon Rabbi David Lida*, pp. 11–12, n. 3. Eisner also quotes from or reprints, pp. 12ff., almost the entire corpus pertaining to the dispute favorable to Lida, from contemporary responsa and pronouncements to more recent references. He does not, however, add anything not previously known.

hearts of man and bring them close to their father in heaven, to keep His statutes and His Torah, to observe them, for that is man's duty, and "the earth will be filled with knowledge of the Lord" (Isaiah 11:9).

The first bibliographer, according to N. Brüll, to realize that there was a problem was J. Zedner, who, in his catalogue of the British Library, records *Divrei David* (Offenbach, 1723) under Lida's name with a reference to "Aryeh Judah Loeb ben Chayim Priluck." That entry, referring to Prilik's *Sefer Y'reh* (Berlin, 1724), concludes, "[Being דברי דוד, by David ben Aryeh; the whole edited by A. J. L. ben C.]." ²⁶ Michael writes that *Divrei David* was reprinted by Aryeh Judah Loew ben Hayyim in Berlin, as part of his *Sefer Y'reh*, as *Sefer Mussar*, omitting the name of the author. ²⁷

Sefer Y'reh is comprised of three parts, *Midrash Conan*, *Perushei Ma'amrei Zohar*, and *Sefer Mussar*, the last identical to *Divrei David*. ²⁸ Prilik states, in the introduction to the *Sefer Mussar* that this book is "small in quantity but large in value. See this new work, which was not extant before. Found in manuscript, the author is anonymous. . . . He was undoubtedly a righteous person. . . ." *Sefer Mussar*, or *Divrei David*, includes personal information; for example, the author refers to his book on the weekly Torah readings (no. 72), stating, "see what is written in my *Zer Zahav*, on *parashat Vayikra*, on the verse 'nor shall you allow the salt of the covenant [of your God] to be lacking'" (Leviticus 2:13). He also had made several visits to Jerusalem (nos. 46, 77, and 85), had served as head of a rabbinical court outside of Jerusalem (no. 46), and had been in Turkey (75).

²⁶ N. Brüll, *Jahrbucher für Jüdische Geschichte und Literatur* (Frankfort on Main, 1876) II p. 171. Joseph Zedner, *Catalogue of the Hebrew Books in the British Museum* (London, 1867; reprint Norwich, 1964), pp. 54 and 197. It should be noted, however, that Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin, 1852–60), cols. 876–77 no. 4826.4, was also aware of the problem, for he writes, under Lida's *Divrei David*, "[anon. Sub. Tit. ס' מוסר L. *Ethicae*]; ad c. Arje b. Chajjim: L. *Timoris* q. v. (1724)."

²⁷ Michael, p. 319, n. 700 1. More recent bibliographies repeat these entries; see Ch. B. Friedberg, *Bet Eked Sefarim* (Tel Aviv, 1951), I daled 218 and II yod 920 [Hebrew]; and Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Listing of Books printed in Hebrew Letters Since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing circa 1469 through 1863* (Jerusalem 1995), vol. II pp. 113 no. 99. Also, *Bibliographical Project of the Jewish National and University Library* (Jerusalem, 1992) [Hebrew].

²⁸ I was able to examine the *Sefer Mussar* in the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak. I would like to express my appreciation to R. Yitzhak Wilhelm, librarian, for his assistance.

Prilik's introduction, according to Eliakum Carmoly, was written in haste, without research or investigation, for, given all of the personal references in the *Sefer Mussar*, it is clear that the author was David of Parobyz.²⁹ Carmoly makes no mention of *Divrei David*. Brüll, aware of the existence of both works, not only accepts Carmoly's identification of David of Parobyz as the true author, but explicitly adds that this is but one example of Lida's plagiarism.³⁰ Lida was not the author; he does not mention visiting Jerusalem or Turkey in any of his other writings, although he had ample opportunity to do so, nor was he the author of a work entitled *Ẓer Ẓahav*. In a later attempt to identify the author of *Sefer Mussar*, B. Dinaburg, also without mentioning *Divrei David*, suggests Jacob Zemah, based on the above references to the author's *Ẓer Ẓahav* and his visits to Jerusalem.³¹

These identifications are challenged by Gershom Scholem, who observes that Zemah's *Ẓer Ẓahav* is a halakhic commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh*, whereas the *Ẓer Ẓahav* suggested by Carmoly and Brüll is arranged alphabetically, in contradistinction to the *Ẓer Ẓahav* referenced in the *Sefer Mussar*, a Torah commentary arranged according to the weekly Torah readings. Furthermore, Zemah was a resident in Jerusalem, not a visitor, and never headed a rabbinical court outside of Jerusalem, as did the anonymous author. Scholem observes that at the beginning of the section on Shabbat is a possible numerical allusion to Shabbetai Zevi, suggested by the interchange of the Hebrew letters spelling Shabbat שבת and Tishby תשבי, common among his followers. Parenthetically, this is followed by "Elijah, Messiah, son of David," Tishby normally being understood as a reference to the prophet Elijah. Scholem remarks that while Luria's books are replete with such allusions, and he was suspected of Sabbateanism, in this case, neither

²⁹ Eliakum Carmoly, 1868 *ha-Carmel* VI: no. 50, p. 403. Concerning David of Parobyz see the Carmoly entry; Michael, p. 344 n. 769; and Steinschneider col. 545, the latter identifying Baruch ben David as the author of *Ẓer Ẓahav* (Cracow, 1657 vel 1647), an alphabetic index of Midrashim and the *Ẓohar*.

³⁰ Brüll, II 171–72.

³¹ B. Dinaburg, "The Beginnings of Hasidism and its Social and Messianic Elements," *Ẓion* (Jerusalem, 1943), IV p. 111 n. 14 [Hebrew]. Jacob ben Hayyim Zemah (c. 1570–1665), a Marrano who returned to Judaism in his thirties, became a student of R. Samuel Vital, son of R. Hayyim Vital, and a leading kabbalist. Zemah was an early opponent of Shabbetai Zevi. He wrote, utilizing Hayyim Vital's manuscripts, several kabbalistic works, among them *Nagid u-Mezaveh* (Amsterdam, 1712) and

he nor the other individuals suggested were the author of the work in question.³²

Scholem's observation as to the Sabbatean tendencies of the author are rejected by Haim Liberman, who observes that the suggested allusion had appeared earlier, in R. Nathan Nata ben Solomon Spira's *Megalleh Amukkot* (Cracow, 1637), prior to the birth of the Sabbatean movement. Furthermore, he defends Lida, writing that the author of *Divrei David* explicitly states in his introduction that "it is culled from the words of the early sages with additions of my own."³³

However, even if we excuse Lida for not attributing that which he has taken from the "early sages," there remains the difficulty that a compiler culls his work, something not evident in *Divrei David*, with its references to a book not written and trips not taken by Lida. More important, if Prilik is to be believed, and there is no reason not to believe him, *Sefer Mussar* was printed from a manuscript by an anonymous author, with the result that Lida has not "culled," but rather expropriated another's work.

One additional defense of Lida must be noted. Eisner writes that the date of Lida's supposed trip to Jerusalem (no. 46), "He will fulfill the desire of those who fear him; he also will hear שמע (420 = 1660) their cry, and will save them" (Psalms 145:19), is to be found in the *Sefer Mussar* but not in *Divrei David*.³⁴ While this phrase appears in (some) later editions of *Divrei David* with the word (שמע) in parentheses rather than enlarged and in bold letters, in the 1671 Lublin edition it is in the identical manner as in the *Sefer Mussar*. The entries pertaining to Jerusalem are also in that edition.³⁵

Yet another work was attributed to Lida, the *Asarah Hillulim* on Psalms, which he did not write. *Asarah Hillulim* is included in the *Yad Kol Bo* (Frankfort on Main, 1727), a collection of fourteen of Lida's writings, published by his son Petachiah and son-in-law R. Moses ben

Zohar ha-Raki'a (Korzec, 1785). Among his unpublished works is *Zer Zahav*, a detailed kabbalistic commentary on the *Shulhan Arukh O. H.*

³² Gershom Scholem, "Sefer Mussar of R. Jacob Zemach?," *KS* 22 (1946), 308–10 [Hebrew]. At the end of this article Scholem notes and dismisses other suggestions as to the author of the *Sefer Mussar*.

³³ Haim Liberman, "Hebrew printing at Munkacs," *KS* 27 (1951; reprint in *Ohel R'HL*, Brooklyn, 1980), I pp. 262–63 no. 229 [Hebrew].

³⁴ Eisner, p. 10 n. 3.

³⁵ I would like to thank R. Y. Rosenes of the Judaica Archival Project/Machon Mekorot for providing me with a copy of the 1671 edition of *Divrei David*.

Zalman Mireles.³⁶ It appears that in this instance it was the publishers who included and incorrectly attributed the *Asarah Hillulim* to Lida. The author was, in fact, the Calvinist Christian-Hebraist, Heinrich Jacob van Bashuysen (1679–1750). While it is not clear how such an error could have been made, it seems plausible, as Bashuysen was only seventeen when Lida died, that Lida was not responsible for the error.³⁷

What to make of all this? We know that Lida's career was interrupted, or more correctly curtailed, by groundless hatred, charges of slander and Sabbateanism, charges found to be baseless by eminent authorities. Brilliant and talented, considered by many to be the leading student of the Rebbe Reb Hoeschel and rabbi of several important communities at a young age, he was the unquestioned author of a number of highly valued books. Was David ben Aryeh Leib of Lida a plagiarist, or were these charges also unfounded?

It would seem, although the case is not overwhelming, that there is substance to the charge of plagiarism. As we have seen, Lida takes credit on the title page, and elsewhere, for a work, while providing a disclaimer in the introduction. I would suggest, and this is highly speculative and certainly not a justification, that Lida's acts of literary piracy were youthful improprieties, albeit of a most serious nature. A young man, inexperienced, perhaps immature, from whom much was expected, hoping to impress others and to further a burgeoning career, erred and claimed authorship of works he had not written, but rather discovered in manuscript. These acts occurred at a relatively early age, especially if we allow that the manuscripts were found and prepared for press some time prior to actual publication. *Divrei David* was published in 1671, when Lida was only twenty-one. It has been noted that several approbations for *Migdal David* were written earlier, in 1673–74. He postponed printing *Migdal David*, but, that title being already known and with approbations already written, publication could not be delayed further without good reason.

³⁶ Among these works is a super-commentary on Rashi, also entitled *Migdal David*.

³⁷ Bashuysen wrote books reflecting his interest in rabbinic literature and translated classical rabbinic texts into Latin, among them portions of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* and the Abrabanel's Torah commentary. These titles were published at the Hebrew print shop in Hanau established by Bashuysen in 1708, which is credited with publishing more than 100 Hebrew titles. Among Bashuysen's own works are the Psalms, in Hebrew, with a Latin commentary drawn from rabbinic sources (1712), and a Latin translation of Moses ben Daniel Rohatyn's *Sugyot ha-Talmud* (Zolkiew, 1693) as *Clavis Talmudica* in 1714.

Did Lida have regrets, repenting these early acts of plagiarism? I would suggest, and this too is speculative, that he was ambivalent from the beginning as to what he was doing, which, perhaps, is why he initially added disclaimers, rather than just protect himself in case of disclosure, although that too. Afterwards, he did express regret for these misdeeds, never repeating them, the other, later books bearing his name, all highly regarded, being accepted, unchallenged as his own work. More significantly, in the introduction to *Ir David*, Lida writes: “Whoever repeats a saying in the name of the one who said it brings redemption to the world” (*Megillah* 15a; *Hullin* 104b). He continues, casuistically explicating the apparently superfluous “to the world” and explaining the relationship of redemption to repeating a saying in the name of the one who said it, concluding that doing so causes

“One’s lips to move in the grave” (*Yevamot* 97a; *Sanhedrin* 90b; and *Bekhorot* 31b), as if he were alive, as King David says, “I will abide in Your tent for ever” (Psalms 61:5), as if he were alive and sixty myriads stand alive, ready to accept influences most high through sixty myriads channels, and then the redemption is suitable for the world.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

MOSES BENJAMIN WULFF—COURT JEW¹

The phenomenon of the Court Jew does not cease to fascinate us. Our attention is at first drawn by the contrast of Jews as advisors and confidantes to princes and monarchs, not infrequently in a kingdom or duchy which otherwise forbade residence to Jews, or, if it did allow it, segregated them in ghettos with the concomitant disabilities that resulted from such a status. The image of these court factors (*Hoffaktor*, *Hoffjude*), is further enhanced by their use of the trappings of eighteenth century nobility, while, more often than not, they not only adhered to the faith of their fathers, but actively worked for and interceded on behalf of their co-religionists.²

The role of Court Jews varied between regions and, within regions, between courts. Several Jews may have been in the employ of a single monarch, supplying the court, acquiring provisions for the army, and most important of all, providing financial services to their rulers, while, simultaneously, doing the same for a number of rulers. In many instances close relationships were established between the Jew and the ruler he served, with sensitive matters often being entrusted to the *Hoffaktor*.³

¹ The original version of this article was published in *European Judaism* 33:2 (London, 2000), pp. 61–71.

² There are a number of valuable studies of Court Jews and their influence, among them F. L. Carsten, “The Court Jews. A Prelude to Emancipation,” in *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook* III (London, 1958), pp. 140–156; and Jonathan I. Israel, *European Jewry in the Age of Mercantilism 1550–1750* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 123–144. In book form there is Selma Stern, *The Court Jew, A Contribution to the History of the Period of Absolutism*, translated by Ralph Weiman (Philadelphia, 1950); and, most recently, Vivian P. Mann and Richard I. Cohen, eds., *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds 1600–1800, Art, Patronage, Power* (Munich-New York, 1996), published in conjunction with an exhibition on Court Jews held at the Jewish Museum, New York, and which includes scholarly essays on the subject, as well as a number of books and studies on individual Court Jews; and Mordecai Breuer, “The Court Jews’ in *German-Jewish History in Modern Times. Volume 1. Tradition and Enlightenment 1600–1780*, ed. Michael Meyer (New York, 1996), pp. 104–126. See also Marina Sassenberg, “The Face of Janus: The Historian Selma Stern (1890–1981) and Her Portrait of the Court Jew,” *European Judaism*, 33:2 (2000), pp. 72–80. Most important, for our purposes, due to its treatment of Moses Benjamin Wulff, is Max Freudenthal, *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns. Moses Benjamin Wulff und seine familie, die Nachkommen des Moses Isserles* (Berlin, 1900).

³ Powerless and dependent on the good will of monarchs who often held Jews in low regard, the relationship between Court Jews and the rulers whom they served,

Behrend (Issachar ha-Levi Bermann) Lehmann (1661–1730), for example, was influential, through the expenditure of millions of thalers, in securing the election of Augustus the Strong of Saxony to the throne of Poland. The Hapsburgs depended on a number of Jewish bankers and financiers, such as Solomon and Ber Mayer, who provided the cloth for four squadrons of cavalry at the time of the wedding of the Emperor, Ferdinand II, and Samuel Oppenheimer and later Samson Wertheimer, for funds to finance the almost continuous wars of the Austrian Empire.

The most famous Court Jew is certainly Joseph (Jud [Jew] Sues) Oppenheimer (1698/99–1738), who served several rulers, finally becoming court factor in Württemberg. His high position antagonized non-Jews, so that, upon the death of his benefactor, Duke Charles Alexander, accusations of impropriety, previously proven false, were resurrected and Oppenheimer was hung.

Lesser courts also had their Jewish factors. Although the phenomena of Court Jews is most often associated with Germany, we find their counterparts in Poland, Russia, Sweden, and even in the service of the monarchs in the Iberian peninsula. Attention is generally directed towards a small number of prominent Court Jews, although others, in lesser principalities, often had positions of considerable influence. Moses Benjamin Wulff (1661–1729), achieved such prominence, and may be numbered among the more significant Court Jews, although he seldom receives the same consideration as his contemporaries. An exception is Manfred Lehmann, who describes Wulff as one of the three ‘most prominent Court Jews at the end of the seventeenth century’, the other two being Leffman Behrens and Samson Wertheimer, writing that they ‘brought much honor to the Jewish communities of their respective areas.’⁴

Moses Benjamin Wulff, descended from R. Moses Isserles (Rema), was not a German Jew, although he most likely had been born in Germany. His grandfather, Simon Wolf of Vilna, a communal leader there, was forced to flee during the disorders resulting from the wars between Russia and Sweden and the ravages of the Cossacks in the

despite their close associations and the important services they provided, can only be characterized as ambivalent. The inconsistencies of the position of Court Jews is one of the issues explored by Michael Graetz, ‘Court Jews in Economics and Politics,’ in *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds*, pp. 27–43.

⁴ Manfred R. Lehmann, ‘Behrend Lehmann: The King of the Court Jews’ in *Sages and Saints*. Ed. Leo Jung (Hoboken, 1987), X p. 199.

mid-1650s. Wolf found refuge in Hamburg in 1655 where he rebuilt the family's fortunes. Simon's children include Barukh (Berend) Wulff (Barukh Minden), who succeeded the Court Jew Elias Gumpertz in Berlin, supplying the court of Friedrich William, the Great Elector (1620–88), with its food requirements. Berend Wulff left Berlin for Halberstadt, and from there went to Minden, then to Halle, finally returning to Berlin, where he died.

Another of Simon's son, Solomon Wulff, married the daughter of R. Samuel Hameln, rabbi of Hildesheim and brother-in-law of Glückel of Hameln. Simon Wolf's daughter Driezel married Judah Wahl Katzenellenbogen, whose descendants include Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786); another daughter married R. Shabbetai ben Meir ha-Kohen (*Shakh*, 1621–1662), author of the commentary *Sifte'i Kohen* to *Shulhan Arukh Yoreh De'ah* and *Hoshen Mishpat*.

Simha Bunim (Benjamin) Wulff (d. 1696), was the third, perhaps the eldest, and, it would seem, the least successful of Simon Wolf's sons. During the pogroms accompanying the Cossack attacks he converted, as a ruse to save his life, to Catholicism, openly reverting to Judaism when he reached Hamburg. It seems that Simha Bunim was a tobacco merchant, for that is how he is described in the minutes of the 'Portuguese' congregation. He is recorded there as having been excommunicated (*herem*) in December, 1687 for attempting to 'persuade the sick and ill to seek cure at the hands of the *Ba'al Shem* Shabbatai Raphael', an adherent of Shabbatai Zevi.⁵

Simha Bunim is next found in Halberstadt, and from there moved to Berlin, where he is numbered among the founders of the *Hevra Kaddisha* (Burial Society) in that community. He did not achieve financial success, but rather, as his son, Moses Benjamin Wulff remarks in his letters, had numerous debts.⁶ Nevertheless, Moses Benjamin Wulff, called the 'Tall Jew' due to his great height, was not without connections. He was not only the nephew but also the son-in-law of Berend (Barukh Minden) Wulff, whose daughter, Zipporah, he had married. Both were seventeen at the time, in 1678, and should, therefore, have had entry into and good prospects for a promising career in court circles in Berlin.

⁵ Gershom S. Scholem, *Shabbatai Sevi. The Mystical Messiah* (Princeton, 1973), pp. 283–84, n. 283.

⁶ Alexander Altmann, *Moses Mendelssohn, A Biographical Study* (Philadelphia, 1973), p. 5; Stern, pp. 55–56.

This was not the case, however. The most influential Jew in Berlin was Jost Liebmann, brother of R. Isaac Benjamin Wolf, chief rabbi, from 1685, of Brandenburg and Pomerania, and a relative of Leffmann Behren, the financial agent of the Duke of Hanover. Furthermore, Liebmann's first wife, Malka, who died young, was the daughter of R. Samuel Hameln, who had been rabbi in various German communities, while his second wife was Esther Schulhoff, the widow of Israel Aaron of Königsberg, the Brandenburg court supplier for the Great Elector. Liebmann dealt in jewels and was actually the court jeweler, a position that resulted in his having great influence with Frederick I, who was not only an admirer and purchaser of precious gems, but was also in debt to Liebmann.

Moses Benjamin Wulff elected, unwisely, to compete with Jost Liebmann over the jewelry trade to the court. It is reported that their rivalry escalated to the point where they 'exchanged words and later blows in the residence of President of the Department of Finance'. The result was that Wulff was expelled, in the middle of the winter, not only from Berlin but from all of Brandenburg, forced to leave with his wife, two small children, parents, and with all of his property expropriated by order of the Great Elector.⁷ From Berlin, Wulff went to the principality of Anhalt-Dessau, where, in 1686, he became Court Purveyor.

Wulff attempted to return to Berlin in the 1690s, but Liebmann interceded with Friedrich III (1657–1713), from 1688 the Elector of Brandenburg (and from 1701, Friedrich I, king of Prussia), to prevent his return. Friedrich suggested that if he were to forbid Wulff entry, by not issuing him a letter of protection, Liebmann should pay all of Wulff's debts. Liebmann attempted to transfer this obligation to the entire Jewish community, but when this failed, compromised and agreed to assume half of Wulff's obligations.⁸ Wulff remained in Anhalt-Dessau.

Anhalt was an independent principality comprised of four duchies. The largest city, Dessau, capital of Anhalt-Dessau, is about eighty miles southwest of Berlin. A Jewish presence in Anhalt is recorded from the fourteenth century—mention is made of a Benjamin of Cologne in Erfurt in 1372—and there was a synagogue in Bernberg in 1457, while

⁷ Stern, p. 57.

⁸ Deborah Hertz, 'The Despised Queen of Berlin Jewry, or the Life and Times of Esther Liebmann,' in *From Court Jews to the Rothschilds*, p. 73.

Rabbi Isaac Eilenburg of Ascherlseben is mentioned in the responsa of R. Israel Isserlen (*Terumat ha-Deshen*).⁹ The ruler of Anhalt-Dessau at the time of Moses Benjamin's arrival was Prince (Fürst) John-George II, who was succeeded upon his death in 1693 by his son, Prince Leopold I (1676–1747). Wulff served each in turn, establishing an especially close relationship with the latter.

Leopold, the sole surviving son of John-George II, became an officer in the Prussian army in 1693, the same year he became a sovereign prince. Characterized as 'one of the sternest disciplinarians in an age of stern discipline' Leopold had considerable influence on the development of the Prussian army, from introducing the use of the iron ramrod in 1700, to its training after the Swedish war. The 'Old Dessauer', as he was known, is credited with making the Prussian infantry the finest in Europe. His military exploits, considerable bravery, and military skill, from the siege of Namur in 1695, through the War of the Spanish Succession, Polish Succession, and Austrian Succession, reflect on his ability, with Leopold being described, after the death of Prince Eugene, as 'the greatest of living soldiers'.¹⁰

Wulff's close personal relationship with Prince Leopold allowed him to play a significant role in Dessau, where his position was more akin to that of the Jewish factors who administered lands in Poland and Italy than that of the Court Jews of Venice and Berlin. He served Leopold in a number of capacities, such as, the administration of Dessau, implementing innovations in the currency and postal systems, equipping troops, supplying the court, and assisting the Prince in the management of his estate.

Wulff advised Leopold on the latter's plans and intrigues, often on matters of considerable sensitivity, carrying out private diplomatic missions to various capitals, including the court in Vienna. A Court Jew's effectiveness was, to a considerable extent, dependent upon his contacts and influence. Wulff represented Leopold at the courts of Augustus the Strong in Dresden and of Friedrich I of Gotha and Altenburg; in the former he became one of several Jews serving that ruler, and in the latter became Court Purveyor and reorganized the chaotic financial and monetary system. Wulff also hosted Friedrich and allowed him to make Wulff's home his headquarters when, on a journey, that aristocrat stayed

⁹ *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972), III col. 1; *Encyclopaedia Judaica: Das Judentum in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1928–34) II cols. 842–43.

¹⁰ *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*. 11th Edition (New York, 1910–11), II pp. 46–47.

in Dessau. In Vienna Wulff was instrumental in securing the investiture of Leopold over all of Anhalt and the introduction of primogeniture in Anhalt, both of which required the Emperor's consent.¹¹

It was in Vienna that Wulff performed his greatest personal service to Leopold. Leopold had determined to marry Anna Louise Föse, the beautiful but bourgeois daughter of an apothecary, against the wishes of his family. 'No tears nor contrivances of his mother, whom he much loved, and who took skillful measures. Fourteen months of travel in Italy; grand tour, with eligible French tutor . . . it availed not'.¹² It is even rumored that Leopold killed, in a duel, a cousin of Mademoiselle Föse, a medical student, who appeared to express too great an interest in her. In 1698 Leopold married his apothecary's daughter, a match that lasted more than half a century. Moses Benjamin Wulff was instrumental, after arduous negotiations, in having Anna Louise elevated to the nobility by the Emperor in 1701. It is interesting that Wulff's role is mentioned in all Jewish sources, while in others Wulff responsibility for Anna Louise's much improved status is not acknowledged. Indeed, Caryle writes that she was 'properly ennobled before long, by his splendid military services'.¹³

Most Court Jews, especially among the Ashkenazim, their great wealth, luxurious lifestyle, and associations with gentile nobility notwithstanding, maintained strong connections with the Jewish community and were religiously observant. A number of Court Jews, for example, Behrend Lehmann in Halberstadt, established a *Klaus* (*Bet Midrash*, House of Study) where rabbinic students and scholars pursued advanced Torah study. Wulff, who was known for his considerable piety and benevolence, and who possessed a degree of rabbinic learning in his own right, founded a *Klaus* in Dessau. It was initially headed by R. Benjamin Zev Wolf ben Samuel, author of *Ir Binyamin* on *Ein Ya'akov* (Frankfort on the Main, 1698), and *Ir Binyamin Sheni* on aggadic material in the Jerusalem Talmud (Feurth, 1722). He also served as *Av Bet Din* (head of the rabbinical court) in Dessau and is later mentioned in conjunction with Metz. The *Klaus* was afterwards headed by R. Isaac

¹¹ Carsten, p. 147; Stern, *The Court Jew*, pp. 55–59 and 235.

¹² Caryle, *History of Friedrich II. Of Prussia called Frederick The Great* (1858–65, reprint New York, 1903), I p. 328.

¹³ Caryle, p. 329.

Itzig Gerson, later known as Joseph Isaac Gerson. Gerson was a nephew of Wulff, and his wife was a granddaughter of Barukh Minden, whose daughter had married Reuben Fürst of Hamburg. As a result of the *Klaus*, together with the printing press established by Wulff, Dessau became a center of Jewish learning and scholarship.

Establishment of the press was approved by Leopold's mother, Princess Henriette Catherine of Orange, great aunt of Friedreich William, who acted as regent in her son's frequent absences. Approval was given on December 14, 1695 for the first Hebrew press in Anhalt-Dessau, and the first books were published in 1696.¹⁴ The title page of many of these works include the following statement:

Printed here [in the holy congregation of] Dessau
with AMSTERDAM letters
Under the rule of her ladyship, the praiseworthy
and pious Duchess,
of distinguished birth HENRIETTE CATHERINE
[May her majesty be exalted]

Later books, printed after Henriette Catherine's death, bear Leopold's name, although Anna Louise also functioned as regent in her husband's absence. The permission granted to Wulff entitled him to print both Hebrew and German books. Nevertheless, his printing house published Hebrew titles only, his primary interest being the spread of Jewish learning. Letters cast in Amsterdam were acquired, workers were hired from that city, and in its first year the press issued *Tefillah le-Moshe*, a prayer book with Haggadah and Yiddish translation by Avigdor Sofer from Eisenstadt in several different editions, among them one for women entitled *Minhat Ani*.¹⁵ Also printed that year are a *Selihot*, *Hok Ya'akov*,

¹⁴ Friedberg, Ch. B., *History of Hebrew Typography of the following Cities in Europe: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Avignon, Basle, Carlsruhe, Cleve, Coethen, Constance, Dessau, Deyhernfurt, Halle, Isny, Jessnitz, Leyden, London, Metz, Strasbourg, Thiengen, Vienna, Zurich. From its beginning in the year 1516* (Antwerp, 1937), p. 73 [Hebrew]; Mention is made in bibliographic works, based on Isaac Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim* (Vilna, 1880), p. 36 no. 687 [Hebrew], of a Yiddish edition of *Eldad ha-Dani*, printed in Dessau in 1649. However, the Benjacob entry notes that the date and place of publication are lacking and the attribution is, therefore, uncertain.

¹⁵ The workers at the press, as listed by Freudenthal (p. 271) and Friedberg (pp.

with *Solet le-Minhah*, both by R. Jacob ben Joseph Reischer, *Sha'arei Zion*, and two editions of Psalms.¹⁶

Wulff printed a number of carefully edited prayer books according to the Ashkenaz and Polish rites with Yiddish translations and with Kabbalistic commentaries, for example, *Sha'arei Zion* by R. Nathan Nata Hannover (1696 and 1700), and *kinot* and *selihot*. Other books of note are *Gevurat Anashim* by R. Shabbetai ben Meir ha-Kohen (*Shakh*) and the responsa of R. Meir ben Moses Katz (1697), and *Iggeret le-Hokhmei Brisk* of R. David Oppenheim, *Beit Yehudah*, the novellae of R. Judah ben Nissan (1698), and the kabbalistic work *Va-Yakhel Moshe* by R. Moses ben Menahem Graf (1699). The last book issued by the press was *Zayit Ra'anan* on the *Yalkut Shimoni* from R. Abraham Abele Gombiner (*Magen Avraham*), printed in 1704, when Wulff's troubles forced him to close the press.

Among the ornamentation on the title pages of books printed in Dessau are a pillared frame, topped by an obelisk, which appears on the title pages of *Gevurat Anashim*, *Hok Ya'akov*, *Solet le-Minhah*, and *Kinot*, (fig. 74) and an architectural border with a small crest made up of an erect lion and castle at the top, modeled after the ensign of the famed Amsterdam printer, Immanuel Benveniste (1641–59). The books with this frame include *Beit Yehudah* and *Zayit Ra'anan*.¹⁷ Other books, particularly the small format prayer books, such as *Iyyun Tefilla* and *Sha'arei Zion*, the last measuring about 9 cm, have frames made up of rows of florets but no other ornamentation on the title pages.

74–75) are: setters, Hayyim Altschul ben Mordecai Gumpel from Prague, 1696–1701; Israel ben Moses, 1696–1704, and his sister Ella, the nine-year-old daughter of Moses ben Abraham Avinu, 1696; Jacob Zevi ben Eliezer, known as Koppel Setzer from Postelberg in Böhmen, 1698; and Jacob ben Moses from Posen, 1698. The pressmen were Joseph ben Jekutiel from Dessau, 1698–1704, and Zevi Hirsch ben Elia ben Baer Lübek from Prague, 1696. The editors were Arieh Judah Leib ben Hayyim Sofer and Naphtali (Zevi) Hirsch ben Jeremiah from Berlin, 1704. Freudenthal's opinion (p. 163) that the first book printed in 1696 was *Tefillah le-Moshe* is accepted by Aron Freimann, 'A Gazetteer of Hebrew Printing,' in *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography* (New York, 1976), p. 282, and Alexander Marx, 'Adler's Gazetteer of Hebrew Printing,' *Jewish Quarterly Review* (Philadelphia, 1920), p. 268.

¹⁶ *Hok Ya'akov*, on the laws of *Pesach*, and *Solet le-Minhah*, supplements to the author's *Minhat Ya'akov* and *Torat ha-Shemaim*, were printed and bound together. Indeed, although both books have their own title pages, the signatures and pagination for *Solet Le-Minhah* continues from *Hok Ya'akov*, rather than beginning anew.

¹⁷ Concerning the usage of Benveniste's device by other printers see Marvin J. Heller, 'The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and its Later Influence,' *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* XIX (1994), pp. 3–20.

Wulff's intention, from the time that he established his press, had been to issue a fine new edition of the Talmud. It is not surprising, therefore, that when Johann Christoph Beckman, professor of Greek language, history, and theology at the University of Frankfurt on the Oder, and Michael Gottschalk, bookseller and printer, with whom Beckman was a partner, having secured a royal imprimatur to print the Talmud, approached Wulff in 1696 seeking a partner and sponsor for their enterprise, that he accepted, and a partnership was formed to publish the Talmud. Their contract stipulated that Beckman and Gottschalk would supply Wulff, in Dessau, with paper, typographical equipment, and skilled workers. Wulff, in turn, would pay the costs of publication. Beckman and Gottschalk began to send the stipulated material to Dessau. Work progressed slowly, however; expenses were considerably higher than anticipated and the staff was inexperienced. In addition, Wulff was beset by financial difficulties. Forced to withdraw, Wulff had to pay damages (compensation) to Beckmann and agree that while he might continue to print other works he would not undertake another edition of the Talmud.¹⁸ The projected Talmud was subsequently published in Frankfurt on the Oder (1697–99), sponsored by Issachar (Behrend Lehmann) ha-Levi Bermann, by whose name that Talmud is today known.

Wulff's financial and legal difficulties resulted from his efforts, noted above, on behalf of Gotha and Altenburg. To improve the currency of that state, Wulff, who had successfully extended credit to several governments, entered into a contract in 1691 for the delivery of silver with the Duke, loaning him hundreds of thousands of florins, raised by pledging his jewels, notes, and personal wealth as security, and paying a high interest rate on the monies he borrowed. Friedrich first deferred payment to Wulff, then repudiated the debt, claiming that it was Wulff who was liable, and finally filed suit against Wulff for his alleged obligations to Gotha and Altenburg. Despite the support and intervention of Leopold and the Prussian and Saxon governments, regardless of a detailed accounting of the monies involved provided by Wulff to the courts, and the findings of Prussian and Saxon commissioners that Gotha's proceedings were illegal, Wulff was constantly

¹⁸ Friedberg, p. 73; Max Freudenthal, 'Zum Jubiläum des ersten Talmuddrucks in Deutschland,' in *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judenthums* (Berlin, 1898), pp. 82–83.

involved in litigation and repeatedly imprisoned. When he died on August 19, 1729, the matter remained unresolved.¹⁹

After his printing press closed in 1704 Wulff provided assistance to Hebrew printing-houses in Berlin and in the surrounding communities of Anhalt-Dessau, both through his influence and with material assistance. In 1706, Moses Benjamin Wulff loaned some typographical equipment to his brother-in-law, Reuben Poarsht in Berlin, who used it to print *Hiddushei Halakhot* by R. Samuel Eliezer Edels (Maharsha) in that year and perhaps other books as well. After the return of his material to Dessau Wulff furnished it to Moses ben Abraham Avinu in Halle on the Salle and after that press closed, to Israel ben Abraham in Koethen and Jessnitz.²⁰ Wulff provided the Halle and Jessnitz print-shops with typographical equipment, financial aid, and in Halle, incomplete prayer books to be finished in Halle. Evidence of his assistance can be found on the title pages of a number of books issued by these printers, which have the Wulff ornamentation, that is, the copy of the Benveniste device and in Jessnitz, also the obelisk device.

A number of scholars, influenced by Freudenthal, view Israel ben Abraham's press, and the print shop of Moses ben Abraham Avinu as well, as extensions of Wulff's Dessau printing-house. Altmann and Schmelzer, for example, write, respectively, 'In 1742 the Wulffian printing-house, then located in Jessnitz...' and 'The press continued to operate in the neighboring cities of Halle, Jessnitz and Köthen.'²¹ It seems more likely, however, that these were independent print shops that received support and encouragement from Wulff, and others as well, rather than an extension or subsidiary of the 'Wulffian printing-house'.

Wulff was a relatively modest man, declining the elected post of head of Dessau's Jewish community. He spent the better part of his fortune on communal needs and is quoted as having written that 'he hopes... that his gifts will atone, not only for his sins, but will hasten the day of deliverance.'²² Wulff supported the small Jewish community

¹⁹ Altmann, p. 6; Stern, pp. 251–52.

²⁰ Concerning Moses ben Abraham Avinu see Marvin J. Heller, 'Moses ben Abraham Avinu and his Printing-Presses.' *European Judaism* 31:2 (1998). The Talmudic treatises printed by Moses ben Abraham Avinu in Halle and Israel ben Abraham in Jessnitz are discussed in Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1999), pp. 59–74, 75–83.

²¹ Altmann, p. 10; Friedberg *Amsterdam*, p. 74; Menahem Schmelzer, 'Hebrew Printing and Publishing in Germany, 1650–1750. On Jewish Book Culture and the Emergence of Modern Jewry.' *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook XXXIII* (London, 1988), p. 372.

²² Stern, p. 223.

of Dessau, spending liberally in support of Jewish institutions, including *yeshivot*, and using his influence on its behalf, so that by 1729, the year that he died, the community had grown to 700 persons, from twenty-six families in 1685.²³ Jews, especially members of his family, were attracted to Dessau, where they were able to accept positions or open businesses. Saul Wahl (d. 1717), son of Judah Wahl, namesake of the reputed King of Poland for a day (1587), and Moses Benjamin Wulff's first cousin, settled in Dessau, where he received authorization from Johann George to open a brandy factory, the duchy's first. Polish Jews, after being admitted to Anhalt-Dessau in 1678, subsequently came in larger numbers, due to the influence of Wulff, as they encountered less opposition to their presence there than in many other locations in Germany.²⁴

Moses Benjamin Wulff's family continued to serve the Jewish community of Dessau. His only son, Elias, was appointed *Hoffaktor* by Leopold but achieved neither the eminence nor the influence attained by his father. The family's wealth was gone and he was unable to support the Jewish community as in the past, with the result that the community declined. Nevertheless, a contemporary record describes a *Seder* in Elias's home as being 'like Abraham's house, was open to all wanderers, whether of high or low degree.'²⁵ Elias was elected to and accepted the position of president of the Dessau community, and briefly reopened the Hebrew press in Dessau in 1742, issuing three works, *Korban Aharon* on *Sifra*, together with *Middot Aharon*, by R. Aaron ibn Hayyim (c. 1560–c. 1632), and tractate *Megillah*, both in 1742, followed by *Seder Mo'ed* from the Jerusalem Talmud with the commentary *Korban ha-Edah* by R. David Fraenkel in 1743. He engaged in business, but did not succeed in re-establishing the family's fortunes. Elias died on March 17, 1754.

Elias's son, Benjamin (Simha Bunim, d. 1756), seems to have been more successful, supporting his father in his last days. He established, with royal support, a cotton and calico factory in the Tiergarten in

²³ *The Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1901–06), IV p. 235.

²⁴ Neil Rosenstein, *The Unbroken Chain. Biographical Sketches and Genealogy of Illustrious Jewish Families from the 15th–20th Century* (Rev. ed. Lakewood, edition 1991), p. 196; Moses A. Shulvass, *From East to West. The Migration of Jews from Eastern Europe During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Detroit, 1971), p. 39.

²⁵ Quoted in Stern, p. 233.

1752, which equaled Indian cloth in quality and was more efficient than his Dutch and Hamburg competitors, whom he undersold. Benjamin's son, Isaac Benjamin (d. 1802), expanded the plant from twenty to fifty looms, opened a factory for cotton hats and stockings, and by 1875 was the most important manufacturer of cotton goods in Berlin, producing material with an annual value of 100,000 thalers.²⁶ Elias's daughter married Nathan ben Moses of Kalisch, who was appointed, in 1745, chief cantor of the Dessau community.

Moses Benjamin Wulff's daughters married well. Among them are Miriam, who married Aaron Isaac Levi; their son, Barukh Aaron Levi became *Hoffaktor* in Leipzig, Saxony in 1769. Sarah married Dr. Isaac Wallich of the Koblenz family; a number of their sons became physicians. Another daughter married Magnus Moses, also known as Menahem Mann of Cleve; this family lived in Dessau until 1700.²⁷

Moses Benjamin Wulff's rise to prominence, based on acumen and financial ability, his influence and prestige, and finally his downfall, are not atypical. For all their importance, associating with and counseling monarchs and nobles, for all the glitter of their personal lives, the Court Jew remained a pariah. When their value, both as individuals and as a group, diminished, their power and their wealth disappeared. The role of the Court Jew resulted from a confluence of conditions, and, when those conditions ceased to exist, the role of the Court Jew became superfluous. Nevertheless, the phenomenon of the *Hoffaktor*, for the brief period in which he flourished, captures our imagination and does not cease to fascinate us.

²⁶ Stern, p. 153.

²⁷ Wulff's oldest daughter, Dreizel, died at an early age. Zipporah, Moses Benjamin's wife, died in 1714.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

MOSES BEN ABRAHAM AVINU AND HIS PRINTING-PRESSES¹

The history of Hebrew printing is replete with outstanding personalities. Among the more colorful is Moses ben Abraham Avinu, who printed Hebrew books for more than three decades in Amsterdam and Germany. His life is of interest due to the insights it allows us into Hebrew printing at the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries and because it is instructive as to the adversities of Jewish life in that period.

Moses ben Abraham was a convert to Judaism. His name, prior to his conversion, is given as Haase, and he is referred to as Moses Polak in Dutch records.² Originally from Nikolsburg or Prague, Moses ben Abraham came to Amsterdam, together with his wife Friede Israels, either as a proselyte to Judaism or converted in Amsterdam. The name ben Abraham Avinu [our father], suggestive of the progenitor of the Jewish people, is one often taken by converts. Avinu appears on the title pages of his Amsterdam imprints but not on his later books.

By the end of the seventeenth century, Amsterdam was not only the leading book city in Europe, but was the first city of Hebrew printing, having supplanted Venice in both the number and quality of books printed for many decades. The output of Amsterdam's presses exceeded the combined number of books printed by all the other print-shops in Europe, with the industry employing no less than 30,000 people; from the time of Menasseh ben Israel's first book in 1627 to 1732 there were 318 Jewish printers in Amsterdam, and from 1680 to 1789 there was not one decade in which less than 100 books were printed with Hebrew letters, with as many as 246 books being issued in the peak decade from 1710 to 1719.³

¹ The original version of this article was published in *European Judaism* XXXI n. 2 (London, 1998), pp. 123–32.

² Moses ben Abraham Avinu is not to be confused with the Constantinople printer of the same name who was employed at the printing-houses of Jonah ben Jacob and his sons Reuben and Nissan Ashkenazi (1743–46) and Benjamin ben Moses Roshe of Venice (1746).

³ Bloom, Herbert I., *The Economic Activities of the Jews of Amsterdam in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Port Washington, 1937, reprint, 1969), pp. 45 and 59; Vinograd,

In Amsterdam, Moses ben Abraham worked as a compositor in the printing-presses of Uri Phoebus Ha-Levi, David Tartas, and Moses Kosman. Moses ben Abraham's name appears in 1687 as the type-setter for Phoebus of a Yiddish book of kabbalistic prayers to be recited on the fast day preceding the New Moon. Besides his work on Hebrew titles, Moses ben Abraham also set the Yiddish newspaper *Dinstagishe un Freytagishe Kurant*, first for Uri Phoebus and, after it changed hands, for David Tartas.⁴ It has also been suggested that Moses ben Abraham was involved with the non-Jewish printer Casper Steen, and that 'Casper Steen's first Hebrew printing-office which can be traced in 1692 might well have been identical with that of Moses Abrahamsz'.⁵

In 1689/90 Moses Kosman, a businessman who had established a print-shop that issued three books only in two years, concluded that operating a printing-house detracted from his other business interests, and was more complex and less remunerative than he had foreseen. Kosman therefore sold his print-shop to Moses ben Abraham for Fl. 1,600. Moses ben Abraham supplemented Kosman's type with fonts cut by Hermanus Mandelslo.⁶

Moses ben Abraham Avinu printed in the attic of his house on Batavierstraat Street. His first title is recorded as a small Ashkenazic rite prayer-book, issued with the imprint of Moses Kosman; no copies of this work are extant today and it is known only from a deed which indicates 2,600 copies were printed. Moses ben Abraham Avinu was permitted to sell 250 copies to Germany, evidence that he had business connections in that country, an important customer for the Amsterdam Hebrew presses. Moses ben Abraham printed eight titles in 1690, primarily small works, several with an approbation from R. Moses Judah ben Kalonymous, the rabbi of the Ashkenaz community of Amsterdam. They are *Prayers for the Eve of Shavu'ot and Hoshana Rabbah*; R. Joseph

Yeshayahu, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book Part I Indexes*, Jerusalem, 1995, pp. 24–25 [Hebrew].

⁴ Fuks, L. and Fuks-Mansfeld, R. G., *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815*, Leiden, 1984–87, II pp. 283, 343, and 384; Friedberg, Ch. B., *History of Hebrew Typography of the following Cities in Europe: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Avignon, Basle, Carlsruhe, Cleve, Coethen, Constance, Dessau, Deyhernfurt, Halle, Isny, Jessnitz, Leyden, London, Metz, Strasbourg, Thiengen, Vienna, Zurich. From its beginning in the year 1516*, Antwerp, 1937, p. 34 [Hebrew]; Abraham Yaari, *Studies in Hebrew Booklore*, Jerusalem, 1958, pp. 249–50 [Hebrew]; Wolf, quoted in *Jewish Encyclopedia* IX p. 61.

⁵ Van Eeghen, I. H., 'Moses Abrahamsz, printer in Amsterdam,' *Studia Rosenthaliana*, VI, Amsterdam, 1972, p. 70.

⁶ Van Eeghen, p. 70.

ben Elimelech of Turbin's ethical work *Sefer Ben Zion; Ze'edah u'Re'edah*; tractate *Megillah*; *Moreh Zekek*, an index of the *mitzvot* according to Maimonides, compiled by R. Solomon ben Eliezer ha-Levi and edited by R. Zadok ben Asher Wahl; tractate *Makkot*; *Sefer Pekudei Ha-Shem*; and *Seder Tikkunei Shabbat*.⁷

Although Moses ben Abraham Avinu was able to find financial backing for his works, as did other Amsterdam printers, he was not successful. Deeply in debt, his press closed in November, 1690. Moses ben Abraham was even forced to depart from his house, taking 'with him his more than modest personal belongings'.⁸ The printing-house reverted to Moses Kosman, who then leased the typographical material to Asher Anshel and Issachar Ber. Moses ben Abraham's failure was brought on by a suit initiated by David Tartas concerning a Polish rite prayer-book. Although Moses ben Abraham won the suit he no longer had the resources to continue printing.⁹ The records of the bankruptcy proceedings reveal that Moses ben Abraham and Friede had three children at this time.

In 1694 Moses ben Abraham resumed printing, again with a Polish rite-prayer book, again against Tartas's opposition, and again with Kosman's type. On March 22 of that year he became a member of the Amsterdam Book Guild and, two days later, secured the approval of the Aldermen of Amsterdam to print the prayer book. However, he printed four books only, 'in the cheap and popular pocket size'. The first of these works, a *Birkat ha-Mazon* book (56 pages), included a *haggadah*, Sabbath *zemirot* with Yiddish translation, and a poem on circumcision by Abraham ha-Kohen. The other books printed by Moses ben Abraham at this time are a Yiddish translation by R. Hertz ben Oyzer of R. Solomon ben Jacob Almoli's popular *Pitron Halomot* (Interpretation of Dreams); a daily and festival prayer book according to the Ashkenaz and Polish rite; and *Tikkunei Shabbat*, Sabbath prayers, *zemirot*, and Psalms. Moses ben Abraham again did not succeed financially and left Amsterdam for Germany with unpaid debts, the type being transferred a second time to Asher Anshel and Issachar Ber.¹⁰

⁷ Fuks II, pp. 390–94 nos. 502–509. Concerning the attribution of the tractates printed here and in Halle see *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises printed from 1700 to 1750*, Leiden, 1999, pp. 68–74.

⁸ Fuks, p. 385.

⁹ Van Eeghen, p. 30.

¹⁰ Fuks, pp. 383–87.

The dispute that eventually forced Moses ben Abraham into bankruptcy was not an isolated incident. The printers of Hebrew books in Amsterdam contended on numerous occasions over the exclusive right to print books. As early as 1659 Joseph Athias and the orientalist Johannes Georgius Nisselius contested the latter's twenty-year privilege from the States of Holland and West Friesland to publish a *Sacra Biblia* (Hebrew Bible). In 1714 Samuel ben Solomon Marquis and Raphael ben Joshua de Palachios, relying on restrictive approbations issued on their behalf, prevented Solomon Proops from printing the Talmud. Three years later, after printing a number of tractates, they too were forced to discontinue printing their Talmud edition by the Frankfort on the Oder printer Michael Gottschalk, whose rights, granted for his 1697–99 Talmud, had not yet expired. Perhaps the most notable dispute was between the Proops press and the Frankels of Sulzbach over the right to print the Talmud in the mid-eighteenth century.

In the dispute between Moses ben Abraham and David Tartas, the latter attempted to enforce a privilege granted for fifteen years by the States of Holland and West Friesland for a Hebrew prayer-book. However, the Aldermen of the Amsterdam Book Guild made it clear that just as other prayer-books could be printed without being subject to prior restraints (restrictive approbations), so too Hebrew prayer-books could be printed freely by all (March 22, 1694). Although Amsterdam's rabbinic authorities continued to issue restrictive approbations for original works and large undertakings requiring substantial investment, they refused, in a decree dated 11 Marheshvan (November 25, 1716), to extend such protection to smaller and more common works in order to avoid disputes and because such approbations 'weaken the hand of those engaged in this work, and they cause damage (*Bava Batra* 22b), specifically in this city from which there is considerable commerce [in books] at an inexpensive price'.¹¹

After his failure as a Hebrew printer in Amsterdam, Moses ben Abraham left Amsterdam for Germany, where he, or members of his family, were employed in Hebrew print-shops in Berlin, Dessau, Frankfort on the Oder, and Halle. Wherever Moses ben Abraham printed he was assisted at the press by his children; three generations of his family are known to have worked at the printers' trade. His son

¹¹ Quoted in Isaac Emanuel, 'Four Hebrew documents and two *ketubbot* from the Sephardic rabbinate of Amsterdam' *Hebrew Union College Annual*, XXXVI, Cincinnati, 1965, pp. 11–12 Hebrew section.

Israel ben Moses later became a printer of some repute in his own right, working in Offenbach from 1718/19 to about c. 1733, initially for Bonaventura de Launoy and afterwards operating his own print-shop. Israel ben Moses subsequently printed in Homburg and Neuwied before returning to Offenbach in 1737. The following year found Israel ben Moses in Jessnitz, where he was employed as a compositor by another proselyte, Israel ben Abraham, before returning to Neuwied. Israel ben Moses was assisted in his print-shop by his sons Abraham and Tobias.¹²

Moses ben Abraham's daughters, Elle and Gelle, are remembered today because of their entries in the colophons of a number of the books that they helped set, where they wrote that they should be forgiven any misprints, given their tender age. Elle, in a Yiddish colophon to *Tefilah le-Moshe* (Dessau, 1696), remarks:

The Yiddish letters I set with my own hand
I am Elle, the daughter of Moses from Holland
a mere nine years old
the sole girl among six children
So when an error you should find
Remember, this was set by one who is but a child.

We find the family next in Frankfort on the Oder, where they helped set the Talmud edition financed by the Court Jew Issachar (Ber Segal) ha-Levi Bermann (1661–1730), known as Behrend Lehmann, and printed by Michael Gottschalk from 1697 to 1699. Gottschalk imported his type from Amsterdam, and hired typesetters from several cities in Europe, in addition to the press's own compositors. The names of Israel and his sister Elle appear in the colophon for tractate *Niddah*, which states: 'By the worker faithfully occupied in the holy work, the setter, Israel ben [my lord and father] [the honorable rabbi] Moses [may he live long and happily] And by his sister, the virgin, Elle, bas [my lord...] Moses [may he...]: in the year A woman shall court a man (659 = 1699, Jeremiah 31:22) lp'k (the abbreviated era)'.¹³

¹² The history of the printing-presses in Offenbach and Jessnitz are discussed in Heller, *Individual Treatises*, pp. 98–109, 75–83, respectively.

¹³ The date is derived from the value of highlighted letters in the selected chronogram. Concerning the use of chronograms to date Hebrew books see Marvin J. Heller, 'Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud,' *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore (SBB)* XVIII (Cincinnati, 1993), pp. 3–14.

Israel, together with Elle, also set a *mahzor*, according to the Polish and Ashkenaz rite in Frankfort, the colophon of which stated: ‘See all this, the work of my hand, Elle, bas R. Moses, my father the Jew, and the hand of my brother Israel, in the year, “A threefold cord is not quickly broken” (1700, Ecclesiastes 4:12).’¹⁴ By 1710, when Moses ben Abraham was already in Halle, we hear that he and his wife, Friede Israel, had ten children and an intimation of their straitened financial situation. This information comes from their second daughter Gelle, who set type for a *Selihot* (1709) and a new edition of *Tefillah le-Moshe* (1710). In the colophon of the latter work Gelle writes that she, the daughter of Moses the printer and Friede, the daughter of Israel Katz [Kohen Zedek], has set this ‘beautiful prayer-book from beginning to end’ and that she is one of ten children, not yet twelve years old. She includes a prayer for the final redemption and concludes, ‘May the Lord God of Israel improve our lot and provide food and garments according to our needs. And may He give us, together with all Israel, peace’.

It is in Halle that Moses ben Abraham made his mark in the annals of Hebrew printing. Halle, in the Duchy of Anhalt-Dessau, was part of the domain of Prince Leopold I (Old Dessauer, 1693–1747). The Hebrew printing-houses that operated in the Duchy owed their ability to do so to the influence and patronage of the court Jew, Moses Benjamin Wulff. Wulff served Leopold in a variety of capacities and represented him on private diplomatic missions to various capitals, including the court in Vienna. It was there that Wulff performed his greatest personal service to Leopold, for Leopold had, in 1698, married Anna Louise Föse, the bourgeois daughter of an apothecary, against the wishes of his family. Wulff was instrumental in having Anna Louise elevated to the nobility by the Emperor in 1701, and, later, influential in Leopold’s investiture over all of Anhalt.¹⁵ Wulff established a Hebrew press in Dessau, issuing a number of titles from 1694 to 1704. After his printing-press closed in 1704 Wulff supported Hebrew printing-houses in the surrounding communities of Anhalt-Dessau, among them the presses of Israel ben Abraham in Koethen and Jessnitz, and that of Moses ben Abraham in Halle on the Salle.

¹⁴ Yaari, p. 262.

¹⁵ *The Encyclopedia Britannica*. Eleventh Edition, New York, 1910–11, II pp. 46–47; Marvin J. Heller, ‘Moses Benjamin Wulff—Court Jew in Anhalt-Dessau’, *European Judaism* 33:2. London, 2000, pp. 61–71.

The small small university town of Halle could not have been more unlike the bustling commercial center of Amsterdam. Where Amsterdam had large vibrant Jewish communities, Halle had last expelled its Jews in 1493, not to be readmitted until 1692. Amsterdam was the center of Hebrew printing; the first press to issue a Hebrew book in Halle was not established until c. 1706/08, although the university town of Halle had been home to a print-shop as early as 1520, with a total of twenty-four presses by 1700. That first press was established by J. H. Michaelis (1668–1738), a professor at the university and a non-Jew, whose purpose in doing so was to print a critical edition of the Hebrew Bible. Finally, in contrast to the relative freedom of the presses in Amsterdam, print-shops in Halle were subject to authorization and supervision.

In 1706, Michaelis engaged a Hebrew printer, Moses ben Abraham and his son Israel, to assist him in his project. Objections raised against the presence of a Jew without the benefit of a royal letter were sustained by the king, and were only obviated by arranging an association with the local university. Both Moses ben Abraham and his son Israel were registered at the university, with the stipulation that they reside at Michaelis' press, located in an orphanage in a suburb of Halle, and that neither father nor son engage in any other occupation than printing. Furthermore, they could work on the *Biblia Hebraica* only, and when that was completed must leave the city. Shortly after they began to work on the Pentateuch, Michaelis became ill and was unable to continue at the press.

The compositors, apparently unsupervised and unable to sustain themselves at the press in Michaelis' absence, engaged in other work, so that Michaelis was forced to employ other workers to complete his Pentateuch, printed in the Orphanotroph, which appeared in 1710. Moses ben Abraham printed Hebrew books independently of Michaelis, assisted in his printing-house by his large family, including, at first, his son Israel, who went into business, failed, and in debt, was forced to leave Halle, and his daughters. He was supported by patrons, the most important being Moses Benjamin Wulff, who supplied the press with typographical equipment and a number of incomplete prayer-books from Dessau, to be completed in Halle, and by R. Kalynomous Kalman ben R. Judah Leib Weil of Halle, who supplied funds to support the press.

Excluding two possible editions of *Avot* recorded in bibliographical sources but no longer extant and Michaelis' Pentateuch, the first Hebrew books printed in Halle, and assuredly the first titles for a Jewish market,

were issued by Moses ben Abraham.¹⁶ He is credited with printing slightly more than twenty books in Halle. Given the circumstances of his press, operating without official approval and liable to be closed at any time, as well as the nature of the books he printed in Amsterdam, one would expect that Moses ben Abraham's Halle titles would be small and not very remarkable works. While the books he issued were generally small in size several are significant titles.

In 1709 he printed a *Selihot* and the first part of the responsa of R. Jacob ben Joseph Reisher (c. 1670–1733), *Shevut Ya'akov*. Printed with this work is *Pe'er Ya'akov*, Reisher's novellae on *Berakhot*, *Bava Kamma* and *Gittin* (part II of *Shevut Ya'akov* was printed in Offenbach, 1719, and part III in Metz, 1789). Reisher was an important rabbinic figure, serving as *dayyan* in Prague, and in rabbinic positions in Rzeszow, Anspach, Worms and Metz. Among his other books are *Hok le-Ya'akov*, an important work on the laws of Passover, *Minhat Ya'akov*, on Moses Isserles' (Rema) *Torat ha-Hattat*, and *Iyyun Ya'akov* on the *Ein Ya'akov* and *Avot*. *Shevut Ya'akov* has a copy of the device of the seventeenth-century Amsterdam printer, Immanuel Benveniste, on the title page. This popular mark graced the title pages of books issued by a number of printing-houses in the eighteenth century.¹⁷ Unlike many of his Amsterdam imprints, Moses ben Abraham's Halle titles omit the appellation *Avinu*. More importantly, however, is that his name appears on the title page, as well as the place of printing, beginning with his first title, *Shevut Ya'akov*.

The following year, 1710, saw the appearance of Psalms, a prayer-book (*Tefillah le-Moshe*) and two small but important works, that is, *Turei Zahav* by R. David ben Samuel ha-Levi (Taz, 1586–1667) on *Yoreh De'ah* (eight pages), and *Shehitot u'Bedikot*, R. Jacob Weil's (d. c. 1455) authoritative work on ritual slaughter. One can get a sense of the importance of this last work from the fact Moses ben Abraham's printing of *Shehitot u'Bedikot* is recorded as the fifty-first edition of that work, the first printed edition being that of Jacob ben Naphtali ha-Kohen of Gazola in Mantua in 1556.¹⁸

¹⁶ Steinschneider, Moritz, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana (CB)*, Berlin, 1852–60, no. 1472; Moshe Rosenfeld, *Hebrew Printing from its Beginning until 1948. A Gazetteer of Printing, the First Books and Their Dates with Photographed Title-Pages and Bibliographical Notes*, Jerusalem, 1992, p. 70 no. 694 [Hebrew]; and Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book Part II*, p. 153 nos. 1 and 2 record earlier Hebrew editions of *Pirkei Avot* (1700 and 1706).

¹⁷ Heller, Marvin J., 'The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and Its Later Influence', *SBB* XIX 1994, pp. 3–20.

¹⁸ Friedberg, Ch. B., *Bet Eked Sefarim* (Tel Aviv, 1951), III p. 975 *shin* 639 [Hebrew].

In 1711 Moses ben Abraham published *Ma'aseh Gadol fun Sh'nas 1706*, and *Perush al ha-Mesorah* by R. Jacob ben Isaac of Sausmer, small works of four and twelve pages respectively. This last work had approbations from R. Yom Tov Lipmann Heller (1579–1654) and R. Eliezer Ashkenazi. They were followed in 1712 by two Yiddish works on the destructive fires in Altona and Frankfurt on the Main, that is, David ben Shamaya's account of the great Frankfort fire, *Ein nei Klaghed vun der grossen Serefoh zu Frankfurt*, and on the Altona fire, *Ein nei Lied vun der grossen Serefoh zu Altona*.

Another title printed in 1712 is *Tela'ot Moshe (Weltbeschreibung)*. Moses ben Abraham was the author of this small Yiddish book. It is only twenty-four pages long and a small octavo (8^o) in format, and is a collection of accounts on such varied subjects as the river Sambatyon, the ten lost tribes, and the Garden of Eden. There seems to have been an earlier, 1693 Amsterdam edition of this book, which is recorded in several general bibliographical works without the name of the printer or any detailed information. Moses ben Abraham is also reputed to have translated the New Testament into Hebrew at the request of Jews who required it to respond to Christian polemics. In 1713 the print-shop issued R. Joseph ben David Tebele Rakower's (d. 1707) *Lashon Naki*, a popular work on letter writing.

Among Moses ben Abraham's last imprints in Halle are three, and possibly five tractates. *Rosh Ha-Shanah* (1712), *Bezah* and *Hagigah* (1714) were certainly printed in Halle. There is some dispute, however, concerning *Megillah* (fig. 75) and *Makkot*, whether they are Halle imprints from about 1714 or whether, as their title pages state, they were printed in Amsterdam in 1690. The title pages of these tractates are spare, devoid of ornamentation and with little text. The outstanding feature of the title pages is the oversized letters used for the words 'Massekhet' (tractate) and 'Megillah.' 'Makkot' is set in the same type as the rest of the page. These letters, which measure slightly more than 4.5 cm., were made from a woodcut rather than metal type. All five treatises share many characteristics and it is obvious why there is confusion as to their place and date of printing. The most important proponent for identifying these tractates as Halle imprints is Freudenthal.¹⁹ Nevertheless, it is the opinion of most contemporary bibliographers

¹⁹ Freudenthal, Max, *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns. Moses Benjamin Wulff und seine familie, die Nachkommen des Moses Isserles*, Berlin, 1900, p. 249.

that *Megillah* and *Makkot* were printed at a different period from *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, *Bezah*, and *Hagigah*, most likely when Moses ben Abraham was in Amsterdam.

Two additional works are credited to Moses ben Abraham's print-shop in 1714. *Zera Berakh Sh'lishi*, homilies on the Torah, by R. Berechiah Berakh ben Eliakim Getzel, rabbi of Klementow, Poland, and subsequently darshan in Yavorov, was begun, with thirty-seven pages reaching to *Parashat Vayehi* being printed before the press was closed. The book, which has a warm approbation from R. David Oppenheim, is entitled 'Sh'lishi' to distinguish it from two previous works by that name (*Zera Berakh Rishon* and *Sheni*) by the author's grandfather, R. Berachiah Berakh ben Isaac Eisik. The book's editor writes in the colophon that Berachiah Berakh came to Germany to print his work and that, lacking authorization to reside in Halle, was subsequently incarcerated. Only through the intercession of the local *shtadlan* was he eventually released and able to return to Poland.²⁰ Another edition of *Tefillah le-Moshe* in 1714 is also recorded; it is not clear, however, whether the prayer-book was actually reissued at this time or whether it has been confused with the 1710 edition. If *Tefillah le-Moshe* was reprinted, its inclusion of the prayer *Aleinu*, recently prohibited by royal decree, added to Moses ben Abraham's difficulties with the authorities, who considered both of these titles to contain anti-Christian passages.

Moses ben Abraham's activities had not gone unnoticed. Michaelis protested to the director of the University, who in turn brought the matter to the attention of higher authorities, possibly even the king, apparently as early as 1711, but to no avail. Moses ben Abraham disregarded any warnings and continued to print Hebrew titles without authorization or review of the books' contents.²¹ Alerted to the existence of these works by Michaelis, with their possibly offensive material, as well as the tractates printed in Halle, the authorities finally acted, closing the printing-press, seizing the typographical material and equipment, and imprisoning Moses ben Abraham.

Michaelis' role in another incident concerning the *Aleinu* prayer contrasts with the charges he brought in Halle. Accusations against Jewish religious practices were made to the government of Prussia by two apostate Jews. Among the charges was the claim of Franz

²⁰ Concerning Berechiah Berakh ben Eliakim Getzel see Yaari, pp. 445–449.

²¹ Friedberg, *Hebrew Typography*, pp. 74–75; JE VII p. 175.

Wertzel of Kistrin that the *Aleinu* prayer included impious references to Christianity. Among those questioned by Frederick I were rabbis and scholars, including Michaelis. ‘Those interrogated answered that the prayer concerned only heathens. Professor Michaelis of Halle, the Christian theologian, had also rendered a pro-Jewish reply’.²²

Moses ben Abraham, assisted by friends, is reputed to have escaped shortly after being incarcerated. According to some sources, he returned to Amsterdam, where he printed tractate *Rosh Ha-Shanah* in the same year, dying there in c. 1733/34. Van Eeghen, however, observes that the legends surrounding Moses ben Abraham are not all factual:

It is correct that he left Amsterdam with his family in 1694. But there is no trace to be found that he returned there from Halle in 1714 where he was prosecuted and thrown into jail. Neither can his name be found among those who were buried there in one of the two Jewish cemeteries in Amsterdam between 1731 and 1735. His alleged death in Amsterdam in 1734 or 1735 is, therefore, highly improbable.²³

Fuks agrees with van Eeghen, remarking that there is no documentation in support of Abraham ben Moses returning to Amsterdam, and that ‘no actual trace of his existence [in Amsterdam] has been found after 1714.’ Friedberg suggests a scenario that is consistent with van Eeghen and Fuks’ position, writing that Moses ben Abraham was compelled to return to the press at the orphanage, where he completed the Bible he had been retained to print under the supervision of Michaelis, and that he remained there until his death in 1734. The press in the orphanage remained active until 1750, issuing missionary titles in both Hebrew and Yiddish.²⁴

²² Dubnow, Simon. *History of the Jews from Cromwell's Commonwealth to the Napoleonic Era*. IV trans. Moshe Spiegel, New York, 1971, pp. 200–01.

²³ Van Eeghen, p. 70.

²⁴ Friedberg, *Hebrew Typography*, p. 75; Fuks, II p. 387; *JE* VI p. 175.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

GIOVANNI BERNARDO DE' ROSSI'S *DICTIONARY OF HEBREW AUTHORS (DIZIONARIO STORICO DEGLI AUTORI EBREI E DELLE LORO OPERE)*¹

One of the gems of Hebrew bibliography is the *Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei e delle loro opere* (*Dictionary of Hebrew Authors*) of Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi, a bio-bibliographical work published in Parma (1802) and encompassing the spectrum of Hebrew literature (figs. 76, 77).

The author's erudition and the *Dictionary's* many virtues notwithstanding, this bibliographical treasure is not, today, widely known, and even less frequently quoted. Several reasons can account for the *Dictionary's* obscurity. It was written in Italian, limiting its accessibility; the background of the author, a Catholic abbé, as well as his utilization of material from non-Jewish sources; and, I would suggest, the availability of a contemporaneous work, the *Shem ha-Gedolim*, the bibliographical masterpiece of R. Hayyim Joseph David Azulai (Hida, 1724–1806), published only a few years earlier (Livorno, 1774–86), which has overshadowed the *Dictionary*.

The Italian Christian-Hebraist Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi was born on October 25, 1742, in Castelnuovo Don Bosco, east of Turin in the Piedmont. He learned in Ivrea and afterwards in the University of Turin, where, as a theology student, de' Rossi began his study of Hebrew. In October, 1769, he accepted an appointment as professor of Oriental languages at the University of Parma, where he remained for the rest of his life. De' Rossi's interests and studies were concentrated in three fields dealing with the Hebrew book, that is, typography and the history of the Hebrew book, bibliography, and textual variants in the Hebrew Bible. His concentration on these fields, particularly into the area of textual variants, resulted in his becoming a collector of manuscripts and early printed books.²

¹ The original version of this article was published as the "Prolegomenon" to Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi's *Dictionary of Hebrew Authors (Dizionario Storico degli Autori Ebrei e delle Loro Opere)*, Mayer Sulzberger translation (Lewiston, N.Y., 1999), pp. v–xvi.

² *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, Isadore, Singer, ed. (New York, 1901–06), X p. 486; Shlomo Shunami, "Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi" in *About Libraries and Librarianship* (Jerusalem, 1969), pp. 21–24 [Hebrew].

De' Rossi expresses his love of and fascination with books in the introduction to *De typographia hebraeo-Ferrariensi*, where he writes:

There is no art which carries men away into greater admiration than typography; none which even at its origin had gained greater renown. Scarcely had it been invented, scarcely had the first specimens been published, when it was esteemed by all, wonderful, portentous, divine. Kingdoms, provinces, States, princes, and private men strove with one another in their eagerness to take hold of it, to cultivate it, to advance it to greater perfection, and, with equal zeal, authors learned in its origin and progress, are diligently investigating as to who introduced it into the world and developed it, as to which cities first took it up, as to which books were first produced in each province and state.³

De' Rossi's study of textual variants in the Hebrew Bible, the preparation of which necessitated visiting libraries throughout Italy, resulted in his *Variæ Lectiones Veteris Testamenti* (Parma, 1784–88), for which he received the knighthood of St. George from the court of Parma. The first products of this research dealing with Hebrew printing were *De typographia hebraeo-Ferrariensi* (Parma, 1780) and *Annali ebreo-tipografici di Sabbioneta* (Parma, 1780), on Ferrara and Sabbionetta, respectively. An appendix to the latter work was published three years later (Erlangen, 1783).

These books were followed by de' Rossi's most significant and best known works on Hebrew bibliography, the *Annales hebraeo-typografici sec. XV* (Parma, 1795), a detailed descriptive listing of Hebrew incunabula, in Latin, in three parts, consisting of 51 “*editiones anno in signitae*,” 35 “*editiones anno destitutae*,” and 67 “*editiones falsae ac suppositivae*.” De' Rossi is credited with being the first bibliographer to distinguish Hebrew incunabula as a separate classification of books; the *Annales* are considered “the foundation stone of the study of Hebrew incunabula and in many respects remain unsurpassed.”⁴ This pioneer work on incunabula was followed by the *Annales hebraeo-typografici ab an. MDI ad. MDXL* (Parma, 1799), which, divided into the same three categories,

³ Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi, *De Typographia hebraeo-Ferrariensi commentarius historicus, quo Ferrarienses Judaeorum editiones hebraicae, hispanicae, lisitanae recensentur et illustrantur* (Parma, 1780), p. ix, quoted in David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (reprint London, 1963), p. 246.

⁴ A. K. Offenbergh, *Hebrew Incunabula in Private Collections. A First International Census*, in collaboration with C. Moed-van Walraven (Nieuwkoop, 1990); reprinted in *idem*, *A Choice of Corals, Facets of Fifteenth-Century Hebrew Printing* (Nieuwkoop, 1992), p. 45.

describes, respectively, 292, 49, and 185 post-incunabula, that is, books printed from 1501 to 1540.

Among de' Rossi's numerous titles are the *Bibliotheca judaica antichristiana* (Parma, 1800), a bibliography of Jewish polemical works directed against Christianity, describing 179 books, with an addenda of three additional titles; *Annali ebreo-tipografici di Cremona* (Parma, 1808), on Hebrew printing in Cremona from 1556 to 1586; and a work similar to the *Dictionary*, but on Arabic bibliography, entitled *Dizionario storico degli autori arabi...* (Parma, 1807). A linguist, de' Rossi wrote several grammars on the languages he mastered, among them English, German, and Russian.

De' Rossi is equally well remembered for the especially fine collection of Hebrew manuscripts, including a number of illuminated codices, collected, catalogued, and described in his three volume *Mss. Codices hebraici biblioth. I. B. De-Rossi* (Parma, 1803). His collection of printed books was described in *Libri stampati di letteratura sacra ebraica ed orientale della biblioteca del G. Bernardo de' Rossi* (Parma, 1812).

De' Rossi died in March, 1831. His library consisted of about 1,700 manuscripts and 1,442 early printed books, including ninety incunabula, one of the the largest collections in the world.⁵ It was acquired in 1816 for the Grand Ducal Library at Parma, now the Palatine Library, by the Duchess of Palma, Marie Louise (1791–1847), the wife of Napoleon I and daughter of Emperor Francis II of Austria, for 100,000 francs, but only after repeatedly imploring De' Rossi as to the disposition of his collection.⁶ Together with other acquisitions, it is considered the foremost collection of Hebrew books in Italy and among the leading collections in the world. Among the treasures in the collection is a unicum of Rashi's commentary on the Torah, completed on February 17, 1475, in Reggio di Calabria by Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac, the first dated printed Hebrew book. Amram writes that "Alone of all its brethren this precious book survives. A kind fate sent it into de' Rossi's

⁵ Offenberg, *op. cit.* notes that de' Rossi also collected the Hebrew incunabula in the Biblioteca Comunale in Piacenza as well as a number of such books in the British Museum and the Rylands Library.

⁶ *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem, 1972), V col. 1557. An exhibition of the manuscript collection was held at the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, in 1985. The accompanying catalogue reproduced pages from and described a number of the more important codices.

loving hand; with him it lay in safety until it found its last resting place under the jealous guardian eye of the Grand Duke of Parma.”⁷

II

The *Dizionario* was translated into German—and dedicated to the Rothschilds—by C. H. Hamburger (d. March, 2, 1847), a physician from Leipzig, as the *Historisches Wörterbuch der jüdischen Schriftsteller und ihre Werke* (Leipzig, 1839) (figs. 78, 79).⁸ An index to the *Historisches Wörterbuch*, entitled *Ausführliches Sach- und Namenregister zu de’ Rossi’s ‘historisches Wörterbuch der jüdischen Schriftsteller und ihre Werke’* (Leipzig, 1846), was prepared by the preacher and author Dr. Heimann (Hayyim ben Abraham) Jolowicz (1816–1875). The combined works were republished in Amsterdam in 1967.

A translation into English, based on the *Wörterbuch*, was prepared by Mayer Sulzberger (1843–1923). It appeared as “De’ Rossi’s Dictionary of Hebrew Authors,” serialized from 1867 through 1869 in *The Occident*, (fig. 80) the journal founded by Isaac Leeser (1806–1868).⁹ After Leeser’s death Sulzberger managed *The Occident* for a year, publishing volume XXVI, the final issue of *The Occident*. Professionally a lawyer, Sulzberger was, from 1895, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia, and from 1902 until his retirement fourteen years later, president of that bench, Philadelphia’s highest judicial body.

Sulzberger was certainly qualified to undertake a bibliographic project such as the translation and annotation of the *Wörterbuch*. Not only was he very involved in Jewish communal affairs and a contributor of articles on Jewish subjects to scholarly journals, but he was also a

⁷ Amram, p. 24. A. K. Offenber, “The Earliest Printed Editions of Rashi,” in *A Choice of Corals*, p. 135, reports the following incident, related by de’ Rossi in the beginning of the *Annales*. De’ Rossi had almost, with great difficulty, obtained a second copy of the Abraham ben Garton edition of Rashi from “somewhere in Italy and it had been sent to him in a parcel. The postman, while crossing the river Po, let it slip from his hands when the barge suddenly gave a turn of the helm. The package sank into the water and was never retrieved.”

⁸ Salomon Wininger, *Grosse jüdische National-Biographie* (Cernauti, 1925–36), II p. 600. Hamburger was also the author of a book on Nordic mythology.

⁹ The issues of *The Occident* in which “De’ Rossi’s Dictionary of Hebrew Authors” appeared are Volume XXIV no. 12: pp. 549–60; Volume XXV nos. 1: pp. 18–28; 2:72–80; 3: 106–14; 4: 172–79; 5: 230–40; 6: 298–306; 7: 348–356; 8: 384–93; 9: 436–45; 10: 529–34; 11: 550–59; 12: 601–06; Volume XXVI nos. 1:13–23; 2:66–74; 3: 110–17; 4:182–87; 5:221–27; 6:257–65; 7: 306–13; 8:365–69; 9:398–404; 10:462–72; 11: 501–09.

bibliophile and an important collector of antique and rare Hebraica. A catalogue describing his early collection, entitled *Or Mayer Catalogue of the Old Hebrew Manuscripts and Printed Books of the Library of the Hon. Mayer Sulzberger of Philadelphia* (New York, 1896), was prepared by the renowned bibliographer and book dealer Ephraim Deinard (1846–1930). Sulzberger's library was eventually donated to the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, a contribution to the building of that library that has been recognized in books and articles. Indeed, Alexander Marx, the distinguished head of the Seminary library, described Sulzberger as “the real founder of the Seminary Library.” He also served for many years as the chairman of the publication committee of the Jewish Publication Society.¹⁰

Sulzberger adds a number of notes to the text—all the TR. footnotes are his—many based on the work of Isaac Marcus Jost (1793–1860), the German-Jewish writer and historian. Jost's major works on Jewish history are a nine-volume *Geschichte der Israeliten Seit der Zeit der Makkabäer bis auf Unsere Tage* (Berlin, 1820–28), *Neuere Geschichte Der Israeliten* (Berlin, 1846–47), and *Geschichte des Judenthums und Seiner Sekten* (Leipzig, 1857–59).

III

The *Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei e delle loro opere* resulted from de' Rossi's investigations into the Hebrew book. It is a bibliographical dictionary of just under seven hundred Hebrew authors, first printed in Parma in 1802 in two volumes. De' Rossi used a wide variety of sources, Jewish and non-Jewish, in compiling the *Dictionary*. Indeed, a review of the books referenced is a brief history of the early works on Hebrew bibliography.

The Jewish sources quoted most frequently are the *Sifteï Yeshenim* (1680) of Shabbetai Bass (Strim, Sabatai, 1641–1718) and the *Shem*

¹⁰ Concerning Sulzberger see Alexander Marx, “Mayer Sulzberger,” in *Essays in Jewish Biography* (Philadelphia, 1948), pp. 223–28; Herman Dicker, *The Mayer Sulzberger-Alexander Marx Correspondence 1904–1923* (New York, 1990); and *idem*, *Of Learning and Libraries. The Seminary Library at One Hundred* (New York, 1988), *var.cit.* On Sulzberger as a collector see Alexander Marx, “Jewish Book Collectors,” in *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore* (New York, 1944), pp. 232–236, where we are informed that Sulzberger's collection grew from the 28 manuscripts and not quite 400 books recorded by Deinard in 1896 to 400 manuscripts and 3000 rare books, including 45 incunabula, by 1903.

ha-Gedolim of R. Hayyim Joseph David Azulai, the pioneer works of Hebrew bibliography. Bass initially trained to be a cantor, but instead, because of his love of books, became a printer by trade. He was the author of *Sifteï Hakhamim* (1680) a super-commentary on Rashi on the Torah, and *Massekhet Derekh Erez* (1680), a travel guide book. Bass is the first Jewish bibliographer, his *Sifteï Yeshenim*, which describes about 2,200 Hebraica and Judaica, being the first such work in Hebrew.

Azulai is among the preeminent Sephardic rabbinic figures of the late eighteenth century. A resident of Hebron, he was selected by that community to travel abroad as their representative to raise funds for the maintenance of the rabbinic academies in the Holy Land. While traveling throughout Western Europe, he visited libraries and private collections. A prolific writer, with more than a hundred twenty-five titles to his name, Azulai wrote his bibliographic work, *Shem ha-Gedolim*, to enable rabbinic scholars to distinguish between authors with the same name and correctly date their works. De' Rossi frequently notes the opinions expressed in the *Shem ha-Gedolim*, writing, for example, on Chayim Abulafia's *Etz Chayim* and *Yosef Lekach*, "which, according to Azulai, are learned and elegant," or observing that "Azulai says that he saw an unpublished commentary by Bertinoro on Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch."

Historical and genealogical works referenced include the *Nomologia* of Immanuel Aboab (c. 1558–1628); *Sefer ha-Kabbalah (Book of Tradition)* of Abraham ben David (Dior, ibn Daud, Rabad I, c. 1110–80); *Kore ha-Dorot* of David Conforte (1617/18–c. 1690); *Zemach David* of David Gans (1541–1613); *Sefer Yuhasin* of Abraham Zacuto (1452–c. 1515); and *Shalshet ha-Kabbalah* of Gedaliah ibn Yahya (c. 1515–1578).

Among the significant bibliographic works quoted by non-Jewish authors are the *Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica* (Rome, 1675–93) of Giulio Bartolucci (1613–87) and the *Bibliotheca Hebraea* (Hamburg, 1715–33) of Johann Christoph Wolf (1683–1739). The former was professor of Hebrew and rabbinic literature at the Collegium Neophytorum (school for Jewish converts) in Rome and *scriptor hebraicus* at the Vatican library. The *Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinica* is in four volumes. The last volume was completed, and a fifth supplementary volume entitled *Bibliotheca Latina-Hebraea* (1694) was added by Carlo Giuseppe Imbonati. Cecil Roth observed that

the two most eminent Italian Hebraists of the period in a modern sense were Catholic priests—Giulio Bartolucci, in the seventeenth century,

whose gigantic *Magna Bibliotheca Rabbinica* is a landmark in the history of Hebrew bibliography; and Giovanni Bernardo de' Rossi, in the eighteenth, one of the most remarkable bibliophiles of all time, whose superb collection of Hebrew manuscripts is the glory of what was once the Ducal Library at Parma.¹¹

Johann Christoph Wolf, professor of Oriental Languages and Literature at the gymnasium at Hamburg, wrote, for his doctoral dissertation, a history of Hebrew lexicons, and a book on Karaite literature, *Notitia Karæorum* (Hamburg, 1714). His most important work, however, is the four-volume *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, based on the work of his predecessors, but primarily Bartolucci, and of his own research in the renowned Oppenheim collection, as well as his own extensive library of Hebraica. This work, highly valued by both Jewish and Christian bibliographers, is de' Rossi's most important bibliographical source. The *Bibliotheca Hebraea* was also employed by Steinschneider as a primary work in the preparation of the *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*.

De' Rossi makes use of the works of additional Christian-Hebraists. Among the more frequently referenced are Jacques Christian Basnage (1653–1725), a Protestant cleric and historian, author of a five-volume history of the Jews entitled *L'histoire et la religion des Juifs depuis Jésus Christ jusqu'à présent* (Rotterdam, 1706–07), translated into English (London, 1708), and *Antiquités judaïques ou Remarques critiques sur la république des hébreux* (1713); Johannes Buxtorf (I) (1564–1629), author of the *Bibliotheca Latina Hebraica* (Rome, 1694), a catalogue which describes the Hebrew books in his library (324 entries); Paul (Büchlein) Fagius (1504–49), who learned Hebrew from Elijah Levita and established a Hebrew press in Isny (1542) that published a number of Hebrew books, including Levita's *Tishbi*. Fagius' own writings include an exegetical work on the first four chapters of Genesis (1542), a basic Hebrew grammar (1543), and two Christian polemical works, *Liber Fidei seu Veritatis* (1542) and *Parvus Tractulus* (1542); and Gilbert Générard (1537–1597), Regius Professor at Paris, whose accomplishments include translations of Rashi and Abraham Ibn Ezra's commentaries to the Song of Songs and *Seder Olam Zuta*.

The authors and books described in the *Dictionary*, which is in alphabetical order by author, cover the complete gamut of Hebrew literature. Biographical and historical background is provided for many

¹¹ Cecil Roth, *The History of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia, 1946), pp. 394–95.

of the authors, as well as enumeration and description of their books. The background information, as well as the large number of entries testify not only to de' Rossi's knowledge of the Jewish book, but to his familiarity with the major personages of Jewish history. Biographical information often includes anecdotal material, such as that Samuel Silva, obtaining a pre-publication copy of Uriel da Costa's book challenging the immortality of the soul and the oral law, wrote a response, published prior to da Costa's book.

Great emphasis is placed on grammarians and philosophers, Biblical studies and theology, reflecting de' Rossi's predilections. He praises his authors, for example, telling us that the Ibn Ezra (Aben Ezra) was "one of the greatest minds, and one of the most extraordinary and celebrated writers of his people." In that entry, the longest in the book, 29 works, many still in manuscript, are described. In a much briefer entry, on Solomon Parchon, we are informed that he was a "great grammarian," and that his *Mahberet*, a lexicon based on earlier works, is "enriched with our author's notes." In the entry for Maimonides (Maimuni), for whom thirty-three works are enumerated, the description of the *Moreh Nevuchim* (*Nebuchim*) is three times longer than that of the *Yad Chazaka* (*Mishné Torah*). The importance of halakhists and talmudists is not neglected, however, although they certainly do not receive equal emphasis. For example, the entry for Asher ben Jechiel (Rosh), informs us, *inter alia*, that "His great reputation he owed to his profound knowledge of the Talmud and Jewish law, on which he left, among others, two reputable works, the first being *Asheri*, or *Kitzur Piské ha-Rosh*."¹²

De' Rossi is familiar with the many editions of a given work, so that, when discussing Solomon Ben Eliyakim Panzi's work he notes that it was published under different titles in different locations, that is, *Massoret ha-Talmud* (Salonika, 1523) and *Mafteach ha-Gemarah* (Venice, 1622), as well as the existence of a Latin translation (Helmstadt in 1697), and the identity of the translator, Ritmayer.

Indeed, one of the strengths of the *Dictionary*, which distinguishes it from other bibliographic works, is that de' Rossi continuously informs us of the existence of translations. These are, most frequently, between Latin, Spanish, and Portuguese to or from Hebrew, but also include more exotic languages such as Persian. The translator is often

¹² That de' Rossi has preferences, or areas of emphasis, should not be viewed negatively. Menahem Mendel Zlatkin, *Ozar ha-Sefarim, Part II* (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 5-6, observes that Azulai intentionally omitted works from the *Shem ha-Gedolim* by authors of which he disapproved.

identified, whether Jewish, churchman, or Christian-Hebraist. We are thus provided with an insight not only into the circulation and influence of individual Hebrew titles, but also into the varied habitations and languages of the Jewish people. We are made aware of the influence of the Hebrew book on the larger society and, correspondingly, of that society's impact on Jewish thought to a degree not found in comparable bibliographies.

Our author's knowledge of the Hebrew book is not limited to knowing the dates and places of publication of the various editions of a given work, but extends to the book's contents. For example, when describing the *Sifra*, we are informed, in an attempt to determine the identity of its author, that it "is ascribed by Abraham ben Dior, Maimuni, Isaac Israeli, Abravanel, and others to Rab, President of the Academy at Sora, who died in 243, while others claim it for Yehuda ben Ilai, a pupil of Akiba's, who flourished in 121." De' Rossi brings unusual but interesting works to our attention, such as, the *Shib'im Temarim* of Reuben David Tebel, which "explained a single verse of the Bible in seventy different ways," and the Discourses of the Venetian inventor Meir Magino, "on the uses of silk and of the various ways, devised by himself, of preparing and manufacturing it." We also find entries for printers and editors, such as the Soncino family—concerning Gershom (Gerson), De' Rossi writes "to whom we are indebted for so many publications—and Jacob Ben Chayim Tunisi, editor of the Rabbinic Bible published by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1525.

De' Rossi's knowledge of Hebrew manuscripts is also much in evidence. Numerous works that exist in manuscript only are listed; for example, that of Jacob Ben Abba Yaari Sason, author of "A commentary on the Pentateuch, which is in MS." In many instances, such as that of Abraham ha-Levi ben Isaac, we are also informed as to the location of the manuscript, here "an unpublished commentary on the song of Solomon, which is in MS. in the Oratoire library in Paris, and in mine." In the latter case, the author had also written "*Marginal Comments* in a copy of the *Megillot* with Arama's and Rashi's commentaries printed at Riva di Trento in 1561, and belonging to me."

Another of the *Dictionary's* features is the inclusion of Karaite (Caraites) writers, both famous and obscure. Not only are their printed books enumerated, but here too manuscript works are noted and described.¹³

¹³ The Karaite authors are Abraham (ben Yehudah), Afandopulo (Caleb), Anan (Ben David), Alfarag (Ibn), Alkumasi (Daniel), Beschizi (Elia), Beschizi (Moses ben

Polemical works are enumerated in detail, generally without comment. The entry for Peripot (*sic*) Duran (Efodi) includes “*Kelimmat ha-Goyim*, against Christianity. In MS,” and under Joseph Ben Shem Tob Sefardi we find, “*A commentary on the anti-Christian letter of Peripot Duran. It was published without date or name of place.*”¹⁴ There are instances when we are informed that ‘refutations’ have been published, again proving that the audience for Hebrew books often extended beyond that of the Jewish community, for whom they were written.

In a most uncharacteristic entry, on the Abrabanel (Abraveneli), whose achievements de’ Rossi clearly holds in high regard, introducing him as “one of the greatest men among the Jews in ability, erudition and statesmanship,” the Catholic abbé can not forbear from commenting on both Christian responses to Abrabanel’s anti-Christian writings, and, after recounting the hardships suffered by the Jews in Spain and Portugal, from observing that the refugees from those lands were well treated in Italy. “Abraveneli should likewise have reflected, that the Christian religion, based, as it is on the love of our neighbor, abhors persecution. His unappeasable hatred, however, he concealed from Christians, with whom, as Bartolucci remarks, he lived in such intimate, pleasant and affectionate relations that he appeared to be a Christian.” This remark is the only such comment in the *Dictionary*.

There are surprising omissions. For example, the brief entry on Moses Hayyim Luzzatto makes no mention of the *Mesillat Yesharim*, or the other ethical, philosophical, and kabbalistic works written by that author. There are a number of spelling variations in the book, for example Karaite (Caraité), responsæ (responsa) and Saadiyah (Saadyah). These variant spellings are in the original English edition, reflecting the conventions of the editors of *The Occident*, and have been retained in this edition.

De’ Rossi provides a rich and often detailed variety of biographical material about his subjects, certainly an important part of the book’s value. Here too, however, there are omissions. For example, in the entry

Elia), Gibbor (Yehudah), Hadassi (Yehudah), Haondi (Benjamin), Jacob (ben Reuben), Joshua (ben Yehudah), Karai (Aaron ben Joseph), Karai (Joseph), Karai (Mordechai ben Nissan), Karkesani (Joseph), Matzliach (Sahal Ben), Mizordi (Moses), Nikomodeo (Aaron Ben Eliyahu), Obed (Tobia), Poki (Yehuda), Pozzi (Maroli Moses), Roe (Joseph), Troki (Isaac Ben Abraham), Yafet (ben Eliha-Levi), Yemsel (Samuel ben David), Yerocham (ben Salman).

¹⁴ Duran’s polemical work is described by de’ Rossi in some detail in the *Bibliotheca judaica antichristiana*, pp. 90–91 no. 129.

for Moses Nachmani (Ramban), which enumerates twenty-four titles, the brief biographical sketch informs us that he went to Jerusalem in 1267, but neglects to tell us that Ramban's departure from Spain, following his successful defense of Judaism in a disputation, was not entirely voluntary. De' Rossi does note, however, the occurrence of the disputation, it being recorded as one of the Ramban's titles (no. 7). We are often told, without comment, of the occurrence of a disputation and accompanying literature. For example, Shem Tob Ben Joseph, whose works include, if indeed he was the author, "a description of a religious controversy which took place between himself and Cardinal Pietro della Luna, in Aragon."

Similarly, the entry for Abraham Seba (Saba) omits both the well-known story of his arrest and subsequent imprisonment in Portugal, after attempting to retrieve his manuscripts, buried earlier by a tree, and which, after his release, Seba rewrote from memory; as well as the less well-known tale, recounted by Azulai, of Seba's final voyage from North Africa to Italy. A storm arose, and, to the request of the ship's captain that he pray that the storm cease, Seba responded that he would do so only if the captain promised that if Seba died at sea the captain would bring his body to a Jewish community in Italy for burial. The captain promised, Seba prayed, the storm ceased, and Seba died the following day. He was buried with great honor by the Jewish community of Verona.¹⁵ De' Rossi writes that R. Meir of Rothenburg (Maharam) "died, in prison, in 1305, having been unable to pay the sum demanded of him by the Emperor Rudolph I." This is not correct. The money, thirty thousand marks, was available, but the Maharam, fearing that ransoming him for such an exorbitant sum would only encourage the seizure of other communal leaders, forbade its payment.

There are a number of minor errors. For example, under Yehuda Nasi an otherwise fine and detailed entry is marred by the statement that the six Orders of Mishnayot are divided into sixty-one treatises, when the actual number is sixty-three. Shunami comments that occasional bibliographic errors and mistakes in understanding Talmudic expressions can be found in de' Rossi's work, immediately adding that

¹⁵ Hayyim Joseph David Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim* (Jerusalem, 1979), *Ma'arekhet Gedolim*, alef 85.

nevertheless, de' Rossi was a researcher of the first class, and an exacting bibliographer.¹⁶

These few critical observations notwithstanding, the *Dictionary* is, as observed above, a gem in the field of Hebrew bibliography. It has for too long been unavailable to the English reader. It is hoped that this edition will rectify that lacuna.

¹⁶ Shunami, p. 23.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

THE HEBREW BOOK TRADE AS REFLECTED IN BOOK CATALOGUES¹

A neglected field within the discipline of Hebrew bibliography is the recording and study of Hebrew book publisher, dealer and auction catalogues.² This lacuna is remarkable, given the extent of the Hebrew book trade, even in its formative years, and the well documented and widespread use of catalogues in the general book trade. It is the contention of this paper, in spite of the fact that it is, given the sparse number of recorded catalogues, ‘an argument from silence,’ that there must have been numerous Hebrew book trade catalogues, and that the recording and study of these listings is a worthwhile pursuit.

The *Encyclopedia Judaica* informs us, in two separate entries, that the first sales catalogue for Hebrew books is Solomon Proops’ (d. 1734) *Appiryon Shelomo* (1730), stating Proops ‘was also the first to bring out a sales catalogue of Hebrew books (*Appiryon Shelomo*, 1730)’ and that ‘From 1715 productions by Proops carried advertisements of books he had published, and in 1730 he issued a sales catalog (*Appiryon Shelomo*), the first such Hebrew publication.’³ A prior comment to the same

¹ The original version of this article was published in *Quaerendo* v. 26 n. 4 (Leiden, 1996), pp. 245–57.

² A variety of catalogues, serving distinct purposes, exist. This study is limited to those catalogues of the Hebrew book that relate to the book trade, that is, book publisher, bookseller, and auction catalogues. It does not address catalogues that record holdings of individuals, public collections or bibliographical surveys. A number of studies have been made based on the role of catalogues in the book trade. There are bibliographies of catalogues, as well as works on the field and uses of catalogues. An important pioneer work is that of Graham Pollard & Albert Ehrman, *The Distribution of Books by Catalogue from the Invention of Printing to A.D. 1800, Based on Material in the Broxbourne Library* (Cambridge: Printed for distribution to members of the Roxburghe Club, 1965). A general study of the field is Archer Taylor, *Book Catalogues: Their Varieties & Uses* (Chicago 1957), 2nd edn. Rev. by Wm. P. Barlow, Jr. (Winchester 1986); David McKitterick, ‘Book Catalogues: Their Variety & Uses,’ in: *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth Century Bibliography*, ed. Peter Davison, (Cambridge 1992); and *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* (PBSA), 84:4 (New York 1995), that entire issue being devoted to the subject of catalogues. In addition, a number of articles on the subject have appeared in such journals as *The Library* and *Quaerendo*.

³ *Encyclopedia Judaica*, ed. Cecil Roth (Jerusalem 1972), vol. 13, col. 1105, and vol. 16, col. 1554. Another entry, on the book trade, vol. 4, col. 1238 does note the existence of an earlier Bomberg list, of which see below.

effect, and perhaps the source of the *Ef* entries, can be found in the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, which states that Proops's 'printed catalogue *Appiryon Shelomo*, 1730 (the first of its kind)...'⁴

If this were correct it would be exceedingly strange, given the rich history of Hebrew publishing, that it should take 255 years from the appearance of the first dated Hebrew book, Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac's edition of Rashi's Torah commentary (Reggio di Calabria, 1475), for the first Hebrew sales catalogue to be issued, when catalogues, or lists of books available for sale, had been a feature of the general book market from the incunabular period.

It is generally not realized that a flourishing book trade existed prior to the invention of printing. G. H. Putnam, in his classic work on the book in the middle ages, discusses this trade in manuscripts and even notes that among the regulations pertaining to the book trade in university towns was 'To place conspicuously in the windows of their shops a price list of all works kept for sale.'⁵ Putnam also notes several instances, restrictions on their participation notwithstanding, of Jews engaging in the book trade.

Nevertheless, this is quite removed from the issuing of sales catalogues from which books may be ordered. Sales lists of printers' wares appeared fairly early, slightly more than a decade after the invention of printing with moveable type. The first list is credited to Heinrich Eggestein of Strasbourg (1466), followed by Peter Schöffler (the son-in-law of Johannes Fust, Gutenberg's financier and erstwhile partner). Schöffler's book list (1470) has twenty-one entries, among them the *Psalterium* of 1457 and the *Cannon missae* of 1458. His independent prospectus for the letters of St. Jerome requests the reader to await his edition and not to purchase any other. Sweynheym and Pannartz's lists of 1470 and 1472, nineteen and twenty-eight titles respectively, show the price and number of copies per edition, ranging from 16 groschen to 20 ducats. Krokerger's advertisement, issued sometime after 1480 'contains virtually everything the publicity manager of a modern firm could think of.'⁶

⁴ *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, ed. Isadore Singer (New York 1901–06), vol. 12 pp. 302–04. Also ref. vol. 3, p. 314.

⁵ Geo. Haven Putnam, *Books and Their Makers During the Middle Ages*, vol. 1 (1896–97, repr. New York 1962), p. 209.

⁶ Karl Schottenloher, *Books and the Western World. A Cultural History*, transl. by William D. Boyd and Irmgard H. Wolfe (Jefferson, North Carolina 1989), p. 201; S. H. Steinberg, *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (Baltimore 1969), pp. 133–36.

Christopher Plantin, the great sixteenth-century Dutch publisher ‘was among the first publishers to make extensive use of catalogues which he distributed and frequently reprinted,’ for example, in 1566, 1567, 1568, 1575, and 1584. Many of Plantin’s catalogues were for distribution to booksellers at the Frankfort book fair. A large market for Plantin’s Hebrew Bible of 1566 was the Jews of North Africa, that Bible being ‘much in demand by scholars in Morocco.’ The books were sold by Jan Rademaker, the Barbary coast agent for the wealthy Antwerp merchant and ship owner Gilles Hooftman.⁷ Among the entries in Plantin’s catalogue of 1575 is a ‘“*Biblia Hebraica*” (in Hebrew), octavo, 125 leaves... 45 sous.’ This compares with both pocket and octavo classics, six and four sheets respectively, each at one sou, Virgil, at 3 florins, five sou and the Bible Royale, at 70 florins, 60 to dealers.⁸ It is not known if this *Biblia Hebraica* is the aforementioned Bible sold to the Jews of Morocco.

Given the rich history of printed publisher, dealer and auction catalogues, it would be, as observed earlier, exceedingly strange if the publishers of Hebrew books had waited until 1730 to issue their first sales catalogue. It is also difficult to imagine that as astute a businessman as Gershom Soncino did not issue some sort of listing of his books. Nevertheless, the earliest known Hebrew publisher’s catalogue, and our knowledge of it comes from a secondary source, is a reference to a catalogue of the works of the sixteenth century Venetian printer Daniel Bomberg, found in the pioneer bibliographical work, *Bibliotheca universalis* (1545–55), prepared by a Swiss professor of humanities and student of the natural sciences, Conrad Gesner (1516–57). The references are in vol. II, *Pandectarum sive partitionum univversalium... libri XXI*, sive *Bibliothecae tomus II*, p. 41b.⁹

By the first decades of the sixteenth century Venice was the center of the international book trade, with more printing-presses and issuing more titles than any other location. Its books were sold throughout Europe; writers brought their manuscripts to be printed and buyers came to Venice to acquire the latest titles. Daniel Bomberg, a non-Jew from a mercantile family in Antwerp, the most important printer

⁷ Colin Clair, *Christopher Plantin* (London 1960), pp. 203–04.

⁸ Putnam, *op. cit.*, (n. 5), vol. 2, p. 279.

⁹ Bomberg’s book catalogue, as printed by Gesner in the *Pandects*, was reprinted by Aron Freimann in ‘Daniel Bombergs Bücher-Verzeichnis,’ in: *Zeitschrift für hebräische Bibliographie*, 10 (Berlin 1906), pp. 38–42.

of Hebrew books in Venice and a seminal figure in Hebrew printing, established a Hebrew print-shop in Venice in 1515, one which continued to issue Hebrew titles until 1549. His accomplishments include printing the first *Mikra'ot Gedolot* (rabbinic Bible with commentaries), the first Babylonian Talmud (he issued three editions), the first Jerusalem Talmud, and the first printed Karaite book. The Bomberg Bible is the first Hebrew Bible to include chapters and his Talmud edition established the current standard foliation.

In the *Pandects*, Gesner writes, 'Descripta sunt haec ex catalogo Danieelis Bombergi (si bene memini) Venetiani typographi & bibliopulae,' that is, he is including a Bomberg sales catalogue. There are 75 entries, each comprised of the book's title and price (fig. 81). Although the first five entries are for 'Machazorim,' followed by two entries for 'Sidurim,' the following volumes do not appear to be in any particular order. Avraham Yaari does not regard the listing in the *Pandects* as a Bomberg sales catalogue, objecting that the list includes books printed elsewhere in Italy, and even in Constantinople, remarking that Bomberg is not known to have sold books not printed by his printing-press.¹⁰

Why that should be so is not clear. How could Bomberg have sold his books throughout the Jewish world without a catalogue? How could distributors, much less individual customers, have placed orders if they did not know what titles were available and their price? Small printers in Venice, requiring a means of distributing their books, would surely have been favorably disposed to their inclusion in the sales catalogue of a major printing-house like that of Bomberg. Meir Parenzo (d. 1575), for example, who worked at one time or another for several large print-shops in Venice, and for many years was associated with Bomberg, printed several books for his own account in 1548–49, reportedly at Bomberg's press, and in 1549 part of the Mishnah at the press of Carlo Quirino, required a distributor for his books.¹¹ It is not an uncommon practice for small presses to have their books distributed by a larger publisher. We know that an earlier printer in Venice, the illustrious Aldus Manutius (1452–1515), listed the works of his rivals, Nicolas Blastus and Zacharias Calliergi, in his catalogues.

¹⁰ Abraham Yaari, 'The Printing-house of Manassah ben Israel. The First Hebrew Book Catalogue' in: *Kiryat Sefer (KS)*, 21 (Jerusalem 1944; repr. In: *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem 1958)), p. 432.

¹¹ David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (London 1963), p. 368; Joshua Bloch, 'Venetian Printers of Hebrew Books,' in: *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography*, ed. by Charles Berlin (New York 1976), p. 80.

Zunz and Freimann, and other bibliographers as well, regard Gesner's list as an authentic reproduction of a Bomberg catalogue.¹² Alfred Sendry, discussing early bibliographic works, comments on Bomberg's catalogue and then writes, unfortunately without elaborating 'Venice, one of the early centers of Jewish printing, became automatically one of the great exchanges for Hebrew book sellers, and the publication of such catalogues is an important source of our knowledge of the Hebrew literature of that period.'¹³

The books printed at the Bomberg press were sold throughout Europe. The Karaite prayer-book (1528), commissioned by Joseph Rabyatachi, a wealthy Karaite from Constantinople, was distributed in the Crimea.¹⁴ A complete Bomberg Talmud, made up of volumes from the first two Talmud editions, was apparently imported into England between 1540 and 1565. Purchased by Richard Bruerne (d. 1561), the second Regius Professor of Hebrew at Oxford, it was bound in the sixteenth century with a copy of *Akedat Yizhak*. It is presumed that references to the Talmud in the *Akedat Yizhak* caused Bruerne, one of England's leading Hebraists and a well known book collector, to import an edition of the Talmud.

How did Bruerne go about ordering his Talmud? It has been suggested that an Oxford book dealer who imported academic works from Antwerp—one of four centers from which England received books from the continent, the others being Cologne, Lyons, and Paris—received Bomberg's catalogues, which he showed to his customers. Books printed in Venice and Basel came to England through Antwerp. Most likely, Bruerne saw a sales catalogue, either that of the printer or of a dealer who listed Bomberg's books.¹⁵

¹² Leopold Zunz, *Gesammelte Schriften* (Berlin 1875), vol. 1, p. 49; Concerning other bibliographers ref. A. M. Habermann, 'Scribes, Printers, and Booksellers,' in: *Kvusei Yahad Essays and Notes on Jewish Culture and Literature* (Jerusalem 1980), p. 202; Alfred Sendry, *Bibliography of Jewish Music* (New York 1951), pp. xxix–xxx; and Menahem Schmelzer, 'Rashi's Commentary on the Pentateuch and on the Five Scrolls, Venice, Bomberg, 1538', in: *Studies in Jewish Bibliography History and Literature in Honor of I. Edward Kieff* ed. Charles Berlin (New York 1971), p. 432 n. 14.

¹³ Sendry, *op. cit.* (n. 12), pp. xxix–xxx.

¹⁴ Philip E. Miller, 'Agenda in Karaite Printing in the Crimea During the Middle Third of the Nineteenth Century', in: *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 20 (Cincinnati 1998), pp. 82–88.

¹⁵ Edgar Samuel, 'The Provenance of the Westminster Talmud,' in: *The Jewish Historical Society of England Transactions*, 27 (London 1982), pp. 148–50.

The next known, and here extant, catalogues issued by a publisher of Hebrew books are those of the Amsterdam printer Manasseh Ben Israel (1604–57). In the seventeenth century the leading mercantile nation in Europe was the United Provinces of the Netherlands, and Amsterdam was its first city. One of the leading metropolitan centers of Europe, Amsterdam had replaced Venice as the center of the European book trade. This was also true for the Hebrew book, with more than 650 Hebrew titles attributed to the city's Hebrew presses from 1630 to 1700, representing more than one quarter of the Hebrew books recorded for that period.¹⁶

The first Hebrew book printed in Amsterdam—there were a number of earlier works with Hebrew letters—was a Spanish rite prayer-book published by Manasseh Ben Israel and dated 1 January 1627. Manasseh Ben Israel was a person of many accomplishments. Born to a Marrano family in Madeira, he was baptized Manoel Dias Soeiro. His parents, Gaspar Rodrigues Nuñez and Antonia Soeira, in fear of the Inquisition, fled Lisbon for Amsterdam, where the family adopted Jewish names, renaming Manoel Manasseh. Manasseh studied under R. Isaac Uziel of Fez (d. 1622) in the Sephardic school in Amsterdam, became an accomplished speaker and writer, and served the Amsterdam Jewish community in a number of capacities, including preacher at the Neveh Shalom congregation. His books include the multi-volume *Conciliator* (1632–51), which reconciles seeming inconsistencies in the Bible, *Thesouro dos Dinim* (1645–47), a code of Jewish law for returnees to Judaism, and, his most famous work, *Esperanca de Israel* (Hope of Israel, 1650), which was influential in the readmission of the Jews to England. Manasseh Ben Israel journeyed to England in 1655, where he presented a petition to Cromwell for the readmission of the Jews to that country.

Manasseh Ben Israel's press, founded in 1626, printed Hebrew books, and a number of non-Hebrew titles as well, until a year prior to his death in 1657, although the press was not always under his management. Its output included prayer-books, bibles and other works, thereby supplying the general Jewish community with religious texts, as well as titles specifically addressed to the needs of the large Marrano community in Amsterdam. It also issued the first extant sales-catalogues

¹⁶ Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Listing of Books Printed in Hebrew Letters Since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing circa 1469 through 1863* (Jerusalem 1995), vol. 1, pp. 24–25.

of Hebrew titles from a printer. At least two such catalogues are known, one, published by Manasseh in 1648 (a copy, reproduced by L. and R. Fuks, is in the Library of the University in Cologne), is of ten printed pages. The catalogue is in two parts, one listing fifteen Hebrew and thirteen Spanish books from Manasseh's press, the other a total of 526 available titles. The second catalogue, published by Manasseh's son Samuel, is dated 1652. Two copies were discovered by A. Yaari in the binding of an old book. This catalogue, entirely in Portuguese, lists 39 Hebrew and 26 Spanish (Portuguese) titles, with their cost. Two Hebrew works, *Abravanel on the Prophets* and *Toledot Aharon*, lack prices, so that Yaari, in a note on the latter book, speculates that it was still in press and the price had not yet been fixed.¹⁷ The listing of the Hebrew titles concludes with the remark that 'many other books printed elsewhere are available.'

The first Amsterdam book catalogue, actually a mart catalogue, was issued by Cornelius Claesz (Nicolai) in 1604, followed by a catalogue of imported Chinese books the following year and one of French books in 1608.¹⁸ Jan Janszoon issued catalogues in 1634, 1640 and a number after 1648. Catalogues are known from Leiden from 1624 and from Copenhagen (mart catalogues), printed twice yearly from 1635. Surely, Manasseh Ben Israel, who sold overseas and at fairs, did not wait more than two decades after printing his first book to issue a stock or mart catalogue. Manasseh's successors, who sold much of their output to the Jewish communities of Germany and Poland, must certainly have printed sales catalogues.¹⁹

What of book sellers', as distinct from book publishers', catalogues? No such list of books for sale from a dealer in Hebrew books from

¹⁷ L. and R. Fuks, 'Manasseh Ben Israel as a bookseller in the light of new data', in: *Quaerendo*, 11 (Leiden, 1981), pp. 34–45; Yaari, *art. cit.* (n. 10), pp. 430–44. For a critical review of Yaari's assessment as to which books in the catalogue were actually printed by Manasseh ben Israel ref. C. Roth 'Notes on "An Original Catalogue from Manasseh Ben Israel's Press,"' followed by Yaari's rejoinder, *KS*, 24 (Jerusalem 1947), pp. 85–88.

¹⁸ Mart catalogues, often distributed at fairs are, as defined by Pollard (pp. 103–04), 'designed to sell only a few copies of each book, often contain second-hand or antiquarian books' and contrast with stock catalogues, which are 'usually of a publisher's stock, and his list. They were not confined to books which he himself had printed, but might include all books of which he held a wholesale stock... they were intended to advertise books with a steady sale that could always be supplied.'

¹⁹ Another vehicle employed by Manasseh Ben Israel to promote his books was the inclusion of lists of books available from his press, both Hebrew and Spanish titles, already published and in print, in many of the books that he published.

the sixteenth or seventeenth century is recorded in any bibliography of Hebrew works, unless one includes Manasseh Ben Israel's catalogues, for he certainly was a book seller as well as a book publisher. Nevertheless, a number of general dealer catalogues or lists include Hebrew books, especially those issued for book fairs (mart catalogues). Among the oldest and most important of these fairs was the bi-annual fair at Frankfurt on the Main. Catalogues of the books for sale were issued from an early date; George Willer of Augsburg, who printed mart catalogues from 1564, issued a three volume catalogue *Collectio in Unum Corpus*, printed by Nicholas Bassaeus, in 1592, with one volume describing Greek, Latin, and Hebrew books. A similar work, *Bibliotheca Exotica*, was brought out by George Draud in 1611.²⁰

Christian Wechel (c. 1476–1553) included Hebrew books in his catalogues, although these appear to be mainly grammatical works directed to a non-Jewish audience. It is reported that 'the catalogue printed for Fetherstone in 1628, pp. 21–25 are filled with the titles of Hebrew, Chaldaic, and Arabic books. In Robert Martins's list of 1633, in an anonymous list of 1637, in Richard Whitaker's of 1645, and Octavian Pulleyn's of 1657, there are many Hebrew books. Most of these books, as the dealers explicitly state, were imported from Italy.'²¹

We have already observed that Bruerne most likely ordered his Hebrew books from an Oxford book dealer in Antwerp. The English bookseller George Thomason published a catalogue in 1647 that listed Hebrew books on pages 47–56. Described as 'rich in good Soncinos, Bombergs, Rivas, Bragadinis, di Garas and other prints of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century,' the books consist of Bibles, a small number of manuscripts, 63 folios, and 94 quartos. The price for these books, which total upward of 400 titles, in addition to 40 more volumes in other 'Oriental tongues,' several volumes are bound together, was £500.²² Thomason had acquired the books from an Italian vendor, and, via the good offices of John Selden (1584–1654), member of Parliament from Oxford, jurist and orientalist who wrote a number of treatises on Jewish subjects, funding was obtained from Parliament for their purchase for Cambridge University, becoming the foundation of

²⁰ Pollard, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 75–82.

²¹ I. Abrahams and C. E. Sayle, 'The Purchase of Hebrew Books by the English Parliament in 1647,' in: *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* (London 1918), p. 63.

²² Abrahams, *op. cit.* (n. 21), p. 71.

that Library's Hebrew collection. Parenthetically, Selden, whose own Hebrew books became an important part of the Bodleian Library collection, acquired a number of his books from a catalogue issued by Manasseh Ben Israel.²³

We noted earlier that booksellers posted lists of the available works in their shop windows. The use of broadsheets, among the most ephemeral of advertisements, were another means of advertising a printer's wares. Abraham Habermann informs of two broadsheets, printed eighty years apart, that have survived from the seventeenth century. The first is an approbation issued by the rabbinic authorities of Pozna for *Even ha-Ezer*, the novellae of R. Eliezer ben Nathan of Mainz (Raban, c. 1090–c. 1170), which was printed in Prague in 1609–10. The printer was Moses ben Bezalel Katz, a scion of Gershom ben Solomon Kohen, one of the pioneers of Hebrew printing in Prague a century earlier, and whose offspring are remembered as the 'Gersonides.' The broadsheet, which was intended to be placed in synagogues, informs potential buyers that if they purchase the book 'the buyer will rejoice and the seller will be joyful.'²⁴

The second broadsheet was issued in Fuerth at the Hebrew print-shop established by Joseph b. Solomon Zalman Schneur in 1691, one of two to open in that city that year. Joseph Schneur died in 1692, while *Shulhan Arukh Hoshen Mishpat* was in press. He was succeeded at the press by his brother Abraham and his brother-in-law Isaac Bing. Bing managed the printing-house until 1698, when the press closed, by which time about thirty-five titles had been issued. Although the printer's name is not given on the broadsheet it was issued after Joseph Schneur's death for he is referred to as *z"l* [may he be remembered for a blessing]. The text begins by praising *Shulhan Arukh H.M.*, noting its commentaries, layout, and the quality of the ink, paper, and letters. Several other books are also mentioned: *Megalleh Amukkot*, *Yoreh Hattim*,

²³ Cecil Roth, 'A List of Books from Manasseh Ben-Israel's Stock,' in: *Areshet 2* (Jerusalem 1960) repr. in *Studies in Book and Booklore* (Westmead 1972) pp. 21–22. Seventeenth-century Dutch Christian Hebraists such as J. Drusius, Constantijn L'Empereur, and A. Scaliger purchased many of their Hebrew books from abroad, often through intermediaries. Could their selections have been made from sales catalogues? Ref. Peter T. van Rooden, *Theology, Biblical Scholarship and Rabbinical Studies in the Seventeenth Century. Constantijn L'Empereur (1591–1648) Professor of Hebrew and Theology at Leiden* (Leiden 1989), pp. 100–01.

²⁴ Habermann, *art. cit.* (n. 12), p. 202.

Hanhagot Adam, the responsa of R. Joseph ibn Leib, and the responsa of R. Samuel ben David Moses ha-Levi *Nahalat Shivah* and *Zahav Shevah*.²⁵ All of these titles were printed in 1691 or 1692 and represent a portion only of the output of the press in those years. The titles not listed from the books published in 1691 are small books, and the large works from 1692, such as *Bereishit Rabba* and *Knesset ha-Gedolah*, were most likely printed after the broadsheet.²⁶

Another category of book sale catalogues is the auction catalogue. We know of about 1,500 extant seventeenth-century Dutch book auction catalogues, the earliest being the Marnix sale of 1599.²⁷ The number of Hebrew auction catalogues known, in contrast, is meagre. What is surprising, given that ‘sales catalogues, not always carefully compiled and often rudely printed, were quickly tossed aside,’ is not that there are so few Hebrew sales catalogues, there are four, but that any have survived.²⁸

The four known auction catalogues of Hebrew books, all of which were held in Amsterdam, are for the last decades of the seventeenth century. One is of a publisher’s books, that is, Joseph Athias, and the other three are the libraries of rabbinic scholars, R. Moses Raphael

²⁵ Habermann, *art. cit.* (n. 12), pp. 202–04.

²⁶ For a list of the titles printed in Fuerth at this time ref. Leopold Löwenstein. ‘Zur Geschichte der Juden in Fürth. III. “Der hebräischen Druckerei in Fürth”’, in: *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* vol. 10 (Frankfort, 1913), pp. 55–61; and Vinograd, *op. cit.* (n. 16), vol. 2, pp. 504–05.

²⁷ Giles Mandelbrote. ‘A New Edition of the Distribution of Books by Catalogue: Problems and Prospects,’ in: *PBSA*, 89 (New York 1995), p. 407. An important source of information on auction catalogues is the ‘Apparaat Hellinga,’ the repository of information and data concerning the Dutch book trade at the library of the Dutch Book Trade Association, Amsterdam University. A summary of early Dutch book-trade catalogues in major libraries can be found in Bert van Selm ‘Dutch book-trade catalogues printed before 1801 now in the British Library,’ in: *Across the Narrow Seas. Studies in the history and Bibliography of Britain and the Low Countries Presented to Anna E. C. Simoni*, ed. Susan Roach (London 1991), p. 56. The British Library has slightly more than 300 catalogues, about half from the 17th century and half from the 18th century. The Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel has 700 catalogues printed prior to 1701, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris about 700, the Library of the Dutch Book Trade Association in Amsterdam about 900, of which 825 are from the 18th century. The Royal Library in the Hague has about the same number as the British Library, but with a greater proportion being from the 18th century. For a history of early book auction catalogues ref. Bert van Selm, ‘The Introduction of the Printed Auction Catalogue,’ *Quaerendo*, 15 (1985): pp. 16–54, 115–49.

²⁸ P. S. Morrish, ‘A Collection of Seventeenth-Century Book Sale Catalogues,’ in: *Quaerendo*, 1 (1971), p. 35.

d'Aguilar, R. Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, and R. Samuel b. Isaac Abas.²⁹ Men of distinction and accomplishment, they are of importance to us because their books were sold at public auction in Amsterdam between 1680 and 1694 and the sales catalogues have been preserved.

Joseph Athias (c. 1635–1700), who began to print books in Amsterdam in 1658, came from a family whose origins were in Spain; his father, Jorge Mendez de Castro, was burned alive at an *auto-da-fé* in Cordova in 1665. Unlike other Hebrew print-shops of the period, which directed both their Hebrew and non-Hebrew books, usually Spanish, Portuguese or Yiddish works, to the Jewish community, Athias printed books for the non-Jewish market as well. In 1685 Athias turned over direction of the printing of Hebrew books to his son Immanuel (c. 1664–1714), concentrating on other works and the type-foundry he had acquired. Joseph Athias began printing with a Sephardic rite prayer book and issued his first English Bibles as early as 1661, using a stereotype, that is, composing and fixing each page in a frame, which was then stored in a case for future use. Reuse of the stereotype enabled Athias to print a complete Bible within a few days; in 1691 Athias asserts that he is able to print 250 Bibles in four hours.³⁰ In the introduction to his Yiddish Bible (1687) Athias claims that more than a million Bibles have been printed by him for the English and Scottish market. Athias did not use the stereotype method for his Hebrew books as the smaller market for these works did not justify the expense it entailed.

The stereotype method required a significant investment of capital and it was an important, although not the sole reason for Athias being heavily indebted to the paper dealer Christoffel van Gangelt, his primary financier. Athias attempted to pay van Gangelt with English and Spanish Bibles, but, by 1672, was further in debt to him for more than 39,539 florins and 19 stuyvers, with 11,000 copies of English

²⁹ The three last auction catalogues are listed in Shlomo Shunami, *Bibliography of Jewish Bibliographies* (Jerusalem 1969), under Catalogues of Private Collections (p. 38, nos. 209, 210 and 212). The earliest catalogues listed under Booksellers' and Publishers' Catalogues (a Selection) date from the first half of the nineteenth century (pp. 77–86, nos. 432–481).

³⁰ I. H. Van Eeghen, quoted in L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands 1585–1815. Historical Evaluation and Descriptive Bibliography* (Leiden 1987), vol. 2, pp. 288–89. Also ref. Harry Carter & George Buday, 'Stereotyping by Joseph Athias. The Evidence of Nicholas Kis', in: *Quaerendo*, 5 (1975), pp. 312–20, where it is claimed that Athias was the first to make use of the stereotype method.

Bibles in the financier's warehouse.³¹ In 1672 van Gangelt, who at the time was also in dire financial straits, was saved from bankruptcy by Josephus Deutz, his stepdaughter's husband. Athias' Bibles, and an even greater number of other books printed by Athias, came into Deutz's possession. Deutz attempted to sell the books with the assistance of the merchant and bookseller Hendrik Wetstein from 1677. After Deutz's death, Wetstein, on behalf of Deutz's heirs, sold the remaining titles at public auction from his home on 27 March 1688. Details of this sale are known from papers discovered, by chance, by Dr. Isabella H. van Eeghen, who came across the complete records of the sale among the papers of Van Gangelt.³²

The sale was conducted in a manner that did not greatly differ from current auctions. However, 'only with each lot an undefined number of books went, called the "hap."' The prices were decided for single copies which was then multiplied as the buyer bought the whole lot.' Books were listed in Latin letters with their format, for example, '2 Biblia Ebraica Nisselii, 8.... 18 Engelse Bybels, 12.... 23 Kipour, 8. by na voldrukt.' Buyers known to the auctioneer could pay after the sale, others had to pay in advance. An analysis of the prices received for Athias' books indicates that they were well below the books' retail value, so that booksellers were not in favor of such auctions, which were, as a result, held infrequently.³³

R. Moses Raphael d'Aguilar (d. 1679) and R. Isaac Aboab da Fonseca (1605–93) were both of Portuguese birth, their families leaving that unhappy land to settle in Amsterdam where they could openly embrace Judaism. In 1642 d'Aguilar and Aboab left Amsterdam for Recife

³¹ This was not the first instance of Van Gangelt accepting books in payment of a debt from a printer. Johannes Georgius Nisselius, who printed in Leiden from 1656 to 1662, advanced 4,000 copies of his Bible to Van Gangelt and Laurens de Geer, another creditor, in lieu of a cash payment. The two merchants eventually wrote off Nisselius' debt to them of 10,992. Fuks, *op. cit.* (n. 30) vol. I, p. 46.

³² Fuks, *op. cit.* (n. 30) vol. 2, pp. 289–90 and 294; I. H. van Eeghen, 'Een Veiling Van Boeken Van Athias in 1688 (with English summary),' in: *Studia Rosenthaliana (StRos)* 2 (Amsterdam 1968), pp. 40–41.

³³ Van Eeghen, *art. cit.* (n. 32) vol. p. 41. It would seem that this was not the first such sale of Athias's books. Fuks (p. 297) reports that notices appeared in the *Amsterdamsche Courant* (7 August 1687) and *Oprechte Haerlemsche Courant* (17 July 1687) for a sale of 3,000 Yiddish Bibles. Hendrick de Schepper was the broker for the sale, which was dated for 26 August 1687 and was to take place in 'de Keyserkroon.' In addition to auction announcements, Athias also advertised his books in Dutch newspapers. The first known ad by a Jewish printer in a Dutch newspaper appeared in the *Haerlemsche Courant* on 9 October 1666. It is for the three editions of Psalms printed by Athias' in that year.

(Pernambuco), Brazil, at the time a Dutch possession, to accept rabbinic positions. When the Portuguese reconquered Dutch Brazil in 1654, d'Aguilar and Aboab returned to Amsterdam. D'Aguilar served as the successor to Manasseh Ben Israel in the Etz Hayyim Seminary and was the author of about 20 books, two only published in his lifetime, *Epítome da Grammatica hebrayca* (Leiden, 1660; Amsterdam, 1661), and *Dinim Sechítá y Bedicá* (Amsterdam, 1661). Among his unpublished manuscripts is a 350-folio topical index of the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds. D'Aguilar, who became an adherent of Shabbetai Zevi, accumulated a large library which was sold at public auction in 1680. A 48-page catalogue, *Reshimat sifrei h"r Mose Raphael d'Aguilar*, was prepared for the auction.

R. Isaac da Fonseca Aboab was appointed *hakham* of the Bet Israel Congregation in Amsterdam at the age of twenty-one and was retained when the three Sephardi congregations in Amsterdam united in 1639. Nevertheless, he chose to go to Brazil, where he served as the *hakham* of the Jewish community of Recife until it fell to the Portuguese in 1654. After returning to Amsterdam, Aboab, who was held in high esteem, served the community in a number of capacities, including as a member of the *bet din* (rabbinical court) that issued the ban of excommunication against Baruch (Benedict de) Spinoza (1632–77) in 1656. Aboab, too, was a follower of Shabbetai Zevi. He translated a number of Hebrew books into Spanish and wrote several works, including novellae on tractate *Kiddushin*. His extensive library was sold at auction in Amsterdam on 15 July 1693, the auctioneer being Abraham Wolfgang.³⁴

The catalogue, consisting of twenty pages, followed by a six-page appendix, is organized by size, that is folio (pages 1–8, 152 printed and 3 manuscript items), quarto (pp. 8–17, 183 printed and 15 manuscript items), octavo (pages 17–18, 38 printed items). Pages 19–20 list 49 Spanish and Portuguese books by format followed by 4 Latin books. The appendix lists an additional 114 Latin, Greek and 'Hispan.' books by format for a total of 373 printed and 18 codex Hebrew books and 167 books in other languages. The number of titles is considerably greater, for a number of works are bound together and therefore offered

³⁴ I wish to express my appreciation to Rabbi Jerry Schwarzbard, Rare Book Room Librarian, Jewish Theological Seminary, for providing me with a copy of the Aboab catalogue.

as single items. The Hebrew books are listed in two columns, the titles in Hebrew, a description and the author in Latin, separated by the auction lot numbers, for example, 'כתר כהונה 141 Lexicon. Talmud. R. David Coen de Lara.' (fig. 82) Aboab's library clearly indicates that he was a scholar of eclectic interests. In addition to rabbinic works, which include the Babylonian (Amsterdam edition) and Jerusalem (Cracow edition) Talmuds, halakha, responsa, and commentaries, there are books on Kabbalah, grammar, philosophy, poetry, classical literature, and even translations of the New Testament. A. Marx's comment, that 'we can learn much about a man from the catalogue of his books,' is certainly appropriate here.³⁵

R. Samuel b. Isaac Abas (d. 1692 or 1693), who also served the Sephardic community of Amsterdam in a rabbinic capacity, is primarily remembered for his popular translation of *Hovot ha-Levavot* (Amsterdam, 1670) into Portuguese from Ibn Tibbon's Hebrew translation. Abas' library, made up of Hebrew, Latin, Portuguese, and Spanish books, was sold at auction in 1694. A thirty-page catalogue—a copy is in the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel—was prepared for the sale. The catalogue, which lists lists 1,186 items, is in two parts. First is the Hebrew section (pages 1–11, 236 items), followed by the books in Latin, Spanish and Portuguese, French and Italian (pages 12–30, 950 items). The second section is made up of an assortment of classical works and several historical books.

Considerable work is being done in the general field of book catalogues. Current projects include updating Graham Pollard and Albert Ehrman's pioneer work *The Distribution of Books by Catalogue from the Invention of Printing to A.D. 1800*; preparation of a census of printers and booksellers catalogues up to 1600 by Dr. Christian Coppens, Curator of the Manuscripts and Rare Books Department, Centrale Bilbotheek, Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium; the project initiated by Dr. Bert van Selm and now under the direction of Dr. J. A. Gruys of the Royal Library in the Hague (Koninklijke Bibliotheek) together with the Department of Dutch Language and Literature of Leiden University to prepare a database of Dutch book sales catalogues to 1800 with the resulting census and microfiche edition of these catalogues to

³⁵ Alexander Marx, 'Some Jewish Book Collectors,' in: *Studies in Jewish History and Booklore* (New York 1944), p. 211. For an analysis of the classical books in Aboab's library ref. Shlomo Berger, 'Codices Gentium: Rabbi Isaac Aboab's Collection of Classical Literature,' in: *StRos* 29 (1995), pp. 12–13.

be available as *'Book Sales Catalogues of the Dutch Republic 1599–1800'*; preparation of a handlist of French Book sales; and the organization of the auction and dealer catalogues in Philadelphia area libraries by the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections (PACSL).³⁶

One project is specifically concerned with Jewish auction sales catalogues. Mrs. Lies Kruijer-Poesiat (Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana) is preparing an inventory of such catalogues. The above studies and projects, with the exception of Mrs. Kruijer-Poesiat's study, while of value and interest to the Hebrew bibliographer, are not directly concerned with the Hebrew book, although more than one include catalogues with Hebrew books.

Inquiries were made to the responsible parties for a number of the above projects, and to several major libraries and institutions as well, to ascertain whether their surveys or collections included catalogues of Hebrew books from Hebrew book-publishers, dealers, auction catalogues, or from general factors who also dealt in Hebrew books. Dr. Coppens, whose census is through the sixteenth century, responded that he is unaware of any such catalogues nor of any mention of them in the secondary literature. He remarks that general collections, and he cites examples, do include Hebrew books. Dr. Gruys provided me with a short-title listing of some sixty catalogues (with still others to be catalogued) to 1730 (fifty to 1700) that include Hebrew books. Three auction catalogues only, however, that is the d'Aguilar, Aboab, and Abas catalogues, are of collections of Hebrew books owned by Jews. The remaining catalogues appear to be the collections of Christian Hebraists which also include, among their holdings, Hebrew books.³⁷

The Jewish representative on PASCL, as well as the curators of a number of rare book rooms at major Jewish Libraries, were also queried concerning their libraries' holdings of early catalogues related to the book trade. No new catalogues, in addition to those already described, were disclosed. Nevertheless, as was made clear by several librarians, the absence of such items from a library's recorded holdings is not to be understood as conclusive evidence that the library does not possess them, but rather that they may be part of the library's uncatalogued holdings.

³⁶ All of these projects are described in *PBSA*, 89:4.

³⁷ The earliest catalogue is that of Josephus Justus Scaliger, sold on 11 March 1609. L'Empereur's library, fourteenth on the list, was sold on 26 October 1648.

What of the project focusing on Jewish auction sales catalogues? Mrs. Lies Kruijer-Poesiat informs me that the focus of her project is to inventory the Jewish auction sales catalogues in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana. Their oldest catalogue is dated 1786; the majority of that library's large collection is comprised of nineteenth and twentieth century sales catalogues.

This survey of early Hebrew publisher, dealer and auction catalogues makes clear how much work remains to be done. I began by observing 'that it is given the sparse number of recorded catalogues, "an argument from silence."' Cecil Roth addresses this very point in his remarks on the discovery of Manasseh Ben Israel's sales catalogue, remarking that an argument from silence is not conclusive when applied to Hebrew bibliography, for 'the matter is now clear, that this list did exist, even though no copy had reached our hands.'³⁸

³⁸ Roth, *art. cit.* (n. 23), 'A List of Books' p. 21.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

OBSERVATIONS ON THE WORKER TO BOOK PRODUCTION RATIO IN AN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY HEBREW PRINTING-HOUSE¹

A detailed study of the worker to book production ratio in a Hebrew printing-press in the first half of the eighteenth century suggests that the primary occupation of the printers of books with Hebrew letters was not the printing of Hebrew (or Yiddish) works. The study, which focuses on the number of workers to the number and size of books issued by the Hebrew print-shop of Israel ben Abraham in Jessnitz over several decades, indicates that staffing levels are excessive if book production was the primary business of the subject press.²

Israel ben Abraham printed in various locations in Germany, among them Koethen, Jessnitz, and Wandsbeck. A proselyte who had reputedly been a Christian clergyman, Israel ben Abraham was, perhaps, the author of a Yiddish Hebrew grammar *Mafteach Leshon ha-Kodesh* (Amsterdam, 1713). In 1716 Israel ben Abraham acquired the typographical equipment previously used by Moses ben Abraham Avinu in Halle, also a convert to Judaism. After that press closed, the typographical material reverted to its original owner, Moses Benjamin Wulff, the court Jew of Prince Leopold I (1693–1747), ruler of Anhalt-Dessau, who subsequently transferred it to Israel ben Abraham.³

¹ The original version of this article was published in the *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (Mainz, 1998), pp. 217–221.

² The primary sources used in this study are Max Freudenthal: *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns. Moses Benjamin Wulff und seine Familie, die Nachkommen des Moses Isserles*. Berlin 1900 and Yeshayahu Vinograd: *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book Part II Places of print sorted by Hebrew names of places where printed including author, subject, place, and year printed, name of printer, number of pages and format, with annotations and bibliographical references* (Hebrew). Jerusalem, 1993. *Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns*, although somewhat dated, remains an important bibliographic source, recording detailed information not readily available elsewhere.

³ Concerning the use of Wulff's typographical material, particularly Immanuel Benveniste's printer's mark ref. Marvin J. Heller: *The Printer's Mark of Immanuel Benveniste and its Later Influence*. In: *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*. Cincinnati 1995, pp. 3–20. For Moses ben Abraham Avinu ref. Marvin J. Heller: *Moses ben Abraham Avinu and his Printing-Presses*. In: *European Judaism*, 31:2 London, 2000, pp. 123–32.

The first location in which Israel ben Abraham established his printshop was in Koethen, in Anhalt-Dessau, where he issued four titles in 1717/18. The printing-house's Jewish workers were not permitted to reside in Koethen; Israel ben Abraham therefore left for the neighboring town of Jessnitz, also within Leopold's domain.

Israel ben Abraham printed in Jessnitz from 1719 to 1726, when, faced with strong competition from the Frankfurt on the Oder and Berlin Hebrew press, he left Jessnitz, relocating in Wandsbeck, a suburb of Hamburg, printing there until 1733. When a Hebrew press opened in neighboring Altona Israel ben Abraham went into temporary retirement, remaining in Wandsbeck as a private citizen. When a second printshop opened in Altona, Israel ben Abraham became associated with that printing-house. In 1739 R. David ben Naphtali Hirsch Fraenkel (c. 1707–62), author of *Korban ha-Edah* on the Jerusalem Talmud, rabbi of Dessau and, from 1743, chief rabbi of Berlin, persuaded Israel ben Abraham to return to Jessnitz and to reopen his printing-press. Israel ben Abraham's second period in Jessnitz lasted from 1739 to c. 1745, when he retired to Berlin.⁴

Freudenthal attributes 37 books to Israel ben Abraham's first Jessnitz interval, 6 to the second period, and records two undated titles, *Hinnukh le-Katan* and *Luah ha-Hayyim*, tentatively dated by Vinograd as [1720]. Accepting those dates gives Freudenthal totals of 39 and 6 titles for the eight (1719–26) and six (1739–44) year periods, respectively, which averages per year slightly less than five titles for the first period and one title for the second period. In contrast, Vinograd lists 45 works from 1719 to 1726 and 7 from 1739 to 1745, with the respective averages being six titles and one title per year.

Vinograd records one book for 1745, Isaac ben Eliezer's *Sefer ha-Gan*, not recorded by Freudenthal, accounting for the variance in years of printing. The *Thesaurus*, following Steinschneider, has two separate entries for *Hiddushei Rabbi Hayyim Yonah* on tractate *Shevu'ot* and for tractate *Shevu'ot* although these works were printed together, as noted

⁴ S. Bamberger: Wandsbecker Druckperiode des Israel ben Abraham 1726–1733. In: Festschrift für Aron Freimann zum 60. Geburtstage. Berlin 1935, p. 102; Ch. B. Friedberg: History of Hebrew Typography of the following Cities in Europe: Amsterdam, Antwerp, Avignon, Basle, Carlsruhe, Cleve, Coethen, Constance, Dessau, Deyhernfurt, Halle, Isny, Jessnitz, Leyden, London, Metz, Strasbourg, Thiengen, Vienna, Zurich. From its beginning in the year 1516 (Hebrew). Antwerp 1937, pp. 76–78.

in the first of these entries.⁵ Freudenthal records the two works in a single entry.

We know the formats or size of 38 of the 45 titles in the 1719 to 1726 period and of all seven of the titles in the 1739 to 1745 period. I have grouped the books by format and size as follows: large format books are folio (2⁰) and 32 cm; intermediate books are quarto (4⁰), octavo (8⁰), and 18–21 cm; small format books are duodecimo (12⁰), sextodecimo (16⁰), and 13–17 cm. The results are as follows:

	1719–1726			1739–1745		
<u>Format</u>	<u>large</u>	<u>inter- mediate</u>	<u>small</u>	<u>large</u>	<u>inter- mediate</u>	<u>small</u>
Number	9	21	8	2	2	3
% of total	24	55	21	29	29	43

In the first period, a majority of books are in intermediate format, with a smaller percentage of books in small rather than large format. A significant shift to small format books (in percent only, the numerical difference in format is obviously not significant) occurs in Israel ben Abraham's second Jessnitz phase. However, one of the two folio works, Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah*, is the largest single work printed by Israel ben Abraham. Book format, considered in conjunction with book pagination, the number of books printed annually, and staffing levels at the printing-house, provides us with a clear picture of the worker to book-production ratio at Israel ben Abraham's press.

We know the pagination of 38 of the 45 books printed in Jessnitz from 1719 to 1726 and all seven of the titles printed from 1739 to 1745. One title only exceeds 200 pages, the multi-volume *Mishneh Torah* (1739–42), of which several volumes have more than that number of pages. Two books, R. Moses Alshekh's *Marot ha-Zove'ot* (1720) 2⁰ [2], 160 pages, and R. Zevi Hirsch ben Ezriel's *Ateret Zevi* (1722) 2⁰ 167, 2 pages, are more than 150 pages. Seven additional titles have more than 100 but less than 150 pages.

One more work may be added to this list, that is, *Shevu'ot*, for which pagination is not supplied in the *Thesaurus*, and which is, as noted above,

⁵ Moritz Steinschneider: *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*. Berlin 1852–60, nos. 1865 and 1866.

listed under two entries. The pagination for *Shevu'ot*, an octavo format tractate, is (1)+98+15+3. *Shevu'ot's* text, 98 pages, twice the standard pagination for the tractate, results from the accepted Talmudic page being printed over two pages. This format, no longer used in Talmudic tractates, was popular in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth centuries for small individual treatises, as it allowed the standard pagination to be retained with the text being printed in larger letters than would otherwise have been possible (fig. 83).⁶

Thirteen titles, ten from the first and three from the second Jessnitz period, contain fewer than 50 pages. *Eldad Hadani*, printed as an octavo in 1722 and in 1723, comprises 7, [1] pages and 8 pages respectively, while an annual calendar (1740) and the ethical work *Sefer ha-Gan* (1745) are of 12 pages only and *Kuntres Rabbi Hayyim Yonah* (1723) is 16 pages.⁷

Freudenthal provides the names of 32 workers (including Israel ben Abraham), made up of correctors, setters, pressmen, and unspecified in the Jessnitz printing-house, 16 in both the first and in the second periods. Although a number of individuals stayed with the press for several years, particularly in the second interval, one individual only, Friedrich George Klessner from Leipzig, was associated with the press in both phases. The number of workers to books for selected years in both periods is as follows:

	<u>1721</u>	<u>1722</u>	<u>1723</u>	<u>1739</u>	<u>1741</u>	<u>1742</u>	<u>1743</u>
books	3	3	6	1	0	1	1
workers	5	9	6	12	12	13	3

⁶ For a discussion of small format treatises ref. Marvin J. Heller: *Designing the Talmud: The Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page*. In: *Tradition*. New York, 1995, pp. 40–51 and Marvin J. Heller: *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750*. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1999, *var. cit.*

⁷ These small works should not be regarded lightly. Menahem Schmelzer, in an article on Hebrew printing in Germany from 1650 to 1750, describes several books of interest printed in Jessnitz, among them Yehuda Aryeh Leib ben Zevi Hirsch's work on the history of languages, *Oholei Yehudah* (1719) 21 cm. 3, 57 pages; Tobias Kohen's medical and scientific encyclopedia *Ma'aseh Tuvia* (1721) 4^o 4, 122 pages; and David Gans's astronomical work *Nehmad ve-Na'im* (1743) 20 cm. 82 pages. This last work had remained in manuscript for one hundred thirty years until printed by Israel ben Abraham. Menahem Schmelzer: *Hebrew Printing and Publishing in Germany, 1650–1750*. On Jewish Book Culture and the Emergence of Modern Jewry. In: *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook XXXIII* (1988), p. 372.

We get an even better picture of the worker to book-production ratio by examining the format and size of the books in detail for a specific year. The pagination is known for all of the titles published by Israel ben Abraham's press in 1723. The books, with their format and pagination are:

Eldad Hadami 8^o 8 pages
Damesek Eliezer 22 cm. [4]127 [3] pages
Kunteres Rabbi Hayyim Yonah 2^o 16 pages
Refu'at ha-Nefesh 8^o 36 pages
Sefer ha-Kevanot 8^o [4] 2–43 pages
Yam shel Shelomo 2^o [2]130 pages

These books, two folio, three octavo and one 22 cm book, have a total pagination of 372 pages. The printing-house staff for 1723 is given as six. If, however, the number of workers needed to produce six books totaling less than four hundred pages, most in intermediate format, seems disproportionate, the ratio of workers to books in the 1739 to 1742 period is even more irregular.

The number of titles credited to Israel ben Abraham's press per year in his second Jessnitz period, or, more accurately, the titles started per year, are one annually for 1739 and 1740, none for 1741, and one in 1742. During these years the press averaged twelve workers a year. The book figures, however, are misleading.

In 1739 the press began work on the *Mishneh Torah*, which was not completed until 1742 (fig. 84). As noted above, this was a large work, so that the pagination of volume III (1) +221 + 169 pages, printed in 1741 when no new titles are shown, was actually considerably more book work, given the folio format of the *Mishneh Torah*, than the six titles issued in 1723. In 1742, the year that the *Mishneh Torah* was completed, (1) +154 + 157 +(1), a folio edition of the *Moreh Nevukhim* [1] 127 pages, was issued. Authorized by R. Fraenkel, it was the first edition of that work in almost 200 years, the previous printing having been by Tobias Foa in Sabbioneta in 1553.⁸

Thirteen workers, including Israel ben Abraham, and there may have been others, are known to have been at the printing-house in Jessnitz in 1742, clearly more than are required to set, edit and print the two books published that year. Perhaps the staff at any one time was actually

⁸ Moses Mendelssohn acquired a copy of this edition of the *Moreh Nevukhim* when he was not yet thirteen years. It inspired his lifelong interest in philosophy.

smaller, reflecting turnover—the known staff dropped from thirteen in 1742 to three in 1743—due to a new press in Dessau, that of Elijah (Elias) ben Moses Benjamin Wulff, that recruited many of Israel ben Abraham's workers, forcing him to hire replacement workers.⁹

However, a review of the names of Israel ben Abraham's personnel for 1740 and 1741 suggests considerable staff stability. Of the nine workers in 1741 and eleven in 1742, seven and eight respectively were employed by Israel ben Abraham in both the preceding and following year. Of the remaining workers, all but one were employed for more than a year. Further evidence of continuity of personnel at the printing-house, and therefore confirmation of high staff levels as opposed to numerous workers resulting from rapid turnover, can be found in a list of Israel ben Abraham's setters (*setzers*) in Wandsbeck prepared by S. Bamberger. We can identify four workers associated with Israel ben Abraham in Jessnitz who accompanied him to Wandsbeck, and two workers employed in Wandsbeck who returned with him to Jessnitz.¹⁰

It appears that the staff to book production ratio in the Jessnitz press of Israel ben Abraham is excessive if printing books was his primary business. It is clear that this ratio does not reflect a temporary situation but rather an apparent consistent over-staffing. Israel ben Abraham was, presumably, in business to make a profit, which could not have been possible with the staff to book production ratio. Perhaps the nature of his primary business can be found in the several relocations of Israel ben Abraham's printing-press.

Why did Israel ben Abraham relocate his print-shop so often? In each instance he seems to have moved or closed his press due to competition in the vicinity of his printing-press. The other presses were located in neighboring cities with larger Jewish communities than the towns in which Israel ben Abraham was situated. If Israel ben Abraham's primary business was book publishing he would not have been so sensitive to the

⁹ Friedberg, Jessnitz (see note 4) p. 78. The Dessau press issued three works only before closing, *Korban Aharon* on *Sifra*, together with *Middot Aharon*, both by R. Aaron ibn Hayyim (c. 1560–c. 1632) and tractate *Megillah*, both in 1742, followed by *Seder Mo'ed* from the Jerusalem Talmud with the commentary *Korban ha-Edah* by R. David Fraenkel in 1743. Concerning the Dessau press see Marvin J. Heller: Moses Benjamin Wulff—Court Jew in Anhalt-Dessau. In: *European Judaism* 33:2. London, 2000, pp. 61–71.

¹⁰ Bamberger (see note 4), p. 103. The workers (first period) are Aaron ben Elijah Kohen, Eliezer Lesser ben Abraham, Isaac Eisak ben Joseph Isaac, and Moses ben Joseph, and (second period) Judah Leib and Abraham ben Naphtali Hertz of Wandsbeck.

proximity of another printer in Berlin, Frankfurt, or Wandsbeck, for even the Hebrew presses in Amsterdam could rightly be considered competitors. I would suggest that it was his local, non-book business that was threatened by printing-houses in the proximity of his press and the loss of that business which ultimately forced him to close his printing-house and relocate several times.

What would that local business have been? Perhaps it was the printed material required by the local Jewish, and even the local non-Jewish community. Two items of marketable value for a limited, albeit recurring time only, are known with certainty. In 1742 Israel ben Abraham printed a calendar, which both Freudenthal and Friedberg submit was a regular occurrence; Friedberg observes that Israel ben Abraham also issued calendars in Wandsbeck. Another item, also printed one time yearly, was *Sefirat ha-Omer* calendars, a totally different genre from annual calendars. Such items, together with even more mundane material, ephemera, generally quickly disposed of, required by individuals and commercial enterprises in every community, would seem to have been his primary business.

Book production is both capital and labor intensive, as opposed to the more commonplace work of a print house. Books are more expensive to produce, require more man hours, and the return on investment is delayed until after the finished product has been completed and distributed. Even then there is an element of risk, for an individual book may fare poorly. In addition, the press runs for books was not large; it has been estimated that the average size of an edition was only 1,000 copies.¹¹ More mundane items, in contrast, are done to order, seldom take long to set and print, have minimal risk and are paid for upon delivery, if not in advance. Printing such items would explain the staff levels of Israel ben Abraham's print shop and his sensitivity to local competition.

Was Israel ben Abraham's situation unique? The worker to book production ratio was analyzed for a second press, that of the Wilhermsdorf printer, Zevi Hirsch ben Hayyim. The findings, which corroborate the results of our study of Israel ben Abraham's print-shop, are presented here in summary form only.¹²

¹¹ Schmelzer (see note 6), p. 379.

¹² The works consulted on Hebrew printing in Wilhermsdorf are Moshe N. Rosenfeld: Jewish Printing in Wilhermsdorf. A Concise Bibliography of Hebrew and

Zevi Hirsch printed Hebrew books in Wilhermsdorf for almost three decades, that is, from 1712 to 1739, before relocating to Fürth, where he continued to print until 1753. During the more than two and a half decades he was active, Zevi Hirsch's Wilhermsdorf press issued 181 titles, or approximately six and a half books annually. That number, however, is misleading, for many of the items enumerated are not really books, but rather calenders, *Birkat ha-Mazon* books (*benchers*) and broadsides. Furthermore, there is a considerable variance in the number of books printed by year.

Twelve titles are recorded for 1718 and eleven to thirteen titles (two titles are dated tentatively) for 1716, whereas no titles are recorded for 1728. The book work that year was carried over from the previous year. Three titles are listed for 1727 and the same number for 1729. Of the six titles printed in that three year period one only, *the Arba'ah Turim*, begun in 1727, can be considered a major work. Seven workers' names, and that is not the entire staff at the time, are associated with the *Arba'ah Turim*. It does not seem possible that the staffing for that three year period, which was relatively stable, can be justified by the book work. Nor does it seem possible that Zevi Hirsch could have come close to recovering his investment in the *Tur* with such labor costs if that was his staff's major activity. Furthermore, book production was highest in the first decade of the Wilhermsdorf press, although staffing was only moderate.

A similar conclusion, albeit in a different context, was reached by Meir Benayahu, concerning the early output of the Bath-Sheba press in Salonika. He finds it a matter of wonder that anyone can suggest that two small books are all that was printed in two complete years, that is, 1592–93. He observes that the workers were “numerous and performed their duties diligently,” concluding that additional works, here volumes from the Talmud, must have been published.¹³

Yiddish Publications, Printed in Wilhermsdorf between 1670 and 1739, Showing Aspects of Jewish Life in Mittelfranken Three Centuries Ago Based on Public and Private Collections and Genizah Discoveries. With an Appendix, Archival Notes by Ralf Rossmeißl. London 1995; Aron Freimann: Annalen der hebräischen Druckerei in Wilhermsdorf. In: Festschrift zum Siebzigsten Geburtstag A. Berliner's. Gewidmet von Freunden und Schülern. Edited by A. Freimann and M. Hildesheimer Frankfurt/Main 1903; and VInograd (see note 2).

¹³ Meir Benayahu: The Relation Between Greek and Italian Jewry (Hebrew). Tel Aviv, 1980, p. 114. Benayahu's assumption that unknown volume(s) from the Talmud were surely printed by the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press in Salonika has been

I would suggest that Israel ben Abraham, Zevi Hirsch ben Hayyim, and perhaps the Salonika printer as well, printed not only books but also what may be described as ephemeral material. It was this latter work, which was a relatively secure and lucrative business, that enabled them to print books, which was their primary objective, even if it was not their primary business. However, even if printing ephemera was not their principal business, it is clear, based on staff and book production ratios, that book production was not their primary business.

proven correct. Whether the single tractate known to date, *Berakhot* (1592), or even additional tractates would be sufficient to explain staffing at the press is another matter. Concerning that tractate ref. Marvin J. Heller: The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina Salonika Edition of *Berakhot*: An Unknown Attempt to Circumvent the Inquisition's Ban on the Printing of the Talmud in Sixteenth Century Italy. In: *Jewish Quarterly Review* 1996, pp. 47–60. We find further support for our contention, albeit somewhat far afield, in a study of women in the book trade, that individuals engaged in the book business often had to engage in other activities. In C. J. Mitchell: *Women in the Eighteenth-Century Book Trades*. In: *Writers, Books, and Trade*, Edited by O. M. Brack, Jr., New York 1994, p. 37, which states: "Booksellers dealing purely in printed matter could exist only in cities and university towns. . . . Anyone who sold books seems to have sold stationery as well." Also ref. p. 63, n. 82.

CHAPTER TWENTY

AND THE WORK, THE WORK OF HEAVEN, WAS PERFORMED ON SHABBAT¹

In the earliest Hebrew books, the invention of printing is referred to as a holy work, “the work of Heaven.”² That language is used, for example, by R. Gabriel ben Aaron of Strassbourg, the corrector, in the colophon to the first printed tractate, *Berakhot* (Soncino, 1483/84). This appreciation was well justified, for the ability to publish the works of earlier sages and contemporary authorities helped Judaism survive and flourish. In the first half of the sixteenth century, many of the classics of Judaism were printed and reprinted in Italy, to be eventually distributed throughout Europe, reaching England, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire.

These accomplishments notwithstanding, the holy work, the printing of Hebrew books, became fraught with difficulties in the second half of the sixteenth century. Most of the problems encountered by Hebrew printers are well known. These include the burning of the Talmud in Italy in 1553–54, followed by the censorship and expurgation of Hebrew books by church authorities, often represented by apostates. Church approval became required to print, signified by the *Con licentia di I Superiori* (published with the permission of the authorities) now found on title pages. Furthermore, in contrast to the incunabula period and the first decades of the sixteenth century, when Jews owned and operated their own presses, such proprietorship was afterwards prohibited in Italy.³ As a result, Jews found it necessary to bring their books to Christian printers to be published, or to establish relationships in which the latter employed Jews and printed Hebrew books, or Jews established

¹ The original version of this article was published in *The Torah u-Maddah Journal* 11 (New York, 2002–02), pp. 174–85.

² David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Philadelphia, 1909, reprint London, 1963), p. 10, who observes that Christian printers too referred to their art as a “holy work.”

³ Incunabula are books printed prior to 1500. This term, used to describe the first products of the printing press, is derived from the Latin for swaddling clothes, meaning beginning or origin.

business relationships with non-Jewish printers. These relationships were mutually beneficial, for Jews could thus not only print their books but also had access to the typographical material of their non-Jewish business associates, while the latter had entry to the Jewish book market. This association of Christian printers with Hebrew partners was not uncommon, for “the Hebrew books sector, being unique, was rather attractive to investors, being more limited and not so wildly competitive as the Italian book sector.”⁴

There was, however, a further and most serious disability in the regulations affecting Jewish participation in the printing industry: the prohibition on the employ of Jewish typesetters. Type had to be set by non-Jews, and the correctors, who were Jewish, would afterwards review the text. Setting type did not require the presence of the Jewish corrector, for the non-Jewish typesetter worked from a copy book prepared earlier, in which each page was arranged with the corrected text, lines, and margins to be used as an example and followed as a guide by the typesetters.

Optimally, the Jewish corrector would read and correct sheets before a run began. However, if that was not possible he would read and correct sheets when the run was underway, that is, if an error was found while printing, the press would be stopped, the error corrected, and printing resumed, a process referred to as “stop-press corrections.” This accounts for many of the textual variations within an edition of a book. However, when the non-Jewish typesetters would set type and print late *erev* Shabbat or on Shabbat, when Jews would not come to the press, the sheets were set and printed without being read and any errors that occurred could not be corrected. Once the sheets had been printed, unless the error(s) was substantial or substantive, and often even then, the sheets were left uncorrected.⁵ The review process resumed after Shabbat with the next sheet to be set and printed. This situation is recorded in the colophons of a number of Jewish correctors.

⁴ Zipora Baruchson, “Money and Culture: Financing Methods in the Hebrew Printing Shops in Cinquecento Italy,” *La Bibliofilia* 92 (1990), 25. Concerning the restrictions on Hebrew workers in Venice see Benjamin Ravid, “The Prohibition against Jewish Printing and Publishing in Venice and the Difficulties of Leone Modena,” *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature*, ed. Isadore Twersky (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 135–53.

⁵ An interesting example is the title page of Nahmanides’ (Ramban) *Sha’ar ha-Gemul* (Ferrara, 1556), which attributes the work to Maimonides (Rambam). Quickly corrected, most title pages have the correct attribution. However, the original sheets with the title page attributing *Sha’ar ha-Gemul* to Rambam were retained and used.

Indeed, Abraham Yaari quotes from thirty-two books, sixteen printed from 1559 to 1599, with complaints from correctors, who state that they should not be held responsible for errors resulting from work done on late *erev* Shabbat or on Shabbat.⁶

One title, not among Yaari's enumeration, is the *Minhah Belulah* of Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen Rappoport (Verona, 1594), printed at the press of Francesco dalle Donne.⁷ In the colophon to that work the editor, a kinsman, R. Abraham ben Jehiel Kohen Rappoport, apologizes for any errors in the book, for "Who can discern mistakes" (Psalms 19:13). He informs us that not only was he careful but that Abraham Bath-Sheba (the actual publisher of the Yiddish/Hebrew books at the Verona press) was diligent in reviewing the type setting "letter by letter." Nevertheless, the work was done by "uncircumcised workers" (non-Jews), inexperienced in setting Hebrew letters, and it was not possible to avoid errors. Neither they nor the author, therefore, should be held responsible for any errors, and he requests that they be judged favorably. R. Abraham ben Jehiel Rappoport's complaint, and that of the other correctors as well, that he could not correct the pages set on the Sabbath, resulted from dalle Donne's desire to maximize the productivity of his non-Jewish workers, who, not constrained by Sabbath observance, worked on that day.

This article complements Yaari's findings for the period 1550 to 1599, addressing a facet of this occurrence not previously remarked upon, namely, that evidence that work was begun or completed on Shabbat can be determined from the dates on the title pages or in the colophons of Hebrew books. Two caveats to our thesis that the dates on the title pages or in the colophons provide proof that work was begun

⁶ Avraham Yaari, "Editor's complaints regarding printing on the Sabbath by non-Jews," *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1958), pp. 170–78 [Hebrew]. Also see Saul Kook, *Lyyunim u-Mehkarim II* (Jerusalem, 1963), pp. 372–73 [Hebrew], who notes three more cases, among them Abraham Shalom's *Neveh Shalom* (Venice, 1574) and Jacob Luzzatto of Safed's *Sefer Kavvanot ha-Aggadot* called *Kaftor va-Ferah* (Basle, 1580); and Simcha Assaf, "Am ha-Sefer ve-ha-Sefer" in *Be-oholei Ya'akov* (Jerusalem, 1943), p. 11 n. 101, who brings yet additional works, among them Elijah de Vidas' *Reshit Hokhmah* (Venice, 1579), and Nathan ben Jehiel of Rome's *Arukh* (Basle, 1599).

⁷ On the dalle Donne Hebrew press in Verona see my, "A Little Known Chapter in Hebrew Printing: Francesco dalle Donne and the Beginning of Hebrew Printing in Verona in the Sixteenth Century," *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 94:3 (New York, 2000), pp. 333–46.

or completed on Shabbat need be noted. They are the assumption that the non-Jewish typesetter was aware of the Jewish date, not improbable given their association with Jewish workers, the noting of the date on other works, and the availability of Hebrew calendars (the earliest extant Hebrew wall calendar was printed by Gershom Soncino, in Barco, Italy in 1497); and secondly, that the typesetter did not err when taking the letters out of the case, a possibility, but less likely where two letters only signifying a date are needed, and particularly when the date is *Rosh Hodesh*.

The common era date can be derived from the Hebrew date by adding 1240, the year the fifth millennium in the Hebrew calendar began, to the numerical value of the Hebrew letters. Where a chronogram is employed, a not uncommon practice at the time, the letters to be used in the calculation are emphasized. It should be noted that because Rosh ha-Shanah, the beginning of the Jewish year, normally occurs in September, there can be a three month variance in this calculation.⁸ The dates on Hebrew title pages, and in the colophons as well, take one of several forms. The date may be given in a straightforward manner, such as ש"נ"ד (354 = 1594); with a chronogram, as in the case of the *Minhah Belulah*, dated, “Rejoice שמחו (354 = 1594) with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her; rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her” (Isaiah 66:10); or in a more detailed manner, providing the exact date, from which the day of the week can be determined.

For example, *Lehem Yehudah*, R. Judah ben Samuel Lerma Sephardi's commentary on *Pirkei Avot*, printed in Sabbioneta by Cornelius Adelkind at the Press of Tobias Foa, was completed, according to the colophon, on 27 *Heshvan*, “And now shall my head be lifted up above my enemies around me; therefore I will offer in his tent sacrifices of joy; I will sing, I will make music to the Lord” (Psalms 27:6), that is, ואזמרה לידוד = (313) Monday, November 24, 1552.⁹ There are also instances when the day of the week is explicitly stated.

⁸ Concerning the use of chronograms see my, “Chronograms on Title Pages in Selected Eighteenth Century Editions of the Talmud,” *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* XVIII (Cincinnati, 1993), pp. 3–14.

⁹ For consistency, all the dates in this article are according to the Gregorian calendar, adopted in Rome in 1582 in place of the Julian calendar. The Julian equivalent of this date would be October 23, 1554.

In a number of books the date on the title page is preceded by “work began on,” or the date in the colophon by “work was completed on.”¹⁰ This is the case in Cremona, where many books printed at the press of Vincenzo Conti provide both dates. For example, R. Samson ben Isaac of Chinon’s (c. 1260–c. 1330) *Sefer Keritut* (1557) on talmudic methodology, was begun on “Monday, in the year, *parashat*, ‘And Jacob lived וישב (318 = 16 *Kislev* = November 18, 1557) [in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan]” (Genesis 37:1), and the colophon gives a completion date of Wednesday, 2 *Shevat*, 358 (January 1, 1558).¹¹

When a full date is given, even though the day of the week is not stated, as with *Sefer Keritut*, it is possible to determine the day on which work began or was completed. A review of a substantial number of Hebrew books printed from 1550 to 1559 provides several in which the start or completion date occurs on Shabbat.¹² That the number is so small, six only, can be attributed to the fact that not only is such detailed information not always provided, but printers who might otherwise give an exact date would be reluctant to do so when it would be evident to Sabbath observant customers that work had been done

¹⁰ Parenthetically, the presence of starting dates on the title pages of Hebrew books, a not uncommon occurrence, suggests that, in at least these instances, the front or preliminary matter, if any besides the title page, was either printed prior to the text or taken into consideration before printing began. This is not consistent with bibliographic understanding of early book practice, as expressed by Phillip Gaskell, *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (1972, reprint New Castle, 1995), p. 52, who writes, “The preliminary leaves or sections (which were nearly always printed after the text of a book except in reprints and sometimes even then)...” In fairness, it should be noted that Gaskell continues, “Fifteenth-century books generally had no preliminaries...” that is prior to the adoption of the title page. He is not clear as to where late sixteenth century practice falls, although presumably it is included in his comment on the later printing of preliminaries. Book print practice was alike, whether for Hebrew or non-Hebrew books, and the presses that published Hebrew books belonged to Italian printers during this period. We might question than whether the preliminary leaves or sections were in fact “nearly always printed after the text” during this period as is generally accepted.

¹¹ Meir Benayahu, *Hebrew Printing at Cremona: Its History and Bibliography* (Jerusalem, 1971), pp. 34–35 [Hebrew].

¹² This article—and the reason for the 1550 to 1599 period—is based on my *The Sixteenth Century Hebrew Book: An Abridged Thesaurus* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 2004), a study of more than four hundred and fifty Hebrew books, their authors, printers, and conditions of publication, issued from 1500 to 1599. Not all of those books are within our subject period or were printed in Italy, so that the sample is actually smaller than that number. It is not unlikely that there are other instances, not noted here, of dates on title pages that fell on Shabbat.

on the Sabbath.¹³ I would suggest from this that there is a substantive difference between the editor's remarks and the printer's omission of the completion date. The editors are defending themselves from complaints that they are responsible for errors in the text, having done sloppy or substandard work. The printers, in contrast, non-Jews,—and this is speculative as we are dealing with an omission, indicated by its contrast with other instances when additional detail is provided—are showing an understanding to their Jewish customers' religious sensibilities.

Nevertheless, there are instances when such information is given. In 1554–55 the Foa press published R. Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi's (Rif, 1013–1103) halakhic compendium, *Hilkhot Rav Alfasi* (fig. 85). The title page informs that work began on *Rosh Hodesh Adar*, “And God Almighty י"שד (314) give you mercy” (Genesis 43:14), that is, possibly February 13, 1554, which is a Saturday. In this instance, however, it is likely that the date is in error, or, more probable, given that *Rosh Hodesh Adar* is two days, 30 Shevat and 1 Adar, that the printer is referring to the last day of the previous month rather than the first day of Adar.¹⁴ The printer, Tobias ben Eliezer Foa, an observant Jew, would not have operated his press on the Sabbath. His master printer was Cornelius Adelkind, who had first worked for the famed Bomberg press and afterwards for Marco Antonio Giustiniani. It is generally accepted today that Adelkind did apostatize, but the date when he abandoned the faith of his fathers is uncertain. It is likely, however, that Adelkind's conversion was later rather than earlier, for it is questionable as to whether Foa would have employed an apostate.¹⁵ Adelkind's status notwithstanding, given the nature of the Foa press, we must entertain the possibility, although

¹³ Even today Hebrew books printed in religious circles often include a disclaimer that even the paper was not made on the Sabbath.

¹⁴ A similar situation occurs with *Seder Mo'ed*, begun in Sabbioneta, according to the title page, on *Rosh Hodesh Iyyar*, “Let the arrogant be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause; but I will meditate ישיח (319 = 1559) on Your precepts” (Psalms 119:78). The first of Iyyar comes out on Shabbat, but here too *Rosh Hodesh* is two days, so that it is more likely that the reference is to 30 Nissan, a Friday. *Seder Mo'ed* was the last work printed in Sabbioneta, being completed, together with the remaining four orders of Mishnayot, in Mantua. Concerning this edition of *Mo'ed* see Isaiah Sonne, “When was Tobis Foa's Press at Sabbioneta Closed,” *Kiryat Sefer* VII (Jerusalem, 1930), pp. 275–76 [Hebrew].

¹⁵ For a summary of the discussion of whether Adelkind did indeed apostatize and if so when, see my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn, 1992), pp. 159–61.

the clear reference to *Rosh Hodesh* makes it difficult to assume a simple type setting error, that work on *Hilkhot Rav Alfás* did not begin on the Sabbath.¹⁶

The next title, however, prevents a clearer case, that is, *Zeidah la-Derekh*, a concise code of law by R. Menahem ben Aaron ibn Zerah (c. 1310–1385). The author's parents and four younger brothers were among the 6,000 Jews massacred when the populace of Estella, Navarre rose against the Jewish community. Left for dead, a knight, a friend of his father, found him, removed him from among the dead, and nursed him back to health. After he recovered, Menahem went to Toledo, where he studied under R. Joshua ben Shu'ayb, R. Judah ben Asher, a son of the Rosh, and later under R. Joseph ben al-'Aysh. Eight years later a civil war between two aspirants to the throne of Spain left Menahem impoverished. The courtier, Don Samuel Abrabanel, interceded on his behalf and Menahem was appointed rabbi of Toledo and head of the rabbinical academy.

Menahem composed *Zeidah la-Derekh* for the honor and benefit of Don Samuel, whom Menahem praises in the introduction. The attractive book is directed towards the wealthy, who, because of their responsibilities and lifestyle, including social intercourse with non-Jews, are not always rigorous in the performance of *mizvot*, nor do they have sufficient times to master a detailed code. His code, therefore, is directed towards the practical. It provides, as its name, *Zeidah la-Derekh* (“provision for the way”; Genesis 42:25, 45:21) implies, the traveler's necessities, not too burdensome to bear. In addition to its halakhic content, *Zeidah la-Derekh* provides reasons, based on the Rambam, for commandments, philosophical and moral precepts, and medical advice.

The printer, Abraham ibn Usque, had been born Duarte Pinel in Portugal, but, suspected of Judaizing, fled that land in about 1543 for Ferrara, where he returned to Judaism. In 1553 Usque took over the press founded two years earlier by Samuel ibn Askara Zarefati of Pesaro, issuing about about thirty Hebrew titles before the press closed in 1558. The title page has Usque's pressmark, an astrolabe from

¹⁶ To err is certainly human; “Who can discern mistakes” (Psalms 19:13), as can be seen from the completion date of the first edition of R. Moses ben Israel Isserles' (Rema) *Torat ha-Hattat*. Printed by Isaac ben Aaron Prostitz in Cracow, that date is given as Thursday, 25 Heshvan, 330 (November 15, 1569), which, in 1569, was not a Thursday but a Shabbat. Given that not only Prostitz but his workers were Sabbath observant Jews it is likely that the correct resolution of the contradictory dates is that the completion date for *Torat ha-Hattat* was Thursday, 23 Heshvan.

which an anchor descends, and below it a banner with, at the bottom, the inscription, “I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope” (Psalms 130:5). On the sides are the initials AV, for Abraham ibn Usque (fig. 86). The title page informs that work was completed on 8 Adar, “in the shadow of the Almighty י"שד" (February 20, 1554) I will take refuge” (ref. Psalms 57:2). That day was Shabbat. One additional feature makes this edition of *Ẓeidah la-Derekh* noteworthy. In the explanation of the *Amidah* is a discussion of the twelfth benediction, *ve-la-malshinim* (slanderers, informers). This section, comprising almost an entire leaf, was removed by the censors and the enumeration of the prayers comprising the *Amidah* was correspondingly adjusted in the next edition (Sabbioneta, 1567). It has not been replaced and does not appear in any later editions of *Ẓeidah la-Derekh*.

Four years later, in 1558, R. Meir ben Ephraim of Padua and R. Jacob ben Naphtali ha-Kohen of Gazolo printed, at the Mantua press of Venturin Ruffinello, *Ma'arekhet ha-Elokut* with the commentary *Minhat Yehudah*. *Ma'arekhet ha-Elohut* is a kabbalistic work attributed to the Tosafot R. Perez ben Isaac, accompanied by a detailed commentary entitled *Minhat Yehudah*, from R. Judah Hayyat (c. 1450–c. 1510), together with an anonymous commentary, and glosses from the editor, R. Immanuel ben Jekuthiel Benevento. Hayyat, one of the leading kabbalists of his time, was among the refugees from Spain and Portugal. He became stranded in Malaga, where neither he nor his fellow passengers were allowed to disembark because of plague. Hayyat's wife died of starvation and he was close to death. Finally allowed to sail for North Africa, Hayyat was imprisoned there for allegedly disparaging Islam. Ransomed by Jews, to whom he gave 200 books in return, Hayyat went to Fez where a famine compelled him to work at a mill for a piece of bread hardly fit for a dog. Hayyat eventually reached Italy, where, at the urging of R. Joseph Jabez and others, he prepared his commentary, *Minhat Yehudah*, today considered a classic kabbalistic work in its own right.

Ma'arekhet ha-Elokut is dated, “he shall cry, yes, roar יצריה (318 = 1558)” (Isaiah 42:13). The colophon informs that the holy work was concluded on *Rosh Hodesh Adar II* “yes, roar יצריה” (March 1, 1558), which was Shabbat. Here too, we have the possibility that work was actually completed the previous day, that is, Friday, 30 *Adar I*. There is, however, a greater likelihood that the date refers to Shabbat than in the previously noted *Rosh Hodesh* cases in Sabbioneta, for here the proprietor of the press, Venturin Ruffinello, was a non-Jew. That the

title page is not more definitively dated should not cause us to assume, although that is certainly a possibility, that work began on Shabbat, for a number of contemporary Mantua imprints also give the year only, with more specific information in the colophon.¹⁷

In the same year R. Abraham Klausner's (d. 1407/8) *Sefer ha-Minhagim* was printed in Riva di Trento. That Tyrolese town, a refuge for the Hebrew book from 1558 to 1560, represents an unusual episode in the history of Hebrew printing.¹⁸ Riva di Trento is better known for the Trent Blood Libel of 1475 and the Councils of Trent from 1545 to 1563 which formulated the Church response to the Reformation. Nevertheless, it was there that Bishop Cristoforo Madruzzo, Cardinal of Trent, a scholar and supporter of learning, who argued at the Council of Trent (1562) for leniency and moderation in condemning books, became the patron and protector of a Hebrew press. That press, with R. Joseph Ottolenghi, formerly *rosh yeshivah* at Cremona and now head of the yeshivah in Riva di Trento, as the publisher and financial backer, and R. Jacob Marcaria, a physician and talmudist as the printer, issued more than thirty Hebrew books. Their first title was *Hilkhot Rav Alfasi*, published in three folio volumes, the title page of each bearing the Cardinal's coat-of-arms, a significant statement of his support and

¹⁷ Examples of Mantua imprints with more general dates on the title page and specific completion dates are a Roman rite *mahzor* for the entire year, on which work began, according to the title page, "during Hanukkah ש"י"ז" (317 = 1557). The first part of this attractive *mahzor* was completed on *Rosh Hodesh Sivan*, 320 (Sunday, June 5, 1560); the second part during Hanukkah, in the year, "when I restore בשובי (320) your captivity" (Zephaniah 3:20). *Tikkunei Zohar* was begun "and he sat וישב (318 = 1558) upon it in truthfulness" (Isaiah 16:5) and completed, according to the colophon on Tuesday, 17 *Kislev*, "And in mercy a throne was established; and he sat וישב (November 19, 1557) upon it in truthfulness in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and quick to do righteousness." The beginning of the work on Isaac ben Joseph Caro's (mid-fifteenth to after 1518) *Toledot Yizhak* is dated with the verse from Isaiah 16:5, and a completion date of *Rosh Hodesh Marheshvan* ש"ט (319), Thursday, October 23, 1558. Not all Mantua titles are dated with chronograms. For example, Saadiah Gaon's (882–942) *Sefer ha-Tehiyah* is dated, "*Hodesh Iyyar*, in the year three hundred sixteen" (April/May, 1556), and Berechiah ben Natronai ha-Nakdan's (12th–13th century) *Mishlei Shu'alim* is simply dated ש"י"ז (317 = 1557). Additional examples can be given but this seems sufficient.

¹⁸ For a history of the Riva di Trento press see Amram, pp. 296–302; Joshua Bloch, "Hebrew Printing in Riva Di Trento," in *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography* (New York, 1976), pp. 89–110; the introduction to the facsimile reprint of the 1560 Riva di Trento edition of Benjamin ben Abraham Anav's *Massa Gei Hizzeyon*, (Jerusalem, 1966), ed. S.U. Nahon, pp. xv–xviii [Hebrew with English introduction]; and Ch. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal and Turkey, from its beginning and formation about the year 1470* (Tel Aviv, 1956), pp. 82–83 [Hebrew].

protection of the press at a time when his church was banning and burning Hebrew books.

Sefer ha-Minhagim records the customs of the Jews of France and Germany for the entire year, encompassing benedictions, prayers and ritual practice. The title page of this small book, it is a sextodecimo (16^o) measuring about 15 cm. made up of 43 [1] leaves, is dated *Kislev* 319. The colophon notes that it was completed today, 2 *Kislev* 319 (November 22, 1558), a Saturday (fig. 87). However, as with the Foa *Hilkhot Rav Alfis*, we are again dealing with a press in which the principles were Sabbath observers. An alternative reading of the date, היום יום ב כסליו, normal in other circumstances but certainly awkward and even improbable here, could suggest that the setter meant today, Monday, *Kislev* 319, equivalent to either November 24, December 1, 8, or 15. Perhaps in this instance we can assume the date is in error, the letter ב having been misset by the setter.

We turn next to Venice, the foremost city of the Hebrew book trade in the sixteenth century. Two titles merit our attention, R. Abraham ben Gedaliah ibn Asher's (Aba, 16th century) *Or ha-Sekhel*, printed by Giovanni Gryphio in 1567, and R. Samuel ben Moses Kalai's *Mishpetei Shemu'el*, printed by Daniel Zanetti in 1599–1600. Gryphio printed nine titles only, beginning with a *mahzor* according to the rite of Aram Zovah (1560), and including such works as the *Tur Y.D.* (1564), *Tur O. H.* (1566), R. Obadiah Sforno's *Be'ur al ha-Torah* and *Be'ur Shir ha-Shirim*, and R. Meir ibn Gabbai's *Avodat ha-Kodesh* (1567). However, despite the quality of his work, Gryphio was unable to compete in Venice's Hebrew book market, and ceased to print after publishing the *Shulhan Arukh* (1567).

Or ha-Sekhel is a commentary on the *Midrash Rabbah* on the Torah and five Megillot, each book with its own title. The title page is enhanced by the Gryphio pressmark, that is, a griffin holding a stone in its claws, with the the phrase, "Wisdom without good luck accomplishes little" on the sides of the pressmark.¹⁹ This volume, corrected by R. Isaac ben Joseph Hazzan and with a preface from R. Samuel Kasani, the only part of *Or ha-Sekhel* to have been printed, is on *Bereshit Rabbah*.

¹⁹ Amram (p. 350) suggests that despite the fact that Gryphio had such able workers as Samuel Boehm, Meshullam Kaufman, Solomon Luzatto, and Samuel Archivolti, he was unable to compete with the larger and more established presses of di Gara and Bragadine, apropos of the phrase on the sides of his pressmark, "Wisdom without good luck accomplishes little."

Ibn Asher writes that he called the complete work *Or ha-Sekhel* (the light of wisdom) because it certainly lights the eyes of wisdom of one who looks into it. Each book has an appropriate individual name. This volume is called “*Ma’adanei Melekh*, for the sayings of our sages who are called kings are dainties for the soul and this book explains them [the sayings] and places the dainties of the king before all who read them, for, ‘The light of the eyes rejoices the heart’ (Proverbs 15:30). I have also chosen this name to be a remembrance from the verse, ‘Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, [and he shall yield royal dainties *ma’adanei melekh*]’” (Genesis 49:20).

The title page informs that the beginning of the work was 14 *Tammuz*, “Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy וְהִרְנִינוּ (327 = July 1, 1567), [all you who are upright in heart]” (Psalms, 32:11). The colophon informs that completion of the work was on Monday, 15 *Kislev*, “and your judgments are as the light that goes forth בְּאֹרֶךְ יָצָא (328 = November 27, 1567)” (Hosea 6:5). The day of the week that work began, not clearly stated as is the date of the week on which work was completed, was a Saturday. Similarly, the completion date for Gryphio’s edition of the *Shulhan Arukh* is explicitly stated, that is, “Monday 28 Nissan, 327 (April 17, 1567).” Perhaps the omission of the day of the week reflects a sensitivity to Gryphio’s Jewish market, for in these instances where work on that day of the week would not be objectionable to their Jewish customers it is spelled out, in contrast to Shabbat where the specification of the day of the week is omitted.

Mishpetei Shemu’el was printed by Daniel Zanetti, one of several members of that family who printed Hebrew books in Venice.²⁰ It consists of one hundred thirty four responsa from R. Samuel ben Moses Kalai (16th century), a student of R. David Ben Hayyim Kohen of Corfu (Maharadakh, d. 1530) and the son-in-law of R. Benjamin ben Mattathias of Arta (*Binyamin Ze’ev*, d. c. 1540), who was later involved in a serious dispute with David Kohen over the former’s leniencies in permitting an *agunah* to remarry. The responsa in *Mishpetei Shemu’el* cover the corpus of the *Shulhan Arukh*. Kalai discusses contemporary issues and informs us as to the difficulties encountered by and punishments

²⁰ Concerning the Zanetti press and its books see *Asufot XII* (Jerusalem, 1999), ed. Meir Benayhu, a special edition devoted to the Zanetti press. Parenthetically, the volume has as an appendix a facsimile of *Shelom Ester* (Constantinople, 1575–76). A limited edition reprint of *Shelom Ester* (Queens, 2001) was also issued by Dr. B. Ogorik.

suffered by Jews from the Turks for aiding the local inhabitants in Corfu resist the Ottoman siege of that island. He addresses such questions as the status of the wife of a *kohen* taken captive by the Turks upon whom it is testified that at no time was she secluded with her captors; a nursing woman whose husband apostatized, and the responsibility of one community for another.

The title page state that work began on *Mishpetei Shemu'el* on *Rosh Hodesh* Nissan, “they shall obtain joy and gladness ושמחה (March 27, 1599), [and sorrow and sighing shall flee away]” (Isaiah 35:10). Work was completed according to the colophon on, “In you בך shall Israel bless’ (Genesis 48:20) for counting, in the year, ‘[Neither shall your name any more be called Abram], but your name שמך shall be Abraham” (Genesis 17:5), that is 7 Iyyar, 360 (Friday, April 21, 1600), which is the 22nd בך day of the Omer. In 1599, *Rosh Hodesh* Nissan, the date on which work began, was a Saturday. There is no ambiguity here, for Adar, the preceding month has 29 days only, so that *Rosh Hodesh* is one day, and that, in this instance, a Saturday.

The above sample is certainly small, further reduced by two works with dates that seem questionable, the 1554 Sabbioneta edition of *Hilkhot Rav Alfás* and the Riva di Trento *Sefer ha-Minhagim*. Nevertheless, the remaining titles, and likely there are a few more, by themselves statistically of little consequence, are consistent with what we already knew from the editors’ remarks in the colophons. Certainly, if work could proceed on Shabbat when Jewish editors were absent, there is no reason that the “holy work” could not just as well commence and conclude on that day as well. Printers, issuing books for a Jewish market, sensitive to their customers’ feelings, would have no need to publicize that work was done on the Sabbath. These few entries, then, are careless mistakes. Perhaps we can reapply the words of the Psalmist, noted above in conjunction with the *Minhah Belulah*, to the dating of these books by the setters, “Who can discern mistakes” (Psalms 19:13).

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

HIS HAND DID NOT LEAVE HERS UNTIL HE WAS GROWN: TWO LITTLE KNOWN WORKS FROM MOSES CORDOVERO (RAMAK)¹

R. Moses ben Jacob Cordovero (Ramak, 1522–1570) is considered by many to be the greatest theoretician of Jewish mysticism. He was the first to describe the dialectical process through which the *Sefirot* pass in their development and to interpret the various stages of their emanation as manifestations of the Divine mind.² A prolific writer, he is responsible for two of the classics of Kabbalah, *Pardes Rimmonim* and *Tomer Devorah*. The former, completed when Cordova was only twenty seven, is a large, comprehensive and systematic exposition of kabbalistic principles. It is, moreover, a synthesis between the major lines of Spanish Kabbalah, based on the *Zohar*, and elements of ecstatic Kabbalah, integrated for the first time in the work of a major Spanish kabbalist. *Tomer Devorah*, in contrast, is a small kabbalistic ethical and inspirational treatise. The popularity of this book is attested to by the number of times it has been reprinted and the fact that it has been translated into several languages, including English.³ Less well known are a number of other works written by Cordovero. Two in particular are of interest and will be the subject of this article.

Based on his name, Cordovero appears to have been descended from Jewish exiles from the city of Cordova. It has been suggested, but this is uncertain, that he was born in Safed. Cordovero was a student

¹ The original version of this article was published *Los Muestras* no. 44 (Brussels, 2001), pp. 44–46.

² Gershom S. Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1961), pp. 252–53;

³ *Pardes Rimmonim* was first printed by David Azubib in Salonika in c. 1584. No copies of this edition are known to be extant. Concerning this edition see Israel Mehlman, “Hebrew Printing in Salonika,” in *Genuzot Sefarim* (Jerusalem, 1976), p. 73 n. 42 [Hebrew]. The earliest existing edition is the Cracow, 1591 printing of Isaac Prostitz. It is a folio 2^o of [2], 211 leaves. *Tomer Devorah* was first printed in Venice in 1588 by Giovanni di Gara. It is a sextodecimo (16^o) of 19 leaves. There are two English translations, both entitled *The Palm Tree of Deborah*, the first by Louis Jacobs (London, 1960), the second by Moshe Miller (Southfield, Mich., 1993). Jacobs’ translation has been posted on the internet at www.digital-brilliance.com/kab/deborah/deborah.htm.

of R. Joseph Caro (1488–1575) in *nigleh* (revealed, literal Torah) and, after heeding a heavenly voice that urged him to study Kabbalah, of his brother-in-law, R. Solomon Alkabez (*Lekhhah Dodi*) in *nistar* (esoteric Torah, Kabbalah).⁴ Cordovero became a leader of the ascetic mystical community of Safed, preparing for it a list of rules of conduct, primarily instructions and commands.⁵ It has been suggested, but this too is uncertain, that Cordovero was one of the four ordained by R. Jacob Berab, not all in that small group being known with surety.⁶

Cordovero served as a *dayyan* in Safed and founded a yeshivah there in about 1550, which he headed until his death in 1570. Among Cordovero's students were R. Elijah de Vidas (*Reshit Hokhmah*), R. Abraham Galante (*ha-Kadosh*), R. Samuel Gallico (*Asis Rimmonim*, an abridgement of *Pardes Rimmonim*), R. Hayyim Vital, and R. Isaac Luria (*ha-Ari*). Although Luria was Cordovero's student for a short while only, and his system of Kabbalah would supplant that of Cordovero, Luria refers to Cordovero as his master and teacher, testifying that Cordovero was completely free of sin, that both the sages of the Mishnah and Elijah the Prophet appeared to him, and that at Cordovero's funeral a pillar of fire preceded his coffin. Others, such as R. Menahem Azariah da Fano (1548–1620), although in Italy, considered themselves disciples of Cordovero.

Cordovero wrote, in addition to *Pardes Rimmonim* and *Tomer Devorah*, a number of other works, not equally well known. Among these other printed books are *Sefer Gerushin* (Venice, c. 1602), kabbalistic meditations and the practices of Alkabez; *Zivhei Shelamim* (Lublin, 1613), on the order of prayers and *shofar* for Rosh Ha-Shanah; *Tefillah le-Moshe* (Przemysl, 1892), on prayers for the entire year according to the Sephardic rite; *Elimah Rabbati* (Lvov, 1881), another systematic kabbalistic work; *Shi'ur Komah* (Warsaw, 1883), on the Sefirot; and, in part only, *Or Yakar* (Jerusalem, 1965), Cordovero's commentary on the *Zohar*. Two other printed works need to be mentioned, both small in size but of great value, of interest to us and the subject of this article. They

⁴ Alkabez is best remembered for *Lekhhah Dodi*, the hymn recited in the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service. Less well known is that Cordovero composed an alternate version of *Lekhhah Dodi*. Concerning this see R. Moses ben Judah ibn Makhir, *Seder ha-Yom* (Venice, 1599; reprint Jerusalem, 1998), p. 82.

⁵ Mordechai Pachter, "Kabbalistic Ethical Literature in Sixteenth-Century Safed," *Binah* 3 (Westport, Conn., 1994), pp. 161–62; and Solomon Schechter, "Safed in the Sixteenth Century. A City of Legists and Mystics," in *Studies in Judaism, Second Series* (Philadelphia, 1908), pp. 239–40.

⁶ The others, known with greater certainty, are R. Joseph Caro, R. Moses di Trani, and R. Joseph Sagis.

are *Or Ne'erav* and *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*, both printed in Venice in 1587 by Cordovero's son R. Gedaliah Cordovero at the press of Giovanni di Gara.

Gedaliah, a kabbalist and halakhist, was born in 1562. At the age of eighteen he traveled to Italy to see to the printing of his father's *Or Ne'erav*, *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*, and *Tomer Devorah*. He was assisted in this task by R. Menahem Azariah da Fano, the preeminent exponent of the Cordovian school of Kabbalah in Italy. Gedaliah also printed two other works at this time, *Perush Shir ha-Shirim* (Venice, 1587), a commentary on the Song of Songs by the Safed kabbalist R. Elisha ben Gabriel Gallico, and, the following year, *Heshek Shelomo*, a biblical glossary of difficult words translated into Ladino, the name of the author is not known. *Heshek Shelomo* is dedicated to R. Solomon Shirish of Constantinople, who assisted Gedaliah with his travels and with whom he stayed in Constantinople on his return to Erez Israel. By 1592 Gedaliah is in Jerusalem where he served the Jewish community in an official capacity, becoming, in 1614, the head of the *bet din* (rabbinic court).⁷

It was not fortuitous that Gedaliah traveled to Venice to print his father's books, despite the presence of Hebrew print shops in Constantinople and Salonika. Scholars in Safed, and at times even in Salonika, chose to send their books to Venice to be printed there because of the high quality of the imprints of the Venetian print-shops. This despite the hazards of sending a manuscript by sea, and of having their text typeset and edited by strangers, often in the absence of the author, and the need of approval by the censors, all because of the perceived superiority of the Italian presses.⁸

One of the first books that Gedaliah brought to press was his father's *Or Ne'erav*, an introduction to the study of Kabbalah.⁹ A small book (8^o, 56 f.), it is largely an abridgement of *Pardes Rimmonim*, Cordovero's systematic exposition of kabbalistic principles, with additional chapters by Gedaliah. The intent of *Or Ne'erav* is twofold, the popularization of the study of Kabbalah, Cordovero realizing that *Pardes Rimmonim* was not for the novice, and as a defense of the esoteric study of Torah against its detractors.

⁷ Mordechai Margalioth, *Encyclopedia of Great Men in Israel I* (Tel Aviv, 1986), col. 310–12 [Hebrew].

⁸ Meir Benayahu, *The Relation Between Greek and Italian Jewery* (Tel Aviv, 1980), pp. 98–100 [Hebrew].

⁹ Later editions of *Or Ne'erav* include Cracow, 1647; Fourth, 1701; Zolkiew 1800 and 1851; Vilna, 1885; and Brooklyn, 1965. There is also an English translation by Ira

Or Ne'erav has a decorative title page with a frame comprised of pillars with a woman at each side above a lion, both facing out (fig. 88). The text describes *Or Ne'erav* as,

“Sweet to the soul and healthy for the bone” (Proverbs 16:24), [a remedy] for the strange concepts described [within] of those who distance themselves from the true wisdom. “This is the gate of the Lord” (Psalms 118:20) to merit afterwards the book *Or Yakar*, which is the great light, the commentary on the *Zohar*. The sixth part of this work is a praiseworthy and glorious summarization of the introductory material, explained at length by the Rav in his youth, in his book *Pardes Rimmonim*.

At the bottom of the page is the phrase, *Con licentia de Superiori*, indicating the approval of the Church censors. On the verso of the title page is the introduction of R. Moses ben Mordecai Bassola (1480–1560), who praises Gedaliah for the publication of this work and his proofreading, noting that “Mistakes are not found with him.” Bassola continues with praise of the book (2a–b), concluding with verse in the same vein. Bassola was an Italian kabbalist who served as rabbi of Ancona and is deserving of some of the credit for the *Zohar* being published in Mantua (1558–60). In his old age Bassola traveled to Erez Israel where he met Cordovero, who reputedly kissed the older man’s hands.¹⁰

Next is Gedaliah’s introduction (3a–b), in which it is again noted that *Or Ne'erav* is an abridgement of the material in *Pardes Rimmonim*, with additional prefatory chapters by Moses Cordovero, to make Kabbalah more readily understandable, to instruct in its usefulness, and the need to study it. Moreover, since copies of this work are already in many hands Gedaliah expresses concern that what happened to his father’s commentary on Rosh Ha-Shanah should not happen to this book, writing,

I was afraid that what happened to [his, i. e., Moses Cordovero’s] commentary on Rosh Ha-Shanah would happen to it [*Or Ne'erav*]. For it was stolen from me, and the one who printed it without my permission did not fathom the intention of the author. He not only did not correct what he found in his stolen [manuscript], but he expunged and diminished it.

Robinson, *Moses Cordovero’s introduction to Kabbalah: an annotated translation of his Or Ne'erav* (New York, 1994). The Korzec, 1786 edition of Menahem Azariah da Fano’s *Pelah ha-Rimmon* has appended to it both *Or Ne'erav* and *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*. As Robinson notes, “Moses Cordovero and Kabbalistic Education in the Sixteenth Century,” *Judaism* XXXIX (New York, 1990), p. 62 n. 47, “though it was never absolutely forgotten, its publication history does not indicate an inordinate popularity.”

¹⁰ *The Jewish Encyclopedia* II Isadore Singer, Ed. (New York, 1901–06), p. 576.

What Gedaliah is referring to is a printing, with a Rosh Ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur *mahzor* (Constantinople, 1576, 4^o [130] f.) by the Jabez brothers, unauthorized and containing many errors.¹¹ There is yet one additional introduction (4a–6a), from the editor, Menahem Azariah Immanuel da Fano. There is no introduction from Moses Cordovero, suggesting that *Or Ne'erav* is an unfinished work.

The text, which begins on 6b, is divided into seven parts, each subdivided into chapters. They are: 1) rectification of the harm that occurs from the opinions of those who stay distant from this science; 2) the obligation of the enlightened to study theology; 3) the manner and time of study; 4) the superiority of this to other portions of our Holy Torah; 5) the virtues of this science over other portions of our Holy Torah; 6) the necessary preparation for beginners in this science; and 7) a brief explanation of some [Divine] appellations.

Or Ne'erav was completed, according to the colophon, on Wednesday, “[God has endowed me] with a good dowry (בזבד = 15th)” (cf. Genesis 30:20) [in the month of] merciful father (אב Av), [in the year, may He] “often turn away להשיב (347 = August 19, 1587) his anger” (Psalms 78:38) and “cause the palace to stand where it used to be” (cf. Jeremiah 30:18). Although not forgotten or overlooked, it was reprinted several times, and the stature of the author notwithstanding, *Or Ne'erav* did not become a primary introductory work to Kabbalah, perhaps due to the ascendancy of Lurian rather than Cordoveran Kabbalah.

Gedaliah undertook to print, almost simultaneously, another of his father's works, *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*. The order of the two books is not clear. We have a completion date, but no start date for *Or Ne'erav*, and a start but no completion date for *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*. This book, as the title makes clear, is Cordovero's commentary on the Yom Kippur Temple service.

The title page of *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim* has a patterned frame. At the top is the verse, “Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place” (Leviticus 16:3). The text states that it was printed in a small format, it measures about 15 cm. so that “it can be placed at the end of the prayer book to be available on the mighty and awesome day.” It is dated in the year 387 (1587) followed by the censor's license (fig. 89). Next is a brief preamble from Gedaliah, appearing on the verso of the title page, stating:

¹¹ Concerning this edition of the Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur *mahzor* see Avraham Yaari, *Hebrew Printing at Constantinople* (Jerusalem, 1967), p. 126 n. 190 [Hebrew].

because of the exile, due to our many iniquities, variations exist in the order of prayers. Perhaps whoever sees this work will think it is based on the rite of the Sephardim. I state this to make known to all who see this work that it is constructed about the order of the sacrifices according to the Rambam **ר** and not on the order of prayers as one who looks can see.

The text is in seven parts, entitled *tikkunim*, followed (38b–39a) by *sod neshamah yeterah* (secret of the additional soul) by R. Menahem Azaria of Fano (1548–1620), concerning the prohibition on wearing *tefillin* on the intermediate days of festivals. The book concludes with an epilogue by Gedaliah, followed by verse in praise of Moses Cordovero from R. Samuel ben Elhanan Jacob Archivolti, rabbi, *av bet din*, and *rosh yeshivah* in Padua, but perhaps best known for his compositional work, *Ma'yan Gannim* (Venice, 1553).

It is worthwhile to conclude with the epilogue to *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*, written by Gedaliah, which is especially poignant:

Says the youth, Gedaliah, the Lord has granted me the merit to begin the work of heaven, today Wednesday, the 23rd of *Tammuz*, 5347 (July 29, 1587). I have fixed it for a fast and remembrance for ever, “above my highest joy” (Psalms 137:6), for it is the day that my father died, “the crown of my head,” (Job 19:9) seventeen years ago, and I remained, as Josiah, “when he began to reign,” (II Kings 22:1), eight years old, occupied with regularity in learning Bible but not rigorously (*middah she'eino middah*) and then when I began to learn halakhot seriously with [my father my teacher of blessed memory] in his yeshiva I did not have the merit to be with him but for a little while. And that righteous woman, my mother supported me, “The wisdom of women builds her house” (Proverbs 14:1), praise to God may He be blessed, and she stood firm for me and “girded me with strength” (Psalms 18:40) to serve sages continuously and did not move her hand from mine until I was grown (reached maturity). And she was gracious to me and my Maker showed me grace, “[I swear] by the Torah and the teaching” (Isaiah 8:20) that I call it my mother’s Torah. May it be [His] will that I have the merit to serve her with awe and honor for length of days and years of life for her image is for me like that of the Divine presence. And the sun that is always set before me for light (adaptation of Psalms 16:8), he is the wonder of the generation, ha-Rav, the distinguished, R. Solomon Sagis, to be diligently at his doorway day after day and to drink his words with thirst. May his eyes and our eyes behold “Jerusalem, a safe habitation” (Isaiah 33:20) speedily in our day, May it be His will, Amen.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE BATH-SHEBA/MOSES DE MEDINA SALONIKA EDITION OF *BERAKHOT*: AN UNKNOWN ATTEMPT TO CIRCUMVENT THE INQUISITION'S BAN ON THE PRINTING OF THE TALMUD IN 16TH-CENTURY ITALY¹

Abstract

On September 9, 1553 (Rosh Ha-Shanah, 5314) the Talmud was burned in Rome and shortly thereafter in several other cities in Italy. Publication of the Talmud was forbidden and Italian Jewry was denied access to one of the most basic works of Judaism. While attempts to secure the Church's approval to print an expurgated edition of the Talmud are well known, there is scant evidence of any attempt to circumvent the ban on the Talmud. While it is also known that Talmudic treatises were issued by a number of print-shops in Salonika, no causal relationship between those editions and events in Italy has been previously suggested, much less proven. It is my contention that at least one print-shop, the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press, issued treatises intended for the Italian market in defiance of the ban on the Talmud. Although the Bath Sheba family's intention to print the Talmud was publicly stated, there was no evidence, until recently, that any tractates were actually printed. Now, however, a unique copy of tractate Berakhot from this press has come to light. A review of the circumstances of the publication of this tractate from the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press strongly suggests that the market for that volume was the Jewish communities of Italy.

The recent discovery of an edition of tractate *Berakhot*, printed in Salonika by the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press in 1592, confirms what was previously unsubstantiated by either extant tractates or contemporary records: the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press had indeed issued talmudic treatises.² An inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the publication of this tractate affords us an occasion us to revise our understanding of the Jewish response to the burning of the

¹ The original version of this article was published *The Jewish Quarterly Review* LXXXVII (Philadelphia, 1996), pp. 47–60.

² I am grateful to Mrs. Sharon Libermam Mintz, Assistant Curator of Art, Jewish Theological Seminary, for alerting me to the existence of the Bath-Sheba *Berakhot*. I also thank the owners of this edition of *Berakhot*, who allowed me to examine the tractate. They have requested that their identities not be made public.

Talmud in Italy in 1553/54. It is the contention of this paper that the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* represents a previously unknown response to the burning of the Talmud and an attempt to circumvent the Church's ban on that work.

On September 9, 1553 (Rosh Ha-Shanah, 5314) the Talmud was burned in Rome and shortly thereafter in several other cities in Italy. One of the worst conflagrations occurred in Venice (Saturday, October 21, 1553), where Hebrew printing-houses had previously issued four fine and influential Talmud editions. Italian Jewry was traumatized. The Talmud, as well as other works, were proscribed and later placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*. Permitted Hebrew books were subject to censorship. Publication of both the Babylonian and the Jerusalem Talmud was forbidden—the last volume of the Babylonian Talmud printed in Italy was issued in Sabbioneta in 1554—and possession of the Talmud was prohibited. When permission to reprint the Talmud in Basel was granted in 1578 the edition was heavily expurgated. Attempts to have the decree against the Talmud reversed failed. Study of the Talmud consequently declined in Italy. Moreover, Hebrew printing in Italy was affected: Hebrew book production in Venice dropped from 206 titles in 1550–59 to 93 in the next decade and to 79 in the decade after that.³ Scholars who previously had sent their works to Venice to be printed now refused to do so, whether out of concern for how their books would be treated, or as a protest against the book burning and censorship.⁴

Echoes of the tragedy that befell the Talmud and Italian Jewry are expressed in a number of contemporary works. R. Abraham Menahem Porto (Rapaport, d. 1596), an eyewitness to the burning of the Talmud in Venice, compared it to the destruction of the Temple and designated the day as one of “fasting, weeping, and mourning” for the rest of his life.⁵

³ Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Listing of Books printed in Hebrew Letters Since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing Circa 1469 through 1863* (Jerusalem, 1995), 1:28 [Hebrew].

⁴ Meir Benayahu, *The Relation Between Greek and Italian Jewry* (Hebrew) (Tel Aviv, 1980) 98–100. Benayahu remarks that after several decades had passed, scholars in Salonika once again chose to have their works printed in Venice because of the high quality of the imprints of the Venetian presses. Venice was always preferred by the sages of Safed, notwithstanding the hazards of sending a manuscript on a long journey by sea, and typesetting and editing by strangers without the author present.

⁵ Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen Porto (Rapaport), *Minhah Belulah* (Verona, 1594; reprint Bnei Brak, 1989) 2:285.

In his introduction to R. Jehiel Nissim (Vitale) da Pisa's *Minhat Kena'ot*, A. Berliner quotes from a manuscript by the author, who writes that due to the lack of treatises he is unable to cite from the Talmud, but must instead rely on citations from that work in the writings of Maimonides, *Sefer Mizvot Gadol*, Rosh (R. Asher ben Jehiel), and his son R. Jacob (*Tur*).⁶ R. Azariah Figo (1579–1647), in the introduction to *Sefer Giddulei Terumah*, writes that due to his lack of treatises and other books he was forced to write in a patchwork manner and could not complete chapters in order.⁷

In spite of the above testimony that the Talmud became unavailable to Italian Jewry after 1553, there is evidence that individual Jews did indeed clandestinely possess Talmudic treatises and further, that this possession was not as rare as some sources indicate. Although Figo laments the unavailability of tractates he also informs us that that he possessed three treatises (*Bava Kamma*, *Shevu'ot*, and *Nazir*) and that from time to time he was able to borrow additional volumes from individuals in neighboring cities.⁸ R. Abraham Portaleone (d. ca. 1612) writes in the introduction to *Shiltei ha-Gibborim* (Mantua, 1612): “Through God’s favor we had in our meeting place all volumes of the Talmud.”⁹

Shifra Baruchson’s detailed study of the censor’s lists of 430 Jewish libraries in Mantua in 1595 calculates that the libraries held 21,432 copies of 1,234 titles. In contrast to the period prior to the burning of the Talmud, when most Jewish libraries contained Talmudic treatises, such treatises subsequently became very rare; one family only, the heirs of Abraham Portaleone, possessed an entire Talmud, and that was the Basel edition. Fourteen other libraries (3.2 percent of the total) owned four treatises in fifteen copies, primarily from the Basel Talmud, as well as individual pages from other tractates. Baruchson concludes that while it is not unlikely that families owned unreported tractates, these instances must have been infrequent, given the high price and the scarcity of talmudic treatises.¹⁰

⁶ Jehiel Nissim da Pisa, *Minhat Kena'ot*, ed. A. Berliner (Berlin, 1898) xv.

⁷ Azariah Figo, *Sefer Giddulei Terumah* (Venice, 1643, reprint Venice, 1812) 4.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁹ Quoted in Moses A. Shulvass, *The Jews in the World of the Renaissance* (Leiden, 1973) 266.

¹⁰ Shifra Baruchson, *Books and Readers: The Reading Interests of Italian Jews at the Close of the Renaissance* (Ramat Gan, 1993) [Hebrew], The tractates and the number of copies are *Ketubbot* (9), *Berakhot* (3), *Shabbat* (1, few pages only), and *Temurah* (1), and assorted pages from other tractates (Baruchson, 142, 144–46).

The library of R. Samuel Hayyim Bassani (d. 1640–41), consisting of more than 150 volumes, included eleven tractates,¹¹ but we do not know if they were printed prior to the burning of the Talmud and hidden by their owners until the period of persecution had passed. It is also possible that these were from the censored and little regarded Basel Talmud, or were printed outside of Italy and surreptitiously imported by individuals returning from abroad.

There were, indeed, attempts to evade the censorship of Hebrew books in Italy. As early as 1548 Daniel Bomberg refused to comply with an effort to censor Hebrew books. Bomberg's printshop reputedly backdated a number of tractates from their last Talmud edition, during a period when there was reason to believe that printing that work would be prohibited.¹² But this effort preceded the burning of the Talmud and the harsh decrees issued against printing it. In the more repressive period during which the Talmud was burned there was considerable reason for caution.

Nevertheless, there are reports that in 1570 the Talmud was printed by Marco Antonio Giustiniani, then governor of the Venetian island Cephalonia. Accusations to that effect were made to the Inquisition, although by the time the Inquisition's agents began their investigation the books in question had disappeared.¹³ There appears to have been considerable traffic in prohibited books, of which Hebrew titles were just a small part. Venetian book dealers rarely cooperated with the Inquisition, but rather violated the *Index* by smuggling prohibited works into the city from Northern Europe.¹⁴

Circumstantial evidence suggests that an attempt may have been made to replace lost tractates in a more organized manner, by arranging to have a foreign printing-house divert a portion of its output to the Italian market. This effort, given the circumstances, could

¹¹ Cecil Roth, "A Seventeenth Century Library and Trousseau," in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Related Subjects in Memory of Abraham Solomon Friedus (1867–1923)* (New York, 1929) 160–69. The tractates are *Berakhot*, *Shabbat*, *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, *Hagigah*, *Sotah*, *Shekalim*, *Shevu'ot*, *Ketubbot*, *Kiddushin*, *Gittin*, and *Bezah*.

¹² Avraham Rosenthal, "Daniel Bomberg and his Talmud Editions," in *Gli Ebrei e Venezia* (Milan, 1987) 392–95.

¹³ Paul Grendler, "The Destruction of Hebrew Books in Venice, 1568," *American Academy for Jewish Research* 45 (Jerusalem, 1967) 122, 127–28.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 129 n. 96. For a further discussion of the scope and scale of smuggling of prohibited books see, Lisa Jardine, *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (London, 1966) 171–77.

only have been done clandestinely and with a foreign partner who had commercial contacts in Italy. A printing-house that was particularly well-suited for such an enterprise can be found in Salonika. The close relationship between the Jews of the Ottoman Empire and Italy is both well known and well documented. Indeed, the prominence of Jews in the maritime trade between Turkey and Italy at that time was a source of considerable vexation to the Venetians, since Jews engaged in and, to some extent, even dominated commerce between the Ottoman Empire and the Italian cities along the Adriatic seashore from the late 15th to 17th centuries.¹⁵

Among the notable Hebrew printing-houses of Salonika is that of the family of Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba (Basevi in Italian). Scion of an Italian-Jewish family from Verona of German origin, Bath-Sheba was accompanied to Salonika by his wife Fioretta and his two sons, Abraham Joseph (or Joseph Abraham) and Abraham. Their press is credited with about forty titles from 1592 to 1605. The sponsor and patron of the Bath-Sheba printing-house was Moses de Medina, a wealthy scholar and prominent philanthropist.¹⁶ De Medina—the son of R. Samuel ben Moses de Medina (Maharashdam), 1506–89, one of the leading rabbinic figures in Salonika—intended to print his father’s responsa and Talmudic treatises in order, *inter alia*, to support the local Talmud Torah. In the introduction to the responsa, Moses de Medina describes how he had spent his wealth to bring paper, a press, and skilled workers from Venice. In more than one book he expresses his wish to print the Talmud: “And may the Lord also grant me the merit to [fulfill] another *mizvah*, to print tractates and treatises and other books for the public good and to make Torah great in Israel.”¹⁷

Meir Benayahu argues that Medina was not only the sponsor or patron of the Bath-Sheba press but was also the owner, and that the Bath-Sheba family were the managers. Benayahu bases his argument

¹⁵ Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, (London, 1973) 2:727–28 and 816; Stanford J. Shaw, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic* (New York, 1991) 93–96; Aryeh Shmuelevitz, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Late Fifteenth and the Sixteenth Centurie: Administrative, Economic, Legal, and Social Relations as Reflected in the Responsa* (Leiden, 1984) 128–29; and Benjamin Arbel, *Trading Nation: Jews and Venetians in the early Modern Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden, 1955).

¹⁶ Joseph Hacker writes, “He [Medina] was responsible for the founding of a Hebrew printing press in Salonika in 1594 and published his father’s responsa” *Encyclopedia Judaica* 11:1214.

¹⁷ Quoted in Benayahu, *Relation*, 110–11; Israel Mehlman, “Hebrew Printing in Salonika,” in *Genuzot Sefarim* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1976) 56.

on the varying ways in which Moses de Medina is referred to on most of the title pages and colophons, the large proportion of his wealth spent on the press, and his active part in its operations, which included traveling to Italy where he recruited the Bath-Sheba family and workers, and acquired the typographical equipment of the Venetian printer Matteo Zanetti for the new printing-house in Salonika.¹⁸

De Medina's motivation notwithstanding, there had been no evidence that any tractates were printed until very recently. Israel Mehlman writes that the results of this effort to print the Talmud are unknown, and that to this day there are no known fragments of a tractate from this press.¹⁹ Benayahu is certain, however, that tractates were printed. Indeed, it is his opinion that from the establishment of the press in 1592 one objective had been to publish the Talmud, so that by 1594 many tractates had already been printed.²⁰ Similarly, in the conclusion to my account of the Bath-Sheba press, I stated: "Sabbatai Mattathias Bath-Sheba died in 1601. The press's output diminished and no tractates are known from this press, which ceased to operate in 1605."²¹ Since these accounts of the Bath-Sheba press were written, however, a unique copy of tractate *Berakhot*, printed by the Bath-Sheba press has come to light.²²

The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* is a folio volume (30 cm), printed with Rashi and Tosafot. The title page is adorned with a frame like that used by the Foa press in Sabbioneta on the *Moreh Nevukhim* (1553) (fig. 90). The Bath-Sheba printing press used this frame on the title pages of other books, among them the responsa of the Maharashdam (1594), *Bereshit Rabbah* with the commentary *Matnat Kehunah* (1595), *Sefer ha-Terumah* by Samuel ben Isaac Sardi (1596), and the responsa of Joseph Caro (1597). This border originally belonged to the Sabbioneta press of Tobias Foa, which closed in 1569. Foa's fonts and ornaments were in great demand, reflecting the high regard for that press. After Foa ceased printing, his typographical material was used by several printers, among them Vincenzo Conti, Joseph ben Jacob of

¹⁸ Benayahu, *Relation*, 104–06 and 108–113.

¹⁹ Mehlman, "Hebrew Printing," 57.

²⁰ Benayahu, *Relation*, 115–16.

²¹ Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn, 1992), 289.

²² The tractate is now recorded in Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book* (Jerusalem, 1993) 2:668 n. 121.

Mantua, and Bragadini in Venice. David Amram notes that the Foa “title pages were used by Di Gara in Venice and by Turkish publishers [Bath-Sheba] in Salonika.”²³

The text of the title page is like that of its predecessors in Salonika, that is, the Jabez and Azubib treatises.²⁴ The identity of the printer and the date of publication are given on the title page as follows:

נדפס בעיון רב על ידי האחים השותפים י"צו במצות אביהם
 חכם השלם כהר"ר מתת'יא בת שבע יצ"ו....

היתה התחלת המלאכ' הקודש' מלאכת שמים זכה וברה מזוקקת
 שבעתים בפסח שני שנת המחד"ש טובו בכל יום....

בבית הצעיר כמר
 אברהם יוסף יצ"
 מגזע בת שבע²⁵

The date is given on the title page in a chronogram from the daily prayer book as **המחד"ש** (that is, 357) and in a brief colophon, which reads:

תם ונשלם שבח לאל בורא עולם
 שנת נתת הש"מחה [= 358] בלבי²⁶

²³ David Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (London, 1963) 294–95.

²⁴ Joseph ben Isaac Jabez, in partnership with his brother Solomon, established a printshop, in Salonika in 1546. After an outbreak of plague in 1551 Solomon moved to Constantinople. Joseph printed at least eight tractates in Salonika from 1563 to 1567, possibly more, for the students of the Talmud Torah in Salonika and Constantinople and as a response to the burning of the Talmud in Italy. Joseph Jabez subsequently joined Solomon in Constantinople. Joseph Jabez's typographical equipment was acquired by David ben Abraham Azubib, previously associated with the Jabez press. Among the fourteen books attributed to Azubib, who began printing in 1578, are tractates *Berakhot* and *Gittin*.

²⁵ Printed with great care by the brothers, the partners [May their Rock and Redeemer watch over them] at the command of their father, // the complete sage, [our honorable Rabbi Mattathias Bath-Sheba [May his Rock...]].

The beginning of this holy work, the work of heaven, beautiful and clear, refined sevenfold, was on Pesach Sheni [14 Iyyar] in the year “In His goodness He renews [המחד"ש] daily [the work of creation].”...

In the house of the young [honorable Rabbi] // Abraham Joseph [May his Rock...] // from the seed of Bath-Sheba.

²⁶ Finished and completed, praise to God, Creator of the universe // in the year “You have put gladness (השמחה) in my heart” (Psalms 4:8).

Although the dates on the title page and the colophon may be read as the equivalents of either 1592/93 or 1597/98, depending on whether the date is understood as being in the full (*perat gadol*) or the abbreviated (*perat katan*) form, the earlier date appears to be the correct one since the other date given (המחוד"ט) also begins with ה (*heh*, equaling 5, representative 5,000, the millenium) suggesting *perat gadol*.

The tractate, like other Salonika treatises, varies from what had become the accepted foliation of a printed Talmudic volume.²⁷ Many of the later Salonika treatises, particularly those printed in small number primarily, but not exclusively, for the local Talmud Torah, are characterized by the absence of Tosafot and a foliation that is not consistent with the standard or 'Venetian' foliation established by Daniel Bomberg. The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* ends on 97b (standard foliation is 64 pages) and is printed with both Rashi and Tosafot.

Printing a complete Talmud edition can be an expensive undertaking. To secure financing a representative, Abraham Bath-Sheba, was sent to Italy; he was in Verona. Letters of support from rabbis in Salonika and Italy were obtained. R. Judah Aryeh (Leon) Modena (1571–1648) wrote, "a letter to the communities on the printing of the Talmud," in which he states that printing the Talmud is "an enormous undertaking, requiring considerable funds, that can not be calculated." Modena entreats "all who see and hear" to provide support, remarking that "this *mizvah* can be acquired in three ways," that is, through a donation, with the proceeds from the sale going to the poor of the Land of Israel; by a loan, which would be repaid when the first sets of the Talmud were sold; or the donor could "receive books in accordance with the value of his offering, and thus would benefit, without a loss." The letter also requests that all due consideration and provisions be extended to the representative of the printing press, for he was traveling to both Italy and Germany.²⁸

After Modena issued his "letter to the communities on the printing of the Talmud" there is no mention of additional attempts to raise funds or even any discussion about the previous effort. It is true that Italian Jews who had seen the Talmud and other books burned, who

²⁷ Eleven printing-houses are known to have issued tractates in Salonika, from the first volumes issued by Don Judah Gedaliah in c. 1519–23 to an edition of *Berakhot* printed by Saul ben Isaac Molco in 1841. Mehlman, "Hebrew Printing" 43–102.

²⁸ Reprinted in Benayahu, *Relation*, 314–15 and Mehlman, "Hebrew Printing," pp. 44–45. Translated in Heller, *Printing the Talmud*, 288.

had seen other books submitted to censorship, and who had experienced confinement in ghettos, had good reason to avoid further incurring the Church's displeasure. Italian Jewry did comment in their writings, albeit with circumspection, about their condition. Why, however, should they maintain *complete* silence about a Talmud edition to be printed in Salonika? Furthermore, there is no evidence that representatives were sent anywhere other than Italy and Germany, or that Abraham Bath-Sheba actually went to Germany, so that the entire effort to seek sponsors appears to have been restricted to Italy, the land where it was least possible to own or possess volumes of the Talmud.

We now come to the crux of the matter. We know that the Bath-Sheba press planned to print talmudic treatises and that an appeal was made to the Jews of Italy to assist in that task. What has not been recognized previously is that Modena's "letter to the communities on the printing of the Talmud" was not so much a fund raiser for a new Salonika Talmud as it was, rather, an attempt to provide tractates for distribution in Italy. As noted above, the letter offers three options to anyone interested in supporting the printing the Talmud—that is (1) a donation, (2) a loan, or (3) receipt of "books in accordance with the value of his offering." It is possible that the first two options were meant to be taken seriously, but they were not the primary purpose of the letter. It is the third option that is important, revealing, and more indiscrete: sponsors would receive books. Although it has always been understood that subscribers received copies of the books they sponsored, this letters has not until now been reviewed as an offer to provide Italian Jewry with talmudic treatises. Since the press could not openly sell its wares, it carefully sought subscribers who provided payment in advance.

The subject is not mentioned in any further written communication. Once the subject was broached, and it was indiscrete to have done so in writing, there was no need to repeat it, for it involved a serious breach of the law. A breach which, if disclosed, could result in attention being drawn to the fact that Italian Jewry was sponsoring volumes of the Talmud to be printed in Salonika for delivery in Italy.

Benayahu has argued that the project was a financial burden too great for the Jewish community of Salonika to bear alone. Moreover, its importance was not limited to Salonika, but was of significance to the entire Jewish people. He observes that it was not possible to print the Talmud in Christian lands, disregarding the fact that it had already been and would soon again be printed in Poland. Therefore the Jewish community of Salonika sought to engage other communities in this

project, sending a representative to Italy and Germany, and perhaps to other lands, including even Constantinople and the cities of Greece “seeking partners in this *mizvah*.”²⁹

Benayahu, however, exaggerates the burden of these costs. The Talmud had been printed in Italy several times, as well as in Poland, and individual tractates had been issued by Hebrew presses in Constantinople, Cracow, Lublin, and Salonika without appeals to Jewry in other lands. The Jewish community of Salonika at this time was prosperous, probably more so than the Jewish communities to whom the ostensible appeals were directed. Furthermore, an entire Talmud was not printed as a complete unit at once; rather, volumes were printed gradually over a period of years, with each volume comprising several tractates. Some editions—Lublin, 1559 to 1577 and 1617 to 1639, and Amsterdam, 1752 to 1765—took several decades to complete. In addition, expenses could be alleviated, as was done in Constantinople, by seeking subscriptions. Finally, individual tractates were often printed, usually of the more popular treatises or those studied most frequently in yeshivot, that were not part of an edition of the entire Talmud. The text of the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* is not followed by any commentary, nor is it followed by *Seder Zera'im*, suggesting that it was printed as an individual tractate. It is possible, although it seems unlikely, that the material coming after the text of *Berakhot* was lost or bound separately, although the fine condition of the tractate argues against this.

The expense of printing a single, or even several individual tractates is obviously less than that of an entire of the Talmud and was borne by numerous small presses. I have identified approximately one hundred such tractates printed in the first half of the 18th century, issued primarily by small print-shops.³⁰ Surely it was within the capacities of a wealthy sponsor such as Moses de Medina to sponsor a small number of tractates. Indeed, the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press issued a number of titles with considerably more foliation than *Berakhot*—among them *Midrash Rabbah*, several volumes of the responsa of the Maharashdam, *Shulhan Arukh: Orah Hayyim*, *Sefer ha-Terumah*, the *Zohar*, and the responsa of Joseph Caro—without seeking financial assistance from Jews in other lands.

²⁹ Benayahu, *Relation*, 115.

³⁰ Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud. A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (Leiden, 1999).

If *Berakhot* was printed for sale in Salonika and neighboring communities or for the local Talmud Torah a relatively small number would be needed, thereby eliminating the need for external financing. The Talmud Torah, originally founded in 1520 to “disseminate Jewish learning and offer free education to poor and orphaned children,” grew to be the preeminent institution of higher learning for the Jews of Salonika, attracting students from “near and far.”³¹ Well funded, the school received bequests and owned property from which it earned rental income. In one instance a bequest of 60,000 aspers was made, and another bequest consisted of houses around a courtyard.³² It would seem then, that the financial condition of the Talmud Torah, together with the financial resources of Moses de Medina, were sufficient, no matter how dire the need for tractates, to obviate the need for an appeal to foreign Jewry.

The frame employed on the title page of *Berakhot* provides a further indication that the tractate was intended for distribution in Italy. It is comprised of an architectural border with standing representations of the mythological Mars and Minerva with shields, above them vines and fruits. At the center bottom is a wreath with a representation of Roma. It was designed by Francesco Minizio (Giulio) Calvo, a printer of Latin and Italian books in Rome (1521–34) and Milan (1539–45) who used it for several decades prior to its transfer to the Hebrew press in Sabbioneta.³³ The use of this frame, with its mythological representations of Mars and Minerva, on the title page of a book printed by a Hebrew press in a Sephardic community in a Moslem country for local consumption seems unlikely. It is well known, however, that books were exported from Salonika and Constantinople to Italy. Books printed in the Ottoman Empire with typographical material brought from Italy and intended to be marketed there could certainly be printed with such a frame, whereas it might be inappropriate for books directed to a purely local market. That it was also employed on the title pages of other books, as noted above, that could legally be exported to Italy, further suggests that *Berakhot*, too, was intended for Italian Jewry.

³¹ Morris S. Goodblatt, *Jewish Life in Turkey in the XVIIth Century as Reflected in the Legal Writings of Samuel De Medina* (New York, 1952) 20–21.

³² *Ibid.*, 21. Goodblatt notes that fifty aspers were equal to one altoon or sultanese, the largest Turkish coin, which, in turn, equaled a Venetian ducat (201 n. 96).

³³ Concerning the widespread usage of this frame see my “Mars and Minerva on the Hebrew Title Page,” *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 98:3 (New York, N.Y., 2004), pp. 269–92.

There is also another indication that *Berakhot* was not printed for the Salonika Talmud Torah. Five years after the close of the Bath-Sheba press, Solomon and Moses Shimon began to issue Hebrew titles in Salonika. Although Moses de Medina died in 1601 (Benayahu) or about 1610 (Mehlman), his sons Shemai'ah and Judah were the sponsors or, according to Benayahu, the owners of the press.³⁴ Among the books printed by the Shimon brothers are a number of treatises, including *Bava Kamma* and *Berakhot*. *Bava Kamma*, the sole extant tractate that is complete (physically less attractive and about one third smaller in size—20 cm—than *Berakhot*) is marked in Hebrew with ת"ת as are later Salonika imprints for the Talmud Torah. The volumes designated for the Talmud Torah were printed with these letters to identify them as the school's property. The unique copy of the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* does not have the letters ת"ת, indicating that, whether or not it was to be distributed in Italy, it was not designated for the Talmud Torah.

The Shimon brothers also printed an edition of *Berakhot*. Apparently the unavailability of this popular tractate necessitated its being reissued after it had been printed by the Bath-Sheba press. It is likely that copies of the tractate or tractates printed by the Shimon brothers' predecessor, the Bath-Sheba press, were scarce, precisely because a portion of those tractates had not been distributed to the Talmud Torah in Salonika or to local customers, but instead had been directed to Italian Jewry.

The Shimon brothers noted the scarcity of talmudic tractates. On the title page of *Bava Kamma* they remark that it is the fourth printing of the tractate, the previous three editions "due to their great usefulness were all, as one, sold, so that today there is but one to a city and two to a district." It seems not unlikely that such scarcity included other tractates as well, although the reference is specifically to *Bava Kamma*. This argument is strengthened by the possibility that the Bath-Sheba press also printed an edition of *Bava Kamma*, as follows: the Shimon brothers say on the title page of *Bava Kamma* that it is the fourth printing of the tractate. Now, since only three previous editions of *Bava Kamma* can be accounted for, it is possible that the Bath-Sheba press also issued an edition of this tractate.

Berakhot was not the sole work printed in Salonika by the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press for sale in Italy. *Ein Ya'akov*, a collection

³⁴ Benayahu, *Relation*, 117; Mehlman, "Hebrew Printing" 89.

of Talmudic aggadic material compiled and commented on by R. Jacob ibn Habib, was, together with other works based on the Talmud, proscribed and burned in Italy and placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*. It was subsequently permitted to print the *Ein Ya'akov* in Italy, but only under another name, that is, as *Ein Yisrael*. Although it was possible to print the *Ein Ya'akov* outside of Italy under its original name, we find a number of editions, printed in such diverse locations as Amsterdam, Cracow, Frankfurt on the Main, Prague, Prossnitz, and Salonika with the name *Ein Yisrael*. It has been suggested that the Bath-Sheba press retained the name *Ein Yisrael* for their edition (1595), so that the work might be exported to Italy.³⁵

None of the explanations of the Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina press's activities, if their intent was only to print tractates for local distribution or for the Salonika Talmud Torah, is plausible. It is unlikely that a press with a wealthy sponsor, or perhaps owner, in a prosperous community, would print a small number of tractates (assuming that *Bava Kamma* was also printed), volumes not of great size (*Berakhot* is only 92 leaves), and appeal for financial support to Jews in another land, where that work is illegal. However, these same actions are quite reasonable if Bath-Sheba/Medina's purpose was not just to supply tractates for local distribution or for the Salonika Talmud Torah, but rather to direct a portion of their output to Italy. Italian Jewry was in need of a source of unexpurgated treatises. It was clear by 1592 that their attempts to have the decree against the Talmud ameliorated had failed. And even if they had succeeded, would an expurgated edition of the Talmud have found any more favor than the censored Basel Talmud?

It is clear then, that the rationale, the motivation and the means to provide illicit volumes of the Talmud to the Jews of Italy existed. The "letter to the communities on the printing of the Talmud" was directed solely to Italian Jewry and, rather than being an appeal for support, was an offer to acquire tractates that would be printed in Salonika. Italian Jewry did not passively accept the burning of the Talmud but sought clandestine means to acquire Talmudic treatises. The Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina *Berakhot* represents an otherwise unknown but important effort in that direction, although it is not possible to determine if any or how many tractates were actually distributed to Italian Jewry.

³⁵ Benayahu, *Relation*, 98.

It is certain, however, that Moses de Medina and the Bath-Sheba family did succeed in fulfilling the *mizvah* of spreading Torah and of assisting their less fortunate brothers, expressed in the biblical injunctions “you shall not stand aside while your fellow’s blood is shed” and “you shall love your fellow as yourself” (Leviticus 19:16 and 18).

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

OBSERVATIONS ON A LITTLE KNOWN EDITION OF TRACTATE *NIDDAH* (PRAGUE, C. 1608) AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE TALMUDIC METHODOLOGY OF THE MAHARAL OF PRAGUE¹

A *unicum* of tractate *Niddah*, printed in Prague in the first decade of the seventeenth century, sheds light on a previously unknown attempt by Rabbi Judah Loew (Maharal; 1525–1609) to implement his pedagogical theories.

This text, which exists in a fragment of nine pages, is unusual in that it is not accompanied by any commentaries. In printed editions of the Talmud, the text is, with rare exception, accompanied by the basic works of talmudic exegesis, Rashi and Tosafot. They are to be found in the first printed talmudic treatise, *Berakhot*, and the first book printed by Joshua Solomon Soncino in the northern Italian town of Soncino in the year גמ"א (1483–1484).² The exceptions to this format are primarily the Sephardic treatises printed in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, where Rashi, but not Tosafot, adjoins the text.³ Another exception is the Cracow edition of the Talmud, issued from 1616 to 1620 by Aaron and Mordecai ben Isaac Prostitz, where the *Arukh* was substituted for Tosafot.⁴

¹ The original version of this article was published in *The Torah U-Madda Journal* 8 (New York, 1998–99), pp. 134–50. I would like to thank Rabbi Jerry Schwarzbard, The Henry R. and Miriam Ripps Schnitzer Librarian for Special Collections, and Mr. Yisrael Dubitsky, Public Services Librarian, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, for bringing this edition of *Niddah* to my attention. I would also like to express my appreciation to Rabbi Schwarzbard for reading the draft of this article and for his comments.

² Concerning the development of the talmudic page, see my “Designing the Talmud: The Origins of the Printed Talmudic Page,” *Tradition* 29:3 (1995): 40–51.

³ Tractates printed in Spain include Rashi but not Tosafot. The practice of printing Tosafot with the text was, however, accepted in Sephardic communities in the sixteenth century, as can be seen from tractates printed in Constantinople and Salonika.

⁴ The *Arukh* by R. Nathan ben Jehiel (1035–c. 1110) is a compendium of talmudic terminology which also explicates and analyzes difficult passages. It makes reference to Midrashim, cites decisions of the Geonim, and describes Jewish customs. Raphael Nathan Nata Rabinovicz, *Ma’amar al Halpasat ha-Talmud*, ed. A. M. Habermann (Jerusalem, 1952), 85, observes that only the brief explanation of terms of the *Arukh*, not its subject-commentary, is printed with this Talmud. Furthermore, even this shortened version is not printed throughout the Talmud nor is it applied in a consistent manner in all the tractates.

There are rare instances when tractates were published lacking both Rashi and Tosafot, the volume consisting of the text only, that is, Mishnah and Gemara, without any accompanying commentaries. Three treatises, in addition to the edition of *Niddah* under discussion here, are known to have been so published. They are an incunabulum edition of *Hullin*, attributed to an early unknown Sephardic press, assumed to have been printed in the style of manuscript treatises, which were, more often than not, written in that manner; an edition of *Bava Mezia*, apparently printed in conjunction with but not part of the Cracow 1616–1620 Talmud;⁵ and a miniature edition of *Sukkah*, dated 1722, but missing both the name of the printer and the place of printing.

These examples have already been treated in varying detail.⁶ Copies may be found among the holdings of major collections of Hebraica. This is not the case for the tractate *Niddah* which is noted briefly in only one bibliographical work and mentioned in passing in a paper on the responsa of Maharal.⁷ It exists, as noted above, in a *unicum* fragment. It is the intent of this article to describe this little known text, to attempt to identify its printer, and to determine the circumstances of its publication.

The physical characteristics of the treatise can be simply stated. The fragment consists of nine leaves, a title page and eight text leaves, and measures about 19 cm. The volume is not physically attractive. It was printed on paper of poor quality and the letters, both on the title page and in the text, are blurry, unclear, and worn. The title page is stark, without ornamentation (fig. 91). The tractate name, spelled גידה, that is, with a *yod* in the manner of early editions of the tractate, is set in a large square Ashkenazic font; the place of printing is in a smaller square font, both typical of Prague. A third, even smaller square font, is used for a header. The remainder of the text of the title page is in

⁵ I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Doris Nicholson and Dr. Richard Judd, Department of Oriental Books, Bodleian Library, for supplying me with facsimiles of *Bava Mezia* and *Niddah* (1620) from the collection of the Bodleian Library. These tractates and their relation to the c. 1608 *Niddah* edition are addressed below.

⁶ Concerning *Hullin* and *Bava Mezia*, see my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn, 1992), 41–45 and 387–89. Concerning *Sukkah*, see my *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1999).

⁷ See Yeshayahu Vinograd, *Ozar ha-Sefer ha-Ivri* 2 (Jerusalem, 1993–1995), 535, n. 158: “*Tractate Niddah*. Prague, [1608]. Without commentaries. [A facsimile is in the JNUL]. An incomplete copy is in the JTSL” and Isaac Yudlov, “Teshuvot Maharal mi-Prag,” *Sefer ha-Zikkaron li-Khevodo... Maran Rabbi Ya'akov Bezalel Zolti* (Jerusalem, 1987), 265.

rabbinic type. There are a number of distinctive letters in the fonts employed in this volume. For example, the rabbinic *tav* on the title page has a long leg, and the leg of the final *nun* in the text, turns out and then in. The title page states:

See, this is new in our eyes,
that already was in the days of our fathers

Tractate Niddah

The Mishnah and the Gemara. Beautiful and clear. Splendidly printed at the behest of the great Gaon, the wonder of our generation, our crowning glory, our Master, Rabbi Leib, may he have life everlasting, head of the rabbinical court and head of the metivta of the holy congregation of royal Prague. With his very soul and wealth he sought to bring merit to Israel, old and young, to instruct them in the way of life and ethical instruction, [in order] that they should enter into the covenant of the Oral Law which will be for them a special Gemara, so that every man can bear it in his hand and bind it on his fingers. Then it will be chiseled on his heart, as King Solomon, may he rest in peace, said, “Bind them on your fingers; inscribe them on the tablet of your heart” [Proverbs 7:3]. He will go in the way our fathers trod, to continuously review his learning, in every season and every hour, until it will be fluent in his mouth, and all that he has learned will be habitual. For so has He commanded us through Moses His servant, “place it in their mouths” [Deuteronomy 31:19], “May the pleasantness of the Lord our God [be upon us]; our handiwork establish for us” [Psalms 90: 17]. May the Lord be our help, to begin and to complete our desire [i. e., this tractate], in order to make Torah great and glorious. May our righteous savior come and redeem us quickly in our day.

Here, the holy community of Prague

Under the domain of our master, of distinguished birth,
Kaiser Rudolph, may his majesty be exalted.

The first chapter of the tractate ends on page 6a; the entire fragment ends on 8b, equivalent, respectively, to folios 12b and 13b according to the standard foliation. The title page is numbered, in the upper left hand corner, 8. The recto of the following leaves are numbered accordingly, also in the upper left hand corner, that is, 9, 10, until 17. However, these numbers are not uniform in style or in placement, and appear to have been entered by hand. There are no cross-references to the standard Venetian foliation, a practice followed from an early period when foliation varied from what had already become

the accepted convention.⁸ Also absent are the standard indices, such as *Mesorat ha-Shas*, *Ein Mishpat*, and *Ner Mitzah*, first printed with the Giustiniani Talmud (1546–51).

At the top of each page, from right to left, is the chapter name and chapter number, **שמאי פרק ראשון** (fig. 92). The recto the first two text leaves of (fig. 92) also include the tractate name, also spelled with a *yod*. However, in the single instance that the word *niddah* appears in the text of the fragment (p. 10b), it is spelled **נדה**, that is, without a *yod*.⁹

The initial word of text is in a large Ashkenazic font centered above the first column. This contrasts with the initial words of the second chapter, which are only slightly larger and bolder than the text which follows and are inset slightly apart and to the right of the beginning of the column. The text is printed in two columns to a page, thirty five lines to a column, seven to nine words to a line (per column). Catch words are given by column. The beginning of a new Mishnah and Gemara are indicated by the abbreviations of those words in the same type as the text, except that they are set apart by spaces in the lines on which they appear. Lines are justified in the same manner, that is, by the use of spaces in the text.

A characteristic of early editions of the Talmud, in contrast to more recent printings, is the widespread use of abbreviations of phrases. In this edition of *Niddah*, only limited use is made of such abbreviations, less frequently than in current Talmud editions. Abbreviations of single words and names occur somewhat more often.

The text does not vary significantly from current editions. The small number of variants can be attributed to obvious typesetting errors or reflect the edition from which this tractate was set. For example, on 4b (standard foliation) the phrase **ואב"א הכא בטומאה דרבנן דיקא נמי** appears as **ואי בעית אימא הכא בטומאה נמי דקתני**. The two words **דרבנן דיקא** are omitted and the abbreviated phrase **ואב"א** is given in its entirety. In three instances on that page the *tav* of the word **מעטת** is missing, although the complete word also appears on the page. This is not a typesetter's error, however, for the 1520 Venice edition of *Niddah* is printed in a similar way. Minor variations from that text should also, perhaps, be attributed to the typesetter. In once case, a superfluous word was added to the text, but was lined out.

⁸ See, for example, in the Lublin Talmud (1559–1573).

⁹ There is one instance where *niddah* is spelled with a *yod* in the Talmud (*Ketubbot* 56a) although that spelling is not uncommon in other works.

ור"א אחורי כלים דרבנן טבול יום דאורייתא, and immediately followed by the lined out phrase *משקין דזב וזבה*. Here too, the text follows the first Bomberg edition. In current editions, the phrase *משקין דזב וזבה* appears a few lines later in the text. The text has not been corrected to conform to modern usage.¹⁰

The title page is not dated, nor does a date appear elsewhere in the fragment. Nevertheless, the tractate has been tentatively dated as 1608. This date appears, with accompanying reservations (followed by a question mark), in the acquisition records of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary. The Library acquired the tractate in 1904 as part of the collection of Abraham M. Bank (d. 1904) which comprised several hundred rare books and was purchased for eight hundred fifty dollars.¹¹ The acquisition record does not give a source for the date. Nevertheless, based on the information on the title page, we can place the date of printing between 1597, the year Maharal became Chief Rabbi of Prague (see the reference there to him as *av bet din* and *rosh meivota* of Prague), and 1609, the year that he died (see the reference to him there followed by *ש"ז*).

Prague was, for many centuries, a leading city of European Jewry. Its prominence may be attributed to its large Jewish population, distinguished rabbinic leadership, noted yeshivot, and central location. It was in Prague, capital of Bohemia, that the first Hebrew book, a

¹⁰ A caveat is in order. The conformity of these examples to the 1520 Venice edition of *Niddah* is not meant to suggest that this edition was the copy book for the text under discussion here. Rather, it is clear that these textual variations are not printers' errors or editorial changes but originate in an earlier edition.

¹¹ The accession numbers are 1501–1883 and *Niddah* is number 1880. A. M. Bank, a cotton merchant living in New York and originally from St. Petersburg, brought the collection of Leon (Aryeh Löb) Mandelstamm (1809–1889), comprising some 2,135 Hebrew volumes, from St. Petersburg to New York. He sold that collection to the New York Public Library in 1897, which, at the time, had no more than 300 Hebrew volumes. The purchase was recommended by Abraham S. Friedus and sponsored by Jacob H. Schiff. See Richard Gottheil, "Abraham Solomon Freidus," *Publication of the American Jewish Historical Society* 29 (1925): 163–64; and Philip Goodman, "American Jewish Bookplates," *PAJHS* 45 (1956): 151–52.

¹² The printers of that work were Meir ben David; Solomon ben Samuel ha-Levi; Mordecai ben Eliezer; and Shemaryah ben David. The first non-Hebrew book was printed in Prague in 1487. Concerning the first decades of Hebrew printing in Prague, see Leopold Zunz, *Geschichte und Literatur* (Berlin, 1845), 261–303; Hayyim Dov Friedberg, *Toledot ha-Defus ha-Ivri be-Arim... be-Eiropah ha-Tikhonah* (Antwerp, 1935), 1–29; and Charles Wengrow, *Haggadah and Woodcut* (New York, 1967), 9–23.

prayer-book, was printed north of the Alps in 1512.¹² Soon afterwards, the first printers were joined by three additional printers, among them Gershom ben Solomon ha-Kohen.¹³ In 1527, King Ferdinand of Bohemia granted a royal privilege to Gershom Kohen and, as a result, he enjoyed a monopoly on Hebrew printing in Prague. His descendants, known as the Gersonides, continued to print books in that city until the mid-seventeenth century. Another Hebrew press of note in Prague was founded by Jacob ben Gershom Bak (d. 1618) in 1605; the Bak family printed Hebrew books there until the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Ozar ha-Sefer ha-Ivri enumerates one hundred eleven titles printed from that first prayer-book through 1600, none of them talmudic treatises. From 1601 to 1609, the year that Maharal died, seventy four additional titles, among them tractate *Niddah*, are attributed to the Hebrew presses in Prague. A small number of titles are doubtful, or lack the name of the printer.¹⁴

A number of print-shops were active in Prague from 1601 to 1609. The oldest and largest, based on the number of titles issued, was that of the Gersonides. Twenty seven titles were printed by Moses ben Bezalel Katz, the head of the shop; seven titles are attributed to Gershom ben Bezalel; one to Moses ben Joseph Katz; and one book to another unspecified member of the family. Their imprints are generally well printed and many of their title pages are characterized by ornamental frames, the most well known being a border with the spread hands of the kohen's priestly blessing and, at the bottom of the frame, a bearded face accompanied by two cherubs. However, not all of the title pages of the books printed by Moses and Gershom ben Bezalel Katz are so finely ornamented.

It should not surprise us if this tractate *Niddah* was printed by one of the Gersonides, for Maharal's books that were printed in Prague were printed by that family.¹⁵ One octavo format work printed by Gershom Katz, the *Pithe'i ha-Shem* (1609) of R. Issachar Baer ben Pethahiah Moses,

¹³ The others were Meir ben Jacob ha-Levi Epstein and Hayyim ben David Shahor.

¹⁴ See Y. Vinograd (above, n. 6), pp. 531–36.

¹⁵ I have examined *Iggerot ha-Teshuvah* and *Netivot Olam* (1596); *Be'er ha-Golah* and *Behinat Olam* (1598); *Nezah Yisrael* (1599); *Or Hadash* (1600); *Sefer ha-Terumah* (1605); *Mahzor Minhag Polin* (1606); *Kli Yakar* and *She'elot u-Teshuvot Maharam me-Rothenberg* (1608); *Brit Avraham*, *Yosef Da'at*, *Yesh Sakhar*, *Levush Malkhut*, *Perush al Targum Yonatan*, and *Pithe'i*

is similar in style and format to *Niddah*. It is devoid of ornamentation, except for some florets on the title page and near the chapter number atop the text page. The title page is numbered 8 in the upper left hand corner and subsequent pages are uniformly numbered. The paper is of poor quality. The printer's name, date and place of publication are not given on the title page; this information is supplied in the colophon. Nevertheless, the fonts differ in many particulars from those employed in *Niddah*, resembling other books published by the Gersonides, suggesting that the tractate was printed elsewhere.

Two other print shops were also active at this time. The Schedel family press, established in 1602 by Abraham, Ezriel, and Judah Leib, sons of the preacher Moses Schedel, was in the home of Hayyim ben Jacob ha-Kohen, whom Friedberg reports was also a partner.¹⁶ Abraham Schedel printed as many as six titles until 1605, among them the *Hiddushei Halakhot* of R. Samuel Eliezer ben Judah Edels (Maharsha) on tractate *Niddah* (1602). Moses ben Abraham is credited with a *Selihot*, printed in 1605, followed, in 1606, by *Helkat Mehokak* (Haggadah), printed by Judah Loeb ben Moses—[Abraham ben Moses Schedel and partners], in 1608, by *Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim*, and, in 1609, by *Daniel Bukh* and *Lehem Rav*, printed by Judah Leib and Ezriel, the sons of Moses Schedel. *Kizzur Mizrahi* on Shemot, with *Minhat Oni*, is also credited to [Abraham ben Moses Schedel and partners].¹⁷ A comparison of the *Hiddushei Halakhot*, *Selihot*, and *Lehem Rav*, the three Schedel titles examined, and tractate *Niddah* under discussion here does not support the possibility that this tractate was issued by the Schedel press.

The third contemporary Prague printer was Jacob Bak (d. 1618), the son of Gershon ben Moses Bak, a renowned Venetian printer of Hebrew books. Jacob Bak printed in Verona and Venice, where he issued Maharal's *Tiferet Yisrael* (1599), before coming to Prague. After having been initially associated with the Schedels, Bak founded his own press in Prague in 1605 and three titles, according to the *Ozar*, bear

ha-Shem (1609). These books, as well as the other titles mentioned in this section, were examined at the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library, New York University; Library of Agudas Chassidiei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak; and the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary. I would also like to express my appreciation to the following librarians at those institutions for their assistance, respectively, Mr. Marvin Taylor, R. Yitzhak Wilhelm, and Dr. Seth Jerchow.

¹⁶ See H. D. Friedberg (above, n. 12), p. 19.

¹⁷ See Y. Vinograd (above n. 7), nos. 134, 137, 162, 166, 175, and 182.

Bak's sole imprint during this period.¹⁸ The rabbinic print in one of them, *Pa'ane'ah Raza* (1607), printed in two columns, thirty-six lines to a column, and on poor paper, differs from the rabbinic fonts on the title page of *Niddah*. It is therefore unlikely that Bak was responsible for the text under discussion here.

The inability to match *Niddah* to other books printed at the turn of the seventeenth century in Prague is perplexing. The letters in the tractate are worn, as noted above, leading one to assume that there should be several earlier books with the same fonts. There are a number of distinctive letters in this volume, which should also facilitate the identification of the printer. Nevertheless, it has not been possible to match the letters in this tractate to those in any other Prague book from this period. Perhaps this tractate was printed elsewhere, in spite of the fact that the title page gives the place of printing as Prague or, if it was printed by one of the city's Hebrew print-shops, it was done with fonts unlike those in the books examined. More likely, it was a one time printing by someone who was not otherwise a part of Prague's printing establishment.

Maharal is among the preeminent rabbinic figures of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.¹⁹ Little is known of Maharal's personal life, as he was reticent to include such material in his works. Born early in the sixteenth century in Posen, he served as *Landesrabbiner* of Moravia in Nikolsburg from 1553 to 1573 prior to moving to Prague

¹⁸ See H. D. Friedberg, pp. 19–20; Y. Vinograd, nos. 132 (1605), 154 (1607), and 185 (1609).

¹⁹ The philosophy and pedagogical theories of the Maharal are beyond the scope of this paper and are discussed only to the extent that they are relevant to determining the purpose of publishing the subject edition of tractate *Niddah*. Concerning Maharal, see A. Gottesdiener, "Ha-Ari she-be-Hakhmei Prag," *Azkarah, Kovetz Torani Mada'i le-Nishmat... ha-Rav Kook* 4, ed. J. L. Fishman (Jerusalem, 1937), 253–483; A. Mauskopf, *The Religious Philosophy of the Maharal of Prague* (Brooklyn, 1949); and F. Thieberger, *The Great Rabbi Loew of Prague* (London, 1955). On his educational philosophy, see Ahron Fritz Kleinberger, *Ha-Mahshavah ha-Pedagogit shel ha-Maharal mi-Prag* (Jerusalem, 1962); and *idem.*, "The Didactics of Rabbi Loew of Prague," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 13 (1963): 32–55. For other, more specialized articles, see J. Elbaum, "Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague and his Attitude to the Aggadah," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 22 (1971): 28–47; André Neher, "The Humanism of the Maharal of Prague," *Judaism* 14 (1965): 290–304 and Bezalel Safran, "Maharal and Early Hasidism" in *Hasidism: Continuity or Innovation?*, ed. Bezalel Safran (Cambridge and London, 1988), 47–144. A brief but valuable work is Vladimir Sadek, "The Spiritual World of Rabbi Judah Loew Ben Bezalel," *Review of the Society for the History of Czechoslovak Jews* 4 (1991–92): 101–19, and, for a view of a contemporary, David Gans, *Zemach David* (Prague, 1592; reprint New York, n. d.), 58.

to head the Klaus yeshiva there.²⁰ Maharal left Prague in 1583–1584 for Posen, returning in 1588–1589. Once again, he left Prague for Posen in 1592, and returned to Prague in 1597 to succeed R. Mordecai ben Abraham Jaffe (*Levush*), as the Chief Rabbi there.²¹ A little known incident occurred during his last period in Prague, on Shabbat, Tisha b'Av (July 27, 1602), when Maharal was arrested and, it seems, briefly incarcerated together with the other leaders of the Jewish community, due to the denunciations of informers. The community faced expulsion, but in the end it was the informers, based on the testimony of both Jews and Christians, who were imprisoned and tortured.²²

The interests of Maharal were eclectic, encompassing kabbalistic, philosophic and secular scientific studies, in addition to vast rabbinic texts. His acquaintances included the scientist Tycho Brahe, who arranged an audience between him and Emperor Rudolph II (1552–1612) which took place on Adar 3 5352 (February 16, 1592). Although the subject of the meeting remains unknown, it is assumed, based on Rudolph's interests, that the discussion was about Kabbalah.²³

Maharal has been described as “the first to undertake a systematic enquiry into the education of European Jewry and to protest against its defects,” and as “the first of a long line of reformers who exercised a lasting influence upon the course of Jewish education.”²⁴ He had

²⁰ Most sources, based on Nathan Grün, *Der hohe Rabbi Löw und sein Sagenfries* (Prague, 1885), 2–3, date Maharal's birth as 1525. Nevertheless, Meir Pereles, *Toledot u-Nefillot Maharal Hanikra Megillat Yuhasin* (Zolkiew, 1745; reprint Byelgora, 1911), 16, dates the birth of Maharal in 1512. Byron L. Sherwin, *Mystical Theology and Social Dissent, The Life and Works of Judah Loew of Prague* (London and Toronto, 1982), 28, suggests several reasons for Maharal leaving his position as Chief Rabbi of Moravia to direct the Klaus in Prague, among them the opportunity to “put into practice the pedagogic theories so basic to his thought.”

²¹ That Maharal was not elected earlier to the position of Chief Rabbi of Prague may be attributed to opposition to him for some of the strong positions he took, among them his disdain for the current educational curriculum and the *pilpul* method of Talmud study. See Ben Zion Bokser, *The Maharal, The Mystical Philosophy of Rabbi Judah Loew of Prague* (New York, 1954; reprint Northvale, 1994), 44–47 and B. Sherwin, pp. 31–35.

²² See Abraham David, ed., *A Hebrew Chronicle from Prague, c. 1615*, trans. Leon J. Weinberger with Dena Ordan (Tuscaloosa, 1993), 55–58.

²³ D. Gans (above, n. 19), described the meeting, stating that “the contents of their meeting is entirely unknown.” A. Gottesdiener (pp. 304–09), however, reports on alleged details of the meeting, including a wondrous, but patently fictitious, anecdote, based on a dream of Rudolph's, as to why he sought to meet with Maharal. See B. Sherwin, pp. 33–34, for other possible reasons for the meeting between them.

²⁴ See A. F. Kleinberger, “The Didactics,” p. 33 and Isadore Fishman, *History of Jewish Education in Central Europe From the End of the Sixteenth Century to the End of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1944), 13. Maharal also encouraged the study of Hebrew grammar. Joseph ben Heilprun of Posen, the author of *Em ha-Yeled* (Prague, 1597), written with

pronounced opinions on education, expressed in a number of his writings. The stress that Maharal placed on educational reform was directly related to his eschatology, which has been described as “not merely a social desideratum, not merely a therapeutic reform, but an essential part of a plan for messianic redemption, part of a blueprint for the reconciliation of both man and the world with God. Current educational abuses were not simply indicative of pedagogic corruption, but were the primary cause of metaphysical disruption.”²⁵ He believed that the Jewish educational system was in a serious state of decline. He was especially opposed to the premature emphasis on Talmud study from an early age and to the casuistic (*pilpul*) method of learning Talmud introduced by R. Jacob Pollak and espoused by yeshivot in Eastern Europe.²⁶ Instead, Maharal favored a logical and orderly approach, consistent with the Mishnah (*Avot* 5:25): “He [Judah ben Tema] used to say: ‘A five year old begins Scripture; a ten year old begins Mishnah; . . . a fifteen year old begins the study of Gemara . . .’”²⁷

Maharal observes that not only early sages such as the Ba’alei Tosafot, but even later sages, knowledgeable in all of Mishnah and Talmud, as can be seen from their writings, achieved this level of wisdom only because they constantly reviewed their learning “evening, morning, and noon.” He continues, quoting *Pesahim* 50a (also *Bava Batra* 10b), praising the ten Mishnaic sages murdered by the Romans for their adherence to Torah. No creature can stand in their surroundings, for “happy (fortunate) is the one who comes here **בִּידוֹ וּתְלִמוּדוֹ בְיָדוֹ** with his learning in his hand.” And what of the person who does not have “his learning in his hand?” Such a person turns after the material. “How can he merit the world to come when he is a materialistic person?” Those who have their learning in their hand can hold their heads erect, that is, they need not be ashamed. However, those whose Torah is not with them, must hang their heads down and perforce be embarrassed to stand among those holy higher ones.

the intention of instructing young boys to write and speak Hebrew fluently, informs us in the preface to that work that he was encouraged to print his book on Hebrew grammar by Maharal and R. Mordecai Jaffe.

²⁵ See B. Sherwin, p. 172. See also A. Neher, “The Humanism,” p. 297, where he writes that, “In drawing up a plan for remodeling the system of Jewish education, the Maharal is aware that he is shaping a definitive portion of human history. He is sowing the Messianic field. . . .”

²⁶ R. Jacob ben Joseph Pollak (d. 1530), who headed yeshivot in Prague and Cracow, introduced an advanced *pilpul* method of learning Talmud.

²⁷ *Derekh Hayyim* (New York, 1969), 271–74, on *Avot* 5:21.

In his *Drasha* on the Torah, Maharal also emphasizes reviewing learning, making many of the same points as in *Derekh Hayyim*. He writes here that students are not accustomed to reviewing their learning. How then can they believe they will retain anything if they do not repeat it? Torah [learning] is easily lost if not constantly reviewed. Continual review is a principle of Torah learning. Even if a person were to select a poor, flawed way of learning he would still have something to show for his efforts if it was done with constant review. The Maharal expresses disapproval of the *pilpul* method of learning, which distracts the generation, leading to the punishments expressed in *Sanhedrin* 99b, and results in scorning the word of the Lord. On the contrary, it is review that leads to wisdom and intellectual acuity. The Midrash on Job 32 is quoted: “‘It is not that great men are [always] wise’ says Elihu to the companions of Job [and] not all who occupy themselves with Torah are sages, ‘But in truth it is a spirit in man’ a spirit that the Holy One, blessed be He has given him, so that he will be habitual in his learning.’” The Maharal continues “the person who reviews his learning and is habitual in doing so is the one who is wise, and this is what is stated, that the person who learns and does not review his learning is like one who sows and does not harvest...”²⁸

The point is further emphasized with another Midrash (*Kohelet Rabbah* 9:10) comparing those who can hold their heads erect to those who can not, the former having their learning in their hand תלמודן בידן. The Maharal describes them as being able to stand without shame in the presence of the holy souls who are entirely separated from their bodies, for they are in the same category, whereas those whose learning is not in their hands are not separated from their bodies. They, of necessity, must be ashamed to stand in the presence of the holy souls and, therefore, must hang their heads low. From a person’s face one can discern their accomplishments, which is why the heads of those without their learning hang low. They have not brought their abilities to fruition by reviewing their learning. They are, therefore, like unformed matter which has not reached a state of actualization.²⁹

Maharal criticizes even studying Bible with Rashi, for doing so is a device of village teachers who lack other works and use Rashi to protract their lessons, rather than spending time on mastering the basic text.

²⁸ “Drushim al ha-Torah ve-ha-Mitzot” in: *Drashot Maharal mi-Prague* (New York, 1969), 44–45.

²⁹ “Drushim al ha-Torah ve-ha-Mitzot”.

Instead, education should be paced according to a child's ability; just as a child drinks his mother's milk until he is able to progress to more substantial food, so too should his studies advance, as expressed in the aforementioned Mishnah.³⁰ He bemoans the fact that in his generation the order of education has been inverted, with boys of six and seven being instructed in Talmud and only later in Mishnah, with the result that they are left with neither Talmud nor Mishnah.³¹

Maharal places great stress upon on the study of Mishnayot, an unusual curriculum at a time when many teachers ignored such studies entirely, witness the relatively small number of Mishnayot texts published apart from the Talmud.³² It was his opinion that such study was "the basic foundation and iron pillar" for the study of Torah.³³ He writes:

If young men, of tender age had [mastered] their youthful lessons, there is no doubt whatsoever that they would be familiar with and know many tractates prior to coming to the *huppah*. Now, however, they have nothing in their hand, and this all because they learn Tosafot, which is supplementary. Would it not be preferable if they would first acquire [knowledge of] the body of the Talmud? This is because Tosafot is printed with the text of the Talmud. If they would print *Piskei ha-Rosh* and other novellae written by *Ahronim* [later sages],... all would learn according to the *Halakhah*, even small lads.³⁴

We are now in a better position to understand the unique features of this tractate printed by Maharal. Perhaps the omission of Tosafot, and even Rashi, in this edition is indicative of a tractate designed for emphasizing fundamentals. Maharal, one of the greatest talmudists of his time, was certainly not opposed to the learning of Tosafot. His opposition, clearly

³⁰ See his *Gur Aryeh* (Bnei Brak, 1972), Parsahat Va'ethanan, p. 40.

³¹ See his *Derekh Hayyim* (Cracow, 1589), 6:7, and *Tiferet Yisrael* (New York, 1969), ch. 56. A late seventeenth century autobiography, in which the author recounts how he was tutored by his father, relates how "My father started to teach me Gemara Sota once or twice, though I had never before studied Talmud or even Mishnah. Thus a long time passed by without my learning anything, until I became a thorn in my own eyes and even more so in the eyes of my father. . . ." See Alexander Marx, "A Seventeenth-Century Autobiography. A Picture of Jewish Life in Bohemia and Moravia," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 8 (1917–18): 279 (Hebrew) and 292 (English translation). For an overview of Jewish education at this time, see S. Assaf, *Mekorot le-Toldot ha-Hinukh be-Yisrael* (Tel Aviv, 1925) and Joshua Trachtenberg, "Jewish Education in Eastern Europe at the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century," *Jewish Education* 11:2 (1939): 121–37.

³² See I. Fishman (above n. 24), pp. 47–48.

³³ *Gur Aryeh*, *op. cit.*

³⁴ "Netivot ha-Torah," in *Netivot Olam* (New York, 1969), 5:25.

expressed, was to a curriculum that did not properly instruct students in essentials or correctly prepare them for advanced studies. Similarly, Maharal certainly did not criticize learning Talmud with Rashi, but rather indicated a strong belief in the merits of reviewing and mastering the text prior to proceeding to more advanced studies.

The stress on emphasizing basics, however, does not explain the choice of *Niddah* as the tractate selected to be printed, or the absence of Rashi. *Niddah* is not a tractate for initiating young students into the intricacies of the Talmud and yet the format of this edition is not one to appeal to older students of Talmud. More likely, then, the tractate was printed for students of any age who had previously studied *Niddah*, but who wished to review the text on a repeated, frequent basis. This would be consistent with the phrase on the title page, “to continuously review his learning, in every season and every hour, until it will be fluent in his mouth and all that he has learned will be habitual.”

Reviewing one’s learning is a theme of Maharal’s *Derekh Hayyim*. The Mishnah in *Avot* (6:7) states, “Torah is even greater than priesthood or royalty, for royalty is acquired along with thirty prerogatives, and the priesthood with twenty-four [gifts], but the Torah is acquired by means of forty-eight qualities, which are . . . learning in order to teach, learning in order to practice, making his teacher wiser, pondering over what he has learned . . .” In his commentary to that Mishnah, Maharal emphasizes that neglecting to repeatedly review one’s learning is comparable to scorning the word of the Lord. He quotes a Baraita (*Sanhedrin* 99a–100b): “R. Joshua ben Korha says, ‘Anyone who learns [Torah] and does not review his learning is comparable to a farmer who sows but does not reap.’ R. Joshua says, ‘One who learns Torah and forgets [his learning] is like a woman who gives birth and buries her offspring.’ R. Akiva says, ‘Sing every day, sing every day . . .’” He continues to write that one who studies Torah without reviewing it is comparable to a farmer who sows but does not reap and “there is nothing more contemptible, for he leaves his produce to the birds, thus scorning his seed, and so is one who learns Torah without reviewing his learning.” Similarly, according to R. Joshua, one who forgets his learning is like a woman who gives birth and buries her offspring. It is as if she gave birth for this purpose, “and so is the person who forgets what he has learned . . . which is equivalent to scorning the word of the Lord.” Torah is a Godly creation, comparable to the birth of a child. Therefore, causing its loss, by not reviewing one’s learning, makes one

liable with his life. This is the reason that R. Akiva says, “sing every day, sing every day,” for one must review his learning constantly. A chapter learned yesterday, should be “repeated today, and every day. Even if no new [insights] are derived [from this repetition] one should repeat what was learned yesterday.”³⁵

Maharal elsewhere also emphasizes the importance of reviewing one’s learning. He writes that since students are not accustomed to doing so, how can they believe they will ever retain anything? Torah learning is easily lost if not constantly reviewed. Even if a person were to select a poor, flawed way of learning, he would still have something to show for his efforts if it was done with constant review. He quotes the Midrash on Job 32: “It is not that great men are [always] wise, says Elihu to the companions of Job, [and] not all who occupy themselves with Torah are sages. But in truth it is a spirit in man, a spirit that the Holy One, blessed be He has given him, so that he will be habitual in his learning.” Maharal continues, “the person who reviews his learning and is habitual in doing so is the one who is wise, and this is what is stated, that the person who learns and does not review his learning is like one who sows and does not harvest.”³⁶

This point is further emphasized with another Midrash (*Kohelet Rabbah* 9:10) comparing those who can hold their heads erect to those who cannot, the former having their learning in their hand. Maharal describes them as being able to stand without shame in the presence of the holy souls who are entirely separated from their bodies, for they are in the same category, whereas those whose learning is not in their hands are not separated from their bodies. They, of necessity, must be ashamed to stand in the presence of the holy souls and must hang their heads low because they have not brought their abilities to fruition by reviewing their learning. They are, therefore, like unformed matter which has not reached a state of actualization.³⁷

The title page of this edition of *Niddah* states that the Maharal “sought to benefit Israel, old and young, to instruct them in the way of life and ethical instruction in order that they should enter into the covenant of the Oral Law which will be for them Gemara....to continuously review his learning, in every season and every hour, until it will be

³⁵ See *Derekh Hayyim*, pp. 303–04, on *Avot* 6:7.

³⁶ “Drushim al ha-Torah ve-ha-Mitzot,” 44–45.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

fluent in his mouth, and all that he has learned will be habitual.” This tractate, “printed at the behest of the Gaon,” is designed to facilitate a continuous review of the text. It reflects the Maharal’s pedagogical philosophy, particularly the need to repeatedly review one’s learning.

It would seem that the publication of this tractate of *Niddah* was not the sole attempt to implement Maharal’s pedagogical theories into the format of a talmudic treatise. A previously unrecognized result, inspired by Maharal’s educational philosophy, is the Cracow Talmud of 1616–1620, printed by Aaron and Mordecai ben Isaac Prostiz.³⁸ Their press was established by their father, Isaac ben Aaron Prostiz (Prossniz, Moravia), who issued his first book, R. Naftali Herz of Lublin’s commentary on *Midrash Rabbah* on the Five Megillot, in 1569. His publications include a small number of tractates issued in 1578–1579, and at least one tractate, *Bezah*, printed in 1599. He returned to Moravia in 1600, leaving the management of the press to his sons, Aaron and Mordecai. They were the printers of the small folio Talmud issued from 1602 to 1605, although their father’s name appears on the title pages.

The 1616–1620 Cracow Talmud was their second Talmud edition. As noted above, this Talmud is unusual in that it omits Tosafot, replacing it with the *Arukh*. It is not unlikely that the educational philosophy of Maharal was the inspiration for this Talmud as well. The title page of *Berakhot*, one of the few tractates in this Talmud that have a title page, begins, “O generation, see this new matter which existed previously and now has been renewed in our time,” much like the first line of the *Niddah* text, “See, this is new in our eyes, that already was in the days of our fathers.” The title page emphasizes the value of learning *halakhot*, employing the same language as did Maharal for retaining one’s learning as a result of the review of the material:

The Holy One blessed be He has in His world only four cubits of *Halakhah*. . . . Happy is he who comes here with his Talmud in his hand, precisely because it is in his hand, so that he is able to come and go and his Talmud is in his hand to learn from it. . . . Everyone who learns *halakhot* every day is assured a portion in the World to Come.

The volumes of this Talmud measure about 20 cm. The tractates are printed in two columns, the text in the inner column, Rashi in the outer

³⁸ The literature describing this edition of the Talmud is scant. See my *A History of the Earliest Printed Editions* (above, n. 6), pp. 381–90; Rabbinovicz (above, n. 4), 84–85; Moise Schwab, “Une Editione Rarissime du Talmud,” *REJ* 48 (1912): 300–03.

column. The standard foliation is noted in the margins. Rabbinovicz, who has a low opinion of this Talmud, remarks that all of its textual variations can be attributed to the proofreader's corrections. He also notes that tractate *Niddah* was printed with letters that are different and superior to the rest of the treatises of this Talmud, but is unable to identify the printer of that tractate. *Niddah*, whether the Prostitz brothers were the printers or not, is certainly a part of this Talmud, being, in all other particulars, like the rest of that edition.

As mentioned earlier, at least one tractate, *Bava Mezia*, was printed without Rashi and Tosafot. This tractate was first described by me as part of the Cracow Talmud. However, knowledge of the c. 1608 *Niddah* tractate under discussion here has necessitated a reassessment of that position. It is now evident that there were two editions of *Bava Mezia*, one with and one without Rashi. The Bodleian Library copy, consistent with the other volumes in this Talmud, is printed in two columns, one text and one Rashi. However, the copy of *Bava Mezia* in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary does not include Rashi and contains only the text. It too, like the *Niddah* text, appears to be a *unicum*.

This edition of *Bava Mezia* resembles *Niddah* in layout and appearance. However, it also shares important characteristics with the Cracow Talmud.³⁹ The text of *Bava Mezia* is in two columns, 36 lines to a column, one more than in the c. 1608 edition of *Niddah*. The tractate has 74 leaves, in contrast to the standard foliation of 119 leaves. However, the standard foliation is noted in parentheses in the text. There are a sufficient number of similarities between the Cracow Talmud, and even more so the *Bava Mezia* and *Niddah* tractates to suggest that *Niddah* served as a model for *Bava Mezia*.

The close relationship between the Prague and Polish Jewish communities is well known. A number of Hebrew printers came to Poland from Prague or its environs, among them the founder of the Cracow press, Isaac Prostitz. Two typesetters, both with a Prague association, are named in the colophon to the 1620 edition of tractate *Niddah*. They are Moses ben Katriel Weisswasser from Prague, and Judah, called Leib, ben R. Isaac Yudlosh Katz.⁴⁰ Isaac ben Judah

³⁹ Pages 34b–36a from *Bava Mezia* are reproduced in my *A History of the Earliest Printed Editions*, p. 389.

⁴⁰ Among the books printed in Prague without the name of the printer is *Shulhan Arba* (1596), attributed to R. Bahya ben Asher (d. 1340). On the title page is a copy of the printer's mark of the Venetian printer, Marco Giustiniani. The colophon to the

Yudlosh Katz is recorded as a typesetter, from 1623–48, at the Katz (Gersonides) press.⁴¹

The Cracow Talmud of 1616–1620 must be considered one of the more immediate results of Maharal's educational philosophy. I would suggest that Aaron and Mordecai ben Isaac Prostitz, the printers of that edition of the Talmud, were influenced by Maharal and issued a small inexpensive edition of the Talmud, with Rashi, that would be useful to students who wished to review their learning with a basic commentary. They were reluctant, however, to issue a complete Talmud without Rashi and Tosafot. Experienced printers, the Prostitz brothers must have recognized that the market for such an edition was limited. Their Talmud, to be complete, required that all the volumes be consistent. Nevertheless, they did print at least one tractate, *Bava Mezia*, a tractate popular in the yeshivot, in two formats. One volume was printed with Rashi as part of the complete Talmud; a second volume was printed in the same format as the Prague *Niddah*, that is, without Rashi.

Shulhan Arba names the setter as Moses ben Katriel Weisswasser. Nevertheless, we should not infer too much from this, given the peripatetic nature of Hebrew printers.

⁴¹ See H. D. Friedberg (above, n. 12), p. 16.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

OBSERVATIONS ON THE REPRINTING OF *KESEF NIVHAR*¹

After being out of print for more than two hundred years, *Kesef Nivhar*, by R. Avi Ezri Zelig ben Isaac Margoliot, was reissued in 1995.² *Kesef Nivhar*, homilies and commentaries on the Torah, was first printed in Amsterdam in 1712 and reprinted in Livorno (Leghorn) in 1794. The author also wrote novellae on Talmudic treatises and responsa entitled *Hibbure Likkutim* (Venice, 1715).³

Apart from the intrinsic value of *Kesef Nivhar*, the publication of the first edition provides us with an example of cooperation between print shops in Amsterdam in the first part of the eighteenth century. The manner in which it was produced and the physical evidence of the book informs us about book practices at that time.

Avi Ezri Zelig Margoliot was born in Kalish, where he served as *darshan* (preacher) and perhaps, also as *dayyan* (member of the rabbinical court). He suffered during the pogroms of the *gezerot Polonia* in 1655–56 which occurred during the war between Sweden and Poland, when the city was sacked by the troops of Czarniecki, who razed the Jewish quarter and murdered hundreds of Jews. Margoliot refers briefly in the introduction to *Kesef Nivhar*, and again in much greater detail in the introduction to *Hibbure Likkutim*, to the tragedy that occurred during those years. He served for a short time as a preacher in Prague, and then was invited to Halberstadt to join the ‘Klaus,’ the *bet midrash* (house of study) founded by the Court Jew Issachar ha-Levi Bermann, known as Behrend Lehmann (1661–1730).⁴ Margoliot remained in Halberstadt

¹ The original version of this article was published in the *Studia Rosenthaliana*, 31 no. 1–2 (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 168–74.

² *Kesef Nivhar* (Brooklyn 1995). The publisher had previously issued a facsimile edition of *Kesef Nivhar* (1989) based on the Livorno edition, but it was difficult to read due to the large number of abbreviations and the fact that many letters were unclear. Recognizing the importance of this work, the publisher subsequently reset and reissued *Kesef Nivhar* with the abbreviations spelled out and in clear square letters.

³ The 1794 Livorno edition of *Kesef Nivhar* was printed by Jacob Nunes Weiss and Raphael Mildola. *Hibbure Likkutim* was printed in Venice by the Bragadine press.

⁴ Berend Lehmann of Halberstadt, the Court Jew of the Elector August II of Saxony (1670–1733), founded the ‘Klaus’ in that city to promote Jewish studies. He was the

from 1701–11, when he decided to move, together with his wife, to the Holy Land. It was on his journey to Israel, which was subsidized by Lehmann, that he published *Kesef Nivhar* and *Hibbure Likkutim*. When he arrived in the Holy Land Margoliot settled in Safed, where he lived briefly, until his death.⁵

The title of *Kesef Nivhar* is taken from Proverbs 10:20 “[The tongue of the righteous is as] choice silver; [the heart of the wicked is of little worth].” Margoliot selected *Kesef Nivhar* כסף נבחר as the title as it has the same numerical value as his name, Avi Ezri Zelig אבי עזרי זעליג, that is, 420.⁶ The book has a subtitle *Yesuleh be-Kesem Ophir*, which is taken, with slight grammatical modification, from Job 28:16, that, referring to wisdom, states “[It cannot be] valued with the gold of Ophir, [with the precious onyx or the sapphire.]”

In the first paragraph of the title page, obviously written earlier, Margoliot informs us that he is currently in the *bet midrash* of the praiseworthy Bermann. The following paragraph records the names of the sponsors of the book. Among them, reflecting Margoliot’s close association with Halberstadt, are Leib ben Itzik ben Joel, son-in-law of the *Av Bet Din* (head of the rabbinical court) of Halberstadt, and Mordecai Pezikin, son-in-law of Bermann.⁷

Eight approbations from rabbinic figures attest to the value of *Kesef Nivhar*. The first, and most interesting, given the later relationship of the signatories, are from R. Zevi Hirsch ben Jacob Ashkenazi (Hakham Zevi), and R. Solomon Ayallon, respectively *Av Beit Din* and chief rabbis

financier of the Talmud edition printed by Michael Gottschalk in Frankfort on the Oder from 1697–99, which is today known as the Bermann Talmud. On Behrend Lehmann see Manfred R. Lehmann, “Behrend Lehmann: The King of the Court Jews,” in: Leo Jung, (ed.), *The Jewish Library X Sages and Saints* (Hoboken 1987), pp. 197–217 and Selma Stern, *The Court Jew* (Philadelphia 1950), tr. from German by Ralph Weiman, *var. cit.* On the Klaus see Manfred R. Lehmann, “A Jewish Financier’s Lasting Investment”, in: *Tradition XIX* (New York 1981), pp. 340–47.

⁵ Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin, 1852–60), col. 2580–81 no. 7169; Abraham Yaari, “To the [Holy] Land: Books Printed on the Journey to the Land of Israel” in: *Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Hebrew) (Jerusalem 1958), p. 22.

⁶ Another contemporary work with a title with the same numerical value as the author’s name is *Kav ha-Yashar* (Frankfort 1705) by R. Zevi Hirsch ben Aaron Samuel Koidonover (Kaidanover, d. 23 March 1712). The title equals the number of chapters (*Kav* קב = 102), as well as the authors first name, Zevi (צבי = 102), and is an anagram of the author’s second name (ha-Yashar = הירש = Hirsch Pezikin).

⁷ The remaining sponsors are R. Gumpel ben Jacob Katz of Hannover and R. Hirtz, the son-in-law of R. Eliczer Pezikin of Vienna.

of the Ashkenazic and Sephardic communities of Amsterdam. Ayallon, whose approbation immediately follows that of the Hakham Zevi, writes that he agrees with the approbation of the aforementioned rav, for one can rely on nothing untoward leaving his hand.⁸ R. Gabriel of Cracow, *Av Bet Din* in Nikolsburg writes that it is not his practice to give approbations to homiletic works, but, as the author of this book is a great man and he wishes to support its publication, he is making an exception in this case.

Margoliot writes, in the introduction, that *Kesef Nivhar* was actually completed many years earlier, as can be seen from the approbations, but that he refrained from publishing it because of its excessive length. He has now shortened the book and brought it to press. A review of the approbations reveals that four are concurrent with the publication of the book, and that the other four were written between 1683 and 1687. A statement after the approbations notes that two additional and apparently early approbations, from R. Naftali Katz and R. Moses of Hamburg, were lost on the way.⁹

Kesef Nivhar was printed in two parts the first, by Solomon Proops, the second by Simon Shamash and Moses Dias. The two parts are physically alike and the casual reader might well assume that the entire book was printed at the same print shop. The title page, and there is one only for the complete book, names Proops as the printer until Leviticus and, in smaller letters, reveals that from that point the printing was done at the press of Simon Shamash (fig. 93).

Solomon Proops, the printer of the first part, was initially a bookseller and financier of books printed at various presses in Amsterdam. Proops established his own print shop in the first years of the eighteenth century, a press that remained active and under the Proops family's control until 1869, and afterwards, under other management, that continued to issue Hebrew books until 1917. As noted above, the first part of *Kesef Nivhar*, printed by Proops, is on Genesis and Exodus. The partners who printed

⁸ The Hakham Zevi accused Nehemiah Hiyyah Hayyun, then in Amsterdam, of being an adherent of Shabbetai Zevi. Ayallon defended Hayyun from those charges. The acrimonious dispute resulted in the Hakham Zevi being forced to leave Amsterdam in 1714. Today the Hakham Zevi is considered to have been correct in his assessment of Nehemiah Hiyyah Hayyun.

⁹ The remaining approbations are from R. Isaac ben Abraham of Posen, R. Zevi Hirsch of Lvov, R. Asher ben Isaac of Belzer, R. Abraham ben Yoda of Halberstadt, and R. Yoda ben Nissan of Kalish.

the second part of the book, on Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy and an index of the contents by *parasha* (the weekly Torah readings), are named in the colophon (fig. 94).

The colophon informs us that printing was completed at the press of the partners Moses Dias and Simon Shamash. Moses Dias had also been a bookseller before establishing his own press in 1706, which remained active until 1715. Among the notable titles printed by Dias is an edition of the Jerusalem Talmud, ‘from Tractate *Berakhot* and *Seder Zera'im* and Tractate *Shekalim* (1710).’ Simon Shamash’s name does not appear on that volume, as his association with Dias began after its publication. We find both names on later works, for example, the title page of *Avodah Zarah* (1712), which employ similar language as the colophon of *Kesef Nivhar*, stating “the gentleman and Torah scholar Moses ben Isaac Dias the Sephardi, the leader, the Torah Scholar, the [honorable] Simon Shamash of the Ashkenazi Congregation.” Although Shamash had previously printed some small works together with his brother, he is primarily remembered as a printer of Hebrew books because of his association with Moses Dias.

The recent reprint of *Kesef Nivhar* is in two volumes. The title page of the new edition, which is attractively reset, purports to reproduce the text of the original title page. This is not, however, the case. The second paragraph, referring to the sponsors of the first printing, has been omitted. Of greater importance, the title page to the second volume, which also states that it includes the text of the original, is spurious, as the second part of the 1712 printing did not have a separate title page, the two parts being combined into one book. In the new, second title page the text of the first title page is repeated, except that Simon Shamash’s name, but not that of Moses Dias, is substituted for that of Solomon Proops.¹⁰

Although the first edition was printed in two separate print shops, the individual parts, upon competition, were brought together. The intention, there being but one title page, was for the book to be bound as a single unit. To accomplish this, the finished work had to have been sold together, as a single unit, despite the manner in which it was

¹⁰ The publisher confirmed that he had added a second title page to his second volume, copying the first page but substituting Simon Shamash for Solomon Proops, as Shamash was the printer of that volume of *Kesef Nivhar*. The omission of Moses Dias’ name was inadvertent.

printed. Prevailing practice at the beginning of the eighteenth century, as it had been from the incunabular period, was for the buyer to acquire a book unbound and take it to a binder for completion.

Both parts of *Kesef Nivhar* are reasonably uniform in appearance, the physical differences being insufficient, as noted above, to attract attention to the fact that the book had two printers. Both books measure about 32 cm and the fonts, if not identical, are alike in appearance.¹¹ The type used by Dias/Shamash in *Kesef Nivhar* is the same as that employed by them in tractate *Avodah Zarah*, which is distinct from the fonts used two years earlier by Dias in his edition of the Jerusalem Talmud.

Each printer's segment of the book is of equal length. The text of Genesis and Exodus ends on 35b, and the text of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which begins the foliation anew, ends on 30b, but, with the index of the volumes' contents by *parasha*, which follows, that too is also completed on 35b. Perhaps the individual foliation for the two parts was caused by the work being divided between printers prior to the preparation of the copy books. The signatures for both parts begin with the first text page as *aleph*. What is unusual, however, is that the signatures for Genesis and Exodus, prepared by Solomon Proops, are in sets of four leaves, for example, 11 אא, then 12 בא, (the Hebrew reads from right to left, the Arabic numerals from left to right) followed by two unsigned leaves and then 21 גא, etc., whereas the signatures for Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, set by Dias/Shamash, are in sets of two, 11 אא, a blank page, 2 ב, a blank page, 3 ג, etc.¹²

The ornamentation used by the two printers varies. Proops placed different decorative woodcuts, floral in content, after the approbations and at the end of Exodus. Dias/Shamash used a single woodcut, that of a bear astride a branched floral arrangement, employing it at the

¹¹ Steinschneider, *op. cit.*, informs us that the Bodleian Library has a copy of *Kesef Nivhar* on large paper with the name of R. David Oppenheimer on the cover "charta maxima (expl. splendidum cum nomine Dav. Oppenheimer in tegumine)." Oppenheimer (1664–1736), rabbi of Nikolsburg, Moravia, and from 1702 of Prague, was a great collector of Hebraica, having special editions of books on vellum or fine paper printed for him.

¹² In the Livorno edition of *Kesef Nivhar* the text ends on 70a and the index on 75b. Although the Livorno printers attempted to make their edition a copy of the Amsterdam edition, both have sixty-five lines in two columns to a page, the two editions are not exact, so that by the end of the text, that is, the end of *וזאת הברכה*, the Amsterdam edition has seven lines of text compared to twenty-two lines in the Livorno edition. In the recent reprint, which is in a smaller format (slightly less than 23 cm) with larger letters, the text of the second volume ends on page 509 and the index on page 543, which are equivalent to 255a and 272a.

conclusion of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy and after the index. The bear ornament can also be found on the title pages of Dias/Shamash's books, such as the Talmud editions noted above, as well as on the title pages of books by other printers, both in Amsterdam and elsewhere.¹³

Additional information about the production of the book can be found in the colophon. Unlike the title page, which dates the book by year, that is 1712, the colophon provides a more specific completion date, Friday, and "Moses wrote this Torah and gave it to the Kohanim (Deuteronomy 31:9)," which equals 22 *Elul* 5472 or September 23, 1712. The colophon concludes with the name of the compositor, Hayyim ben Gompel Alt Schule. In contrast, the colophon to the first part relates the compositor's name only, that is, Jacob bar Moses Segal of Hamburg, known as the son-in-law of Jacob Maarssen of Amsterdam.

Why were there two printers for the two parts of *Kesef Nivhar*? I would suggest, and this is mere speculation, that Margoliot was in haste to reach the Holy Land. Even though we do not know the exact date of his birth, the fact that he suffered during the pogroms of 1655–56 suggests that he was an older man by 1712. Margoliot wished to complete the work quickly and be on his way. It was Margoliot who was responsible for *Kesef Nivhar* being printed separately, and concurrently, by Proops and Dias/Shamash. Perhaps Margoliot even made the arrangements with both printers concerning their segments of the work. Another possibility, and this seems more likely, given the coordination required by the printers, is that Margoliot requested Solomon Proops, whose name appears much more prominently on the title page, to make the arrangements or to subcontract part of the work, so that it would be completed in a shorter period of time. We find that when Margoliot arrived in Venice and submitted *Hibbure Likkutim* to the printer he did not wait to see that work completed, but rather proceeded on to the Holy Land, so that by the time *Hibbure Likkutim* was in press, Margoliot was already in Safed.

¹³ On the varied use of the bear ornament see Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Individual Treatises Printed from 1700 to 1750* (E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1999), chapters 20 and 25; *idem.*, "The Bear Motif on Eighteenth Century Hebrew Books" (*The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, forthcoming). Herbert Z. Zafren, "The Value of Face Value", in: *Hebrew Union College Annual*, 40–41 (Cincinnati, 1969–70), pp. 555–80; and Herbert Z. Zafren, "Dyherenfurth and Shabtai Bass: A Typographic Profile" In: Charles Berlin (ed.) *Studies in Jewish Bibliography, History and Literature in Honor of I.E. Kiv* (New York 1971), pp. 543–80.

Whether this is an accurate description of the sequence of events or not, there is one thing of which we can be certain. We are indebted to the publisher for bringing this valuable work to press after being so long unavailable.

INDEX

A

- A secretis Epistola, de admirabili*, 2
- Aaron, 282
- Aaron, Israel, 209
- Aaron, Rabbi, 111, 145–146
- Aaron ben Jonah, 37
- Aaron ben Moses, Rabbi, 82
- Aaron Samuel ben Isaac, Rabbi, 196
- Aba (Rabbi Abraham ben Gedaliah ibn Asher), 275–276
- Abas, Rabbi Samuel ben Isaac, 251, 254–255
- Aboab, Immanuel, 234
- Aboab, Rabbi Samuel ben Abraham, 164, 171
- Abrabanel, Don Isaac ben Judah
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 237–238
frames, and, 5–6
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 145
Livorno, printing in, 166
printer's marks, and, 24, 44–45
Shabbat, printing on, 272
tiles, and, 75–76
- Abrabanel on the Early Prophets*, 27
- Abraham (ben Israel ben Moses), 222
- Abraham (patriarch), 40, 216, 277
- Abraham ben Avigdor, Rabbi, 110
- Abraham ben David, Rabbi (Ravad), 188
- Abraham ben Dior, 237
- Abraham ben Garton ben Isaac, 94, 131, 231, 242
- Abraham ben Jacob Avinu, 24
- Abraham ben Mattathias, 162
- Abrahamsz, Moses, 219
- Abraham on the Prophets*, 247
- Absalom, 194–195
- Abudarham, Rabbi David ben Joseph, 74
- Abulafia, Chayim, 234
- Adam, 194–195
- Adams, H. M., 122–123
- Adderet Elyahu*, 72–91, 185–186
- Adelard of Bath, 141
- Adelkind, Cornelius, 4, 47, 159, 269, 271
- Aderet, Rabbi Solomon ben Abraham (Rashba), 136, 167
- Aesop, 142, 163
- Aesop's Fables*, 1
- Afendopolo, Caleb, 77
- Afikomen*, 189
- Akedat Yizhak*, 6, 245
- Akiba, Rabbi, 237, 310–311
- al-Bargeloni, Rabbi Isaac ben Reuben, 10
- Albert VI, 131
- Albo, Rabbi Joseph, 83, 147–148
- Alfasi, Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob (Rif), 188, 271
- Alfred the Englishman, 142
- Algazi, Rabbi Solomon, 177
- Algazi, Rabbi Yom Tov ben Israel Jacob, 74
- al-Hakam, Rabbi Elijah Moses Hayyim, 85
- al-Hakam, Rabbi Joseph Hayyim ben Elijah (Ben Ish Hai), 84–85
- al-Hakam, Rabbi Moses ben Hayyim, 85
- Alkabez, Rabbi Solomon ben Moses ha-Levi, 97, 279
- Almenera de la Luz*, 171
- Almida, Rabbi Isaac, 79
- Almoli, Rabbi Solomon ben Jacob, 220
- Alshekh, Rabbi Moses, 21, 29, 259
- Alt Schule, Hayyim ben Gompel, 320
- Altenburg, 214
- Altmann, 215
- Altschuler, Rabbi David, 76
- Amarillo, Moses, 79
- Amarillo, Rabbi Solomon, 79
- Amnon, Abraham Israel, 172
- Amos, 62
- Amram, David, 7, 123, 154, 231, 290
- Amsterdam Talmud, 25, 56–57, 59–61
- Annales hebraeo-typographicci ab an. MDI ad MDXL*, 230
- Annales hebraeo-typographicci sec. XV*, 230
- Annali ebreo-tipografici di Cremona*, 231
- Annali ebreo-tipografici di Sabbioneta*, 230
- Antenore, 121
- Antiquités judaïques ou Remarques critiques sur la république des hébreux*, 235

- Antonius, Aaron di Solomon, 21
Apologia por la noble nacion de los Judios, 176
Appiryon Shelomo, 241–242
Arakhin, 59, 61
 Arama, Rabbi Isaac ben Moses, 6, 237
Arba'ah Turim Orah Hayyim, 46, 112, 136, 264
 Archivolti, Rabbi Samuel ben Elhanan Jacob, 283
 Aripul, Rabbi Samuel ben Isaac ben Yom Tov, 51, 117–118
 Aristotle, 127–128
Arukh, 100, 298, 312
Arukh ha-Kazar, 14
Arzei Levanon, 9
Asarah Hillulim, 203–204
Asarah Ma'amarot, 22–24
 Aschaffenburg, Rabbi Simeon ben Isaac, 110, 146
 Asher, 276
 Asher ben Jehiel, Rabbi (Rosh), 110, 286
Asheri, 236
 Ashkenazi, Abraham ben Isaac, 116, 118–119
 Ashkenazi, Isaac, 112, 114–115
 Ashkenazi, Jonah ben Jacob, 79
 Ashkenazi, Judah ben Isaac ha-Levi, 46
 Ashkenazi, Rabbi Eliezer ben Isaac, 49–51, 106–120, 226
 Ashkenazi, Rabbi Elijah ben Asher ha-Levi, 124
 Ashkenazi, Rabbi Gershon ben Isaac, 199
 Ashkenazi, Rabbi Zevi Hirsch ben Jacob, 26, 316–317
Asis Rimmonim, 279
Ateret Zahav, 173
Ateret Zekenim, 7
Ateret Zevi, 259
 Athias, Immanuel (Manuel) ben Joseph, 38–40, 43, 251–252
 Athias, Joseph, 23, 38, 43, 221, 250–252
 Augustus, Friedreich, 101
 Augustus the Strong, 207, 210
Aus der Heimat Mendelssohns, 30
Ausführliches Sach- und Namenregister zu de' Rossi's 'historisches Wörterbuch der jüdischen Schriftsteller und ihre Werke', 232
 Avash, Rabbi Judah ben Isaac, 190
Avdei Yitzhak, 80
 Averroes, 122, 127
Avodah Zarah, 58, 99, 318–319
Avodat ha-Gershuni, 199
Avodat ha-Kodesh, 124, 126, 275
Avodat ha-Levi, 110
Avot, 225, 307, 310
 Ayallon, Rabbi Solomon, 316–317
 Azriel of Gerona, 125
 Azubib, David, 98, 290
 Azulai, Rabbi Hayyim Joseph David (Hida)
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 229, 234, 239
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 138
 Livorno, printing in, 174
 plagiarism, and, 195, 197
 titles, and, 87
- B
- Babylonian Talmud
 book trade, and, 244, 253–254
 early Hebrew printing, and, 111
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 133, 145–146
 printer's marks, and, 21, 32
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 285
 titles, and, 83, 87–88
 Bahur, 161
 Bahya ben Asher, 48
 Bak, Gershon ben Moses, 156, 304
 Bak, Israel, 88, 119
 Bak, Jacob ben Gershon, 153, 156, 303–305
Bakashot Hadashot, 180–181
 Bamberger, S., 262
 Bank, Abraham M., 302
Baraita, 190
Baraita de-Rabbi Eliezer, 119
 Bartolucci, Giulio, 234–235, 238
 Baruch, Rabbi Joshua Boaz, 4
 Baruch ben Samuel, Rabbi, 82
 Baruchson, Shifra, 286
 Bashyazi, Elijah ben Moses, 76–77
 Basle (Basel) Talmud
 chronograms, and, 54, 58
 frames, and, 10
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 133
 monograms, and, 36
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 285–287, 296
 Talmud design, and, 99
 Basnage, Jacques Christian, 235
 Bass, Rabbi Shabbetai ben Joseph, 74, 162, 233–234
 Bassacus, Nicholas, 248

- Bassani, Rabbi Samuel Hayyim, 287
 Bassola, Rabbi Moses ben Mordecai, 281
 Bathsheba, 194–195
 Bath-Sheba, Abraham ben Sabbatai Mattathias
 book production, and, 264
 early Hebrew printing, and, 119
 frames, and, 11–12
 Shabbat, printing on, 268
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 288, 291–292
 Verona, printing in, 153–154, 156–158, 161–164
 Bath-Sheba, Fioretta, 11, 288
 Bath-Sheba, Rabbi Abraham Joseph (Joseph Abraham), 11, 13, 153, 264, 288
 Bath-Sheba, Sabbatai Mattathias, 7–8, 11–12, 153, 264, 288–289
 Bath-Sheba/Moses de Medina Salonika edition of *Berakhot*, 284–297
Bava Batra, 24, 183, 221, 307
Bava Kamma, 98, 100, 225, 286, 295–296
Bava Mezia, 24, 83, 96–98, 100, 299, 313–314
 Beckman, Johann Christoph, 36, 78, 214
Bedek ha-Bayit, 14
Be'er Esek, 194
Behinat ha-Dat, 72
 Behrens, Leflman, 207, 209
Be'it Avraham, 37
Beit Yehuda (1698), 28, 213
Beit Yehudah (1746), 190
Beit Yosef, 14, 46
Bekhorot, 205
 Belforte, Salomone, 178
 Benayahu, Meir
 book production, and, 264
 frames, and, 7
 Livorno, printing in, 170
 Padua, printing in, 129
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 288–289, 292–293, 295
 Verona, printing in, 154
 Benevento, Rabbi Immanuel ben Jekuthiel, 273
 Benjacob, Isaac, 75, 135
 Benjamin, Israel, 170
 Benjamin, Nathan, 175
 Benjamin ben Jonah, Rabbi, 143–145
 Benjamin ben Mattathias, Rabbi, 276
 Benjamin of Cologne, 209
 Benveniste, Immanuel, 55
 Benveniste, Immanuel, printer's mark of, 18–32, 35, 213, 215, 225
 Benveniste, Moses, 177
 Benveniste, Rabbi Hayyim ben Israel, 171, 176–177
 Benveniste Talmud, 24
 Berab, Rabbi Jacob, 279
Berakhot
 chronograms, and, 55–58
 frames, and, 12–13
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 318
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 312
 monograms, and, 37, 41
 Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 225
 printer's marks, and, 25–26
 Shabbat, printing on, 266
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 284–298
 Talmud design, and, 94–95, 97–98, 100, 105
 titles, and, 86
 Berditchev Talmud, 104
Bereshit Rabbah, 13, 250, 275, 289
Berit Avraham, 165, 169–171
Berkat ha-Nehenin, 169
 Berlin, Rabbi Abraham ben Judah, 73, 102, 286
 Bermann, Issachar ha-Levi, 36, 101, 207, 211, 214, 222, 315–316
 Bermann Talmud, 36
 Bertinoro, Obadiah, 7, 234
Berure ha-Middot, 83
Bet Elokim, 20
Be'ur al ha-Torah, 275
Be'ur Shir ha-Shirim, 275
Bezah
 chronograms, and, 56
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 312
 monograms, and, 41
 Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 226–227
 printer's marks, and, 31
 Talmud design, and, 94, 98
 titles, and, 83
Bibliotheca Latina Hebraica, 234–235
Biblia Hebraica, 29, 224, 243
Bibliotheca Exotica, 248
Bibliotheca Hebraea, 234–235
Bibliotheca Magna Rabbinnica, 234–235
Bibliotheca universalis, 243
Bibliotheca judaica antichristiana, 231
Bidhapti, 142
 Bing, Isaac, 249

- Binyamin Ze'ev*, 276
 Blastus, Nicolas, 244
 Bloch, Joshua, 46, 72
 Bloch, Moses, 40
 Boaz, Rabbi Joshua ben Simon Baruch, 95–96
 Boccaccio, Giovanni, 122
 Boehm, Samuel ben Isaac, 124–126, 129–130
 Bomberg, Daniel
 book trade, and, 243–245, 248
 chronograms, and, 54
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 237
 early Hebrew printing, and, 109
 frames, and, 8–9
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 302
 printer's marks, and, 44, 46–47
 Shabbat, printing on, 271
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 287, 291
 Talmud design, and, 94–95, 98–99, 104–105
 Verona, printing in, 159
 Bonacosa, Jacob, 122
 Boner, Ulrich, 163
 Bonfed, Samuel, 42
 Bonfil, Robert, 155
 book production to worker ratio in the eighteenth century, 257–265
Book Sales Catalogues of the Dutch Republic 1599–1800, 255
 book trade, Hebrew, 241–256
 Borghesi, Diomede, 126
 Boskowitz, Esther, 75
 Boskowitz, Rabbi Benjamin Ze'ev (Wolf) ha-Levi, 75
Bove Bukh, 160
 Bragadin, Lorenzo, 77
 Bragadin, Pietro, 77
 Bragadini, Alvise, 18, 168, 248, 290
 Bragdine, Aluise, 168
 Brahe, Tycho, 306
 Bruerne, Richard, 245, 248
 Brull, N., 201–202
 Buccio, Pietro, 126
 Buchbinder, Henoch, 42–43
 Buchbinder, Isaac Itzik ben Leib, 42–43
 Bundi, Rabbi Adam, 188
Buovo d'Antona, 160
 Buxtorf, Johannes, 235
- C
- Caleoni, Giovanni, 77
 Calliergi, Zacharias, 244
 Calvo, Francesco Minizio (Giulio), 2–3, 7–9, 12–14, 17, 294
Cannon missae, 242
 Canpanton, Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob, 127
 Caraffa, Cardinal Giovanni Pietro, 133
 Carlebach, Elisheva, 172
 Carmoly, Eliakum, 202
 Caro, Rabbi Joseph ben Ephraim
 Cordovero, Moses and, 279
 early Hebrew printing, and, 110
 frames, and, 10, 13–15
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 136
 Livorno, printing in, 189
 printer's marks, and, 46
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 289, 293
 Cases, Rabbi Hananiah ben Menahem, 180, 182–184
 Cases, Rabbi Menahem ben Elijah, 182
 Castellani, Giordano, 126
 catalogues, Hebrew book, 241–256
Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana, 235
 Chajes, Rabbi Isaac ben Abraham, 111
 Chanan, Rabbi, 145
 Charles Alexander, Duke, 207
 Charles IV, Emperor, 132, 135
 Chazzen, Asher Anshel ben Eliezer, 24, 220
 Chiari, Isidoro, 2
 Christian-Augustus, Duke, 40
 Chronicles, I, 81, 85
 chronograms on title pages, 54–62
 Coen de Lara, Rabbi David, 254
 Colbert, 166
Collectio in Unum Corpus, 248
Colliget, 122
 Comtino, Rabbi Mordecai, 76
 Conat, 92
Conciliator, 246
 Conforte, David, 234
 Constantinople Talmud, 99
 Conti, Hannah, 124
 Conti, Vincenzo, 124, 129, 134, 270, 289
 Coppens, Dr. Christian, 254–255
 Cordovero, Rabbi Gedaliah, 280–283
 Cordovero, Rabbi Moses ben Jacob (Ramak), 278–283
 Cosimo I, Duke, 166
 court Jew Moses Benjamin Wulff, 206–217
 Covo, Rabbi Elijah ben Judah, 79
 Cracow Talmud, 1602–1605, 24
 Cracow Talmud, 1616–1620, 58, 96, 100, 298–299, 312–314

- Crivellari, Gaspare, 130
Cursus optimarum questionum super Philosophiam Aristotelis, 132
- D
- da Costa, Uriel, 236
 da Fano, Rabbi Menahem Azariah Immanuel, 279–280, 282–283
 da Fonesca, Rabbi Isaac Aboab, 171, 193, 251–255
 da Pisa, Rabbi Jehiel Nissim Vitale, 286
 da Romano, Ezzelino, 121
 da Silva, Rabbi Hezekiah ben David, 184
 d'Aguilar, Rabbi Moses Raphael, 250–253, 255
 dalle Donne, Francesco, 151–154, 156, 158, 161, 163, 268
 dalle Donne, Sebastiano, 152–154, 158
Damesek Eliezer, 261
Daniel Bukh, 304
Darkhei Moshe, 86
 David, King
 early Hebrew printing, and, 118
 monograms, and, 34
 plagiarism, and, 194–196, 198–199, 202, 205
 printer's marks, and, 49
 titles, and, 89
 David ben Shamaya, 226
 David of Parobyz, 202
 de Avila, Rabbi Samuel, 26
De bello rhodio libre tres, 2
 de Castro, Jorge Mendez, 38, 251
 de Castro Tartas, David, 28, 198, 219–221
 de Castro Tartas, Isaac, 198
 de Córdoba, Alfonso Fernández, 2
 de France, Marie, 142
 de' Medici, Ferdinand I, 166, 169
 de Medina, Judah, 295
 de Medina, Rabbi Moses, 11–12, 153, 284–297
 de Medina, Rabbi Samuel ben Moses (Maharashdam), 11, 13, 153, 288–289, 293
 de Medina, Shemai'ah, 295
De modo divitis adhibendo homini christiano oratio, 2
 de Oliveyra, Rabbi Solomon, 193
 de Palachios, Raphael ben Joshua, 25–26, 55–56, 221
 de Pas, Rabbi Isaac ben Moses, 181, 184
 de Pasti, Matteo, 152
De piscibus, 2
 de Poitiers, Dianne, 33
De prodigiis Tyberius, 2
De re militari, 152
 de' Rossi, Azariah, 157
 de' Rossi, Francesco, 164, 172
 de' Rossi, Giovanni Bernardo, 229–240
 de Sancta Fide, Hieronymus, 188
 de Septum Arboribus, Martinus, 122
 de Tournes, Jean, 111, 113, 117
De typographia hebraeo-Ferrariensi, 230
 de Valdezoccho, Bartholemaeus, 122
 de Vega, 171
 de Verona, Joannes Nicolai, 152
 de Vidas, Rabbi Elijah, 279
Decachordum Christianum, 77
 Deinard, Ephraim, 233
 del Medigo, Rabbi Elijah, 72
 del Portelvecchio, Pietro, 128
 Del Tuppo, Francesco, 1
 della Luna, Cardinal Pietro, 239
Delle rime di M. Diomede Borghesi, 126
Der Babylonische Talmud, 32
Der Edelstein, 163
Derash, 48
Derashot ha-Torah, 127–129
Derekh Emunah, 123–127, 129–130
Derekh ha-Melekh, 83
Derekh Hayyim, 308, 310
 Deuteronomy
 chronograms, and, 58, 62
 frames, and, 5
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 143, 148
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 318–320
 Livorno, printing in, 182
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 300
 Padua, printing in, 128
 Verona, printing in, 158
 Deutz, Josephus, 252
Devek Tov, 110
 di Cavalli, Giorgio, 129–130
 Di Gara, Giovanni, 7, 9, 134, 248, 280, 290
 di Trani, Rabbi Isaiah, 96
 Dias, Moses ben Isaac, 317–320
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors (Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei e delle loro opere), 229–240
 Dinaburg, B., 202
Dinim Sechita y Bedica, 253
Dinstagische un Freytagische Kurantin, 219
 Dior, Abraham ben David, 234
 Diskin, Rabbi Moses, 82

- Distribution of Books by Catalogue from the Invention of Printing to A.D. 1800, The*, 254
- Divrei David*, 31, 191, 200–204
- Divrei Hakhamim*, 27
- Divrei Yosef*, 184–185, 188
- Dizionario storico degli autori arabi*, 231
- Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei e delle loro opere*, 229–240
- Dodi be-Nekhdi*, 141
- Dovev Sifte Yeshenim*, 177
- Draud, George, 248
- Duran, Rabbi Solomon ben Simeon (Rashbash), 188–190
- d'Viterbo, Cardinal Egidio, 159
- E
- Ecclesiastes, 17, 51, 114, 117–118, 128, 223
- Edels, Samuel Eliezer ben Judah (Maharsha), 28, 103, 215, 304
- Eduyyot*, 57
- Efodi, Peripot Duran, 238
- Eger, Rabbi Akiva ben Simhah Bunim, 102
- Eggstein, Heinrich, 242
- Ehrman, Albert, 254
- Eilenburg, Rabbi Isaac, 210
- Ein Mishpat Ner Mizvah*, 301
- Ein Mishpat Ner Mizvah*, 95
- Ein nei Klaglied vun der grossen Serefoh zu Frankfurt*, 226
- Ein nei Lied vun der grossen Serefoh zu Altona*, 226
- Ein Ya'akov*, 171, 211, 225, 295–296
- Ein Yisrael*, 171, 296
- Eisenmenger, Johann Andreas, 199
- Eisenstadt, Rabbi Moses, 37
- Eisenstein, Judah David, 75, 90–91
- Eisik, Rabbi Berachiah Berakh ben Isaac, 227
- Eisner, Abraham Abba, 199, 203
- Eldad Hadani*, 260–261
- Eleazar ben Judah, Rabbi, 73
- Eliezer ben Nathan, Rabbi (Raban), 249
- Eliezer Liebermann ben Leib, Rabbi, 26
- Elihu, 308, 311
- Elijah ben Kalonymous, Rabbi, 78
- Elijah ben Solomon Zalman, Rabbi (Vilna Gaon, Gra), 81–82, 136
- Elijah the Prophet, 72, 83, 87–88, 175, 202, 279
- Elimah Rabbati*, 279
- Elisha, 72
- Elle (daughter of Moses ben Abraham Avinu), 222–223
- Emden, Rabbi Jacob, 198–199
- Emek ha-Melekh*, 20
- Emunot ve-De'ot*, 141
- Encyclopedia Judaica*, 241–242
- Endecktes Judentum*, 200
- Ephemerides Patuainae*, 126
- Ephraim Solomon ben Aaron, Rabbi, 78
- Epitome da Grammatica hebrayca*, 253
- Epstein, Rabbi Jehiel Michal, 89
- Ergas, Rabbi Joseph ben Emanuel, 184–185, 188
- Erwin*, 57, 60–61, 95, 142
- Esperanza de Israel*, 176, 246
- Esther
- chronograms, and, 60, 62
- early Hebrew printing, and, 116
- Livorno, printing in, 173, 179
- printer's marks, and, 26, 51
- titles, and, 87–88
- Etz Chayim*, 234
- Eugene, Prince, 210
- Eve, 194
- Even ha-Ezer*, 10, 13, 249
- Evreux, Rabbi Moses ben Shneur, 135
- Evreux, Samuel ben Shneur, 135
- Exodus
- chronograms, and, 57, 59–60, 62
- frames, and, 14
- Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 146
- Kesef Nivhar*, and, 317, 319
- Livorno, printing in, 174, 188
- Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 304
- printer's marks, and, 46
- titles, and, 73, 90
- Ez ha-Hayyim*, 171–172
- Ezekiel, 60
- Ezra, 60, 62
- F
- Fagius, Paulus, 34, 235
- Falcon, Rabbi Shneur ben Judah, 127
- Feigensohn, Samuel Shraga, 104
- Ferdinand, King, 303
- Ferdinand II, Duke, 170, 207
- Fiammeta*, 122
- Figo, Rabbi Azariah, 286
- Filipponi, Calidono, 8

- Filipponi, Filotarsi, 8
 Filipponi, Francesco, 8
 Fischer, Killian, 132
 Foa, Nathan, 79
 Foa, Rabbi Tobias ben Eliezer
 book production, and, 261
 frames, and, 4–7
 Shabbat, printing on, 269, 271, 275
 Talmud, ban on printing, and,
 289–290
 Talmud design, and, 96
 titles, and, 79
 Fonteyn, Jacques, 2
 Fose, Anna Louise, 211–212, 223
 Fraenkel, Aaron ben Meshulam
 Zalman, 40–43, 57, 221
 Fraenkel, Meshulam Zalman ben
 Aaron, 40–43, 57, 221
 Fraenkel, Naphtali ben Meshulam
 Zalman, 40–43, 57, 221
 Fraenkel, Rabbi David ben Naphtali
 Hirsch, 6, 216, 258, 261
 Fraenkel, Seckel ben Aaron, 41, 43, 57
 frames used on title pages
 non-Jewish, 1–17
 printer's mark of Immanuel
 Benveniste, 18–32
 Francis II, Emperor, 231
 Franco, Rabbi Joseph ben David, 11
 Franco, Solomon, 170
 Frankfurt Talmud, 56–62
 Frankfurter, Hirsch, 42
 Frankfurter, Rabbi Moses, 22, 26
 Frederick, William, 42
 Freiburg im Breisgau, Hebrew printing
 in, 131–150
 Freimann, 245
 Freudenthal, Max, 30, 215, 226,
 258–260, 263
 Friedberg, Ch. B., 27–28, 30, 154, 177,
 228, 263
 Friedberg, Hayyim Dov, 138, 304
 Friedrich (Frederick) I, King, 209–210,
 214, 228
 Friedrich (Frederick) III, King, 36, 209
 Froben, Ambrosius, 131–135, 137–141,
 145–147, 150
 Froben, Hieronymous, 150
 Froben, Johann, 133
 Fuks, L., 19, 21–23, 228, 247
 Fuks, R., 247
 Furst, Reuben, 212
 Fust, Johannes, 242
- G
- Gabbai, Abraham ben Yedidah, 98,
 171, 176–177
 Gabbai, Jedidiah ben Isaac, 165–172,
 175–178
 Gabbai, Rabbi Isaac ben Solomon, 20,
 167
 Gabriel, Rabbi, 317
 Gabriel ben Aaron, Rabbi, 266
 Gacon, Don Samuel, 97
 Galante, Rabbi Moses ben Mordecai
 (Maharam Galante), 51, 111, 117, 279
 Gallico, Rabbi Elisha ben Gabriel, 280
 Gallico, Rabbi Samuel, 279
 Galmidi, Rabbi Elijah, 113
Galut Yehudah, 130
 Gans, David, 234
*Gaon of Vilna, The Man and His Legacy,
 The*, 82
 Gavison, Abraham ben Jacob, 190
 Gavison, Jacob, 190
 Gedaliah, Don Judah, 98
 Gediliah, Rabbi Abraham ben Samuel,
 169–171, 175
 Gelle (daughter of Moses ben Abraham
 Avinu), 222–223
 Genebrard, Gilbert, 235
 Genesis
 chronograms, and, 56–57
 Cordovero, Moses and, 282
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 235
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
 148–149
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 317, 319
 Livorno, printing in, 187
 plagiarism, and, 194, 200
 printer's marks, and, 46
 Shabbat, printing on, 270–272,
 276–277
 titles, and, 73–74, 78, 83, 86
 George, Johann, 216
 Gerondi, Rabbi Jacob ben Sheshet,
 9–10
 Gerondi, Rabbi Jonah ben Abraham,
 135–137
 Gerson, Rabbi Isaac Itzig (Joseph
 Isaac), 211–212
 Gersonides. *see* Levi ben Gershom,
 Rabbi (Rabag)
 Gersonides, Isaac Kohen, 40
*Geschichte der Israeliten Seit der Zeit der
 Makkabäer/nlbis auf Unsere Tage*, 233

- Geschichte des Judenthums und Seiner Sekten*, 233
- Gesner, Conrad, 243–245
- Getzel, Rabbi Berachiah Berakh ben Eliakim, 227
- Gevul Binyamin*, 26
- Geurat Anashim*, 213
- Ghiron, Rabbi Johanan, 188
- Gikatilla, Rabbi Joseph ben Avraham, 9
- Gilles of Viterbo, 159
- Gimpel, Judah Leib ben Mordecai, 22–24
- Gimpel, Mordecai, 23
- Ginzberg, Rabbi Mordecai ben Benjamin Wolf, 196
- Ginzburg, Rabbi Naphtali Herz, 27
- Giovio, Paolo, 2
- Gittin*, 97–98, 108, 111, 225
- Giustiniani, Marco Antonio
early Hebrew printing, and, 107, 115, 117, 119
printer's marks, and, 18, 44–51
Shabbat, printing on, 271
Talmud, ban on printing, and, 287
Talmud design, and, 95, 105
- Giustiniani, Niccolo, 44
- Giustiniani Talmud, 24, 115, 301
- Givat Shaul*, 37
- Glogau, Rabbi Jechiel Michael, 29
- Gluckel of Hameln, 208
- Goldschmidt, Lazarus, 32
- Gombiner, Rabbi Abraham Abele, 28, 195, 213
- Gomez, Luis, 2
- Gompel, Koppel ben Mordecai, 42
- Gompel, Rabbi Israel ben Mordecai, 42
- Gonzaga, Duke Vespasian, 3–4
- Gotha, 214
- Gottschalk, Michael
chronograms, and, 56
court Jews, and, 214
monograms, and, 36–38, 40, 43
Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 221–222
printer's marks, and, 25
Talmud design, and, 101
titles, and, 78
- Gra (Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon Zalman), 81–82, 136
- Graf, Rabbi Moses ben Menahem, 213
- Gregory XIII, Pope, 135
- Grey, Z., 187
- Grillo, Professor F., 37
- Grodzinski, Rabbi Hayyim Ozer, 89
- Gruys, Dr. J. A., 254
- Gryphio, Giovanni, 14, 18, 129, 275–276
- Guarin, Thomas, 134
- Guenzburg, Rabbi Simon Levi, 135
- Gumpertz, Elias, 208
- Gutenberg, Johannes, 92, 178, 242
- H
- ha-Ari (Rabbi Isaac Luria), 118, 199, 279
- Haase (Halle), Moses ben Abraham Avinu, 21, 28, 215, 218–228, 257
- ha-Bavli, Rabbi Menahem ben Moses, 110
- Habermann, Abraham M., 92, 135, 138, 249
- Hadrat Elyahu*, 83
- Ha-Emunah ve-ha-Bittahon*, 9–10
- Haftarot*, 46
- ha-Ger, Abraham, 98, 170
- Haggai, 46, 48, 168
- Hagigah*, 183, 226–227
- Hagiz, Rabbi Jacob ben Samuel, 171–173, 175
- Hai ben Sherira Gaon, Rabbi, 10
- ha-Kadosh*, 279
- Hakham Zevi, 26, 316–317
- ha-Kohen, Abraham, 220
- ha-Kohen, Hayyim ben Jacob, 49, 304
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Eliezer, 183
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Elijah, 170
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Hayyim ben Abraham, 171, 173–176, 191, 195, 197
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Jacob ben Naphtali, 4, 101, 225, 273
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Malachi ben Jacob, 183–184, 189
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Shabbetai ben Meir, 208, 213
- ha-Kohen, Rabbi Zevi ben Joseph, 181
- Halakhot Gedolot*, 45
- Halakhot Ketannot*, 171
- ha-Levi, Abraham ben Isaac, 237
- ha-Levi, Joseph, 125
- ha-Levi, Mordecai ben Moses, 146
- ha-Levi, Rabbi Joel Moses ben Solomon, 22
- ha-Levi, Rabbi Samuel ben David Moses, 250
- ha-Levi, Rabbi Solomon ben Eliezer, 110, 220

- ha-Levi, Uri Phoebus ben Aaron,
 21–23, 28, 30–31, 195, 218
 ha-Levi Ashkenazi, Abraham Nathan
 ben Elisha Hayyim, 175
Halikhot Olam, 136
Halikot Eli, 177
 Halle, Israel ben Abraham Avinu, 30
 Halle, Israel ben Moses, 30
 Halle, Moses ben Abraham Avinu, 21,
 28, 215, 218–228, 257
ha-Mashkon, 10
 Hamburger, C. H., 232
 Hameln, Rabbi Samuel, 208–209
Hamishah Hamshei Torah, 135
 ha-Nakdan, Rabbi Berechiah ben
 Natronai, 141–143, 163
 Handali, Rabbi Joshua, 79
Hanhagot Adam, 250
 Hannah (granddaughter of Hayyim
 Shahor), 49, 107
 Hannover, Rabbi Nathan Nata, 173,
 213
 ha-Penini, Rabbi Jedaiah ben Abraham
 Bedersi, 182
 Hapsburg, 207
ha-Rokeah, 87
 Hartmann, Friedreich, 36
 Hartmann, Joachim, 36
 ha-Sardi, Rabbi Samuel ben Isaac, 13
 ha-Sarfaty, Rabbi Vidal, 26
Hasdei HaShem, 14
Hassagot ha-Rambam, 183
 Haver Tov, Rabbi Abraham ben
 Solomon Hayyim, 169
Havi Shoded, 83
 Hayon, Nehemiah, 185
 Hayyat, Rabbi Judah, 273
Hayyei Olam, 135, 138–141
 Hayyim Baruch, Rabbi, 77
 Hayyim ben Bezalel, Rabbi, 15–16
Ha-Ẓad Nahash, 185
Hazut Kashah, 6
 Hazzan, Rabbi Isaac ben Joseph, 275
he-Arukh, 14
Hebrew Printers' Marks, 21, 35, 51
*Hebrew Typography in the Northern
 Netherlands 1585–1815*, 23
 Heckscher, Rabbi Ephraim ben Samuel
 Zanvil, 29–30
 he-Hasid, Rabbeinu Yonah, 138, 140
 Heilprin, Jacob, 130
 Heilprin, Joseph, 162
Helkat Mehokek, 48, 304
 Heller, Rabbi Yom Tov Lipmann, 226
Hemed Moshe, 42
 Henriette Catherine, Princess, 212
 Henry II, King, 33
 Henry VII, King, 132
 Hertz ben Oyzer, Rabbi, 220
 Herz, Rabbi Naftali, 312
Heshek Shelomo, 280
Hibbure Likkutim, 315–316, 320
 Hida (Rabbi Hayyim Joseph David
 Azulai)
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 229,
 234, 239
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 138
 Livorno, printing in, 174
 plagiarism, and, 195, 197
 titles, and, 87
Hiddushei ha-Gershuni, 199
Hiddushei Halakhot, 28, 215, 304
Hiddushei ha-Rashbatz, 190
Hiddushei Rabbi Hayyim Yonah, 258
 Hieronymus, 133
Hilkhot Bekhorot ve-Hallah, 74
Hilkhot Rav Alfás, 19–20, 50, 271–272,
 274–275, 277
Hilkhot Yom Tov, 74
 Hillel ben Samuel, Rabbi, 136
Hinnukh le-Katan, 258
 Hirsch, Hayyim ben Zevi, 42–43
*Historisches Wortebuch der jüdischen
 Schriftsteller und ihre Werke*, 232
 Hiyya Meir bar David, Rabbi, 95
Hok le-Ya'akov, 213, 225
Hok le-Yisrael, 180, 182–184
Hokhmat ha-Mispar, 37
Hokhmat Nazir Kodesh, 29
 Hooftman, Gilles, 243
Horayot, 58
 Horowitz, Rabbi Isaiah ben Avraham
 ha-Levi, 20, 37
 Horton, Mr., 187
 Hosea, 62, 276
Hoshen Mishpat, 10, 79, 171, 208
Hovot ha-Levavot, 254
Hozeh Ẓayyon, 185–186
Hullin, 61, 96, 98, 205, 299
 Hyman, Rabbi Aaron, 147

 I
 ibn Abraham, Rabbi Yom Tov (Ritba), 96
 ibn Akra, Rabbi Abraham ben
 Solomon, 10
 ibn Alantansi, Eliczer ben Abraham, 2
 ibn Arkha, Elazar, 170

- ibn Asher, Rabbi Abraham ben
Gedaliah (Aba), 275–276
- ibn Askara Zarefati, Samuel, 272
- ibn Daud, Abraham ben David, 234
- ibn Ezra, Rabbi Abraham, 133,
235–236
- ibn Gabbai, Hayyim, 127
- ibn Gabbai, Rabbi Meir ben Ezekiel,
123–127, 130, 275
- ibn Gabirol, Solomon, 171
- ibn Habib, Levi, 129
- ibn Habib, Rabbi Jacob, 171, 296
- ibn Hayyim, Rabbi Aaron, 216
- ibn Leib, Rabbi Joseph, 250
- ibn Me'iri, Rabbi Meir ben Jacob,
10–11
- ibn Melekh, Rabbi Solomon, 22
- ibn Nahmias, David, 2
- ibn Nahmias, Samuel, 2
- ibn Shem, Rabbi Shem Tov, 127
- ibn Shem Tov, Rabbi Joseph, 127
- ibn Shem Tov, Rabbi Shem Tov (ben
Joseph), 127–128
- ibn Tibbon, 254
- ibn Usque, Abraham, 272–273
- ibn Verga, Rabbi Solomon, 74
- ibn Yahya, Gedaliah, 234
- ibn Ya'ish ibn Isaac, Rabbi Baruch,
114–115
- ibn Ya'ish, Rabbi Baruch, 50, 114
- ibn Zerah, Rabbi Menahem ben Aaron,
272
- Iggeret le-Hokhmei Brisk*, 213
- Iggerot ha-Rambam*, 45
- Ikkarim*, 83
- Il Tempio Della Divina Signora Donna
Geronima Colona*, 126
- Imbonati, Carlo Giuseppe, 234
- Immanuel, Menahem, 22
- Index librorum prohibitorum*, 285, 287, 296
- Inquisition, ban on printing Talmud of,
284–297
- Ir Benyamin*, 211
- Ir Benyamin Sheni*, 211
- Ir David*, 26, 196–197, 199, 205
- Ir Gibborim*, 134, 147
- Ir Miklat*, 196
- Isaac (patriarch), 40, 128–130, 147
- Isaac (son of Eliezer ben Isaac), 50
- Isaac ben Avraham, Rabbi, 111, 196
- Isaac ben Eliezer, 258
- Isaac ben Meir, Rabbi, 15, 29, 50
- Isaac ben Ze'ira, Rabbi, 89
- Isaiah
chronograms, and, 57, 60, 62
- Cordovero, Moses and, 283
- early Hebrew printing, and, 117
- frames, and, 7, 17
- Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 146
- Livorno, printing in, 186–187
- plagiarism, and, 201
- printer's marks, and, 49
- Shabbat, printing on, 269, 273, 277
- titles, and, 74, 77–78, 86
- Ishmael, 145
- Ishmael, Rabbi, 190
- Isopet*, 142
- Israel, Friede, 218, 220, 223
- Israel, Rabbi Elijah ben Moses, 84
- Israel, Rabbi Jedidiah Solomon, 84
- Israel ben Abraham, 6, 21, 29–30, 215,
222–223, 257–263, 265
- Israel ben Azariah, Rabbi, 170
- Israel ben Moses (ben Abraham Avinu),
222–224
- Israeli, Isaac, 237
- Issachar Baer ben Pethahiah Moses,
Rabbi, 303
- Issachar Ber ben Abraham Eliezer, 24,
220
- Isserlen, Rabbi Israel, 210
- Isserles, Eliezer, 86
- Isserles, Rabbi Moses ben Israel (Rema),
14–16, 48, 85–86, 207, 225
- Iyyun Tefilla*, 213
- Iyyun Ya'akov*, 225

J

- Jabez, Rabbi Joseph, 11, 98–99,
112–114, 273, 282, 290
- Jabez, Solomon, 11, 99, 112–114, 282,
290
- Jabin, 145
- Jacob (patriarch), 10, 108, 147–148,
179, 187, 270
- Jacob, Rabbi (ben Rabbi Asher ben
Jehiel), 286
- Jacob ben Abraham, 161
- Jacob ben Asher, Rabbi, 46, 136
- Jacob ben Isaac, Rabbi, 226
- Jacob ben Mordecai, Rabbi, 196
- Jaffé, Kalonymous ben Mordecai,
49–50, 100, 115
- Jaffé, Rabbi Mordecai ben Abraham,
49, 100, 107, 142, 306

- Jassoon, Jan, 247
 Jehiel Michael ben Judah Leib, Rabbi, 82–83
 Jeremiah, 55–56, 60, 78, 149, 182, 222, 282
 Jeroham ben Meshullam, Rabbi, 168
 Jerusalem Talmud
 book trade, and, 244, 253–254
 court Jews, and, 211, 216
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 133, 147
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 318–319
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 285
 titles, and, 83
Jewish Encyclopedia, 242
 Job
 Cordovero, Moses and, 283
 early Hebrew printing, and, 114
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 148
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 316
 Livorno, printing in, 166
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 308, 311
 titles, and, 78, 88–89
 Joel, 17
 Johanan, Rabbi, 89
 John-George II, Prince, 210
 Jolowicz, Dr. Heimann (Hayyim ben Abraham), 232
 Jonah, 48
 Joseph ben Abraham, 188
 Joseph ben al-'Aysh, Rabbi, 272
 Joseph ben Elimelech, Rabbi, 219–220
 Joseph ben Jacob, Rabbi, 29, 289
 Joseph ben Yakar, 49, 106–107
 Joshua, 56, 62, 79, 81
 Joshua ben Joseph, Rabbi, 136
 Joshua ben Korha, Rabbi, 310
 Joshua ben Shu'ayb, Rabbi, 272
 Joshua Hoeschel ben Jacob, Rabbi, 192, 204
 Josiah, 60, 283
 Jost, Isaac Marcus, 233
 Judah, 56–57, 60, 74, 185, 189
 Judah, Rabbi, 89
 Judah Aryeh Leib ben Joseph Samuel, 25, 55–56, 58, 60
 Judah ben Asher, Rabbi, 272
 Judah ben Nissan, Rabbi, 28, 213
 Judah ben Samuel he-Hasid, Rabbi, 73
 Judah ben Tema, 307
 Judges, 15, 57
- K
- Kaf Nahat*, 20, 167
Kaftor va-Ferah, 134, 147
 Kalai, Rabbi Samuel ben Moses, 275–276
 Kalai, Raphael Judah, 98
 Kalonymous ben Mordecai, 107
 Karo, Rabbi Joseph, 184
 Karo, Rabbi Simeon, 168
 Kasani, Rabbi Samuel, 275
 Kashfi, David ben Elijah, 50–51, 112–114, 118
 Katz (Berman Ashkenazi), Rabbi Issachar Ber ben Naphtali, 13–14
 Katz (Kohen Zedek), Israel, 223
 Katz, Gershom ben Bezalel, 303
 Katz, Gershom ben Joseph Bezalel, 48
 Katz, Gershom ben Solomon ha-Kohen, 39, 48, 249, 303
 Katz, Isaac ben Judah Yudlosh, 313–314
 Katz, Judah (Leib) ben Rabbi Isaac Yudlosh, 313
 Katz, Mordecai ben Gershom, 48
 Katz, Moses ben Bezalel, 249, 303
 Katz, Moses ben Joseph, 303
 Katz, Rabbi Meir ben Moses, 213
 Katz, Rabbi Naphtali ben Isaac, 87, 317
 Katz, Rabbi Solomon ben Mordecai, 39, 48
 Katzenellenbogen, Judah Wahl, 208
Kavod Hakhomim, 27
 Kayyara, Rabbi Simeon, 45
Keli Yakar, 78
Kelimmat ha-Goyim, 238
Keritot, 95
Kesef Nivhar, 119, 164
Kesef Nivhar (Yesuleh be-Kesem Ophir), 315–321
Keshet u-Magen, 188
Keter Malchut, 42
Keter Torah, 26, 75
Ketubbot, 25, 57–58, 98–99
Kevod Elohim, 127
Kiddushin, 25, 56, 58, 96, 98, 183, 253
Kilyim, 142
 Kimhi, Rabbi David (Radak), 45
 Kimhi, Rabbi Moses (Remak), 50
Kinat Soferim, 180, 182–184
 Kings, I, 46, 62, 75, 83
 Kings, II, 60, 62, 72, 88, 283

- Kinot*, 213
Kiryat Hannah, 80
Kisse Eliyahu, 88
Kitab al-Shira wa-al-Baye, 10
Kitzur Piske ha-Rosh, 236
Kizzur Mizrahi, 304
Klalei ha-Midrash, 10
 Klausner, Rabbi Abraham, 110, 274
 Klessner, Friedrich George, 260
Knesset ha-Gedolah, 170–171, 176, 250
Ko'ah Avanim, 141
 Kochin, Rabbi Elijah Zev Wolf ben Eliezer, 89–90
Kodashim, 172
 Koelner, Johann, 25
Kohelet Rabbah, 308, 311
Kohelet Ya'akov, 51, 111, 116–117
 Kohen, Aaron ben Elijah, 29
 Kohen, Gershom, 106
 Kohen, Rabbi Abraham, 37
 Kohen, Rabbi David ben Hayyim, 276
 Kohen Gadol, Rabbi Ishmael, 10
Kol Bo, 45
Kol ha-ReMeZ, 26
 Kolner, Johann, 56
 Konitz, Rabbi Jacob ben Pesach, 42
 Kook, Rabbi Abraham Isaac, 90
 Koppel, Rabbi Jacob, 87
 Koppelman, Rabbi Jacob ben Samuel Bunim, 141–143, 147–149
Korban Aharon, 216
Korban ha-Edah, 6, 216, 258
Korban Minchah, 171
Kore ha-Dorot, 234
 Kosman, Moses, 28, 219–220
 Kosmann ben Joseph Baruch, 21, 31
Koved ha-Bayit, 27
 Kovner, Abba, 82
 Kroberger, 242
 Krueger, Johann Anton, 43
 Kruijer-Poesiat, Mrs. Lies, 255–256
Kuhbukh, 156, 161–163
Kuntres Rabbi Hayyim Yonah, 260–261
- L
- La Stampa del Kaf Nahat, 167–168, 173–174
 Labant, Brother, 165
 Lamentations, 136, 143, 146
Lashon Naki, 226
 Lauer, Joseph I., 140
Le Coronationi di Polonia, 126
 Leeser, Isaac, 232
Lehem Rav, 304
Lehem Yehudah, 4, 74, 190, 269
 Lehmann, Berend, 36, 101, 207, 211, 214, 222, 315–316
 Lehmann, Manfred, 207
 Leib ben Itzik ben Joel, 316
Lekah Tov, 51, 116–117
Lekkah Dodi, 97, 279
 Lemberger, Abraham, 49
 Leopold, Kaiser, 101
 Leopold I, Prince, 27, 210–212, 214, 216, 223, 257–258
 Lerma Sephardi, Rabbi Judah ben Samuel, 4, 74, 269
Lev Hakham, 51, 118
 Levi, Aaron Isaac, 217
 Levi, Barukh Aaron, 217
 Levi, (Naphtali) Hertz, 21, 31
 Levi ben Gershom, Rabbi (Ralbag), 76
 Levita, Rabbi Elijah ben Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi, 133, 155, 159–161, 235
 Leviticus
 chronograms, and, 59–60, 62
 Cordero, Moses and, 282
 frames, and, 16
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 317–320
 plagiarism, and, 201
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 297
 Verona, printing in, 164
Levush, 306
Levushim, 107
Leyyat Hen, 30
 Lewy, Rabbi Joseph, 73
L'histoire et la religion des Juifs depuis Jésus Christ jusqu'à présent, 235
Liber Fidei seu Veritatis, 235
 Liberman, Haim, 203
Libri stampati di letteratura sacra ebraica ed orientale della biblioteca del G. Bernardo de' Rossi, 231
 Lida, Rabbi David ben Aryeh Leib, 26, 174, 191–205
 Lida, Rabbi David Benjamin, 192
 Lida, Rabbi Pethahiah, 192, 203
 Liebmann, Jost, 209
 Liebmann, Malka, 209
 Lipman, Rabbi Isaac Benjamin Wolf ben Eliezer, 193
 Livorno, Hebrew printing in by Abraham ben Raphael Meldola, 178–190

- by Jedidiah ben Isaac Gabbai, 165–177
- Livy, 121
- Loanz, Rabbi Elijah ben Moses Ashkenazi, 85–86
- Loeb, Isaac ben Judah, 40
- Loew, Aryeh Judah ben Hayyim, 201
- Loew, Rabbi Judah ben Bezalel (Maharal), 15, 48, 156, 298–314
- London, Rabbi Jacob (ben Moses Judah), 188
- Lonzano, Rabbi Menahem, 118
- Lorki, Joshua, 188
- Louis XIV, 166
- Lowenstein, Leopold, 42
- Lowenthal, Abraham, 138
- Luah ha-Hayyim*, 258
- Lublin Talmud, 100, 108–109
- Luntschitz, Rabbi Ephraim, 147
- Lupano, O., 2
- Luria, Rabbi Isaac (ha-Ari), 118, 199, 279
- Luria, Rabbi Solomon (Maharshal), 16, 202
- Lusina, Rabbi Jacob, 183, 188
- Luzzatto, Moses Hayyim, 238
- Luzzatto, Rabbi Jacob, 134, 147
- Luzzatto, Rabbi Samuel David (Shadal), 87
- M
- Ma'adanei Melekh*, 276
- Ma'amadot*, 156, 162
- Ma'amar Esther*, 74
- Ma'amar Hamez*, 189
- Ma'aneh Eliyahu*, 83
- Ma'arekhet ha-Eloket*, 273
- Maarsen, Jacob, 320
- Ma'aseh Buch*, 161
- Ma'aseh Gadol fun Sh'nas 1706*, 226
- Ma'ayan Gannim*, 283
- Ma'ayin Hokhmah*, 28
- Madruzzo, Bishop Cristoforo, 274
- Maft'each ha-Gemarah*, 236
- Maft'each Leshon ha-Kodesh*, 257
- Magen Avraham*, 28, 195, 213
- Magino, Meir, 237
- Mahalakh Shevilei ha-Da'at*, 50
- Maharal (Rabbi Judah ben Bezalel Loew), 15, 48, 156, 298–314
- Maharam Galante (Rabbi Moses ben Mordecai Galante), 51, 111, 117, 279
- Maharashdam (Rabbi Samuel ben Moses de Medina), 11, 13, 153, 288–289, 293
- Maharil (Rabbi Jacob ben Moses ha-Levi Moellin), 167
- Maharsha (Rabbi Samuel Eliezer ben Judah Edels), 28, 103, 215, 304
- Maharshal (Rabbi Solomon Luria), 16, 202
- Mahberet*, 236
- Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon)
- book production, and, 259
- Cordovero, Moses and, 283
- Dictionary of Hebrew Authors*, and, 236–237
- frames, and, 6–7, 11
- Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 135–136
- Livorno, printing in, 182–183, 190
- monograms, and, 38
- Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 220
- Padua, printing in, 127
- printer's marks, and, 45–46
- Shabbat, printing on, 272
- Talmud, ban on printing, and, 286
- Talmud design, and, 102
- titles, and, 83–84
- Ma'in Hokhmah*, 10
- Makkot*, 188, 220, 226
- Malachi, 57, 62, 78, 185
- Malachi ben Jacob, Rabbi, 187
- Manasseh ben Israel, 23, 246–249, 253, 256
- Mandelslo, Hermanus, 219
- Mann, David ben Menahem, 37–38
- Mann, Menahem, 217
- Manoah Hendel ben Shemaria, Rabbi, 49
- Manoah Matsa Hen*, 49
- Manuale Caesaru-augustanum*, 2
- Manutius, Aldus, 44, 244
- Marcaria, Rabbi Jacob, 274
- Marcus, Levy, 22–24
- Mareh Kohen*, 14
- Margarita Philosophica*, 132
- Margenita Tova*, 83
- Margoliot, Rabbi Avi Ezri Zelig ben Isaac, 315–317, 320
- Margolioth, Rabbi Moses Mordecai ben Samuel, 14
- Marie Louise, 231
- Marot ha-Zove'ot*, 21, 29, 259

- Marquis, Samuel ben Solomon, 21,
25–26, 55–56, 221
- Mars and Minerva on title pages, 1–17,
294
- Martins, Robert, 248
- Marx, Alexander, 133, 233, 254
- Marx, Moses, 19
- Mashmia Yeshu'ah*, 20
- Masorah*, 83
- Masoret ha-Mikra*, 110–111, 146
- Massa'ot shel Rabbi Binyamin*, 135,
143–144
- Massekhet Derekh Erez*, 234
- Massoret ha-Talmud*, 236
- Mat, Rabbi Moses ben Abraham
(Moshe Ish Hai), 14, 16–17, 74
- Matnat Kehunah*, 289
- Matteh Moshe*, 14, 16–17, 74
- Mattenot Kehunnah*, 13
- May, Moses, 102
- Mayer, Ber, 207
- Mayer, Solomon, 207
- Mazzah Shemurim*, 74
- Me Niddah*, 80
- Megalleh Amukkot*, 78, 203, 249
- Megillah*, 60, 205, 216, 220, 226
- Megillat Ta'anit*, 134
- Mehlman, Israel, 289, 295
- Meir, Johann, 150
- Meir, Rabbi (Maharam), 239
- Meir ben David, 34
- Meir ben Ephraim, Rabbi, 273
- Meir ben Samuel, Rabbi, 17
- Me'ir Nativ*, 134, 146
- Meisels, Menahem Nahum, 13, 17
- Meisels, Nahum, 100
- Mekhilla*, 26
- Mekor Barukh*, 50, 114–115
- Mekor Hayyim*, 88, 171, 173–174, 197
- Meldola, Rabbi Abraham ben Raphael,
178–182, 184–185, 189–190
- Meldola, Rabbi David ben Raphael,
31, 189
- Meldola, Rabbi Eliezer, 188
- Meldola, Rabbi Isaiah, 179
- Meldola, Rabbi Moses ben Raphael,
188
- Meldola, Rabbi Raphael (Samuel Jacob)
ben Eliezer, 179, 187–188
- Melekhet ha-Mispar*, 37
- Melekhet Makhshevet*, 37, 83
- Meliz u-Meliz*, 182
- Menahem Azariah, Rabbi, 22
- Menahot*, 57, 128
- Menasseh ben Israel, Rabbi, 176, 218
- Mendelssohn, Moses, 208
- Menorat ha-Ma'or*, 40, 171
- Me'or Einayim*, 157
- Mesaheket ba-Tevel*, 119
- Meshal ha-Kadmuni*, 162–163
- Meshullam Cusi ben Moses Jacob, 123
- Mesillat Yeshtarim*, 238
- Mesorat ha-Shas*, 95, 301
- Mesorat ha-Talmud*, 95
- Mezudat David*, 76
- Micah, 81
- Michael, Hayyim, 195, 201
- Michaelis, J. H., 29, 224, 227–228
- Middot Aharon*, 216
- Midrash Kohen*, 9, 201
- Midrash Rabbah*, 19–23, 27–28, 275, 293,
312
- Midrash Rabbah al ha-Torah*, 45
- Midrash Shoher Tov*, 73
- Midrash Talpiot*, 87
- Midrash Tanhuma*, 154, 156, 163
- Midrash Yonah*, 48
- Migdal David*, 174, 191–205
- Mikhlah Yofi*, 22, 94
- Mikra'ot Gedolot*, 244
- Miktav Eliyahu*, 80
- Milhemet Mitzvah*, 188
- Minhagim*, 110
- Minhagim de-Kehilasenu*, 42
- Minhah Belulah*, 154–158, 268–269, 277
- Minhat Ani*, 213
- Minhat Kena'ot*, 286
- Minhat Oni*, 304
- Minhat Ya'akov*, 225
- Minhat Yehudah*, 273
- Minhat Yosef*, 185
- Minz, Rabbi Judah, 122
- Minz, Rabbi Moses ben Isaac
Menahem Levi, 10
- Mireles, Rabbi Moses ben Zalman,
203–204
- Mirkevot ha-Mishneh*, 5–6, 145
- mirror-image monograms on title pages,
33–43
- Mishlei Shu'alim*, 135, 141–143, 163
- Mishnah Zevahim*, 190
- Mishneh Torah*, 38, 45–46, 83, 190, 259,
261
- Mishpetei Shemu'el*, 275–277
- Mishpetei Shevu'ot*, 10
- Mitzvot Nashim*, 130
- Mizbah Eliyahu*, 170
- Mizrachi, Rabbi Elijah, 37, 83
- Mocatto, Michael Dias, 170
- Model, Mordecai (Marx), 42

- Modena, Rabbi Leone (Judah Aryeh),
9, 12, 130, 153, 291–292
- Mo'ed*, 7, 25
- Mo'ed Katan*, 59
- Moellin, Rabbi Jacob ben Moses ha-
Levi (Maharil), 167
- Molkho, Rabbi Solomon, 176
- monograms, mirror-image on title
pages, 33–43
- Moreh Nevukhim*, 6, 127, 135, 148, 236,
261, 289
- Moreh Zekek*, 220
- Mortimer, Ruth, 2
- Moscato, Rabbi Judah, 157
- Moses, 16, 195, 300, 320
- Moses, Magnus, 217
- Moses, Rabbi Gedalia, 42
- Moses ben Jacob, Rabbi, 83
- Moses ben Maimon, Rabbi
(Maimonides, Rambam)
book production, and, 259
Cordovero, Moses and, 283
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and,
236–237
frames, and, 6–7, 11
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
135–136
Livorno, printing in, 182–183, 190
monograms, and, 38
Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 220
Padua, printing in, 127
printer's marks, and, 45–46
Shabbat, printing on, 272
Talmud, ban on printing, and, 286
Talmud design, and, 102
titles, and, 83–84
- Moses ben Nahman, Rabbi
(Nahmanides, Ramban)
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 239
frames, and, 9–10
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 135
Livorno, printing in, 183, 188
printer's marks, and, 44
Talmud design, and, 97
titles, and, 74
- Moses Judah ben Kalonymous, Rabbi,
219
- Moses of Hamburg, Rabbi, 317
- Moshe Ish Hai (Rabbi Moses ben
Abraham Mat), 14, 16–17, 74
- Mss. Codices hebraici biblioth. I. B. De-Rossi*,
231
- Muenster, Sebastian, 133
- Musaf he-Arukh*, 20
- N
- Nachman ben Solomon Naphtali,
Rabbi, 196
- Nachmias, 112
- Naftali Seva Razon*, 21, 27
- Nahalat Avot* on *Pirkei Avot*, 45
- Nahalat Shivah*, 28, 250
- Nahalat Ya'akov*, 130
- Nahlat Binyamin*, 193
- Nahman, Mordecai, 98
- Nahmanides (Rabbi Moses ben
Nahman)
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 239
frames, and, 9–10
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 135
Livorno, printing in, 183, 188
printer's marks, and, 44
Talmud design, and, 97
titles, and, 74
- Najara, Rabbi Israel ben Moses, 51,
118–119
- Napoleon I, 231
- Nashim*, 25
- Nasi, Yehuda, 239
- Nathan ben Jehiel, Rabbi, 14
- Nathan ben Moses, 217
- Nathan of Gaza, 118
- Nazir*, 26, 50, 58, 115, 286
- Nedarim*, 50, 115
- Nedivot, Samuel ben Isaac, 97–98
- Nehemiah, 143
- Nehemiah ben Baruch, Rabbi, 182
- Ner Mitzah, 301
- Neuere Geschichte Der Israeliten*, 233
- Neveh Shalom*, 74
- Nevi'im Ahronim*, 20
- Nicholas, Eduard, 176
- Nicolai, Cornelius Claesz, 247
- Niddah*, 37–38, 80, 96, 102, 186, 222,
298–314
- Nigrin, R. M., 138
- Nimukei Yosef*, 8
- Nissan ben Judah Leib, Rabbi, 193, 197
- Nisselius, Johannes Georgius, 221
- Nissim, Elijah, 87
- Nissim, Rabbi Solomon ben Elijah,
86–87
- Nivhar me-Haruz*, 83
- Nomologia*, 234
- Notitia Karaorum*, 235
- Numbers, 10, 16, 58, 146, 147, 186,
318–320
- Nunez, Gaspar Rodrigues, 246

O

- Occident, The*, 232, 238
Ohel Ya'akov, 142, 147–148
Omek Halakhah, 142, 149
Omer ha-Shikhah, 190
Opera, 133
 Oppenheim, Rabbi David, 213, 227, 235
 Oppenheimer, Joseph, 207
 Oppenheimer, Samuel, 207
Or ha-Sekhel, 275, 276
Or Mayer Catalogue of the Old Hebrew Manuscripts and Printed Books of the Library of the Hon. Mayer Sulzberger of Philadelphia, 233
Or Ne'erau, 280–282
Or Yakar, 279, 281
Orah Hayyim, 10, 136, 171, 304
Orhot Hayyim, 110
Orhot Zaddikim, 48
 Ottolenghi, Rabbi Joseph, 274
Ozar ha-Seder ha-Ivri, 303–304
Ozar ha-Sefarim, 75, 135
Ozen Shmu'el, 26

P

- Pa'ane'ah Raza*, 305
 Padua, sixteenth century Hebrew printing in, 121–130
Pahad Yizhak, 49, 111–112, 113
Pandectarum sive partitionum univversalium... libri XXI, 243–244
 Pannartz, 242
 Panzi, Solomon Ben Eliyakim, 236
 Parchon, Solomon, 236
Pardes Rimmonim, 278–281
 Parenzo, Meir, 244
Paris e Viena innamoramento bellissimo, 161
Paris un Viene, 155–156, 158, 160, 163
Parpera'ot le-Hokmah, 80
Parvus Tractulus, 235
 Pasquato, Lorenzo, 123–129
 Pasquatus, Laurentius, 123
 Paul IV, Pope, 133
Pe'ari Halakhah, 83
Pe'er Ya'akov, 225
Peh Elyahu, 80
Penei Yehoshu'a, 79
Penei Yizhak, 111
 Perez ben Isaac, Rabbi, 273
Peri Hadash, 184
Peri Zaddik, 190
Perush al ha-Mesorah, 226
Perush Eizehu Mekoman, 190
Perush ha-Torah (Rabbi Menahem ben Benjamin Recanati), 45
Perush ha-Torah (Rabbi Moses ben Nahman), 44
Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim, 280, 282–283
Perush Shir ha-Shirim, 280
Perushei Ma'amrei Zohar, 201
Pesah Haggadah, 48
Pesah le-HaShem, 127
Pesahim, 54, 60–61, 108–109, 307
 Pethahiah ben Jacob, 48
Petil Tekhelet, 171
 Pezikin, Mordecai, 316
 Phaedrus, 142
 Pinto, R. J., 119, 164
Pirkei Azot, 16, 167–168, 269
Pirkei Heichalot, 10
Piskei ha-Rosh, 102, 309
Pithei ha-Shem, 303
Pitron Halomot, 220
 plagiarism of *Migdal David*, accusations of, 191–205
 Plantin, Christopher, 243
 Poarsht, Reuben, 28, 215
 Polak, Moses, 218
 Polido, David Raphael ben Abraham, 179
 Pollak, Rabbi Jacob, 147, 307
 Pollard, 132
 Pollard, Graham, 254
 Portaleone, Rabbi Abraham, 286
 Porteria, Don Samuel, 97
 Porto (Rappoport) Ashkenazi, Rabbi Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen, 155, 157–158, 285
 Porto, Abraham ben Jehiel Kohen, 158
Prayer Book, 44
Prayers for the Eve of Shavu'ot and Hoshana Rabbah, 219
 Prijs, 135, 138
 Prilik, Aryeh Judah Loeb ben Chayim, 201, 203
 printer's marks
 Benveniste, Immanuel, 18–32
 Giustiniani, Marco Antonio, 44–51
 printing on Shabbat, 266–277
 Proctor, 132
 Proops, Abraham, 39, 43
 Proops, David, 39, 43
 Proops, Jacob, 39–40, 43, 57–58, 60

- Proops, Joseph, 39–40, 43, 57–58, 60
 Proops, Solomon ben Joseph, 25–26,
 39–40, 43, 56, 221, 241–242,
 317–320
 Proops Talmud, 41, 59, 62
 Prostitz, Aaron ben Isaac, 100, 298,
 312–314
 Prostitz, Isaac ben Aaron, 13–14, 100,
 130, 312–313
 Prostitz, Mordecai ben Isaac, 100, 298,
 312–314
 Provencal, Rabbi David, 157
 Proverbs
 Cordovero, Moses and, 281, 283
 early Hebrew printing, and, 111, 114,
 117
 frames, and, 9, 15, 17
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
 139, 143, 147, 149
 Kesef Nivhar, and, 316
 Livorno, printing in, 167, 174, 183,
 187, 190
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 300
 Shabbat, printing on, 276
 titles, and, 73–74, 83
 Psalms
 chronograms, and, 55, 57, 58–59, 62
 Cordovero, Moses and, 280, 282–283
 court Jews, and, 213
 early Hebrew printing, and, 108, 117, 118
 frames, and, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14–15
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
 139, 146, 147, 149
 Livorno, printing in, 167–168, 174,
 179, 183–184, 186
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 300
 Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and,
 220, 225
 plagiarism, and, 194, 196, 203, 205
 printer's marks, and, 26, 28
 Shabbat, printing on, 268–269, 273,
 276, 277
 titles, and, 78, 81, 86, 89
 Verona, printing in, 155, 158–160
Psalterium, 242
 Pulleyn, Octavian, 248
 Putnam, G. H., 242
- Q
- Quaestiones Naturales*, 141
 Quirino, Carlo, 244
- R
- Rabad I, 234
 Raban (Rabbi Eliezer ben Nathan), 249
 Rabbino, Rabbi Jedidiah, 80, 185
 Rabbino ben Elijah (ben Moses ben
 Elijah Moses), Rabbi, 77
 Rabbinovicz, Raphael Nathan Nuta, 96,
 101, 104, 313
 Rabbinovitz, Rabbi Elijah Hayyim ben
 Nahum, 88
 Rabyatachi, Joseph, 245
 Rachel, 186
 Radak (Rabbi David Kimhi), 45
 Rademaker, Jan, 243
 Rakover, Nahum, 102
 Rakower, Rabbi Joseph ben David
 Tebele, 226
 Ralbag (Rabbi Levi ben Gershom), 76
 Ramak (Rabbi Moses ben Jacob
 Cordovero), 278–283
 Rambam (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon)
 book production, and, 259
 Cordovero, Moses and, 283
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and,
 236–237
 frames, and, 6–7, 11
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
 135–136
 Livorno, printing in, 182–183, 190
 monograms, and, 38
 Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 220
 Padua, printing in, 127
 printer's marks, and, 45–46
 Shabbat, printing on, 272
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 286
 Talmud design, and, 102
 titles, and, 83–84
 Ramban (Rabbi Moses ben Nahman)
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 239
 frames, and, 9–10
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 135
 Livorno, printing in, 183, 188
 printer's marks, and, 44
 Talmud design, and, 97
 titles, and, 74
 Rapa, Jehiel ben Jekuthiel ha-Kohen,
 46–47
 Rapaport, Rabbi Jonah ben Isaac
 Kahana, 83
 Rappoport, Rabbi Abraham ben Jehiel
 Kohen, 268

- Rappoport, Rabbi Abraham Menahem ben Jacob ha-Kohen, 155, 157–158, 268
- Rashba (Rabbi Solomon ben Abraham Aderet), 136, 167
- Rashbash (Rabbi Solomon ben Simeon Duran), 188–190
- Rashbatz (Rabbi Simeon ben Zemah), 188–189
- Rashi (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac)
book trade, and, 242
chronograms, and, 58, 60
Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 231, 234–235, 237
early Hebrew printing, and, 107, 110
frames, and, 1, 7, 12
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 131
Livorno, printing in, 171, 173
Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 298–299, 308–310, 312–314
printer's marks, and, 32
Talmud, ban on printing, and, 289, 291
Talmud design, and, 94, 96–100, 104
titles, and, 74, 78, 88
- ratio, worker to book production in the eighteenth century, 257–265
- Raw Alfás*, 104
- Ravad (Rabbi Abraham ben David), 188
- Recanati, Rabbi Menahem ben Benjamin, 45
- Refu'at ha-Nefesh*, 261
- Reggio, Rabbi Isaac Samuel, 72
- Reider, Joseph, 1
- Reisch, Gregorius, 132
- Reisher, Rabbi Jacob ben Joseph, 29, 213, 225
- Rema (Rabbi Moses ben Israel Isserles), 14–16, 48, 85–86, 207, 225
- Remak (Rabbi Moses Kimhi), 50
- Reshimat sifrei h"r Mose Raphael d'Aguilar*, 253
- Reshit Hokhmah*, 279
- Reuben ben Eliakim, 21, 23
- Ricchi, Rabbi Raphael Immanuel ben Abraham Hai, 79–81, 185–186
- Ricci, Clemente, 180
- Rider, Friedrich, 132
- Rif (Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi), 188, 271
- Rinnat Dodim*, 85
- Ritba (Rabbi Yom Tov ibn Abraham), 96
- Ritmayer, 236
- Riva, 248
- Rivkes, Rabbi Moses ben Naphtali Zevi, 192
- Rivkind, Isaac, 7–8
- Robertelli, Francisci, 126
- Rofe, Aaron ben Moses, 37–38
- Romano, Rabbi Simeon, 9
- Romulus*, 142
- Rophe, 177
- Rose, Johann, 26
- Rose, Thomas, 26–28
- Rosenfeld, 162
- Rosh (Rabbi Asher ben Jehiel), 110, 286
- Rosh, Asher ben Jehiel, 236
- Rosh Amanah*, 44
- Rosh Ha-Shanah*, 97, 226–228
- Rosh Yosef*, 29
- Roth, Cecil, 176, 234, 256
- Rudolph I, Emperor (Kaiser), 239
- Rudolph II, Emperor (Kaiser), 300, 306
- Ruffinelli, Messer Venturin, 7–8, 273
- Ruth, 26, 174, 191, 195, 197–198

S

- Saadiah Gaon, Rabbi, 141
- Saba, Rabbi Abraham, 77, 130, 239
- Sadon, Eleazar Raphael, 84
- Sadon, Hayyim, 84
- Sadon, Joseph, 84
- Sadon, Judah, 84
- Sagis, Rabbi Solomon, 283
- Salonika Talmud, 98
- Sammarco, Ottavio, 126
- Samson ben Isaac, Rabbi, 270
- Samuel (ben Manasseh ben Israel), 247
- Samuel, I, 62, 85–86, 88, 146
- Samuel, II, 16, 62, 86, 147–148, 195, 198
- Samuel bar Moses ha-Levi, 22–24
- Samuel of Fez, Rabbi, 184
- Sanhedrin*
Livorno, printing in, 188
Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 308, 310
plagiarism, and, 195, 205
Talmud design, and, 101, 103
titles, and, 77, 80
- Sar Shalom*, 51, 117
- Sardi, Samuel ben Isaac, 289
- Sason, Jacob Ben Abba Yaari, 237
- Sasportas, Rabbi Jacob, 175, 193
- Saul ben Moses, Rabbi, 37
- Schechter, Solomon, 72
- Schedel, Abraham ben Moses, 304

- Schedel, Ezriel, 304
 Schedel, Judah Leib ben Moses, 304
 Schedel, Moses ben Abraham, 48, 304
 Schmelzer, Menahem, 215
 Schneur, Abraham, 249
 Schneur, Joseph ben Solomon Zalman, 42, 249
 Schnold, Rachel, 82
Schoene Glueck, 159
 Schoffer, Peter, 242
 Scholem, Gershon, 175–176, 202–203
 Schulhoff, Esther, 209
 Schwarzbaum, Haim, 142
Seder le-Arba'ah Tsomot, 21, 31
Seder Mo'ed, 36–37, 100, 172, 216
Seder Nashim, 56
Seder Olam Rabbah, 134
Seder Olam Zuta, 134, 235
Seder Tefillot (ha-Shanah) Minhag Kehillot Romania, 50, 113
Seder Tikkunei Shabbat, 220
Seder Tohorot, 37, 57
Seder Zera'im, 50, 56, 115, 172, 293, 318
 Sefardi, Joseph Ben Shem Tob, 238
Sefat Emet, 119
Sefer Abudarham, 74
Sefer Ben Zion, 220
Sefer Gerushin, 279
Sefer Giddulei Terumah, 286
Sefer ha-Aguddah, 130
Sefer ha-Bahur, 28, 159
Sefer ha-Emunot, 127
Sefer ha-Gan, 258, 260
Sefer ha-Hibbur, 141
Sefer ha-Hinnukh, 21
Sefer ha-Kabbalah (Book of Tradition), 234
Sefer ha-Kevanot, 261
Sefer ha-Massa'ot, 135, 143–144
Sefer ha-Mazref, 141
Sefer ha-Mefo'ar, 176
Sefer Ha-Mikkah ve-ha-Mimkar, 9–10
Sefer ha-Minhagim, 110, 274–275, 277
Sefer ha-Mitzvot, 76, 182–183
Sefer ha-Nikud, 9
Sefer ha-Rashbash, 178, 188–189
Sefer ha-Roke'ah, 73, 95
Sefer ha-Shorashim, 45
Sefer Hasidim, 73, 91
Sefer Hasidim, Kافتor va-Ferah (Kavvanot ha-Aggadot), 134
Sefer ha-Terumah, 289, 293
Sefer ha-Terumot, 13
Sefer ha-Tishbi, 160
Sefer ha-Vikkuah, 87
Sefer ha-Yirah, 135–141, 144
Sefer ha-Zekhut, 188
Sefer Ikkarim, 147–148
Sefer Keritut, 270
Sefer Ma'anah Lashon, 26
Sefer Meshalim, 162
Sefer Mitzvot Gadol (Semag), 83–84, 286
Sefer Mussar, 201–203
Sefer Pekudei Ha-Shem, 220
Sefer Yirah, 201
Sefer Yossiphon, 42
Sefer Yuhasin, 234
 Segal, Aaron ben Hayyim David, 31
 Segal, Gershon, 31
 Segal, Hayyim David, 31
 Segal, Jacob bar Moses, 320
 Selden, John, 248–249
Selihot
 court Jews, and, 213
 Livorno, printing in, 180
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 304
 Moses ben Avraham Avinu, and, 223, 225
 printer's marks, and, 20, 26, 29
Semikhat Hakhamim, 87
 Sendry, Alfred, 245
 Seror, Rabbi Raphael Jedidiah Solomon ben Joshua ben Solomon, 190
 Sforno, Rabbi Obadiah ben Jacob, 10, 275
Sha'ar ha-Sho'el, 125
Sha'ar Nafstali, 87
Sha'arei Dura, 15, 29, 50, 115
Sha'arei Gan Eden, 87
Sha'arei Teshuvah, 136–137
Sha'arei Zion, 173, 213
Shabbat, 14, 57, 59, 199
 Shabbat, printing on, 266–277
 Shabbetai Raphael, 208
 Shabbetai Zevi, 118, 175, 191, 193, 202, 208, 253
 Shahor (Schwarz), Hayyim ben David, 49, 106–107, 131
 Shahor (Schwarz), Isaac, 49, 106–107
 Shakespeare, 151
 Shakhna, Rabbi Shalom, 15
 Shalit, Rabbi Joseph ben Jacob Ashkenazi, 4–5, 8
 Shalom, Rabbi Abraham ben Isaac, 74
Shalshet ha-Kabbalah, 234
 Shamash, Simon, 317–320
 Shapiro, Rabbi Israel ben Nathan, 196
She'elot u-Teshuvot, 129, 167
She'elot u-Teshuvot ha-Geonim, 50, 111–112

- Sheftel, H., 104
Shehitot u'Bedikot, 225
Shekalim, 59, 61, 318
Shem ha-Gedolim, 138, 229, 233–234
 Shem Tob Ben Joseph, 239
Shene Me'orot ha-Gedolim, 79
Shenei Eliyahu, 84
Shenei Luhot ha-Berit (Shelah), 21, 23, 37
Shever ba-Mezarim, 182, 187
Shevet Yehuda (1655), 20
Shevet Yehudah (1554), 74
Shevu'ot, 97, 108–109, 258–260, 286
Shevut Ya'akov, 21, 29, 225
Sheyare Keneset ha-Gedolah, 177
Sheyari on Orah Hayyim, 171
Shib'im Tamarim, 237
Shiltei ha-Gibborim, 286
 Shimon, Moses, 98, 295
 Shimon, Solomon, 98, 295
Shir ha-Yihud, 135
Shir Hillulim, 198
 Shirish, Rabbi Solomon, 280
Shi'ur Komah, 279
Shivah Einayim, 188
 Shmeruk, 154–155, 160, 162
Shomer Emunim, 185
 Shrock, A. T., 138
Shulhan Arukh
 frames, and, 10, 13, 15–16
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 136
 Livorno, printing in, 171, 174,
 184–185
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 304
 plagiarism, and, 197, 202
 printer's marks, and, 19
 Shabbat, printing on, 275–276
 titles, and, 88
Shulhan Arukh Hoshen Mishpat, 249
Shulhan Arukh: Orah Hayyim, 293
Shulhan Arukh Yoreh De'ah, 208
Shulhan ha-Panim, 9, 11
Shulhan ha-Panim (Misa de El Almah), 10
Shulhan shel Arba, 48
 Shunami, 239
Si'ah Yizhak, 111
Sibbuw, 48
Sifra, 216, 237
Siftei Hakhamim, 74, 234
Siftei Kohen, 27, 208
Siftei Yeshenim, 74, 162, 233–234
 Sigisimund Augustus, King, 107
 Sigisimund II Augustus, King, 14
 Silva, Samuel, 236
 Silvirah, Hannah, 81
 Silvirah, Isaac, 81
 Silvirah, Rabbi Elijah, 80–81
 Simeon, Rabbi, 168
 Simeon bar Yohai, Rabbi, 86
 Simeon ben Jehozadak, Rabbi, 89
 Simeon ben Zemah, Rabbi (Rashbatz),
 188–189
 Sinzheim, Rabbi Joseph David, 102
 Sirkes, Rabbi Joel ben Samuel, 136
 Slatkine, Menahem Mendel, 72
 Slonik, Benjamin, 130
 Slotki, Rabbi Elijah David, 86
 Sobieski, King John, 30
Sod ha-Hashmal, 9
Sodei Razayya, 87
 Socira, Antonia, 246
Sofe Anavim, 80
 Sofer, Avigdor, 212
 Sofino, Raphael, 176
Solet le-Minhah, 213
 Solomon, King, 237, 300
 Solomon ben Abraham, Rabbi, 135
 Solomon ben Eli, Rabbi, 136
 Solomon ben Isaac, Rabbi (Rashi)
 book trade, and, 242
 chronograms, and, 58, 60
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 231,
 234–235, 237
 early Hebrew printing, and, 107, 110
 frames, and, 1, 7, 12
 Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 131
 Livorno, printing in, 171, 173
 Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 298–299,
 308–310, 312–314
 printer's marks, and, 32
 Talmud, ban on printing, and, 289,
 291
 Talmud design, and, 94, 96–100, 104
 titles, and, 74, 78, 85, 88
 Soloveitchik, Rabbi Hayyim, 89
 Soncino, Gershom
 book trade, and, 243, 248
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 237
 frames, and, 1
 printer's marks, and, 18, 32
 Shabbat, printing on, 269
 Talmud design, and, 94–95, 105–106
 titles, and, 76–77
 Soncino, Joshua Solomon, 94, 105, 298
 Song of Songs (*Shir ha-Shirim*)
 Cordovero, Moses and, 280
 Dictionary of Hebrew Authors, and, 235

- early Hebrew printing, and, 114–117
frames, and, 15
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
146, 148
Livorno, printing in, 172, 186
Padua, printing in, 126
plagiarism, and, 196, 199
printer's marks, and, 50–51
titles, and, 80, 85, 89
Sonne, Isaiah, 47
Sotah, 58, 61
Spektor, Rabbi Isaac Elhanan, 89
Spinoza, Baruch (Benedict de), 253
Spira, Rabbi Nathan Nata ben
Solomon, 74, 78, 203
Steen, Casper, 219
Stein, Abraham Samuel, 82
Steinschneider, Moritz, 27, 38, 103,
130, 235, 258
Stern, Rabbi Meir, 192
Sukkah, 96, 103, 299
Sulzberger, Mayer, 232–233
Suslin, Alexander, 130
Sweynheym, 242
- T
- Ta'amei ha-Mitzvot*, 110
Ta'anit, 56, 60
Tahmun, 55
Talmud, origins of printed page,
92–105
Tanhuma, Rabbi, 156
Tanna de-Vei Elyahu, 73, 79
*Targum shel Hamesh Megillot bi-Leshon
Ashkenaz*, 149–150
Taz, Rabbi David ben Samuel ha-Levi,
225
Tebel, Reuben David, 237
Tefillah le-Moshe, 212, 222–223, 225, 227, 279
Tehillah le-David, 189
Tehillot Hokhmah, 171, 173
Tela'ot Moshe, 29, 226
Temurah, 58
Terumat ha-Deshen, 210
Thesaurus, 258–259
Thesouro dos Dinim, 246
Thomason, George, 248
Tiferet ha-Gershuni, 199
Tiferet Yisrael, 189, 304
Tikkun Soferim, 190
Tikkunei Shabbat, 220
Timm, Erika, 160
Tishbi, 235
Tishby, Isaiah, 175
title pages
chronograms on, 54–62
Mars and Minerva on, 1–17, 294
mirror-image monograms as printer's
devices, 33–43
printer's mark of Immanuel
Benveniste, 18–32
titling of Hebrew books, study of,
72–91
Titrich of Bern, 159
Tobias (ben Israel ben Moses), 222
Tokhahat Megillah, 185
Tola'at Ya'akov, 124, 127
Toledano, Eliezer, 2
Toledot Adam ve-Havvah, 167–168, 170
Toledot Aharon, 111, 135, 137, 145–147,
247
Tomer Devorah, 278–280
Torah ha-Ketuvah ve-ha-Mesurah, 147
Torah Or, 95
Torat ha-Hattat, 14–16, 225
Torat ha-Kena'ot, 198
Torat Hakham, 173, 175, 197
Torat ha-Olah, 48
Torat Hesed, 174, 197
Torat Kohanim, 73
Toricella, 2
Tosafot (commentary)
frames, and, 12
Loew, Rabbi Judah, and, 298–299,
307, 309, 312–314
printer's marks, and, 32
Shabbat, printing on, 273
Talmud, ban on printing, and, 289,
291
Talmud design, and, 94–100, 104
titles, and, 83, 88
Tosefot ha-Semag, 84
Transylvanus, Maximilianus, 2
Tretter, Martin, 36
Trincavelli, Vittore, 126
Tsuf Devash, 26
Tunisi, Jacob Ben Chayim, 237
Tur, 286
Tur Baretet, 173–174, 191
Tur Orah Hayyim, 123, 275
Tur Pitada, 173–174
Tur Yahalom, 174
Tur Y. D., 275
Turei Zahav, 225
Tyrnau, Rabbi Isaac, 110

U

Uziel, Rabbi Isaac, 246

V

Valturius, Robertus, 152
 van Bashuysen, Heinrich Jacob, 204
 van Eeghen, Dr. Isabella H., 228, 252
 van Gangelt, Christoffel, 251–252
 van Selm, Dr. Bert, 254
 van Sichem, Christoffer (Cornelis), 19,
 27, 35
Varia Lectiones Veteris Testamenti, 230
Va-Yakhel Moshe, 213
 Verona, Hebrew printing in the
 sixteenth century in, 151–164
Vikkuah al Hokhmat ha-Kabbalah ve-al-
Kadmut Sefer ha-Zohar, 87
Vikku'ah ha-Yayin ve-ha-Mayim, 85
Vikku'ah Mayim Hayyim, 16
 Vilna Gaon (Rabbi Elijah ben Solomon
 Zalman), 81–82, 136
 Vinograd, Yeshayahu, 135, 154, 258
 Vital, Rabbi Hayyim, 118, 173, 197,
 279
 Vitale, Rabbi Benjamin ha-Kohen, 26,
 184
 Volterra, Rabbi Aaron Hayyim,
 180–182

W

Wahl, Judah, 216
 Wahl, Rabbi Zadok ben Asher, 220
 Wahl, Saul, 216
 Waldkirch, Conrad, 134, 147
 Wallich, Dr. Isaac, 217
 Wallich, Moses, 162
 Waxman, 161
 Wechel, Christian, 248
 Weil, Rabbi Jacob, 225
 Weil, Rabbi Kalynomous Kalman ben
 Rabbi Judah Leib, 224
 Weisswasser, Moses ben Katriel, 48, 313
 Wertheimer, Samson, 207
 Wertzfel, Franz, 227
 Wetstein, Hendrik, 252
 Whitaker, Richard, 248
 Willer, George, 248
 William, Friedrich, 208, 212
 Wolf, Driezel, 208
 Wolf, Johann Christoph, 234–235

Wolf, Rabbi Benjamin Zev ben Samuel,
 211
 Wolf, Rabbi Isaac Benjamin, 209
 Wolf, Simon, 207–208
 Wolfgang, Abraham, 253
 worker to book production ratio in the
 eighteenth century, 257–265
 Wulff (Minden), Barukh (Berend), 208,
 212
 Wulff, Elias (Elijah) ben Moses
 Benjamin, 216, 262
 Wulff, Isaac Benjamin, 217
 Wulff, Miriam, 217
 Wulff, Moses Benjamin, 27–29,
 206–217, 223–224, 257
 Wulff, Sarah, 217
 Wulff, Simha Bunim (Benjamin), 208,
 216–217
 Wulff, Solomon, 208
 Wulff, Zipporah, 208

Y

Yaari, Abraham
 book trade, and, 244, 247
 Livorno, printing in, 170, 175, 177
 monograms, and, 34–35, 37, 40
 printer's marks, and, 21–23, 26–27,
 29, 31, 46–47, 51
 Shabbat, printing on, 268
Yad Chazaka, 236
Yad Eliyahu, 88
Yad Kol Bo, 203
Yalkut Shimoni, 28, 165–166, 168–169,
 171, 213
Yam shel Shelomo, 261
Yavin Shemu'ah, 189
 Yehuda ben Ilai, 237
Yelammedenu, 156
Yevamot, 25, 56, 89, 95, 205
Yeven Mezulah, 173
 Yochanan, Rabbi, 111
Yoreh De'ah, 10, 111, 171, 225
Yoreh Hattim, 249
Yosef Lekach, 234
Yozerot, 14

Z

Zacuto, Abraham, 234
 Zacuto, Rabbi Moses, 26, 170
Zafanat Pane'ah, 157
 Zafren, Herbert C., 19

- Zahalon, Rabbi Elijah ben Moses
Gershon, 83
- Zahalon, Rabbi Yom Tov ben Moses,
51, 116–117
- Ẓahav Shevah*, 250
- Zalmati, Solomon ben Maimon, 2
- Zanetti, Bartolomeo, 126
- Zanetti, Daniel, 7, 10, 275–276
- Zanetti, Matteo, 289
- Ẓayit Ra'anān*, 28, 213
- Zechariah, 56, 60, 62, 113, 147, 185,
189
- Zedner, J., 201
- Ẓe'enah u'Re'enah*, 220
- Ẓeh Yenahamenu*, 26
- Ẓeidah la-Derekh*, 272–273
- Ẓemach David*, 234
- Zemah, Jacob, 202
- Ẓemiroṭ Yisra'el*, 51, 118–119
- Ẓer Ẓahav*, 201–202
- Ẓera Berakh Rishon*, 227
- Ẓera Berakh Sheni*, 227
- Ẓera Berakh Sh'lishi*, 227
- Ẓera Ya'akov*, 42
- Ẓera'im*, 7
- Ẓeror ha-Mor*, 77, 130
- Ẓevah Pesah*, 24, 45
- Zevi ben Henoḥ, Rabbi, 14
- Zevi Hirsch ben Ezri'el, Rabbi, 259
- Zevi Hirsch ben Haiyim, 102–103,
263–265
- Zifroni, Rabbi Israel ben Daniel (David)
ha-Ashkenazi
early Hebrew printing, and, 111
frames, and, 10
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in,
131–132, 134–135, 137, 139–141,
143, 145–147, 150
- Ẓikkaron Purim*, 178–179
- Zimrah, Rabbi David ben Solomon Avi
(Radbaz), 167, 170, 176
- Zinberg, 161
- Zirndorfer, Isaac ben David, 42
- Ẓivhei Shelamim*, 279
- Ẓohar*
Cordovero, Moses and, 278–279, 281
early Hebrew printing, and, 117
frames, and, 14
Freiburg im Breisgau, printing in, 147
Livorno, printing in, 174
plagiarism, and, 195, 200
printer's marks, and, 50
Talmud, ban on printing, and, 293
titles, and, 78, 85–88
- Ẓok ha-Itim*, 17
- Zoppino, Nicholas, 163
- Zovah, Aram, 275
- Zunz, 245
- Zvi Hirsch ben Abraham, 50
- Zwinger, Theodore, 150

PLATES



Fig. 1. O. Lupano's *Torricella*, Milan, 1540



Fig. 2. Paolo Giovio's *De piscibus*, Rome, 1524



Fig. 3. Don Isaac ben Judah Abrabanel, *Mirkevot ha-Mishneh*, 1551
 Courtesy of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak

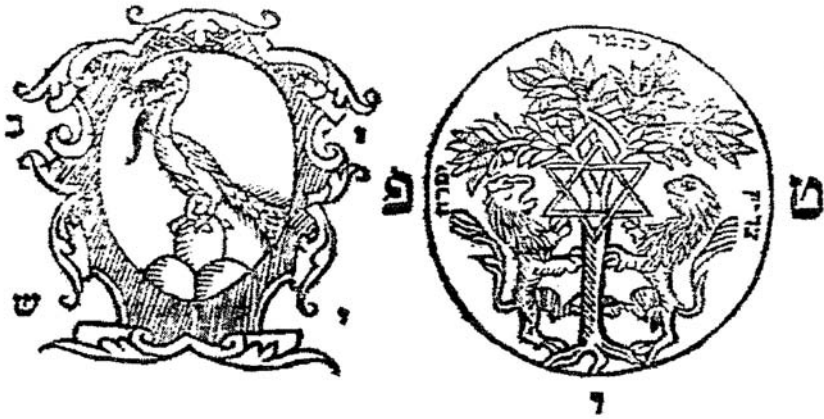


Fig. 4. Printers' Devices of Joseph ben Jacob [Ashkenazi] Shalit and Tobias Folia



Fig. 5. Meir ben Jacob ibn Me'iri, *Shulhan ha-Panim*, Venice, 1602



Fig. 6. Bath-Sheba family device



Fig. 7. Moses ben Abraham Mat of Przemysl, *Matteh Moshe*, Cracow, 1591
 Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary



Fig. 8. *Berakhot*, Amsterdam, 1644



Fig. 13. *Bava Batra*, Amsterdam, 1702



Fig. 14. *Berakhot*, Amsterdam, 1714



Fig. 9. Bet Elokim, Amsterdam, 1655



Fig. 10. *Selihot*, Amsterdam, 1642



Fig. 11. *Shevet Yehudah*, Amsterdam, 1655

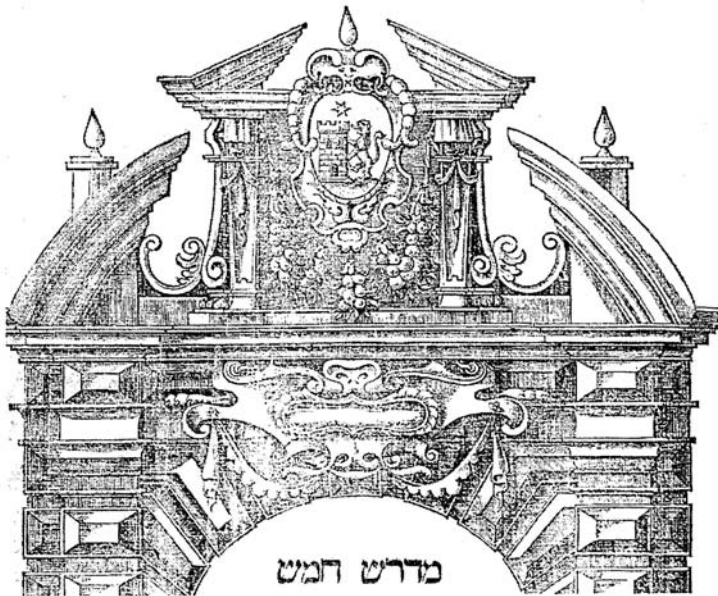


Fig. 12. *Midrash Hamesh Megilot Rabbata*, Amsterdam, 1641-42



Fig. 15. *Berakhot*, Amsterdam, Proops 1714



Fig. 16. *Perush al Nevi'im Rishonim*, Hamburg, 1686



Fig. 17. *Hidushe Bet Yehudah*, Dessau, 1698



Fig. 18. *Betsah*, Amsterdam, 1716



Fig. 19. *Seder le-Arba'ah Tsomot*, Amsterdam, 1762

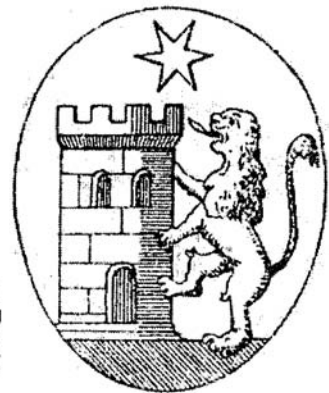


Fig. 20. *Midrash Tanhuma*, Berlin, 1923



Fig. 21. Mirror-image monogram formed from Michael Gottschalk's initials, MG



Fig. 22. Monogram of Michael Gottschalk with wreath on the title page of Seder Mo'ed (1716)



Fig. 23. Elongated, mirror-image monogram formed from Michael Gottschalk's initials



Fig. 24. Mirror-image monogram of Manuel ben Joseph Athias's initials, MJA



Fig. 25. Monogram comprised of the full names of Joseph and Jacob Proops

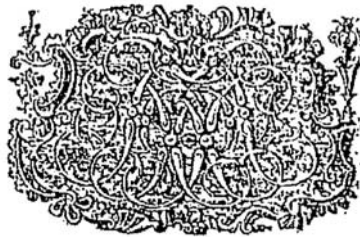


Fig. 26. Monogram comprised of the full names of Joseph and Jacob Proops within an ornate rococo framework



Fig. 27. Mirror-image monogram of Meshulan Zalman, made up of the initials SA for Salman Aaron



Fig. 28. Second mirror-image monogram of Meshulam Zalman, with the letters of his full name, printer's full name, Meshulam Zalman [ben] Aaron



Fig. 29. Meshulam Zalman's monogram accompanied by two cherubim and topped by a crown



Fig. 30. Mirror-image monogram made up of the letters ANMS, representing Aaron [and] Naphtali [ben] Meshulam Salman

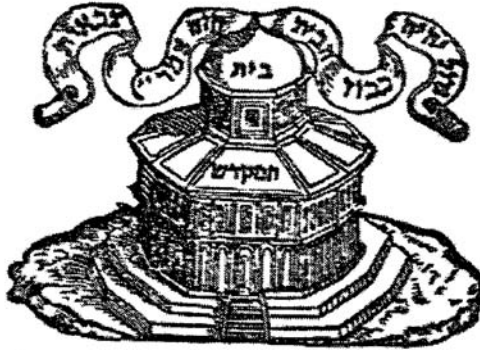


Fig. 31. Mirror-image monogram made up of the letters IL, representing Isaac Itzik ben Leib Buchbinder



Fig. 32. Mirror-image monogram made up of the letters HL, representing ben Leib Henoch Buchbinder

לישועתך קויתי יהוה



בבית בן שש בית סלדון מלך אכטוניו ופטיכילן

Fig. 33. Giustiniani printer's mark

גדול יהיה כבוד הבית הזה האחרון מן



Fig. 34. Giustiniani printer's mark (larger version)



Fig. 35. Giustiniani printer's mark (Prague)

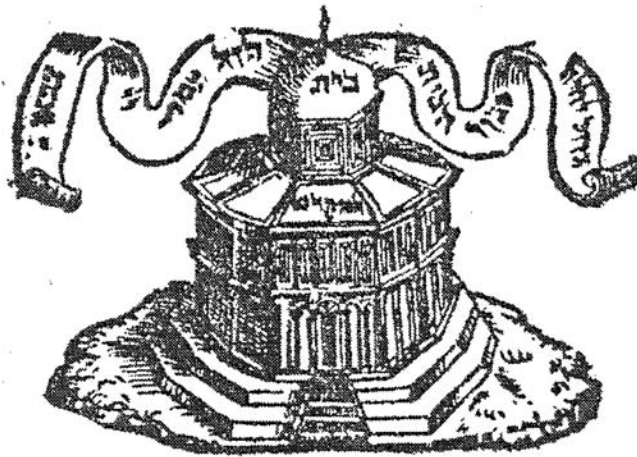


Fig. 36. Giustiniani printer's mark (Constantinople)

והיו ראשית סבל'אכתו לפרט וכל ערך' יהיה בשקל הקודש לפ'ק :



CON PREVILEGIO.

באמשטרדם

ב'דפים המשיחיים דגבדים **שמואל** בן החסיד העניו המשכיל ונכון ר' שלמה סרוקס ז"ל
 ורפאל בן ה'שיש הנכבד הגביר והנעלה והשערי פלא'אשויש ז"ל :

Fig. 37. *Shekalim*, Amsterdam, 1716

והיו ראשית סבל'אכתו לפרט וכל ערך' יהיה בשקל הקודש



Cum Privil. Cæsar. Majest.

בפרנקפורט דמיין

נדפס אצל יוהאן קעלנר *

Fig. 38. *Shekalim*, Frankfort on the Main, 1721



באמשטרדם

בבית ובדפוס
 האחים משה ויוסף משה יעקב וישראל אברהם בני המעט משה
 שלמה פרופס כ"ן ז"ל סוכרי ספרים
 נגזת ונל עייקן י"ה גמקן הקדוש ג"ה

Cum Privilegio.

Fig. 39. *Arakhin*, Amsterdam, 1764



Fig. 40. 1531, *Adderet Elyahu*, Elijah ben Moses Bashyazi, Constantinople



Fig. 41. 1622, *Adderet Eliyahu*, Rabbino ben Elijah, Venice



Fig. 42. 1694, *Adderet Elyahu*, Elijah ben Kalonymus of Lublin, Frankfort a. Oder

צ'רפראות לחכמה
צורת ההידה



Fig. 45. 1742, *Adderet Eliyahu*, Raphael Immanuel ben Abraham Hai Ricchi, Livorno, riddle of a couple lying on a sword ref. *Sandhedrin* 7a



Fig. 46. 1742, *Adderet Eliyahu*, Livorno, Ricchi family device

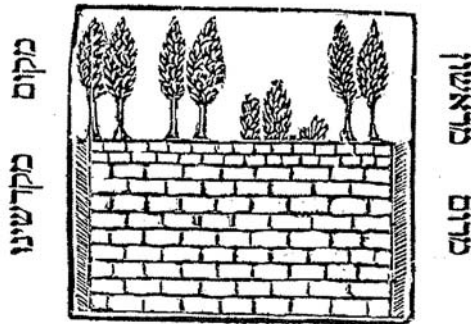


Fig. 47. 1859, *Adderet Eliyahu*, Jerusalem, woodcut of Israel Bak press



Fig. 48. 1928, *Adderet Eliyahu*, Elijah Zev Wolf ben Eliezer Kochin, Pittsburg

סיוות מן רבו מעשך " כלם בתבנה עשית " דנו דכנו כל מה
 שיש ביבשה יש בים תוין מן החולדה אם ר' זירא סאי קראת האדם
 כל יבשי תלדי " אמר רב חנא בר רב יהושע כי כוונתו אינם מן
 היבשה אם רב פפא בשמחה נרש תרבה משכה ואליהו ארץ ש
 שמעיה ברבי " אמר רב פפא לא אבההש לשמעיה בבל "
 אמר רב נדל אמר רב נרשא נשך סניכך נהר פקוד לוויך מנלימא י
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 ויתן קהורתא פסאחית הלכת לזוע וראיתי נחש כרוך על הצנ לימים
 יצא ערווד מכניהם וכשבחתי וסחתי הדברים לפני שמעון החבדי אמר
 לי אמר הקב"ה הן הכיאו כיריה שלא בראתי בעולמי אף אני אביא
 עליהם כיריה שלא בראתי בעולמי והאמ מד כר שחשמישן ועיבתן
 שהולדין ומגדלין זה מזה אין תשמישן ועיכותן שהאין יולדין ומגדלין
 זה מזה אמר רב יוסף נם מחוך נם האין נם כחוך נם פורענות הוא נם כחוך
 נם לפורענותא מתני האבר והבשר כו " טובאח אוכלין
 אין טומאת נבלות דיכי דמי אי דמעלין ארוכה אפילו ו
 טומאת אוכלין נמי לא ליטמו אי דאין מעלין ארוכה טומאת נבלות נמי
 ליטמו לעולם אין מעלין ארוכה ושמי טומאת נבלות דרחמנא אמר
 אמר וכל אשר יפול ער שיפל תניא נמי הכי האבר והבשר המדולדלין
 וכל אשר יפול ער שיפל יוכל ליטמו טומאת נבלות תלמוד לוטר
 וכל אשר יפול ער שיפל יוכל ליטמו טומאת אוכלין מטמו ליבא מפיוע ריח
 לרב דייא בר אשי דאמר חייב בר אשי אמר שמואל תאינין שעמקו
 באיביהן מטמין טומאת אוכלין מטמו והתולש מהן בשנת חייב הטאת
 שאני החם דאם קרא וכל אשר יפול ליבא מפיוע ליה ידקות שיבשו
 באיביהן כגון הכיוב והדלעת אין מטמין טומאת אוכלין קצצן ויבשו
 מטמין טומאת אוכלין יבשו סלקא דעתך עץ כעלמא גינה אפ' דפי
 יצחק קצצן על סנה ליבשו טעמא דקדוב ודלעת כיון דיבשו לאו כני
 זכירתה הן הא שאר פירות מיטמו היכי דאמו אי דיבשו ועוקציהן ש
 פשיטא אלאלאו הן בלא עוקציהן לעולם הן ועוקציהן וקצצן על כח
 ליבשו איצטריכא ריח הא שמע אילן שנפשה וכו' פירות הר"י הן כח
 כחלשין יבשו באיביהן הרי הן כמחוכרין טאלאו תלושין תלישין ו

Fig. 49. Hullin, 127a-b. Spain/Portugal 148?/9?

Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library T-S Misc a4.37^s

רוצה למה לרוחא ורחמי לא
 זמנה ותפסי יהמקט לא תקחו
 עור מק ים לכה לו וראי רחמי
 וראי שיהותצט ייה נני יה ותרי
 כסאוג וחור במזוי ויקיב י ראי
 רמסום רחמי אסורה אבל שוגג
 רלא חמור אסורה אימא לא ירובאו
 ארמבעין שוגג משום דלפי איבוד נשמה אגל
 כור רחמי יבור נשמה אגל אהם רחמי עלה
 ירחי ארץ לא יכפר ברם אשר שפרך כה כי אם
 ברם שופכו למה לו מבעי ליה לכדתניא פני
 שאם תעריפה עגלה ואחר כך נמצא הורג מנין
 שאין פוטין אותו שטא ולא רץ לא יכפר : ואחיה
 חכער הרם הנקי למה לו מבעי ליה לכדתניא
 הוקטו כל שופכי דם לעגלה ערופה מה להלן
 מן רצוא אף שופכי דם מן רצוא אמה להלן
 כקוצץ ומול עוף אף באן בקופיץ ומול עורף אמ
 רב נחמן אמ רבא בר אבוח אמ קרא ואיהבו
 לרער במך כבוד לו כיתה ופיה כל חרם אשר
 חרם מן חרם למה למבעי ליה כדתניא
 לויא ליהרב ואם ערבו עלו מען שלא אמ כלוח
 תל כל חרם אשר יחרם וכול אף קורם שונגרי
 ריעב ותל מן הארם ולא כל הארם ולר חגיגה כן
 יקובא נערין שפט שרמו קצונן האו כל חרם
 באי עבוד ליה מבעי ליה לכדתניא רישמעל כע
 של רוחנן כן ברקא אומ לפוט מציע למותחן
 פרוי שום שנותנן מבין וכתפפר להם שטא אם
 כופר תשת עלת יכולאף כורו ארם כן תל כל חרם
 אשר יחרם מן הארם לא ופרה ואין לו אלא
 גותלת המרות
 ימית בני ימים הקיטול קף ימים יתחבלי פתו כמחן יחרם מן הארם חרם פתח יב חרסו
 לוא חיותות חיות עלת נתיב סגרת ל כפרים כון דקרי לית פריה כל יתחיי ויתחיי קי מדיק קר
 הוקרי לין מתקום מעט מילתות יתירות ויקי שנהו כמן קפוסה תגלי כדפון ורג כפס חסיון

Fig. 50. Ketubbot, 37b. Guadalajara 1485?
 Courtesy of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library U.L.C. ADD. 1053

וכן נסקרין בטקירה אחת אינר רב נחמין בר יצחק אף
 אין נמי תעבא שבאין היוצר יחד וגם המצבן אית כל מעשה
 מיזי קאימא לאימא ק' רבנאן וכו' עלמא ולבייהו כהררי
 והא קא חזינן דלנו הכי הוא לא למו ק' היוצר רוחה יתיר
 וגם והוא מצבן א כל מעשהיה **מתני** על ששה חשים
 שאינם י צאין על ניקון מעבדי **הפסח** ועל אב
 מעבדי התעבית ועל גאל מעבדי ליה ועל תשרי מעט מעט
 הקנת המועדות ועל כסלו מעט חפוכה ועל אדר מעבדי
 הפורים ובזמן שבית המקדש קיים יוצאין אף על איי
 מעבדי פסח קטן **נמר** על אשד וכו' ולפקי נמי ארמוז
 ואענת דאיך רב **תל בר** בזמא אינר רבי שמעון
 חסידא מיזי דכתיבה אינר וי' צום הרביעי וצום החמישי
 וצום השביעי וצום העשירי יהיו לבית יהודה לשאון ולשמחה
 וגו' קרי ליה צום וקרי ליה שאון ושמחה לא למו הכי קאימא
 בזמן שיג שגשג יהיו לשאון ולשמחה אין שגשג צום רב פגם
 איך הכי קאימא בזמן שיג שגשג יהיו לשאון ולשמחה יש שמר
 צום אין שגשג ואין שמר רבי מתעבין לו רבו אין מתעבין אי
 הכי תעבד באבנמי אינר רב פפא שאני תעבד גלובתיהו
 והכפל בו צרות דאיך מר בו חרב הבית בראשונה ובשנייה
 ובלבדה ביתי ובחרשח העיר תביל אינר ל שמעון בן הוסי
 ל רביס היה דורשן ל עקיב ואני דורשן ואני דורשן כמזמ
 גל מילן אינר ל רביס ודרי ארה אית בן הגר המעבדי אגד
 ינה לא תהיט מצחק ל עקיבא אינר עזי וכן הוא אינר
 כמתלהל זורה זקיס תגיס ומות אינר הלל מצחק אינר
 ואיך מילן היה הצאן ובקר יחטט לה דברי ל עקיבא ל
 שמעון תני לה דמתיחא ואיך יחד היה אינר תר עקיב
 הכי הם אינר יס אביהם שהיה אינר ירש אה הארץ אבו
 שהיינו רביס על אחת כחה וכמה רש אינר הכי הם אינר
 אביהם שלא עבר לא לאה אינר ירש אית הארץ אבו שעבדי
 [אחות הרב העלמו] ואיך

וכן נסקרין בשיקף אחת מידנסי
 תבא דירן תמירא למילתיה מיהו
 ק' היוצר יחד וגם עלמא ולבייהו כהררי
 רבו שלמה כך וכו' שלמה הק היוצר
 יחד וגם ואקרא רעו מעה מהרר
 האציה א כל מעבדי הארץ היוצר
 אותה השגח יחד וגם **מתני**
 שזמין יוצא' כשקראו
 כל אית תרגם על פי עדים אראו
 אית חדש ומודיעין האנשים [גולה]
 יו שקראוהו אס ביום ל וחדש אעבר
 חסר או ביום ל וא וחדש אעבר מל
 מעבדי הכסח והולכין הארץ ער
 הפסח חזק מעבדו ועל האב מעבדי
 הדעניות והולכין כל מעבדי ימים
 חזק מעבדי ועל אלו מעט ארץ
 האסה מודיעים מתי מתחילן אלו
 ועשין ראש השנה ביום שלשים [גאל]
 בגולה רובו שנים אין אלו מעבדי
 ואף על פי שפסק הוא בדם אית
 מעבדו ביד דין לתשרי והס לא היו
 מקראין כי אם על פי הראיה והס
 היו באים ער קורס הימחה בום
 שלשים אל גאלו עשין איהו היום
 קדש ותו לא והס לא היו באים ער
 קום לא אר אלו היו כוונת איהו
 הן קדש פ'י אלו היו יכול להודיע
 רגל אה אלו מעבדי יו למו ועב
 הולכין אינר רוב השנה והס לא ידע
 מתי מתחיל גאלו אלו ידע קום ל אלו

ועל תשרי מעבדי הקנת המועדות אינר שקראו ל תשרי הו חזין
 יוצאין לוח היחד תהולתן ער מקו סיכולן להגיע ער התמונדיעם אס עבד כל אלו אס למו
 אלו יהא לכו נקפטי ביה ונסוכיה מעט פסח שני לפמא ושהיה בדרך רחוקה כראשון **נמר** דאל
 תבא בר בובא רבולה ימי תעג' ניסיהו בזמן הזה בזמן שאין ביה קיים ומתי' בזמן
 קאימירי מקדש וכה המקדש קיים שיג שגשג אגד ישרא תקיפא על הארמוז יהיו לשאון ולשמחה
 לשמור נהספד ובעתה יש צום חובה לתעבדיהו רבו אין מתעבין וכו' וראות הוא ל מעבדיהו
 איהו עליהו ל רביס וכו' וזו אית הו' מכוין

Fig. 51. *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, Fez, c. 1516, Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary

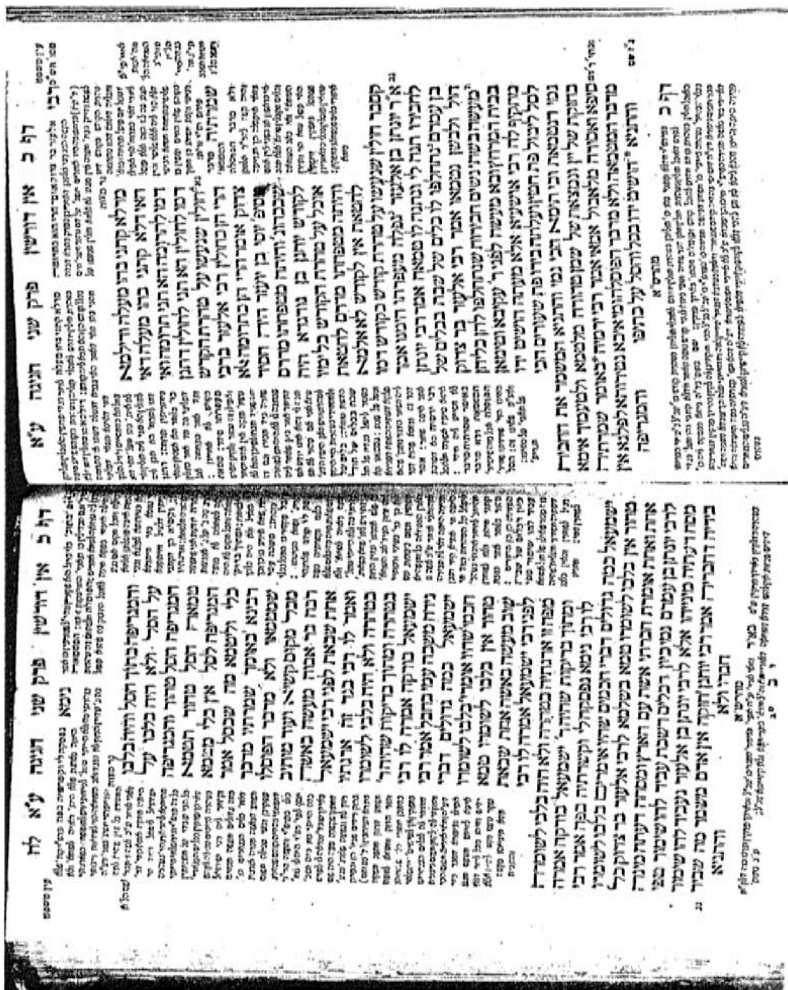


Fig. 52. Hagigah, Amsterdam, 1744

הישן פרק שני סוכה

ביציאתו ממהרה לבא ויש אומר' חילוף הרבדים
 ואין לך כל אומה ואומה שיקה שאין אל היה לוקח
 עמה שני' וכל אלהי מצרים אעשה טפסים וכוונ
 לשישראל עושי רצונו של מקום אין מחזיראין מכל
 אלו שנאמר נה אסר ה' אל דרך הגוים אל תלמדו
 ומאותות השמים אל החתו כי יחזו הגוים מהמה
 אומות יחזו ואין ישראל יחזו חנו רבנן בשביל
 ארבעה דברים חמה לוקה על אב בית רין שמר
 ואינו נספר סלה תעל נערה המאדסה שעצקה
 בעיר ואין מושיע לה ועל משכב זכור ועל שני אחוז
 שנשפך דמן באחד ובשביל ארבעה דברים מאד
 לוקח על כותבי פלסתר ועל מעזי ערות שקר ועל
 מגדלי כהמה דקה בארץ ישראל ועל קוצצי אלנות
 סבורי ובשביל ארבעה דברים נכסי בעלי בתים
 נמסרין למלכות על משהו שטיות פירו' ועל מלך
 ברבית (כב ע"ב) ועל שיהיה ספק כיום לסחור
 ולא מיחזו ועל פוסקי צדקה דברים ואינו נותנין אסר
 רב בשביל ארבעה דברים נכסי בעלי בתים וצואין
 לטמין

הישן פרק שני סוכה כמ

לממון על כובשי שכר שכר ועל עושי שקר שכר טעיר
 ועל שפורקין עול מעל צואריהו ונותנין על חבריהו
 ועל גסות הרוח וגסות הרוח כנגד כולן אבל בענום
 כתבי וענוים ידשו ארץ והתענו על רוב שלום:

הדרן עלך הישן

לולב הנזול והיבש פסול של אשירה ושל עיר
 הנדחת פסול נקטם ראשו נפרצו עליו
 פסול נפרו עליו כשר רבי יהודה אומר יאגרו
 מל מעלה ציני הר הכרול כשירן לולב שיש בו שלש
 נפחים כדי לנענע בו כשר : גמ' : קא פטיק ותני
 לא שנת ביום טוב ראשון ולא שנת ביום טוב שני
 בשלמא יבש הדר בענן וליבא אלא גוול בשלמא
 יום טוב ראשון רכתוב לכס משלכס אלא ב"ט שני
 אמאי לא אמר רבי יוחנן משום רבי שמעון בן יוחי
 (ר ע"א) משום יהוה ליה מצוה הכאה בעבירה
 עני' והבאתם גוול את הפשת ואת החולה גוול דומי'
 דפסח

Fig. 53. *Sukkah*, Frankfurt on the Oder and/or Berlin 1722



Fig. 54. Two-tailed lion *passant* used by Eliezer ben Isaac Ashkenazi



קהלת יעקב

הדור אתם ראו תורה נזה לנו חסיה
 מרסה קהלת יעקב חכלו החכס
 השלם כאהרן משה בלאכסי כלו
 והוא ביאור כחמד על מבלת
 קהלת אשר היו דכריו מותרו זה
 חק זה והוא כטוב טעמו וכמוקן
 טמו העמוד הדבר על בורת
 והבין טעמו על מוכו ומלכד זה
 הכיא על כל פסוק ופסוק דכריו
 הוהר והמקוים הכתמים חזהב
 ומכו רב הפליא לעמות :

יסורחו בהררי קיש

צפת תובכ שבגליל העליון קרית מלך רב היא היום תחת
 מסשלת ארוננו המלך סולטן מארד יר'ה :

צדעם ככית הבכיר ונעלה כה'ר אכרהם אסכנו יצו על ידי אלימור בלהר יצחק
 המחיקק היום יום ג' כ'ה למסון שנת כל קלוכה ופועתו לבא אבצר :

Fig. 55. *Kohelet Ya'akov* title page



Fig. 56. 1562, *Derekh Emunah*, Meir ben Ezekiel ibn Gabbai, Padua
 Courtesy of the Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University



Fig. 57. 1567, *Derashot ha-Torah*, Shem Tov ben Joseph ibn Shem Tov, Padua
 Courtesy of the Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University

מסעות של רבי בנימן

יום הנקראת ארץ אשכנז יאורן סעודי בארץ לפניא
שיש בה קהלות פירסאל וכלס נדיש על גור סלח
וקנעליש ונוראנה וקנע וקנעניא ונענה ונרספה
ונשהנאן וכל ישראל סעודים כולם בכל ארץ וארץ
וכל פי שיכטל שלא יתקני ישראל אינו רואה ספן
סוכ וכלא יחד עס ישראל ומנח שהשם ימקוד על
נלתינו ויום קרן סעימו או כל אחד ואחד אנסר אני
אליך את הזודים ואני אקנע / ומסדינות האלו ים
ביום תלסודי תכסים וקהלות אורנים את איתם
דנרים שלום לכל הקרובים והרדוקים ואם יא
אלהם אנסאו ספתיס בני ועישם לל פשתה יאברו
שבי אהינו כושיעת השם כהרעין ולולא שאננו
סמדי שלא בא הקץ ולא תוע אמתו היינו סתקנע
אכל לא יכל עד שיעי ערן הוסר וקול דחור ויכא
הכפטי ויאסרו הפדו ירל השם והם שולחם כחכס
אחז לאתר ואסרום להם התמוכו כרת מסר ואנלי
אין תנעלי יודישם יכבס רשעס כלפני השם ויתנע
לכשיגדוס שדוהי בגוהם וכל אל הפרטת כארץ
אלכמיא שוברת תער יש אשתר אןבוד ודור סרסוד
דבלטיר נבאלו התרמורנו הרבה שירסאל חלסוד
השבים ועשירים / ומשם והלאה ארץ ביה והא
הקראת פירסאל היא התלת ארץ אשכנזי
וקריא אתה הקרובים דרוי שם ארץ נען כשביל
אנשי הארץ התיא סוכלי נענות נענותם לכל אמות
דמואטי חסיל ותיא סלכור נהולת סעוד מרא
תה שער מל העיר הנדולת היא סוכי הסוכות דתי
דך

Fig. 59. *Massa'ot shel Rabbi Benjamin*
Benjamin ben Jonah of Tudela, Freiburg 1583

מסעות של רבי בנימן

זה הספר מחובר בדברים

שספר איש אוז מארץ נבארה שבו
רבי בנימן בר יונה מפורלה זל:
וילך הליך ויבא באריות רבות ודחוקות /
כאשר יתמרש בדבריו אלו וכל מקום
שכא בו כתב כל הדברים שראה או שמע
סמי אנשי אמת אשר נשמעו בארץ ספרד /
וכן הוא וזכר סקצת הנדולים והנשאים
שנסקצת סקצות וכתבא הנבאודבריו זה
עמו לארץ קאשתליאיה בשנת תקל"ג /
ויש דמי כתיב סעודי לים אכין ומסיל כול סוד
הכל דבר דתני סעודי כרי למשה /
אמריו נבואו דכתיב מחובים /
ויכתיב כתיב כתיב
- לים אמות /
דעס מעריסות כתיבאיהו עמ סעודי לים /
על יד הוירדני יא

Fig. 58. *Massa'ot shel Rabbi Benjamin*
Benjamin ben Jonah of Tudela, Freiburg 1583



Fig. 62. *Ohel Ya'akov*, Jacob ben Samuel Bunim Koppelman, Freiburg 1583–1584

ה קיבא כר' .

אזיה שטע דער הונג און יין אונט . אז וויס אז ער טארט קונט . וואו אים
דז וויס עס זינד :



דאן ביאט פמיל און פון בעלשט . אן איינס דער דא פון יאן יבולט . און
איק קעמט און נעלט . ער וויס עס דא עס וועט בלייבט אים
דא פארטער עס . דוקס דוקס צו אדער און בוויר עס . אום פעלט איד
יבד עס וואו . דען אין אלעבר דך ביטן זאל . אים וואס אים קעמט
בישערט . אום עס אים און עפעס דאזיין אדער . אום איי דיק וועט אים
קעמט אונטן . דא אן ער פרויך אין אן און יין וועלן . דא אים בל אייט און
אום בירבע דד ביא . קעמט איר און דא אן פונד אונד ביא אבאיה .
אין אן אייט קורד לייט . אין וואס ארט ער דארטן נעמט :



קיבא כר' .

אזיה אדער איינר ברודר אונט אין ברודר האט . אין ברודר פסטק
פילום באט ער אין יין אונט :



הונט האט אין פסטק לייט נעבון . ער וועט ער באר עס דען
אנדורונדן . ער נעמט און פון דא דודר ביין . דא וויס
פאלט ער עס אין . דא אן ער אייט זאלען פסטק . אדער אין
ברוק . דא אדער וועט אין וואס דא וואס ער . אום ער דערבר וועלן .
דא דעס אין איינס וועלן . אן דען וואס דען וועט פון . אין אדער
פסטק און און יין . יין וועל עס זי וואס אין פסטק . ער וועל עס זעמט
פון אין . ער וועל עס און ער עס אין . דא אדער פסטק און ער דעס .
דאן און און און ער עס וועלן . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן . דא וועט
אין וואס עס דען וועל עס און עס . אן אן און באר וועלן .
אין האבן ער פסטק . און עס ער דאן און . אן עס אז ער טארט
אין אין . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן .
קונט . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן .
אזיה נעבון . דא אדער און אן ער וועל עס . ער וועל עס און
ער עס וואס . ער האט ער וועל עס און ער וועלן . דא אן און און
אן און דען . ער און ער וועלן . דא אן און און און
פסטק און און פסטק . ער וועל עס און ער וועלן .
האבן . אים ער וועל עס ער ער .
אדער עס וועלן :

אזיה

Fig. 64. 1595, *Kalbbuch*, Abraham ben Mattathias Basevi (?), Venice
Courtesy of Dr. Moshe N. Rosenfeld

נשלמו שלש מאות שאלות · שבח לאל נורא עלילות:

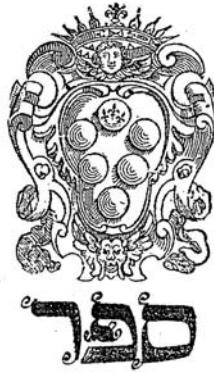
וכתר שם טוב על גביהם



שלשה כתרים הם



Fig. 65. Typographical ornament of La Stampa del Kaf Nahat press



שאלות ותשובות
של הרב הגדול סיני ועוקר הרים משרי צבאות
ישראל

הגאון כבוד הר רך זאבי ומרא ולה

לכל בני ישראל היה אור בשמש ורח על מימי התורה נורי הנבואה יאורי הקבלה ואגמי המדרשים
והיו קרש קדשים •

ותהי ראשית מלאכתו מלאכת הקדש חדש כסלו שנת
ומברכתך יבורך בית עבדך לעולם •

שנת תש"א - תש"ב

כליזורנו

תחת ממשלת אדמו"ר הכולוס סגור

פירדינאנדו די מידיצי

ירוש הודו:

במסות בעל הרפוס בתי ידיריה בנפולרי יצחק נבאי בעל כף נחת וזל •

Con Licenza de; Superiori.



Fig. 66. 1652, *She'elot u'Teshwot*, David ben Solomon ibn Abi Zimra (Radbaz), Livorno

Courtesy of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak

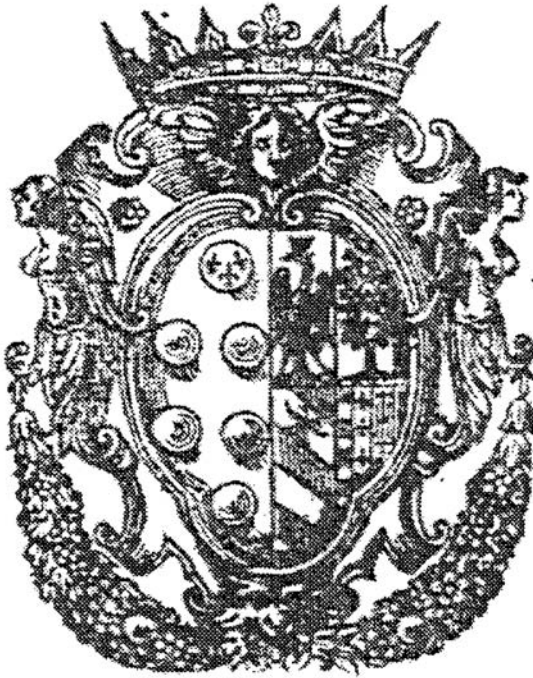


Fig. 67. Escutcheon of the Medici's, rulers of the Duchy of Tuscany

ספר
קנאת סופרים

והוא חבר נחמד להודיע לבני האדם מה נמצא אמרי ישר הנשר הגדול
הרמבם זל בספר המצות שלו הן כיד שרשיו הן במצותיו וכפמיש יפוצץ
סלע דימהלוקות להשיב אמרי אמרת לשולחים יד עליו
בהשגותיהם את הקול עשה יפה בעמאיש אשר נמצא אהו מדע והשכל ככל ספר
חכמה ועצה וגבורה למלחמה וזה הרב הכולל גוע ישישים הרופא
המוכח כמוהירר חנניה קזים ובכמהירר מנהם ולהה

הכסף לבית הדפוס ע"י יקר רוח אוס מכונה כן לפרס. התמכר כס"ר
מנחם קזים יצ"ו אוס ספר ככרסו
לעבורו אוכ"ר *
יורד מבי עליון גס"ה יתן סטוב לעמך ייטב לו



גדפם

בליוורנו יע"א

בדפוס המשובח

של הגבירים השתפים ריצי ומילדולה

בשנת ונחלתו לא יעזוב

Fig. 68. 1740, *Kinat Soferim*, Hananiah ben Menahem Cases, Livorno

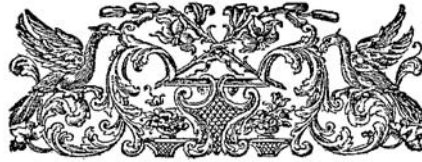


Fig. 69. 1742, decorative ornament, *Divrei Yosef*, Joseph ben Emanuel Ergas, Livorno



Fig. 70. *Divrei Yosef*, Joseph ben Emanuel Ergas, Livorno

זה ספר
חזה ציון
ע"ד רוד הנדיל

והוא פד"ש פרד"ם על כל תבה והיבה של ההללים בדקדוק עצום
ובכמה רתושה באמת רשום :

חזר פעל ועשה מעשה רב ועצום כנגלה ונכסתר הלל הוא התבס הטלם
הדין המגויין הרב המנוקק המקובל המלטי כמנהג'ר
רפאל עכנואל חי ריקי ייב"י

ונגס סהשלנות נתון כפי סאפטי יי"א הכסור החסד יי"א יי"א יי"א
כמנהג'ר רפאל מלדולה יי"א :

נדפס בליוורנו י"א

בבית וברפוס רום טובה של הגביר אברהם בכמהרד
רפאל מלדולה יי"א

בשנת והגניא מלכותו

ממנואל מלך ספרד

אות לבית אב

תמן את דבר

המחבר המדובר

לוא אלסא נוא

IN LIVORNO MDCCXXXII.
Nella Stamperia d' Abraham Meldola,
Con Lic. de' Superiori, e Privilegio di S. A. R.

Fig. 71. 1742, *Hozeh Ziyon*, Raphael Immanuel ben Abraham Hai Ricchi



Fig. 72. 1680, *Migdal David*, David ben Aryeh Leib Lida, Amsterdam

שׁוֹר הַיְלּוּלִים

דברי שׁוֹר הַיְלּוּלִים • כנדיים הוא מדבר • כעין בתחילתו • שׁוֹר וְאִסְרָן חֲתוּמָיו :

חון	קהל	דברי שירה • הלל וזמרה :	לאל נתן • לנו התורה :	ד
חון	קהל	לאל המיוחד • יענו כאחד :	ישמו אחר • ושמו אחר :	ד

הכוונה בלשון דברי שירה שהוא לשון רבים • כי הוא נגד שתי תורות שקבלנו במעמד הר סיני תורה שבכתב ותורה שבעל פה והוא בעולם וי"ט וכנסם גם לעולם הרמזים נבואות המלך והכל הוא הנביאית שלש עשרה מדות הרמזים הכוזב ועיין באורך בכתבי האר"י ל' כשירת הים ובישתבס :

חון	קהל	ולחזות הברית • בהם ההרית :	למעשה חרות • תקרי חירות :	ו
חון	קהל	לאל המיוחד • יענו כאחד :	ישמו אחר • ושמו אחר :	ו

תקרי חירות והוא לשון חכמים ו'ל אל תקרי חרות אל חירות :

חון	קהל	דרכיה נועם • נתיבותיה בטעם :	נתפרשה לעם • בציר רועם :	ד
חון	קהל	לאל המיוחד • יענו כאחד :	ישמו אחר • ושמו אחר :	ד

בציר רועם • זה פשה שהוא רועה בארץ ישראל ולו גילה הק"ה טעויו וסודי וסוקי התורה רק משה בהן עובת עין לישראל ופיהם להן מקצתן וקצתן הכתיר בנו טעויו פרה חלומה ודומה תמוס כעו מעגלותיה אשר לא מדע בטעם האורש בעולם • והו הכועס :

חון	קהל	בנו בחר • עישה שחר :	ובאומת היסר • בריבור אחר :	ב
חון	קהל	לאל המיוחד • יענו כאחד :	ישמו אחר • ושמו אחר :	ב

הכוונה להדיע טעם שכנו בחר האל ית' בלא תימא אילו רצו האומות לקבל את התורה היה כותן להם ולא לנו שהרי החזיר הק"ה על כל אומה ולאן טרם שנתנה לישראל ואשר שראה שאין אומה ולאן חכמים בה נתנה לנו אבל לא מטעם שבהר בנו ויבואר ע"ד האורש החכים הק"ה בה והעויד קמשה יוול חמשה כדי באס מיבא עשו וירנה לקבל דיכור אכבי העויד לו כנגדו דיכור אשר הוא לא תרנה בכדי שימאן גם באכבי וכן כולם כנואם שכל כוונת השם היה לכתילה שימאנו האומות ויתנס לישראל בטובת עין ויזיתק הלשון שפיר שכנו בחר הק"ה • העשה שחר שהרי ע"י דיכור אשר מיאנו האומות וולקבלם והו באומת קיבר וכו' :

חון	קהל	נעשה ונשמע • באשר שמע :	מעם נושע • מדבר פשע :	ו
חון	קהל	לאל המיוחד • יענו כאחד :	ישמו אחר • ושמו אחר :	ו

הכוונה בזה לישב קושיא עמומה להיות שמינו שהק"ה בה הושיל האומה ישראלית לתוכו • וישראל המשילו את הק"ה נ"כ לתוכו שחזרו כתפוח בעני היער כן דודי בן הנביס • והאין אפשר שישוב הוא יתברך בלחנת דבר ענינו שהוא יושב את ישראל • אלא המונה הוא כפירו העוספות שהקדמנו ישראל כעשה לכעווע שהוא דומה לאילן שפריו קודם

Fig. 73. 1680, *Shir Hillulim*, David ben Aryeh Leib Lida, Amsterdam



Fig. 74. 1696, *Solet le-Minhah ve-Shemen le-Minhah*, Jacob Reischer, Dessau
 Courtesy of the Fales Library and Special Collections, New York University

מוסכת מוגילה

נדום באשטרייך

כבית כמעותר וכדעהאד-האמלוק ודקי הלערה
 כדירי משה בר אבהם זצ"ל :

לפרש קטן ק"כ מתי ק"כ סגולת ז'
 1274 = 1714

Halle of 400 Munich.

Fig. 75. *Megillah*, Title Page. Amsterdam/Halle 1690/1714
 Courtesy of the Curators of the Bodleian Library Opp Fol 633

DIZIONARIO
STORICO
DEGLI AUTORI EBREI
E
DELLE LORO OPERE

DISTESO
DAL
DOTTORE G. B. DE-ROSSI
PROF. DI LINGUE OR.

VOL. I.

PARMA
DALLA REALE STAMPERIA
1802

Fig. 76. 1802, *Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei*, title page, Parma

E S

l'Azulai attesta egli pure nella II parte del suo *Scem aghedolim* fogl. 80 d'averne veduto un'altro esemplare scritto in Mantova nel 1486. Nella stessa Bodlejiana esiste anche il suo *Comento su i Profeti primi*, o su i libri storici di Giosuè, dei Giudici, e dei Re scritto nel 1396, che è letterale e cabballistico, e in cui l'autore in fine è detto Salmoni, o Salomoneo. V. il Wolfio t. III p. 869. Questo autore scrisse parimente il *Sod ascem*, *Arcano del Signore*, che è un *Comento* su quello d'Aben Ezra del *Pentateuco*, il quale conservasi ms. nel codice suddetto Bodlejano, nel 140 della biblioteca nazionale di Parigi, e nel mio 205. Nella prefazione del mio è chiamato Esdra figlio di Salomone figlio di Gatigo.

EYBESCH URZ Gionatan, nato in Moravia nel 1696, presiedette alla sinagoga di Praga per trent'anni continui, poi passò a Merz, quindi a Amburgo e ad Altona, ove morì nel 1764 in età di 68 anni. Si ha di lui un *Comento su i Profeti e su gli Agiografi*, e varie altre opere. V. il Voigt da san Germano *Effigies virorum eruditiorum Bohemiae et Moraviae* p. I 8°. Praga 1773.

E Z

115

EZECHIA figlio di Manoe. Ha un *Comento del Pentateuco* letterale e mistico, che porta il titolo di *Chizkuni*, *Confortatemi*, ed è stato stampato più volte. La prima edizione si è fatta col testo in Venezia nel 1524. Entra anche nella *Bibbia rabbinica* d'Amsterdam.

EZOVI o EZOPEO Giuseppe di Perpignano, valente poeta, è autore di un lungo *Poema morale*, intitolato *Kaarad chésaf*, *Scodella d'argento*, molto stimato dagli ebrei e dai cristiani, e stampato in CPoli non nel 1533, come segnano il Bartoloccio e il Wolfio, ma nel 1531, come abbiamo dimostrato negli *Annali ebraici* del 1501 al 1540 p. 35. Fu ristampato in Parigi colla latina traduzione del Mercero nel 1559, ed altra traduzione latina ne avea molto prima, e sin dal 1512 pubblicata in Tubinga il Reuclino che il Wolfio ristampò nel IV tomo della sua *Biblioteca ebraica*. Noi non solo possediamo in questa nostra privata collezione quella prima rarissima edizione, ma anche dieci diversi codici mss., e di più quattro altri di una inedita sua *Lettera* in versi al figlio Samuele, di cui il Wolfio e gli altri bibliografi non parlano.

Fig. 77. 1802, *Dizionario storico degli autori ebrei*, text page, Parma

Historisches
Wörterbuch

der
jüdischen Schriftsteller
und
ihrer Werke

von
G. B. DE-ROSSI.
aus dem Italienischen übersezt

von
Dr. C. H. Hamburger.



Leipzig,
Verlag von V. Herr.

1839

Fig. 78. 1839, *Historisches Wörterbuch...*, title page, Leipzig

Sezira.**147**

trachtungen über den Alfes, die dem Werke beigelegt sind; aber die Commentare zu den heiligen Büchern, die einige Bibliographen unter seinem Namen aufführen, sind von dem ersten Jesaja.

Jesaja (Menachem), auch Mendel und Abigdor, schrieb einen Commentar zum Pentateuch, in welchem der Maschi'sche theilweise erläutert wird, Krakau 1624, in 4.

Jesurun (Isaak), Rabbi in Hamburg. Im Buche über die Vorsehung Gottes, welches er in portugiesischer Sprache 1663 ans Licht brachte, stellt er philosophische Betrachtungen über die Vorsehung und deren Folgen auf. Er hat auch andere Werke geschrieben.

Sezira, ein kabbalistisches, sehr altes und sehr berühmtes Buch, welches Einige dem Akiba, Einige bald diesem bald jenem andern Gelehrten vor dem Zeitalter des Talmud, in welchem es erwähnt wird, zugeschrieben. Auf dem Titelblatt wird der Patriarch Abraham genannt, und es gibt viele unter den Juden, die den Muth, aber keinen Grund haben, daran zu glauben. Wenigstens zeigt diese Leichtgläubigkeit die außerordentliche Ehrfurcht, die sie vor diesem Buche hegen, welches sie als die erste und ächteste Quelle ihrer kabbalistischen und mystischen Theologie, und als den ältesten wunderthätigen Speicher der höchsten Mystereien ansehen und verehren. Es ist in sechs Capitel und jedes Capitel in einige Abschnitte getheilt, und handelt in einem sehr gedrängten Style über die Weisheit und den Namen Gottes, wobei es nach der Art der alten Gnostiker Buchstaben und Zahlen geheimnißvoll verbindet. Es wurde zuerst in Mantua 1562 gedruckt mit fünf Commentaren von Abraham Ben Dior, Mose Botril, Nachmani, Saadja Gaon und Elazar von Worms. Am Schlusse ist der Text des Buchs noch einmal abgedruckt, aber etwas abweichend von dem, der die Commentare begleitet. Dieselbe Abweichung findet sich auch, wie der Herausgeber bemerkt, in allen Handschriften, und Wolf, der in Thl. I, S. 25, eine Probe davon gibt, hält die Varianten für das Werk der Ausleger und für Glossen derselben, die mit der Zeit in den Text übergegangen sind. Simon bezeugt im zweiten Bande seiner auserlesenen Briefe, S. 168, vier verschiedene Codices davon gesehen zu haben, die alle von einander abwichen; dasselbe findet sich bei den dreien, die ich besitze, und es wundert mich, daß ich dieselben Varianten in der neuen constantinopolitanischen Ausgabe von 1724 finde, die einen Auszug aus dem Dior'schen Commentar, den vollständigen Nachmani'schen und einen Theil von dem Luria'schen enthält. Außer dieser Ausgabe gibt es viele andere, sowie auch viele Commentare, worunter ein unedictor unbekannter von Jakob

Oppenheimer libraries. In the Medicean library there are several commentaries by him on various treatises of Aristotle.*

CASTRO (MENDEZ DE), a Spaniard by birth, lived in Amsterdam. He edited the folio Hebrew-Spanish Bible published there in 1672. The translation is literal and resembles the Ferrara edition.

CASTRO (RODRIGO DE), a Portuguese, studied at Salamanca, and was created a doctor of philosophy and medicine. In order to become a Jew he went to Hamburg, where he practised medicine from 1596 till his death in 1627. He wrote—

1. *De universa morborum muliebrum medicina.*
2. *De officiis medico-politicis.*
3. *De natura et causis pestis, quae anno 1596, Hamburgi grassata est.* These books have all been printed, the first two having passed through several editions. Zakuto calls him an excellent physician.

CATALANO (GERSHON BEN SHELOMO), a scholar of the thirteenth century, died at Perpignan. He wrote *Sha'ar ha-Shamayim*, a philosophical book in three parts. The first treats of the four elements and animate and inanimate things, as birds, beasts, fire, water, snow, hail, clouds, plants, stones, &c.; the second of astronomy, the heavens and the earth; the third of divine things. It was printed in 1547 at Venice, quarto.

CATALANO (SOLOMON ABRAHAM) died in 1492. He wrote *Neve Shalom*, in which he treats of the eternity of the world, divine providence, the divine law, free will, salvation, cabalistic doctrines, prophets and prophecies, sacrifices and offerings, the soul and its condition after death, the resurrection, the formation of the foetus, &c. It was printed at Constantinople and Venice, in quarto. Masius and Aboab praise it highly. A MS. commentary on Alghazil's *Physics* appears to be by the same author.

CHABIBI (JACOB BEN), a Spaniard, lived at Zamora in the fifteenth century. In 1492 he went to Salonichi, where he died at the beginning of the sixteenth century. He wrote *En Yisrael* or *En Ya'akov*, containing all the Hagadot of both Talmuds,

* He was called Bonafoux de l'Argentieres, and there are extant thirty-six works written by him.—TR.

TITVLVS XXI.

42

- ditur. Sunt autem preces in festiuitatibus.
- Machazorim Italicæ æditionis, libris 3.
- Machazorim, Bononiensis æditionis, lib. 8.
- Machazorim opus magnum ex Romania, libris 9.
- Machazorim in Germania excusum, lib. 8.
- Sidurim de beracha (preces quotidianæ) Italicæ characteris, lib. 1. solidis 10. (aliàs, lib. 1. solidis 4.)
- Sidurim e Germania, libra 1. solidis 11.
- Or amim, id est, Lumē populorum, R. Abdia, Bononiensis typi, libra 1.
- Recanati (Videtur scriptum esse Rabi Manahem à Ricanato in Pentateuchum) libris 4.
- Pisce helacor, id est, iudicia sententiarū Recanati, Bononiensis characteris, libra 1.
- Tefuoth harasba, libris 5. Sunt autem responsiones R. Simeon filij Abraham qui dicitur Rasba.
- Sefer chafidim, id est, liber iustorum, libris 2. solidis 10.
- Minuch, libris 4.
- Sefer haiafchar, id est, liber recti uel iusti, libra 1. solidis 10.
- Sefer olam, id est, liber seculi, chronicon Iudaicum, libra 1.
- Meliza, id est, oratio, solidis 4.
- Zeror amor, id est, fasciculus myrrhæ in Pentateuchum, libris 9.
- Ahbecht rochel, id est, pulueres aromatici, solidis 12.
- Biniamin grammatica, fol. 4.
- Caerath kesef, id est, patera argentea, carmine: solidis 6.
- Pisque harasba, id est, iudicia R. Symeonis filij Abraham.
- Mechila in libros Moysi, solidis 2.
- Lefon Limudim, id est, lingua doctorū, (R. Davidis opus grammaticum) libra 1. fol. 4.
- Pirche, id est, Capitula Elia, solid. 12. liber grammaticus.
- Aben Hira, (i. liber filij Sira) lib. 2. fol. 8.
- Tefiloth zadichim, id est, orationes piarum, libris 3.
- Cad hacema. i. cadus farinæ, libris 6.
- Ben hamelech uehanazir (dialogus fabulosus, ut puto, filij regis cum religiofo, R. Abraham Leuitæ) lib. 1. fol. 10.
- Sefer icarim, i. articuli fidei, solidis 4.
- Safa berura, id est, sermo purus, lib. 1. solidis 4.
- Iefod mora, id est, fundamentum pietatis uel timoris domini, lib. 1. fol. 4.
- Sefer hamuhar (uel hazoar, liber de deitate) libris 3.
- Torath adam, id est, lex hominis, lib. 3.
- Abucharham, libris 4. solidis 10.
- Sefer hamanhig, id est, liber de prouidentia & rectore Deo, libris 7.
- Sefer kerisfuth, id est, liber diuortiorū, libris 3. solidis 2.
- Imre noam, id est, sermones elegantes, libra 1. solid. 10.
- Marpe lason, i. lingua salutaris, solid. 10.
- Enodath haleui, id est, cultus uel opus Leuitæ, solidis 16.
- Serith Ioseph, id est, reliquiæ Ioseph, solidis 12.
- Sarasim, id est, radices Kimchi, libris 6.
- Rasi coe (aliàs Raschai rabi Salomon in Mosen) super Pentateuchū et quinque historias, libra 1. solidis 16.
- Sefer hateruma, id est, liber oblationū, libris 2.
- Tefuoth, id est, responsiones haramban, (Ramban uocāt Rabi Moise filium Namaan Gerundensem) libra 1. solidis 10.
- Pefacim uchtaum, id est, iudicia & epistolæ, libra 1.
- Beniamin zeebh, id est, lupus, libris 6. solidis 4.
- Michlol (R. Davidis opus grammaticū ut conijcio) libris 3. solidis 10.
- Emanuelis cōpilatio carminib. libris 3.
- Licute pardes, id est, collectanea Paradisi R. Salomonis, libra 1.
- Seclor etefuot, id est, questiones & responsiones R. David, libris 4.
- Seclor etefuot harasba, solid. 7. Sunt autem questiones & responsiones R. Symeonis filij Abraham.
- Mafforeth hamafforeth tuhbt taam Elia, id est, annotationes dictionum, literarum & accentuum. libra 1. solidis 4.
- Tisbi Elia, libris 6. Et est dictionarium 712. dictionum.
- Arba turim, id est, quatuor uersuum, Sunt autem libri 4. ceremoniarum

Fig. 81. 1545–55, *Bibliotheca universalis*, Conrad Gesner, Zurich
 Courtesy of the Rare Books Division, New York Public Library

(17)

תורה :		felicitas.
פירוש הזוהר	8	Coment. in Zoar, Cabalá.
ב'אורים על ס' הגזוז והמזנה	9	Philosophia.
ס' תמשקל	10	De <i>Pondere</i> .
מצודה דוד	11	Caballisticum.
ככלל יופי פי' על קהלת	12	Coment. in Ecclesiastic.
רקדוק כוהר'ר יצחק עזי'א	13	Gramaticæ R. Yshac Uziel.
פי ס' הכופת	14	De probalitate veritatis.
אדם קדמון סדר האצילות אדיר	15	Cabala de influentia, emanatione & creatione.
האוינו' כטי ולא מטי' ח כלכ'ם		

In Octavo.

ס' ההלים עם לאטין	1	Psalmi: linguam Hebr. Latin.
קצור חיבת הלבבות	2	De bene vivendi.
ספר היראה	3	De timore & penitentia.
ספר תקוני שבת מלכתא	4	Precatio diei Sabat, modo Cabalistic.
מסעות ר בנימן לאטין	5	Mansiones Bejamim de Tudela.
ארבעה ועשרים פאריץ ז' כרכים	6	Biblia, 7.voll. Paris.
טעמי המצות אנרת אורחות עולם	7	Ratio preceptos. de 7 climat. mundi, & tres partes ejus Asia, Affrica, Europa.
בחנת עולם עם לאטין	8	Examen mundi, cum Latin.
מלאכת ההגיון שמע הטבעי קצור	9	De Logica, & Phisica natural, compend. de Aben Rased. de productione mundi.
אבן רשד'י פלח הרמון	10	Gramatica; clavis Sententia Talmudic.
דרכי נועם שרשת נבלות עין חיים	11	De cerimonia, & jures.
רוקח סהר'יל	12	Gramatica, & Sintaxis Kimhi.
מכלול קמחי	13	Antiquitar. Josefii.
יוסיעון פראנקפורט	14	Coment. in Pentateuchu. R. Selomo Yshaki.
רשי על תורה	15	Chronicka. Otomana, & Galica.
כפר דברי הימים למלכי צרפת ומלכי בירת אושמן החינר	16	Gramatica.
מהלך שבילי הרעת	17	Sulchan Aruch, de jure & ceremonis
שלחן ערוך עם משה רבקה ד' כרכים		E Judeo-

1693,

Fig. 82. *Catalogus Librorum*, Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, Amsterdam
 Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary

מסכת ראש השנה

עם פירוש רש"י ותוספות והראש והוספה
 עוד חידושי מהרש"א • למר יעקב
 ולמר קשישא • בשולי
 היריעה • למען ימלא
 הארץ דעה :

עשה כדרך קני למען ישא ליום בכרך חתולו ציחוס הנוראים
 שקהא שגורה כמי כל אים ישראל לשמור ולעשות

מן שדפס מקדם באמשטרדם

נדפס פה סק יעסניץ

במסות וההוצאות האלוף והנעלה כהר"ר קלונימוס קלמן בא"א הא"ח הל"ץ
 יהודה לוי יצ"ו : משפחת יפה ומשפחת שפירא : שנתמבר
 בעק מצוה הזאת עם בעל המדפיס :

נדפוס כר"ר ישראל בר אברהם ג"ל

בית תלמודא בית

Fig. 83. *Rosh Ha-Shanah*, title page, Jessnitz


 (בשם ה' רמב"ם)

משנה תורה

היד החזקה
 להגשר הגדול הנאון רבינו משה בר מימון זצ"ל

ע"ס. השנת הראשונה בליל. החדש הרביעי בשנת. והתקן משנה להאמן המעביר רבינו חיים קצור זצ"ל
 הגדול ע"ס. והנהגת משגיחיו. החדש רבינו שבע. והרב והמלמד הגדול. והביט על הלכות
 קדושים ועל כל הנהגות השייכות להלכות אלו ולהלכות שבת ומועד. ועם פירוש
 פקדים על רבני הרב והמלמד והמלמד. גם שמו של המעביר
 ג'ולתה החביבה והיה על פניו הארץ והיה על דרך אלמא
 בנות ליל רבני רבני מנו אשר
 ביום שבאשרו.

ע"ס. כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך
 מלשון האמן מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך
 והיה מלך מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך
 ומה גם שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך
 ומה גם שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך או כל שיש לו כבוד מלכות מלך

חלק שני
 "מהנה המנהג העיקר גדול בעקר רבני חיים זצ"ל. והנה המנהג העיקר לקדוש ה' לשבת.

גרסא בקק יעסניץ
 תחת המלכה
 לראשונה הודיעו המלך והמלכה ומהנה המנהג העיקר לקדוש ה' לשבת.



Cum Privilegio Serenissimi

מהנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר
 והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר
 והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר והנה המנהג העיקר

MATYON TOM II

Fig. 84. 1739-42, Mishneh Torah, Moses ben Maimon (Rambam), Jessnitz



עם כל הנמצא בספרי האלפסי שנרפסו לפניו עד היום חדשים גם ישנים

והיה לנו והוספנו כזה על אשר היו לפנינו. והמהלכות אשר לבעלי דתוספורת וסמיון וסלג וסור ויתר
 מהפוסקים והמפרשים עם הרב, ארפס אל עם איזה דינים וקושיות ותירוצים והדושי רבינו ישעיה אדרון
 זל הנקראים בשם **שלטי הגבורים** וככל שלשה הלקי הספר הזה בכלל הוספנו על
 הראשונים השגרות מן מרחבמים שחשנו כגון בעל העיטור הראב"ר רבינו יונה הראש זל *
אין נמי תשובות שעשו שום אחד מהגבורים זל על השגות שנעשו לרבינו אלפסי
 זל או שכאר רעתו ודבריו של הרב זל או תשובות שהשיב הרב זל בעצמו
 לשאלים עם החדשים והוספורת מהלכות ככל אשר תמצא דיו
 ויכל הגליון: **גם** לא יחסר בו הוקדו דיני דברדכי מסודר
 להלכות כל פרטי דיניו בקצור איש על דגלו באותות
 פמנו יצא הקורא בו מיד את מבוקשו *

אשר כל תוצר וליד והצמח המרובי בסידין ושוטל במטה יוספטטש מברוך יליא בכפר שמעון ולה צעיר
 התלמידים בערות חנן הדעת לזכות את הרבים ובהקדמה שעשה התלמיד הגלל לספר הזה דוסף אסין
 להדפיס ערבי הרב זל בפסקיו ומנין המהלכות שיש לבינו מהפוסקים שארזו עמו * והרחיב לבאר
 תועלת כל החוספת שהוסף בספרי הרב זל כמו * ובהקדמה והיא יטעם המועם מעם סן
 ופריה ושתוק להבו: **וְיֵאָמְרוּ** לתת דברי בעל המאור זל וספר הגדלות בכל
 שלשה תהליקים אל תוך הספרי במקום הראילי וליה להליק אותו
 הספר בפני עצמו למען יהיה הכל במשולח ערוך

ועליו לה שבה לאחון הכל אשר לא חשבויר נאל סרביז תורה בישראל נתון בלב אחר קדוש מחבבו ארין ישראל שמו
 במהר משתן שושן מלא דעת ויראת תלוי: להדפיס האלפסי חלו שיחה שלם כפי האפשר לא יחסר בו חסון וכל
 עשותות וחסות לכו רק לזכות הרבים ורצה לבנו מסון כיו להעשר ספר הרב אלפסי זל על מלאה

ובכן הוספנו בו שנים מסכתות אה מסכת בכורות ומסכת נדרים אשר התחיל הרב זל להביאם בהלכותיו ולא
 אסתייע ליה מילתא * וזכת הנשר תנחול תרמבן זל שתגלגל זכות גער הלכותיו על יד כאשר כתב הרמבן זל: ונתת
 שתי מסכתות וגם העיר על יד הרב רבינו יצחק בר ששת זל כמה פעמים בתשובותיו: מלבד
 שהלשון מהלכות האלה יעיר עליון היות קצת שפתן הרב אלפסי זל

גם יס מביאם לתוך מסכתות הנוסחים סוף זל בספרו ועד על זה בו ידועתא סוף זל אסתי דרבי הרב זל טעם בחכמו זל בר ירון
 אע"פ זל לן קצתו ונתעבד לכוניא לזור תעלמות חכמת סוכ זל נתנו דמענבא עבר כסחא טימא בסמיא סיה סין
 מסכתות הנו עם מחסום וחוסים אסתי משין ידוע מדך סוף סלכות הרב זל לזון יסס סבר סרב
 זל אסתי עמי כל יסחא עליו סלמיא יססי לז יסתי כל בו סריו וסמנו סרס
 אין משיירין פואה באלפס:

נרפס תרת מסכת הארון **ויספסיאן נונאנה קולונה** ירה בבית הגדיבוהקצין כמר
 טוביה פואה ימו * ותרי ראשית מלאכתו בעיר **סביוניטה** יוסר הארד
 שנת ואל **שדיו** יתן לבם הרבים

Fig. 85. 1554-55, *Hilkhot Rav Alfasi*, Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi (Rif), Sabbioneta
 Courtesy of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Yosef Yitzhak



Fig. 86. 1554, *Ẓeidah la-Derekh*, Menahem ben Aaron ibn Zerah, Ferrara
 Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary

וברידי
 הסופר הוה עוכרא
 שנדרתי להתענות שיני
 וחמישי שיני שנה תמימה ואירע
 שחל תשעה באב אותה שנה להיות ביום ג'
 זהיתירו לי החבר רבי ליפמן מנויאשטאט זל ומה"ר
 כענדל קלונער זל לסעוד אחר תפילת
 טנחה רק תבשיל אחד מעדשים
 בלא שום שומן ובלא
 שום צירוף
 אחר :

סליק מנהגים של מהר אנרהם
 קלונער זל

תם ונשלם תהלה לבורא עולם היום יום
 ב' כסליו שנת שי"ט לפ"ק
 פה ריווא דטרינט

Fig. 87. 1558, *Sefer ha-Minhagin*, Abraham Klausner, colophon, Riva di Trento



Fig. 88. 1587, *Or Ne'era*, Moses ben Jacob Cordovero (Ramak), Venice
 Courtesy of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Yosef Yitzhak



Fig. 89. 1587, *Perush Seder Avodat Yom ha-Kippurim*, Moses ben Jacob
 Cordovero (Ramak), Venice
 Courtesy of the Library of Agudas Chassidei Chabad Ohel Yosef Yitzhak



Fig. 90. 1592, Tractate *Berakhot*, Salonika
 Courtesy of a private collector



Fig. 91. c. 1608, Tractate *Niddah*, title page, Prague

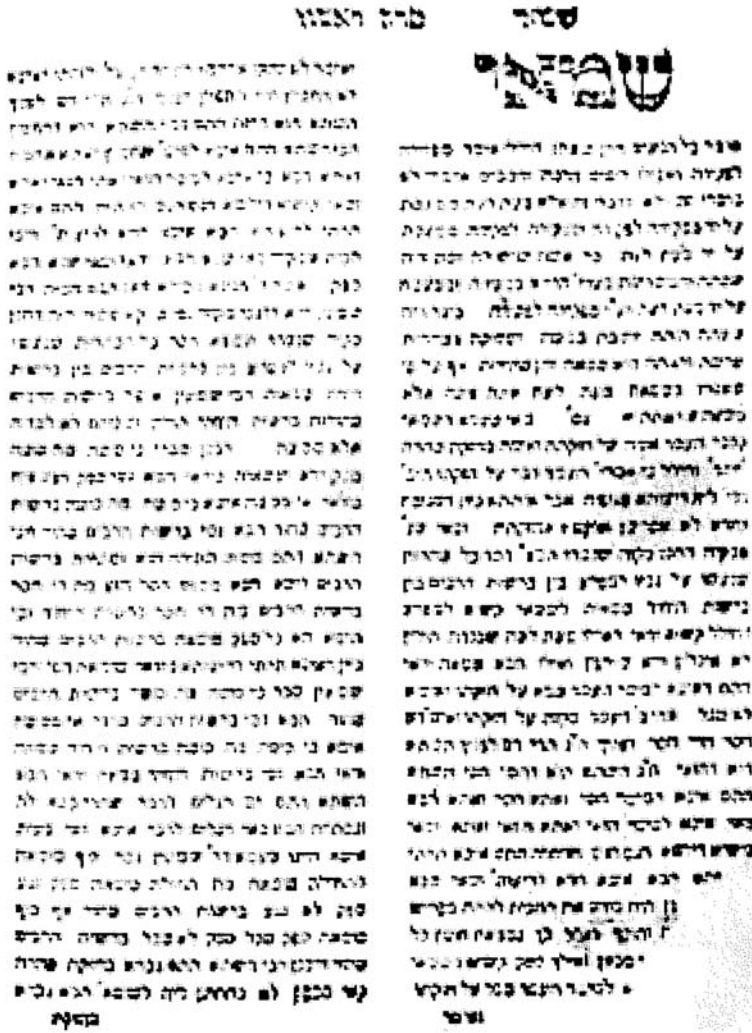


Fig. 92. c. 1608, Tractate *Niddah*, text page, Prague

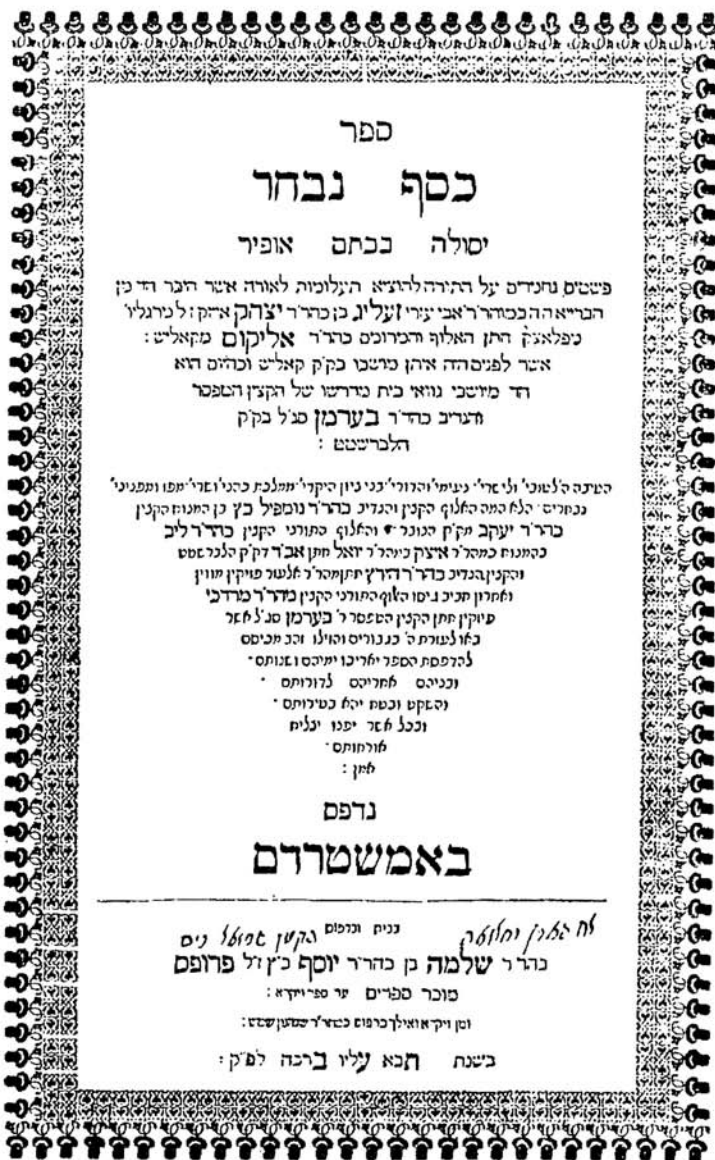


Fig. 93. Titlepage of Margoliot's *Sefer Kesef nivhar*, Amsterdam, 1712
Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, pressmark Ros. 3810 B 4 (Photo I. Heijstek)

פרשת וזאת חכרכה

פליצה כסוף כולל כתיב חכמה וזכר ענזר דלא מקביל קהם לקטילין אל יד לא היה כחוב חסנתן ולא
 עזרין ללי עי שנתה וית' החזקין וקדים שגשגה וית' היה עלים נאלם ולא היה כיתן להזרח יתנך חיה פליצה
 חזקין א"ל לעזת וית' טילין וידועכל ה' יתנים חלי במשנה דלא כקרא חיה אלמה ער דמקבל עיטין ל"י חיה אי אספר
 החזקנים כדכתיב בזלמים כדעה חיל ויוג הפליק אי אספר ער שגשגה ויוג החזקין ויוג החזקין כדעה חכה תפילין
 לעזת ער וית' ספחין ויוג נכסה על ידי תפילין אל יד וחס עמו נכסיק לכן אי אספר לנח האוינים ולקבלת
 אל יד :
 היו טילין בגלם חל החזק דלא הקדומו תפילין אל דלש לאל
 ודשחא כית' קדזר אלמלא הקדומו תפילין אל דלש
 די כסות מכיין ועלים נאלם חזק :

תם ונשלם שבח לאל כורא עולם

נגמר הרסום בערב שבת קידש לכרר ולפרס ויחזק טשה את החורח הואח
 ויתנה אל הבהנים וגי

כדשים ומסוחשים ה' בהנכד החורני משה נלא"י יצחק ד'יאש ול' והאלף החורני כדור"י
 שסעון שמש ונאכן דק"ק אכשטרם יצו :

על ידי הפועל היעוסק במלאכת הקדושי הועציר חיים כהמנוח כהרר גומעל אלט שול ול
 מקק פראנ הכידה ול'ע'ע עוסק במלאכת שמים בקק אמשטרדם יצו :



Fig. 94. Colophon of *Kesef nihar*, Amsterdam, 1712
 Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, pressmark Ros. 3810 B 4 (Photo I. Heijstek)

