

## Between Judaism and Christianity

# The Medieval Mediterranean

Peoples, Economies and Cultures, 400–1500

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# Between Judaism and Christianity

Art Historical Essays in Honor  
of Elisheva (Elisabeth) Revel-Neher

*Edited by*

Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer



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*Cover illustration:* Huntress and male warrior depicted in a panel installed next to the conjectured eastern entrance, inside the basilical hall of the Nile Festival Building. With kind permission of Zeev Weiss.

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## CONTENTS

Preface .....	ix
<i>Katrin Kogman-Appel and Mati Meyer</i>	

Elisheva Revel-Neher .....	1
<i>Ziva Amishai-Maisels</i>	

### PART ONE

#### LATE ANTIQUE JEWISH ART

The Mosaics of the Nile Festival Building at Sepphoris and the Legacy of the Antiochene Tradition .....	9
<i>Zeev Weiss</i>	

Fish-Ta(i)les: Jewish Gold-Glasses Revisited .....	25
<i>Rivka Ben-Sasson</i>	

Jewish Art in Late Antiquity: An Example of Jewish Identity .....	39
<i>Kurt Schubert (d. Feb. 4, 2007)</i>	

### PART TWO

#### EARLY CHRISTIAN ART

Jonas of Aquileia: A Gesture to Constantine the Great .....	55
<i>Margo Stroumsa Uzan</i>	

Donations and Donors as Reflected in the Mosaic Pavements of Transjordan's Churches in the Byzantine and Umayyad Periods .....	73
<i>Lihl Habas</i>	

Johannes of Gaza's <i>Tabula Mundi</i> Revisited .....	91
<i>Rina Talgam</i>	

## PART THREE

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

Cosmology, Art, and Liturgy .....	121
<i>Shulamit Laderman</i>	
The Codex Barbarus Scaligeri, the <i>Christian Topography</i> , and the Question of Jewish Models of Early Christian Art .....	139
<i>Herbert L. Kessler</i>	
Notes on the Illustrations of Ezekiel's Temple Vision in the <i>Postilla litteralis</i> of Nicholas of Lyra .....	155
<i>Walter Cahn</i>	
Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant in Spanish and Sephardic Medieval Manuscripts .....	171
<i>Andreina Contessa</i>	
Purity and Impurity: The Naked Woman Bathing in Jewish and Christian Art .....	191
<i>Sarit Shalev Eyni</i>	
She Who is Not Named: Pilates's Wife in Medieval Art .....	215
<i>Colum Hourihane</i>	

## PART FOUR

## BYZANTINE ART

Eve's Nudity: A Sign of Shame or Precursor of Christological Economy .....	243
<i>Mati Meyer</i>	
Silenus Among the Jews? Anti-Jewish Polemics in Ninth-Century Byzantine Marginal Psalters .....	259
<i>Emma Fanar</i>	

## PART FIVE

## HEBREW ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS

Jewish Scribes and Christian Illuminators: Interstitial Encounters and Cultural Negotiation .....	281
<i>Eva Frojmovic</i>	
The Scales in the Leipzig Mahzor: Penance and Eschatology in Early Fourteenth-Century Germany .....	307
<i>Katrin Kogman-Appel</i>	
The Seal of Solomon the Scribe: The Illustrations of the Albenc Pentateuch of 1340 .....	319
<i>Bezalel Narkiss</i>	
The Hidden Couple: An Unexecuted Under-Drawing in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor .....	353
<i>Dalia-Ruth Halperin</i>	
A Woman's Hebrew Prayer Book and the Art of Mariano del Buono .....	371
<i>Evelyn M. Cohen</i>	
List of Contributors .....	379
Index .....	000
Illustration Section .....	383

JEWISH SCRIBES AND CHRISTIAN ILLUMINATORS\*  
INTERSTITIAL ENCOUNTERS AND  
CULTURAL NEGOTIATION

Eva Frojmovic

A great deal of valuable work on representations of Jews and Judaism in medieval Christian art has moved the debate forward from a position defined in the 1960s, according to which these Christian representations were predicated entirely on the model of anti-Semitism.<sup>1</sup> By contrast, some recent research in the field has highlighted a range of contradictory impulses and scenarios for coexistence.<sup>2</sup> Where Jewish subjectivities are explored, a gradual sea change has led to a reevaluation: Jewish culture is no longer seen as “a closed and suspicious Jewish society, but one that succeeded in maintaining, alongside the hostility, a lively and open dialogue with the Christian milieu.”<sup>3</sup> However, all of these studies remain resolutely based on texts and written documents, and only slowly has there been recognition of the value of art and material culture as documents of history.<sup>4</sup> There is less work that explores Jewish subjectivities

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\* Almost a quarter of a century ago, I had the privilege of studying under Elisheva Revel-Neher. Now I have the privilege of saying thank you by dedicating this essay to her. Elisheva Revel-Neher taught something that I was then not quite ready to learn: to think of the relations between Jews and Christians in medieval art in a framework that transcends the adversarial rhetoric of anti-Semitism. And so it is only fitting that in this tribute essay, I explore the cultural encounter that arose from the collaboration between a Jewish scribe and a Christian illuminator. All translations are mine unless otherwise specified.

<sup>1</sup> Blumenkranz (1966). Kraus (1967), ch. 7 is titled: “Anti-Semitism in Medieval Art.”

<sup>2</sup> Biddick (2003), Lipton (1999) and (2002), Merback (2007), Rowe (2006), Rubin (1999), Weber (2001).

<sup>3</sup> Yuval (2006/2000), 28. The change can be traced among historians across the preceding decade. In chronological order: Yuval (1993) (an essay that had the effect more of an earthquake than of a sea change), Hoffman (1996), Marcus (1996), Einbinder (2002), Goldin (2002), Baumgarten (2004), Kruger (2005), Frassetto (2007), and Elukin (2007).

<sup>4</sup> Yuval (2006/2000), 28 n. 52, suggests that the sea change in the perception of Jewish-Christian cultural relations was anticipated by art historians: “This has long been recognized by art historians... But this view has not been adequately accepted among historians, perhaps because the place of art in the everyday life of Ashkenazic Jewry has not been fully clarified. Or perhaps it is still considered a non-normative manifestation



in medieval art in a new key in relation to Christian visualities, but this field too has been growing.<sup>5</sup>

The danger of focusing nearly exclusively on Christian representations of Jews and Judaism is that we may unwittingly repeat the very same erasure of Jewish subject positions that some of these Christian representations enacted in the first place.<sup>6</sup> To avoid silencing Jewish voices again, this time in scholarship, we must study the other side: how Jews used visual culture to imagine themselves, their history, and their communities. It was this imperative to explore the other side that attracted me to the illuminated Hebrew manuscripts of thirteenth-century Germany. For here, apparently for the first time, there arose a new world of narrative and allegorical images, images that paralleled and responded to the proliferation of images in high medieval Christian culture. My expectation was that the Jewish images would articulate Jewish subjectivities, just as Christian images articulate Christian subjectivities. Or do they?

Actually, any desire to recover an authentic and autonomous medieval Jewish subjectivity in art is bound to be thwarted. Jewish subjectivity is elusive, if not always ghostly. It can be seen as a mirror image of the complex and unstable relationship between co-emergent Jewish and Christian cultures. By co-emergent I mean that Jewish images are not merely passive responses to an assumed monolithic and unchanging Christian image culture, but that each changes in relation to the other's

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of Jewish religious life in the Middle Ages." Important words, fully borne out by Yuval's sole citation of Joseph Gutmann's work from the 1960s and early 1970s, which suggests unfamiliarity with the more recent literature; see next note. Marcus (1996) is exceptional in his weaving together of textual and visual analyses. Bland (2000) occupies a special place, since in his extremely valuable study he discusses Jewish attitudes to the visual, as they emerge from written sources in great detail, but does not link the source analysis to a discussion of actual artefacts. The primacy of lachrymose history is still present in Bland (2000), 141: "Late medieval Jews were a persecuted minority. Oppressed by the church, they did not encounter Christian images and behold them as artistic masterpieces displayed in a museum. The grandeur and sanctity of Christian monuments were invisible to medieval Jewish eyes. Unlike hegemonic medieval Christian intellectuals who were able to discover 'beauty' in ancient polytheistic shrines, vanquished medieval Jews were unable to 'neutralize' Christian artefacts, aesthetize them, and experience them as 'art.'" It remains debatable in what sense medieval Christians understood "art," but at any rate this essay reviews the perceptual question raised by Bland.

<sup>5</sup> From the last decade, I can only name a selection: Bland (2000) (see previous note), Epstein (1997); Frojmovic (2002); Kogmann-Appel (1999), (2000), (2004), and (2006); Shalev-Eyni (2004) and (2007); and Wolfthal (2004).

<sup>6</sup> My thanks to Diane Wolfthal for first raising my awareness of this methodological problem.

culture. I do not mean to say that medieval Jews were constantly keeping an eye on their Christian neighbors. All I suggest is that whether knowingly or not, they were part of a larger cultural formation and that Jewish-Christian relations were part of that formation, whether the individual subjects were aware of it or not.

Jewish subjectivity is one that is always displaced in relation to an imaginary center. This center can take a number of forms, but for most of medieval Jewish history, it is elsewhere and in a different, utopian, time-place, and in art the messianic Jerusalem—not the real present of Speyer, Worms, or Mainz—serves to mark this utopian time and place.

Jewish artistic production occurs in displacement. It takes place in the interstices of social structures that a priori exclude the possibility of Jewish artistic production: the workshop structure and the guild system, the court, the church. All of these institutions excluded Jews, be it as patrons or as producers. By contrast, the preguild lay urban workshops of the early thirteenth century, unstable and staffed by itinerant craftsmen, could and did accommodate a mixed patron-artist relationship. These lay workshops worked for Jewish patrons as if they were *lay* patrons, that is, in a way structurally similar to the way in which they worked for the Christian laity.

Rather than seeing this displacement and this interstitial production as a weakness, I emphasize these characteristics, because they engendered something very special: an art that bears and exhibits the scars of the Jewish-Christian encounter in the sense that the physical defacement of the miniatures can be seen literally as a scar inflicted on the body of the book.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, it is equally an art that demarcates—makes marks on and draws boundaries around—the dominant Christian discourse on/of images by means of its critical use of Christian images.

In this essay, I focus on an instance in which Jewish patrons commissioned Jewish scribes and Christian illuminators in a self-conscious attempt to follow the practice of Christian lay people, especially the nobility, of commissioning sumptuous illuminated books as status symbols. My case study is the so-called Munich Rashi, Bayerische

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<sup>7</sup> I am indebted to Mieke Bal (response to my paper at the “Migratory Aesthetics” conference, AHRC Centre for Cultural Analysis, Theory and History, University of Leeds, 2006) for her suggestion that one might see the defacement of the manuscript as a scar of the encounter.

Staatsbibliothek Cod. Hebr. 5.<sup>8</sup> The manuscript, born out of considerable efforts at cultural mediation and translation, is a commentary on rather than an imitation of Christian image practices. Following Hamid Naficy's work on "accented cinema," I call this Jewish commentary "accented manuscript illumination."<sup>9</sup>

Naficy's book is devoted to contemporary filmmaking by exilic, diasporic, and postcolonial filmmakers, perhaps a surprising inspiration for an essay on Jewish scribes and patrons and Christian illuminators. And yet, Naficy's book made me see and recognize new things in this manuscript. Naficy states: "If the dominant cinema is considered universal and without accent, the films that diasporic and exilic subjects make are accented." Naficy is quick to point out that the accent is not a literally audible phenomenon: "...the accent emanates not so much from the accented speech of the diegetic characters as from the displacement of the filmmakers and their artisanal production modes."<sup>10</sup> I argue that something similar happened in the visual culture of the medieval Jewish communities in Christian Europe in relation to the dominant Christian image culture. The difference is that authorship is much more dispersed, in that the actual painters could be Christians working for Jewish scribes and patrons *who have to be considered co-authors*.

Indeed, in Hebrew manuscript production, displacement of makers and production modes vis-à-vis dominant models can be observed: itinerant scribes and migrant patrons lead to unstable partnerships with Christian craftsmen in an interstitial space not fully controlled by either the monastic scriptorium or the urban guild: "Another element of accented cinema is stylistic and iconographic: They signify and signify upon exile and diaspora by expressing, allegorizing, commenting upon, and critiquing the home and host societies and cultures and the deterritorialized conditions of the filmmakers."<sup>11</sup>

Of course, some of this is not relevant to our discussion. After all, the visual language of all, not just Jewish, medieval visualities differ radically from modern visual languages. Nevertheless, I was powerfully struck by the poetic articulation of the scribe's exilic condition in his

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<sup>8</sup> Klemm (1998), vol. 1, 198–202, with older literature, to which add the brief but dense entry in Steinschneider (1895), 2.

<sup>9</sup> Naficy (2001).

<sup>10</sup> Naficy (2001), 4.

<sup>11</sup> Naficy (2001), 4.

colophon, and by the performance of an erasure of Christian image culture in the images of the Munich Rashi.

### *Cultural Negotiation*

In this first part of this essay, I focus on the concrete processes of cultural negotiation between minority and majority subjects that are jointly involved in production. I am interested in tracing the process itself: encounter, communication, and the back and forth of negotiation between two unequal partners of which the “weaker one,” the Jewish patron, is in this case the customer with “purchasing power” and has to be treated as such, so that the normative Jewish-Christian power relationships are temporarily suspended.

The encounter I ask us to imagine appears at first look to have been an encounter in the everyday: in 1233, a scribe entered the workshop of an illuminator in the city of Würzburg, possibly headed by Master Heinrich “the Painter” (Hainricus pictor). At that time, this lay illuminator’s workshop was developing a synthesis of French and Thuringian aristocratic models, a synthesis that had great appeal to noble lay patrons in the area.<sup>12</sup> The workshop does not seem to have been part of a monastic scriptorium, and although one ecclesiastical and one monastic book survive from its production, it was known for its high-quality, deluxe devotional books for aristocratic lay customers—just what the scribe’s patron was looking for.<sup>13</sup> The scribe probably had with him some large parchment folio quires—probably not the whole book—that he wanted illuminated for his wealthy patron. What was required was a comprehensive cycle of initial word panels with biblical narrative scenes, one full-page miniature, and a number of pages decorated with ornamental bands and grotesque marginal figures. The scribe indicated

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<sup>12</sup> Engelhart (1987) traces the output of this workshop, with due emphasis on its luxury products, though he was not conscious of the probable lay patronage of several of them. Elisabeth Klemm’s introduction to her 1998 catalogue (vol. 1) constitutes an important updating of the evidence.

<sup>13</sup> These facts have been inferred by Klemm from the colophon of the Dominican Bible, 1246, where Hainricus is named as a lay person, and from the deluxe character of the surviving Psalters from this area; see Klemm (1998), vol. 1, 202: “We have to assume the production [of the Munich Rashi] in an illuminator’s workshop that worked for diverse patrons (probably not a monastic scriptorium).” By contrast, Engelhart (1987), 17, worked on the assumption that the Hainricus workshop was monastic.

that the quires he had brought were part of a very substantial volume, consisting of hundreds of folios. This was a business proposition that might keep the workshop employed for a good while.

However, what made this encounter not so everyday was the identity of the scribe and of his patron: they were both Jewish. Shelomo ben Shemuel (Solomon son of Samuel) was a member of a well-respected family of scribes in Würzburg. We can trace the activity of several members of this family in the 1230s, and what they all have in common is that they wrote texts for books that received a new form of decoration: narrative initial word panels—not ornamental, but figurative. This kind of illustration seems to have been unknown in medieval Hebrew manuscripts prior to this period (the early 1230s). The book whose quires Shelomo was discussing with the Christian illuminator may in fact have been the first ever such project to be attempted (certainly no earlier experiment of this kind survives). Shelomo's patron was Rabbi Yosef ben Rabbi Moshe (Master Joseph, son of Master Moses).<sup>14</sup> Yosef ben Moshe was a man of substance: specified as “from Ulm,” he is named in the colophon of another large-scale illumination project, the three-volume Ambrosian Bible (Milan Biblioteca Ambrosiana Inf 30–32). Given his documented involvement in two prominent illuminated manuscripts, we can be sure that R. Yosef was just as much, if not more, of a driving force behind this project as the scribe. If he had social, economic, or educational/scholarly contacts with Christians, he may even have known and admired the kinds of deluxe prayer books that were becoming fashionable among the local nobility just at that time.<sup>15</sup>

The encounter is one between unequal partners, but a close look at the relationship yields some surprises. Shelomo signaled his belonging to a local context by signing his colophon as “Shelomo ben Shemuel the scribe from Würzburg.” By contrast, the Christian illuminator may have been a newcomer to Würzburg, possibly a migrant from northern Germany who arrived in the wake of the installation of the Würzburg's bishop from Thuringia. Heinrich “the painter” seems to have employed a heterogeneous team of assistants/partners, some of whom were familiar with French models. Despite the evidence for Heinrich's status as head of a heterogeneous and unstable workshop, we are at first inclined to

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<sup>14</sup> “Rabbi” in this context must be seen as an honorific title, not denoting the status of an ordained or accepted rabbinical scholar.

<sup>15</sup> The most splendid instance is the Psalter Munich Clm 3900 by the same workshop; see Klemm (1998), vol. 1, 204.

think of Shelomo, not Heinrich, as the migrant—because the scribe was Jewish. Admittedly, the Jewish community of Würzburg was possibly no more than three generations old, but by the 1230s it was well established, despite intermittent threats from Christian authorities, and boasted eminent rabbinic scholars. Würzburg was by then part of a chain of Jewish settlements that extended eastward from the Rhine (Speyer, Worms, Mainz) along the Main River and all the way to Regensburg (and ultimately Vienna).<sup>16</sup>

From a traditional Jewish point of view, the project that Shelomo brought to Heinrich's workshop was unprecedented, even daring. This comprehensive and ambitious decorative plan, which remained unfinished, was to comprise:

- Over seventy narrative illuminations at the heads of books and Parashiot (weekly Torah readings). These were planned in a hierarchic structure, that is, larger title miniatures over two text columns at the beginning of biblical books and smaller ones over one column for the Parashiot. Fifteen were completed (thirteen in Genesis and Exodus and one each at the beginning of Job and Daniel, respectively).<sup>17</sup>
- Sixteen decorative pages at the end of biblical books (five were completed at the end of Genesis and Deuteronomy, three at the end of Job, and two at the end of Ecclesiastes without colors; the last pages 252v–255v were prepared but not illuminated).
- A full-page miniature of the Menorah (the seven-branched golden candelabrum in the sanctuary).
- A plethora of decorative letters and borders throughout the text.

In addition, the scribe, an able calligrapher and competent draftsman, added renditions of Rashi's maps of Canaan near the end of the Book of Numbers<sup>18</sup> and a sketch of a sukkah, a palm branch, and a basin in the Book of Kings.

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<sup>16</sup> Elbogen (1934), 475–496, Avneri (1968), 928–936, and Müller (1993) with some comments on the medieval tombstones discovered in 1987; Müller (2001), esp. 515–527; Flade (1996). On the Jewish scholars of Regensburg, see Kanarfogel (2006).

<sup>17</sup> It is not known why the project was abandoned unfinished. It is noteworthy that the workshop worked simultaneously on different quires in different parts of the Rashi manuscript. These ruptures also happened in Christian manuscripts, e.g., the Kassel Willehalm; see Holladay (1996).

<sup>18</sup> Gruber (1994).

Nothing similar had ever been attempted in a Hebrew manuscript before. It was to be illuminated in the full panoply of the illuminator's palette of colors, including burnished gold. Within the Jewish community, this unprecedented project seemed to have made possible only through the services of the recently established (Christian) lay illuminator. Previously, any patron wanting a Christian illuminator to work for him would have had to approach a monastic scriptorium—evidently not a viable proposition for Jewish patrons.

How do we know the identities of the *dramatis personae*? Shelomo ben Shemuel and Yosef ben Moshe are named in the lengthy, learned, and allusive, partly rhymed colophon at the end of the second volume of Munich Ms. Hebr 5 (full text and translation in the appendix). The illuminator is nowhere named and his identity had to be extrapolated from stylistic features that link this Hebrew manuscript with Latin manuscripts from Würzburg. The artist, or rather artistic team, of the Munich Rashi is, as Hanns Swarzenski noted in the 1930s, a Würzburg workshop responsible for the Würzburg Dominican Bible of 1246 and a number of splendid, but undated manuscripts for the church and (mostly) nobility. The workshop produced two projects for church institutions, an undated evangelistary and the four-volume Dominican Bible of 1246 (the only work signed by Heinrich).<sup>19</sup> However, it is arguable that Heinrich's reputation and livelihood rested on the production of deluxe Psalters for the aristocratic laity. Since Swarzenski's survey, the Munich Rashi has been consensually attributed to this workshop, as its only work for Jewish patrons. In the 1980s, Engelhart still assumed that the workshop had to be part of a monastic scriptorium, but was unable to identify and locate it.<sup>20</sup> By contrast, more recent scholarship assumes an urban lay identity.<sup>21</sup> It seems plausible that the emergence of a lay workshop made it possible for Jews to avail themselves of its services within a secular urban economy.

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<sup>19</sup> Dominican Bible, Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. p. th. F. m. 9/II and IV, vols. I and III destroyed; Evangelistary, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 23256; Psalter, Munich, Universitätsbibliothek, 4<sup>o</sup> Cod. Ms. 24; Psalter Los Angeles, Getty Center, formerly Aachen, Collection Ludwig, Ms VIII 2; Psalter fragments, London, British Library, Add. 17687 and Los Angeles, Getty Center, Ms 4, leaf 1 and 2; Psalter, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 3900; the Psalter Melk, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms 1903. For thirteenth-century Franconian illumination, see Engelhart (1987) and Klemm (1998), vol. 1, 184–210. Most of the manuscripts, including the Munich Rashi, are discussed there.

<sup>20</sup> Engelhart (1987), vol. 1, 17.

<sup>21</sup> Klemm (1998), vol. 1, 202.

The encounter between the Jewish scribe and the Christian illuminator left two parallel, now barely visible, traces inscribed in the margins of the manuscript: a set of Latin instructions for the illuminator, presumably written by Heinrich or a senior member of the workshop, and a set of Hebrew letter templates, written for the benefit of the Christian illuminator by someone versed in Hebrew calligraphy—presumably Shelomo ben Shemuel, the scribe. Neither of these is easy to illustrate in the present essay, because they were written in leadpoint, then erased, and finally cropped by the binders.<sup>22</sup> But even the page layout of the book may be another trace of collaboration, as although the layout was normally determined by the scribe, if images were intended it is possible that the layout of decorated pages was coordinated between scribe and illuminator before the writing began.

The surviving fragments of instructions in Latin specify subject matter. They name the *dramatis personae*: Abraham, Isaac, Esau and Jacob, Job and [his] wife; they ascribe fairly minimal verbs and actions: Esau “comes to meet” Jacob (fol. 29v); Joseph “is sold” (fol. 34). Sometimes, they just name a scene: “*Somnium Pharaonis* . . .” Pharaoh’s dream (the rest of the inscription, which probably specified which dream was to be illustrated, is illegible; the image, on fol. 37, shows the appearance of the seven fat cows).

The Hebrew templates for the initial words, which Elisabeth Klemm first noted in her 1998 catalogue, are very unusual, possibly unique. They consist of very carefully drawn, “lifesize” outlines of the complete words. These letters were meant to be painted in thick strokes, but the template is drawn in thin leadpoint, so the scribe—for that is who must have done them—took care to draw the outlines of each letter in a double line (Fig. 1: detail of fol. 21v).<sup>23</sup>

Although the written records are in Latin and in Hebrew, we have to assume that the conversation was held in the vernacular. What this means for the Christian partner is relatively clear: a local dialect of Middle High German. Whether the Jewish partner spoke Yiddish (leaving out the Hebrew words unintelligible to his Christian interlocutor)

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<sup>22</sup> On conservation grounds, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek will not photograph these details (or take any new shots of the mss). Figure 1 is the only one where I was able to capture a bit of the template by scanning and then enlarging a detail from the slide provided by the library.

<sup>23</sup> It is not clear what happened on fol. 6, where the template provided did not spell out the first word of the Parasha, but instead named the subject of the picture (“tevah,” the ark), and that is what the illuminator inserted into the initial word panel.



or whether he was also able to speak Middle High German we do not know for certain, as the oldest written record in Yiddish postdates our period by forty years. This vernacular was not just a range of spoken dialects, but Middle High German was also the language of verse romances, poems, and vernacular religious works for lay consumption. In other words, German (and to a lesser degree, Yiddish) occupied a space that was marked as lay and was thus at least partly outside the orbit of clerical culture with its threatening overtones of ecclesiastical universalism.

Latin, Hebrew, German, and perhaps Yiddish; speaking, drafting notes, and templates; writing a book and creating images—we can see how many acts of translation were needed to accomplish the collaboration that Shelomo and Hainricus pictor's workshop undertook to produce the volume. Moreover, each act of translation involved a process of cultural negotiation between the Jewish and Christian cultures that these men inhabited. Although not quite the same as an Iranian exile watching a film with Turkish subtitles in a Paris cinema with the help of a translating friend, these processes add up to a “chain of linguistic and cultural signification” characteristic of diasporic cultural production.<sup>24</sup>

The verbal communication concerned a program of biblical illustration, that is, an iconographic program, as well as a mode of representation that initially resembled Christian art, but ended up diverging significantly. In the next section of this essay, I focus on the mode of representation, which is neither iconography nor style in isolation. It is, rather, the method by which a narrative is pictured so as to transform Christian modes of representation into Jewish ones.

### *An Accented Mode of Representation*

The problem that necessitated a new mode of representation was the specter of idolatry. Jewish communities in Christendom wished to distance themselves from the Christian image worship, which was considered idolatrous. As images in Christian religious manuscripts served devotional, not just illustrative ends, images in illuminated manuscripts also had the potential of being idolatrous. To illustrate the problem and the solutions arrived at in this manuscript, I juxtapose two Jewish

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<sup>24</sup> Naficy (2001), 3.

reactions to Christian images: a denial of the Christian image and a rejection of the Christian image. The denial of the Christian image is embodied in the aniconic full-page miniature in the book, the only such image in this book and an image that presents the touchstone for the mirage of purity and segregation-as-holiness. The rejection of the Christian image can be found in a narrative image where the relationship between Christian image making and Jewish rejection of Christian cult images reaches its crisis.

The denial of the Christian (cult and devotional) image can be exemplified by the only full-page miniature in this book, which depicts the seven-branched golden candelabrum, the Menorah (Cod. Hebr. 5/I, fol. 65; Fig. 2). The page constitutes a meeting point between two distinct pictorial traditions, the devotional and the didactic. The Menorah was a monumental image of the Israelite cult, now transformed into an image of memory, devotional reflection, and messianic hope. At the same time, the Menorah is part of a parafigurative tradition of didactic, diagrammatic illustration of Rashi's works. This separate tradition is independent of the art of the illuminator. Rather, it rests in the hand of the scribe-draftsman. There are numerous manuscripts of Rashi's great Bible commentary whose only illustrations are didactic: they contain unilluminated drawings of the same shape of Menorah as the Munich Rashi, according to Rashi's exegesis: with its flames converging toward the central flame and its stepped footstool.

These exegetical details had to rely on a scribal drawing or an illustrated (though probably not illuminated) model manuscript, which would also have contained diagrammatic maps of the Holy Land and the Sanctuary. Indeed, the Munich Rashi does include these diagrammatic maps carefully laid out and labeled by the scribe (fol. 140), who clearly followed an established model. The Menorah page, then, negates the art of the Christian illuminator, especially the tradition of devotional images in manuscripts, but at the same time shows evidence that the artist took advantage of the same techniques. With the full panoply of the artist's colors and gold leaf—and gold is central to the iconography of this golden sanctuary implement—the Menorah is that great aniconic icon, a nonfigurative and hence nonidolatrous object of devotion and cult.<sup>25</sup> This status as aniconic icon is reinforced by the flat, diagrammatic style. The Menorah may also have served as a "Gegenentwurf," a

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<sup>25</sup> Revel-Neher (1998); Frojmovic (2002); Kogman-Appel (2004), 156–168.

counterdesign to the Christian appropriations of the Jewish Sanctuary, appropriations we find from the time of Cassiodorus onward and quite commonly in the cathedrals (Essen, Braunschweig, Milan, etc.) of the high medieval Holy Roman Empire.<sup>26</sup> It is in fact quite possible that the *Menorah*, initially one didactic image among several, rose to such iconic prominence in Jewish visual culture in response to the Christian appropriations. So even here, in the supposed purity of the aniconic, in the total denial of the Christian figurative world, we still find hybridity and cultural negotiation rather than separation.

The full challenge presented by Christian image culture, production, and consumption becomes visible in the narrative panels introducing the Parasha (weekly Torah reading) incipits and book incipits of the commentary text. What was at stake between the Jewish scribe as an agent of his patron and the Christian illuminator was the simultaneous attraction of the beauty of Christian art and the repulsion of Christian idolatry. A Jewish figurative art became possible only because the Jewish scribe and the Christian illuminator were able to jointly develop a nonidolatrous mode of figuration.<sup>27</sup> In fact, for about a century to come, illuminators of Hebrew manuscripts in southern Germany employed a series of representational modes designed to avoid the stigma of the idolatrous image, a taboo that crops up in many places in rabbinic literature. Among these modes were figurative images where the faces were substituted with those of animals and birds—faces covered by ample hair, by wreaths and helmets and hoods, and even hands. The earliest experiment with nonidolatrous images is the one we find in the Munich Rashi: faces blanked out by means of a careful scraping away of facial features, especially the eyes. But that is not how the work was planned. It was rather designed as a fully figurative cycle of images. In the first instance, the faces were all fully painted and only erased in the course of the work. Why? And how was this erasure understood then, and how can we understand it within a critical framework?

An analysis of folio 47v can help us to appreciate what was at stake (Fig. 3). On folio 47v, the Christian world of figurative images clashed with Jewish taboos. Because the Latin instructions do not survive,

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<sup>26</sup> Bloch (1963).

<sup>27</sup> The Munich Rashi was probably not the only example of Jewish-Christian collaboration. I have found Latin instructions for the illuminator also in the Laud Mahzor, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Or. 321, an undated manuscript of the later thirteenth century.

we cannot be sure what the illuminator (or the scribe, for that matter) thought the subject was to be. The text this image prefaces is the commentary to *Va'era*, the second Parasha in the book of Exodus (Ex. 6:2–9:35). This panel is the first visual appearance of the biblical Moses in this manuscript, and it is thus reasonable to interpret it as some form of “Calling of Moses,” since that is what the narrative structure requires at this point in order to effectively introduce the hero. The text in the early part of this Parasha does not offer much narrative plot. It opens with God revealing his name to Moses, a flashback (historical recapitulation of the divine relationship with the Hebrews), a series of orders and instructions from God to Moses and Aaron regarding the Hebrews and Pharaoh, and a genealogical excursus.

Moses' mission gets off to an inauspicious start when the Hebrews disbelieve his promise of redemption.<sup>28</sup> Which particular moment in the biblical narration the image is supposed to represent is unclear, but what is clear is that the illuminator broke a major Jewish taboo: the prohibition against the divine image. Moses, larger than the two other men and placed in the center of the composition, is conversing with God. For none other than God could have been pictured in the quarter-circle at the top right. The (empty) scroll in his left hand and his right hand gesturing toward the right indicate that he is engaged in a conversation with the heavenly apparition. The two men on the left function as witnesses. The central personage in the red mantle mediates between the left and right half of the composition by seemingly pointing out the heavenly quarter-circle to his companion on the extreme left. That companion has half lifted both hands, palms up. Although the three individuals in this image appear to be tied together into a meaningful scene, this impression is misleading. The composition is made up from stock figures that give the appearance of being specific to one particular verse or situation, but do not serve to identify chapter and verse. They create a generic image of Moses as the man who saw God face-to-face and lived.

This image, I believe, was the turning point of the project, for until then the narrative situations had been cleverly chosen to avoid having to picture the Divinity. Noah greets the dove, Jacob dreams of the heavenly ladder, and Lot is rescued from the conflagration of Sodom and Isaac from the prepared altar, all by angels without direct divine

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<sup>28</sup> The Parasha *Va'era* comprises Ex. 6:2–9:35.

intervention. But on fol. 47 the illuminator breached the terms of an agreement (however it may have been framed) and represented a direct encounter between man and God, which was unacceptable to the patron and his society. The illuminator was forced to erase the quarter-circle completely. This was done very carefully, so that much of the black contour that delineated the heavens as a separate realm in the first place was preserved. The resulting, amputated image can be seen to be “truly” judaized, in that Moses can be imagined as conversing with a radically aniconic deity. The contour of the quarter-circle alone is in fact sufficient to guarantee our understanding of the image’s iconography: a bust, probably haloed, and not just a hand in a cloud. Once the offending divine image was erased, the taboo was lifted.<sup>29</sup>

However, a suspicion of idolatry appears to have been raised, and the Jewish partners in this venture decided that even the human faces had to be defaced in order to stay on the safe side of idolatry. This was a significant step. My contention is that the Christian illuminator was asked to undertake this erasure himself, since it was done with almost surgical care and skill, trying to preserve as much as possible of the image while erasing the facial features, especially the eyes (some mouths are still extant).

We do not know how Shelomo ben Shemuel explained the need for defacement to his Christian partner, but he had to find a way of conveying to him the urgency of annulling the idols. Nullification of the idols is in fact the technical term for what happened with the defacement of the Munich Rashi. This term is first explained in the Mishnah and the Talmud, and then codified in Moses Maimonides’ *Mishneh Torah*.<sup>30</sup> The crucial stipulation is that for nullification to be valid, the idolater himself must deface the idol before the Jewish patron/buyer/finder takes possession. The rabbinic sources, which clearly consider sculptures and three-dimensional objects, recommend chiseling off noses or ears. In the two-dimensional realm of manuscripts, eyes were the more common focus of the nullifier’s efforts. Thus a member of the Christian workshop

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<sup>29</sup> At the end of the thirteenth century, a similar collaboration between a Christian illuminator and Jewish scribe led to a similar “clean-up” operation in the Kaufmann *Mishneh Torah*; Cohen (1988).

<sup>30</sup> The nullification of idols is regulated in the treatise Avodah Zara, ch. 4, of the Mishnah (1933), 442, and Babylonian Talmud, Avodah Zarah fols. 52b–53b, Babylonian Talmud (1961), Seder Nezikin, vol. 4, 267–272; Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Idolatry, ch. 8, sections 8 and 10.

had to carry out the defacement, not the Jewish scribe or patron. Once nullified, the idolatrous image is permitted for Jewish use.<sup>31</sup>

The erased facial features, especially the eyes, are the scars of the encounter between Christian and Jewish image cultures. The result is what I call an accented mode of representation. This accented mode modifies the Christian way of representing narrative, while quite literally placing it under erasure. This mode of representation, an ironic commentary on the condition of being a minority, opens the way to the tradition of narrative images populated by faceless or animal faced personae, persons that cannot face or be faced by us. Their defacement has the immediate effect of lifting them out of Christian image culture and even of distinguishing them out of the potentially neutral sphere of secular “images of adventure.” But the eye and the brain quickly get used to supplying the missing features and even imagining their “expression.” Thus narrative can take place in this accented mode.

### *Narrating Exile*

The accented mode of representation has to be borne in mind when examining the narrative program. Thérèse Metzger subjected these miniatures to a rigorous scrutiny and uncovered a number of discrepancies vis-à-vis the biblical text and Jewish iconographic tradition (see the appendix).<sup>32</sup> These discrepancies are not attributable to rabbinic interventions, but on the contrary include overt Christian elements. One cannot fail to notice that these visual narratives are full of generic vagueness and iconographic imprecisions and, above all, that they are suffused with Christian traditions of typology and controlled by incarnational theology. The illuminators failed at least in one instance to observe the ban against the divine image (vol. 1, fol. 47, above). On fol. 18v, by placing Isaac on a cruciform pyre of wood with his hands and feet crossed, they inscribed a Christian typology (Isaac’s sacrifice anticipates Jesus’

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<sup>31</sup> The question often arises whether the Munich Rashi was not defaced decades or even centuries later. The answer is surely negative, because this experimental manuscript is followed by a consistent string of manuscripts that all employ formalized procedures for nullifying the idols. The little-known late-thirteenth-century mahzor in Parma, Ms. Parm. 2887, uses blank faces that have not been defaced, but that quote the erasure committed in the Munich Rashi (see Beit-Arie and Richler eds. (2001), 250 cat. no. 1010, with photograph).

<sup>32</sup> Metzger (1974), 537–552.

sacrifice; Fig. 4). In the first case (the taboo divine image), the patron or scribe enforced a correction, an event that may have triggered the defacement of the entire set of figures. In the second case (allusions to Christian typology), a Jewishly socialized and acculturated reader/viewer was expected to disregard the Christological allusion. Iconographically, the miniatures of the Munich Rashi are hybrid objects, both Jewish and Christian, and these two cultural forces remain in an uneasy balance that can only be tipped by the accented mode of representation, which estranges these images from their Christian roots.

Metzger did not see the instructions for the illuminator and letter templates, so she was convinced that the illuminators were Jews. The discrepancies thus remained puzzles to her, inexplicable “mistakes.” (tabulated in the appendix). After Suckale drew attention to the Latin instructions in 1988 and Elisabeth Klemm noted the letter templates in 1998, we have to conclude that these were not blunders by Jewish artists.<sup>33</sup> We can now see the “non-Jewish intrusions” as traces of the professional formation and visual culture of the Christian illuminators. This formation could include genuine errors (such as Lot saved together with a man instead of his two daughters (fol. 9v) or the mix up between Esau’s and Jacob’s followers), but other “mistakes” make sense in the Christian context in which they originated.

The negotiation between the Jewish scribe and the Christian illuminator about what was to be painted and how was a process in which the Jewish scribe would have had a role in reducing the inscription of Christian meanings and in enforcing as far as possible a self-consciously Jewish reading of the Bible. While inscriptions of Christological meanings were hard to avoid in subjects such as the Binding of Isaac, the scribe had a role in the construction of the overall narrative thread through the selection and ordering of the scenes. The result is a hybrid, in which Jewish ideologemes and sensibilities both clash and mingle with Christian references. The narrative (and nonnarrative)<sup>34</sup> images have been organized into sequences that retell a rhythmic and contrapuntal version of the biblical fabula of journeys and exiles across the pages of the commentary, structuring a remembered text (after all,

<sup>33</sup> Suckale (1988), 123–134.

<sup>34</sup> Paradoxically, the nonnarrative images—the candelabrum and maps of Canaan, and other scribal drawings—are the only text illustrations that visually record Rashi’s interpretations of the biblical text. An illustrated autograph or authoritative manuscript may have provided the model for these nonnarrative images.

this manuscript contains a commentary, but not the Bible text) into meaningful units.

Much of the narrative is redefined in such a way as to eliminate as far as possible the figure of God from the plot—not an easy task in a covenantal narrative, where God intervenes as creator and redeemer. Instead, intermediaries in the form of angels and other messengers drive the action. Folio 1 is lost; my guess—and it is only a guess—is that a composition of Adam and Eve in the Garden served as the opening image (not God creating the world, as was common in Christian Genesis initials at the time).<sup>35</sup> In the Flood (fol. 6), Noah welcomes the dove without God's blessing. On fol. 9v, Sodom is destroyed by an angel. On fol. 18v, Isaac's sacrifice is prevented by an angel who appears out of the clouds. On fol. 25v, the ladder in Jacob's dream is frequented by ascending and descending angels, but the divine figure so common in Christian representations of the subject is absent. Instead, the ladder disappears in clouds. Several of the events from the patriarch's lives are narrated as human dramas free from divine intervention. As mentioned earlier, the crisis of nonidolatrous representation arrives with Moses' first appearance on fol. 47v. As Moses' special privilege had been to be called by God personally, to "see God face-to-face and live," the choice of this scene was especially problematic to a community that shied away from any representation of God. We do not of course know in this case what the scribe asked the painter to paint—an angel? a hand in a cloud? We do not know what the iconography that the painter got so spectacularly wrong was supposed to be.

The visual narrative of the Munich Rashi can be read as an allegory of exile. Exile is not always explicitly thematized, let alone realistically depicted, but displacements and journeys abound: Noah and Lot have to leave their homes to save their lives; Jacob has to leave to flee the wrath of Esau (who was commonly interpreted as symbolic of Christianity in Jewish sources; Fig. 1); Joseph is sold into captivity; Jacob's family joins him in exile (Joseph, in rich court dress, in the Byzantine

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<sup>35</sup> The two almost contemporary Hebrew Bibles in Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, B 30–32 inf. (dated 1236–1238) and Wrocław, University Library Ms. M 1106 (1237–1238) open on their first folios with Adam and Eve (separated by the width of the illuminated initial word panel) wearing leaves to cover their genitalia and stretching out their arms toward each other. They appear like cutouts from a scene of the Fall, but minus the snake. With the addition of assorted animals, the scene of the Fall is transformed into a nonidolatrous image of Creation (without the Creator). The Munich Rashi may have opened with a more conventional scene of the Fall.



style, welcomes his father and brothers, who are by contrast marked by traveling gear and pointed “Jewish” hats, to Egypt); the Israelites wander through the desert. The harshness of exile, however, is folded away in a heroic narrative of journeying and adventure. The travails of the Hebrews in the Egyptian diaspora—the reason for the Exodus—are omitted entirely. Exile is made invisible as a narrative of suffering that might have resonated with the medieval present. Instead, the Moses cycle—now incomplete—seems to have offered a heroic narrative of leadership, beginning not with the hero’s birth but with his calling to his mission. The theme of exile is also in evidence in the middle part of Shelomo ben Shemuel’s colophon: “In exile and with the Messiah / His angels to summon me / From sorrow to conceal me / When the guardian will carry me” (full text in the appendix). Difficult as its syntax may be to interpret, it is clear that this is a prayer for a messianic redemption from exile.

The Other, always also presumably understood as the Christian Other, is represented in terms of idolatry. The idolatry of the Other is pictured spectacularly in a miniature toward the end of the unfinished tome (presently, fol. 209v of the second volume; Fig. 5), which is the beginning of the Book of Daniel. The Daniel panel is exceptional in that it encompasses a tripartite sequence within one panel, a composition that makes for a very different viewing experience than the other narrative panels, which are monoscopic. In this tripartite narrative sequence, the rhetorical devices of the series, correspondences, and contrasts can be taken in simultaneously. One might have expected an author portrait of the prophet at the beginning of his book, but instead the adoration of the statue and the ordeal of the three young men in the fiery oven are juxtaposed, the dwarf king and his lackeys making up the middle. The scenes are to be read from right to left, in the direction of Hebrew script. On the right, then, and approaching from the right, a group of four men adore the golden idol on their knees, with hands folded and raised in [Christian] prayer, forming a 1 + 4 grouping. The left scene is subdivided again, so as to form three compartments of more or less equal width. The fiery oven forms a frame delimiting a picture within the picture, just like the column formed a framing device between the scene of idolatry and the king’s execution command. In rhetorical and stylistic terms, this last part would contain the most important information.

So it is in iconographic terms as well: The evil Nebuchadnezzar is in the center of the miniature, in a 1 + 4 grouping with his lackeys,

thus corresponding to the scene of idolatry. The three young men in the fiery oven are in a 3 + 1 grouping, protectively embraced by the angel. The general movement from right to left is only interrupted by the firebrands that jump back to the right and at the horrified lackeys and the king. The narrative is organized in clustered groups: idol and adorants, evil king and executioners, young men and angel. The action is moved forward by the emphatic gestures of prayer and the aggressive gesture of the lancer, but then comes to a standstill inside the fiery oven and bounces back with the fiery brands. As the horrified miens of the executioners reflect back the fire and violence, the action comes to a dead end in the center of the composition. Visual narrative and its rhetorical devices of parallelisms and juxtaposition are used to convey contrasts between heroes and villains and between men's idolatry of a simulacrum that cannot save and the invisible intervention of God's angel, who can—with obvious resonance for communities of viewers for whom a picture of youth being burned to avoid idolatry had existential resonance at that time.

In her pioneering 1974 study of the Munich Rashi, Metzger asked the fundamental question: *dans quelle mesure ces enluminures sont-elles juives?* (to what extent are these miniatures Jewish?).<sup>36</sup> She asked this long before any evidence was found that the illuminators were not Jews. Nevertheless, she herself sought and found an unambiguous answer: no, these images are indistinguishable from Christian biblical images. Still, she was convinced that the artists were Jewish.

I hope that my analysis of narrative structures and themes has shown that this is not necessarily so. In fact, my answer is quite the opposite: although the illuminators were Christian, the images are in fact Jewish by virtue of their accented mode of representation and their narrative structure. Viewed by a Jewish audience of readers (and listeners) and viewers, the very exegetical traditions contained in the texts of the commentaries in the Munich Rashi would have been brought to bear onto the reading of the fundamental themes of exile and salvation.

The medieval manuscript that is the subject of this essay does not engage in a binary juxtaposition of homeland and exile. Rather, homeland is folded into exile in such a way that exile becomes invisible at the same time that it provides all the artistic means of representation. “Citadel cultures of withdrawal” are imagined but at the same time

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<sup>36</sup> Metzger (1974), 550.

impossible because the dominant Christian culture provides all the means of production and all the structures of artistic language.<sup>37</sup> Thus exile remains ever present, even though often not openly acknowledged—allegorized and enunciated but not explicated.

### Appendix

#### 1. *The Colophon of Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. Hebr. 5*

The full text of the colophon on folios 252v–256r of the second volume (Cod. Hebr. 5/II) runs as follows: I wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dr. Benjamin Richler, Institute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, and Prof. Susan Einbinder, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, for her help with the translation.

אני שלמה ברבי שמואל/ כתבתי אילו פירושי עשרים/ וארבעה ספרים  
 לרבי יוסף/ ברבי משה בשנת ארבעת/ אלפים ותשע מאות ותשעים ושלושה  
 (252ב–255ב) לבריאת עולם, וזה/ יהיה זכרי בשובי לעפרי.  
 ברוך ה' לעולם אמן ואמן ודברי הטוב יאמן לכחש בשמן מעוכלא ועד תומן  
 בגלות ובמזומן מלאכיו לי לזמן מצר להיטמן כאשר ישא האומן.  
 אני שלמה ברבי שמואל ממדינת וירצבורק כתבתי אלו פירושים של עשרים  
 וארבעה ספרים לרבי יוסף בר' משה בשנת ארבעת אלפים ותשע מאות  
 ותשעים ושלושה לבריאת עולם והמקום יזכהו להגות בהם והורישם לבניו  
 ולבני בניו עד סוף כל הדורות אמן. ורוח ממרום יערה עלינו וסתורתו יאיר  
 עינינו. ויביא משיח צדקינו ויבנה בית מקדשינו. ושם תצמיח קרן אלינו.  
 (א256) אמן במהרה בימינו

I, Solomon son of R. Samuel, wrote these commentaries to the twenty-four books [of the Bible] for R. Joseph son of R. Moses in the year 4993 after the creation of the world. And this will [or may this] be my memorial when I return to dust:

Blessed be God for ever amen and amen  
 The words of [the] good shall be believed  
 For the lean when he fattens from an *Ukhlah* to a *Tomen*<sup>38</sup>  
 In exile and with the Summoned One [Messiah]  
 His angels to summon me

<sup>37</sup> Naficy (2001), 6.

<sup>38</sup> These are Talmudic dry capacity measures, the first being the smallest and the second being the second smallest.

From sorrow to conceal me  
When the guardian/nurse will carry [me].

I, Solomon, son of Rabbi Samuel from the city of Würzburg, have written these commentaries of the twenty-four books for Rabbi Joseph son of Rabbi Moses in the year four thousand and nine hundred and ninety-three after the creation of the world. And the “place” [i.e., God] may give him the merit to study them and to bequeath them to his sons and grandchildren until the end of all the generations, amen. And may the heavenly spirit be poured out onto us and his secrets may illuminate our eyes. And may he bring the Messiah of justice and may he rebuild the Temple. And there will the horn [of redemption] sprout unto us. Amen speedily in our days.

2. A “Catalogue of Errors”: *Displaced Scenes, Factual Errors, Christian Interpretations in Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5*

<i>Folio</i>	<i>Displaced scenes</i>	<i>Factual errors</i>	<i>Disregard for Rashi's exegesis or inclusion of Christian elements</i>
Vol. 1, Fol. 6			Noah's ark interior organization (called for by Rashi) not shown.
Fol. 9v	Destruction of Sodom should be in the next Parasha.	Lot accompanied by one male instead of two daughters.	
Fol. 18v	Binding of Isaac should be in previous Parasha.		Isaac placed on cruciform wood.
Fol. 29v		Jacob and Esau's followers/kin exchanged.	
Fol. 39		Unclear which meeting. Why only seven brothers? Why is Benjamin not clearly marked?	
Fol. 40v			Jacob's blessing arm posture cruciform.

Table (*cont.*)

<i>Folio</i>	<i>Displaced scenes</i>	<i>Factual errors</i>	<i>Disregard for Rashi's exegesis or inclusion of Christian elements</i>
Fol. 44v	Misplaced: Joseph welcoming Jacob etc. should be two Parashiot earlier.		
Fol. 47v			God initially shown speaking to Moses.
Vol. 2, fol. 183		Job has four friends; it should be three!	

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### Illustrations

Fig. 1. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5 / I, fol. 21v: Isaac on his deathbed refusing the firstborn blessing to Esau, with Jacob running away on the right. In the right margin, Hebrew template for the Christian illuminator (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).

- Fig. 2. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5 / I, fol. 65: The *Menorah* (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).
- Fig. 3. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/I, fol. 47v (detail): The Calling of Moses, initial panel to the second Parasha in Exodus (Ex. 6:2–9:35) (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).
- Fig. 4. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/I, fol. 18v: Binding of Isaac (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).
- Fig. 5. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/II, fol. 209v: Adoration of the Statue and The Three Hebrews in the Fiery Oven, initial panel to the Book of Daniel (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).





THE SCALES IN THE LEIPZIG MAHZOR  
PENANCE AND ESCHATOLOGY IN EARLY  
FOURTEENTH-CENTURY GERMANY\*

Katrin Kogman-Appel

In the Middle Ages the Jewish liturgical cycle began in spring with the first special Sabbath. As typical of the *yotser* genre,<sup>1</sup> the *yotser* for that day refers repeatedly to the Pentateuch portion (*Parashat Shekalim*: Ex. 30:11–16) to be read in addition to the regular Sabbath pericope during the morning service. The biblical text describes the Israelites giving money, *shekalim*, to build the desert Tabernacle.

In accord with a common custom that developed in the mid-thirteenth century for the design of festival prayer books, mahzorim, it was this type of liturgical poem, the *yotsrot*, the poetic embellishments of the *Shema Israel* prayer, that received most of the artistic decoration, normally in the form of initial panels. As the mahzor contains only the poetic embellishments, but not the regular prayer, it is with these initial panels of the *yotsrot* that the liturgy of a new holiday is begun.<sup>2</sup> This is also the case in most sections of the so-called Leipzig Mahzor,<sup>3</sup> where for *Parashat Shekalim* the opening word “*El*” of the *yotser* is decorated with a large panel containing four medallions of the eschatological creatures (Ezek. 1:4–25) and a balance surrounded by two dragons in the center of the composition (Fig. 1). In the upper margin a small hunting motif—a hare and a dog—can be discerned. The Leipzig Mahzor, written and illuminated around 1310 in southern

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<sup>1</sup> Davidson (1924), vol. 1, 178, no. 3853.

<sup>2</sup> As observed by Shalev-Eyni (2001), 53, for the so-called Tripartite Mahzor; this system was often pursued, even though not religiously.

<sup>3</sup> Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, MS Vollers 1102/I–II; for a facsimile edition of the illuminations, see Katz (1964); for a CD-ROM version see Mackert (2004). In the liturgy of *Parashat Shekalim*, it is indeed only the *yotser* that is decorated; on other occasions, however, we also find other types of *piyyutim* embellished; see Shalev-Eyni (2001), 58, n. 30.

Germany, is a two-volume prayer book and one of the most elaborately decorated extant Ashkenazic mahzor manuscripts.<sup>4</sup>

*Parashat Shekalim* describes how the Israelites gave half a shekel each for the Tabernacle. Actual weighing of the *shekalim* is not mentioned explicitly. The text uses various forms of the root *kaph – pe – resh*. In verse 12: “Each man is to give a ransom for his life to the Lord (*kofer nafsho le’adonai*), to avert plague among them during the registration.” In verse 15: “...when you give the contribution for the Lord to make expiation for your lives (*lekhapper al nafshotechem*).” In verse 16: “The money received from the Israelites for expiation (*kesseph hakippurim*) you are to apply to the service of the Tent of Meeting.” In short, each man gives his ransom, which promises expiation—atonement. Similarly, the decorated liturgical poem creates a connection between the ransom and atonement for the sins, which is the main theme in its second section. The first part, however, ends with an allusion to the divine Throne of Glory as it is described in the first chapter of the Book of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1:26–28).

The imagery on the Leipzig initial panel,<sup>5</sup> which has no parallel and does not follow any established iconographical tradition, addresses all the aspects mentioned in both the biblical and the liturgical texts. The balance refers to the contributions of the Israelites. In an interpretation of this biblical event it is naturally assumed that the money collected for the Tabernacle was weighed. But the scales are also a common symbol for the atonement of sins. The balance is, finally, surrounded by medallions displaying the four creatures mentioned in the Ezekiel vision. In some sense, it is God who holds the scales, which are balanced and even; they

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<sup>4</sup> The Leipzig Mahzor has no colophon and its dating relied hitherto on stylistic considerations; an upper Rhenish provenance was suggested by Voller (1906), vol. 2, 437, no. 1102; followed later by Katz in his commentary volume, Katz (1964), 14–15, and Narkiss’s contribution in the same volume, 47; see also Sed-Rajna (1983), 16; C. Mackert in personal conversations and in a lecture he gave in Leipzig in 2005. I am indebted to Dr. Mackert for sharing the manuscript of his paper with me. In a later publication Narkiss locates the Leipzig Mahzor more generally in southern Germany, Narkiss (1984), 21. Recently Raeber (2003), 117–121, suggested a provenance in Freiburg im Breisgau. Elsewhere I shall revisit the question of its origin by examining its text version, which seems to point to the middle Rhine region; Kogman-Appel (in prep.).

<sup>5</sup> An illustration of the *Shekalim* pericope and the related *yotser* is also found in the Worms Mahzor, Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, MS 4°781/1, Würzburg (?), 1272–73; for a facsimile edition, see Beit-Arié (1986); it shows the figure of a man with scales, with the heavy side inscribed “Israel.”

are attached to the upper frame by a hook and the vertical pole lies on the *lamed* of the *aleph-lamed* ligature standing for *El*, God.

Earlier research paid very little attention to this unusual setting, which, at first sight, seems to be entirely indebted to Christian art.<sup>6</sup> Both elements play an important role in Christian eschatological iconography: the four creatures, understood as symbols of the Evangelists, are associated with the Second Coming of Christ (Fig. 2), and the scales are prominent in depictions of the Last Judgment (Fig. 3).<sup>7</sup> The Leipzig image was thus understood as an eschatological weighing of the souls modeled after Christian representations of the Last Judgment.<sup>8</sup> Elias Katz saw the balance as a symbol of God's judgment and the dragons as a representation of the forces of Satan attempting to change the balance of the scales.<sup>9</sup>

Awareness of Christian pictorial renderings of the End of Time is certainly evident in the Jewish version of the Leipzig Mahzor, but the details are a significant departure from Christian versions. The Leipzig image combines two motifs that Christian art—in particular architectural sculpture of the Romanesque and Gothic periods—normally represents in two different thematic settings. The four creatures are associated with the Second Coming (Fig. 2), whereas the scales dominate the imagery of the Last Judgment, often—as at the portal at Bourges Cathedral—accompanied by a devil with Jewish physiognomy (Fig. 3). In the Christian context the scales are never balanced, but tend significantly to the side of the Blessed. Apart from that, the Christian four creatures follow their description in the Apocalypse (Apoc. 4:6–8) rather than that of Ezekiel. This is apparent in the arrangement of the creatures: lion and ox on the bottom and man and eagle on top. All the animals are winged and the man appears as an angel.

If the Leipzig panel was fashioned after Christian models it merged two different well-known aspects of the messianic scenario: the coming of the Messiah, marked by the flanking four creatures as in Apocalypse,

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<sup>6</sup> See, e.g., Wischnitzer (1960), 23–25, who linked the medallions to Ezekiel and representations of the Evangelists, and the scales to the money changers in the Second Temple; on the relation to Christian sources, see also Narkiss's contribution in Katz (1964), 31.

<sup>7</sup> The focus on these two aspects of the messianic era is especially typical in French gothic art. In German art of the thirteenth century, most pictorial treatments of the messianic period are concentrated on the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>8</sup> Sed Rajna (1983), 32; Narkiss's contribution to Beit-Arié (1986), 81.

<sup>9</sup> Katz (1964), 19.

on the one hand, and the Last Judgment, represented by the scales, on the other. However, the story is not that simple. Several peculiarities of the Leipzig panel show us that although the designer of this iconography was certainly aware of how Christian art dealt with the messianic era, he composed an image that can only be understood against the background of Ashkenazic culture and its very particular and specific ideas concerning it.

Let us begin with the small hunting motif on the top of the upper frame: a reddish hare is running from right to left, followed slowly by a heavy, tired hound standing, rather than running, desperately sniffing the ground as if he had lost his ability to smell and to hunt. This is a variation of the traditional hunting motif as an allegory of anti-Jewish persecution:<sup>10</sup> based on an interpretation of the Song of Songs (2:7), a female deer, standing for Israel, is pursued by a gentile hunter and his dogs representing the non-Jewish persecutor. In other examples it is a hare that attempts to escape the hunter and his dogs.<sup>11</sup> In the Catalan Rylands Haggadah (ca. 1330; Fig. 4) the black and white dogs allude to the activity of the Dominicans, who saw themselves as “*Domini canes*,” the dogs of God, chasing the heretics.<sup>12</sup> Another Catalan haggadah shows an inversion of the traditional hunting scene that will occur in the messianic era: an enthroned hare is being served by a dog representing Christianity (Fig. 5).<sup>13</sup>

In the Leipzig Mahzor we are not yet there. The situation has changed, though: the hare is free and the hunting hound has lost his ability; he has been weakened, but is not yet in the serving position that will mark the final stage of the messianic scenario. This variation of the hunting motif thus shows an earlier stage, one in which the preconditions for the arrival of the Messiah are about to be fulfilled.

Israel Yuval has shown that around the year 1240, the turn of the millennium according to the Jewish calendar, messianic expectations were particularly fervent and, that the scholars of the time believed

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<sup>10</sup> The marginal motif in the Leipzig panel was understood as such by Katz (1964), 19; on hunting as a metaphor for anti-Jewish persecution in medieval Jewish literature, see Epstein (1997), 21–22; on the hunting motif in Jewish art, see Schubert (1984), 119–120; Ayali (1982), 262–263.

<sup>11</sup> Ayali (1982), 262–263. Epstein argues that the hare is rooted in a Christian defamatory symbol for the Jews, translated by the Jews into a positive image of themselves, Epstein (1997), 27.

<sup>12</sup> Schubert (1986–87), 251–252.

<sup>13</sup> Schubert (1986–87), 250–251.

that the arrival of the Messiah would depend on certain preconditions.<sup>14</sup> Detailed descriptions of the messianic era—the arrival of the Messiah, the preconditions to be fulfilled toward the coming of the Messiah—proliferated during these years. The first precondition was the restoration of Jewish political power or at least a massive Jewish presence in the Land of Israel. This idea had a particularly strong influence as it could be understood as an inversion of and a proper response to Crusader ideology. It is also conceivable that Crusader ideology was an impetus for the notion of the restoration of political power.

The second precondition was a massive movement toward repentance. A complex system of penance was developed in the twelfth century by the Ashkenazic pietists, in particular by R. Judah the Pious (d. 1217).<sup>15</sup> During the thirteenth century his views were slightly modified by his disciple R. Eleazar of Worms (d. 1230), who made the concept more applicable for a broader circle of Jews.<sup>16</sup> The pietists combined a well-defined moral system with mysticism and highly developed eschatological interest. Penance had a key role in the general Jewish messianic expectations, especially in the pietistic concept. The ultimate aim of the pietistic penitential system was a balance of sins and virtues, for they believed that without this balance the precondition for the coming of the Messiah would not be fulfilled.

R. Judah the Pious, whose attitude was, as scholars have shown,<sup>17</sup> quite sectarian, took up the late antique concept of four types of penance. First penance for a sin by confronting the subject or object that triggered the sin, now without committing the same sin (*tshuvat haba'ah*); second penance by means of a safeguard (fence), that is, by avoiding the object or subject that caused the sin (*tshuvat hagader*); third penance of balance by means of suffering that the sinner takes upon him/herself, in order to equal out the weight of the sin (*tshuvat mishkal*); and fourth penance by means of the specific punishment mentioned in the Bible for a particular sin (*tshuvat hakatuv*).<sup>18</sup> The concept as such is

<sup>14</sup> Yuval (1998), 110.

<sup>15</sup> Marcus (1981), chap. 3.

<sup>16</sup> This process was described in detail by Marcus (1981), 120–128.

<sup>17</sup> Marcus (1981), pt. 2; Soloveichik (1976), 330–331.

<sup>18</sup> This terminology was developed in its final form only in the text of R. Elazar of Worms, *Sefer Harokeah* (1847), *Hilkhoh Teshuvah*, par. 1–15, see Marcus (1981), 48–49; it is, however, rooted in the discussion of R. Judah, the Pious, in *Sefer Hassidim* (1891), par. 37–43.

not new,<sup>19</sup> but R. Judah elaborated on it and explained that the aim of this penitential system was a balance of the divine scales of reward and punishment earned for acts of virtue and for sins. This idea of eschatological balance is the specific pietistic input into the original Talmudic concept. R. Judah the Pious and his father R. Samuel ben Kalonymus the Pious<sup>20</sup> before him discussed these modes and the manner in which virtues can balance sins in great length and detail.

As noted, R. Judah's attitude tended to be sectarian, and some of his concepts were not applicable to broader circles of the medieval Jewish population. Among these notions was the idea of a ritual of confession to a sage,<sup>21</sup> which was never institutionalized. R. Eleazar reinterpreted his system, eliminating the idea of confession. This and other modifications informed the bases of pietistic thought. In Marcus's words: "...despite Judah's failure to forge German Jewry into a community of saints, R. Eleazar's adaptations of his teacher's innovations led to their incorporation into the mainstream of European Jewish piety."<sup>22</sup> Different from R. Judah's system in which the sage plays a central role, R. Eleazar developed what Marcus calls a private penitential system, one that functions between the sinner and God.<sup>23</sup> Although the acts of penitence described by R. Eleazar were more severe than those discussed by R. Judah, the former had a much longer "afterlife," and a strong impact on most of the rabbinic literature of the centuries to come. His ideas are reflected in the writings of R. Isaac of Moses, R. Meir of Rothenburg, R. Jacob Weil, R. Israel Bruna, and others.<sup>24</sup>

I do not claim here that the Leipzig Mahzor reflects a pietistic worldview in any particular way. As Kurt and Ursula Schubert suggested many years ago, it rather seems that the pietists, especially R. Judah, objected to the idea of figurative art.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, R. Judah formulated his ideas during the late twelfth and the early thirteenth century, and R. Eleazar was active during the early thirteenth century. Pietistic activity and writing came to an end around 1250, and the Leipzig Mahzor was

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<sup>19</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Yoma*, 86a; for an English translation, see Neusner (2005), vol. 5, 336–339.

<sup>20</sup> R. Samuel the Pious, *Sefer Hayir'ah*, included as par. 1–13 of *Sefer Hassidim* (1891); for an analysis see Marcus (1981), 44–49.

<sup>21</sup> Marcus (1981), 75–78.

<sup>22</sup> Marcus (1981), 121.

<sup>23</sup> Marcus (1981), chap. 8.

<sup>24</sup> Marcus (1981), 128.

<sup>25</sup> Schubert (1984), 70–71 relying on *Sefer Hassidim*, Vistinetzky (1891), par. 1625.

illuminated approximately sixty years later. However, after the ground were prepared by R. Eleazar, some aspects of the pietistic concepts had a significant impact on intellectual developments within German Jewry for some time after 1250 and shaped Ashkenazic thought up to the sixteenth century and beyond.

The late-thirteenth-century southern French *Sefer Kol Bo*, for example, reflects this process from the sectarian trend of R. Judah via the more generally applicable concepts of R. Eleazar to the adoption of pietistic elements in much wider circles—even beyond Ashkenaz—quite clearly. A highly eclectic collection of customs, halakhic material, and texts by Maimonides, on the one hand, and by R. Eleazar, on the other, the *Sefer Kol Bo* describes the penitential process as follows:

Rabbi Simon, the son Lakish, said on behalf of Rabbi Simon, the son of Rabbi Yosse, and the Rabbanan: it is written (Ezek. 1:8) “and hands of a man were underneath their wings”; the interpretation is: underneath the wings of the four animals; in order to receive those who repent according to the law. His right hand is stretched out to receive those who repent and to avoid that they touch the Throne of Glory as it is written (Hos. 14:2): “return Israel to God, your Lord.” Those who repent reach a location where the ministering angels are not allowed to arrive...<sup>26</sup>

A few lines later, the text focuses on God’s call for repentance:

Return Israel to God: take with you things and return to God...I gave you my law to fulfill the precepts and to adhere to it all your days in order to remember all the good I have done to you; I warned you not to sin before me and not to follow a foreign God in your uncircumcised, unclean heart...Return to me...because I created penance for you...because I loved you, son, return to the Lord with all your heart...and this is what means “his hand is stretched out to receive those who repent,” because the Holy One blessed be He embraces all those who repent and receives them as it is written (Song of Sg.: 2:6) “his right arm embraces me.”<sup>27</sup>

In the text that follows this excerpt, first the four types of penance are described in detail, then a lengthy list of different kinds of sins is attached, and finally a long list of virtues or, rather, qualities that lead to virtue is added. The section concludes with a detailed description of the penitential process quoting the prescriptions made by R. Judah in

<sup>26</sup> *Sefer Kol Bo*, Vidavsky (1997), vol. 1, 266.

<sup>27</sup> *Sefer Kol Bo*, Vidavsky (1997), vol. 1, 266.



*Sefer Hasidim*,<sup>28</sup> whereas the rest of the text in *Sefer Kol Bo* is largely based on the works of R. Eleazar.

This is an elaboration of a late antique motif by means of the pietistic penitential system. Late antique interpretations of the Ezekiel vision (Ezek. 1:8) comment on the verse “the hand of a man underneath their wings...” as the hand of God who receives the penitent.<sup>29</sup> The text as reported in the *Sefer Kol Bo* combines this interpretation with the pietistic concept of penance.

Against the background of this concept, the Leipzig panel can be read as showing God—in terms of the *aleph-lamed* ligature—on the Throne of Glory. When the time comes, He will measure the weight of the sins and virtues and accept the penitent. The Throne is indicated only by the presence of the four creatures, whose representation, as noted earlier, differs from the Christian counterparts. On the one hand, their arrangement follows their mention in Ezekiel, but, on the other, their appearance does not correspond to the biblical text. According to Ezekiel’s description the overall appearance of each of them was of a man with four faces: that of a lion, an ox, an eagle, and a man. Here they appear, as was common in most artistic renderings, as separate beings. They also lack wings. The reason for this divergence from the biblical text lies in a halakhic restriction that refers in particular to the visualization of the tetramorph. A text in the thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century halakhic compilation *Orhot Hayyim* by R. Aaron Hakohen of Lunel, for example, quotes a *responsum* by R. Solomon ibn Adret of Barcelona (died c. 1310) and reads as follows: “It is forbidden to create the form of the four creatures as one figure with four faces, but creating one of them alone is not (forbidden).” After a few words of reservations concerning a figure of the man, we read a few lines later: “and that is why it is allowed to create the form of the lion, the eagle and the ox—each on its own.”<sup>30</sup> It is notable that halakhists brought up this subject at all, and it is probably an indication that artistic renderings of the visionary creatures were an issue.

In the Leipzig image the three animals—the lion, the ox, and the eagle—stand out as golden silhouettes against a blue-black background.

<sup>28</sup> *Sefer Kol Bo*, Vidavsky (1997), vol. 1, 267–272.

<sup>29</sup> Babylonian Talmud, *Pesahim* 119a, for an English version, Neusner (2005), vol. 4, 551.

<sup>30</sup> *Orhot Hayyim*, Schlesinger (1902), *Hilkhot Avodah Zarah* 7, 232–233. This text may have been written by the author of *Sefer Kol Bo* as the two are very close in content.

They are framed in golden medallions, perhaps to be understood as wheels, alluding to the visionary text in Ezek. 1:15: "...and I saw wheels on the ground, one beside each of the four." The man is rendered somewhat differently, as he is not shown as a silhouette, but as a colored figure wearing a rather simple hooded garment and holding, almost embracing, a book with two locks. He is not within a golden medallion, but rather is framed in red and blue. The background, not discernible in the photograph but traceable in the original, is silver. He is, therefore, as sublime as the animals, a fact that is underscored by the precious metals, either gold or silver, used in the color scheme, but he is clearly meant to be distinguished from them.

Jewish texts of various kinds, both mystical and traditionally exegetical, including those of the Ashkenazic pietists discuss the four creatures at considerable length and in great detail.<sup>31</sup> On various occasions these discussions of the tetramorph merge with another tradition—that of the image of Jacob engraved in the Throne of Glory. The roots to this tradition lie in the Aramaic version of the dream of Jacob's ladder in the Jerusalem Talmud, which elaborates on the angels who climb up the ladder on the night of Jacob's dream to call their fellow angels to look at the figure whose image is engraved in the Throne.<sup>32</sup> This motif later naturally entered the exegesis of Ezekiel's description of the Throne (Ezek. 1:26): "Above the vault over their heads there appeared, as it were, a sapphire in the shape of a throne, and exalted on the throne a form in human likeness."

There are two different traditions concerning this image of Jacob, which have been researched in depth by Eliot Wolfson.<sup>33</sup> One explains that the human form believed to be seated on the Throne (Ezek. 1:26) is that of Jacob,<sup>34</sup> and the other identifies the fourth creature of the Ezekiel vision, the man, with Jacob. The medieval midrashic text *Sekhel Tov* deals with the story of Jacob as follows:

Rabbi Hiyya Rabba and Rab Yannai, one says: they stepped up and down on the ladder and left him; the other says: they stepped up and down in order to stay next to Jacob.... (In order to see) him whose image is

<sup>31</sup> Issues of the chariot, the Throne of Glory, and the four creatures are discussed at length, e.g., by R. Eleazar of Worms, *Sode Razayah*, Eisenbach (2004), *Hilkhot Hamerkavah*.

<sup>32</sup> *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, Clarke (1984), Gen. 28:12.

<sup>33</sup> Wolfson (1995).

<sup>34</sup> Halperin (1988), 121; Wolfson (1995), 8.

engraved in the upper sphere, they stepped up and saw the fourth creature on the Throne of Glory, whose name is like his, Israel, and then they stepped down and found him sleeping....<sup>35</sup>

Eleazar Hakallir refers to this tradition in a *kerovah* about the Throne of Glory to be read on New Year as early as the sixth or seventh century. Describing the four creatures, he refers to the man as “the image of the simple man (*tam*),”<sup>36</sup> choosing the words from the Book of Genesis that describe Jacob as a simple or mild man sitting in the tent as opposed to the wild Esau, the hunter. The expression “simple man” is frequently explained in rabbinic literature as a hint that Jacob enjoyed a rabbinic education and became a scholar.<sup>37</sup> Indeed the man in the Leipzig image is shown as a “simple man”: the book in his arms characterizes him as scholar and the somewhat stiff appearance of the hood, which thus looks like a hat, seems to identify him as a Jew. According to both these traditions Jacob exhibits divine characteristics. Whether based on the conception of a demiurge or the Metatron, Jacob emerges in these texts as a figure with divine features.

In conclusion: What at first sight appears to be a simple reproduction and juxtaposition of common Christian messianic motifs emerges as a rather sophisticated image of the Ashkenazic pietists’ penitential system. The pietistic campaign of penance prepares the world for one of the preconditions for the arrival of the Messiah: a balance between sin and virtue. This balance, measured by God himself on the Throne of Glory is indicated in the image by the even scales. The Throne of Glory features a likeness of the divine Jacob. At the same time the hound, the non-Jewish persecutor, has lost his power and senses Israel is free of him and able to establish its own power, another precondition for the coming of the Messiah.

<sup>35</sup> *Midrash Sekhel Tov*, Buber (1959), 141; see also Wolfson (1995), 8.

<sup>36</sup> Davidson (1924), vol. 2, no. 189; Goldschmidt (1970), vol. 1, 217; Wolfson (1995), 8.

<sup>37</sup> *Bereshit Rabbah*, Theodor and Albeck (1996), 63:9–10, vol. 2, 693; for an English version, see Neusner (1985), vol. 2, 360–361.

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### *Illustrations*

- Fig. 1. Leipzig Mahzor, Universitätsbibliothek, MS V1102/I, fol. 31v, southern Germany, ca. 1310, initial decoration for the *yoizzer* to be read on the first special Sabbath.
- Fig. 2. Chartres Cathedral, western portal, ca. 1140–1150, Second Coming of Christ.
- Fig. 3. Bourges Cathedral, western portal, early thirteenth century, Last Judgment.
- Fig. 4. Rylands Haggadah, Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS heb. 6, fol. 29v, Catalonia, c. 1330, marginal hunting motif.
- Fig. 5. London, British Library, MS Add. 14761, fol. 30v, Catalonia or southern France, ca. 1330, Bondage in Egypt, with marginal representation of the messianic era.

THE SEAL OF SOLOMON THE SCRIBE  
THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE ALBENC PENTATEUCH  
OF 1340

Bezalel Narkiss

In honour of Elisabeth Revel-Neher, a friend, colleague, and former student, I offer here a study of a most intriguing Hebrew illuminated manuscripts, dated 1340, from the south of France, in an area later called the Dauphiné. I first saw the manuscript in 1964 in the Bodleian Library at Oxford,<sup>1</sup> while surveying the libraries of the British Isles for Hebrew illuminated manuscripts,<sup>2</sup> and was fascinated by the textual illustrations drawn by Shlomo, the scribe who executed the work.

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<sup>1</sup> Ms. Oppenheim 14; see Neubauer (1886), No. 20; cf. Beit-Arié, (1994), No. 20; cf. the detailed description of the manuscript by Mordechai Glatzer and Malachi Beit-Arié in the Institute of Hebrew Palaeography in Jerusalem, No. C2, for which I am grateful to Michal Sternthal. I am most appreciative of the help I received from Prof. Aliza Cohen and Ariella Amar in writing this article, and to Christine Evans for making it readable.

<sup>2</sup> In 1963, while completing my Ph.D. dissertation at the Warburg Institute in London I was asked by the David Salomons Fund of the Mayer Memorial Foundation in Jerusalem to catalogue all Medieval Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in Great Britain. It was a task of unknown extent, which was given to me in collaboration with the art historian Dr. Rosy Schilling, through Dr. Moshe Spitzer of Jerusalem. Only after a five-year survey of all the Hebrew manuscripts in England, Scotland, and Ireland did we realize the enormity of the task we had undertaken. Instead of the couple of hundred manuscripts we assumed we had, we found over a thousand, some of them extraordinary, which then took us, with the help of some colleagues and students, many years to catalogue and study.

With financial support from the British and Israel Academies and recognition by the International Union of Academies, we planned the catalogue to include four different areas of Hebrew illumination: (1) the Oriental schools of Egypt, Persia, Yemen, and North Africa; (2) the Sephardi schools of the Iberian Peninsula; (3) the Ashkenazi schools of France and Germany; and (4) the Italian schools. However, for lack of funds only one volume *The Spanish and Portuguese Manuscripts* was published in 1982 by the Oxford University Press and the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities in Jerusalem. By then my collaborator Rosy Schilling had been killed in an automobile accident, and the catalogue was dedicated to her memory. This Ashkenazi manuscript was never published.

*The Text*

The manuscript consists of the Pentateuch, five Megillot, and the Haftarah. The biblical text in the centre of the page is flanked in the outer margin by the Aramaic Targum and in the inner margin by a commentary by Rashi (R. Shlomo Ytzhaki), the eleventh-century Rabbi of Troyes. It is also furnished with the Masorah *magna* and *parva* (Fig. 1).<sup>3</sup>

By the middle of the fourteenth century manuscripts with similar content were quite common in Ashkenazi circles in Germany and France, probably made for personal use in the synagogue for prayers on the Sabbath, when the weekly pericope was read, followed by the appropriate Haftarah, and when a specific Megillah was read on a festival, a feast, or a fast. Some manuscripts of this kind incorporated the Targum within the biblical text, verse by verse, the way in which the texts traditionally had been read since the second century. Since not all Pentateuchs include a commentary, it stands to reason that those that do have one were also used by people who wished to deepen their understanding of the text or educate their children at home.

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<sup>3</sup> *Codicology*: The manuscript was written on parchment, comprising II + I + 2 + 352 + II leaves, measuring ca. 320 × 255 mm; biblical text space (214–219) × (89–130) mm; text space with Targum and commentary 288 × (193–220) mm. The main text and the Targum were written in square Franco-Ashkenazi script; the biblical column in 28 lines per page on fols. 1–262v, and in two columns on fols. 263–351v for the Megillot and Haftarah. The Targum was written in the inner column in 48–50 lines, and the commentary, in semicursive script, in the outer column in 56–70 lines per page, sometimes extending to the top and bottom margins (e.g., fol. 288). The Masorah *magna* is in 3 lines on top and 4 at the bottom, and the Masorah *parva* between the columns is written in small square script. From a comparison of the script of the three columns, it is obvious that the principal scribe wrote the biblical text, the Targum, and the commentary. However, since the color of the ink in each column is somewhat different, it is possible that he wrote the columns at different times, starting with the biblical text, followed by the Targum, and then by the commentary. He designed the illustrations in conjunction with the commentary, after the biblical text and Targum were checked by the masorator, who probably vocalized them and passed the pages back to the scribe, who corrected the texts and added the missing parts. Pricking is noticeable in a few folios (e.g., fols. 32–39, 216–223, 244–247, and others). Ruling was done by plummet across a spread of two pages in 29 horizontal lines for the main text, 57 lines for the commentary, and 3 + 4 lines for the Masorah. Vertical ruling is 1 + 3 + 2 + 3 + 1. Gathered in 45 quires of eight leaves each, except for I (first folio missing) and XXXI with seven leaves (one leaf missing after fol. 262v with the last four words of Deuteronomy); quire XLII has two leaves only. There were catchwords in the lower-left corner of all the quires, some with illustrations, but many were cropped by a later binder.

*The Making of the Manuscript*

The date and origin of our manuscript is stated in its colophon:

Shlomo bar Eliezer Hayim Hacoheh wrote the Pentateuch, Megillot and Haftarat for R. Moshe ben Yehudah, completed, on the 6th day of the second Adar, 5100 from the creation (6.2.1340), on Tuesday during the week when the pericope *Vayikra* (Leviticus) is read.<sup>4</sup>

In another colophon Shlomo repeats his and his late father's name, Eliezer, who was also a scribe nicknamed De[s]yiaia, from the town of l'Alben.<sup>5</sup>

It is difficult to know how to pronounce the nickname De[s]yiaia or De[s]yieie, although it was quite a common one during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in England and France, perhaps originating from the old French *Deus aye*, meaning "God help," It probably refers to Shlomo's father, since it follows his name Eliezer, which means "God is my help." Thus the name Eliezer and the nickname De[s]yiaia, have the same meaning. Eliezer was also a scribe, since the term "Cohen the scribe" follows the nickname.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On fol. 352, the colophon is written mostly in display script occupying the entire page:

חזק ונתחזק הסופר לא יוזק לא היום ולא לעו' / לעולם עד שיעלה חמור בסולם  
יעקב אשר חל' / חלם בנל'ך ואעי' (ברוך הנותן ליעף כח ולאין אונים עוצמה ירבה)  
אמן אמן אמן סלע. / אני שלמה בר' אליעזר / חיים הכהן הסופר זצ"ל (זכר צדיק  
לברכה) / כתבתי וסיימתי זה החומ' [ש] / והפטרות וחמש / מגילות לר' משה בן  
הנר (הנכבד רבי) / יהודה זצ"ל לירח ואדר: (יום) ג' פרשה ויקרא שנת חמשת  
אלפים ומאה לפרט / ליצירה המקום ברחמיו זרעו זרעו זרעו / להגות בו  
ויזכה לבנים זכרים יהגו בתוכו ויקיים בו / מקרא שכתוב לא ימוש ספר הזה מפיך  
והגית בו / יומם ולילה למען תשמור לעשות ככל הכתוב בו כי / אז תצליח את  
דרכך ואז תשכיל: /

Tuesday in the week of Pericope *Vayikra* in 5100 AC was the 6th day of second Adar.

<sup>5</sup> On fol. 351v, at the end of Isaiah 66, the Haftarah for Shabbat and the beginning of the month:

ונתחזק לעולם לא יזק שלמה בר' אליעזר חיים / הכהן זצ"ל המכונה די[ש]אייא כהן  
הסופר מעיר לאלבן [הסופר]. /

The letter ש (shin) in smaller script is above the first י (yod) and the term הסופר is added in small script at the end.

<sup>6</sup> For a detailed discussion of the name *Diaia*, see Loewe (1930–32), vol. II, 166–169, n. 603; 346, n. 1529. Loewe remarks that the motto of William the Conqueror *Dax aie* has the same meaning; cf. Halévy (1884), 167; Loeb (1888), 299; Gross (1897), 269, 468; cf. Stokes (1913), 293, who equates *Diaia* with Eliezer; cf. Mordechai Glatzer and Malachi Beit-Arié in the above-mentioned (n. 1) description of the manuscript for the Hebrew Palaeography Project.



Following the colophon is an added rhymed poem composed anonymously in the year 1262, which Shlomo copied, possibly from a model that he was using.<sup>7</sup> This earlier poem stresses the need to study the Torah and mentions the unknown author's daughters and son. Shlomo also marked his name with pen-drawn decorations in several places<sup>8</sup>: one of the significant marks is a hand holding a medallion surrounding a six-pointed star and inscribed with "the seal of King Solomon" (fol. 216; fig. 2).<sup>9</sup> At the end of Exodus (fol. 119v; fig. 3) next to the depiction of the *ephod* with the stones of the *hoshen*, Shlomo states that he drew it according to the commentary by "R. Abraham bar Ytzhak, dean of the court of Lunel."<sup>10</sup> Since the style of this drawing is similar to the rest of the illustrations, we assume that he was also the artist of the entire manuscript. However, the painted initial-word panels could have been coloured by a different artist. The masorator, who possibly also vocalized the text, was probably called Ytzhak Cohen, since these names frequently appear next to the Masorah.<sup>11</sup>

The year 1340 given in the colophon is undoubtedly the date of the manuscripts, fitting the style of script as well as the pen-drawn decoration. The earlier date of 1262 refers to the poem and possibly to the model from which Shlomo the scribe copied.

<sup>7</sup> The additional poem of 1262 asks God to save the author from his enemies, helping him, his daughters, and his son to prosper and continue to study the Torah:

אנא השם מחשבת אויבי הפר: וגמולם בראשם השב בלא כפר: / ותזכו בנותי  
להיות כבנות חפר: ובני יזכה לקיים אמרי שפר: /  
פתוח תפתח ידך לאביון: ומלא משאלות לבי והגיון: / והשב שבותי בלא  
חלום וחזיון: כי קלו ימי מרב תגיון: / ואתה אל אדני שמעני: הסר מעלי קללה  
שמעני: / ואם לא מספרך מחני: כי בכרתי מות מעני: / וחזק ואמץ ידים הרפות:  
בל יהיו עוד לאחר כפופות / ותזהיר אורי מיגון חליפות: ואהודך משירי בכנור  
ותופפות: / וללמד בזה נתחכמה והבה: כי קבע עתים לתורה חובה: / וגם זאת  
בשנת טובה לפרט מאלף שישי נכתבה: /

In a third colophon on fol. 345v at the end of the Haftarot of the Pentateuch (*Zot habrakha* in Joshua 1:1–18) he repeats his name, adding the two first and two last lines of the above poem:

חזק ונתחזק לעולם לא יזוק שלמה כהן הסופר: / אנא השם מחשבת אויבי הפר:  
וגמולם בראשם השב בלא כפר: / ותזכו בנותי להיות כבנות חפר: ובני יזכה לקיים  
אמרי שפר: / וללמד בזה נתחכמה והבה: כי קבע עתים לתורה חובה: / וגם זאת  
בשנת טובה לפרט מאלף שישי נכתבה: /

On fol. 317 his name Shlomo bar Eliezer Hayim is written in quasi-acrostic.

<sup>8</sup> E.g., fols. 10, 11, 44v, 83v, 203, 219, 235v, 248v, 259, 261, 262, and 270v (twice).

<sup>9</sup> In Hebrew: חותמו של שלמה המלך.

<sup>10</sup> In Hebrew: כאשר ציירתי למעלה. See description of fol. 119v below.

<sup>11</sup> "Ytzhak," e.g., on fols. 27, 87v, and 115. "Cohen," e.g., on fols. 103, 122v, 123, 182.

The name of Shlomo's town can be identified as the village of Albenc on the river Isère north of the town of Grenoble, in the region ruled from the eleventh century on by the counts of Vienne and not part of the Kingdom of France or the Holy Roman Empire.<sup>12</sup> Throughout the fourteenth century, when the Jews were repeatedly expelled from the Kingdom of France, they found havens in many lands, including the independent County of Vienne, later called the Dauphiné. In 1340 the Jewish communities prospered in the self-governing principalities in the south of France that did not belong to the French kingdom, including Provence, Burgundy, and the Papal State, as well as Vienne, and these were regarded by the Jews as stepping stones to settlement in Italy.<sup>13</sup> There were good facilities for the prosperous Jews of southern France to commission illuminated manuscripts and for a school of copying and illumination to flourish there. On the evidence of some of the iconography and various elements of the style in these manuscripts, some of the scribes and illuminators may have come originally from the north.

In 1349, nine years after the completion of our manuscript, the crown prince (the *Dauphin*) of the new royal house of Valois bought the Principality of Vienne, and from then on the region, called the Dauphiné, belonged to French crown princes. The situation of the Jews in the area may have become precarious at that point, and some of them probably migrated to other regions or kingdoms, carrying their treasures with them. Be that as it may, according to owners' inscriptions our Pentateuch reached Italy in the fifteenth century and remained there until at least the seventeenth century. It then became the property of some Ashkenazi Jews, who inscribed their names as owners of the manuscript, the first of whom was in Frankfort-on-Main in 1705, after which it changed hands again. It was eventually acquired by the famous Rabbi David Oppenheim of Prague (1664–1736) early in the eighteenth century, and his enormous library was bought by the Bodleian Library in Oxford in 1829.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See Gross (1897), 269.

<sup>13</sup> See Schwartzfuchs (2001), 288–289 (Hebrew).

<sup>14</sup> *History of the Manuscript*: The earliest sale inscription appears in the lower part of fol. 352v: Ytzhak bar Abraham sold the manuscript to Shlomo bar R. Ytzhak Ashkenazi in Naples on 6th January 5246 (1486). At the bottom of fol. 352 below the colophon Shlomo records in a lengthy inscription the birth of his son Ytzhak on Saturday 1st Tammuz 5247 (23 June, 1487).

From then on at least until 1611 the manuscript remained in Italy. At the bottom of fol. 351v, below the poem of 1262, is a sale agreement: Abraham bar Hezekiah

*The Decoration Programme of the Manuscript*

The decoration programme of our Pentateuch corresponds to the Ashkenazi Franco-German style,<sup>15</sup> which consists of decorated initial-

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confirms that he sold the manuscript to Menahem bar Meshulam through Ovadia of Cesena (ציינה) in northern Italy, south of Ravenna. Above this sale agreement is the signature of a well-known censor, a Jewish convert, who worked mainly in Venice and its vicinity: “*Visto p[er] me Camillo Jaghel commissio del 1611.*” At the top of every folio between 1r and 44r are running titles of pericopes in a seventeenth-century square Ashkenazi script.

On fol. 352 above, on the left and within the colophon, is a seventeenth-century owner’s inscription, written in Ashkenazi rabbinic cursive. In the top line are words that are difficult to understand, repeated twice. In Hebrew letters: קמובאיטבפוט קולפכמתיהן.

On the second line is a gift inscription to an important person, R. Aharon Baer Kazn[...?]. In Hebrew: (כבוד מורנו הרב רב) אהרן בער כצנ[...?] לידי אדוני ב'ב (בעל) ברית(י?) האלוף והקצין הנ' [כבד] ושתדלן כמהר"ר.

The place and date of this inscription is below the display script of the colophon: Frankfort-on-Main, 1st of Elul 5465 (21.8.1705). In Hebrew: פרנקפורט דמיין יטא חד אלול תפה לפר' [ט] פה הנ' [...?].

The difficult inscription of fol. 352 is copied again on the left, followed by the reversed Hebrew alphabet, written four times. In Hebrew: תשרק צפעס נמלך יטחו והדג בא (which was at times used as the initials of some *piyyutim*). On fol. 351v above the text is another owner’s inscription written in Ashkenazi rabbinic cursive, though by a different hand, below another reversed Hebrew alphabet. The writer is Moshe ben Shlomo Zalman. In Hebrew: נאום הכותב משה בן שלמה זלמן. On fol. 352v there are further owners’ inscriptions written in Ashkenazi rabbinic-cursive that can barely be deciphered, except possibly: Israel Frankel.

During the early eighteenth century the manuscript reached David Oppenheim, the famous, learned and rich Rabbi of Prague and Bohemia, who had an enormous library. The eighteenth-century binding of white leather on cardboard, embossed and blind-tooled with geometric motifs and with vestiges of clasps, was probably done for him. Endpapers have an unidentified watermark of a crowned shield enclosing a clover leaf. It resembles one of 1656, with a fleur-de-lis in its center; see Heawood (1950), 101, pl. 224. Thanks are due to Michal Sternthal for this information. The flyleaf of the binding is a frontispiece etched on vellum, copied from the woodcut frontispiece of the Amsterdam Haggadah of 1712 by Abraham bar Jacob. This frontispiece, which was sometimes added to R. David Oppenheim’s books, depicts Moses and Aaron in front of columns on either side of the page. On top, on a curtain ground are six medallions representing biblical scenes: the Expulsion, Noah’s Ark, the Tower of Babel, Abraham and Melchizedek, Lot and his daughters, and Jacob’s dream. Oppenheim’s collection was bought by the Bodleian Library in 1829, catalogued as Opp. 14.

<sup>15</sup> For example the Duke of Sussex Pentateuch, London British Library, Add. Ms. 15282, and the Regensburg Pentateuch, Jerusalem, Israel Museum, Ms. 180/52, both from around 1300; see Narkiss (1969), 31, pls. 29, 32.

word panels for the books<sup>16</sup> and the pericopes,<sup>17</sup> full-page miniatures,<sup>18</sup> marginal text illustrations, and catchwords.<sup>19</sup> However, some variations in our manuscript may point to a particular school of illumination in the south of France. Most marginal illustrations in manuscripts from Germany or northern France of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are outlined by micrography of the Masorah *magna* text, whereas in our Albenc Pentateuch, as in others of the same school, the illustrations are pen-and-ink drawings interwoven within the commentary column or structured as *carmina figurata*. The many text illustrations were probably added to induce young members of the family, who may have been intrigued by the illustrations, to study the text of the Pentateuch and the commentary in order to understand their meaning.

The decorations of our Pentateuch can be divided into four types:

1. The text of the commentary column outlined and shaped as the classical *carmina figurata*.
2. Pen-drawn illustrations incorporated within the shaped text of the commentary.
3. Pen-drawn text illustrations in the outer margins or attached to catchwords.
4. Initial-word panels to some openings of books and pericopes.

The pen-drawn illustrations and the *carmina figurata* were drawn by one artist, a knowledgeable person, well acquainted with the meaning of the biblical and commentary texts, who integrated them visually in the margins or within the commentary columns. As noted earlier, the scribe of our manuscript was also the artist. There are many examples of the breadth and scope of his knowledge of the biblical text and commentary, most of which are direct illustrations of one or the other of the included texts and some are details alluding to them, while others refer to external texts.

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<sup>16</sup> In our manuscript on fols. 1 (Genesis; Fig. 1), 120 (Leviticus; Fig. 13), 263 (Esther), 270v (Song of Songs; Fig. 16), 277 (Lamentations).

<sup>17</sup> In our manuscript on fols. 17, 91, 130, 190v 263, and 270 all include text illustrations.

<sup>18</sup> None in our manuscript.

<sup>19</sup> Most of the catchwords in our manuscript were cropped by later binders; some are decorated with pen-and-ink drawings, e.g., fols. 7v, 15v (a rampant lion), 23v (three fish joined at their heads), 31v, and two illustrating the text, e.g., fols. 39v and 47v.

### *Condensed Narrative Illustrations*

The depictions of alluding details may further imply that the artist drew them deliberately as a puzzle. One example is in the commentary column on fol. 14v, illustrating Abraham's covenant with God over the divided animals (Gen. 15). On top of the column is a shield alluding to God's words to Abraham: "I am your shield (your protector)" (Gen. 15:1); and at the bottom of the column is the head of a calf representing one of the sacrificed animals (Gen. 15:9–10). The shield and the calf's head are a condensed allusion to the scene.

A more intricate example is the *carmina figurata* rampant lion next to the biblical story of Judah and Tamar (Gen. 38, fol. 46v; Fig. 4). The allusion to Judah as a lion is related to another biblical text—Jacob's blessing of his sons, where he refers to Judah as a lion (Gen. 49:9). In the story of Judah and Tamar, he gives her his signet as a pledge (38:18). According to Rashi's commentary, following the Targum, our artist depicted a rampant lion, which commonly figured on seals used by both Jews and Christians during that period.<sup>20</sup>

Many of Shlomo's illustrations are closely related to Rashi's commentary, such as the zigzag roads leading to Lot's house, which were taken by the angels who came to save him (fol. 18v). This is based on Rashi's understanding of the term "turn in (to my house)" (Gen. 19:2–3), which means that they did not go directly to Lot's house in order to mislead the Sodomites.<sup>21</sup> Another example is the moon and the sun seen together on the morning that Sodom was destroyed (fol. 19v) on top of the commentary column, which is based on Rashi's interpretation of the verse "the sun has risen upon the earth" (Gen. 19:23–25). This points to the appearance of both sun and moon during the destruction of Sodom, stating that it was done in order to upset those Sodomites who worshipped the sun and those who worshipped the moon.<sup>22</sup> Overturned gables and a gate are also depicted within the column.

The artist sometimes added pictorial allusions that do not appear in either text and point to his deep knowledge of the Jewish texts. Among these, for example, is the tetramorph cherub with a human face at the top of the ladder in Jacob's dream (fol. 32v; Fig. 17), alluding to the verse:

<sup>20</sup> See Bedos-Rezak (1981), 207–228; cf. Friedenberga (1987).

<sup>21</sup> See description below.

<sup>22</sup> In Hebrew: הַלְבֵנָה עֹמֵדֵת בְּרִיקָע. Rashi's interpretation, based on the Midrash *Sechel Tov* to Gen. 19:15.

“And behold, the Lord stood above it” (Gen. 28:12–13). In order to avoid representing an image of God, Shlomo depicted one of the tetramorphs that, according to Ezekiel (1:5–28), carry the throne of God.<sup>23</sup>

At times Shlomo illustrated a commentary from other texts, especially of the tosaphists, the Ashkenazi rabbis who followed Rashi.<sup>24</sup> One example is the diagram of the high priest’s *hoshen* (fol. 119v; Fig. 3), which follows the interpretation of R. Abraham ben Ytzhak of Montpellier (died c. 1315), dean of the court in Lunel.<sup>25</sup>

### *Pentateuch Text Illustrations*

There are no bounds to our scribe-artist’s imagination in illustrating the biblical stories. Shlomo’s original iconography is revealed both in elaborate scenes and in individual images. Examples of single figures and objects that shape the *carmina figurata* commentary column are the figure of the bearded Abraham, aged ninety-nine (fol. 16), illustrating Gen. 17:1; the tree of knowledge (fol. 3); the staff of Moses, which changed into a serpent and swallowed the staffs of Pharaoh’s magicians (fol. 72v; Fig. 5); and the more sophisticated chequered tower representing the towns built by Nimrod (fol. 10v).<sup>26</sup>

Shlomo elaborated the shaped columns by introducing pen-and-ink drawings within the commentary column. A similar illustration of the towns built by Nimrod is the chequered tower of Babel (Gen. 11:3–4; fol. 11; Fig. 6); but our artist interwove the workers within the continuous bricklike structure.<sup>27</sup> This depiction is innovative and no other similar representations of this subject are known from any other Hebrew or Latin manuscript. Another example of a narrative scene is Ishmael shooting an arrow at a bird perched on a tree in the margin (Gen. 21:21; fol. 21; Fig. 7). This depiction may allude to Rashi’s commentary on “Hagar’s son mocking” or “playing” with Sarah’s son Isaac

<sup>23</sup> See description of fol. 32v and Fig. 17 below.

<sup>24</sup> See Urbach (1980), especially Chapters I and II, relating to Rashi and his pupils.

<sup>25</sup> See description of below. Another drawing based on a text by a tosaphist illustrates the eight spies carrying the cluster of grapes back from Canaan (Num. 13, fol. 181v; Fig. 14).

<sup>26</sup> Others are the dragon-shaped serpent (fol. 3v); the dreams of the butler and the baker (fols. 49 and 49v); Moses’ burning bush (fol. 67v); and many more.

<sup>27</sup> Other examples are the rainbow in the clouds drawn within the column (fol. 9v); the moon still visible on the morning when Sodom was destroyed (fol. 19v); and the ladder of Jacob’s dream with a tetramorph on the top (fol. 32v, fig. 17).

(Gen. 21:9), which implies that Ishmael shot at Isaac while they were playing in the field. This explanation serves as an excuse for sending Hagar and Ishmael away at Sarah's demand, as depicted in the two following episodes. To the right of a bush-shaped *carmina figurata* commentary is the well with a bucket that Hagar found with God's guidance, while at the top Hagar in the desert is pouring water into the mouth of Ishmael, who is sitting under a tree-shaped commentary column (Gen. 21:19; fol. 21v; fig. 8).

In contrast to a column in the shape of a bush or tower, the artist designed outlined figures and filled them with the commentary text. One of these sophisticated examples is Esau, acceding to Isaac's request to hunt and cook him a tasty meal, shooting an arrow into the neck of a stag shaped in *carmina figurata* within the commentary (Gen. 27:3–4; fol. 30; Fig. 9). The bottom of this shaped column is flanked by Rebecca, who loves Jacob, ordering him to fetch a young goat, seen at the opposite side.

### *Marginal Pen-Drawn Illustrations*

Most of the depictions are marginal pen-and-ink drawings illustrating a word or an episode: for example, the hooded Jacob rolling a stone away from the well in Haran with the help of a shepherd (Gen. 29:10; fol. 33, Fig. 10), where, contrary to the biblical text, Jacob is rolling the stone away by himself; and the cluster of grapes carried back from Canaan by eight individuals (Num. 13; fol. 181v; Fig. 11).<sup>28</sup> A few of the marginal illustrations are framed within a trefoil arch, such as the Sacrifice of Isaac (fols. 22v; Fig. 12, and on fol. 120; Fig. 13), and Eliphaz the son of Esau robbing Jacob (fol. 33; Fig. 10).

Of special interest are the text illustrations attached to catchwords, mostly cropped. Examples are Jacob doing battle with the angel (fol.

<sup>28</sup> Other noteworthy drawings are: a fierce animal, which might have devoured Joseph (fol. 46); Pharaoh's dream of the seven ears of corn (fol. 51); the plagues of blood, frogs, lice, beasts, boils, and darkness (fols. 73, 73v, 74, 74v, 75, 75v, and 78, respectively); a dog that did not bark at the Israelites coming out of Egypt (fol. 78v); Pharaoh's drowning horse (fol. 83); Miriam playing a timbrel and a flute (fol. 84v); the diagram of the *hoshen*, where Shlomo states that he drew it (fol. 119v; Fig. 12); the fear of the beasts who might grow stronger upon the Israelites (fol. 228); Phinehas carrying his lance (fol. 240v); a heraldic eagle (fol. 253); and a crouching stag at the end of Song of Songs (fol. 273v).

39v; Fig. 14); a black Ishmaelite selling Joseph to Potiphar (fol. 47v), or the Amalekites fighting the Israelites (fol. 87v).

### *Initial-Word Panels*

The initial-word panels were modeled after Franco-German Hebrew illuminated manuscripts of the same period, though drawn and painted in the style of our scribe-artist: for example, the architectonic panel of Genesis (fol. 1; Fig. 1), formed of a horseshoe arch filled with red hatching on a blue ground. Above is a gable surmounted by a fleur-de-lis, resting on two pillars decorated with a plaited motif, as well as foliate bases and tops. The shape of the arch resembles the initial-word panel of Numbers in the De Castro Pentateuch of 1344 (Fig. 15).<sup>29</sup>

## *The Origins of Shlomo's Illustrations*

### *South German Schools of Illumination*

Apart from the initial-word panels, the Franco-German influence is noticeable in some iconographical and compositional elements of the text illustrations, which may have been known to Shlomo. For example, the Sacrifice of Isaac illustrates the initial word of Leviticus (fol. 120; Fig. 13) dealing with sacrifices, and it is similarly attached to Leviticus in the Ambrosian Bible from southern Germany of 1236–1238.<sup>30</sup> However, in our manuscript the scene also appears next to its text (fol. 22v; Fig. 12). The two representations share similar iconographical elements with the same scene in the Brabant Pentateuch of 1310, copied by a scribe who may have come originally from Ochsenfurt on the river Main (Fig. 16).<sup>31</sup> In all three representations Isaac is lying naked, supine on the altar with his hands and legs tied, based on Rashi's commentary, following a midrash (*Tanhuma, Vayera*, 23) explaining the term "bound"

<sup>29</sup> Jerusalem, Israel Museum, Ms. 180/94, fol. 206, initial-word panel of Numbers; see Benjamin (1979).

<sup>30</sup> Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Ms. B. 30 Inf, fol. 102v; see Ottolenghi (1972), 119–125, pl. 13.G.

<sup>31</sup> Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Levi 19, fol. 34v. The illuminated colophon on fol. 624v states that the scribe Isaac in the county of Brabant is the son of Elijah, a cantor from Ochsenfurt on the Main (בארץ ברבן אני יצחק הסופר בר (אליהו חזן מאוכסנפורט).



as meaning with his hands and legs tied together like an animal for sacrifice.<sup>32</sup> The bearded Abraham is wearing a hood and holding Isaac's hair with his left hand. However, in our manuscript he holds a knife in his right hand, whereas in the Brabant Pentateuch he holds a sword. The torso of the winged angel is inclined toward the ram, which is caught in a thicket with entwined roots.

The *carmina figurata* technique, in which our scribe-artist excels, also has some antecedents in Franco-German Hebrew manuscripts. The most prominent among these are the Tripartite Mahzor (ca. 1320) from the Lake Constance region, in which geometrical, floral, and fleur-des-lis motifs appear in the commentary column,<sup>33</sup> and the Hayyim D'Quopdana Pentateuch, where the *carmina figurata* resemble some shapes in our manuscript<sup>34</sup>: for instance, on fol. 94 the *carmina figurata* commentary is shaped as two addorsed dragons with pen-drawn heads and long ears similar to the dragons in our Pentateuch on fols. 3v and 72v; Fig. 5.

The combination of pen-and-ink drawings and *carmina figurata* is also found later in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in the Franco-German Ashkenazi realm.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the panels of two Megillot in our Pentateuch, Esther (fol. 263) and Song of Songs (fol. 270v; Fig. 18), decorated with pen-drawn Franco-German motifs show traces of pinpricks, which indicate that they were copied from a similar model, though not necessarily from corresponding book panels.

Apart from his knowledge of Hebrew manuscripts, Shlomo may have been influenced by Christian illustrations: for example, the human-faced tetramorph at the top of Jacob's ladder (fol. 32v; Fig. 17).

<sup>32</sup> The Babylonian Talmud (*Shabath*, 54a) relates an argument as to how Isaac was bound: one hand and one foot together behind his back, or hands together and feet together.

<sup>33</sup> The three parts of the mahzor are housed in three libraries: vol. I, Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Kaufmann Collection, Ms. A384, e.g., fols. 56v, 57, 99v, 100, 207v, 208; vol. II, London, British Library, Add. Ms. 22413, e.g., fols. 15v, 16; vol. III, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Mich. 619, e.g., fols. 113v, 143v; see Shalev-Eyni (2001), 302, 307–8, 310, respectively; cf. Narkiss (1968), 125–133, figs. 30–33.

<sup>34</sup> London, British Library, Or. Ms. 2696.

<sup>35</sup> One manuscript of the late fourteenth century is an abridged Talmud by R. Isaac Alfasi with Rashi's commentary with grotesque dragons shaped as *carmina figurata*, though not illustrating the text. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, héb. 311; see Garel (1991), 145–48 (no. 106). Garel thinks that it is originally from Prague; cf. Sed-Rajna (1994), 236–238 (no. 92). Sed-Rajna mentions another manuscript of Isaac Alfasi, with geometrical *carmina figurata*, in Paris: héb. 313, see *ibid.*, 324–226 (no. 92).

*Southern French Manuscripts*

There are manuscripts executed in the south of France during the fourteenth century that were decorated with *carmina figurata* and pen-and-ink drawings, though mostly they lack Shlomo's imagination and connection to Rashi's commentary. Among these are three Pentateuchs in the British Library<sup>36</sup> with the Targum and Rashi's commentary on either side of the biblical text, as well as the Megillot and Haftarot. All three have *carmina figurata* illustrations of the commentaries, as well as marginal pen-and-ink drawings. The closest is the Multi-Scribe Pentateuch, copied by three scribes: Hayyim, Shmuel bar Hayyim, and Yosef.<sup>37</sup> The winged dragon with long ears (fol. 133v) is similar to Moses' staff-dragon in our manuscript (fol. 72v; Fig. 5). Like the other manuscripts of this group, the Multi-Scribe Pentateuch has some Franco-German elements, such as initial-word panels (e.g., fols. 7 and 57) and illustrations outlined in micrography,<sup>38</sup> as well as some typical Franco-German grotesque dragons (e.g., fols. 43v and 50v).

Shlomo's use of pen-and-ink drawings rather than shapes outlined in micrography may resemble other manuscripts out of the south of France, mainly from Provence. However, unlike our manuscript, the style of these Provençal drawings, which were sometimes coloured, was influenced by the art of northern Spain or Lombardy. The southern French works do not constitute an iconographical school, but are rather a group of manuscripts characterized by their innovative iconography and are thus similar to our Pentateuch. Examples are some fourteenth-century illuminated Haggadot from Avignon and its environs, one being the Sassoon Spanish Haggadah,<sup>39</sup> written in Sephardi script and decorated with colored pen-drawn initial-word panels, with some special and innovative iconography.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Add. 26878; Harley 5709 and Harley 1861.

<sup>37</sup> London, BL, Add. 26878. More examples of *carmina figurata* are the hangings of the Tabernacle (fol. 105), a spread eagle (fol. 191v), a slaughtering knife (fol. 194v), a grotesque camel (fol. 199), and two grotesque human heads (fol. 305). Among the pen-and-ink drawings are a dog (fol. 49v), a sacrificial goat (fol. 161v), a bird with a frog in its beak, and some diagrams, including the plan of the Land of Canaan (fol. 205).

<sup>38</sup> Such as the seven-branched menorah (fol. 107v); the high priest's miter (fol. 110v) and the Ark of Covenant (111v).

<sup>39</sup> Now in Jerusalem, Israel Museum, Ms. 180/41; see Narkiss (1969), 62, pl. 11.

<sup>40</sup> Another manuscript is the Schocken Haggadah (formerly Jerusalem, Schocken Collection, Ms. 24085, now in an unknown private collection), which shows the influence of an artist from Lombardy, though some of its iconography is of Spanish origin; see Narkiss (1953); Zirlin (1986/87), 55–72; Sternthal (2006). A third manuscript of the late

*Description and Iconography of the Illustrations*

Most of the illustrations in our Pentateuch—no fewer than fifty-one—are in the book of Genesis; Exodus has nineteen, and the rest of the books have five, seven, and six illustrations, respectively.

*Genesis*

The architectonic initial-word panel of Genesis on fol. 1 (Fig. 1) is placed above the three text columns. The green painted initial-word is written in a panel of red penwork scrolls. It is set under a wide lobed arch filled with red hatching on a blue ground. Above is a gable surmounted by a fleur-de-lis in red and yellow, resting on two pillars decorated with a plaited motif as well as foliate bases and crests. The shape of the arch resembles the initial-word panel of Numbers in the De Castro Pentateuch from Germany of 1344 (Fig. 15)<sup>41</sup>; however, the style and motifs differ, since our arch lacks the fantastic animals that decorate the De Castro arch, which are typical of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century schools of Hebrew illumination in Franconia.

The story of the temptation in the Garden of Eden is illustrated by three consecutive motifs next to the text. The *carmina figurata* illustrations start on fol. 3, depicting the Tree of Knowledge with roots and branches (Gen. 2:17) along the whole commentary column. Another small pen-drawn tree extends to the bottom margin from the final letters of the words of the biblical text “tree of the garden” (Gen. 3:1).<sup>42</sup> This is followed on fol. 3v by an abbreviated scene of the temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:1–5) depicting in *carmina figurata* the serpent as a dragon without legs,<sup>43</sup> but with an open mouth and long ears, a depiction similar to that of the dragon-serpent into which Moses transformed his staff (fol. 72v; Fig. 5). The serpent depicted as a dragon probably follows Rashi, who equates the serpent with a dragon in his commentary to the Babylonian Talmud, *Bava Batra*, 16b.<sup>44</sup>

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fourteenth century is the Wolf Haggadah (now in Jerusalem, National and University Library, Ms. Octavo, 7246), with pen-and-ink drawings in Italian style; see Kaufmann (1892), 65–77; Garel (1975), 22–27; Zucker (1997), 4–13; Keinan (2004).

<sup>41</sup> See n. 29 above.

<sup>42</sup> In Hebrew: עץ הגן.

<sup>43</sup> According to Rashi’s commentary on Gen. 3:14 the serpent had legs, which were cut off.

<sup>44</sup> I am grateful to Ariella Amar for this reference.

On fol. 9v, within the commentary column, a rainbow is drawn as a semicircle surrounding a stylized cloud (Gen. 9:11–17). In the right outer margin is a hand pointing to an inscription: “This is the cloud and the rainbow (proving that God is) faithful to his covenant and fulfills his vow, thus said the Lord who remembers the covenant.”<sup>45</sup> In the lower part of the column are two stylized leaves alluding to the vineyard planted by Noah (Gen. 9:20).

The top of the commentary column on fol. 10 is shaped like a large jar with a handle and a spout pouring wine into the goblet of Noah (Gen. 9:21). On fol. 10v a gabled chequered tower in *carmina figurata* with a closed door takes up the entire commentary column, illustrating the cities built by Nimrod of Babylon, the grandson of Ham, Noah’s great-grandson (Gen. 10:8–13).

The following page (fol. 11) also depicts a building formed by *carmina figurata* in the commentary column—the tower of Babel (Gen. 11:3–4, fig. 6), shown as a chequered brick wall constructed in a most original way. Four workers are entwined between the bricks: at the top is a man reaching up with his left arm and pointing with his right at a woman climbing steps with a basket of bricks on her head. Between them is inscribed: “This is the tower of the ‘Divided Generation.’”<sup>46</sup> Below them there is a hooded workman raising a hoe over a built-up corner, and another man further down is holding a vertical plumb line. The inscription reads: “These are bricks.”<sup>47</sup> This interesting iconography, which is not known to me from any other Hebrew or Latin manuscript, may be the scribe-artist’s own invention. In the outer margin is a plant marking the scribe’s name Shlomo.

The commentary column depicting God’s covenant with Abraham over the divided animals (Gen. 15) on fol. 14v has a shield on top in *carmina figurata*, literally illustrating God’s words: “I am your shield (protector)” (Gen. 15:1). At the bottom of the column there is a drawing of a calf’s head, alluding to the divided animals that Abraham sacrificed to seal the covenant (Gen. 15:9–10). Another calf’s head protrudes from the last line of the Targum column.

<sup>45</sup> In Hebrew: זה הענן והקשת, נאמן בבריתו וקיים בשבועתו, כִּאֲ (כה אמר) השם זוכר הברית. The sentence is part of the benediction said on seeing a rainbow.

<sup>46</sup> In Hebrew: זה מגדל דור הפלגה. The term is based on the Mishnah, *Sanhedrin*, 10:3.

<sup>47</sup> In Hebrew: לבינים זה.

On fol. 16 the full-profile figure of Abraham as an old man of ninety-nine (Gen. 17:1) shapes the entire commentary column in *carmina figurata*. He has a large head, a large eye, and a long beard and he is wearing a long tunic with a hood; his shod feet extend below the bottom of the column.

A small initial-word panel within the biblical text starting the pericope *Vayera* (Gen. 18) on fol. 17 is one of the few decorated initial words of a pericope. It is painted yellow, strewn with triple red dots, and framed in green and red. A green and red foliate bar extends along the main text column.

The story of the destruction of Sodom and the saving of Lot is depicted on five consecutive folios. On fol. 18 a tower similar to the one on fol. 10v, but with a bolted door, illustrates the inhospitality of the Sodomites before the city was destroyed (Gen. 18:20–21). The two angels who came to destroy Sodom are depicted on fol. 18v as two outspread foliate wings above the commentary column. Within the column are zigzag roads leading to Lot's house. This illustrates Rashi's explanation of the term "turn in (to my house)" (Gen. 19:2–3) meaning that they should go by indirect ways, so that the Sodomites will not realize where these strangers are going.<sup>48</sup> On fol. 19v Sodom's destruction is depicted by a crescent of the moon and a star above the commentary column, which incorporates an upside-down gate and overturned gables. The star probably represents the sun next to the moon, which, according to Rashi's interpretation of the verse "the sun has risen upon the earth" (Gen. 19:23), means that Sodom was destroyed at a time when both the sun and the moon appeared together in the sky. He states that this was in order to disquiet those Sodomites who worshipped the sun and those who worshipped the moon.<sup>49</sup> Accordingly, the inscription next to the moon with a star reads: "The moon is standing in the sky."<sup>50</sup> On fol. 20 a small covered jar with a handle and spout is shown pouring wine into a large goblet within the column, illustrating Lot's daughters making their father drunk (Gen. 19:31–35). Another covered jug held by a man is depicted above of the commentary column on fol. 20v. Since this has

<sup>48</sup> In Hebrew: ויסורו, ויסורו. Rashi's interpretation is based on the midrash in *Genesis Rabbah*, 50:7–8, according to R. Huna.

<sup>49</sup> Rashi's interpretation, based on the Midrash *Sechel Tov* to Gen. 19:15.

<sup>50</sup> In Hebrew: הלבנה עומדת ברקיע.

no connection to the story of Abimelech told on this page (Gen. 20), it may relate to Lot's second daughter making her father drunk.<sup>51</sup>

The story of Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar, is depicted in three episodes on two consecutive folios. The first (fol. 21; Fig. 7) shows Ishmael the archer (Gen. 21:21) enclosed by a semicircle within the commentary column, shooting an arrow at a bird perched on a tree in the margin. It may also allude to Rashi's commentary on "Hagar's son mocking" or "playing with" Sarah's son, Isaac (Gen. 21:9), which implies that Ishmael shot at Isaac while they were playing in the field, which served as an excuse for sending Hagar and Ishmael away at Sarah's demand. Another semicircle in the commentary column encloses part of a verse omitted by the scribe and added between the text and the commentary columns, interrupting the flow of the Masorah *parva*. This may indicate that the commentary and the Masorah *parva* were written after completion of the biblical text and its correction possibly by the vocalizer.

On fol. 21v (Fig. 8) to the right of a bush-shaped *carmina figurata* commentary is a pen-drawn scene of Hagar pouring water from a waterskin into the mouth of her seated son Ishmael, who is near death, inscribed "and she gave the lad to drink."<sup>52</sup> Below is the draw well with a bucket that she found with the guidance of God (Gen. 21:19). The tree-shaped commentary indicates the shrub under which Hagar left Ishmael (Gen. 21:15).

The pen-drawn sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22:9–13) is framed by a trefoil arch at the bottom of the commentary column on fol. 22v (Fig. 12). Isaac, dressed, is lying on his back on a structured altar with his hands and legs tied together behind his back. Abraham, bearded and wearing a hood, is holding Isaac's head down with his left hand and has a knife in his right. The torso of a winged angel appears above the altar inclined downward toward the right, where a ram is caught in a thicket with intertwined roots. A similar depiction appears at the beginning of the book of Leviticus on fol. 120 (Fig. 13), although there Isaac's hands and legs are tied separately in front. The illustration is based on Rashi's commentary, following a midrash (*Tanhuma, Vayera, 23*), explaining

<sup>51</sup> A jar and a goblet are also depicted on folio 10, representing the drunken Noah (Gen. 9:21), though the jar shapes the column, whereas the goblet is pen-drawn.

<sup>52</sup> Gen. 21:19: ותשק את הנער.

the term “bound” as meaning with his hands and legs tied together like an animal for sacrifice.<sup>53</sup>

On fol. 23v is the Cave of Machpelah, where Abraham buried Sarah (Gen. 23:9), showing four tomblike structures with gabled roofs, inscribed as “cave to (instead of ‘cave of’) Machpelah.”<sup>54</sup> At the bottom of the page next to the cropped catchword are two (originally three) fish sharing one head.

The story of Abraham’s servant finding Rebecca is illustrated in three episodes on consecutive folios. On fol. 24v the commentary is shaped in *carmina figurata* as an elongated amphora with four circular bulges, representing the water jar that Rebecca offered to Abraham’s servant (Gen. 24:15). The sequel on fol. 25v shows the *carmina figurata* commentary shaped as a camel, one of those with Abraham’s servant at the well (Gen. 24:30). The following text illustration on fol. 26 relates to Abraham’s servant telling Rebecca’s parents the story of his miraculous meeting with Rebecca, who gave him water and watered his camels, and ends with him giving Rebecca a nosering and bracelets (Gen. 24:46–47). This is illustrated by a *carmina figurata* shaped pitcher on top of the commentary column, below which are three roundels representing the ring and the bracelets. The story ends on fol. 26v with the servant giving presents to Rebecca and her family before she goes with him to meet Isaac (Gen. 24:53), but the commentary column shaped as two birds pecking at a fleur-de-lis may be unrelated to this episode.

The controversy between Esau and Jacob over the blessing from their father, Isaac, is depicted in two episodes on fol. 30 (Fig. 9). The top of the commentary column shows the hairy Esau shooting an arrow into the neck of a stag eating a leaf off a branch in *carmina figurata*. Esau is thus carrying out Isaac’s request to go hunting and cook him a tasty meal, so that he might bless him (Gen. 27:3–4). Inscribed: “This is Esau catching the game.”<sup>55</sup> In the lower part of the commentary is Rebecca planning to disguise Jacob as Esau, in order for him to obtain blind Isaac’s blessing (Gen. 27:9–13). The drawing shows Jacob wearing

<sup>53</sup> The Babylonian Talmud (*Shabath*, 54a) relates an argument as to how Isaac was bound: each hand and foot together behind his back, or hands together and feet together.

<sup>54</sup> In Hebrew: מערת, מערת למכפלה.

<sup>55</sup> In Hebrew: זה עשו לזכד ציד.

a hood and standing near Rebecca, who points to a kid to the right of the commentary, inscribed “Rebecca loves Jacob.”<sup>56</sup>

Iconographically important is Jacob’s dream (Gen. 28:12–13) on fol. 32v (Fig. 17), where the *carmina figurata* commentary column is shaped like a ladder with five rungs, inscribed twice: “This is a ladder.”<sup>57</sup> Standing on two human feet, the ladder is topped by a pen-drawn eight-winged human head with two feet below them, recalling the four-winged cherubim (the tetramorph) on top of the Ark of the Covenant in mid-Byzantine illustrations.<sup>58</sup> No example of the latter fits the eight-winged creature on top of our ladder. The closest images are the cherubim depicted as a head surrounded by six wings above the Ark of the Covenant in the British Library Hebrew Miscellany (ca. 1280), probably from the north of France,<sup>59</sup> which may point to a possible locale for the model of our cherub. Two cherubim with a single head surrounded by four wings are above the Ark of the Covenant in the twelfth-century Homilies of Jacobus Kokkinobaphos in the Vatican Library and may indicate an earlier Byzantine representation.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand, the cherubim depicted in Sephardi Hebrew Bibles from neighbouring Catalonia are mostly bi-winged human-bodied angels, which may go back to an early Jewish tradition.<sup>61</sup> Since these creatures have the task of bearing God’s throne and glorifying him, our image

<sup>56</sup> In Hebrew: רבקה אוהבת את יעקב.

<sup>57</sup> In Hebrew: זה סולם.

<sup>58</sup> The images are based on Ezekiel’s four-faced living creatures that carry the throne of God (Ezek. 1:5–28), Isaiah’s six-winged seraphs (Isa. 6:2–3), and St. John’s vision of the four creatures each with six wings (Rev. 4: 6–8).

<sup>59</sup> London, British Library, Add. Ms. 11639, fol. 522; see Revel-Neher (1998), fig. 79. For grouping the different series of illustrations according to style, see Sed-Rajna (1982), 18–30; cf. Metzger, vol. 38 (1985), 59–290; vol. 39 (1985), 221. For other considered ateliers see Zirlin (2003), 135–161, and for the provenance of the original manuscript in the Street of the Jews (*Jurue*) in Metz see Garel (2003), 27–37.

<sup>60</sup> Cod. gr. 1162, fol. 133v; see Revel-Neher (1998), 24–25, pl. 6, and cf. Chérubins in her General Index. For comparison of the other type of cherubim with four faces in Byzantine art see *ibid.*, pls. 1, 2, 5, and figs. 3, 8–10, 12, 31–37, 45–47; cf. Revel-Neher (1982), 6–17.

<sup>61</sup> See Revel-Neher (1998), pl. 7b, figs. 58, 59, 60, 66a, 70, 75, 76, also in the Sarajevo Haggadah, fig. 87, and in the Ashkenazi Regensburg Pentateuch, fig. 81. The cherubim with two wings also appear in the ninth-century apse mosaic in the Theodulf Oratory at Germiny-des-Prés, see Revel-Neher (1984), fig. 87; as well as in other Jewish and Christian objects from the second century on; see Revel-Neher, *ibid.*, figs. 2, 25, 26, 53, 55, 74, 77. They appear in the same way in the Ashburnham Pentateuch, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Nouv. Acq. Lat. 2334, fol. 27v, see Narkiss (2007), 375, pl. 32.



may represent one of the angels who carried His throne taking the place of God on top of the ladder (Gen. 28:13).

Two more episodes relating to Jacob appear on fol. 33 to the left of the geometrical shaped commentary column. Above is the hooded Jacob, who, with the help of another shepherd, is rolling the stone away from the well for Rachel to water her flocks. This is contrary to the biblical text (Gen. 29:10), which says that he rolled it away alone, without help. Two sheep are standing below the well. In the lower part (Fig. 10), framed by a trefoil arch, is a midrashic scene of Jacob giving a bracelet and his money to the armed Eliphaz, Esau's son. According to the story, Esau ordered his son to kill Jacob on his way to Haran. The scene illustrates Rashi's interpretation of Gen. 29:11 stating that the reason Jacob cried when he kissed Rachel was that he had no jewelery to give her, since he had given it all to Eliphaz. Eliphaz could not bring himself to kill Jacob, since he had been brought up by Isaac, his grandfather and Jacob's father, so he asked Jacob what he should do instead and yet carry out his father's order. Jacob answered that he should take whatever he possessed, since being poor is considered the same as being dead.<sup>62</sup> Jacob and Eliphaz are identified by inscribed names above their heads.

On fol. 39v in the bottom margin, next to the partly cropped catchword is a drawing of Jacob wrestling with a winged angel (Gen. 32:24; Fig. 14). On fol. 46 at the bottom of the commentary column is a drawing of a wild beast with an open mouth, referring to Jacob's thought when he saw Joseph's bloody garment that an evil beast had devoured him (Gen. 37:33).

The commentary in the shape of a rampant lion on fol. 46v (Fig. 4) alludes to Judah's involvement with Tamar (Gen. 38), to whom he gave his signet as a pledge for sending her a kid as payment for lying with her (38:16–18). The lion is identified with Judah, according to Jacob's blessing of his sons (Gen. 49:9), and may have been interpreted by our artist as the animal engraved on Judah's signet, as suggested by Rashi following the Targum. Rampant lions engraved on a seal were commonly used by Jews as well as Christians during this period.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>62</sup> In Hebrew: לפי שרדף אליפז בן עשו במצות אביו אחריו להורגו והשיגו, ולפי שגדל אליפז בחיקו של יצחק משך ידו. אמר לו מה אעשה לציווי אבא, אמר לו יעקב טול מה שממוי [ן] שבידי, ועני חשוב כמת. This is based on the early *Midrash Agadah* on Genesis, see Buber (1894), 28:5. The term "A poor man is considered dead" is based on the Babylonian Talmud, *Nedarim*, 64b. I am grateful to Ariella Amar for these references.

<sup>63</sup> See n. 20 above.

The story of Joseph in Egypt is depicted in five episodes, mostly on consecutive folios. In the lower margin of fol. 47v is a fragmentary illustration probably of Joseph being sold by the Ishmaelites to Pharaoh's servant Potiphar (Gen. 39:1), as related at the end of the text column (the catchword is missing). What is left is a cropped drawing of a beast-like black man's head, possibly one of the Ishmaelites.

Three dreams are shown in the following commentary columns. On fol. 49 the column is shaped like a foliate scroll with two vine leaves, two clusters of grapes, and a flower drawn below, illustrating the butler's dream (Gen. 40:9–10). The top part of the commentary column on fol. 49v represents the fulfillment of the butler's dream (Gen. 40:11), shaped as a goblet held by a drawn hand, with two other hands pressing a bunch of grapes above the goblet. The baker's dream (Gen. 40:16–17) is illustrated by two baskets, one on top of the other, in the lower part of the shaped column. Seven upright ears of corn, illustrating Pharaoh's dream of the fat and lean ears of corn (Gen. 41:5–7), are on fol. 51 above the geometrically shaped commentary column.

A pitcher, probably illustrating the silver cup put in Benjamin's sack by Joseph's steward (Gen. 44:1–12), is drawn above of the commentary column on fol. 56.

An additional illustration based on Rashi's commentary is on fol. 58v, where the lower part of the commentary column is shaped like the horned head of a heifer showing its tongue, illustrating the beheaded calf (Deut. 21:1–9). Rashi's commentary on Gen. 45:27: "And they told him (Jacob) all Joseph's words... and he saw the wagons which Joseph sent," reminded Jacob of the law of the beheaded calf, which he was studying when he learned about Joseph's disappearance.<sup>64</sup> This complex association between wagon and calf is related to the similar sound of

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<sup>64</sup> Deuteronomy 21:1–9 deals with the finding a dead body in the fields when the killer is unknown. The elders of the nearest town have to behead a calf (עגלה ערופה) a neck-struck calf) at the place where the body was found, and proclaim: "Our hands have not shed this blood." Miraculously Jacob was studying this matter when Joseph's bloody garment was brought to him, and he thought that his hands had not shed this blood; miraculously, too, Joseph knew what his father was studying at the time, and thought that he should send Jacob a sign that he was still alive to prove that the brothers were not playing a trick on him again. The elaborate study of how, where, and when the act of striking the calf should be performed is related in the Mishnah, *Sotah*, 9; and in the Babylonian Talmud, *Sotah*, 44b–49b. Since the students of the Torah during the Middle Ages disregarded the concept of chronological time, Rashi could envisage Jacob studying the law according to a later book of the Pentateuch, the Mishnah, and the Talmud.

both terms in Hebrew: wagon is *agala*, a sound similar to *egla*, which is calf. Rashi explains that Joseph sending *agalot* (the plural of wagon) was meant as a sign to Jacob that he was still alive, by reminding him of what he was studying when he saw Joseph's bloody garment, an allusion to the proclamation: "My hands have not shed this blood" pronounced by the elders over the beheaded calf (Deut. 21:7).

### *Exodus*

The story of Moses in Egypt is illustrated in ten scenes, mostly consecutive. The burning bush that Moses saw on Mount Horeb (Ex. 3:2–3) is depicted in the commentary column on fol. 67v, which is shaped as a twining tree with large leaves surrounded by small flames. On fol. 72v (Fig. 5) is Aaron's rod changing into a serpent and swallowing the rods of Pharaoh's magician (Ex. 7:10–12). The commentary column is shaped as a winged dragon with two legs, long ears, open toothed jaws, and a twisted tail ending below in a small drawn dragon's head about to swallow a short rod in front.

The plague of blood (Ex. 7:20–21) on fol. 73 is illustrated by shaping the commentary column as a meandering river, inscribed "This is the Nile."<sup>65</sup> Three dead fish are drawn in the bends. The plague of frogs (Ex. 8:1–2) is shown as three leaping frogs drawn at the side of the geometrically shaped commentary column. The plague of lice (Ex. 8:12–13) on fol. 74 is illustrated by a few tiny lice drawn on either side of the commentary column. The plague of beasts (Ex. 8:17–20) on fol. 74v has a drawing of a head blowing a horn protruding from the geometrically shaped commentary column, next to the word "is blowing." This relates to Rashi's commentary explaining how in a similar catastrophe, a war, a besieging army blows horns to frighten the besieged.

The palms of a pair of hands are drawn below the commentary column on fol. 75 and on top of the column on fol. 75v. Both depictions illustrate the verse "Take to you handfuls of ashes," relating to the plague of boils (Ex. 9:8–10). Rashi explains the appearance of two hands, in spite of the fact that an object is usually thrown with one hand, as a miracle with the hands of both Moses and Aaron being joined together

<sup>65</sup> In Hebrew: זה גילוס.

in calling down this plague.<sup>66</sup> A pen-and-ink drawing in the left margin of fol. 78 represents the plague of darkness as two people touching each other within a house, illustrating either the verse “Darkness which may be felt” (Ex. 10:21) or “they saw not one another” (Ex. 10:23).

The crossing of the Red Sea has three illustrations. In the left margin next to the commentary column of fol. 78v a little dog is seated, illustrating Ex. 11:7: “But against any of the Children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue.” The head of a horse, referring to the horses of Pharaoh’s army drowning in the Red Sea (Ex. 14:23), is at the bottom of the commentary column on fol. 83. The crossing of the Red Sea is concluded with a pen-and-ink drawing in the right margin on fol. 84v of Miriam playing the timbrel and the flute afterward (Ex. 15:20).

Six episodes are related to the wandering of the Israelites in the desert, including a few laws, beginning with an amphora in the outer margin on fol. 86v, the container into which Moses and Aaron put a sample of the manna “to be kept for your generations” (Ex. 16:33). At the bottom of fol. 87v is a partly cropped catchword depicting two hooded knights fighting, one with a raised sword, illustrating the battle of the Israelites with Amalek (Ex. 17:8–13). On fol. 91 the initial word of the pericope *Mishpatim* (Ex. 21:1), dealing with the “judgments which thou shalt set before them,” is placed inside a double frame, with the hooded head of a bearded man extending a warning hand with a long index finger. In the left margin of fol. 92 a hand holding a sword is placed next to the commentary relating to the punishment of a master who kills his servant (Ex. 21:20), which according to Rashi’s explanation is death by the sword (based on Bab. Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, 71a). Two additional hands with elongated index fingers pointing to each other are drawn above the biblical text. On fol. 103v below the commentary column is a circle surrounded by a garland of fleurs-de-lis, inscribed with the extract quoted from Rashi’s commentary on Ex. 30:3, “A crown of gold round about, a sign of the priestly crown” (which only appears at the top of next page).<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Stating in Hebrew: כל דבר הנזרק בכח אינו נזרק אלא ביד אחת, הרי נסי הרבה, אחד שהחזיק קומצו של משה מלא חפנים שלו ושל אהרן.

<sup>67</sup> In Hebrew: זר זהב סימן לכתר כהונה. Being a Cohen, Shlomo the scribe probably wished to stress his priestly origin with this sign. This is based on the Babylonian Talmud, *Yoma*, 72b, which explains that out of the three crowns of the Tabernacle, the priest received that of the incense altar.

An exceptional illustration is on fol. 119v (Fig. 3) below the end of the book of Exodus across the entire width of the page. It consists of a diagram of the knotted *ephod* and the twelve stones of the *hoshen*, used by the high priest for divination, giving the right answer to the leaders of the community (described twice in Ex. 28:6–30 and 39:2–21). This was done by means of the *Urim veTumim*, which were also part of the “Hoshen of Judgment.” On top of the commentary column is the title: “This is a different, new commentary,”<sup>68</sup> and is in fact a shortened version of Rashi’s commentary on Ex. 28:6, with some variations (Rashi’s commentary on Ex. 39:2–21 is not extant). The diagram is drawn according to an interpretation written below it. Unlike the descriptions of the *hoshen* in the Bible (Ex. 28:15–21, 39:2–14), which arrange the stones in four rows,<sup>69</sup> the diagram arranges all the stones in one long row, adding two additional rows below, all enclosed in knotted frames of the *ephod*. On the top row are the names of the twelve stones, and below them are the corresponding names of the twelve tribes in the order of

<sup>68</sup> In Hebrew: זאת פרישה אחרת חדשה.

<sup>69</sup> There are a few depictions of the *ephod* and the *hoshen* in Hebrew illuminated manuscripts. A colored depiction appears in an Ashkenazi-German manuscript with Rashi’s commentary on the Pentateuch, Haftarot, and two Megillot, with additions by his pupil R. Joseph Kara. It was completed on 9.9.1294 (23 Elul 5054 AC). The illustration is on a full page (fol. 41) at the end of Exodus, as in our manuscript, but depicts the *ephod* as two sheets of cloth, connected by metal rings with a roundel between them for the priest’s head. On the front are the twelve stones, arranged in four rows, inscribed with the names of the stones and of the tribes, and at the back are the two stones of the *Urim VeTumim*. A caption on its side states: “The *ephod* was like a *shurkut* without sleeves.” (מלפניו ומאחוריו של כהן גדול האפוד היה כמין שורקוט בלא בתי ידים ושמות השבטים כתובים באבנים.) The odd term *shurkut* is also given as a synonym for the term cape (מקטורן) in a halakhic ruling concerning the tying of laces on the Sabbath by R. Isaac ben Moses of Vienna (c. 1180–1250, see *Or Zaru’a*, II, *Shabat*, 67). I am grateful to Ariella Amar for this reference. The term may suggest an apron in old German, similar to the modern German *Schürze*. I am grateful to Prof. Aliza Cohen for this suggestion. Rashi also refers to an apron in his interpretation of the *ephod*, worn by noble women when riding, and he calls it *pourcient* in old French. This manuscript’s whereabouts are unknown, because of the circumstances of its provenance. Before World War II it belonged to the *Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentums* in Berlin, and one of their teachers, Dr. Alexander Guttmann, took it from Germany to the United States in 1940 together with another fifty-eight manuscripts. He kept the manuscripts for more than forty years in Cincinnati, where he taught at the Hebrew Union College, until he offered them for sale at Sotheby’s in New York. Only after the manuscripts were sold (on June 26, 1984, this manuscript as Lot 57), did the court of New York respond to a public outcry, and order Sotheby’s to retrieve the manuscripts from the buyers and find public institutions to house them, so that they would be available to scholars and the general public. However, not all the manuscripts were returned, this being one. I am grateful to Dr. Cissy Grossman for the information about the sale and its consequences.

their birth and Jacob's blessing his sons (Gen. 49:3–27), which were to be engraved on the stones. In the lower row are the names of the three Patriarchs, divided in sections of one to three letters, followed by the term: "Tribes of Jeshurun." According to the Babylonian Talmud (*Yoma*, 73b) the names of the Patriarchs and the term were added in order to have the entire Hebrew alphabet appearing on the twelve stones, since the letters *zadei* and *tet* were missing in the names of the tribes. With these additions the alphabet was complete and enabled to enlighten the necessary letters on the stones of the *hoshen* and make up the correct answer. As our scribe-artist Shlomo explains, he drew them according to the learned commentary by R. Abraham bar Ytzhak, dean of the court of Lunel.<sup>70</sup>

### *Leviticus*

The Sacrifice of Isaac appears above the initial word of Leviticus, on fol. 120 (Fig. 13). The drawing is similar to that on fol. 22v (Fig. 12), though much broader and arranged differently. Isaac with hands and legs bound separately is lying on the structured altar in the centre. The hooded Abraham is holding Isaac's hair with his left hand and a

<sup>70</sup> He probably refers to Abraham bar Ytzhak of Montpellier (known as *מן ההר* died c. 1315), who functioned in some communities in the south of France and in Provence. He is known for his commentaries on the Talmud, some of which were based on Rashi and composed in that style. His commentary on *Yoma*, which elaborates on the *hoshen*, was published by Bloi (1975), 208–223, from a manuscript that ends on page 63a, and therefore our commentary on page 73b is not included; cf. Urbach (1980), in n. 23 above, 248–249. Thanks are due to Ariella Amar for her help with this reference and in identifying R. Abraham bar Ytzhak. There is another rabbi by the name of Abraham bar Ytzhak of Narbonne (1110–1179), known by his title "Dean of Court," but he was mainly interested in matters of law, and did not write a biblical or Talmudic commentary.

The Hebrew transcription of the words on the *hoshen* is as follows:

אודם, פטדה, ברקת, נפך, ספיר, יהלם, לשם, שבו, אחלמה, תרשיש, שהם, ישפה  
ראובן, שמעון, לוי, יהודה, דן, נפתלי, גד, אשר, יששכר, זבלון, יוסף, בנימין  
א ב רהם י יצחק י יעקב שב טי יש ו ר ון

כך היו/ האבנים סדורות לפי מה שאנו אומרים ביומא פ' (רק) בא לו דפריך התם  
והיו לו כתיב בהן צדי כיצד לומר עלה והצלח כשהיו שואלים באורים/ ותומים לירד  
במלחמה. ומשני אברהם יצחק ויעקב כתיב בהו' (ז). ותופריך והא לא כתיב בהו' (ז)  
טי"ת. ומשני שבטי ישורון כתיב בהו' (ז). להכי מפרש/ הגאון נוחו עדן כאשר ציירת  
למעלה. וכן באתה תצוה, ובאלה פקודי כמלואותם. הילכך צריך שיהיו האבנים שוות,  
שיהיו ששה/ אותיות בכל אבן ואבן לא פחות ולא יותר, והיינו דכול במילואותם  
שהן ממולאין, שהיו בכל אחת ואחת ששה אותיות ולפי זה צריך/ שיהא חסר ו'ו  
ראשונה ובספרים מדוייקין חסר ו'ו ובעמיו בב' יודין וכן כתוב בספר מדיוק (צריך  
להיות: מדיוק) מפ' (רוש) הרב ר' אברהם ב"ר יצחק אב בית דין מלוניל.

knife in his right. The angel is on the left, and the ram to the right is facing Abraham. On top are traces of an unfinished triple arcade. The Sacrifice of Isaac is used as an opening to Leviticus because the book starts with detailed descriptions of sacrifices. The Sacrifice of Isaac also appears in an initial-word panel for Leviticus in the Ambrosian Bible from southern Germany executed in 1236–1238.<sup>71</sup>

The rest of the book of Leviticus is illustrated with four pen-and-ink drawings. On fol. 130 the initial words of the pericope *Shmini* (Lev. 9–11) are written within an arcade, and under them are a pen-drawn calf and ram, relating to the two animals that are to be sacrificed on the eighth day after the dedication of the priests of the Tabernacle (Lev. 9:1–2). On fol. 132v a pen-drawn owl in the margin illustrates the unclean birds that should not be eaten (Lev. 11:13–19). In the left margin, next to the Targum column of fol. 153v, is a head shown blowing a shofar above a partly omitted verse in the text, illustrating the proclamation of liberty in the fiftieth jubilee year by blowing a horn (Lev. 25:8–10). Within the commentary column, below part of a missing verse in the text of fol. 155v, is a clenched fist illustrating the possibility of redeeming a property that a poor man had to sell and now “his hand can reach it” (Lev. 25:25–28).

### *Numbers*

The book of Numbers contains seven illustrations of different laws and episodes. That on fol. 165v shows three coins like medallions on top of geometric forms shaping the commentary column, alluding to the five shekels that each first-born had to pay to the high priest, Aaron, and his sons to be redeemed. According to Num. 3:45–51, the Levites were to replace the firstborn, who until then were the servants of God, in memory of the plague of firstborn (Exodus, 13:11–15). The replacement was done by one Levite redeeming one firstborn. After counting the Levites and the firstborn it showed that there were 273 more firstborn, which had to be redeemed with five shekels.

In the right margin of fol. 170v is a tiny cauldron with a handle over a tripod, pen-drawn near the word “pot,” which relates to the sacrifice of a nazirite when the days of his separation end (Num. 6:13–21). As part of the ceremony, his head is shaved and the hair put on the altar fire under the cooked shoulder of the ram (Num. 6:18). According to

<sup>71</sup> See n. 30 above.

Rashi's commentary, the ram is cooked in a cauldron. However, our scribe added to the commentary his own or someone else's interpretation: "under the cauldron, namely a pot."<sup>72</sup>

On fol. 181v (Fig. 11) the text tells the story of the return of the twelve spies sent by Moses to search out the land of Canaan (Num. 13). Rashi's commentary on Num. 13:23 determine the tasks of each spy: eight of them carried the staff with the cluster of grapes, two others carried pomegranates and figs, but Caleb and Joshua did not carry anything. His commentary, based on one of the interpretations of a midrash (Bab. Talmud, *Sota*, 34a) did not elaborate on the different possibilities for eight people to carry the cluster instead of two as in the Bible. Our knowledgeable scribe added within the commentary column an explanation, based on an elaboration probably from a tosaphist's commentary on the Talmud, although the scribe attributes it to Rashi.<sup>73</sup> The additional commentary with the accompanying diagram in the right margin explains that the staff with the cluster was resting on two other long rods, one on either side, and four other smaller rods were placed at the ends of the long rods, so that eight men could carry the cluster each at one end of the small rods.<sup>74</sup> The pen-drawn diagram has three bunches of grapes hanging from the staff and three pomegranates and two leaves fastened on top of the main staff. Next to the smaller rods are inscribed the names of six of the tribes (the other two on the right were cropped by a later binder). From right to left and top to bottom, they are: Simeon, Naphtali, Issachar, Judah (in spite of the commentary that says that Caleb, the chief of the tribe of Judah did not carry the staff), Zebulun, and Dan. Between the text and the commentary columns is a branch with three figs and two bunches of grapes.

<sup>72</sup> In Hebrew: תחת הדוד לשון סיר.

<sup>73</sup> It could be a variant of Rashi, but if so, he did not have to start the additional text with: "So interpreted," and end it after fifteen lines with: "this is how Rashi interpreted it." (וכן (הוי פירש רש"י בזה).

<sup>74</sup> The tosaphist's addition may have been by R. Judah ben Eliezer of Troyes, since in his Pentateuch commentary called *Minhat Yehudah* of 1313 he added a few diagrams, one similar to ours, explaining the need for large and small rods for eight people to carry the cluster. The diagrams appear in some of the more than thirty manuscript copies of his commentary; see Twito (2005). He includes photos of two fourteenth-century manuscripts with diagrams: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, héb. 168; and New York, Jewish Theological Seminary Library, Ms. Lutzki 787; cf. Diagrams of the different systems of carrying it by eight in Steinzaltz (1990), *Babylonian Talmud, Sota*, 148. Thanks are due to Ariella Amar for both references with the comparative diagrams; cf. Madrid, Duke of Alba Collection, Bible, fol. 118v, see Nordström (1967), 108–112.



On fol. 190 at the bottom of the Targum column are four pen-drawn ears of corn, relating to the offering of tithes to the priests as “corn from the threshing floor” (Num. 18:27). On fol. 194v at the bottom of the commentary column is the head of a grazing ox, showing the fear of the Moabites that the Israelites will “lick up all that is around us, as the ox licketh the grass in the field” (Num. 22:4). It is also related to Rashi’s interpretation (based on the Midrash Numbers *Rabbah*, *Balak*, 4), written next to the ox’s head, that “whatever an ox licks has no sign of blessing.”

On fol. 203 Rashi’s commentary on Num. 27:16 relates to Joshua as Moses’ successor who never left his master: “As Solomon said, whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof” (Prov. 27:18). A marginal drawing next to the name Solomon (which is also the name of the scribe) is a hand holding an uprooted fig tree with fruit and leaves, inscribed “This is a fig tree.” Above the tree within a leaf is written the part missing from the commentary: “Solomon whoso keepeth the fig tree.”<sup>75</sup>

### *Deuteronomy*

While the space round the initial word of the book of Deuteronomy is empty, in the book itself there are six illustrated allusions to the text. On fol. 216 (Fig. 2) Rashi’s commentary on Deut. 1:3 explains that Moses remonstrated with Israel as he neared his death, as did other leaders including Jacob, Joshua, and Samuel, and David to Solomon. Near the name Solomon in the commentary is a hand holding a six-pointed star enclosed within a circle, inscribed “The seal of King Solomon.”<sup>76</sup> Since Solomon is also the scribe’s name, the seal also alludes to his seal.

On fol. 228 God suggests that the Israelites should not conquer the inhabitants of Canaan immediately, but gradually, “lest beasts of the field increase upon thee” (Deut. 7:22). This is illustrated by a stag ensnared in a rope, near a tree drawn next to the commentary column. Rashi adds that “If you will not sin, the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee” (based on Job 5:23). On fol. 235v the scribe’s name Shlomo is marked by a leaf surrounded by an eagle in profile, its long foliate tail extending between the columns. The name appears in the commentary, related to what King Solomon said in Proverbs 7:9, mentioning evil

<sup>75</sup> In Hebrew: שלמה שומר תאנה.

<sup>76</sup> In Hebrew: חותם של שלמה המלך.

deeds done secretly in the darkness of night. This verse is mentioned in Rashi's commentary regarding the secret enticement to worship other gods (Deut. 13:6).

In the margin of fol. 240v is a drawing of a man's torso, his extended arm holding a spear, alluding to the story of Phinehas, who "took a spear in his hand" to strike the Israelite man and the Moabite woman during their intercourse (Num. 25:7). The depiction of Phinehas relates to Rashi's commentary that tries to determine what constitutes the arm of a sacrificed lamb or goat given to the priest (Deut. 18:3). One of the possibilities is that it is the part between the elbow and the palm; another suggests that arm is synonymous with palm, as with Phinehas holding a spear in his hand. Our scribe-artist used this allusion to depict Phinehas, but not to illustrate the text where the story appears (Num. 25:7).

On fol. 252v at the bottom of the commentary column are the winged talons of an eagle inscribed "as it will fly,"<sup>77</sup> referring to an enemy who will fly as swiftly as an eagle against the Israelites who do not worship God (Deut. 28:49). This text appears on fol. 253v, where there is a drawing of a large heraldic spread eagle, related to the text (Deut. 28:48), and inscribed: "(a yoke of) iron upon (your neck)."<sup>78</sup> Two similar wings over two eagle's claws appear in the above-mentioned early fourteenth-century Franco-German Pentateuch copied by Hayyim d'Quopdana, illustrating the Haphtarah of Shabbat and the New Moon (in Isaiah 66:20), dealing with bringing all nations to Jerusalem to worship God, and traveling in many different ways, though, in spite of the illustration, not on eagle's wings.<sup>79</sup>

### *The Five Megillot*

Only three of the five Megillot have decorated initial-word panels; and in the books of Ruth and Ecclesiastes the space round the initial word remains empty. This section starts with the book of Esther on fol. 263 and Song of Songs on fol. 270v. In both, the entire panel, including the initial words, is only outlined, which may indicate that they were prepared for colouring. All three panels may have been copied by our scribe-artist

<sup>77</sup> In Hebrew: באשר ידאה.

<sup>78</sup> In Hebrew: ברזל על.

<sup>79</sup> London, British Library, Or. ms. 2696, fol. 616v.

from another manuscript, since the bands round the initial word have traces of pinpricks, and some of the hybrids, animals, and humans are outlined by stylus. They all echo the mixture of similar animals, hybrids, grotesque motifs, and interlacing bands that was common in Hebrew illuminated manuscripts from the south of Germany.

The panel for the book of Esther on fol. 263 has an interwoven arcade at the top framing four lions' heads, from whose mouths extend interwoven bands. They all end in the mouths of five other lions' heads, which form the bases of the arcade. In the center between the two initial words is a pillar decorated with interlaced bands, forming at the bottom of the panel the tails of two addorsed winged dragons, whose long necks form the sides of the lower part of the panel. Two facing birds are entwined in the dragons' tails in the center.

The panel of the Song of Songs on fol. 270v (Fig. 18) is composed of three interwoven bands in the form of a figure eight, creating a rosette. Between the bands at the top is a grotesque soldier aiming a spear at a human-headed hybrid dragon raising a sword. At the bottom of the panel, in the corners, two musicians are sitting cross-legged, one playing the viol and the other the lute, while in front of them a monkey and a dog are dancing on their hind legs; single leaves are drawn in the smaller compartments. On fol. 273v at the end of the book, below the second column, which mentions a deer (Song 8:14), there is a crouching stag with a leaf in its mouth.

The panel for the book of Ruth on fol. 274 was not completed, but through the plummet tracings it is possible to detect an agricultural scene: two people threshing, a man winnowing, and a woman (Ruth?) gathering corn into her bag. Apart from Ruth gleaning, the scene is not a direct illustration of the text.<sup>80</sup> Over the plummet drawings the two initial words are repeated in seventeenth-century display script.

The initial word of Lamentations on fol. 277 is outlined within a black painted panel. Within the commentary column a crying human face is drawn with a hood falling over its eyes, facing an open-mouthed lion's head incorporating the small initial word. A man covered by a *talit* is

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<sup>80</sup> The story of Ruth is depicted as a fifteenth-century addition to the so-called Worms Mahzor of 1272 (Jerusalem, the Jewish National and University Library, Ms. Heb. Quarto 781/1, fol. 221), but there the scenes are different, apart from Ruth gathering corn; see Cohen-Mushlin (1985), 94–95.

drawn on the side of the initial word of Lamentations in the De Castro Pentateuch of 1344, fol. 349.<sup>81</sup>

### Conclusion

Shlomo the scribe-artist of our Pentateuch can be considered one of the more impressive illustrators of Hebrew manuscripts in the Ashkenazi world during the fourteenth century. The two types of illustrations he used—*carmina figurata* and the pen-and-ink drawings—which allude not only to the biblical text but to Rashi's commentary as well, are known from other manuscripts of the same school, although most of them lack the imagination displayed by Shlomo and the allusions to the text. The same types of illustrations are also known from earlier Franco-German Hebrew illuminations from northern France and from Franconia in southwest Germany, where some of the iconographical models for our Pentateuch originated. However, their *carmina figurata* shapes are not as common as in our Albenc manuscript, and the drawings in the Franco-German manuscripts are usually outlined in micrography. Shlomo's imagination and innovations are endless and can scarcely be paralleled in other manuscripts from the period in the south of France.

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<sup>81</sup> See n. 29 above.

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### Illustrations

- Fig. 1. Fol. 1. First page of Genesis.
- Fig. 2. Fol. 216. The seal of Solomon.
- Fig. 3. Fol. 119v. The *hoshen* of the high priest.
- Fig. 4. Fol. 46v. The Lion of Judah.
- Fig. 5. Fol. 72v. Aaron's rod turning into a serpent.
- Fig. 6. Fol. 11. Building the Tower of Babel.
- Fig. 7. Fol. 21. Ishmael hunting a bird.
- Fig. 8. Fol. 21v. Hagar tending Ishmael.
- Fig. 9. Fol. 30. Esau and Jacob.
- Fig. 10. Fol. 33. Jacob and Eliphaz.
- Fig. 11. Fol. 181. The spies carrying the cluster of grapes.
- Fig. 12. Fol. 22v. The Sacrifice of Isaac.
- Fig. 13. Fol. 120. Initial word of Leviticus—the Sacrifice of Isaac.
- Fig. 14. Fol. 39v. Jacob wrestling with the angel.
- Fig. 15. De Castro Pentateuch, 1344, Jerusalem, Israel Museum, Ms. 180/94, fol.206, Book of Numbers.
- Fig. 16. Sacrifice of Isaac. Brabant Pentateuch, 1310. Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Levi 19, fol. 34v.
- Fig. 17. Fol. 32v. Jacob's dream.
- Fig. 18. Fol. 270v. Initial-word panel of Song of Songs.



THE HIDDEN COUPLE  
AN UNEXECUTED UNDERDRAWING IN THE CATALAN  
MICROGRAPHY MAHZOR\*

Dalia-Ruth Halperin

The Catalan Micrography Mahzor for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur (Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, Hebr. 8°6527) was written and decorated in Catalonia in the fourteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Its decoration was executed entirely in micrography—minute script forming the outline of an image—and consists of twenty-three full-page panels concentrated in two quires at the beginning of the manuscript and thirty-four candelabra tree decorations in the outer margins of the text. In all but four cases the candelabra tree design appears on confronting pages, and on several pages the trees are inhabited by birds. Various other types of decorations include a geometric scroll, which serves as a text divider, and an animal design in the outer margins. Apart from the micrographic decoration, there are two initial words in gold within decorated panels (Fig. 1). Throughout the volume, both the main text and the micrography are in semicursive Sephardi script. Paleographic

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<sup>1</sup> The Catalan Micrography Mahzor was dated based on the life span of the authors of the *piyyutim* (liturgical poems) to ca. 1280 in Weiser (1992), 60–67. The Index of Jewish Art at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem dates the manuscript to mid-fourteenth century, see Aleph Card 0006479 and 0006489. Bezalel Narkiss dates it to the end of the century; see Narkiss (1998), 74. Over the years the late Leila Avrin dated the Catalan Micrography Mahzor to three different dates, all in the fourteenth century. In Avrin (1991), 139, the manuscript was dated to the second quarter of the fourteenth century; in “The Micrography of the Catalan Mahzor and its Symbolism,” *Wolfenbütteler Forschungen*, Jeremy Adler and Ulrich Ernst (eds.) (not published) to the third quarter; and in the microfilm B167 at the Department of Manuscripts and Archives at the Jewish National and University Library to the end of the century. I am grateful to Leila Avrin’s daughter Lisi Shirbi for allowing me access to her late mother’s papers. The Leila Avrin archives are held today at the Isidore and Anne Falk Information Center for Judaica and Jewish Ethnography at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Dodi (1992–93), 1075, based the dating of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor in his article on the microfilm’s date.



assessment<sup>2</sup> reveals that the scribe was also the masorator.<sup>3</sup> A comparison of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor with dated manuscripts in the same script suggests a date between 1325 and 1354.<sup>4</sup>

A thorough examination of the underdrawings beneath the micrographic designs shows a barely discernible complete image under the scroll design in the center of the framed panel on fol. 9v (Fig. 2), which can be verified by infrared photography (Fig. 3).<sup>5</sup> For some reason this composition was never carried out. The present study offers a discussion and interpretation of this image not only in the context of the rest of the decoration program, but also against the background of late Medieval Sephardi culture and Jewish-Christian polemics.

The underdrawing shows two standing figures facing one another. The one on the left is a man in profile facing toward the right with his legs *en face*. His bent arms are raised in prayer. He has short hair with big curls and bangs. He is beardless and has a broad nose; his eyelid is open at the side, the eyebrow is a tall arch, and his lips and chin protrude. He is wearing a surcoat<sup>6</sup> with a broad opening at the elbow, which reaches down to midcalf, but is shorter than the *cote* that peeks out from beneath it. The *cote*, which is a tunic with long tight-fitting sleeves, has a round collar and appears to be striped or pleated.<sup>7</sup> There is a diagonal line descending from the left hip toward the right thigh, which may be a low-fitting belt. He is wearing shoes with slightly pointed tips.

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<sup>2</sup> Different from Bible manuscripts, where the main text is written in square script, the use of semicursive script in both text types of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor makes a comparison feasible. The morphologic difference between square and semicursive scripts in Bible codices makes a paleographic comparison difficult if not impossible.

<sup>3</sup> Micrographic decoration formed from *masorah magna* usually decorates the lower and upper margins of the page in Bible manuscripts. The scribe who applies these lists is the “masorator,” so I think it is appropriate to refer to the micrographic decorator of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor as the “masorator,” even though the text consists of citations from the Book of Psalms and not the *masorah*.

<sup>4</sup> For consideration of the paleographic and codicological findings, see the first chapter of my dissertation, Halperin (in prep.) An analysis of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor’s text further supports a date of ca. 1350 and enables us to attribute it to Barcelona.

<sup>5</sup> My thanks to Rafael Weiser and Rivka Plesser, former directors of the Department of Manuscripts and Archives, and to Tova Szeintoch and Ilana Kessler of the Hebrew University Laboratory for Restoration and Preservation of Manuscripts and Rare Books at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, who agreed to take the manuscript for infrared imaging at the Israel Museum. The imaging was carried out by Michael Maggen, head of the Israel Museum’s Paper Conservation Laboratory. Since the parchment is not flat, the page had to be processed in two segments. The two images were merged via Photoshop.

<sup>6</sup> For this type of coat, see Piponnier and Mane (1997), 167.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 40, 165.

The figure on the right is a woman standing in three-quarter profile facing the man. Her posture has a slight “S” curvature and a braid falls down her back. Her face is drawn in a style similar to that of the man with a broad nose, her eyelid open at the side, and the eyebrow shown as tall arch. Her mouth is wide and straight. She, too, wears a long *cote* with a round collar and tight-fitting sleeves, which clings to her upper torso and opens up with many folds below her waist. There is a bulge above her right hip, which may be the end of the lacing that fits the *cote* tightly to her upper torso or, perhaps, a purse. Shoes peek out from under her dress. Her right hand is raised, but her palm points downward, giving the joint an odd appearance, as if it was fractured. She clutches three floral stems with cloverlike flowers at their tips. Her left palm supports another stem and she has a bouquet binder or the flowering branch’s stalk between her palms, reminiscent of a fleur-de-lys. The man’s face and his uplifted hands are directly opposite the flowering branch in the woman’s hands.

The two figures are within the visible frame executed in micrography. In the center, between them, one can see the remnant of a leafy tree. The style of the leaves and the structure of the branch correspond to those of the seven other trees that appear in the full-page decorations. This motif is typically found in the center of several of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor compositions (Fig. 4, left) and serves as a natural backdrop for the scene. Near the couple’s feet, in the corners at the bottom of the frame, we can discern two birds with spread wings. Each has a round head with a short, sharp beak, a rounded abdomen, and a rectangular tail, and they both face outward. These birds are similar in style to those that inhabit several of the candelabra trees elsewhere in the volume and in one of the initial word panels. The bird at the top of the micrographic scroll on fol. 15v (see Fig. 1, right) is nearly identical to those in the subject underdrawing.<sup>8</sup>

The observation that many elements of the unexecuted drawing correspond formally to counterparts on other pages strongly suggests that this couple was designed by the same individual who laid out the compositions for the micrographic decoration. The correspondence is found in the appearance of the tree, the types of leaves, the drawing’s

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<sup>8</sup> There is no reason to assume that the birds are not part of the original design. Their stylistic similarity with the birds in the candelabra trees—which are integral elements of the micrographic design—show that the decorations were laid out by the scribe-masorator.

position on the page, and the style of the birds. The couple is placed in identical relationship to the frame as the design within in the other twenty-two full-page panels and is of exactly the same height and width as the scroll that is now seen in the center of the composition. As on all the folios of the second quire, the drawing area on this folio is 118 × 89 mm. The *aiguisé* frame on this page belongs to the repertoire of frames evident throughout the manuscript. Moreover, nothing indicates that this folio was in secondary use, its parchment being of the same color and thickness as the other folios in the quire; in terms of its technical features, the preparation process and its ruling indicate that the parchment corresponds fully to the other pages of the manuscript.<sup>9</sup>

These observations suggest that fol. 9v originally contained a complete underdrawing, which, for some reason, was rejected at the last moment by either the scribe or the patron. Instead of the composition with the couple, the scroll design of fol. 9r shining through the parchment was copied. The decision to hastily reproduce the decoration of the recto page indicates that the scribe was determined to avoid a delay in the completion of his work. A further reason to reuse the scroll design may have been the fact that it hides most of the essential details that reveal the existence of the couple—facial features, hands, most of the clothing—and the birds.

Elsewhere I argue that the discovery of this drawing constitutes a Rosetta stone for stylistic comparison.<sup>10</sup> The fact that the linear quality of the drawing is not affected by the micrographic design makes a stylistic analysis easier than for the other pages. It can be demonstrated that this drawing and, by extension, the rest of the figurative designs, such as the falconer on the facing page (see Fig. 2, left), can be attributed

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<sup>9</sup> The ruling method employed by the scribe is typical of Sephardi Hebrew manuscripts until the middle of the fourteenth century. Two folios were ruled together on the hair side at the same time, the ruling being done after the quire arrangement was laid out. This method was used only rarely after 1350; see Beit-Arié (1981), 75–76. This observation supports the dating of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor to the period between 1325 and 1354, but its importance is that it enables us to reconstruct the scribe's working procedures. An analogy between the ruling method and the spread of the illuminations indicates that the scribe first fixed the quire arrangement, and then engraved the outlines of the frames; the actual decoration was added only at this point. This can be supported by the observation of punch holes used to draft the head of the falconer's horse on fol. 10r. These holes are evident up to fol. 14r, the last page of the second decorated quire.

<sup>10</sup> Halperin (2007), 19–30.

to the workshop of Ferrer and Arnau Bassa in Barcelona.<sup>11</sup> Numerous comparisons can be drawn between the figurative images in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor and those of a group of manuscripts produced in the Bassa workshop between 1333 and 1348.<sup>12</sup> In particular, a relationship can be established with the Anglo-Catalan Psalter in Paris (Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod. lat. 8846),<sup>13</sup> and the *Book of Hours of Marie of Navarre* in Venice (Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, cod. Marc. Lat. I, 104 (= 12640)).<sup>14</sup>

There is a weight of evidence that illuminations in Hebrew manuscripts were commissioned in the Bassa atelier. This was first shown by Francis Wormald for the Copenhagen copy of Maimonides' *Guide for the Perplexed*.<sup>15</sup> It was further elaborated in more recent years by Rosa Alcoy i Predrós, who pointed to the similarities between the marginal decorations in the *Book of Hours of Marie of Navarre* and the Copenhagen Maimonides.<sup>16</sup> Gabrielle Sed-Rajna linked a Hebrew medical treatise now in Paris (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod. hébr. 1203) to the Ferrer Bassa workshop.<sup>17</sup> I do not propose that either Ferrer or Arnau Bassa actually executed any of the full-page illuminations of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor in part or in full. The stylistic similarities between the marginal decorations in manuscripts from their atelier and many of the decorations in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor point to a Jewish scribe-masorator-artist who may have been affiliated with the atelier and entrusted with the execution of marginal decorations. Sed-Rajna suggested that it was possible that a Jewish artist from the Bassa workshop illuminated the Paris Hebrew medical treatise.<sup>18</sup> The overall character of the decorations in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor suggests that its designer was deeply rooted in the repertoire of motifs

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<sup>11</sup> For the iconographic and stylistic analysis, see the second chapter in Halperin (in prep.).

<sup>12</sup> The Bassa atelier can be traced in various dated works of art, as well as written documents, mostly working contracts with patrons. For detailed information, see Meiss (1941), 45–87; Wormald (1988), 147–52; Dalmasas and Jose i Pitarch (1984), 154–160; Yarza Luaces, J. (2005), 299–305; Alcoy, R. (2006), 57–120.

<sup>13</sup> Leroquais (1940–41), t. II, 78–91; Wormald (1998) 147–149; Avril, Aniel, Mentré, Saulnier, Żaluska (1982), 93–95.

<sup>14</sup> Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, cod. Marc. Lat. I,104 (= 12640), fol. 186r; *Ibid.*; Dalmas and Jose i Pitarch (1984), 155–156.

<sup>15</sup> Wormald (1998), *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> Alcoy i Predrós, (1992), 133, 137–139.

<sup>17</sup> Sed-Rajna, (1992), 123, 128.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 127.

of Spanish Jewish art with its Islamic influences and sources.<sup>19</sup> Apart from this typically Jewish repertoire, he was also familiar with the iconography, style, and motifs of Western Christian art, and this was a dominant feature in his work.

In the following, I examine the iconographic context of the planned image, which, it appears, must have been charged with controversial meaning of some kind, so that a quick mirror copy of the decoration on the recto of the page was substituted. I argue that the image was borrowed from Christian iconography and planned for adaptation to a Jewish context, but that for some reason it was found to be unsuitable.

It is most likely that the composition in question represented a wedding scene, which could suggest that it was based on the Christian motif of the celestial wedding of Jesus and Maria-Ecclesia. In Ashkenazi manuscript illumination this theme was occasionally employed and transformed into an image of the wedding of the Shekhinah (the in-dwelling of Divine Presence)<sup>20</sup> and the Nation of Israel. It appears in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Ashkenazi mahzorim as an illustration of the liturgical poem “With Me from Lebanon My Bride” (Fig. 5).<sup>21</sup> This transformation of the Christian wedding theme into a Jewish depiction of the Shekhinah to be wedded to Israel has polemic implications in the context of the discussion about the continuation of the Covenant between God and the People of Israel versus the Christian claim that the Covenant was passed on to Christianity.

A brief glimpse at Ashkenazi renderings of “With Me from Lebanon My Bride” suggests that the Catalan Micrography Mahzor version of the motif was slightly modified. Ashkenazi versions of the couple do not picture a flowering branch in the woman’s hand. Following a line

<sup>19</sup> Examples of this repertoire are the pages with the Sanctuary/Temple implements, fol. 11v–12 and the carpet page with a foliate scroll, fol. 3, 4v, 9r, 9v; see Narkiss (1998), 74–75; Sed-Rajna (1975), 6–21; Revel-Neher (1998), 64–83, 91–95, 115–118. Islamic sources are evident not only in additional carpet pages in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor, but also in elements borrowed from the Islamic “animal cycle” that includes the griffin, rabbit, deer/stag, pigeon, dog hunting rabbit, eagle hunting rabbit or stag, and the mounted falconer. See Gelfer-Jørgensen (1986), 113, 118, 124, 129–131, 167–168; Werkmeister (1997), 103.

<sup>20</sup> The Shekhinah is the manifest glory of God and is also known as *Malkhut* (Kingdom). It is the tenth *sefirah* (enumeration) in theosophical Kabbalah. The Kabbalah gained prominence in Sephardi culture in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; see Scholem (1982), vol. 1, 230, 245–256.

<sup>21</sup> For a discussion on the representation of the mystical marriage of Jesus and Maria-Ecclesia motif, see Shalev-Eyni (2005), 27–57; Sed-Rayna (1983), 46–47.

of thought developed by Elisheva Revel-Neher, we can assume that this modification may have resulted from the significance of the flowering staff as a substitute for the lulav (palm branch) as the eschatological emblem in the design of the pages devoted to the Sanctuary/Temple implements in Sephardi Bibles.<sup>22</sup> The flowering staff that is to return in the hands of the Messiah signifies that the true priesthood was not passed onto Christianity, but remained within Judaism. Ecclesia is usually depicted in Christian art holding a spear or a chalice, but there are a few renderings in which she holds a trifoliate flowering branch, which, as Ra'aya Heller argues, symbolizes the Trinity and salvation.<sup>23</sup> The branch in the woman's hands adds to the debate. Not only is the closing of the trifoliate flower to one bud a rejection of the Trinity, which stresses the unity of God, but it also signifies that salvation is expected to come with the Jewish Messiah and that the true partner of God is *Synagoga*.<sup>24</sup>

Could an Ashkenazi motif of visual polemic have had an impact in Spain? The Ashkenazi influence on Sephardi scholarship from the thirteenth century on is a well-known phenomenon. Antirationalistic tendencies among Sephardi scholars had led to an increased interest in midrashic thought and post-Rashi Ashkenazi scholarship, with its highly esteemed traditional study of the Talmud.<sup>25</sup> More Catalan scholars studied in French yeshivot,<sup>26</sup> and this influence was further enhanced by the immigration of Ashkenazi scholars to Spain and the arrival of French Jews after the expulsion from the Capetian dominions in 1306.<sup>27</sup> These developments could well have resulted in a transmission of Ashkenazi iconographic motifs to a Catalan scribe.

There were other channels of cultural interaction as well. Frequent exchange of letters between Sephardi and Ashkenazi scholars was conducted via envoys, mostly merchants, who not only carried written correspondence, but transmitted traditions and customs orally as well.

<sup>22</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), 115–118.

<sup>23</sup> Heller (1990), 78, fig. 13.III.

<sup>24</sup> Ben-Shalom (2003), 29 n. 31, 42; Lasker (1977), 45–82, 103–104. Polemics on the subject of transubstantiation did not appear in Spain until the end of the fourteenth century; see *ibid.*, 139. For examples of original polemical literature that deals with the Trinity, see also Tautner-Kormann (1993), 70–72, 82–83.

<sup>25</sup> Gross (1973), 27–55; Grossman (1992), 227–228.

<sup>26</sup> Assis, *The Golden Age of Aragonese Jewry* (1997), 301.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 301–303, 309.

Some of the envoys were scholars themselves, interested in the cultural activities in the communities they reached.<sup>28</sup>

Elisheva Revel-Neher has shown that, owing to such cultural exchanges, the Sephardi motif of Temple/Sanctuary implements, especially depictions of the menorah, common in Sephardi Bibles reached southern Germany during this period.<sup>29</sup> It is plausible to assume that the transmission of iconographic motifs did not occur in only one direction.

All this considered, the pictorial source from the Ashkenazi mahzorim does not carry such a manifold polemic. The motif of the woman with a flowering branch can be found in a bilingual (French and Latin) manuscript of the *Somme-le-Roy* (*The Book of Vices and Virtues*) in the British Library (London, British Library, Add. 28162), dated to 1290–1300 and illuminated either in Paris or in Moubuisson.<sup>30</sup> This is a literary and visual source that was known in the Spanish-Provencal region and its complex iconography could have drawn a manifold polemic response.

The text of the *Somme-le-Roy* was authored by the Dominican friar Lorens d'Orléans in 1279. Its survival in numerous copies and translation into six languages—Provencal, Catalan, Spanish, Italian, Flemish, and English—during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries testifies to the fact that it was widely known and popular. Its popularity was probably due to it being a vernacular rendition of a pious text and part of the church's requirement for lay education.<sup>31</sup> It is reasonable to assume that Jewish scholars may have familiarized themselves with this text in the French, Provencal, or even the Italian version.<sup>32</sup> In the same way that the Mendicants studied Hebrew and rabbinic literature to help them in their polemics against Judaism<sup>33</sup> and in support of their extensive efforts

<sup>28</sup> Ben-Shalom (1996), 177–179, 189–191; Grabois (1996), 93–94.

<sup>29</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), 88.

<sup>30</sup> A cycle of fifteen illuminations was already present in the original treatise of the *Somme-le-Roy* and appears in full or partial form in most manuscripts. Alexander (1992), 115–120; Kosmer (1973), 20. Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod. fr. 938, fol. 74r is iconographically related to London, British Library, Add. 28162; *ibid.*, 27.

<sup>31</sup> Nelson (1942), XIII, XXVII–XXIX; Kosmer, (1973), 14, 16–20.

<sup>32</sup> On the multilingual talents of the Jews, see Menache (1996), 41–42. The Catalan and Spanish versions are from the fifteenth century. Kosmer (1973), 286d Chart E.

<sup>33</sup> Cohen (1982), 76, 131–56, 242–243; Assis, *The Golden Age of Aragonese Jewry* (1997), 49.

to pressure the Jews to convert, Jewish scholars may have studied texts of the Mendicants in order to counter their arguments.<sup>34</sup>

On fol. 5v (Fig. 6) there is a full-page illumination divided into four compartments. The upper-left panel shows the figure of a woman standing over a resting stag, personifying Humility. She holds a flowering lily in her right hand, and in her left is a medallion showing the upper torso of a woman with a palm branch and a book. The palm branch, frequently an emblem of martyrdom in Christian art, is also an attribute of Chastity in medieval art. As the book and the stag are two of the attributes of Prudence, I suggest that in this illumination the female figure is a synthesis image of Humility, Prudence, and Chastity.<sup>35</sup> The top-right section depicts Pride, personified by King Ahaziah falling from a crenellated wall. The bottom left shows the repentant sinner kneeling before an altar with his hands held in prayer, being welcomed by Jesus, and on the right is the Hypocrite being rejected by Jesus, who turns away.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Daniel Lasker contends that knowledge of Christian doctrine was not attained through reading Christian treatises but through familiarity with these subjects via the debates. David Berger adds that at times Jews read these books in their neighbors' homes. Katrin Kogman-Appel argues the Barcelonan municipal council ban on Jewish trade in Christian holy books in 1326, especially those with symbols and images, points to a possible source of Jewish familiarity with Christian iconography. Owing to the multilingual abilities of the Jews, there is no reason to assume that they did not read such books while they had them in their possession. See Lasker (1977), 162; Berger (1986), 589; Kogman-Appel (2006), 125; Assis, *Jewish Economy in the Medieval Crown of Aragon* (1997), 85.

<sup>35</sup> Hall (1974), 'Palm', 231–232; 'Stag', 289. The figure of Humility is combined with Chastity's attribute, the unicorn, in another *Somme-le-Roy* manuscript in the British Museum MS. Add 54180, fol. 97v. Both *Somme-le-Roy* manuscripts are from the thirteenth century, but from different ateliers. Though Chastity's attributes differ, this may indicate that the overall meaning was similar though manifested via different models. The taper in Humility's hand in MS. Add 54180 is an attribute that with the unicorn may identify her with the Virgin. In three other *Somme-le-Roy* manuscripts Humility is crowned and bears a palm branch. This too may indicate that this virtue was identified with the Virgin and represents Maria-Ecclesia. The manuscripts are: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, cod. fr. 938, fol. 74r; Paris, Bibliothèque Mazarine, cod. fr. 970, fol. 89v; Cambridge, St. John College, ms. B.9 fol. 198r. In Reims, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 571, fol. 40r, Humility is not crowned but she holds a leafy trifoliate-leaf branch.

<sup>36</sup> The iconography of the virtues and vices originated in fifth-century Prudentius's *Psychomachia*, *Battle of the Souls*. The poem recounts the battle between the virtues and the vices as an account of the conflict of the Christian faith and the idolaters, its victory heralded by a thousand martyrs. The opposing pairs of virtues and vices described in the *Psychomachia* became disengaged in the thirteenth century, and they became more symbolic, no longer following the original combative scheme presented by Prudentius. See Murray (1996), 561–562; Mâle (1982), 73; Kosmer (1973) 88–91.



The visual similarities between the image of the couple in the Catalan Micrography Mahzor and the left side of the illumination in the *Somme-le-Roy*—Humility and the sinner—suggest that Jewish scholars were familiar with this sort of literature. Moreover, I argue that the employment of the motif of the woman and the sinner constitutes an iconographical transformation in support of a polemical response to the whole *Somme-le-Roy* miniature. Humility is the root virtue from which all other virtues grew. It can therefore incorporate their attributes, the Holy Ghost's gifts, and the beatitudes of all the other virtues.<sup>37</sup> Via Prudence man is able to pursue the right line of reason so that all his thoughts and deeds are within the ordinance of God, and he may attain and see His kingdom. Via Temperance-Chastity, he is without undoing and never needs to repent. The first gift of the Holy Ghost—dread combined with meekness—is part of Humility. This is the virtue that is the foundation of the spiritual edifice and necessary for salvation.<sup>38</sup> Therefore the composite virtue of Humility represents the foundation of the spiritual edifice necessary for salvation, which is the gate through which a person willingly submits himself to God, becomes sanctified by Him, and connects with Jesus and his teachings.<sup>39</sup>

In Judaism the Shekhinah is the most fundamental of the *sefiroth* (enumerations) in the Kabbalah and constitutes the gate to preeminence, conveying through her essence the other dimensions of the Almighty to this world. The aspiration of the believer is to attain that singleness that will enable him to transfer the abundance of heavenly wealth to the earthly world and deliver his soul into the domain of godliness.<sup>40</sup> The scribe-masorator-artist of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor responds in a way that is diametrically opposed to the Christian theological view and claims that the only truth is found in the Torah, which is sustained and illuminated by the light of the Shekhinah shining from its depths. The repentant Congregation of Israel, whose atonement will hasten

<sup>37</sup> Kosmer (1973), 52a Chart A, 94.

<sup>38</sup> Nelson (1942), 123, lines 1–20; 124, lines 32–35; 125, lines 1–4, 11–21, 25–28; 126, lines 3–7; 128, lines 26–29; 130 lines 1–2, 14–29; 140, lines 5–6. See also Kosmer (1973), 93–94; *Catholic Encyclopaedia on CD-Rom*, entries: Eight Beatitudes; Holy Ghost section VI. Gifts of: Humility, Prudence, Temperance.

<sup>39</sup> As shown by Ellen V. Kosmer, there is little correspondence between picture and text in the illuminated *Somme-le-Roy*. The miniature amplifies the treatise with visual examples in addition to the verbal ones. See Kosmer (1973), 28.

<sup>40</sup> Tishby (1971), vol. 1 *Sefirah*, 133–35, *Shekhinah*, 219–22, 226–28; vol. 2. *Torah*, 375.

the redemption, is sanctified in the Shekhinah and it is through the Shekhinah that the Nation becomes unified with its God, the Unity and not the Trinity. As the Hypocrite ailed with Pride was viewed as the Jew,<sup>41</sup> the Catalan Micrography Mahzor's scribe in fact completely turns over the *Somme-le-Roy* miniature and declares that the Nation of Israel is still *Verus Israel*.

This line of thought brings us back to the falconer opposite the couple, who, to my way of thinking, also carries a polemic response. One of the concepts represented by the falconer in the secular literature of this period is the wise and righteous worldly ruler who brings peace.<sup>42</sup> The texts employed to form the micrography image<sup>43</sup> are psalms concerned with the continuation of the Diaspora, maintaining the Covenant between the Almighty and the Nation of Israel, repentance that will hasten salvation, and salvation itself with the Almighty Himself as the Savior. The verses forming the drawing of the falconer and the head of his horse are from psalms interpreted in the rabbinic commentary of Midrash Tehillim as expressions of the Savior.<sup>44</sup>

In the same vein as the transformation of Jesus and Maria-Ecclesia in "With Me from Lebanon My Bride" to the Shekhinah and the Nation of Israel—and not to the Almighty and the Congregation of Israel—we

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<sup>41</sup> In the British Library *Somme-le-Roy* (London, British Library, Add. 54180), fol. 97v, the Hypocrite dons a Jewish conical cap. As Ellen V. Kosmer (which one is correct?) demonstrates, this comparison is known in the Middle Ages and is due to Matthew VI:5, where Christ says "thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the synagogue," and in Matthew 23, where he denounces the Pharisees as hypocrites. See Kosmer (1973), 95–98, 156.

<sup>42</sup> Friedman (1978), 196. For literature on hunting scenes in Medieval art, see van Marle (1931–32), vol. 1, 197ff.

<sup>43</sup> The falconer and the horse's head are constructed from Psalm 59; the tree and the rest of the horse from Psalms 77 and 78; the outer frames from Psalms 23 and 24; and the inner frames from Psalm 104 verses 14–end, excluding verses 22–23, 29, 33 and Psalms 29 and 31. I wish to thank Haviva Pedaya from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, who emphasized that the scribe's selection of specific psalms for each illumination is an editing task laden with meaning. The illuminations point to the use of symbols from the Zohar. The examination of the possible holistic typological-historic message underlying the cycle of full-page illuminations is one of the key features of my doctoral dissertation.

<sup>44</sup> *Midrash Tehillim*, see Psalm 59(5), 77(2), 78(18), 23(7), 29(1,2); for an English version, see Braude (1959). This midrashic compilation includes homilies from the third to thirteenth centuries. Rabbi David Kimkhi (Radak, 1160–1235) interprets the subject of Psalm 59 and verse 31 from Psalm 104 as the messianic king. See *Mikraot Gedolot* on psalms. A similar interpretation of the latter verse can be found in Rabbi Jacob ben Hananel Sikili (late-thirteenth to early-fourteenth century) in *Torat ha'Minha*, homily 21, 203.

can assume that the Christian image of the falconer was transformed into the anointed messianic king, scion of the House of David, and not the Almighty Himself.<sup>45</sup> Thus the image depicts the coming of the Jewish messianic king, a sovereign of flesh and blood. This is emphasized by the scribe-masorator's omission of all the words referring to the Almighty in the verses he uses to depict the mounted falconer.<sup>46</sup> The possibility of representing the Almighty Himself is not acceptable in the Jewish context.<sup>47</sup> But the scribe adds yet another major feature. Via his tour-de-force scribal abilities, he leaves the reins unfinished and returns to complete them with a coveted verse that puts the Torah and the Jewish commandments in the hands of the Messiah.<sup>48</sup> The homily to verse 5 of Psalm 78, "For he established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel,"<sup>49</sup> asserts the eternal truth of the Torah and the Jewish commandments,<sup>50</sup> thus negating the refutation of the Jewish commandments by the Christians.

This page, then, also responds to two of the "hot" polemic questions of the time: Whether the Messiah will come as a corporal Messiah of flesh and blood or whether his arrival is the *Parousia*, the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and the revocation of the Jewish commandments.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>45</sup> In rabbinic literature, too, the Messiah is described as a corporal king; see, e.g., Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 34/b; for an English translation, see Neusner (1984–95), Tractate Berakhot chap. 5, 245, C. He is also identified as a scion of the House of David; see, e.g., Babylonian Talmud, Sukkah 52a, Neusner (1984–95), Tractate Sukkah, vol. 6, 256, VI.B.

<sup>46</sup> This occurs very rarely. In all other instances the scribe-masorator does not skip the Almighty's names and frequently employs the common abbreviation used by Jewish scribes, i.e., one to three adjacent letters Yud from the Hebrew alphabet.

<sup>47</sup> Batterman (2002), 66, argues that heterodox, popular, nonobservant, and alternative Jewish tradition had the impulse to visualize God and that it is a deep-rooted bias that Jewish tradition allows no place for imaging God in visual terms. Examining Hebrew book illumination proves that the contrary is true and that indeed artists/patrons went to great length to avoid imaging God. Ample examples exist, such as the Sarajevo Haggadah's traditional use of a hand to represent the Divine or the transformation of the celestial marriage of Jesus and Maria-Ecclesia to the Shekhinah and Israel. Had such impetus as Michael Batterman describes existed, the image could have been taken directly to represent God and Shekhinah-Torah.

<sup>48</sup> See n. 44 for the manner in which he constructs the falconer's image.

<sup>49</sup> Hebrew-English Bible (1917).

<sup>50</sup> *Midrash Tehillim*, Psalm 78(1); *Yalkut Shimoni*, Psalms ref. 819; Rabbi Israel al-Nakawa's (d. 1391) *Menorat ha'Maor*, 'Talmud Torah' chap. 5, 233–234; *New Zohar*, *Megilat Ruth* 37b; Rabbi Joshua Ibn Shuaib's (first half of the fourteenth century) *Derashot RJ Ibn Shuaib*, sermon on the weekly portion of the Torah Jethro, Exodus chap. 18–20.

<sup>51</sup> For a discussion of the corporality of the Messiah, see Lasker (1977), 105–134 especially 117–121.

From the thirteenth century on, religious polemic debate between Jews and Christians was very common. As scholars now believe, these disputes took place not only on an official public level, but were often spontaneous and held in private spheres.<sup>52</sup> The main subjects of debate were the Trinity, the Messiah, the Virgin Birth, the question of death bringing atonement, resurrection of the dead, the sacraments, and the revocation of the Jewish commandments.<sup>53</sup> On many occasions rabbis were asked to write polemic answers that could be employed in response to Christian debaters,<sup>54</sup> especially in light of the pressures of the Mendicants concerning conversion. These disputes are evident not only in the polemic literature, but also in Responsa literature, philosophical treatises, Kabbalah, and Bible exegesis.<sup>55</sup> I suggest that the imagery of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor is yet another, visual, expression of this polemic discourse. Visual polemics, as scholars have begun to show in recent years, were intended for an audience that was aware of the Christian content of the model images and able to grasp the inverted meaning of the iconography and the strengthening of the stance of Judaism, which it sought to preserve.<sup>56</sup>

In conclusion, the two pages of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor discussed in this chapter constitute a response to some of the major questions that were part of the polemical discourse of the thirteenth and the fourteenth centuries: the nature of God, the Messiah, the refutation of the Jewish commandments, and the *Verus Israel*. The discovery of the underdrawing that remained unfinished and eventually made way for another design and deciphering its meaning in tandem with its counterpart, the mounted falconer, disclosed the full significance of these images as planned by the scribe-artist.<sup>57</sup>

Copying the mirrored scroll from the recto of the page was a quick and efficient solution for coping with the patron's apparent decision not to complete the planned image. As to the reason for this decision, I can only speculate that the apparent Christian roots of the imagery and the association with the celestial couple caused some discomfort, especially

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<sup>52</sup> Ben-Shalom, (2003), 35–37, 41; Glick (2004), 158–159; Berger (1986), 596.

<sup>53</sup> For works on Jewish polemics, see Lasker (1977); Maccoby (1982); Chazan (1989); and idem (1992).

<sup>54</sup> See n. 25.

<sup>55</sup> Ben-Shalom (2003), 24; Tautner-Kormann (1993), 4–5.

<sup>56</sup> Batterman (2002), 58–59, 87; Lasker (1977), 163; Tautner-Kormann (1993), 2.

<sup>57</sup> The overall message that emerges from analyzing the illuminations constitutes the fourth and significant chapter of my dissertation; Halperin (in prep.).

owing to its abundant representation in cathedral sculpture.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, although Ashkenazi influence was far-reaching in Jewish Spanish culture, the Jewish antithesis of the celestial couple—the Shekhinah and the Nation of Israel—that was developed in Ashkenaz was never fully accepted in Sephardi culture. This unfamiliar image was thus probably rejected. Perhaps its depiction of the Divine, not seconded in Sephardi art though transformed, was too overt. Leaving out the couple and covering the underdrawing with the scroll design diluted the original polemic content of the page.

Whatever the reason, what is clear is that the scribe of the Catalan Micrography Mahzor was not merely a scribe-masorator-artist, but a learned scholar who was daring in his designs, familiar with the iconography and the motifs of Christian art, and apparently well versed in contemporary Christian literature. The last he employed toward a polemic end by altering them so that they ultimately reinforced Judaism. We thus perceive here an artist who conceived the polemic message in his own way. The fact that his idea was rejected by the patron sheds some light on the extent to which he was independent, but also shows the degree to which he depended on his patron after all.

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<sup>58</sup> Kosmer (1973), 90–91 and n. 129.

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*Illustrations*

- Fig. 1. Initial word panel and Piyyutim for Rosh Hashanah, *The Catalan Micrography Mahzor*, Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, Hebr 8°6527, fol. 16r–15v.
- Fig. 2. Mounted falconer and vine scroll, *The Catalan Micrography Mahzor*, fol. 10r–9v.
- Fig. 3. Unexecuted drawing of the couple seen with infrared photography beneath the Vine scroll, *The Catalan Micrography Mahzor*, fol. 9v.
- Fig. 4. Hunt scene and knotted foliate interlace, *The Catalan Micrography Mahzor*, fol. 5r–4v.
- Fig. 5. 'From Me with Lebanon My Bride', *Liepzig Mahzor*, Liepzig, University Library, V. 1102, vol. 1 fol. 64v.
- Fig. 6. Humility, *Somme le Roy*, London, British Library, Add. 28162, fol. 5v.





## A WOMAN'S HEBREW PRAYER BOOK AND THE ART OF MARIANO DEL BUONO\*

Evelyn M. Cohen

The fifteenth century witnessed a zenith in the production of illuminated Hebrew manuscripts in Renaissance Italy. A prayer book made for a woman currently housed in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary exemplifies the fine decoration found in some of these codices.<sup>1</sup> The text begins with the prayers recited daily, followed by the prayer for the amelioration of dreams, the liturgy for the Sabbath, *Rosh Hodesh*, the festivals of Hanukkah and Purim, readings for the special Sabbaths preceding Passover, *eruv tavshilin*, the Haggadah, and the liturgy for Passover. It seems likely, based on the physical makeup of the manuscript, that the scribe intentionally ended the volume at this point.<sup>2</sup> A second tome containing the remaining cycle of prayers traditionally

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<sup>1</sup> New York, the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, MS 8641. The manuscript was purchased from the estate of Michael Zagayski at an auction held at the Parke-Bernet Galleries in New York on May 13, 1970, lot 214. The prayer book had previously belonged to Mrs. Meyer S. Goldschmidt.

<sup>2</sup> The manuscript comprises twenty-seven quires, of which the first twenty-six are composed of ten parchment leaves, arranged according to Gregory's rule. As the final quire is composed of only eight leaves, it seems likely the scribe deliberately ended the volume with the recitation for Passover that concludes at the end of the page.

Catchwords, sometimes placed within decorative forms such as pots and fountains, appear at the end of all quires except for the first, fourth, eleventh, and twenty-second. Of special interest is the last catchword, written on folio 260v, where the word is placed within a drawing of the head of a man depicted in profile and wearing a cap. This, the sole catchword to be embellished with a human form, appears on the only page in the work that contains a human hand, which is placed in the outer margin and points down to the bottom of the page. The manuscript contains 268 folios, measuring  $5\frac{3}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  in. ( $14.5 \times 11.4$  cm), although the leaves probably were trimmed at a later point in time. The text block measures  $3\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{1}{4}$  in. ( $8.2 \times 5.6$  cm) and is ruled for 15 lines per page. The main text was written using dark brown ink in a square script, while the numerous instructions, reflecting local practices that are worthy of further study, were penned in an Italian rabbinic script. Some words of the text were censored by means of erasure.

included in Italian prayer books possibly was intended and perhaps even produced, although there is no evidence of its existence.

The manuscript in its current state does not include a colophon, so the patron who commissioned the work cannot be identified. The text makes it clear, however, that it was intended for use by a woman. The wording of three of the gender-specific daily morning benedictions (fol. 7v) was altered from the traditional male form. The woman thanks God for making her as he wished (שעשיתני כרצונך), for making her a Jewess (שעשיתני ישראלית), and for not making her a servant (שלא עשיתני שפחה). The traditional wording was added in the inner margin by a later hand, presumably by a subsequent male owner.

The inclusion of a text for the conclusion of the Sabbath morning reading of the Torah is worthy of note (fol. 126r). In accordance with a tradition found in the Roman rite, in addition to the standard recitation: “He who blessed our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, may he bless this entire congregation...” (מי שבירך אברהם יצחק ויעקב), a second passage relates specifically to women: “He who blessed Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, may he bless every Jewess who makes a mantle for the Torah...” (מי שבירך שרה רבקה רחל ולאה הוא יברך כל בת ישראל שעושה מעיל או מטפחת לכבוד התורה והמתקנת נר לכבוד התורה הק”ב”ש שלם שברה ויתן לה גמולה הטוב ונאמר אמן).<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the decoration found on the opening page (Fig. 1), six initial words are adorned with elaborate panels.<sup>4</sup> The first five are written in black ink and surrounded by painted frames and gold-leaf borders (Figs. 2–4). They are further adorned with floral designs of a characteristically Florentine type. The illumination of the last decorated initial word panel in this manuscript differs from the others. The word *Ha* in blue at the beginning of the text of *Ha Lahma* ‘*Anya* is embellished with a gold-leaf panel decorated with fine tooling, a technique that is rarely found in Hebrew manuscripts of this period (Fig. 5).

The finest illumination in the prayer book is found on the opening page (fol. 1r). The letters of the initial word *Mikhtam* are painted in

<sup>3</sup> The passage appears in the *Mahzor Roma* printed by Bnei Soncino in Soncino and Casal Maggiore, 1485/6, and in subsequent printed editions.

<sup>4</sup> They appear on folios 4r (רבוץ כל), 19r (לעולם), 26v (ברוך), 37v (ברוך), 84r (יהי), and 201r (הא). The letters of the first three examples are surrounded by squiggle work.

blue on a gold-leaf panel that does not seem to have been tooled.<sup>5</sup> A decorative bar of blue adorned with gold appears above and below the word. An elaborate border containing six male figures, three half-length and three bust-length, frames the page. Five of the men appear to be prophets; four of them hold scrolls devoid of text. The sixth and largest figure, placed in the center of the outer margin, depicts King David, crowned and nimbed, playing a psaltery (Fig. 6). He is gazing upward, and his head, depicted in a three-quarter view, is appropriately turned toward the large initial word that begins the first verse of Psalms 16: “*Mikhtam* of David. Protect me God, for I seek refuge in you.”<sup>6</sup> Above the half-length figure of the king, a putto plays a *lira da braccio*, and beneath him another putto sings while accompanying himself on a lute. Both putti have red wings and stand before a landscape. Within the bottom border, under the text, two more putti with red wings, standing in a similar outdoor setting, support a shield emblazoned with a family emblem showing a rampant lion viewed in profile, turned toward the left, facing a green stalk (Fig. 7).<sup>7</sup> The frame includes other decorative elements, such as two pearls placed within golden forms at the top of the page and a putto standing on what may be a fountain within a landscape at the inner margin. Unfortunately, the page has sustained considerable damage and some of the details of the forms, as well as the letters of the text, are difficult to discern.

The manuscript was first described by Georg Swarzenski and Rosy Schilling, who believed that the art was created around 1500.<sup>8</sup> They surmised that the putti on folio 1r resemble the work of “Boccardini” and that the art was Tuscan, probably Florentine. It is likely that they were

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<sup>5</sup> No traces are visible today, but this might be the result of the damaged condition of the gold leaf on this page.

<sup>6</sup> Toward the top of the page the scribe wrote “These are the seventy-two verses that were compiled by Rabbi Moses, of blessed memory,” a reference to Nahmanides (1194–1270). The first line of text, beginning with the large initial word, is the first verse of Psalms 16, after which the traditional verses are copied. Versions of the seventy-two verses, which relate to the kabbalistic seventy-two lettered name of God, are found in the Soncino *Mahzor Roma* 1485/6, as well as in the *Rothschild Mahzor*, New York, the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, MS 8892, and in other manuscripts from Italy, but the order of the verses is not always the same.

<sup>7</sup> In Renaissance Italy, prominent Jewish families, in emulation of their Christian associates, created family emblems, sometimes incorporating visual puns on their names. For a description and discussion of these armorial devices, see Roth (1967), 165–84, and Pisa (1984), 291–461. The family to which this emblem belongs has yet to be identified.

<sup>8</sup> Swarzenski and Schilling (1929), 257, no. 233.

referring to the Florentine illuminator Giovanni Boccardi (1460–1529), also known as Giovanni di Giuliano Boccardi, Boccardi il vecchio, or Boccardino.<sup>9</sup> The arrangement of the decorative elements around the page, the soft rendering of the landscape, and more importantly the appearance of the facial features, however, make an attribution to the prolific Florentine illuminator Mariano del Buono (1433/4–1504), or his workshop, more convincing.<sup>10</sup>

At least seven illuminated Hebrew manuscripts have been ascribed to Mariano and his workshop, a greater number than are attributed to any other Italian master. Perhaps the first scholar to associate this artist with a Hebrew text was Annarosa Garzelli, who credited him with the decoration of a commentary on the Pentateuch by Nahmanides,<sup>11</sup> as well as the illumination of a *Sifrei Emet* written for Jacob, the son of Benjamin of Montalcino in 1467.<sup>12</sup> Luisa Mortara Ottolenghi concurred with this last attribution<sup>13</sup> to which she added a copy of Yosef Albo's *Sefer Ha'Ikkarim* that she found to be similar in style to the commentary by Nahmanides.<sup>14</sup> She believed Mariano also might have illuminated a Psalter with the commentary of David Kimhi;<sup>15</sup> a prayer book belonging to Abraham, the son of Jacob;<sup>16</sup> a prayer book copied in Monselice in

<sup>9</sup> For information concerning this artist, see Levi D'Ancona (1962), 149–154; Garzelli (1985), 80–81 and 341–346; Levi D'Ancona (2001–02), 225–230; and Galizzi (2004), 113–116.

<sup>10</sup> I am grateful to Mirella Levi D'Ancona for suggesting this attribution and to Jonathan Alexander and Angela Dillon Busi for their confirmation. For information concerning Mariano del Buono, see Levi d'Ancona (1962), 175–181; Garzelli (1985), vol. 1, 189–215 and vol. 2, 341–346; Alexander (1994), 118–119 and 150, cat. nos. 49, 68, and 69; Alexander, Marrow, and Freeman Sandler (2005), cat. nos. 82 and 100; and Galizzi (2004), 727–730.

<sup>11</sup> Manchester, the John Rylands University Library, Ms. hebr. 8; see Garzelli (1985), vol. 1, 207 and vol. 2, 402.

<sup>12</sup> New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library MS 409, Florence, 1467; see Garzelli, (1985) vol. 1, 207. The colophon (fol. 187v) indicates the patron and the date the work was completed (5 July [5]227 [= 1467]). The scribe identified himself at the beginning of the inscription, but his name was subsequently erased. Pasternak (2002), 187, believed that the manuscript was penned by Isaac ben Ovadia of Forlì.

<sup>13</sup> Mortara Ottolenghi (1993–94), 92.

<sup>14</sup> Rovigo, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, Ms. Silvestriana 220. This attribution is found in Mortara Ottolenghi (1997), 982–983.

<sup>15</sup> Berlin, Staatsbibliothek SPk Ms. Hamilton 547, commonly referred to as the *Hamilton Psalter*. For the possible attribution to Mariano, see Mortara Ottolenghi (1997), 989.

<sup>16</sup> London, British Library Add. 16577. The manuscript is described in Margoliouth (1905), vol. 2, no. 630, 234–238. For the attribution to Mariano, see Mortara Ottolenghi (1993–94), 93.

1489;<sup>17</sup> and some of the illuminations in the *Rothschild Mahzor* written for Elia, the son of Yoav of Vigevano of the Gallico family in Florence in 1490.<sup>18</sup> The woman's prayer book in the Seminary Library should also be included among the works attributed to Mariano del Buono.

Many of the Latin manuscripts associated with Mariano and his workshop contain pages with elaborate borders inhabited by figures in frames and with putti supporting coats of arms in the lower border that are similar to those in the Hebrew prayer book.<sup>19</sup> Two of Mariano's finest Latin manuscripts, in particular, are worth comparing to this work.

The first is a Breviary produced for the Ospedale of Santa Maria Nuova in 1477, which is considered a turning point in Mariano's style.<sup>20</sup> Although superior in quality to the Hebrew manuscript, the details of the rendering of the facial features, particularly the mouths and soft nondetailed eyes are similar in style. Both utilize as a decorative element a putto standing on a fountainlike form in landscape. Especially striking is the relationship between the prophet in the center of the upper border of the opening page of the Hebrew prayer book (Fig. 8) with the similarly placed figure of God the Father on folio 161v of the Breviary. In both, the bust-length figures of the elderly men, their hair parted in the middle and their white beards long and pointed, have similarly shaped mouths formed as arcs that turn down at the corners, creating a serious, almost frowning, expression. Both men convey the impression

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<sup>17</sup> Parma, Biblioteca Palatina Ms. Parm. 2738; see Mortara Ottolenghi (1993–94), 93 and Mortara Ottolenghi (1997), 983. The scribe did not include his name in the colophon, but as Benjamin Richler noted, the name Ephraim, which is pointed out on two folios in this manuscript, might be that of the scribe; see Richler (2001), 228, no. 939.

<sup>18</sup> New York, the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary, MS 8892; see Mortara Ottolenghi (1994–95), 93 and Mortara Ottolenghi (1997), 983. In the latter, the author speculated that although not mentioned in the colophon, a member of the Norsa family might have been involved in the commissioning of the manuscript. She incorrectly assumed there was no documentation of a marriage between the Gallico and Norsa families, whereas in fact Elia's son David married Giusta Norsa, which explains the frequent appearance of the Norsa family emblem in this work; see Luzzati (1998), 82 and Luzzati (2002), 49, note 52, as well as E. M. Cohen (2005–06), 172. Until recently the date in the colophon had been read incorrectly as 1492. For the correct dating of the manuscript, see Wachtel (2005–06), 160–168.

<sup>19</sup> An obvious point of departure is the treatment of the decoration of the letters. In Mariano's works, as in Latin manuscripts generally, initial letters are frequently embellished. Hebrew does not utilize capital letters, however, and in place of decorated initials, illuminated Hebrew works employ ornamental initial words in panels.

<sup>20</sup> Florence, Museo Nazionale del Bargello, ms. 68, fol. 161v; see Levi D'Ancona (1962), 177 and 179 and Garzelli (1985), vol. 1, 203.

that their eyes are closed as they gaze down at the text beneath them. The figures gesture differently in keeping with their disparate identities. In the Breviary the nimbed figure of God the Father lifts his hands with his palms turned toward the viewer. Three of the fingers of his right hand are raised in a pose of benediction. In the Hebrew prayer book, the prophet holds a scroll in his left hand; in place of a symbolic gesture, he rests his right hand on the gold frame beneath him.

The figures in another Breviary display the same facial types that are found in the Hebrew prayer book.<sup>21</sup> Some figures found on folio 354r are particularly noteworthy. God the Father appears in the center of the upper border; once again his mouth curves creating a ponderous expression and his eyelids appear to be closed as he gazes down in the direction of the text. Putti, depicted with protruding stomachs and small, minimally articulated eyes, appear in the borders on either side of the text. Reminiscent of the Hebrew prayer book, one of the two putti in the left-hand border who have musical instruments plays a *lira da braccio*.

The softly rendered landscape elements and the stocky figures, seemingly lacking necks that appear in the woman's prayer book in New York, are in keeping with Mirella Levi D'Ancona's characterization of Mariano's style.<sup>22</sup> These features are found in another Hebrew manuscript, characterized by Elliott Horowitz as a liturgical handbook.<sup>23</sup> The work contains two full-page miniatures and twenty-six text illustrations that are embellished with Florentine floral motifs, as are many of the pages throughout. The figures in this work, their body types, and the rendering of their facial features, particularly their eyes and mouths, are similar to those in the woman's prayer book as well as to those in other Latin codices attributed to Mariano del Buono.<sup>24</sup> In light of the

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<sup>21</sup> Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, ms. Riccardiano 372; see Garzelli (1985), vol. 1, 210–211, who believed it dates to around 1479.

<sup>22</sup> See Levi D'Ancona (1962), 177.

<sup>23</sup> Princeton, Princeton University Library Garrett Ms. 26. The manuscript lacks a colophon but probably was created around the time of the woman's prayer book. For a discussion of some of the illustrations and a summary of the earlier bibliography for this manuscript, see Horowitz (1993–94), 98–111.

<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Alexander kindly provided me with a copy of his unpublished description of this manuscript, which he wrote in 1994. He noted the similarities between the illuminations of this work and others attributed to the Florentine artists Monte and Gherardo del Flora and to Mariano del Buono.

numerous Hebrew manuscripts now associated with this illuminator, the ties the artist may have had to the Jewish community of Florence are worthy of further examination.

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### *Illustrations*

- Fig. 1. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 1r. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 2. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 4r. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 3. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 19r. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 4. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 37v. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 5. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 201r. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 6. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 1r—detail—King David. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 7. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 1r—detail—family emblem. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Fig. 8. New York, Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary MS 8641, fol. 1r—detail—prophet in center of upper border. Courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary.



Fig. 1. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5 / I, fol. 21v: Isaac on his deathbed refusing the firstborn blessing to Esau, with Jacob running away on the right. In the right margin, Hebrew template for the Christian illuminator (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).

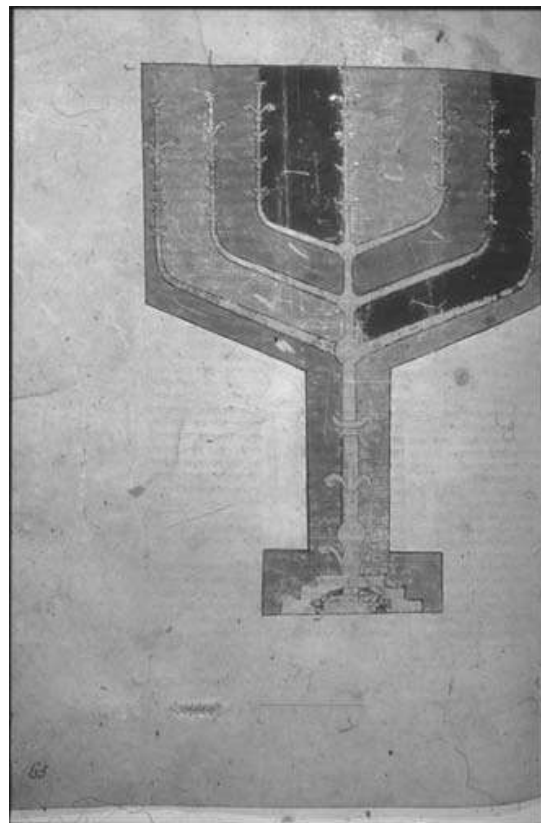


Fig. 2. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5 / I, fol. 65: The *Menorah* (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).



Fig. 3. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/I, fol. 47v (detail): The Calling of Moses, initial panel to the second Parasha in Exodus (Ex. 6:2–9:35) (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).



Fig. 4. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/I, fol. 18v: Binding of Isaac (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).



Fig. 5. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Hebr. 5/II, fol. 209v: Adoration of the Statue and The Three Hebrews in the Fiery Oven, initial panel to the Book of Daniel (photo: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München).