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Introduction

In the Days of the Judges, when a famine came over the land of Judah, Naomi and her family found a refuge in Moab. After the death of her husband and two sons Naomi, bitter and destitute, returns to Bethlehem. Ruth, one of her two Moabite daughters in law, is determined to go with her, holding fast to her and to her religion. The days are the beginning of the barley harvest, and Ruth, like other poor people, goes to the fields to glean ears of corn after the reapers. On her way, she comes to a field belonging to Boaz, kindred of Naomi's late husband, who takes her under his protection and finally accepts her request to marry her. They become the great grandparents of David, the King of Israel whose heir is the Messiah.

In the Jewish tradition, the book of Ruth, telling the story of Ruth and her mother in law, is recited during the feast of *Shavuot* (Pentecost) also known as the Feast of Harvest. It is thus one of the five scrolls (*megillot*) associated with particular liturgical events, which are placed together in the Hagiographa, the third section of the Hebrew Bible.[1] However, the setting of the story in the period of Judges (1:1) is the reason why in the Greek and Latin Bibles the book of Ruth follows the book of Judges and figures as the eighth biblical book. It was therefore part of the illuminated Byzantine Octateuchs which

contain the first eight books of the Old Testament, a format that gained much popularity during the post-iconoclastic period.[2] However, while the first books of the illuminated Octateuchs were adorned with a vast selection of miniatures, Ruth, the last book, received two scenes only.[3] Two more scenes appear in the eleventh century Catalan Roda Bible, where the earliest Western illustrations of Ruth are found.[4] Some more examples are known from the twelfth century, the time of the giant Romanesque Bibles from Salzburg,[5] Florence[6] and Canterbury or St. Albans.[7] A century later, the elaborated biblical cycles developed in Paris reserved a place of honor for the story of Ruth.[8] The French illuminators not only based themselves on earlier English and Byzantine models,[9] but expanded the cycle, occasionally by using motifs from everyday rural life.[10] The French version became widespread in Western Europe and during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries turned into a general European tradition.[11]

This paper discusses the iconography of Ruth as depicted in two manuscripts: the Tripartite Mahzor, a Jewish Ashkenazi prayer book of around 1322 from the Lake Constance region, and the Padua Bible, a Christian picture Bible of around 1400 from Italy. Both manuscripts were influenced by the general European iconography of Ruth. Notwithstanding the geographical and chronological distance between the two, they

37

share some iconographic similarities. While the general European iconography basically follows the Vulgate, the Latin version of the Bible by St. Jerome (c. 345-420), some of the specific components of the Tripartite Mahzor and the Padua Bible are based on Jewish commentaries and midrashic texts.

The midrashic interpretations of the book of Ruth were partly incorporated in various Jewish translations such as the Aramaic *Targum*, as well as in some discussions in the Babylonian Talmud and several corpora of midrashim.[12] Others, such as the sixth or seventh century Ruth Rabbah or the tenth century Ruth Zuta were compiled as independent treatises.[13] Later, the outstanding medieval Jewish commentators such as Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yzhaki, 1040/1-1105) and Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164) devoted full commentaries to the book.[14] Such prominent Christian medieval exegetes as Hugh of St. Cher (ca. 1200-1263) and the later Nicholas of Lyra (ca. 1270-1340) showed a special interest in some of the Jewish commentaries on Ruth, especially that of Rashi, whose work is based on earlier rabbinic literature.[15] The impact of midrashic sources and rabbinic commentaries on the iconography of Ruth, their details and implications are demonstrated here, through the cycles of episodes in both the Tripartite Mahzor and the Padua Bible.

The Tripartite Mahzor is an illuminated Ashkenazi prayer book that was used by the cantor in public prayer during the Jewish Holydays, and special Shabbats.[16] It includes liturgical poems, prayers and readings from the Scriptures for each feast.[17] The manuscript was written in Hebrew by a Jewish scribe, whereas the illustrations were executed in a local Christian urban workshop. The strong stylistic link between the Mahzor and the *Graduale of St. Katharinenthal* of around 1312 from Lake Constance region,[18] indicates the provenance of the Mahzor, as well as its direct connection with the *Graduale's* workshop.[19] The Christian artists of this workshop probably executed the painted panels of the Tripartite under the guidance of a Jewish scholar, who determined the details of the illustrations. Two main models were involved, a local Christian (with the Western iconography of Ruth) and a Jewish one with some midrashic components. While the Christian model was available in the workshop, the Jewish model was probably presented to the artists by the Jewish adviser.[20]

The Book of Ruth appears in the Mahzor within the prayers for *Shavuot* (Pentecost), in accordance with the tradition of reading the book during this feast. The initial word panel presents several scenes fused together. They read from right to left and, as I shall show, depict Ruth four times in four episodes. In the first scene (on the extreme right) she declares her faith in Naomi's God by raising her hands (Ruth 1:16). In the following one she gleans in Boaz's field among other

laborers (2: 3), while in the third she reaps. The last scene, to the left of the tree trunk, depicts Boaz giving Ruth the six measures of barley (3:15).

Ruth, like most women (but usually not men) in the Tripartite Mahzor, is depicted as an animal headed figure. The heads were originally designed by the draughtsman with normal human features, as can be discerned under the pealing off colours in the extreme left figure of the panel. The animal heads were added later by the colourist, who did not necessarily understand the scenes, for he endowed each Ruth figure with a different animal head. In doing so he was recalling an earlier Ashkenazi tradition, which depicted both men and women as animal headed figures. The phenomenon has not yet been fully understood.[21] It calls for comprehensive research into the roots of the custom, which manifests itself about a hundred years prior to the Tripartite Mahzor. Here I shall consider the panel as it was designed by the draughtsman, without referring to the animal heads.

The Ruth panel of the Tripartite Mahzor will be discussed in detail. I shall first define the common Christian iconographical elements, and then consider the special components, based on Jewish literature, which are paralleled in the Christian Padua Bible. The Padua Bible[22] was produced in Padua around 1400,[23] more than seventy years after the Tripartite Mahzor. This Christian picture Bible consists of a wide cycle of miniatures illustrating the Pentateuch, Joshua and Ruth, accompanied by a paraphrase on the biblical text written in a Venetian dialect.[24] The text substantially based on the Latin Vulgate, also includes details partly derived from Jewish sources. Despite the late date some of the illustrations depend on earlier pictorial sources. H. Kessler, who analyzed some of the scenes, showed how the cycle of miniatures reflects early Christian sources which seem to have been known in the ninth century Tours and eleventh century Canterbury.[25] G. Vikan, who discussed the Joseph cycle, thinks it includes numerous parallels to monuments of the Cotton Genesis tradition.[26] The iconographical sources of the Ruth cycle have not yet been thoroughly studied.[27] The Jewish influence on its iconography and text is the subject of the second part of this paper. Although the Padua Bible cycle comprising about forty six scenes, is much wider than the simple panel of the Tripartite Mahzor, the remarkable iconographical similarities between the two suggest that both manuscripts go back to a common earlier Jewish iconographic tradition.

In the Field: the French Model

Ruth gleaning in Boaz's field is depicted in the centre of the right side of the Tripartite Mahzor panel [Fig. 1].[28] She

38

1) «Scenes of Ruth», Tripartite Mahzor, Lake Constance region, c. 1322, British Library, London, Add. 22413, f. 71.

gathers the ears of corn in one hand, while in the other she carries a straw basket, where she stores her gleanings. The movement of her hands and her straw basket, are features that appear also in the Arsenal Bible, a manuscript produced in a French scriptorium at Acre in the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem around 1250 (Fig. 2, middle right compartment).[29] Ruth's bent posture is typical of the iconography of this scene,[30] but the identical design of the receptacle as a straw basket is unique to these two manuscripts. The straw basket

probably originates in a French model,[31] brought to Acre with the Crusaders, and at the same time reaching other places in Europe, including the Lake Constance region, the place of origin of the Tripartite Mahzor.[32]

The figure of Boaz, asking about the identity of the new female gleaner in his field, is depicted in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries examples [Figs. 2-3]. The artist of the Tripartite Mahzor omitted Boaz, as well as the male reapers,[33] but added a few other figures, carrying out different agricultur-

39

2) «Scenes of Ruth», Arsenal Bible, Acre, c. 1250, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, Ms. 5211, f. 364v.

40

3) «Scenes of Ruth», Lambeth Bible, Canterbury or St. Albans, 1140–1150, Lambeth Palace Library, London, Ms. 3, f. 130.

al tasks. A man kneeling to tie a sheaf is depicted on Ruth's right according to Boaz's instructions to his men: "Let her glean even among the standing sheaves" (2:15). The man tying the sheaf can also be seen in the English Lambeth Bible of 1140-1150 [Fig. 3].[34] In other detailed Ruth cycles, this action is represented in the following scenes, as in the mid thirteenth century Morgan Picture Bible, where several panels were given to agricultural tasks in Boaz's field.[35] A figure threshing grain to the left of the tree trunk in the Mahzor likewise appears in the Picture Bible (Fig. 12, left panel).[36]

The veiled woman on the extreme right of the Mahzor panel was probably borrowed from another episode in the French model. One of the preceding scenes in the Arsenal Bible shows Naomi and her two daughters in law on their way out of Moab (Fig. 2, middle left panel). Orpa is about to return to the city, which she has just left, while Ruth, refusing to leave her mother in law, is holding fast to her. Naomi, raising her hand, is trying to persuade Ruth to return home (2:15), while Ruth is pointing upwards, as if declaring: "your God is my God" (2:16). The woman pointing upwards in the Tripartite Mahzor makes a gesture similar to that of Ruth in the Arsenal Bible. Her veiled hair indeed differs from that of the gleaning Ruth who is bareheaded, but the same difference exists in the Arsenal Bible: Ruth is veiled when she declares her faith and her hair falls on her shoulders when she gleans. The Mahzor

artist probably reduced the whole scene of the French model to one figure—that of the declaring Ruth. Since the episodes in the Mahzor's panel read from right to left, the declaring Ruth precedes the gleaning Ruth, as in the French model.

Reaping: The Tripartite, the Padua and a Local Secular Tradition

The similarities between our Mahzor and the French iconographical tradition of Ruth suggest the existence of a shared contemporary French model used by the artists of the Hebrew manuscript. However, this kind of model cannot explain all the iconographical components of the scene. The female reaper standing near the gleaning Ruth does not appear in the French versions.[37] A parallel to the standing reaper can be found in the Padua Bible of around 1400 [Fig. 4].[38] Here she is standing with a sickle in her hand, surrounded by maidens who are stooping while performing other harvesting tasks. An inscription above the female reaper identifies her as Ruth.

In the Hebrew Bible, Ruth did not reap but gleaned, in keeping with Jewish law which made provision for the poor obligatory: "And she went, and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers…" (2:3). Ruth, kneeling with a sheaf of grain which she has just gleaned is represented in the Padua Bible in an earlier scene depicting Boaz asking about the identity of the new woman in his field [Fig. 5].[39] However, the reaping Ruth appears in a later scene, which takes place the next day [Fig. 4]. Boaz, who wants to ensure that Ruth will glean enough grain, says: "Do not go to glean in another field…Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped…" (2:8-9). According to Josephus Flavius (c. 37-100), by making this offer Boaz was actually giving Ruth the right to reap instead of glean.[40] The midrashic motif of the reaping Ruth, included also in some later midrashim,[41] was possibly known to St. Jerome (c. 345-420) and influenced his translation of two verses.[42] The first describes Boaz's order to his men after the conversation with Ruth (2:15), while the second summarizes Ruth's actions in the field from the next day till the end of the barley and wheat harvest (2:23).[43] Here, instead of using the verb *conligare*, as in the other verses, to define the act of gleaning named in the Hebrew story,[44] Jerome used the verb *metere* which indeed can be understood as "to collect", but that at the same time and more often in such a context means "to reap". Following the Vulgate, the text accompanying the miniature depicting the reaping Ruth in the Padua Bible adopted a similar verb: "Como Ruth la maitina torna a mière cum le fantesche de Booç, per voluntà de Booç e per conseyo de Noemi soa soxera."[45]

41

4) «Ruth Reaping», Padua Bible, Padua, c. 1400, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, Rovigo, ms. 212, f. 43 (lower right panel).

6) «Miniature of Kunz von Rosenheim», Zurich, c. 1330, Universitätsbibliothek, Heidelberg, CPG. 848, f. 394.

5) «Boaz Asking about the New Woman in His Field» Bible, Padua, f. 42 (lower panel).

The undoubted identification of the female reaper in the Padua Bible as Ruth raises the question of her identity in the Mahzor. A similar female reaper is drawn in the miniature of Kunz von Rosenheim in the Manesse Codex, an illustrated compendium of medieval German lyric poetry compiled between 1300 and 1340 in Zurich, at the same cultural and geographical milieu as the Mahzor [Fig. 6].[46] Like our reaper, the woman in the Manesse Codex wears a red dress and her hair falls on her shoulders under a hat. In one hand she holds

42

a few ears of corn while in the other she has a sickle. Both the Manesse and Mahzor figures wear gloves. Scholars discussing the Manesse have pointed out the odd inclusion of gloves in an agricultural environment.[47] In the Codex this would imply that the reaper is the highborn lover of the knight standing next to her with a falcon, a common noble attribute, on his hand. The two are playing at rusticity as in a pastoral game.[48] The "aristocratic" reaper of the Manesse Codex may have been a part of the artistic repertoire of the Tripartite Mahzor workshop.[49] Yet it is also plausible that by the aristocratic gloves our artist wanted to stress Ruth's royal origin as it is described in some midrashic sources. According to Midrash Ruth Zuta, Boaz orders his man: "Don't despise her since she is a daughter of kings."[50] Here he is referring to the earlier tradition of Midrash Ruth Rabah presenting Ruth as the daughter of Eglon, the Moabite King killed by Ehud ben Gera (Judges 3:19).[51] At the same time, the gloves might express the spirit of similar midrashic sources emphasizing Ruth's modesty and telling how not even one finger could be seen during her weary work in the field.[52]

The female reaper of the Tripartite Mahzor can thus be identified as Ruth, appearing three times on the right side of the panel in three sequential scenes, combined in one space and reading from right to left [Fig. 1]. In the first scene she declares her faith in Naomi's God; in the second she stoops with her straw basket, gleaning in Boaz's field with other people performing different agricultural tasks; in the third scene, taking place later on the next day, she is depicted as a reaper. While the first two scenes are part of the French pictorial tradition, the third is not. Its inclusion in the Mahzor panel might reflect the artistic repertoire of the local workshop, but could also have been influenced by another model, similar to that in the Padua Bible, which did include the reaping Ruth.

The Veil: The Pictorial Similarities of the Tripartite and the Padua

The probable relation between the Tripartite Mahzor and a model similar to the Padua Bible becomes more evident when we look at the left side of the Mahzor panel. Following her mother in law's advice, Ruth secretly enters the threshing floor and lies down at the feet of the sleeping Boaz (3:5-7). In the middle of night, after Boaz finds her at his resting place, Ruth identifies herself and says "spread your *kanaf* over your servant for you are next-of kin" (3:9). The word *kanaf* in this context can be understood as the edges of a garment and as such it was translated in the Greek and Latin versions by the word *pallium*, which means a coverlet or a cloak.[53] In Jewish sources, this phrase

was usually interpreted as a request for marriage. According to Rashi, Ruth asked Boaz to cover her with his *talith*—an act which forms a major part of the Jewish wedding ceremony.[54] In response, Boaz expresses his willingness to marry her as a near kinsman, and Ruth stays until the morning. Before leaving, he gives her six measures of barley. And the Hebrew Bible recounts: "And he said: Bring the veil (*mitpahat*) that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six [measures of] barley,[55] and laid it on her" (3:15).

The Hebrew word *mitpahat* (מטפחת) was translated in both the Septuagint and the Vulgate as *palliolum*, which means a little cloak or a mantle. In accordance with these translations, Ruth's *palliolum* is depicted in some French illuminations as a cloak, which she uses as an attached receptacle for her gleanings. An example can be found in the French Morgan Picture Bible [Fig. 7].[56] This French pictorial tradition originated in England, as the twelfth century Lambeth Bible shows in two preceding scenes. In one Ruth presents her first gleanings to her mother in law; in another she is shown gleaning (Fig. 3, left and middle panels). It is possible that the tradition developed under the influence of contemporary field customs, which include a similar apron for holding seed to be sown, as in one of the single leaves of the *Speculum virginum* of 1190 (Fig. 8, middle panel).[57] Holding both sides of the cloak without taking it off also fits the Vulgate version, where the verb "bring" (*havi*) of Boaz's order to Ruth in the Hebrew Bible was replaced by the verb *expande* which means stretch out (the cloak), without necessarily removing it.[58]

An entirely different iconographical version is depicted in the Tripartite Mahzor [Fig. 1]. Here Boaz holds a separate piece of cloth representing the veil (*mitpahat*). This representation follows the direct meaning of the Hebrew Bible and some of the Jewish exegeses on the book of Ruth, defining the *mitpahat* as a veil covering the head or the neck.[59] Also the design as a separate piece of cloth and not as an attached garment is closer to the direct meaning of the Hebrew Bible where the verb "bring" (the veil) in Boaz's instruction means that Ruth had to take off the veil in response.

In the Padua Bible paraphrase the receptacle for the barley is termed a *pallio*, similar to the *palliolum* in the Vulgate. Here however the *pallio* is identified as the coverlet with which Boaz wrapped Ruth after her request "spread your *pallium* over your servant for you are next-of kin".[60] A similar relation between the receptacle for the "six barley" (3:15) and Ruth's request (3:9) can also be distinguished in a twelfth century anonymous Jewish commentary. Here, by interpreting the veil as *talith*,[61] the commentator may be giving the object a nuptial connotation, referring to Ruth's marriage request (3:9) considered earlier by Rashi as a demand for the marital act of covering the bride by a *talith*.[62]

43

7) «Boaz Pouring the Six Measures of Barley into Ruth's Mantle/ Ruth Presenting the Grains before Naomi», Morgan Picture Bible, Paris, c. 1250, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, Ms. 638, f. 18v (upper panels).

However, the Padua illustration also contains the unusual design of the veil as a separate piece of cloth, as in the Tripartite Mahzor (Fig. 9, right panel).[63] In the Padua Bible, Boaz and Ruth are both holding the ends of the cloth or veil in the same way that Boaz holds them in the Mahzor [Figs. 1 and 9]. In the later, Ruth does not hold the ends, and her hands are folded together in a gesture of thanksgiving. This gesture was probably introduced into our scene by means of an image showing Ruth kneeling in front of Boaz with the same gesture of her hands, as in the French Bible of Jean de Papeleu of 1317 [Fig. 10],[64] or in the Padua Bible, in the scene depicting their first meeting in the field [Fig. 11].[65] Boaz holding the veil

in the Mahzor can be therefore understood as a shorter version of the scene in the Padua, or as a sequential episode, where Boaz has just taken the cloth ends from Ruth, intending to tie them together and give her the bundle to carry.

At the threshing floor: The Jewish Aspects of the Padua Bible

The scene depicting the giving of the six measures of barley in the Padua Bible is accompanied by additional episodes, based on Jewish sources. The first scene shows Ruth pouring

44

8) «Allegorical Harvesting Tasks», a single leaf from a Speculum Virginum, Middle Rhineland, c. 1190, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn, 15/ 328.

9) «Ruth Pouring the Grains / Boaz and Ruth Arranging the Bundle for Loading», Padua Bible, f. 44 (lower panels).

the grains by herself into the veil, which is spread out on the ground (Fig. 9, left panel).[66] According to the Hebrew Bible as well as the Greek and Latin versions, and the descriptive text of the Padua Bible itself, Boaz is the one who performed this action: "...and he measured out six measures of barley and laid it on her" (3:15).[67] However, in Arabic translations of the book of Ruth, written in Hebrew script, Boaz's order to Ruth: "hold it out" and Ruth's reaction "So she held it" are given as if Boaz had said: "and take inside what I will give you".[68] Thus, according to this tradition, possibly also known to the designers of the Padua or its pictorial model, Ruth might have performed this action by herself.

Moreover, in the Bible the veil was not lying on the ground but was held by Ruth: "So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley." This specific detail is discussed and

rejected in the late sixteenth century commentary of Rabbi Elisha Gallico, an Italian Jew who became the student of Rabbi Yoseph Caro in Safed. Gallico assumed that Ruth didn't take her veil off, but held two of its ends while Boaz poured in the grains. This kind of interpretation is very close to the English and French iconographic versions [Figs. 3, 7]. However to stress his point, Gallico suggests another possibility which in his opinion, would have been rejected by the biblical text, and therefore supports his commentary: "On the face of it, it would have been better if he (Boaz) were to take the veil off, lay it on the ground and measure the barley above, so that Ruth would not have to be troubled holding it during the measuring. Then both would have managed together to put the filled veil on her back."[69] In this rejected description of events, Boaz, as in the Padua Bible, laid the veil on the ground to pour

46

the grains, and then both he and Ruth arranged the filled veil for carrying. It is possible that Gallico, who based his commentary on earlier sources,[70] was referring in this description to an unknown earlier textual or oral tradition, which may have been known to the artists of the Padua Bible or its model. No such earlier version has survived. Yet, it is possibly not accidental that these two motifs, the spreading out of the veil and the cooperation between Boaz and Ruth in arranging the bundle for carrying,[71] are presented in the Padua Bible and in Gallico's commentary in two separate sequential episodes [Fig. 9].

The scenes in the Padua Bible depicting Ruth as she steals into the threshing floor show the influence of Jewish sources as well. According to the Bible, after Boaz went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn, Ruth came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down (3:7). The Hebrew uses the word *margelotav* (מרגלותיו), which has two meanings: "at his feet" or "his feet". Most Jewish translations, as well as the Latin versions of the Bible gave *margelotav* as "his feet".[72] Accordingly, most of the pictorial renderings of this episode show Ruth in the act of exposing Boaz' feet as in the Arsenal Bible [Fig. 2], and the earlier Lambeth Bible [Fig. 3], or show Boaz with exposed legs and Ruth creeping or lying at the foot of his bed or next to the heap of grain, as in the Morgan Picture Bible [Fig. 12].[73] A special iconographical feature was added to this scene in the Padua Bible [Fig. 13].[74] Although as in the usual iconography, the sleeping Boaz's foot is exposed, Ruth is not lying at the foot of the bed, but appears to be resting there on a pillow. This representation which is not mentioned in the Padua paraphrase may be understood in light of Ibn Ezra's commentary on this verse. The Spanish exegete Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164), who composed his commentary on the book of Ruth in Rome,[75] interprets the word *margelotav* in the usual way as "his legs". To stress his point, he refers to an anonymous commentary, where the word was interpreted as the quilt put under the legs: "Margelotav—is his feet, so the one who interpreted [the word *margelotav*] as the quilt put under the legs, like the word *merashotav* (מראשותיו)—the one put under the head, was completely mistaken."[76] The allusion seems to tell us about a Jewish commentary which does not figure in other sources but was known to Ibn Ezra in the middle of the twelfth century and may have been known also to the Italian designers of the Padua Bible or its model. The same interpretation may explain the special iconography of the scene in the Padua Bible: Ruth is taking the quilt or pillow under Boaz's feet and lying on it. The inclusion of this kind of Jewish exegetical component, not mentioned in the accompanying paraphrase, may suggest the use of a pictorial model which incorporated such Jewish motifs.

10) «Ruth Kneeling before Boaz», Bible of Jean de Papeleu, Paris, 1317, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, Ms. 5059, f. 365.

The Sack: Meeting of Traditions

One of the apparently Jewish components of the Padua Bible has a parallel in thirteenth century French Ruth cycles. According to the Bible, at the end of her first day in Boaz's field, Ruth gathered up her gleanings, threshed them, and came into the city where "her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave her what was left over after she herself had been satisfied" (2:17-18). The Bible does not tell us how Ruth carried home the gleanings and the remains of her meal. In the twelfth century Lambeth Bible, as seen earlier, Ruth keeps the barley inside the apron tied to her garment [Fig. 3].[77] A different iconographical version appears in the Padua Bible [Fig. 14].[78] The scene on the left depicts two of Boaz's men in the act of pouring the grains into a sack, while the next scene shows them loading the filled sack on Ruth's back. The presence of the sack in this context is also indicated in the accompanying text.[79] The representation might have been based on the Aramaic translation of the book of Ruth, according to which Ruth takes the remains of

47

**11) «Ruth Kneeling before Boaz», Padua Bible, f. 42v (upper panel).**

her food out of a sack.[80] Ruth carrying the sack on her back is presented in a similar scene in the Oxford Bible Moralisée, as well as the Toledo version [Fig. 15],[81] where the sack is also mentioned in the text.[82] Some parts of the Aramaic translation of the book of Ruth, referred to as the *Chaldaeus Paraphrastes*, were added to the twelfth century *Glossa Ordinara* at a later date and appear in the earliest printed editions of the Glossary.[83] It is possible that this Jewish translation was already known in thirteenth century Paris, the place of origin of the Bible Moralisée.

The similarity between the scenes of the sack in the Padua Bible and the Bible Moralisée may indicate the incorporation of a French model in the illumination of the Italian Bible. The presence of this model is also felt, as I have shown, in the scene of Ruth kneeling before Boaz [Figs. 10-11].[84] Yet this French model cannot explain many of the miniatures of the

Padua Ruth cycle with their Jewish midrashic and exegetical components. Some of these are associated with the episode of the sack, which includes midrashic scenes unparalleled in the Bible Moralisée or any other Christian examples. The first depicts Boaz's men pouring the measured barley into the sack; the second shows them loading it on Ruth's shoulders [Fig. 14]. The Bible tells us that Ruth performed these tasks by herself without mentioning the presence of Boaz's men: "...then she beat out what she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley. She picked it up and came into the town..." (2:17). In contrast to the biblical text, the tenth century *Midrash Ruth Zuta* tells of how "they (Boaz's men) were busy in threshing and preparing the barley for Ruth until evening."[85]

The Padua paraphrase incorporates a similar midrash within verse 2:17 of the Vulgate: "Como le ovre e li famigy de

48
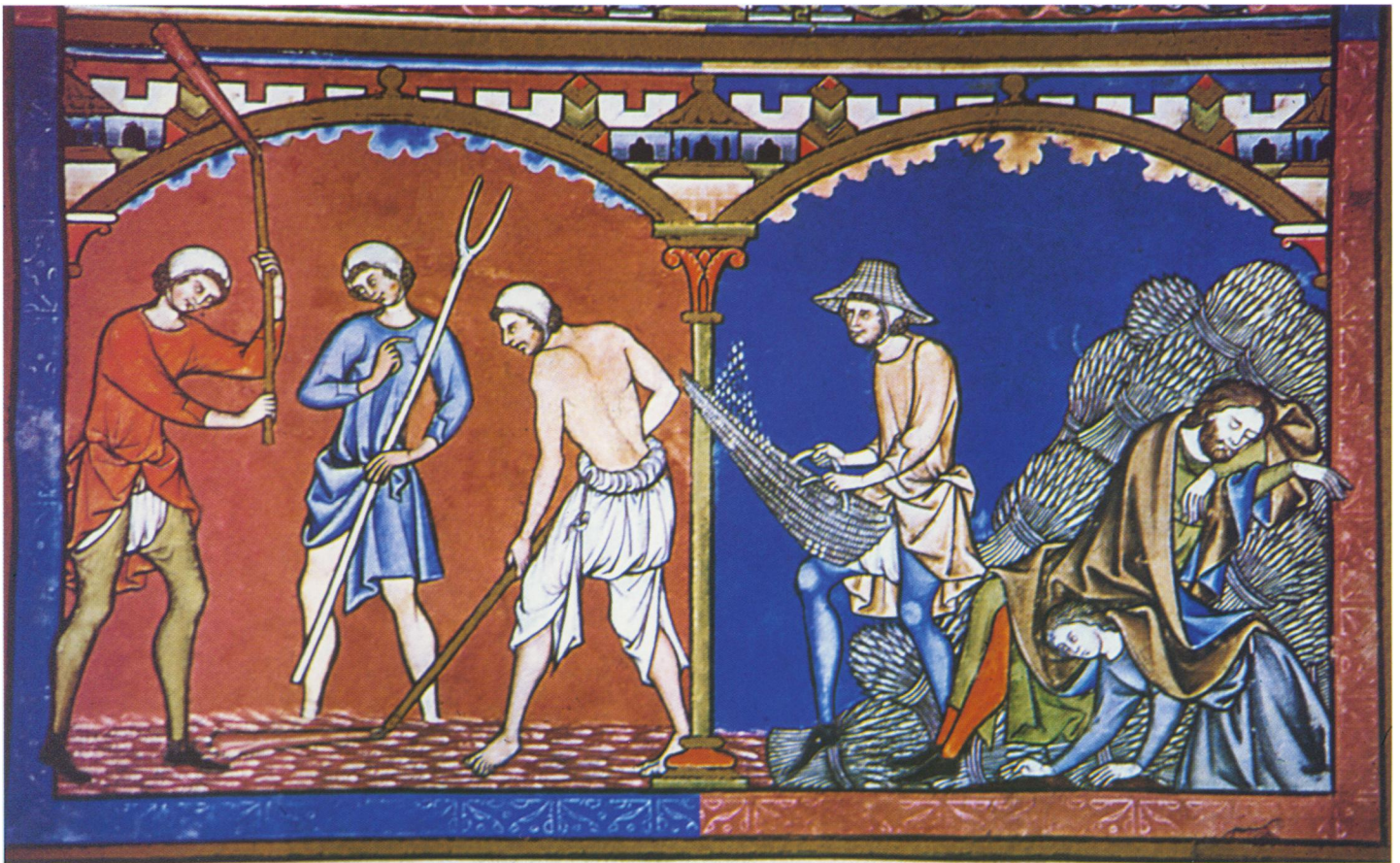
12) «Threshing of Boaz's field / Ruth Creeping under Boaz's Mantle», Morgan Picture Bible, f. 18 (lower panels).

Booç sì insacha l'orço che aveva guadagnà Ruth, el quale fo, segondo le mesure che se uxava in quel tempo, trea mòça."[86] Whereas the first part follows the midrash and describes how Boaz's labourers pour the barley into sacks, the second follows the Vulgate and gives the amount of Ruth's crop as "three measures" of that time. The three measures mentioned by St. Jerome (*id est tres modios*) are based on an early midrashic interpretation. The Hebrew Bible says only: "it [the amount of Ruth's crop] was an epha of barley". "How much is an *ephah*?" asks Midrash Ruth Rabbah, and R. Yohanan answers: "Three *seahs*, as we have learned: *An ephah is three seahs* [Menahot 7:1]."[87] The paraphrase thus demonstrates the different levels of Jewish influences on the Padua Bible:

some reached the Christian text in an indirect way through the early Latin version of Jerome or later Christian commentators influenced by Jewish exegesis; others, which have no parallels in other Christian texts, originated directly in Jewish sources.[88]

Conclusion: The Jewish Influence on the Padua Bible in the General Context

The Jewish connection of the Padua Bible can be discerned in two complementary aspects; one textual the other pictorial. The inclusion of Jewish elements with no parallels in

49
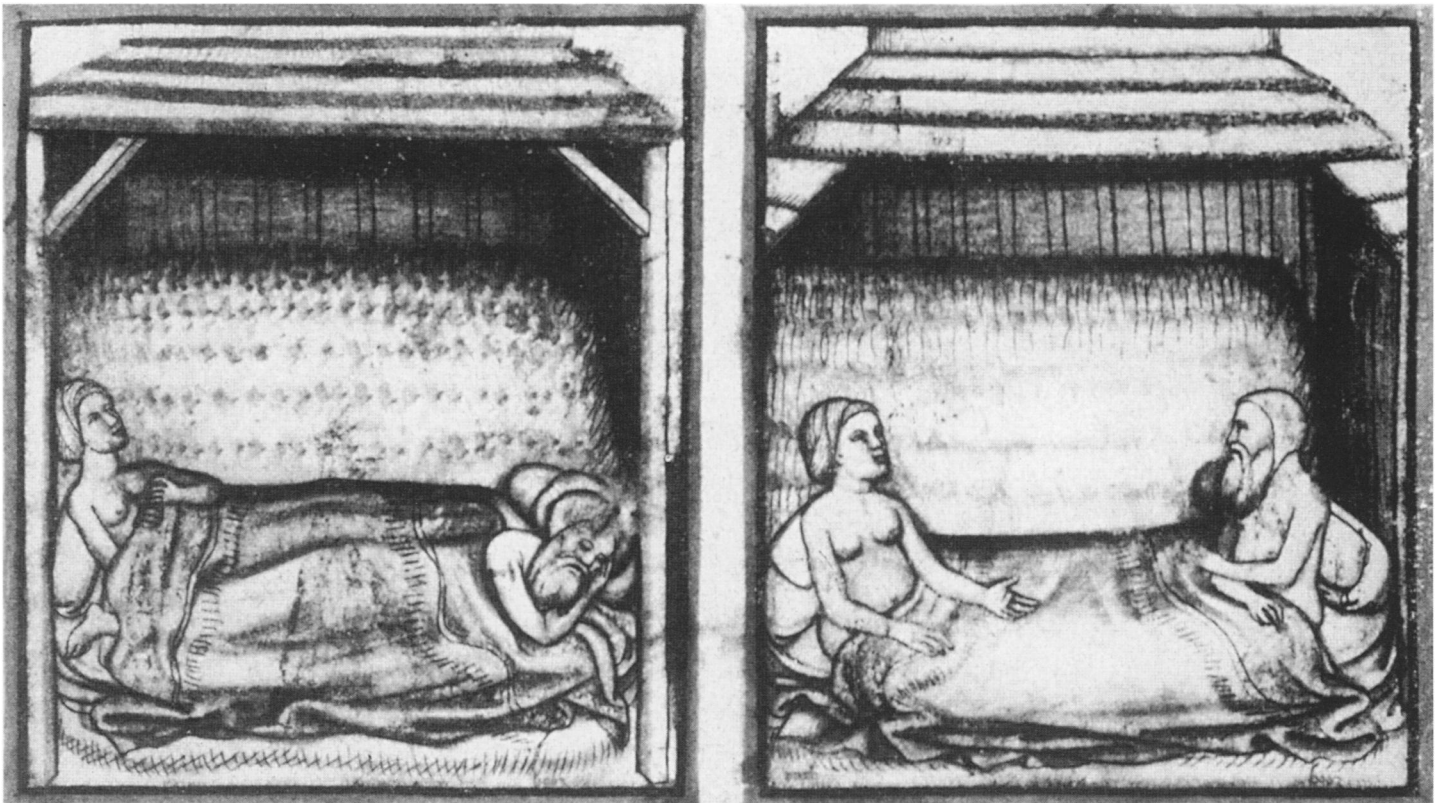
13) «Ruth in Boaz's Bed», Padua Bible, f. 44 (upper panels).

contemporary Christian sources indicates a Jewish literary influence. This circumstance may be considered in relation to the medieval attitude towards Jewish commentaries on the Old Testament. As seen above, already in the fourth century St. Jerome used Jewish rabbinic interpretations in translating into Latin some problematic verses of the Hebrew text of Ruth.[89] Consulting Jewish exegesis became especially conspicuous from the twelfth century on, when a new interest in the literal sense of the Scriptures flourished among some prominent contemporary Christian exegetes. These commentators not only wished to learn Hebrew in order to read the original version of the Bible, but also turned to Jewish medieval commentaries for clarification of the biblical text.[90]

As maintained by Lesley Smith, the linguistic difficulties of the text of Ruth and the problems in understanding the ancient Hebrew customs it describes led to a special Christian interest in the related Jewish sources.[91] Whereas the thirteenth century theologian Hugh of St. Cher (ca. 1200-1263) incorporates some of Rashi's interpretations in his *Postilla* on Ruth, the later Nicholas of Lyra (ca. 1270-1340) uses Rashi as the main source for his literal commentary.[92] At times, both commentators indicate the Jewish origin by a general statement referring to the Hebrews (*Hebraei*),[93] and in a few rare instances, Nicholas even gives the Jewish commentator's name.[94]

Another famous Jewish exegete, Abraham Ibn Ezra, is mentioned in connection with his interpretation of Ruth 3:3 in the later additions to the most widespread *Glossa Ordinara*,[95] which also includes large parts of the Aramaic translation of Ruth, referred to as the *Chaldaeus Paraphrastes*.[96] These additions appear in the early printed versions of the Glossary but were probably known earlier among Christians.[97] How the Jewish sources were transmitted is still not clear. Whereas the

50

14) «Boaz's Men Pouring the Grains into a Sack and Loading it on Ruth», Padua Bible, f. 43 (upper panels).

commentary of Rashi and some parts of the Babylonian Talmud were translated into Latin,[98] most Hebrew texts were not available to Latin readers. However, the Jewish sources could be read by those Christian theologians who had acquired some Hebrew and could understand the texts to a certain extent, or by Jewish converts who were more acquainted with the language.[99] Other texts might be communicated through oral discussions with Jewish advisers.[100]

The Ruth cycle of the Padua Bible is testimony to the Christian interest in the literal sense and the Jewish understanding of the Scriptures in general and Ruth in particular. The detailed cycle of miniatures and the accompanying text present the literal story of the book of Ruth step by step from the moment that Naomi leaves the land of Bethlehem with her husband and two sons (1:1) to the last narrative verse describing how Naomi takes the baby born to Boaz and Ruth and

places him in her bosom (4:16). The Jewish exegetical elements incorporated the cycle are not based on a sole consistent source that could have been available to the Christian compiler as a written text. They are a combination of different Jewish interpretations originating in various sources and showing a wide range of not only textual but also oral tradition. It is therefore reasonable to assume that a Jewish adviser might have been involved in designing the Padua Bible.

The participation of Jews in forming a Christian illuminated Old Testament text has some well-known parallels. A few years later, the Spanish Rabbi Moses Arragal translated the entire Hebrew Bible into Castilian for Don Luis de Guzmán, the Grand Master of the Order of Calatrava. This huge project, executed between 1422 and 1430, includes the biblical text with a commentary mainly based on midrashic elements and rabbinical notions.[101] Not only the Christian scribes worked under the

51

supervision of Arragal, but apparently also the illuminators who incorporated Jewish midrashic components within the miniatures and their captions.[102] The case of the Padua Bible might have been similar to the Alba but it was not necessarily identical. The prominent relation of the Padua to the Vulgate version,[103] probably indicate that the text was composed by a Christian author who was directed by a Jewish adviser in incorporating the Jewish additions not otherwise available to him.

The Jewish associations of the Padua Bible are not confined to probable textual and oral direction. Although the iconographical scope of the Padua is very wide compared with the Tripartite Mahzor, the specific shared pictorial components indicate the influence of the same iconography on both manuscripts. The geographical and chronological distance between the two raises the question of the transmission of this pictorial tradition. It is possible that both manuscripts hark back to an earlier common Jewish iconography that originated in Italy. Although the early traces of this tradition are lost, the later evidence suggests Italy as a center for Jewish medieval iconography transmitted by illuminated Hebrew manuscripts and carried by means of Jewish immigration and cultural relations to Germany[104] and other communities in Europe, especially Spain.[105] These Jewish-Italian cycles were probably designed under the influence of local Christian traditions but at the same time were enriched by distinct Jewish components. In their Jewish version they might in return have influenced local Christian traditions.

Throughout the Ashkenazi Tripartite Mahzor there are many midrashic elements, indicating the existence of a possible Jewish model,[106] probably presented to the artists by the Jewish scholar who guided them. At this point it cannot be ascertained how the artists of the Padua Bible got hold of a direct or indirect Jewish-like model. Yet it is possible that the Jewish adviser probably involved in forming the paraphrase also transmitted such a model to the illuminators. The inclusion of some Jewish iconographical components not mentioned in the accompanying texts, such as the pillow at the feet of Boaz, supports the assumption of a Jewish pictorial model. The adviser might also have instructed the illuminators and

15) «Ruth Threshing and Carrying her Crop to her Mother in Law», Bible Moralisée, Paris, c. 1230, Tesoro de la Catedral, Toledo, vol. 1, f. 95v.

explained the Jewish components in the episodes of the model. At the same time a pictorial model could have gained an independent existence and be copied, not necessarily with full understanding of every detail. However this may be, the Jewish influence on the text and miniatures is discernable throughout the manuscript,[107] a comprehensive analysis of which is still to be made. This paper is only one step in studying the iconographical relations between the Padua Bible and Hebrew illuminated manuscripts.

52

* I wish to thank Prof. Bezalel Narkiss for reading the text and offering helpful remarks. I am also grateful to Dr. Andreina Contessa and Ms. Anna Nizza for their advice in translating the Venetian dialect of the Padua Bible.

1 The five scrolls consist of five books: Song of Songs, Ruth and Ecclesiastes, which are read in public on the three main biblical holy-days of Passover (Pesah), Pentecost (Shavuot) and Tabernacles (Sukkoth) respectively; the book of Lamentations, read on the Ninth of Av (commemorating the destruction of the Temple) and the book of Esther, read at Purim.

2 See K. Weitzmann and M. Bernabò, The Byzantine Octateuchs (The Illustrations in the Manuscripts of the Septuagint II), Princeton, 1999, Text vol., pp. 3ff.

3 Ibidem, text vol., p. 323 and plates vol., figs. 1545-1552.

4 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. lat. 6, vol. I, f.110v and vol. II, f. 1. See W. Neuss, Die Katalanische Bibelillustration um die Wende des ersten Jahrtausends, Bonn-Leipzig, 1922, p. 76.

5 See the Admont Bible of the 1140s (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS S. N. 2701, f. 105v; T. Wehli, "Die Admonter Bibel", Acta Historiae Artium, 23/3-4 (1977), pp. 173-285; W. Cahn, Romanesque Bible Illumination, Ithaca and NewYork, 1982, p. 258, Cat. No. 26.

6 See the Tuscan Bible of S. Maria del Fiore from the first quarter of the twelfth century (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, Edili 125, f. 109); E. B. Garrison, Studies in the History of Medieval Italian Painting, Florence, 1953-1962, vol. I, pp. 164-166, vol. II, pp. 170 and 228-233; Cahn, Romanesque Bible, p. 284, Cat. No. 12; and C. R. Dodwell, The Pictorial Arts of the West 800-1200, New Haven, 1993, p. 180. See also below note 30.

7 See the Lambeth Bible of around 1145-55 (London, Lambeth Palace Library, Ms. 3, f. 130), below note 34.

8 See the mid thirteenth century Morgan Picture Bible (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. 638, fols. 17v-18v; S. C. Cockerell, Old Testament Miniatures, London, 1975, pp. 92-97); as well as the various copies of the Bible Moralisée, thoroughly studied by John Lowden, The Making of the Bibles Moralisées, vol. II: The Book of Ruth, University Park, Pennsylvania, 2000.

9 For English influence on the French cycle see below. For the Byzantine influence, see note 73. Some French cycles also shows an affinity to the two scenes of the Roda Bible.

10 See e.g. the Morgan Picture Bible, f. 17v, lower right panel and f. 18, two lower panels; Cockerell, Old Testament Miniatures, pp. 93 and 95.

11 For a short but comprehensive survey of the iconography of Ruth, see Lexikon der Christlichen Ikonographie, ed. E. Kirschbaum, Rome, 1968-1976, vol. 3, s. v. Ruth, by J. Paul and W. Busch.

12 See e.g. Midrash Tanhoma, below note 52.

13 For a survey of early translations of the book of Ruth as well as of the midrashic sources and commentaries related to Ruth, see D. R. G. Beattie, Jewish Exegesis of the Book of Ruth (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 2), Sheffield, 1977. For further bibliography, see M. M. Caspi, The Book of Ruth: an Annotated Bibliography (Books of the Bible 7), New York and London, 1994. For more sources see also M. M. Kasher, Torah Shelemah: Megilat Ruth, Jerusalem, 1999 (Hebrew).

14 For additional Jewish medieval commentaries on the book of Ruth see, Beattie, Jewish Exegesis, pp. 114ff.

15 L. Smith, Medieval Exegesis in Translation: Commentaries on the Book of Ruth, Kalamazoo, Michigan, 1996, pp. x-xi, xiii, xviii, 41ff, 57ff. These aspects will be discussed below.

16 In its present state the Tripartite Mahzor consists of three volumes dispersed in three libraries, Budapest (Library of the Hungarian

Academy of Sciences, Kaufmann Collection, Ms. A384), London (B.L., Add. 22413) and Oxford (Bodleian Library, Ms. Mich. 619). On the Tripartite Mahzor, see B. Narkiss, "A Tripartite Illuminated Mahzor from a South German School of Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts around 1300", Papers of the Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies, 2 (1968), pp. 125-133, and figs. 30-33; id., Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts (Jerusalem, 1969), pp. 106-108 and pls. 33-34; G. Sed Rajna, Le Mahzor enluminé, Leiden, 1983, pp. 16-17, 71-74; S. Shalev-Eyni, The Tripartite Mahzor, Ph.D. Diss. Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001; idem "Illuminierte hebräische Handschriften aus dem Bodensee-Raum", Kunst und Architektur in der Schweiz, 51/3 (2000), pp. 29-38.

17 The decoration of the Tripartite is concentrated in the initial word panels for the main liturgical poems, and the biblical books of Song of Songs, Ruth and Ecclesiastes. Since there are no capital letters in Hebrew, initial words take the place of the initial letters in Latin illuminations.

18 Zürich, Schweizerisches Landesmuseum, Inv. Nr. 26117

19 These conclusions are discussed at length in my PhD thesis. For a short summary see Shalev-Eyni, "Illuminierte hebräische Handschriften", pp. 29ff.

20 Ibidem, pp. 31-34.

21 The reluctance to depict human faces is typical of thirteenth and fourteenth century Ashkenazi illuminated manuscripts, and is possibly based on Jewish Halakhaic sources. See B. Narkiss, "On the Zoocephalic Phenomenon in Mediaeval Ashkenazi Manuscripts", in Norms and Variation in Art: Essays in Honour of Moshe Barasch, Jerusalem, 1983, pp. 49-62. Other scholars have also discussed this phenomenon. The first was Z. Ameisenowa, "Animal-headed Gods, Evangelists, Saints and Righteous Men", Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes, 12 (1949), pp. 21-45, who compared the figures to the Christian animalheaded figures of the four Evangelists, and considered the phenomenon as an attribute of righteous people. While this argument seems reasonable with respect to representations of positive animal-headed personages, it cannot explain why similar animal heads are sometimes given to dishonest or negative people. R. Mellinkoff, Antisemitic Hate Signs in Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts from Medieval Germany, Jerusalem, 1999, pp. 35-42, explains the motif as an attempt by Christian artists to insert anti-Semitic elements into Hebrew illuminated manuscripts from Germany. This proposal does not take into account the difficulty of believing that a Jewish patron would accept such an element in his books.

22 The Padua Bible consists of two volumes kept today in London (B. L., Add. 15277) and Rovigo (Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, ms. 212).

23 G. Folena and G. L. Mellini, Bibbia Istoriata Padovana della fine del Trecento: Pentateuco-Giosuè-Ruth (Saggi e studi di storia dell'arte 5), Venice, 1962, pp. IX-XXIII and XXVII-LIX.

24 The whole cycle was published by Folena and Mellini, ibidem.

25 H. L. Kessler, "Traces of an Early Illustrated Pentateuch", Jewish Art, 8 (1981), pp. 20-27.

26 G. Vikan, "Joseph Iconography on Coptic Textiles", Gesta, 18 (1979), p. 104. See also S. Arensberg–MacMillan, "The Padua Bible and the Late Medieval Biblical Picture Book," Ph. D. dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1986, available in an abstract form in the ProQuest Digital Dissertations.

27 The Ruth cycle of the Padua Bible was republished by M. Levi d'Ancona, with some references to other examples, but without a detailed discussion of the iconographical sources of its various components. See id., "Figurazioni del libro di Ruth nella Biblia", Il codice miniato: Rapporti tra codice, testo, e figurazione: Atti del III congresso di storia della miniatura (Storia del miniatura: Studi e docu-

53

menti 7), ed. M. Ceccanti and M. C. Castelli, Florence, 1992, pp. 3-18. For a discussion of the typological aspect of Ruth, see *ibidem*, pp. 11ff.

28 London, B. L., Add. 22413, f. 71.

29 Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 5211, f. 364v, see H. Buchthal, *Miniature Painting in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford, 1957, pl. 81. The Arsenal Bible includes a short version of twenty-two books of the Old Testament, written in old French. Each book has twenty full opening pages and illustrated initials (*ibidem*, p. 54). The gleaning Ruth is depicted on the opening page to the Book of Ruth.

30 Some examples present Ruth holding her gleanings in one hand. See the Tuscan Bible of S. Maria del Fiore from the first quarter of the twelfth century (Florence, Laurentian Library, Edili 125, f. 109; D. Denny, "Notes on the Lambeth Bible", *Gesta*, 16/2 (1977), pp. 55-56, and fig. 11), or the thirteenth-century English De Brailes Picture Bible (Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, Ms. 500, f. 18); H. Swarzenski, "Unknown Bible Pictures by W. de Brailes", *The Journal of the Walters Art Gallery*, 1 (1938), pp. 55-69, and fig. 20.

31 The opening Ruth page in the Arsenal Bible resembles to contemporary Ruth cycles from Paris as well as other western examples. See Buchthal, *Miniature Painting*, p. 57, and note 1.

32 A large straw basket is depicted in an ink drawing accompanying the initial word panel of a piyyut to Pentecost written on a fifteenth century quire added to the thirteenth century Ashkenazi Worms Mahzor (Jerusalem, The National and University Library, Heb. 4°781/1, f. 221) See A. Cohen-Mushlin, "Later Additions to the Worms Mahzor", in *Worms Mahzor Ms. Jewish National and University Library Heb. 4°781/1: Introductory Volume*, ed. M. Beit Arié, Vaduz-Jerusalem, 1985, p. 94.

33 In the Arsenal Bible Boaz is riding a horse on the left, while the reapers are on the right, and one of them turns back to talk to his master. Boaz is shown as a horseman also in the thirteenth century Morgan Picture Bible, f. 17v (see note 8). In earlier examples the horse is absent, but the whole composition is similar, and Boaz appears on the left, standing as in the English Lambeth Bible (fig. 3 and note 34), or seated as in the Florentine Bible of S. Maria del Fiore (see notes 6 and 30).

34 London, Lambeth Palace Library, Ms. 3, f. 130. See C. R. Dodwell, *The Great Lambeth Bible*, London, 1959, pl. 3. On the Lambeth Bible see also: D. Denny, "Notes on the Lambeth Bible", *Gesta*, 16/2 (1977), pp. 51-64; Cahn, *Romanesque Bible*, p. 261, Cat. No. 34, and Dodwell, *Pictorial Arts*, pp. 347-350.

35 New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. 638, f. 17v; Cockerell, *Old Testament Miniatures*, pp. 92-93, No. 118.

36 F. 18; *ibidem*, pp. 94-95. The man holding the rake on the right side of the Mahzor panel has no parallels in the preserved Ruth cycles. Yet the work of raking did appear among contemporary harvesting tasks, as can be seen in the allegorical harvesting scenes of the *Speculum Virginum* illuminated in the middle Rhineland, about 1190 (fig. 8, middle panel). The gesture of raising the hand is also performed by one of Boaz's men in the same scene in the stained glass windows of the Sainte Chapelle (Paris, 1242-1248). See *Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi*: France, vol. I: *Les vitraux de Notre-Dame et de la Sainte-Chapelle de Paris*, ed. M. Aubert, L. Grodecki, J. Lafond and J. Verrier, Paris, 1959, pls. 32-33. This man, together with two reapers, appears in one medallion, while Boaz and the gleaning women are depicted in the opposite one. In the Sainte Chapelle, as in the French model, the raised hand probably represents Boaz's men hailing their master: "The Lord bless you" (2:4).

37 The French version, as the English one by which it was influenced, shows the gleaning Ruth among the male reapers according to the verse: "...she came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers" (2:3) (see e.g. figs. 2-3). Boaz, trying to protect Ruth, suggests she keeps close to his maidens (2:8). Naomi, her mother in law, advises her to "...go out with his young women" (2:22), and the Hebrew Bible recounts: "So she stayed close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests". According to the Hebrew Bible, these maidens did not reap but gleaned. However, the existence of female reapers in the field of Boaz is mentioned in the exegesis of Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089-1164), according to whom the women mentioned by Naomi in the verse: "You had better go out with his young women" are female reapers who together with the male ones were under the patronage of Boaz. Two female reapers drawn in ink join the initial word panel of a piyyut to Pentecost written on a fifteenth century quire and added to the thirteenth century Ashkenazi Worms Mahzor (Jerusalem, The National and University Library, Heb. 4°781/1, f. 221). See above note 32. Unlike our Mahzor, the women reapers in the Worms Mahzor are stooping.

38 Rovigo, Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Concordi, ms. 212, f. 43, lower right panel; Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, pl. 242.

39 F. 42, *ibidem*, pl. 240.

40 *Jewish Antiquities*, book V, ix.2. See H. St. J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, *Josephus: Jewish Antiquities*, Cambridge, Massachusetts—London, 1926, vol. 5, p. 147.

41 See *Midrash Ruth Zuta* of the tenth century; S. Buber, *Midrasch Suta: Hagadische Abhandlungen über Schir ha-Schirim, Ruth, Echah und Koheleth*, Berlin, 1894, p. 50.

42 The influence of Jewish interpretations on the translation of St. Jerome can be distinguished in other verses. See below and note 89.

43 "...praecepit autem Booz pueris suis dicens etiam si vobiscum metere voluerit ne prohibeatis eam" (2:15). "iuncta est itaque puellis Booz et tamdiu cum eis messuit donec hordea et triticum in horreis conderentur" (2:23).

44 See verses 2:2, 2:3, 2:7, 2:8, 2:16, 2:17, 2:19.

45 Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, p. 115, paragraph XXVIII. See also the Padua text based on verse 2: 15 of the Vulgate: "Se Ruth volesse mière cum vu, lassella mière (*ibidem*, paragraph XXIIII).

46 Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Pal. Germ. 848, f. 394; K. Martin, *Minnesänger: Vierundzwanzig farbige Wiedergaben aus der Manessischen Liederhandschrift*, Aachen, 1971-72, vol. II, pl. 22. See also I. F. Walther and G. Siebert, *Codex Manesse: Die Miniaturen der Grossen Heidelberger Liederhandschrift*, Frankfurt am Main, 1988, pl. 125.

47 Martin, *Minnesänger*, pl. 22.

48 *Ibidem*.

49 Another reaper with gloves appears in the Tripartite Mahzor in the medallion showing the labour of reaping in the month of Elul (Budapest, Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Kaufmann Collection, Ms. A384, f. 144). See B. Narkiss and G. Sed-Rajna, *Index of Jewish Art: Iconographical Index of Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts*, vol. IV: *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Kaufmann Collection at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences*, Jerusalem-Budapest-Paris, 1988, card no. 21. This medallion is one of twelve marginal medallions depicting the labours of the months, and illustrating the special liturgical poem of the prayer for dew. See: Sed-Rajna, *Le Mahzor enluminé*, p. 36 and B. Narkiss, "Description and Iconographical Study", in *Worms Mahzor Ms. Jewish National and University Library Heb. 4°781/1*: Introductory Volume, ed. M. Beit Arié, Vaduz-Jerusalem, 1985, pp. 84-86. Since here the gloves seem to have no reference to their aristocratic connotation, it is possible that also in our scene the gloves had lost their original meaning.

54

[50] 2:15; Buber, *Midrasch Suta*, p. 51.

[51] Ruth Rabbah to verse 1:4, J. Neusner, *Ruth Rabbah: An Analytical Translation*, Atlanta, Georgia, 1989, p. 60, No. 3. A: "R. Bibi in the name of R. Reuben said: *Ruth and Orpa were the daughters of Eglon...*"

[52] *Ruth Zuta* 2:3, Buber, *Midrasch Suta*, p. 50. According to the Talmud "He [Boaz] perceived modest behaviour in her: the standing ears [she gleaned] standing, the fallen [she gleaned] sitting". English translation, *The Babylonian Talmud: Translated into English with Notes, Glossary and Indices*, ed. I. Epstein, London, 1938, Seder Mo'ed, Shabbath, vol. II, p. 555. The Talmudic Midrash was adopted by Rashi in his interpretation to verse 2:5, followed by Nicholas of Lyra in his Postills on Ruth. See Smith, *Medieval Exegesis*, p. 60. A different pictorial expression of the same midrash is included in the fifteenth century ink drawing added to the Ashkenazi Worms Mahzor (see above note 32): Whereas the two reapers in this drawing are bending and exposing their legs, the gleaning Ruth is seated and her legs are entirely covered. This depiction is in accordance with Midrash Ruth Rabbah, which describes her noble behaviour: "all the other women bend down to gather gleanings, but this one sits down and gathers. All the other women hitch up their skirts, she keeps hers down" (2:5), see Neusner, *Ruth Rabbah*, p. 108. The ink drawing includes a few other midrashic components. Among these is the woman on the extreme upper left. She is completely covered from head to toe, but is holding one of her shoes, which she has just taken off. This depiction derives from two different commentaries to the biblical text. The Hebrew Bible describes the way Ruth steals into the threshing floor by the word "בלט". This word was translated in the Aramaic version, as well as the Greek and Latin as "stealthily". This may explain the way Ruth is taking off her shoes in the Worms Mahzor. Her enveloping garment can be explained by commentary in the eighth century Midrash Tanhuma, translating the same word as "wrapped in a mantle" lest strangers should recognize her (Midrash Tanhuma, Behar 3), see J. T. Townsend, *Midrash Tanhuma: Translated into English with Indices and Brief Notes*, Hoboken, NJ, 1997, vol. II: Exodus and Leviticus, p. 356.

[53] "...expande pallium tuum super famulam tuam".

[54] On the usage of the talith in the Jewish wedding ceremony, see: J. Gutmann, "Wedding Customs Ceremonies in Art", in *Beauty in Holiness in Jewish Customs and Ceremonial Art*, New York, 1970, p. 314; T. and M. Metzger, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1982), pp. 227-233.

[55] According to the Hebrew Bible Boaz gives Ruth "six barley" usually regarded as six measures of barley. See e. g. the Aramaic translation as well as the Septuagint and the Vulgate. However, in the Midrash the number six was interpreted in a symbolic way. See e.g. the Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 93a-b, or Ruth Rabbah on the same verse; Neusner, *Ruth Rabbah*, pp. 168-169.

[56] F. 18v; Cockerell, *Old Testament Miniatures*, pp. 96-97, No. 122.

[57] Bonn, Rheinisches Landesmuseum, 15/ 326-8; *The Year 1200: A Centennial Exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. K. Hoffmann, New York, 1970, Cat. No. 266.

[58] "...expande... palliolum tuum quo operiris et tene utraque manu..."

[59] For example, Rav Saadia Gaon (late ninth-tenth century) in his Arabic translation interpreted the word *"Mitpahat"* as a scarf. See Y. Capah, *Five Scrolls: Old Commentaries*, Jerusalem, 1962, p. 148 (in Hebrew).

[60] The text of the Padua Bible describes how Boaz measured out the barley on the *pallio*, which is the coverlet with which he covered Ruth that night: "Como Booç la maitina mesura sie mòça de orço sul

pallio, çoe sul coverturo, che lo aveva tegnù adosso ello e Ruth in quella note", Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, p. 116, paragraph XXXV. There is no indication in the Hebrew Bible that Boaz covered Ruth in response to her request, but this is mentioned in the Padua Bible (*ibidem*, 116, paragraph XXIV), though not shown in the miniatures. However, Boaz covering Ruth is depicted in some thirteenth century French copies of the Bible Moralisée. See Lowden, *Making of the Bibles Moralisées*, figs. 69-72. Here the accompanying text altered Ruth's request and it turned into Boaz's act: *"Boaz entered his bed and Ruth came next to him and with his coverlet he covered her"* (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ms. 1179, f. 84; *ibidem*, 142). For the text of the other three versions, see *ibidem*, pp. 141-146.

[61] A. Jellinek, *Commentarien zu Esther, Ruth und den Klageliedern*, Leipzig, 1855, p. 32; Beattie, *Jewish Exegesis*, pp. 33-35, 127.

[62] See above. In the Vulgate the use of the same verb (*expandere*) in both verses also connect the two.

[63] F. 44, lower right panel, Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, pl. 244. The miniature in the Padua does not necessarily represent the receptacle as a coverlet as does the attached text. It may be derived from another tradition, a pictorial one that provided a model for the illuminators. This may be deduced from some details of the miniature itself. Although Ruth wears her typical head kerchief, the veil covering the neck that usually accompanies this type of headdress (compare figs. 4, 5, 11, 14) is lacking. The absent piece of clothing may therefore be the textile that serves as a container for the barley, in accordance with the direct intention of the Hebrew Bible and some of the Jewish interpretations.

[64] Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 5059, f. 365; H. Martin, *Miniature française du XIII au XV siècle*, Paris, 1924, fig. 34.

[65] F. 42v, upper panel; Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, pl. 241.

[66] F. 44; lower left panel, *ibidem*, pl. 244

[67] For the Padua text see above note 60.

[68] M. Peritz, "Zwei alte arabische Uebersetzungen des Buches Ruth", *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums*, 43 (1899), p. 401. The two manuscripts containing this version are Oxford, Bodleian Lib., Ms. Opp. 4°.154 and Berlin, Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Ms. Or. Fol. 1203. See ibid., pp. 49ff. Both texts were ascribed to the tenth century Karaite commentator Yephet ben Ali (Eli). See H. Malter, *Saadia Gaon: His Life and Works*, Philadelphia, 1942, p. 323.

[69] S. Regev, "A fragment from Rabbi Elisha Gallico's Commentary to the Book of Ruth", *Asufot: Annual for Jewish Studies*, 4 (1990), p. 118 (Hebrew).

[70] M. Benayahu, "The Commentaries to the Five Scrolls of Rabbi Elisha Gallico", *Asufot: Annual for Jewish Studies*, 4 (1990), pp. 73-98 (Hebrew).

[71] Ruth and Boaz tying the bundle together are mentioned in the paraphrase: "Como Booç e Ruth ingropa... pallio..." (Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, p. 116, paragraph XXXVI).

[72] "...discoperto a pedibus eius pallio se proiecit"

[73] In the Toledo and Bodley versions of the Bible Moralisée the scene of Ruth being covered is also based on this contemporary western iconography, portraying Ruth at the foot of Boaz's bed (Lowden, *Bibles Moralisées*, figs. 71-72). In the mid thirteenth century Morgan Picture Bible, Ruth is partly covered by Boaz's blanket, but the act of covering is absent and Boaz's feet are exposed as in the original iconographic western version and the Vulgate text (fig. 5). A different iconographic tradition is involved in the design of this scene in the Vienna Bible Moralisée. Here Boaz and Ruth lie on two separate mat-

55

tresses, facing each other (*ibidem*, fig. 69). This composition probably derives from the Byzantine Octateuch, where the sleeping couple is arranged symmetrically. For the Byzantine version, see: K. Weitzmann and M. Bernabò, *Byzantine Octateuchs*, Text vol., p. 298 and Plates vol., figs. 1549-1552. For the influence of the Byzantine version on the fourteenth century French Wenzel Bible, kept today in Vienna, see T. Erenstein, *Das Alte Testament im Bilde*, Vienna, 1923, p. 526, fig. 3.

[74] F. 44, upper panels; Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, pl. 244.

[75] Abraham Ibn Ezra was born in Tudela. He left Spain in 1140 and lived the life of a wandering scholar in Italy, France and England. See *Encyclopedia Judaica*, s. v. Ibn Ezra Abraham.

[76] "על כן טעה המפרש כי הוא כסת יושם תחת הרגלים כמו טעם

מראשותיו שיושם תחת הראש".

[77] This iconographic version influenced the thirteenth century French Morgan Picture Bible (f. 18, upper left panel, Cockerell, *Old Testament Miniatures*, No. 119). Here the artist added a small sack, balanced on Ruth's head. It seems plausible that the tied apron serves for the gleanings and the receptacle on the head for the remains of the food.

[78] F. 43, upper panels; Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, pl. 242.

[79] *Ibidem*, p. 115, paragraph XXV.

[80] "ואפיקת מן תרמילא ויהבת לה ית מזונא דאשארת"

[81] Toledo, Tesoro del Catedral, f. 95v and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Bodley 270b, f. 125v; Lowden, *Bibles Moralisées*, vol. II, pp. 130ff and figs. 64-65. In the Vienna 2554 version the folio is missing and in the Vienna 1179 a different scene is depicted, where Ruth appears to be ordering the reapers to carry the corn into the house of the Lord. See *ibidem*, pp. 129-30 and fig. 63.

[82] "After Ruth had gleaned ears in the field she threshed them and she carried the grain in a sack to her mother in law, three bushels". English translation after Lowden, vol. II, p. 130.

[83] *Ibidem*, pp. 31-36.

[84] See above.

[85] 2:17; Buber, *Ruth Suta*, p. 51.

[86] Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, p. 115, paragraph XXV. See also the text of the following panel describing how Boaz's men loaded the crop on Ruth: "como quelle ovre e quilli famigy de Booç sì mette adosso a Ruth quelle trea mòça de orço" (*ibidem*, p. 115, paragraph XXVI).

[87] *Ruth Rabbah* to verse 2:17; Neusner, *Ruth Rabbah*, p. 131. See also the Aramaic Targum.

[88] One of these sources was probably a pictorial model whose traces may be seen in the scene preceding the filling and loading of the suck. Here, as in the *midrash*, one of Boaz's men helps Ruth while she beats the grain (f. 42v, lower right panel; *ibidem.*, paragraph XXIIII). Following the biblical text, Ruth herself, identified by an inscription, performs the task of beating, not one of the labourers as in the midrash: "Como Ruth bate cum el bataùro le spige de l'orço..." Here again the text follows the Vulgate, adding to the original Hebrew instrument used by Ruth for threshing (*batuare* in the paraphrase and virga in the Vulgate). Yet it is interesting to note that in the miniature Ruth is drawn as a man wearing the short tunic and hat typical of Boaz's reapers in previous scenes (see fig. 5). The representation as an apparently male figure might result from combining two different versions; one based on the biblical text describing Ruth as the one who beats, the other, probably included in the pictorial model, influenced by the midrash and depicting one of Boaz's labourers performing this task. The artist indeed copied the man threshing but added the inscription to adjust the miniature to the paraphrase and the biblical text.

[89] See e.g. Jerome's translation to verse 3:3 regarding Ruth's clothes and cf. Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 113b and Midrash Ruth Rabbah; Neusner, *Ruth Rabbah*, p. 141. For more examples, see above.

[90] D. Copeland Klepper, "Nicholas of Lyra and the Franciscan Interest in Hebrew Scholarship", in *Nicholas of Lyra: The Senses of Scripture*, ed. P. D. W. Krey and L. Smith, Leiden, 2000, pp. 289-311. See there for further bibliography.

[91] Smith, *Medieval Exegesis*, pp. x-xi.

[92] For the literal Postills on Ruth by Nicholas of Lyra, see L. Smith, "The Rewards of Faith: Nicholas of Lyra on Ruth", in Nicholas of Lyra, pp. 47-58, esp. pp. 53ff. For Christian acquaintance with Rashi between the twelfth to the fourteenth century, see H. Hailperin, *Rashi and the Christian Scholars*, Pittsburgh, 1963, pp. 103ff. On the changes regarding the literal exegesis of the Scripture in the same centuries, see F. van Liere, "The Literal Sense of the Books of Samuel and Kings; From Andrew of St. Victor to Nicholas of Lyra", in *Nicholas of Lyra*, pp. 59-81.

[93] Smith, *Medieval Exegesis*, pp. xi, 41, 58, 59, 60, 62.

[94] See Nicholas of Lyra's interpretations of verses 3:2 and 3:8; ibid., p. 61.

[95] *Ibidem*, p. 33.

[96] *Ibidem*, pp. 31-36.

[97] *Ibidem*, p. xiii.

[98] For manuscripts containing a Latin text of Rashi's commentary on Ruth see the list in G. de Martel, *Répertoire des textes Latins relatifs au Livre de Ruth, VII-XVes* (Instrumenta Patristica 18), Dordrecht, 1990, p. 27. For a general discussion concerning the translation into Latin of some of Rashi's commentaries on the Scriptures and parts of the Babylonian Talmud as a result of the Talmud trials in the 1240s, see Copeland Klepper, "Nicholas of Lyra", p. 301, note 47 and G. Dahan, "Un dossier latin de texts de Rashi autour de la conroverse de 1240", *Revue des études juives*, 151 (1992), pp. 321-36.

[99] For the use of Hebrew material among late thirteenth and early fourteenth century Franciscan theologians, see Copeland Klepper, "Nicholas of Lyra", pp. 301-302, 309-310.

[100] Smith, *Medieval Exegesis*, p. x.

[101] In the commentary of the Alba, Arragl also included some Christian exegetical comments instructed by Brother Arias de Encinas, the Superior of the Franciscan monastery in Toledo. For a detailed description of the Alba Bible and its production, see C. O. Nordström, *The Duke of Alba's Castilian Bible: A Study of the Rabbinical Features of the Miniatures*, Uppsala, 1967, pp. 11-24, 233-235.

[102] *Ibidem*. For the Jewish sources of the Alba, see also S. Fellous, *Histoire de la Bible de Möise Arragel: Quand un rabbin interprète la Bible pour les chrétiens*, Paris, 2001.

[103] See above. For the inclusion of a few elements derived from Christian commentaries on Ruth see the passage describing Boaz eating and drinking before turning to his resting place (3:7), where the Padua text describes the custom of preparing a feast on the threshing floor at harvesting as well as sheep-shearing time ("Como Booç cena cum gran deleto, segundo la uxança del convivio che se faxeva al tempo dela meson e del toxare dela piegore..."; Folena and Mellini, *Bibbia Istoriata Padovana*, p. 116, paragraph XXXII). This custom is mentioned by Peter Comestor (d. ca 1179) in his Scholastic History, followed by Hugh of St. Cher in his literal *Postills* on Ruth. For an English translation of both, see Smith, *Medieval Exegesis*, pp. 38 and 44 respectively. The first was probably the source of the Padua.

[104] This tradition could have reached Germany at an earlier date through the Jewish Italian immigrants who formed the main core of the first Ashkenazi communities. See I. M. Ta-Shma, "Toward a History

of the Cultural Links between Byzantine and Ashkenazic Jewry", in *Me'ah Shearim: Studies in Medieval Jewish Spiritual Life in Memory of Isadore Twersky*, ed. E. Fleischer, G. Blidstein, C. Horowitz and B. Septimus, Jerusalem, 2001, pp. 61-70.

[105] Specific Jewish iconographical links can be discerned between the Genesis and Exodus cycles of the Padua Bible and the biblical cycles preceding the text of the fourteenth century Hebrew illuminated Haggadot from Spain. For some associations of the Haggadot with the Padua Bible, not necessarily in a midrashic context, see K. Kogman-Appel, "Coping with Christian Pictorial Sources: What Did Jewish Miniaturists *Not* Paint?", *Speculum*, 75/4 (2000), p. 850; *idem*, "The

Picture Cycles of the Rylands Haggadah and the So-called Brother Haggadah and their Relation to the Western Tradition of Old Testament Illustration", *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 79 (1997), pp. 15-16.

[106] Shalev-Eyni, "Illuminierte hebräische Handschriften", pp. 29-38.

[107] See e.g. the Jewish aspect of the scenes dedicated to the story of Phineas in the Padua Bible as discussed by A. Contessa, "Phineas lozelante nell'arte cristiana", in *Raccontare Dio: il Midrash e la tradizione de Israele*, ed. R. Zini, Reggio Emilia, 2002, pp. 115-159. For an English version see the forthcoming *idem*, "Phineas: A Problematic Figure in Christian Art", *Jewish Art*, 25 (in print).