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AN UNKNOWN LIST OF HEBREW BOOKS*

“כבדתיך בהרבות לך ספרים. ולא הצרכתיך
לשאול ספר מאדם כאשר אתה רואה רוב
התלמידים ישוטטו לבקש ספר ולא ימצאו.
ואתה שבח לאל! משאיל ואינך שואל.
וברוב הספרים יש לך שניים שלישים.”

“I have honored thee by providing an extensive library for the use, and have thus relieved thee of the necessity to borrow books. Most students must bustle about to seek books, often without finding them. But thou, thanks to God, lendest and borrowest not. Of many books, indeed, thou ownest two or three copies” [1].

The world of medieval books has always attracted the attention of a large number of historians, art specialists, palaeographers, bibliographers, etc. Without its study, it would be impossible to have an adequate picture of the development of culture and science, or the picture of everyday life. Certain circumstances, however, complicate the scholar's path into the world of medieval Hebrew books; these are the dispersion of the Jewish population, its partial migration (both forced and voluntary), and variations in the legal status, economic position, and cultural level of Jewish communities in various regions within various geo-political structures. All these factors resulted in varying economic opportunities and spiritual needs among the literate part of the Jewish population. The tradition of Hebrew books [2] is multi-lingual and exclusively original, yet it remains unquestionably dependent on regional literary traditions both codicologically and palaeographical [3].

A distinctive feature of Hebrew books is perhaps the absence of “institutions” for the production of manuscripts such as the scriptoria which so significantly influenced the formation of a book market in Christian Europe [4]. Taking the above into account, one can easily grasp why our knowledge of medieval [5] Hebrew books seems, at least in my personal view, akin to a partially restored mosaic with broad, empty expanses between “islands” of information.

Lists of books are one of the most reliable bibliographic sources for filling in such kind of “informational lacunae”. By analysing these, we can throw a certain amount of light on the contents of private libraries and their “statistical average size”, the selection of books in circulation and their

prices, and the bibliographic and aesthetic criteria which guided contemporary readers in their perceptions. At a relatively late period, these lists can give us a sense of the ratio of print to manuscript books in particular libraries and society.

Lists of books are also a most important source for amplifying our knowledge of specific books. In some cases, they contain information about utterly unknown works and publications [6]. A considerable number of such lists from various periods and regions has received scholarly attention and been published. One need only mention the works of S. Poznansky, E. N. Adler, S. Assaf, I. Sonne, E. E. Urbach, E. Worman, N. Allony, R. Bonfil, Sh. Baruhzon [7], etc. and note that these publications far from exhaust the field [8].

The manuscript list under consideration in this article is a significant addition to the corpus of currently known documents. It is, to my knowledge, the **first** Hebrew book list from Spain during the period of the Expulsion to be brought into scholarly circulation. It is also the **first** dated Hebrew book list from the period of incunabula, which enumerates both manuscripts and early printed books [9]. I discovered the list during my work on the Catalogue of Hebrew incunabula from the collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (henceforth, the JTS) in New York. The list is on the first blank folio before the text in the Spanish edition of the second volume (*Tur yore de'ah*) of Jacob ben Asher's (ca. 1270—ca. 1340) *'Arba'ah turim* [10]. The list is written in hurried Spanish cursive, in brown ink. The ink has faded badly, but the list can be discerned with the aid of ultra-violet rays.

* The present article is based on the paper, delivered at Jerusalem to the Twelfth World Congress of Jewish Studies, 31 July 1997.

Full text of the list in Hebrew

קניתי אני סולימאן הכהן מר' [=מרבי] משה פיורו' אלו הספרים הנזכרים להלן / ארבעה
 טורים בד' [לת] כובסים אורח חיים ויורה דעה וחושן משפט / מדפוס ואבן העזר מכתב יד
 וז' ספרים מיד הרמב"ם בד' [לת] כובסים / שהם מדע ואהבה מדפוס ככובס אחד זמנים
 מכתב יד בכובס א' [חד] / נשים מכתב יד בכובס א' [חד] הפלאה ושופטים ונזיקים מכתב יד
 / בכובס אחד שרשים מר' [בי/בנו] דוד קמחי מכתב יד בכובס א' [חד] / חובת הלבבות
 ועניינים אחרים מכתב יד בכובס א' [חד] חומש / תרגום ורש"י מדפוס בכובס א' [חד] קניתי
 אלו ספרים ט"ו ימים / לרח' [ראש חדש] אדר שני ברך' יחד וג"כ [גם כן] קניתי ממנו
 פי' [רוש] הרמב"ן / מהתורה מכתב יד בשני כובסי [ם] קניתי באלמאסאן פי [רוש] /
 הרמב"ן מהתורה מדפוס קניתי בפאראה תורת הבית מכתב / יד קצר קניתי אורח חיים אחד
 מדפוס קניתי שני / ספרים מעניינים באלמאסאן יש לי ארבע פעמים / כל כתובים בד' [לת]
 כובסים כלם מקלף יש לי ג"כ [גם כן] חומש / מקלף יש לי ג"כ [גם כן] נביאים אחרונים
 בלי קשירה מקלף / יש לי ג"כ [גם כן] סדור מחדש ותלים אחרים יש לי ג"כ [גם כן]
 הפטרות / מקלף יש לי ג"כ [גם כן] תרגום מקלף וספרים אחרים ישנים / קניתי גמרא
 מגיטין מדפוס באלמאסאן ממני / סולימאן הכהן יצו [ישמרני צורי וגואלי] /

Translation

I, Suleyman ha-Kohen, bought from Rabbi Moses Fiore [12] these books, enumerated below. 'Arba'ah turim [13] in four volumes [14], 'Orah hayyim, Yoreh de'ah and Hoshen ha-mishpat in print, and 'Even ha-'ezer in manuscript. And seven books from *Yad [ha-hazakahi]* RaMBaM [15] in four volumes and these are [the books] *Mada'* and *Ahavah* printed in one volume, [the book] *Zemanim* in manuscript in one volume, [the book] *Nashim* in manuscript in one volume, [the books] *Hafla'ah* and *Shofetim*, and *Nezikim*, in manuscript in one volume, [the book] *Shorashim* by Rabbi David Qimhi [16] in manuscript in one volume, *Hovat ha-levavot* [17] and [works] on other subjects in manuscript in one volume. The Pentateuch with Aramaic translation (*Targum*) and [the commentary of] RaSHI [18] printed in one volume. I bought these books on the fifteenth day of the beginning of the month of *adar* the second of the year [5] 252 (i. e. 17 May, 1492) [19]. I also bought from him the commentary of RaMBaM [20] on the Pentateuch. I bought in Faro a manuscript of the short [version of the work] *Torat ha-bayit* [21]. I bought one print edition [of the work] 'Orah hayyim. I bought two interesting books in Almazan. All of the Hagiographa I have in quadruplicate, in four volumes. All [of them] are on parchment. I also have a parchment Pentateuch. I also have the Latter Prophets, without binding, on parchment. I also have a new Prayer Book and other Psalms [22]. I also have the *Haftarot* [23] on parchment. I also have the *Targum* on parchment and other old books. I bought the print tractate *Gittin* [24] in Almazan. I am Suleyman ha-Kohen, may my Bulwark and Redeemer preserve me.

* * *

The book list reveals a specific historical context, in addition to the purely bibliographic information it contains, which I will discuss in detail shortly.

First, two names are mentioned in the list: **Suleyman ha-Kohen**, the owner of the books, and **Moses Fiore**, from whom many of the volumes enumerated were acquired. I was unlucky to identify either of them. Neither the informational "thesaurus" in the Hebrew Palaeography Project — "Sfar data" — which contains the names of owners of the manuscripts listed here, nor the search systems at the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts [25], nor the indices of monograph studies on the history of Spanish Jewry during the period were of use. This makes us conclude that both Suleyman ha-Kohen and Moses Fiore were not scholars, Rabbinic authorities, heads of communities, or even wealthy collectors, but mere commoners.

Second, the list gives two places where books were obtained: the Spanish city of Almazan and the Portuguese city of Faro [26]. Almazan is mentioned three times. The RaMBaM's commentary on the Pentateuch, "two interesting books", and the treatise *Gittin* were purchased there. As for the manuscript with the short edition of the *Torat ha-bayit*, it was acquired in Faro.

Finally, the list is dated by the fifteenth day of *adar* the second [5] 252 [27], which falls on Wednesday, 14 March 1492. It should be noted that the edict which expelled the

Jews from Spain (צו הגירוש) dates from 31 March 1492. Thus, the list was drawn up 17 days before that tragic event. Interestingly, the tone of the list in no way indicates that its author was at all aware of the catastrophe about to afflict him and his compatriots.

The text of the list does not provide a clear answer to the question of its purpose. Do we have here a brief list of books from a private library or a list of books for sale? I hold that the list enumerates books, which belonged personally to the owner. This assumption is supported by the facts that (i) the list was written not on a separate sheet, which would be easy to show to potential customers, but inside a book, which makes sense only for personal use; (ii) the list contains no prices, which are common in trade lists; (iii) the list contains details utterly unnecessary in a trade list: the name of the person from whom the books and manuscripts were acquired and the place where they were obtained; (iv) the list is incomplete. The imprecise mention of "two interesting books" and "other old books" are comprehensible only in the context of a personal list and are unlikely in a trade catalogue.

It is true that certain books are present in two or more copies (the "Hagiographa" are even present in quadruplicate), and the descriptions contain physical details (material, number of volumes, method of production). There is,

however, nothing surprising about this: only the Biblical books and a very popular Halakhah codex (Jacob ben Asher's *'Orah hayyim*) are listed in multiple copies, and a description of the physical details is typical of lists of the period [28].

The list includes 28 books — 26 are mentioned titles and two books are given without their names. All of the books are in Hebrew and represent quite a broad range of publications:

1. *'Arba'ah turim* of Jacob ben Asher. The first volume, *'Orah hayyim*, is mentioned twice;
2. *Mishneh torah* (or *Yad ha-hazakah*) of RaMBaM — the books *Mada'* and *'Ahavah* separately, the book *Zemanim* separately, the book *Nashim* separately, the books *Hafla'ah* and *Nezikim* separately;
3. *Shorashim* of David Qimhi;
4. *Hovot ha-levavot* of Bahya Ibn Paquda;
5. Commentary on the Pentateuch of RaMBaN, mentioned twice;
6. *Torat ha-bayit ha-kazar* of Solomon Ibn Adret;
7. Tractate *Gittin*;
8. Prayer book (*Siddur*);
9. Biblical books: (i) the Pentateuch with Aramaic translation and commentary by RaSHI; (ii) the Hagiographa (in quadruplicate!); (iii) the Pentateuch; (iv) Latter Prophets; (v) Psalms; (vi) *Haftarot*.

As was noted above, this is not a complete list. Naturally, the phrase “I also have other old books” is open to broad interpretation. It is important, the library consists of both manuscripts and early printed books. Unfortunately, the books enumerated in the list cannot add anything to the study of the manuscript tradition. All of the works are widely known, there is no bibliographic information on scribes or the time and place of their production, and the ratio of manuscripts contained in the list to their overall number in the library is unknown.

The list of early printed books provides much more information [29]. The list notes eight printed books (מִדְרָשׁוֹת). They are listed without bibliographical data, but we can, nonetheless, attempt to put them into the context of our knowledge of Hebrew incunabula. The terminus *ante quem* is given by the date of the list: May 1492. Naturally, one cannot simply conclude that the list contains only Sephardic incunabula (that is, printed in Spain or Portugal). Connections in book-selling between Spain, Portugal and Italy — the homeland and main “producer” of Hebrew early printed books — certainly existed. Evidence of this is found in Sephardic editions which have been preserved in Italian collections, mentions of Sephardic books in Italian lists [30], the presence of a steady population of Sephardic readers in Italy, and, finally, basic historical logic. Nevertheless, taking into account that Jewish book printing was at most 15 to 20 years old at the time the list was drawn up, that books were published in small numbers [31], and that the tendency was for books to circulate from the Pyrenean peninsula to Italy rather than the other way around, it is more probable that the books in the list are local editions. Thus, we find eight printed books:

1—2. *'Orah hayyim*, which is noted in two separate instances. One can conclude from this that two editions are most likely meant. Following this logic, they can conjecturally be identified as the two known Sephardic editions of

this part of Jacob ben Asher's *'Arba'ah turim* — the edition of Eliezer ben Abraham Alantansi (Hijar, between 12 August — 9 September 1485; Census 65) and the edition *sine anno, sine typographo, sine loco* (Spain or Portugal, ca. 1490) [32], which is dated by most bibliographers ca. 1490 (cf. Census 66; Goldstein 101) [33].

3. *Yoreh de'ah* (the second volume of the above-mentioned work by Jacob ben Asher) — the book which contains on its first folio the list under consideration here. That is, the edition of Eliezer ben Abraham Alantansi (Hijar, 1486—87; Census 72) [34].

4. *Hoshen ha-mishpat* (*idem*, third volume). The only known separate edition of the fifteenth century is that of *Guadalajara*, Solomon ben Moses ben Alqabiz Halevi, between 24—30 December 1480 (Census 74).

5. (Books) *Mada'* and *'Ahavah* — the first two parts of a work by Moses ben Maimon, the *Mishneh torah* (= *Yad ha-hazakah*). The mention of this work demands special attention. Suleiman ha-Kohen informs about “seven books from the *Yad* [*ha-hazakah*] in four volumes”. He writes that “these are [the books] *Mada'* and *'Ahavah* printed in one volume”. Three Sephardic editions [35] of these books of the *Mishneh torah* are known, all *sine anno, sine loco* — (i) the edition of Moses ben Shealtiel, which includes the three books *Mada'*, *'Ahavah* and *Zemanim* [36]; (ii) an edition of the second book (*'Ahavah*) by an “unnamed press” (cf. Census 90). This edition has survived only in fragments, some of which double each other, but one can nonetheless assert with a great deal of probability that it is an independent edition, as identical folios from other parts of the work have not been discovered [37]; (iii) an edition which corresponds most closely to the description in the list, that is, a joint edition of the first two books (*Mada'* and *'Ahavah*).

If we offer the most natural explanation — namely, that Suleyman ha-Kohen acquired from Moses Fiore not a defective copy of Moses ben Shealtiel's edition (without the third book), and not a convolute made up of parts of the aforementioned editions (i—ii) bound together, but a “normal” single-volume edition — then that is the edition meant in the list. This edition, anonymous, like the others mentioned here, is known in two copies — a defective one in the collection of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem [38] and a fragment of 24 folios in the collection of the JTS [39]. The identification of this edition, however, as a Sephardic incunabula rather than as a print specimen of the early sixteenth century produced by Pyrenean natives in Constantinople, Saloniki or Fez (cities which possessed Jewish presses founded by exiles), has evoked and continues to evoke doubts among many scholars. For example, D. Wahchtein, the first to note this edition, described it as “Unbekannter Druck. Konstantinopoler Inkunabel?” [40]. A. Yaari also attributed it to Constantinople editions and dated it between 1505 and 1514 [41]. As for A. K. Offenbergh, he did not include it in the Census, thus refusing it to be dated to the fifteenth century. Meanwhile, the edition is reflected in “Thesaurus” of A. Freimann and M. Marx [42], and is identified as an incunabula both by F. Goff and P. Tishby [43].

The doubts of the specialists are understandable — the difference between incunabula and early paleotypes of the 1500—1510s is so insignificant that the precise identification of single editions (that is, those which display typefaces not found in other editions) is extremely difficult, and sometimes even impossible without supplementary biblio-

graphic information. In our specific case, the edition is printed in two Sephardic-style type-faces which resemble those used in the late fifteenth — early sixteenth centuries, but are not identical to any single known type-face. It is on Italian paper, which was widely used in various regions throughout the entire period [44]. All this makes mentioning a similar edition in a list extraordinarily important, as it supports the view that the anonymous edition of the first two books (*Mada'* and *'Ahavah*) of the Maimonidean Code is in fact a Sephardic incunabula, and consequently fixes the *terminus ante quem* of this edition as May, 1492.

6. The Pentateuch with Aramaic translation (*Targum*) and (the commentary of) RaSHI. It may be assumed that the edition meant is the one mentioned above from the Hijar press of Eliezer ben Abraham Alantansi [45], although one cannot rule out the Portuguese edition (Lisbon) of 1491 [46], or the Italian edition (Bologna) of 1482 [47].

7. The RaMBaN's commentary on the Pentateuch. It was published three times before 1492 — twice in Italy (Rome and Naples) [48] and once in Portugal (Lisbon) [49]. The list most likely indicates the Lisbon edition.

8. The tractate *Gittin*. We find at the very end of the list: "I bought the print tractate *Gittin* in Almazan." For our purposes, this is Suleyman ha-Kohen's most interesting and important acquisition. Two incunabula editions of this tractate are known — one Italian, one Portuguese. However, in my view, neither of them can be identified as the edition purchased in Almazan.

The Italian tractate was printed in February 1488, apparently by Joshua Solomon ben Israel Nathan Soncino in Soncino [50]. All of the "Italian" tractates were published in the presses owned by the Soncinos in accordance with the Ashkenazic tradition of Talmud study — that is, with RaSHI's commentary, additions (*Tosafot*), and a thematically related selection of Halakhah decrees found in the text of the "additions" (*Pisqe tosafot*). Neither the *Tosafot* nor the *Pisqe tosafot* were part of the Sephardic tradition of Talmud study and were not printed in Sephardic editions [51]. The actual text of the tractate and the arrangement of its component parts differed in the Sephardic and Ashkenazic traditions. Thus, the appearance of such an edition in Spain is possible only as a coincidence, and its acquisition by a Sephardic Jew for practical needs is highly unlikely.

As for the Portuguese tractate, it was printed in Faro [52] (which is where the manuscript of *Torat ha-bayit* was acquired) with RaSHI's commentary. The edition has a dated colophon, but specialist opinion is nonetheless divided on the date it indicates. The month is indicated in accordance with the division of weeks in the Pentateuch, and the year with the *gematria* (numerical equivalents) of the letters in the word *ב'ר'י'נה* ("with rejoicing") [53].

Three readings of this date exist: (i) "according to the lesser count" (*לפרט קטן/לפ"ק*), that is, with the thousands omitted (in this case, five thousand) and the simple sum of the letters' numerical values: [5] 257. This is the most palaeographically reasonable reading, as the evenly spaced letters (dots in our case) are considered together and the thousands (five thousand) are omitted. As M. Beit-Arié rightly remarks, this system was widely employed both in manuscripts and early printed editions [54]. This reading of the date might have remained the only one had not historical circumstances intervened — the decree on the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal was issued on 4 December 1496,

and the reading of the section *wayiehi* (and, consequently, the completion of work on the tractate) falls on 18 December 1496 (12 *tevet* 5257). That this dating would have work on the edition continue after the decree has embarrassed scholars and led them to propose other readings: (ii) "according to the greater count" (*פרט גדול/לפ"ג*), that is, taking into account the five thousand indicated by the last letter in the word *ה*, which produces a date of 5252 from the creation of the world, which converts to 18 December (16 *tevet*) 1491; (iii) "according to the lesser count" (without the five thousand), but also without the pronoun "in, with" (*ב*), which equals 2, and produces [5] 255, which converts to 14 December (16 *tevet*) 1494. Several examples: S. Seeligman (who first discovered fragments of the tractate in 1908) — 1494 (eventuell 1496) [55]; E. N. Adler — December 1494 or 1496 in 1923, and 1496 in 1935 [56]; J. Bloch — 1492 [57]; N. N. Rabinovicz — 1496 (who, it is true, conceded that there exists a view based on a reading "according to the greater count") [58]; B. Friedberg — 1491 [59]; H. Z. Dmitrovsky — 1491 or 1496 [60]; F. Goff — 1494 or 1496 [61]; P. Tishbi — 11—16 Dec. 1491 or 11—16 Dec. 1496 [62]; A. K. Offenberg — 17 Dec. 1496? [63], etc.

In my view, only the first reading is correct — [5] 257 (1496); readings (ii) and (iii) are speculative. The original of the folio with the colophon is stored in the JTS collection, and I had the opportunity to study it carefully, concluding on the basis of my own observation that all the letters in the *gematria* are uniformly set down, which logically suggests the simple sum of their numerical values [64]. In this system, the numerical value of the pronoun *ba-* (*ב*) is calculated together with the values of the remaining letters [65]. It should be taken into account that the letter *ה*, called upon to "symbolise" five thousand (reading 2) is the final letter in a word and, consequently, cannot be arbitrarily interpreted as the first letter of the *gematria* (*ה'ר'נ'ה*) without additional indications. A clear example of an indication of the "greater count" with the use of the same word *'רנה* ("rejoicing") is found in the colophon of another Portuguese incunabula: *שנת רנה בשורב ההא אלפים* (in the year 255, of which "5" is thousands) [66].

One should note that the historical context in which the tractate was eventually printed does not in and of itself present an indisputable argument for resolving the question of the date indicated in the colophon. H. Z. Dmitrovsky writes on this issue that "Seeligman's assertion (see note 55) that after the Edict of Expulsion the Jews were unable to print books is unfounded, for between the Edict of 4 December 1496 and 17 December of the same year (if we accept the "lesser count") less than two weeks passed. The tractate must have been almost ready when the Edict of Expulsion was issued. Taking into account that the Edict's enforcement was put off for almost an entire year (until November 1497), it is hardly surprising that the printers, and Don Samuel Porteiro, who apparently financed the edition, tried to save as much of their investment as possible by bringing the book out on the market" [67]. We can add to this that difficulties developed gradually for the Portuguese exiles and it is possible that at the first stage of their "trail of tears" they had not been informed of the ban on exporting books. Furthermore, we know now that the Spanish exiles succeeded in getting some of their books out [68]. Thus, if we allow that the tractate *Gittin* was printed in Faro in 1496, then it is, naturally, not the tractate mentioned in the list.

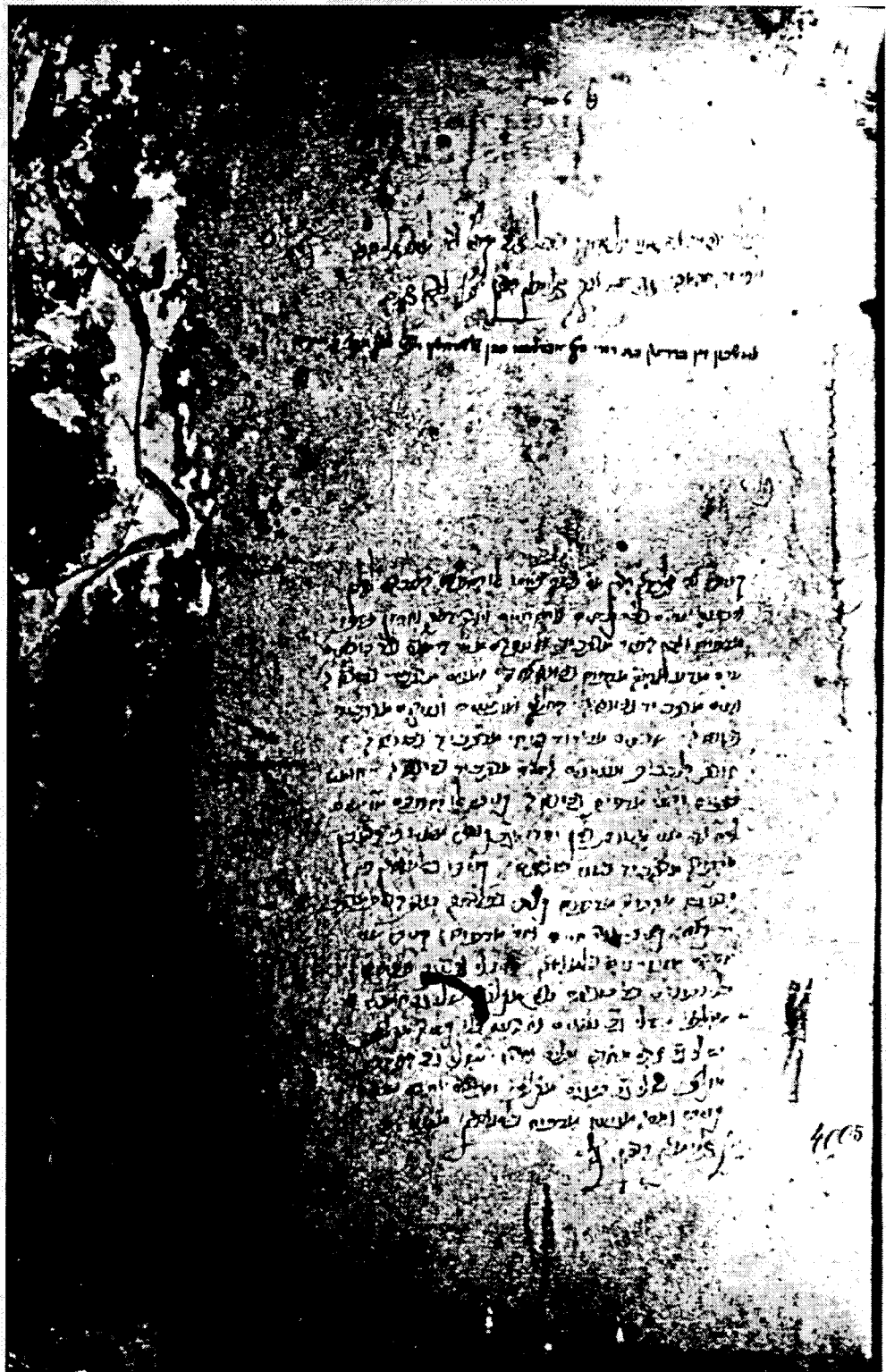


Fig. 1

However, I think that the list itself presents a more convincing argument in favour of the view that Suleyman ha-Kohen had in mind a different edition, one **which has not come down to us**. The bibliographic information which he notes in the list is always accurate and concrete: he does not limit himself to vague references such as "two books from *Turim*", "seven books from the *Yad ha-hazakah*", Commentary on the Pentateuch or the Bible. Instead, he always indicates exactly which books from this or that work he means, whose commentary, etc. And even in references to the Bible, which are, as a rule, indefinite, he indicates precisely the parts (Prophets, Hagiographa) and even gives more detail — Latter Prophets — and contents of the edition: "The Pentateuch with Aramaic translation and RaSHI's commentary."

With such a high level of bibliographical description, it is impossible to imagine that Suleyman ha-Kohen would fail to indicate the component parts of the only tractate of the Talmud on his list. Yet both of the above-mentioned editions were printed, as was "our" Pentateuch, with RaSHI's commentary, and the Italian edition even sports the *Tosafot* and *Pisqe tosafot* in addition! The representative case of the description of this treatise's publication could serve a record in the above-mentioned "Italian" list: **ג"טין עשוי בדפוס... עם פירוש (רש"י) ותוספות בנע"ט [=בנייר עם טבלאות]** ("Gittin printed with commentary [RaSHI], and *Tosafot* on paper, with binding) [69]. Thus, this lapidary mention ("the printed tractate *Gittin*"), the traditional distinguishing feature of Italian and Pyrenean Talmudic editions, and the date of the only Sephardic edition known to us (1496), all bear witness to the fact that the list contains an unknown incunabula — the tractate *Gittin* without RaSHI's commentary.

One such Sephardic edition of the Talmudic tractate is known to incunabula specialists — the tractate *Hullin* [70], published by the "unnamed press" [71] mentioned above. Now we can speculate that it was not the only one. And

perhaps the lucky coincidence which gave us the mention of an unknown incunabula in the 1492 book list will one day help us to find the edition itself.

Thus, to sum up the analysis of the list, I note that we find in it 28 manuscripts and early printed books which made up part, perhaps a large part, of a private Jewish library at the end of the fifteenth century. Of the 28 books enumerated by the owner, almost one third (eight books) are incunabula. Taking into account that the library contained doubles and manuscripts on parchment, the presence in the library of early printed books testifies less to the owner's desire to acquire cheaper books, but rather to the speed with which "the art of artificial writing" spread throughout the book market. Of the eight incunabula mentioned in the list, some can be identified quite definitely with actually known editions (No. 3, for example) and various identifications are possible with some of the others (Nos. 1, 6, 7, for example). The reference to an edition of *Mada'* and *'Ahavah* (No. 5), in my view, clarifies the dating and localization of the Sephardic edition without bibliographical information. The mention of a copy of the tractate *Gittin* without RaSHI's commentary (No. 8) provides, apparently, the only evidence of a hitherto unknown edition. The list itself was recorded mere days before the infamous Edict which expelled the Jews and testifies both textually and by the very fact of such a list's existence, to complete calm within the Jewish community (money is invested into the acquisition of books, libraries form, catalogues are drawn up, etc.).

Thus, the list which this article introduces to scholars broadens our conception of the state of the Jewish community on the eve of the tragic events they were soon to experience, and introduces certain corrections into our knowledge of Hebrew book culture, clarifying our factual knowledge of the development of Hebrew book-printing in the Pyrenean peninsula.

Notes

1. *Hebrew Ethical Wills*, selected and edited with an Introduction by Israel Abrahams, two volumes in one facsimile of the original 1926 edition (Philadelphia, 1976), p. 57.

2. In bibliographic research, Hebrew books are understood to be books in any language, copied by hand or printed, in Hebrew letters.

3. For details on the influence of local codicological and palaeographic traditions of the Hebrew writing, ways of correspondence and producing manuscripts, see M. Beit-Arié, *Hebrew Manuscripts of East and West. Towards a Comparative Codicology* (London, 1993). — The Pannizi Lectures, 1992.

4. No doubt, the Jews possessed a tradition of professional manuscript copying, which presumed the joint preparation of a single manuscript by several craftsmen and the division of labour. For example, as a rule, at least two copyists took part in copying the Biblical Codices - a copyist of the Biblical text itself (סופר) and a punctuator (נקדן), who also used to copy the *massorah* (that is, the traditional reference apparatus for the text, מסרן). Still, one cannot speak of a wide-spread practice with workshops for the production of Hebrew manuscripts. On a purely theoretical level, however, one cannot exclude this possibility.

5. By "medieval", I mean, within the present article, the period from the ninth to the sixteenth century, that is, the period from the first dated Hebrew manuscripts known today until the time when the process of book-printing had stabilised.

6. See, for example, M. Zulay, "A Book-list in which an unknown work of Saadyah Gaon is mentioned", *Kiryat Sefer*, XXV (1948—1949), pp. 203—5;

ז. ברוכנון. "בעקבות הספרים האבודים של המאות הט"ו-ט"ז". עלי ספר. ט"ז, (1990) עמוד 37—58.

7. S. Poznansky, "Ein altes Judisch-Arabisches Buecherverzeichnis", *Jewish Quarterly Review*, XV (1902), pp. 76—8; E. N. Adler, "An ancient bookseller's Catalogue", in his book *About Hebrew Manuscripts* (London, 1905), pp. 37—48; repr. (New York, 1970); ש. אסף. "רשימות ספרים עתיקות", קרית ספר. יח (1941) עמוד 272—281;

Isaiah Sonne, "Book lists through three centuries", *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*, I/2 (1953), pp. 55—76; II/1 (1955), pp. 3—19; אפרים א. אורבך. "רשימת ספרים עבריים מראשית ימי הדפוס", קרית ספר. טו. (1938) עמוד 239—237;

E. J. Worman, "Two book-lists from the Cambridge Genizah fragments", *Jewish Quarterly Review*, XX (1907—1908), pp. 460—3;

נ. אלוני. "שתי רשימות ספרים לרושם אחד במאה ה-XIII", עלי ספר 1 (1975). עמוד 42—48; כנ"ל. "שתי רשימות ספרים מאיטליה", ספר אסף. ירושלים תשי"ג. עמוד 33—39; ר. בונפיל. "רשימת ספרים עבריים מאימולה, סוף המאה הי"ד",

in *Scritti in memoria di Umberto nahon* (Gerusalemme, 1978), pp. 47—62. One should also note a most interesting work by M. Schmelzer "A Fifteenth-Century Hebrew Book List," which will soon be published (personal connection), and many others.

8. A more detailed bibliography of such publications is listed in most of the above-mentioned articles.

9. To the period of incunabula (i. e. books printed before 1 January, 1501) may be attributed the not dated Italian list published by Prof. E. Urbach, which contains the names of both manuscripts and early printed books. In Prof. Urbach's view, the list could be conventionally dated to "ante 1503". For details, see

אפרים א. אורבך. "רשימת ספרים עבריים מראשית ימי הדפוס", קרית ספר. (1938). עמוד 237—239.

10. Here and elsewhere the typographic descriptions of editions (format, number of folios, etc.) are given in accordance with the descriptions prepared for the "Catalogue of Hebrew Incunabula from the Collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America". 'Arba'ah turim, a Halakhah work which consists of four parts: 'Orah hayyim; Yoreh de'ah; 'Even ha-'ezer; Hoshen ha-mishpat.

11. This folio also contains a note of ownership by the author of the list. The note is, naturally, in the same hand and written with the same ink. It is a fairly typical example of such inscriptions:

לעולם יכתוב אדם שמו על ספרו בשביל שלא יקדים אחר לומר שלי הוא ולפי זה חתמתי שמי פה אני סולימאן הכהן יצו.

(May a man always write his name in his book, that a stranger may not forestall him, saying, it is mine. For this reason I have signed my name here. I am Suleiman ha-Kohen, may my Bulwark and Redeemer preserve me).

12. The text of the list is unvowelled, which permits variant readings, and consequently translations, of the name and certain words. See also note 22. The transliteration of the family name here follows the form PYWRW.

13. On this work, see note 10 above.

14. The etymology of the word used in the original, *kwbs* (pl. *kwbsym*), is unclear, although in the context of the list it must indicate a single book. It is possible that we have here a phonetic rendering of קבצים/קובץ (*kovez/kevazim*), collection, sometimes used to indicate a single book. This explanation, however, evokes doubts as well, given the grammatical correctness of the remaining text and the conventionally accepted replacement of final "ts" with "s" (ץ = ס), which render unlikely the replacement of the root's first consonantal *kof* with *kaf* (ק = כ).

15. *Yad ha-hazakah* or *Mishneh torah*, a Halakhah work by Moses ben Maimon (RaMBaM) or Maimonides (1135—1204). It consists of 14 books, seven of which are enumerated in the List: *Sefer Mada'*; *Sefer 'Ahavah*; *Sefer Zemanim*; *Sefer Nashim*; *Sefer Hafla'ah*; *Sefer Shofetim*; *Sefer Nezikim*.

16. *Shorashim*, a dictionary of Biblical language by David Qimhi (1160?—1235?). The dictionary originally formed the second part of the book *Mihlol*, however, in the middle ages it became known as an independent work and was copied and later published as such.

17. *Hovat/Hovot ha-levavot*, a didactic work by Bahya Ibn Paquda (eleventh century).

18. Targum — a translation into Aramaic of the Pentateuch. According to Talmudic tradition, the translation was made by the proselyte Onkelos in the second century A.D. RaSHI — an abbreviation for Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (1040—1105). His commentary on the Pentateuch was the most widely used commentary in the middle ages.

19. In the original the date is given by the sum of the numerical equivalents of the letters in the first word of the Biblical verse (Job 38, 7) ברין' (= 252). For methods of indicating dates in medieval Hebrew books, see, in brief, note 53 below.

20. RaMBaN — abbreviation for Rabbi Moses ben Nachman Gerondi or Nahmanides (1194—1270).

21. *Torat ha-bayit* by Solomon Ibn Adret (ca. 1235—ca. 1310), known in two versions — shorter, indicated in the List, and expanded.

22. This phrase — סדור מחדש ותלים אחרים — can be interpreted in various ways: תלים אחרים ("other Psalms"), possibly an error by the copyist. In place of "other" (אחרים), the reading "certain" (אחרים) is more logical in the context of the List.

23. *Haftarot* — excerpts from the Book of Prophets, read in synagogues after the Pentateuch.

24. *Gittin* — a tractate of the Talmud which examines rules of writing and delivering a divorce letter (*get*). In the original, the word *gemara'* is used in the meaning of tractate. Strictly speaking, *gemara'* means that part of the Talmud containing commentary on its statutory passages (*mishnayot*), however, medieval Judaic tradition used the term in the sense of the full text of a tractate. One should also note that the term "Talmud" without further specification meant in fact the Babylonian Talmud.

25. I take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to my colleagues in Jerusalem, Tamar Leiter and Benjamin Richler, who aided me in this search.

26. Incidentally, the city of Faro was one of the centres of Hebrew book printing in Portugal.

27. The holiday *shoshan purim* (שושן פורים) falls on this day, but this is not mentioned in the list.

28. The great popularity of the codex is indicated both by the large number of surviving manuscripts and by the fact that it was the most frequently published Halakhah work of the incunabula period. We know of 3 full editions of the codex and 11 editions of separate parts, of which 6 are editions of the 'Orah hayyim (cf. *Hebrew Incunabula in Public Collections. A First International Census*, completed by A. K. Offenbergh in collaboration with C. Moed-Van Walraven (Nieuwkoop, 1990), Nos. 61—74; henceforth — Census). Attention to the outward appearance of the book was typical of bibliographic descriptions of that time. Cf., for example, the 1445 Italian list published in the afore-mentioned (note 7) article by I. Sonne, and others.

29. There is no doubt that the phrase "and other old books" could not refer to incunabula, that is, books "copied" with new technology.

30. Cf. the Italian list published by I. Sonne, see his article in *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore*, II/1, and others.

31. Without involving ourselves in a detailed discussion on the emergence of Hebrew book printing, one can note that the first Hebrew books apparently appeared in Rome around 1469—70. For details, see M. Marx, "On the date of appearance of the first printed Hebrew books", *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume*. I. Engl. section (New York, 1950), pp. 481—501. Hebrew book printing appears in Spain around 1475—76, and in Portugal in 1486—87. Editions of early printed books most likely ranged from 240—400 copies. Cf. Jacob ben Asher, *Tur 'Orah hayyim* (Mantua, 1476) (Census 64) — 250 ex.; *Psalms* with Comm. David Qimhi (*sine loco*, 1477; Census 34) — 300 ex.; Jacob ben Asher, *Tur Hoshen ha-mishpat* (Guadalajara, 1480) (Census 74) — 380 ex.; Commentary on the Latter Prophets by David Qimhi (Guadalajara, 1482) (Census 103) — 400 ex.

32. The edition is known in two copies (British Museum and Cambridge) and two fragments (Jewish National Library in Jerusalem and the Jewish Theological Seminary in America). We also know of two "Italian" editions — Mantua, Abraham ben Solomon Conat, 1476 (Census 64) and an anonymous edition which can be linked through indirect evidence to the production of Josua Solomon Soncino's press in Naples and conditionally dated to the early 1490s (the only copy is found in the Jewish National and University library in Jerusalem; Census 67).

33. D. Goldstein, *Hebrew Incunabules in the British Isles*. A preliminary census (London, 1985). One should, however, note that, for example, the Israeli bibliographer P. Tishby localizes this edition in Guadalajara (?) and dates it approximately to 1479, see פ. תשבי. "האינקונבוליים העבריים בישראל", קריית ספר. נט. מס' 20 (1984).

34. This is the only edition in the list which can be identified beyond doubt. But I note as a gloss that we know of two more editions of the *Yoreh de'ah* from this period: one Italian (Mantua/Ferrara, Abraham Conat, Abraham ben Hayim, 1477; Census 70) and one Spanish (Guadalajara, Solomon ben Moses Alqabiz, ca. 1480; Census 71).

35. The work was published twice in Italy before 1492, both times in full — (1) by Solmon ben Judah and Obadiah ben Moses (Italy, ca. 1475); (2) and by Gershon ben Moses Soncino (Soncino, 1490) (Census 87, 88).

36. (Spain or Portugal?, ca. 1491—1492). Folio. 180 Leaf (*Mada'* — L. 1a—36b; *Ahavah* — L. 37a—82b; *Zemanim* — L. 83a—179b. One column, 34 lines per page. Print field: 143—144 × 199—200 mm. Average text density — 298 print characters per five lines (Census 89).

37. We know of several Sephardic editions without bibliographical data which form a single group with common type-faces and other typographic features. They are usually indicated in bibliographies by the titles of particular works, for example, in the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendruck* — Drucker des *Orhot hajjim*; in Census — Printer of Alfasi's Halakot. For a facsimile of the surviving folios, see *Mishneh torah of Maimonides*, a facsimile of an unknown edition printed in Spain before the exile ... by Elazar Hurvitz (New York, 1985), Fasc. 33-116. Also contains information on the current whereabouts of individual folios from this edition (pp. 59—60).

It should be noted that one can also attribute to the works of this press the edition of Maimonides' Introduction (*Hakdamah*) to his work. Despite the identical type-faces in the Introduction and the book *'Ahavah*, we have here, undoubtedly, different editions. Cf. the technical parameters of the print (cited on the basis of a description of the copies from the collection of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America):

Hakdamah — octavo, 19 lines per page, print field 127 × 83—84 mm. Average text density — 116 print characters per 5 lines;

'Ahavah — folio, 30 lines per page, print field 203 × 134 mm. Average text density — 221 characters per 5 lines.

38. An early copy belonged to S. H. Halberstamm (1832—1900), a merchant and collector from Bielitz, later — Israelitische Kulturgemeinde library in Vienna. The copy contains 100 folios, see

פ. תשבי. "האינקונבוליים העבריים בישראל", קריית ספר. נט. מס' 40 (1984).

A brief bibliographic description of the edition: [Spain or Portugal?, sine tipographo, ca. 1490—1492]. Folio. 106 ff (*Mada'* — 62 L., *'Ahavah* — 44 L.). Two columns. 32 lines. Print field: 141 × 189 mm. Average text density: 153 print characters per 5 lines in a single column.

39. The JTS fragment contains 24 folios (book of *Mada'* — 19 fols., book of *'Ahavah* — 5 fols.). It should be noted that the number of folios in this fragment is variously indicated by various sources and everywhere inaccurately: A. Marx, *Bibliographical Studies and Notes on Rare Books and Manuscripts in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America* ... (New York, 1977). P. 222 — 23 L.; F. R. Goff, *Incunabula in American libraries* ... (New York, 1964), No. 79, 2—25 ff.; *Mishneh torah of Maimonides*, a facsimile of an unknown edition printed in Spain before the exile ... by Elazar Hurvitz (New York, 1985). P. 28 — 26 L.

40. B. Wachstein, *Katalog der Salo cohn'schen Schenkungen*, 2. Buecher aus der Sammlung S. H. Halberstamm, Bielitz (Wien, 1914), No. 289.

41. A. Yaari, *Hebrew Printing at Constantinople. Its History and Bibliography* by ... (Jerusalem, 1967), No. 34.

42. *Thesaurus typographiae hebraicae saeculi XV*, eds. A. Freimann, M. Marx (Berlin, 1924—1931), B 41.

43. F. R. Goff, *Incunabula in American libraries* ... (New York, 1964), Heb 79, 2; P. Tishby, cf. above, note 38.

44. In general, I believe that localising and dating editions solely on the basis of paper type is relatively dubious for late medieval manuscripts, when paper production had reached industrial levels and its trade had become international. For example, in the specific case under discussion here, I had the opportunity to investigate water marks on 24 folios of the JTS fragment: the majority of the folios have water-marks which depict, with small variations, a glove. This is one of the most widespread water-mark designs on Italian paper of the second half of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries. The only relatively early drawing, repeated on several folios, is a "signet-ring with a star". It is close, but not identical, to drawing No. 692 in the album C. B. Briquet, *Les Filigranes: Dictionnaire historique des marques du papier des leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu'en 1600* ... (Amsterdam, 1968). Briquet notes that this sign has been identified on Genoa paper from 1483 and 1509, which establishes excessively broad chronological borders for identifying an edition on the basis of paper with such a design.

45. *Torah* (= Pentateuch) with *Targum Onkelos* and comment. of Solomon ben Isaac. Hajar [Eliezer ben David Alantansi], corr.: Abraham ben Isaac ben David. Patron: Solomon ben Maimon Zalmati. 19 July—17 August 1490. Folio. 265 L. Three columns with a variable quantity of lines per column and variable width.

46. *Idem*. Lisbon, Elizier [Toledano], David ben Joseph Ibn Yahya Calfon, [Jehudah Gedaliah?]. 8 July—6 August 1491. Folio 456 L. The number of columns and lines per column varies.

47. *Idem*. Bologna, Abraham ben Hayim for Joseph Caravida. [Ed.]: Joseph Hayim ben Aaron Strasbourg Zarefati, 25 January 1482. Folio. 220 L. (Census 13).

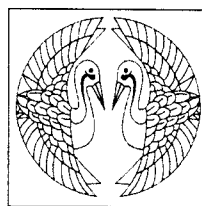
48. Moses ben Nachman Gerondia (RaMBaN). *Perush ha-torah*. [Rome], Obadiah and Menashe and Benjamin of Rome, [ca. 1469—1472]. Folio 246 L. One column. 45 lines per page. Print field: 245 × 166 mm. Average text density: 289 print signs per 5 lines (Census 96); *idem*. [Naples, Joseph ben Jacob Ashkenazi Gunzenhauser], 2 July 1490. Folio. 244 L. One column. 40—41 lines. Print field: 201 × 139 mm. Average text density: 351 print signs per 5 lines (Census 98).

49. *Idem*. Lisbon, Eliezer [Toledano], 16 July 1489. Folio. 301 L. Two columns. Print field: 199 × 140 mm. Average text density: 165 print signs per 5 lines.
50. *Massekhet Gittin*. With comment. by Solomon ben Isaac, *Tosafot, Pisqe tosafot*. [Soncino, Joshua Solomon ben Israel nathan Soncino], Corr.: David ben Elazar ha-Levi Sal, Samuel ben Meir Latif. 18 February 1488. Folio 124(?) L. (Census 123).
51. For more detail on the history and particular features of Sephardic print editions, see S'ridei Bavli, *An Historical and Bibliographical Introduction by Haim Z. Dimitrovsky* (New York, 1979).
52. *Massekhet Gittin*. With comment. by Solomon ben Isaac. Faro, Samuel Porteiro, 11—16 December 1496. <32 L. (maximum known quantity of folios) Folio. Two columns (Census 124).
53. Leaving aside the specifics of date indication in medieval Hebrew books, I would like to note only that dating in incunabula was "from the creation of the word" (לבריאת העולם/ליצירה) and that the millennia could be "omitted". The month and day of the work's completion could be indicated directly (with a calendar date) or indirectly, with a reference to a holiday or, as is the case here, with a reference to a division of the Pentateuch (in the Jewish tradition, the text of the Pentateuch is divided into weekly sections for public reading in synagogues (פרשת השבוע/*Parashat ha-shavu'a*). The tractate was printed during the reading period for the *wayehi/ויחי*.
54. M. Beit-Arié, "The Relationship between early Hebrew Printing and Handwritten Books: Attachment or Detachment" in his volume *The Makings of the Medieval Hebrew Book. Studies in Paleography and Codicology* (Jerusalem, 1993), p. 264, n. 47; cf. also [M. Beit-Arié, C. Sirat], *Manuscrits medievales en caracteres hebraïques ... Tome I. Notices* (Jerusalem—Paris, 1972), I, 115, n. 1.
55. S. Seeligman, "Ein portugiesischer Talmuddruck", *Zeitschrift fuer Hebraische Bibliographie*, XII, 1. Y. 18.
56. E. N. Adler, "Talmud printing before Bomberg", *Festschrift i Anledning af Prof. David Simonsens ...* (Kobenhaven, 1923), p. 83; E. N. Adler, "Talmud incunabula of Spain and Portugal", *Jewish Studies in memory of George A. Kohut ...* (New York, 1935), p. 2.
57. J. Bloch, "Early Hebrew printing in Spain and Portugal", *Hebrew Printing and Bibliography* (New York, 1976), p. 32 (Repr. from: *Bulletin of the New York Public Library*, 42 (1938)). It is interesting to note that while J. Bloch pauses to give a detailed description of the edition with an English translation of the colophon and a photograph of it (page 31, No. 5), he does not even mention the possibility of reading the date differently.
58. ר.ג.ג. רבינוביץ. מאמר על הדפסת התלמוד. תולדות הדפסת התלמוד. הובא לבית הדפוס עם תיקונים השלמות ומפתחות על ידי א.מ. הברמן. ירושלים תשי"ב. עמוד לא-לב.
59. B. Friedberg, *History of Hebrew Typography in Italy, Spain-Portugal, Turkey and the Orient ...* (Antwerpen, 1934), p. 77, n. 3.
60. S'ridei Bavli, *An Historical and Bibliographical Introduction by Haim V. Dimitrovsky* (New York, 1979), p. 74. One should note that the history of the tractate's "discovery" and the problem dating it are laid out by Haim Z. Dimitrovsky in quite some detail, see *ibid.*, pp. 19—20, 73—4.
61. F. R. Goff, *op. cit.*, Heb. 107.
62. פ. תשבי. "האינקונבולים העבריים בישראל", קריית ספר. נט. (1984) מס' 65.
63. Census 124.
64. For a facsimile of this folio with the colophon on which the apportionment of letters is clearly visible, see S'ridei Bavli, *Fragments from Spanish and Portuguese Incunabula and Sixteenth Century Printings of the Babylonian Talmud and Alfasi*, collected and edited by Haim V. Dimitrovsky (New York, 1979), ii, L. 372. See also the illustration in J. Bloch's article (cf. above, note 57).
65. In Hebrew, short prepositions combine with the following noun to form a single word. Thus transformed into inseparable prefixes, they are naturally written as one word. See also Haim Z. Dimitrovsky's arguments on this issue in S'ridei Bavli, *An Historical and Bibliographical Introduction*, p. 74.
66. David ben Joseph Abudarham, *Perush ha-berakhot ve ha-tefillot*, Lisbon, Eliezer Toldano. 1 *tevet*/25 November 5250/1489. L. 170r, line 17 (Census 1).
67. S'ridei Bavli, *An Historical and Bibliographical Introduction*, p. 74 (my translation from Hebrew — Sh. I.).
68. For more on this, see S'ridei Bavli, *op. cit.*, n. 502.
69. אפרים א. אורבך. "רשימת ספרים עבריים מראשית ימי הדפוס", קריית ספר. טו. (1938) מס' [29].
70. *Massekhet Hullin*. [Spain or Portugal, Printer of 'Orhot hayyim, ca. 1480—1490]. Folio. The number of folios is not known. One column. Print field: 134—135 × 204—205 mm. Average text density: 230 print signs per 5 lines. (Census 127)
71. See note 37.

Illustrations

Fig. 1. Booklist from Heb. 56 (courtesy of the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America).

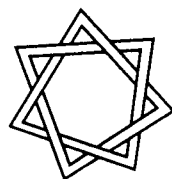
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Front cover:

The portrait of the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great (r. 324—337), the founder of the Byzantine Empire. Miniature from a Christian-Arabic manuscript entitled *al-Durr al-manzūm fī tārikh mulūk al-Rūm* (C 358) in the collection of the St. Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, fol. 11b, 11.8 × 9.5 cm.

Back cover:

Plate 1. Portrait of two Roman Emperors — Stauracius (r. 811) and Michael I (r. 811—813). Miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 101b, 11.9 × 7.5 cm.

Plate 2. Portrait of the Roman Emperor Leo VI the Wise (r. 886—912). Miniature from the same manuscript, fol. 120a, 11.2 × 10.0 cm.