Towards a Supplementary Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana

Theory and Practice

EMILE G.L. SCHRIVER

1993
Towards a Supplementary Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana

Theory and Practice

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan de Universiteit van Amsterdam,
op gezag van de Rector Magnificus prof. dr. P.W.M. de Meijer
in het openbaar te verdedigen in de Aula der Universiteit
(Oude Lutherse Kerk, ingang Singel 411, hoek Spui),
op maandag 11 oktober 1993 te 15.00 uur

door Emile G.L. Schrijver

geboren te Amsterdam
### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note on transcription</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Hebrew Manuscripts: History and Research</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 A History of Hebrew Manuscript Cataloguing</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 A Model of Description for Hebrew Manuscripts</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The Hebrew Manuscript Collection of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 A Specimen of a Supplementary Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indices**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Titles of Manuscripts Described in the Specimen Catalogue</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelfmarks of Manuscripts Described in the Specimen Catalogue</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Manuscripts Mentioned</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Index</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch Summary</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preface

The following work deals with a small part of the Hebrew manuscript collection of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, the Hebraica and Judaica Department of the Amsterdam University Library. Originally it was meant to be a description of 40 hitherto undescribed Hebrew manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, and as such the research was financed from May 1987 until May 1992 by the then ‘Netherlands Organization for Pure Scientific Research’ (ZWO), later the ‘Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research’ (NWO). In 1986 I published an inventory of these manuscripts. As work on the project proceeded, it became clear to me that certain books that were included in the initial listing did not fit into the newly formulated criteria any longer. These were primarily printed books, which, because of the large quantity of manuscript annotations, were given manuscript shelf-marks occasionally; in principle these books are printed books, however, and they should be described as such. Apart from this the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana has in the meantime acquired some forty additional manuscripts, and it turned out to be practically impossible to include these new manuscripts in the catalogue as well. This would mean, however, that the catalogue which was meant to be supplementary would be outdated right away, as it would not describe the actual state of affairs. It was therefore decided that this dissertation was to contain a ‘Specimen of a Supplementary Catalogue’ only (Chapter 5), and that primary attention would be paid to the methodological aspects of the preparation of a catalogue of such a varying collection of Hebrew manuscripts like the Rosenthaliana’s. The manuscripts described in Chapter 5 were selected to be a reliable reflection of the general nature of the library’s collection of Hebrew manuscripts, and the descriptions serve to prove the workability of the method proposed in the preceding chapters. The complete collection of undescribed (Hebrew) manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana will be described in a planned commercial edition of part of this dissertation.

Many people and institutions were in one way or the other involved in the preparation of this dissertation. I would therefore like to thank: Norbert P. van den Berg and A.R.A. (Ton) Croiset van Uchelen, Director and Chief Curator of the Amsterdam University Library for their allowing me to use all technical and practical (whatever that may mean) facilities of the Library; Gerard A. de Zeeuw and especially his former colleague and now successor Iman Heystek of the Photographic Department, for their constant cooperation and for their extremely quick service, which is unsurpassed worldwide; W.K. (Kees) Grijp, curator of the Rare Book Department for his expert help with the descriptions of certain bindings and papers; Jos A.A.M. Biemans, Curator of the Manuscript Department, for introducing me to colleagues in the general field of
International Board of the Jewish National Library, for discussing with me and critically commenting upon many aspects of this dissertation during very inspiring meetings in Paris, Manchester and Jerusalem, for providing me with any kind of information from the Hebrew Palaeography Project's SFAR-DATA database system almost immediately and for his continuous support.

Very special thanks are due to: my handsome and very good friend Stef G. Nelissen, who is an exhaustible source of first-class graphic material and besides a fine paper-hanger; my cousin George L. Schrijver of Sharon, Ontario (Canada), for correcting my English and, much more importantly I have to admit, for introducing me to the world on the Par Side; Albert J. Munsterman, one of my two 'paranyms' and a life-long friend, who, with the help of his father-in-law Jan Dingerdts, arranged the actual printing of this dissertation; Prof. Evelyn M. Cohen (Stern College, Yeshiva University, New York) for being my most critical and honest proof-reader, for correcting the English of this dissertation, for her permission to repeat here part of the information provided in our co-authored article on the Eslingen Mahzor, for introducing me with dozens of colleagues worldwide and for making me spell the American way; Dr. Jan Wim Weselius, my good friend and my colleague at the Judaic Institute and co-editor of Studia Rosenthaliana, for being an unsurpassed practical, strategic and scholarly advisor and for being patient with me whenever possible; Dr. Adrij K. Offenberg, curator of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, whose vast knowledge I enjoy ever since we first met in 1984 (especially in places like the 'Engelse Reet'), for giving me unlimited alibi's, directions, recommendations, information, kindness, opportunities, friendship, freedom, education, nerves, back up, employment, rules and gusto; Prof. J.P. Gumbert, one of my two supervising professors, for his very substantial contribution to the technicality and detailness of the theoretical chapters of this dissertation and for the many wonderful hours we spent discussing, for example, the superiority of the 'm' sign over the 'l' when describing two conjugate leaves within a quire; Prof. N.A. van Uchelen, the other, and the first, of my two supervising professors, who taught me the Hebrew alphabet and besides the importance of being earnest, of clear writing, of dividing between important and less important and between first and last things, of watching a good game of football and of the strength of alliteration; Jaffa Baruch-Smaj, my other 'paronym' and best friend, for being my best friend. I feel the urge also to mention my parents here, who have been crazy enough to finance my studies, and not only that. Finally I would like to thank my wife Birgitta, my daughter Aida and my son Avner, for the fact that they managed to carry the heavy and almost unbearable burden that is put upon the shoulders of family members, once the father (or the mother, for that matter) has decided to write such an incredibly time-consuming scholarly work, ... (read any other preface)

Amsterdam, 10 September 1993

manuscript research and for critically reading a few sample descriptions: Leo J. van der Loo and John H. Robben of the Binding Department of the Library, for their many practical advices and services; Dr. Arjeh Gebhard, of the Staff of the Juda Palache Institute of the University of Amsterdam, for his help as a friend and colleague; Irene E. Zwiep of the Juda Palache Institute, for being kind to me; Prof. Mayer E. Rabinowitz, Director of The Library of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, for bringing the New York volume of the Eslingen Mahzor to Amsterdam, for allowing me to bring it back to New York and for his constant encouragement; Rabbi Jerry Schwarzbard, head of the Rare Book Room, Sharon Liberman Mintz, Curator of Jewish Art and Gina Glaisman, assistant in the Rare Book Room, all of them in the JTS Library, New York, as well, for their kind help during my visits to the Library; Prof. Bezalel Narkiss, Director of the Center for Jewish Art, Jerusalem, for discussing with me certain aspects of the Eslingen Mahzor; Dr. Leonard Singer Gold, head of the Jewish Division in the New York Public Library, for allowing me to study the medieval Ashkenazic Mahzor in the NYPL collection; Brad Sabin Hill, head of the Hebrew Section of the British Library and fellow-Moritz Steinschneider- maniac and Dr. Diana Rowland Smith, also of the BL's Hebrew Section, for the wonderful services extended to me during my visits to London; Dr. Alexander Samey, Fellow of the John Rylands Research Institute and as such involved in the description of the Hebrew manuscripts in the John Rylands University Library, and besides a fellow-Grouch Marx- maniac, for discussing with me the outline of the model of description proposed in this dissertation and for allowing me to study some of the John Rylands University Library's Hebrew manuscript holdings; my good friend William L. (Bill) Gross, Ramat Aviv (Israel), for allowing me to study his remarkable collection of Hebrew manuscripts, and for his constant encouragement to concentrate on eighteenth-century decorated Hebrew manuscripts; Michel Garel, chief-curator of Hebrew manuscripts at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, for providing me with information on the state of cataloguing in the library and for his fine sense of humor; Thomas Kollart (Amsterdam), for critically commenting upon Chapter 2; Daniël Z. Baruch (Amsterdam), Moshe J. Brown (Judaica Consultancy Services/Christie's International, Amsterdam), Eva Grabherr (Hohenems, Austria), Mr Victor Klagsbald (Paris), Dr. Binyamin Richter (Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts, Jerusalem), Dr. Shalom Sabar (Hebrew University, Jerusalem), Prof. Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris), Prof. Colette Sirat (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris), Dr. Jirina Sedinová (Jewish Museum, Prague), Yaël Zilrin (Jerusalem) and Tamar Leiter (Hebrew Palaeography Project, Jerusalem) for providing me with different sorts of information and invitations.

Special thanks are due to: my good friend and wonderful colleague E.J. (Lies) Kruijver-Poelsiat for critically reading earlier versions of this dissertation, for being patient with me with certain shared (hopefully not too) 'long-term' projects, and for being among the very few people who kept believing that I would eventually manage to write this dissertation; Prof. R.G. Fuchs-Mansfeld of the University of Amsterdam, for critically reading earlier versions of this dissertation; Prof. Menahem Schmelzer, Professor of Medieval Hebrew Literature and Jewish Bibliography at The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, for discussing certain methodological aspects of this dissertation and for clarifying some paleographical hazards; Prof. Malachi Beit-Arié, Head of the Hebrew Palaeography Project at the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem, and Chairman of the
Note on Transcription

The Hebrew consonants are transcribed according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hebrew</th>
<th>Transcription</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ק</td>
<td>ꜩ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>כ</td>
<td>b/v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ג</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ד</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ה</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ו</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ז</td>
<td>z</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ח</td>
<td>h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ט</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>י</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ק/קח</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>י</td>
<td>m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>נ</td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ס</td>
<td>s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>פ/פ</td>
<td>p/f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>צ</td>
<td>tz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ק</td>
<td>q</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ר</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ש/ש</td>
<td>sh/s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ת</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transcriptions are as broad as possible; no hyphens, no duplications, no diacritics, even in those cases in which more or less standardized transcriptions do exist. Therefore: ketubkah instead of ketubba and hagadah instead of haggadah. Direct quotations from manuscript sources appear in Hebrew script, rather than in transcription.

1 Hebrew Manuscripts: History and Research

Bei der Betrachtung eines Gegenstandes kann man den Weg von innen nach aussen nehmen, oder umgekehrt. Die Wahl ist manchmal für die Kritik bezeichnend. Wer sich mit dem Inhalte eines Manuskriptes, namentlich eines unbekannten, beschäftigt, wird bei einer unbefangenen Kritik sich bald nach Zeugnissen und Kriterien umsehen müssen, die von aussen kommen. Für uns ist es jedenfalls zweckmäßig, bei der Ausführung anzufangen.1

Hebrew manuscripts are books, scrolls and single sheets written or copied in the Hebrew alphabet. Thus a Hebrew manuscript need not necessarily be written in the Hebrew language. In the pre-medieval period Aramaic gradually became the second language of the Jews. Not only did the Jews use Aramaic in the Hebrew alphabet. Also, Jews in the Diaspora used to write their everyday language in Hebrew characters. The most important 'Jewish languages' are Yiddish, Ladino (the so-called Judeo-Spanish) and Judeo-Arabic.

Jews always have displayed great interest in their literary heritage. Among the earliest handwritten Hebrew sources known are the Dead Sea Scrolls, found in eleven caves near Khirbet Qumran (south of Jericho) from 1947 onward. The scrolls, which were written between approximately 200 BCE and 100 CE, contain Biblical texts, Biblical interpretations, apocryphal and pseudepigraphical texts, hymns and many other texts dealing with the organization of the community and its specific customs and beliefs.2

Later Hebrew manuscripts and thousands of fragments were found in the 'Cairo Genizah', discovered toward the end of the nineteenth century in the synagogue of Fostat, ancient Cairo.3 As it is not allowed to destroy the divine name, religious books and other documents containing this reference are stored in a genizah. Most important among the Genizah manuscripts are the (greater part of) the Hebrew text of the Book of Ben Sira, old manuscripts of classical rabbinical texts, thousands of known and unknown religious and secular poems, material relating to the history of Karaism, sources on the history of the Jews in the region and autographs of great Sephardic scholars like Moses Maimonides and Judah Halevi. One of the major methodological problems of the Genizah sources is that

---

1 This chapter is partly based on: SCHRIEVER, 'Hebrew Manuscripts'; part of the subject matter may also be found in: SCHRIEVER, 'Moderne bestudering.'
2 STRINSCHNEIDER, Vorlesungen, p. 32.
3 Of the vast literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls, see two of the most recent publications: Tow, Textual Criticism, esp. p. 100-121 and DUMONT, Dead Sea Scrolls. General information on the Cairo Genizah may be found in: GOTTEIN, Mediterranean Society; for a short first impression of the wealth and importance of the Genizah and an elementary bibliography, see: BICKEL, 'Cairo Genizah'; for further references: SEE, Published Material.
the state of early medieval Hebrew paleography does not yet permit accurate dating; it is assumed that some of the manuscripts date back at least to the seventh century CE.4

There are two important reasons for the absence of Hebrew manuscript sources from the period of the Dead Sea Scrolls to the seventh, eighth or ninth centuries: (1) time and persecutions have destroyed many Hebrew books, and (2) there is reason to assume that during that period there still existed a genuine oral transmission of texts, which would mean that there were simply not as many books as one would perhaps expect.5

**Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts**

Compared with their non-Hebrew counterparts Hebrew manuscripts of the Middle Ages are, in light of the foregoing, relatively late, but from approximately the tenth century onward there is firm ground on which to stand. By that time the codex had definitively established its leading position as the most popular form of a handwritten text. The use of papyrus had been abandoned, while the practice of writing on a scroll was continued for certain Biblical texts only.6 The earliest date mentioned in a colophon of a Hebrew manuscript is 895. The manuscript, known as the Moses ben Asher codex, was produced in Tiberias; it contains the text of the Prophets and is now housed in the Karaite Synagogue of Cairo. Recent codicological research by Mordecai Glazter, however, has brought to light that this manuscript, including the colophon, was copied at least a century later from an older (now lost) exemplar.7 Since Glazter’s refutation of the authenticity of the date mentioned in the colophon of the Ben Asher codex, a manuscript consisting of fragments of the text of Nehemiah, kept in the Genizah Collection of Cambridge University Library and written in Da Gubdan, Persia, in the year 904, is considered to be the earliest known dated Hebrew manuscript.8 The earliest dated Hebrew manuscript of considerable size (i.e. more than a mere fragment) is a codex of the Latter Prophets with Babylonian vocalization, finished in 916, which now reposes in St. Petersburg.9

Whereas the earliest Hebrew manuscripts were produced in the Orient, in later centuries all regions of the Jewish Diaspora developed their own traditions. Hebrew manuscripts are therefore usually classified according to geographical criteria. The following groups may be distinguished: Ashkenazic (England, Germany, Northern and

---

4 SIRAT, *Papyrus*, p. 17-21; BEIT-ARIET, 'Contribution'.
6 The fact that the Bibliotheca Rasenbaliara does not own any pre-medieval Hebrew manuscript material may serve to explain the limited attention paid here to the pre-medieval period.
8 GLAZTER, 'Alessio Codex', p. 250-259; also see: SIRAT, 'Bible hebraique'.

---

Central France; later on Northwest Europe in general; Sephardic (Spain, Portugal, Southern France, part of North Africa), Italian, Byzantine (Turkey, Greece and the surrounding countries) and Oriental (the Middle East and beyond).11 Within the Oriental group, Yemen and Persia are sometimes considered as separate groups.12

Hebrew books elucidate the varying circumstances under which the Jews of the Diaspora lived in the medieval period. Many Hebrew manuscripts ended up being burnt; furthermore, professional Jewish scribes often had to change their place of residence under the pressure of anti-Jewish political developments. As a result, scribes, on the one hand, met with other preferences relating to the outlook of the manuscript and, on the other hand, came into contact with new fellow practitioners, which resulted in a mutual influence that was particularly strong in the codicological field.

There is no proof that during the Middle Ages there existed anything approximating the institutionalization of the production of Hebrew manuscripts such as, for example, that of a Christian scriptorium. In the words of Malachi Beit-Arié13:

There is no direct evidence to suggest that Hebrew medieval manuscripts, as is the case with Latin and Greek manuscripts, emanated from institutionalized scriptoria, religious or academic centres of copying, or from large-scale commercial production and distribution of handwritten books, which employed large teams of scribes. Colophons and random historical sources, including some documents found mainly in the Cairo Geniza, attest that Hebrew manuscripts were produced either by single professional scribes, or, more often, by learned men who copied the texts for their own use.

In yet another publication Beit-Arié drew attention to this characteristic feature of the medieval Hebrew handwritten book again.14 He pointed out that only nine per cent of the dated Hebrew manuscripts studied within the Hebrew Palaeography Project were copied by several scribes together. This demonstrates a fundamental difference between medieval Hebrew and Latin books. Latin works from the late seventh until the mid-thirteenth centuries were usually produced in multi-copyist scriptoria, while in a later period they were reproduced by university stationers according to the *pecia* system or in commercial workshops.15 Beit-Arié proves statistically that at least half the medieval Hebrew books were 'personal user-produced books, copied by the scholars who were going to use them' and not by hired scribes. This also sheds light on the transmission of Hebrew texts, as a hired scribe may be more vulnerable to mistakes caused by the copying mechanics, while an individual copyist is more likely to make deliberate changes to the text he is copying. These facts have certainly influenced the versions of many Hebrew texts.16

---

11 See e.g.: BEIT-ARIET, *Hebrew Codicology*, p. 17.
15 When looking at things from a broader perspective one could argue that the Christian (well-organized) situation is the exceptional and that the (individual) Jewish and for example also Arabic situation is more common. A recent publication on Latin university manuscripts in *BASILIOIDES, Production* more complete references can be found in: LEMARIÉ, *Introduction*, p. 215-217.
16 In yet another recent article Beit-Arié provided much evidence from colophons of dated and undated manuscripts to sustain this assumption; BEIT-ARIET, *Transmission des textes par scribes et copistes*, as
In recent years the decoration of medieval Hebrew manuscripts has drawn the special attention of many scholars. Most studies concentrate on perhaps the most hackneyed theme in Jewish art history, namely the question of whether Jewish art was allowed to exist during the Middle Ages or not. It is evident that the second commandment, ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image’, did not result in a total rejection of art; it was forbidden to ‘bow unto them [and to] serve them’, but it was generally permitted to produce them, especially two-dimensionally. An exception to this rule is a visual representation of God, which was strictly forbidden.

Hebrew decorated manuscripts from different regions share certain distinctive features. In Ashkenaz Haggadot and prayerbooks were especially popular; in these manuscripts one often finds bird and animal heads instead of human heads, while in many other manuscripts people are depicted with their heads turned backward. This is not the place to discuss the backgrounds of these practices, but it is obvious that the artists were sensitive to the second commandment. In Sepharad one encounters a multitude of exquisitely decorated manuscripts from the thirteenth century onward, and in most of these the artists were not concerned with the second commandment. The manuscripts produced in the so-called Lisbon school in the last third of the fifteenth century, of which more than thirty are extant, are an important, although not the only, exception; there figural art is uncommon. Italian manuscripts, especially those from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, are the most abundantly decorated Hebrew manuscripts ever produced. Besides representational art, many manuscripts show a strong tendency toward elaborate multi-colored floral decoration. In the Orient abstract ornamentation of Hebrew manuscripts was most common; the artists usually refrained from a visual representation of human beings.

The text, which was copied by the scribe, was usually considered the most important part of the manuscript. There are examples of scribes who explicitly mention that they were themselves responsible for both the copying and the decorating of a codex; occasionally one may even find an artist’s colophon, but in most cases the identity of the artist remains unknown. Artists were of course strongly influenced by the surrounding cultures. Although the actual background of the production of Hebrew illuminated manuscripts is not very clear, especially since contemporary documents are scarce, it is certain that both Jews and non-Jews were responsible for the decoration.

**Post-Medieval Hebrew Manuscripts**

The invention of printing in the fifteenth century did not bring about a definitive end to the production of Hebrew manuscripts, but it goes without saying that the Hebrew handwritten book lost a great deal of its popularity. Johann Gutenberg’s invention led to an enlarged English version of this article will appear in the Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library Manchester 75, 3 (1993).

---

17 See e.g., NARKISS, ‘On the Zoocephalic Phenomenon.’

18 The following is a mere (alphabetical) selection of some of the more important publications on the topic: AVER, Micropography; COHEN, Decoration; GARES, D’une main forte; GUTMANN, Hebrew Manuscript Painting; LIBERMAN MINTZ, ‘Selected Bibliography’, p. 179-185; METZGER, Haggadot HEBREW, Jews Life; NARKISS, Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts; SCHUBERT, Judische Buchkunst; SIROTAH, Mahzor emiluminated.

---

HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS: HISTORY AND RESEARCH

dispersion of the written word that could never be achieved by manual copying. Thousands of copies of a book could be produced within a very short period of time, and toward the end of the fifteenth and in the course of the sixteenth century manual copying of Hebrew texts became a relatively marginal phenomenon, especially in Europe. The production of Hebrew manuscripts in Europe since the invention of printing may be divided roughly into four (inevitably overlapping) categories: (1) certain liturgical texts that have to be written by hand according to Jewish Law, such as Torah scrolls, tefillin and mezuzot; (2) single decorated sheets (keriots, Ten Commandments, Ormer calendars, etc.); decorated scrolls (usually the book of Esther, occasionally Psalms and other smaller Biblical books) and calligraphic art; (3) decorated books written during the eighteenth century ‘be-osyos amsterdam’, with Amsterdam letters; (4) autograph manuscripts, archival sources, etc.

A description of the rules and practices connected with the copying of Sifre Torah, tefillin and mezuzot is far beyond the limits of this introductory chapter. There is a vast body of medieval and post-medieval texts on the topic, among which Moses Maimonides’s Hilkhos sifre torah in his halakhic code Mishnah torah is probably the widest known. Many of the texts go back on the extra-canonical talmudic tractate Saferim.

One of the most important traditions that developed after the Middle Ages, both in the East and in the West, is that of decorating the ketubah, the Jewish marriage contract. Ketubah decoration was especially popular in Italy where, from the sixteenth century on, it became customary to read aloud the text of the marriage contract in front of the congregation. This custom inspired well-to-do families to order beautifully decorated ketubot, as an appropriate present to the newly-weds, but certainly also just to show off. Italian ketubah artists were inspired by both the rich ‘contemporary Christian visual culture’ and the immediate Jewish realm. On account of their extensive use of Hebrew texts in the decorative programs and their selection of specifically Jewish subject matter, the majority of the artists may be assumed to be Jewish. Consequently, in the shaping of a particular Italian ketubah there may be influence of contemporary Italian architecture, while in another the design found on the Torah curtains in a synagogue may have served as a model. A third important source of inspiration for ketubah artists were printed books and more particularly their so-called ‘architectural tilepags.’ Hundreds of Italian marriage contracts used an architectural framework, an imaginary arch, for their texts. Especially after the breakthrough of the copper-engraving technique in the printing industry Hebrew and non-Hebrew architectural tilepags were inexhaustible sources of inspiration for Italian ketubah artists.

19 Still by far the most penetrating article on the subject is: NAMENYI, ‘Miniature juive’, an English adaptation of this article is this ‘The Illumination; also see: SCHUBERT, Judische Buchkunst 2; SCHÖNLIE, “Be-osyos Amsterdam”’.

20 The standard edition of the text is: HUGGER, ת国民经济ה海滩; translations may be found in: HUGGER, Seven Minor Treatates and Coven, Minor Treatates, further see: Tov, Talmud Criticism, p. 199-285; Ch. 4: ‘The Copying and Transmitting of the Biblical Text’, where abundant bibliographical references may be found.


22 SABAR, Ketubah, p. 15.
CHAPTER 1

It is necessary now to devote a few words to Hebrew printing, before returning to the manuscripts. Hebrew printing started in Rome, sometime between 1469 and 1472. The first dated printed Hebrew book was finished on 17 February 1475 in Reggio di Calabria. There are 139 editions of Hebrew books that can be assumed, with almost 100% certainty, to have been printed before 1 January 1501. These Hebrew incunabula were printed on about 40 presses, that were all active in the Mediterranean area: in Italy, Spain, Portugal and, only one, in Turkey. 23

In the first half of the sixteenth century the most important Hebrew printing presses were situated in Venice, Mantua, Sabinetona, Cremona and, outside of Italy, Buda, Prague, Constantinople and Salonica. After Daniel van Bombergen established his printing press in Venice in 1516, however, Italy and especially Venice determined the face of sixteenth-century Hebrew printing. 24 As indicated before these sixteenth-century Italian Hebrew imprints exerted a particularly strong influence on Italian ketubot decoration.

In the course of the seventeenth century, Amsterdam took over Venice’s leading role in Hebrew book production. The first Jew to print Hebrew in Amsterdam was Manasseh ben Israel. His first Hebrew work, a daily prayerbook, appeared on 1 January 1627. In this work Manasseh’s corrector, Isaac Abba de Pompea, later to become the renowned Hakhham, mentions the fact that the newly cut Hebrew types were based on letters written by the local Sephardic scribe Michael Judah Leon. 25 Manasseh ben Israel printed a large number of books, not only for the newly established Portuguese Jewish community of Amsterdam, but also for the Western and Eastern European market. Other Amsterdam printers of importance were Immanoel Benveniste, Uri Fayish ben Aaron Halevi, David de Castro Tartas and the members of the printing dynasties of Athsia and Proops. 26

The specific cultural climate in seventeenth-century Amsterdam gave rise not only to the production of many printed Hebrew books. Alongside the printing industry there also existed a genuine manuscript tradition. As the adaptation to Judaism of the Iberian Catholics, known as New Christians or crypto-Jews, who were coming to Amsterdam during the seventeenth century was everything but unproblematic, many Amsterdam Sephardic leaders considered it their primary task to guide this adaptation. Prominent personalities like Saul Levi Morretta and Isaac Orohio de Castro wrote outlines of the Jewish belief, with detailed refutations of Christianity. 27 Due to their highly apologetical nature these books could not be printed and were published in manuscript copies, many of which were produced by professional calligraphers. The very fact that fine calligraphy was popular among the Amsterdam Sephardim is not altogether surprising, by the way. From the end of the sixteenth century onward, in the Netherlands, as in other European countries, there had emerged a strong emphasis on excellent penmanship; although actual historical information on the calligraphers themselves is very scarce, we know of calligraphy competitions in which pupils would have to copy examples set by their masters. 28 Copybooks of these calligraphers, both in manuscript originals and in print, show the large variety of scripts professional calligraphers were able to write, and the work of certain Amsterdam Sephardic calligraphers can easily compete with that of their non-Jewish colleagues.

The great majority of Sephardic calligraphers concentrated on Spanish rather than on Hebrew calligraphy. There is, however, sufficient material evidence to maintain that many of them were more than able to copy Hebrew. In the collection of the Biblioteca Rosenthaliana alone, there is ample proof of this, even among the most recent acquisitions. The library recently acquired a beautifully decorated parchment sheet, containing specimens of various types of script, copied on 21 June 1655 in La Rochelle by Jehudah Machabeus, also known as Louis Nunes Dovale. 29 Apart from the many variants in Latin script and in different languages, he copied a square Sephardic Hebrew alphabet and surprisingly also a Greek and an Arabic alphabet. 30

One of the most important patrons of the Amsterdam Sephardic calligraphers was Ishack de Mataria Abba, a well-to-do Portuguese merchant. An artist who worked for him was Benjamin Senior Godines, not only known as a calligrapher, but also as a painter and as an engraver. The Jewish Museum in London, for example, owns a series of three so-called ‘Vanitas’ or morality paintings by Godines. The third, executed in 1681 at the request of Ishack de Mataria Abba, is a memono moa, of which the Biblioteca Rosenthaliana owns a copy on parchment, also executed by Godines at the order of Ishack Abba. 31 The fact that this memono moa is inspired by a then very popular Catholic genre, illustrates the spiritual and intellectual atmosphere of seventeenth-century Amsterdam Sephardic Jewry. Godines is also responsible for certain engraved titlepages of Amsterdam Hebrew imprints, like the 1687 Albert Magnus edition of the Meaḥ berkahko. 32

Ishack de Mataria Abba’s eldest son, Mataria de Ishack Abba, was, not coincidentally, among the most outstanding professional Amsterdam Sephardic calligraphers. On his visits to his clients he may have carried with him a parchment scroll containing eleven specimens of his handwriting, written on 15 June 1690, when he was only seventeen years old (He. Ros. 700). At the bottom of this scroll there are two specimens of his Hebrew

23 OFFENBERG, Hebrew Incunabula 1469-1516: Choice of Caxic/also see: BUX-AERL, & Relationship.
24 Of the vast literature on the topic I mention only: OFFENBERG, Spread of Hebrew Printing; OFFENBERG, Hebrewisches Buchdruck; further bibliographical references may be found in: HILL, Hebrewia, Bibliography C. Hebrew Books in the Sixteenth Century (no pagination).
25 It should be mentioned that the content of this statement is problematic. Here the very fact, however, that scribal involvement is mentioned is more important than the actual historical credibility of the statement; see: FUKS, Hebrew Typography, p. 102, n. 27.
26 More on Amsterdam Hebrew printing may be found in: FUKS, Hebrew Typography.
27 On Saul Levi Morretta, see: SALOMON, Saul Levi Morretta; on Isaac Orohio de Castro, see: KAPLAN, From Christianity; both works, representing divergent approaches to the problem of the New Christians, also provide general introductions.
28 See e.g.: CRONSTADT, Dutch Writing-Masters.
30 The most interesting fact about this calligrapher’s personality, by the way, is that his calligraphy is not known for its artistic value alone. Shortly after his arrival in Amsterdam (he had lived in Brazil and had also spent some time in La Rochelle, where he wrote the sheet), there is mention in Spanish archival sources of, in the words of Jonathan Israel, ‘a master forger among the Jews at Amsterdam, whom he [a Spanish official] refers to as “Judah Maccabeus” and who, he says, during the second Spanish-Dutch war, had made a specialty of forging documents for Dutch merchants seeking to evade the Spanish embargos and who was still busily manufacturing sets of false papers for the Spanish territories at fifty guilders a time. This may well be the same person who was referred to in the Spanish council of state in February 1661 at the Jews of Amsterdam who was forging numbers of permits for trade in the Spanish Indies.’ Better proof of the value of fine penmanship can hardly be given: ISRAEL, Spain, p. 40-41; also see: EMANUELI, Seventeenth-Century Brazilian Jewry, p. 68.
31 BARNETT, Catalogue No. 895, p. 156-156.
32 FUKS, Hebrew Typography, No. 607, p. 446.
handwriting, one semi-cursive and one square. Very impressive is another work of his, a Latin-Hebrew copybook, now housed in the Royal Library in The Hague.34 One of the finest examples of a decorated Esther scroll35 from Amsterdam, regrettably not from the collection of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, is one copied and illustrated by Raphael Montalto in 1686. It is kept in the Spencer collection at the New York Public Library.36 From the point of view of artistry this beautiful piece of work is certainly comparable to some of the products of the greatest of Jewish engraving artists active in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, Salom Italia, who, among other things, is responsible for the engraved borders of a number of Esther scrolls and some ketubot.37

How widely the fame of the Amsterdam Hebrew printing press spread is shown by the fact that many German, Polish and Bohemian and Moravian printers claimed to have printed their books ‘be-osiyot amstadi’, with Amsterdam letters. The word ‘Amsterdam’ often was printed in very large type, whereas the genuine place of production usually was printed in small type, hidden somewhere on the titlepage, or not even mentioned at all. In so doing the printers hoped to influence the sale of their product positively. Scribes and artists were also impressed by the beautiful Amsterdam Hebrew books; inspired by these books and their illustrations they imitated what is often called a ‘revival’ of decorated Hebrew manuscript production. Commissioned by the well-to-do, in the course of the eighteenth century scribes took great pains to imitate the printed Amsterdam letters and the often very attractive illustrations contained in the Amsterdam imprints. Like the printers they did not hesitate to give the word Amsterdam a very prominent position on the titlepage. At first the eighteenth-century artists copied directly from their printed models, and even tried to imitate in pen and ink the characteristic copper engravings, but soon artists felt the urge to create their own illustrations. They usually maintained the most important elements of the Amsterdam compositions, but changed the costumes, furniture and decor, in order to make the reader of the manuscript feel more related to them. The two most important centers of this eighteenth-century decorated Hebrew manuscript production were Northern Germany and the Bohemian/Moravian region, but there are examples of decorated Hebrew manuscripts written ‘be-osiyot amstadi’ from practically all Western European countries, including Italy, France, the Northern Netherlands and even England.38

33 Also see Chapter 5, No. 25.
34 74 G 17; for a more detailed discussion of the calligraphy of Matasa de Ischak Abaoab and for an account of the tragic course of his life, see: SCHRIJVER, ‘On Matasa de Ischak Abaoab’, with illustrations.
35 The limited attention paid to decorated Esther scrolls in general in this introductory chapter is an indication of the lack of modern systematic research on the topic. Whereas ketubah research greatly profited from Shalom Sabar’s pioneering research, similar research on decorated Esther scrolls is still a desideratum. Until now the only reliable information may be found in Mendel Metzger’s studies on the topic: METZGER, ‘Earliest Engraved Megillah’; METZGER, ‘Illustration sinier Meilachim’; METZGER, ‘Illustrierte Estherrolle’; METZGER, ‘John Rylands Megillah’; METZGER, ‘Stud ‘; METZGER, ‘Style in Jewish Art’, p. 183-186; METZGER, ‘Type inchoiu de Megilla’; further see: NAMENI, ‘Miniature juive’, p. 37-42.
36 GOLD, Sign and a Wawou, p. [iii], 199 (Ex. No. 16).
37 See e.g. SABA, ‘Golden Age’, p. 96-98.
38 The characteristics of these regional variants obviously cannot be discussed within the limited framework of this introductory chapter.

The special attention that is paid here to seventeenth-century Amsterdam manuscript production may serve to show that the ‘revival’ of Hebrew manuscript production in the eighteenth century was not a creatio ex nihilo. Seventeenth-century Amsterdam was a center of Hebrew book production, of both printed books and manuscripts. Artists like the afore-mentioned Benjamin Senior Godines worked for both printers and calligraphers39, while on the other hand Manasseh ben Israel’s newly cut Hebrew letters were reportedly based on letters written by the Sephardic community’s professional scribe. Better proof of a strong interdependence between the two disciplines can hardly be provided. When, in the early eighteenth century, the fame of the Hebrew book printed in Amsterdam spread over Europe, it was only natural that the Amsterdam manuscript tradition would also influence the outside world. In spite of the clear preference of many of the Sephardic calligraphers for Latin rather than Hebrew alphabets, the seventeenth-century Amsterdam calligraphic tradition may provide therefore something of a missing link between the seventeenth-century printed Amsterdam Hebrew books and the decorated eighteenth-century Hebrew manuscripts so explicitly based thereon. Judging from their manuscripts quite a few scribes of the eighteenth-century school conceived of the ‘osiyot amstadi’ as nothing more than what now, in terms of script morphology, would be called plain Sephardic square and semi-cursive letters, without any further external characteristics. And this regular Sephardic letter was exactly the one most commonly used by the seventeenth-century Amsterdam Sephardic calligraphers.

One important difference between the seventeenth-century Amsterdam manuscripts and the eighteenth-century Central European ones should be pointed out as well. The eighteenth-century scribes copied mainly small religious books for everyday use, whereas the Amsterdam calligraphers used to copy occasional poetry, Hebrew alphabet charts and the like. There appear to be only a few examples of books copied entirely in the Hebrew alphabet, as opposed to Spanish manuscript books, of which many survive. But this usage can be explained easily by the specific cultural climate in seventeenth-century Amsterdam: and in fact, after this climate had changed at the beginning of the eighteenth century Hebrew manuscript production in Amsterdam did not differ notably from that in the rest of Europe.

The last important category of Western post-medieval Hebrew manuscripts are those that, probably, may be compared best to their non-Hebrew counterparts, such as autograph manuscripts, literary remains, bound correspondences and archival material (and the different categories may overlap). Although these manuscripts make up the majority of existing Hebrew manuscripts, certainly in the collection of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, modern systematic research on the topic from the point of view of book production is lacking altogether.40

39 An example of this, i.e. Benjamin Godines being only the decorating artist and not the calligrapher, is the Et Haam manuscript of Abraham Cohen Herrera’s Puerta del Cielo, copied in Amsterdam in 1675 by Samuel de David Curiel at the order of Ischak de Matasa Aboab. To this manuscript Godines contributed a splendid titlepage and, at the end, a kabbalistic tree; the titlepage was published in: MEIJER, Die, Image of the Word, Ill. 39.
40 The question whether these manuscripts belong to the archivist’s rather than to the codicologist’s field of research is a theoretical one. In everyday practice many Hebrew codicologists will be faced with the problem of having to describe this kind of material. In many ways a similar collection of mainly
The post-medieval situation in the Oriental countries differed considerably from that in the Occident. Printed books were usually scarce, as a result of which there was often an almost 'medieval' demand for handwritten books, and it appears that for Oriental manuscripts a distinction between medieval and post-medieval is rather artificial. Little is known about the actual circumstances under which these post-medieval Oriental manuscripts were produced, with the exception of perhaps the Yemenite community. The only systematic research done on the topic is Shalom Sabar's work on marriage contracts, which offers, of course, only limited insight into manuscript production in general. When studying Oriental Hebrew manuscripts in a more systematic way one would at least have to consider Moroccan, Palestinian, Yemenite and Persian manuscripts as groups worthy of separate attention, while there may be reason to define even more entities. Modern research on post-medieval Oriental manuscripts is therefore more than necessary, but it should be realized that research will be hampered considerably by the large quantities of manuscripts that have to be dealt with.

Hebrew Scripts

During the Middle Ages two modes of Hebrew script were commonly distinguished: square script and a different more cursive mode of script, usually called masheq (Ashkenaz) or masqet (Sephard) and Ashkenaz, the common medieval Hebrew handbook. In the Humanistic period the differences occurring in Hebrew hands from different periods and regions drew the attention of many a Christian scholar. A striking example of this humanist interest is Elijah Levi's letter to Sebastian Münster of 5 March 1531, in which Levi gives an overview of terminology in vogue among Ashkenazim and Sephardim.

During the nineteenth century Moritz Stein Schneider was the most eminent expert in the field of Hebrew manuscripts. He compiled catalogues of many important collections and wrote a penetrating introduction to the study of Hebrew manuscripts in general. His nomenclature, which distinguishes between a square, a cursive and what was called a post-medieval Hebrew manuscripts, that of the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, is analyzed by Alexander Samel in his "The Interpreted Text."

41 See e.g. Qalhat, "קהלמ חוחית קולס חותי".
42 His 1990 catalogue Ketuboth incorporates most of his earlier research on the topic (much of it hidden in exhibition catalogues) and is a sine qua non for any researcher of Jewish marriage contracts; two of his latest studies, also largely concentrating on ketuboth, are: "Samel, Manuscript and Book Illustration" and "Sephardi Elements."
43 One example, perhaps of only limited statistical value but certainly instructive, may serve to show how popular Hebrew manuscripts were in the Orient in post-medieval times. Virginie Lastir's catalogue of his private collection of Hebrew manuscripts from Morocco consists of 57 items, which were all, without a single exception, copied in the post-medieval period (the majority in the eighteenth century) Klagshaul, Catalogue.
44 A major contribution to the study of the medieval conception of the Hebrew script is: Zimmerli, "Assessment and Sephardim", p. 91-98, 315-318. It devotes a complete chapter to differences between Ashkenazic and Sephardic handwriting and contains a thorough discussion of the rabbinical Responsa dealing with the problem, together with some translations thereof.
45 For the Hebrew text of the letter, see Pruss, "Bayer hebräischen Drucke", p. 497; a German translation of a part of the text can be found in the Appendix to this chapter.
46 STEIN SCHNEIDER, Verderbewegungen Stein Schneider's catalogues are discussed at length in Chapter 2.

HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS: HISTORY AND RESEARCH

'rabbinc' cursive hand, all with their regional variants, became generally accepted during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

A landmark in the study of the Hebrew script is Carlo Bernheimer's "Palaestina Ebratca", published in Florence in 1924. It presents an overview of the state of research in Hebrew paleography in Bernheimer's days, based on his experience as a researcher of Hebrew manuscripts and on most of the secondary literature available at the time. Bernheimer also uses the terms square, rabbinc and cursive. Furthermore he is apparently the first scholar to draw serious attention to the existence of a semi-square mode of script in Italy.

Nothing really changed until Solomon A. Birnbaum published his "The Hebrew Scripts." Birnbaum divided the Hebrew scripts into 26 geographically distinguished 'types', for which he coined several 'Hebraizing' designations: Italian (Hebr. Italian = Italig), Tennes (Hebr. Tennes = Temani), Yevanic (Hebr. Greek = Yevanic), etc. For the different modes of script he used the terms 'square', 'scroll square' (a variant form used for Torah and Esther scrolls), 'cursive' and 'masqat. Birnbaum presented the term 'rabbinc', since 'the 'rabbis' had, of course, no closer connection with this style than with Square and Cursive. Birnbaum's is the first comprehensive work on the subject and it is still of great value, not the least because it includes post-medieval scripts. His peculiar terminology, however, never really was accepted, especially so since his introductory remarks - in which one would have expected for example a thorough explanation of his method - are too brief. The first volume of a new series of publications of the Hebrew Paleography Project, "Specimens of Medieval Hebrew Scripts", fills a noticeable gap in the literature on Hebrew scripts. It contains charts with meticulously copied Hebrew alphabets from the Orient and Yemen, taken from selected dated manuscripts, among which are quite a few from the Fostat Genizah. The alphabets are accompanied by a mostly full-size photograph of a page from the source manuscript. The charts do not just record, what is sometimes called, the "lettre moyenne" of a certain manuscript, but also the variant forms of the letters, which, inevitably in a scribe's handwriting, this approach generally corresponds to that of Colette Stratz in her "Écriture et Civilisations", where she defines the lettre moyenne as:

une lettre qui rassemble tous les caractères de toutes les lettres, dans tous les folios du ou des manuscrits du même scribe [...] à condition que le scribe soit régulier car s'il n'était pas, il faudrait de plus, indiquer les limites extrêmes de variation dans la forme de cette même lettre et la fréquence de cette variation.

The charts do not record 'la fréquence de cette variation', which is practically impossible when dealing with 154 manuscripts, and perhaps have only one drawback, again already defined by Colette Stratz:...
To phrase it differently, there seems reason to doubt the necessity of recording as many vari-
tant forms as has been done, especially since there are no defined criteria for copying a
certain variant or not.\footnote{For a detailed review of this work, see: SCHREYER, 'Beit-Arié's Specimens.'}

Because of its widespread use there are many different types of Hebrew scripts. The
most important modes are: the monumental square script, the somewhat less monumental
semi-square script, the semi-cursive bookhand and the cursive script for everyday use. The
geo-graphical classification of Hebrew manuscripts mentioned earlier in this chapter, dis-
tinguishing between Ashkenazic, Sephardic, Italian, Byzantine and Oriental (with Yemen
and Persia as separate groups), is also used for Hebrew scripts. This means that there are
dozens of different types of Hebrew script. The widespread use of Hebrew scripts over a
period of at least two millennia and the fact that the traditional division into modes does
not suit all types and periods, however, are the main reasons why until now a clear defini-
tion of the different types and modes is still lacking.\footnote{Beit-Arié, Palaeographical Identification, p. 31, n. 18.}

A further complication is the fact that the historical process behind the development
of the shapes of Hebrew scripts, especially of the cursive mode, is often unclear due to the
scarcity or lack of early book hands. In the words of Malachi Beit-Arié\footnote{Beit-Arié, Specimens, p. iv-v.}

In the Orient [...] the surviving findings seem to represent the following process: A semi-square mode, employed either in elegant or careless style, was retained for centuries, until a calligraphic square script emerged and crystallized at the end of the ninth century. This square script probably developed within the copying of biblical codices and was promoted by the activities of the Masoretes. Side by side with this new, 'Biblical', mode, the old semi-square was still employed. In the second half of the tenth century, a semi-cursive mode, sometimes employing cursive shapes, emerged, crystallized in the eleventh century, and soon replaced the old semi-square mode.

For the same reason Beit-Arié decided not to make any sub-classification whatsoever in his Specimens for Yemenite manuscripts.\footnote{A first idea of the different appearances of Hebrew scripts may be gained from: REICHER, Hebrew Manuscripts, p. 28-39, where 48 short specimens with transcripts are provided; Colette Serrac's recent יד ביאור תן, p. 73-160 contains 30 highly informative longer transcripts of selected dated Hebrew manuscripts from different regions, with instructive photographs; a comprehensive treatment of the history of the Hebrew script is Ada Yardeni's wonderful Book of Hebrew Scripts; further see: NEUMARK, Fasimile.}

It is evident that the final word on the development of Hebrew script in the medieval
and even more so in the post-medieval period has not been uttered yet, and may never be.
All the same, it is to be desired that the Hebrew Palaeography Project's new series of paleo-
graphical atlases will shed some new light, at least on the medieval period.\footnote{Quoted from: PERITZ, Hebrewischer Brief, p. 9-12.}
2 A History of Hebrew Manuscript Cataloging

Die Geschichte der jüdischen Bücherkunde kann von der der Literaturgeschichte nicht getrennt werden. Einen Abriss der Schicksale dieser jungen Wissenschaft hat Zunz in der Einleitung seines Werkes 'Zur Geschichte und Literatur' gegeben. [...] Wenn er mit der, ihm eigenen, an Bitterkeit streitenden Schärfe die christlichen Gelehrten geisselt, denen das Studium der jüdischen Geistesprodukte nie ein Mittel war, diesen Geist kennen zu lernen, sondern um im Judentum Zeugnisse der Unvollkommenheit und die Rechtfertigung zu dessen Aufhebung zu finden; so hat er doch das historische Fakultum nicht verschwunden, dass die wissenschaftliche Form erst durch jene Männer von wissenschaftlicher Bildung auf den spärlichen, widerstreitenden Stoff übertragen worden; dass die Juden selbst wegen ihres Schicksals und vermöge der religiösen Anschauung, welche von jeher dem Individuum eine sehr untergeordnete Stellung einräumt, wenig Sinn für eigentliche Geschichte hatten, auch für jene Elemente, welche die Haltpläcke im Strome der historischen Bewegung bilden.1

For Leopold Zunz (1794–1886) and Moritz Steinschneider (1816–1907), leading scholars of the 'Wissenschaft des Judentums', the study of manuscripts and their description were prerequisites for the study of Jewish history and literature. Although Zunz may have been the first to underline the great importance of studying the original sources, Moritz Steinschneider, often referred to as 'the father of Hebrew bibliography', was the founder of modern Hebrew manuscript cataloging. His catalogues have exerted an enormous influence on both his contemporaries and his followers. Of course Steinschneider’s leading role does not mean that he worked out of nothing. On the contrary, both in his manuscript catalogues and in his works on printed books Steinschneider leaned heavily on his predecessors. Therefore, before going into a detailed treatment of the catalogues of Moritz Steinschneider and of everything that followed, attention will be paid to what preceded.2

Until the End of the Middle Ages3

Already in the Babylonian Talmud (Bava Batra 14b–15a) one may find a list of the Biblical books in their correct order, which was obviously meant as a guide for copyists. Of only relative bibliographical importance, especially as in spite of this

---

1 STEINSCHNEIDER, Vortrénomen, p. 2.
2 A fairly complete overview of Hebrew manuscript catalogues can be found in: SHINN, Bibliography, Nos. 2898–3135 and SHINN, Bibliography Supplement, Nos. 5838–5892; the catalogues discussed in this chapter were selected (undoubtedly arbitrarily) on account of their importance for the history of the field and/or their methodological significance. A valuable listing of exhibition catalogues, which were for reasons of mere length left out of consideration here, may be found in: GROSS, 'Catalogue of Catalogues'.
3 Interesting as it is historically, the library of the Qumran community is left out of account here, as it is far beyond the methodological and chronological scope of this chapter.
list medieval Bible manuscripts show a great variety in the order of books, it may serve to indicate a traditional Jewish interest in the registration of books. For the medieval period there is much information available on the use of manuscripts, especially in scribes' colophons. Relatively little is known, however, of the handling of manuscript collections. Especially from the Cairo Genizah many lists of manuscripts from private libraries have been published in this century.4 Interesting as these may be from a (literary-)historical point of view they are of minor importance for the history of Hebrew manuscript cataloguing, as they rarely provide more than the most basic kind of information, i.e., the name of the author, a title, the writing material and, occasionally, a date.

Another striking witness of medieval Jewish bibliophily is Judah ibn Tibbon's (c. 1120–c. 1190) moral testament to his son Samuel (c. 1160–c. 1230). It is a clear example of what Leopold Zunz called 'den Sinn für Büchersammlungen.'5 In it he further complains about the son's negligence of his library and gives him detailed instructions how to take care of his collection.6 Although, in medieval times, Jews generally may have owned larger private collections than their non-Jewish neighbours, these collections never reached a size that should be judged according to modern standards. This was explained by Zunz in his own manner:

(...) größere Sammlungen freilich verbreit der Culturstand, die Armut und das Bedrängnis. Im fünfhundert Jahrhundert wuchs die Lust zu den Büchern; aber wo nicht das Mordschwert die Bücher mit Blut bespritzte, jagten Priester- und Kneimebdie die Besitzer fort und zerstörten die hebräischen Werke, die Niemand las, in alle Winde.

From the Humanists until Moritz Steinschneider

As is already clear from Steinschneider's words quoted in the beginning of this chapter, a truly 'scientific form' of studying Jewish literature and the books containing that literature was developed by Christian Humanist scholars rather than by the Jews themselves.8 Here the most important Humanist works and some still very significant Jewish attempts will be discussed. For methodological reasons a distinction (also in the order of presentation) is made between those works that claim to be more or less exhaustive listings of individual texts, often based on a variety of sources, and those that describe single manuscript copies of those texts, usually, but not necessarily, as part of a separate collection.

The first important work9 is De abbrevisatibus hebraicis by Johann Buxtorf (the father; 1564–1629), to which he appended the first scholarly bibliography of rabbinic literature, entitled Bibliotheca rabbinica nova, ordine alphabetic hebraico disposita. The book was first published in Basle in 1613,10 and was reprinted several times afterward with additions.11 It contains 324 items, manuscripts and printed books, arranged alphabetically according to their Hebrew titles. The descriptions provide the Hebrew title with Latin transcription and translation, the author, a short discussion of the contents, and the place and date of production (mainly in the case of printed works). Although the work is based almost entirely on Buxtorf's private collection, which was later sold to the Public Library in Basle, its title indicates that Buxtorf considered his work to be of general importance and that he never meant it to be a catalogue of his collection.12

Between 1675 and 1693 the Vatican librarian and teacher Giulio Bartolocci (1613–1687), a Cistercian monk, published in Rome his is ode:y (Qiryat sefer), or Bibliotheca magna rabbinica. The impressive work (four volumes in folio) contains no less than 1680 entries of printed books and manuscripts in Hebrew and Latin, arranged alphabetically according to the Hebrew forms of the author names or, in the case of anonymous works, according to a Hebrew subject or simply the Hebrew title. Both Hebrew and Latin entries list the author, a subject, biographical notes on the author, the title, a description of the contents, the place and date of production and a location, while in the usually more comprehensive Latin descriptions additional information is provided on the format and, in the case of manuscripts, on the writing material. On the titlepage of the first volume the following motto, can be found: מברכיהGOOD (Saying of the Fathers 1:14); a better reason to publish a bibliography hardly can be given.13

The first Hebrew bibliography prepared by a Jew is Sifte yeshivim by Shabbethai Bass (1641–1718), printed in Amsterdam in 1680.14 Unlike his non-Jewish predecessors and contemporaries Shabbethai Bass wrote his book for an exclusively Jewish audience. The more than 2,200 entries (of which some 265 duplications should be subtracted), arranged alphabetically according to the title, usually provide the title, the author, a discussion of the contents of the work, the place and Hebrew date of production, a location (in the case of manuscripts, usually a private collection) and the format. Bass's

6 See Abraham, Hebraic Ethical Wills 1, p. 51-92.
8 A fine introduction to the history of Judaeo-bibliography, with considerable attention for the personal lives of the bibliographers, is in Birman, History. The earlier period of Hebrew bibliography is discussed in Chapter 1: 'General Hebraica Bibliographies', p. 2-35. The analysis of certain of the bibliographies and catalogues presented here inevitably lean heavily on (and partly repeat) Birman's (op. p. 29-31).
9 In 1556 Michael Naenzer published in Basle his Sancta lingua Hebræa Erstesma, to which he added a Catalogus librorum quorumdam honorum atque præcipientium in linguæ sìriæ, Ebraeæ scilicet, Chaldææ, Aethiopicae, Arabicae, etc. Graece atque Latina. This appendix is often considered to be the first Hebrew bibliography proper, but is of no importance here as it appears to describe printed books only (mainly Biblia); Prius, Basler hebräischen Drucke, No. 96, p. 137-138.
10 Prius, Basler hebräischen Drucke, No. 212, p. 323-324.
11 Prius, Basler hebräischen Drucke, No. 212, p. 323-324.
12 Birman, History, p. 3-5, 29.
13 Birman, History, p. 8-18, 20-30; also see: Böss, 'Hebrew Collections', p. 15.
descriptions include, at least according to Shimeon Brisman, some 825 manuscripts or works not directly known to Bas.15

Hebrew bibliography during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was dominated by one impressive work, the Bibliotheca hebraea, written by the Christian scholar Johann Christoph Wolf (1683-1739), and printed in Hamburg and Leipzig between 1715 and 1739. The four-volume work, containing over 5,000 pages of text, was to influence many later bibliographers, especially Moritz Steinschneider. The first two volumes make up the actual listing of manuscripts and printed books; the other two supplement the first with addenda, corrigenda and indices. There are 2,231 author entries and 784 anonymous entries, besides a large number of additional references. Entries provide information on the author (in Hebrew script and in romanized form), biographical data, the title (in Hebrew script and in Latin translation), a discussion of the contents, a place and date of production, the format and a location. Although Wolf made extensive use of the work of his predecessors, and in spite of the fact that he introduced quite a few bibliographical 'ghosts', his Bibliotheca hebraea ushered in a new era of Hebrew bibliogra-

phy. On the one hand, he realized that he had to use his sources critically and, on the other hand, he was able to use the renowned Oppenheimer collection of Hebrew manuscripts and printed books, now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford, which was at that time stored in Hanover. The most important drawback of Wolf's Bibliotheca is the 'embarras de richesse', a thing often said also of the works of one of Wolf's greatest admirers, Moritz Steinschneider.16

Although not a bibliographical work in the strict sense of the word, mention should be made here of a 'bio-bibliographical' work of which the first volume appeared in Le Qaem in 1774 and the second in 1786: סֵפֶר הַבְּמַדְגֵּדָלִים (Sefer ha-bemagdelim) by Hayyim Joseph David Anulai (1724-1806). The work was complemented in 1796 by another work of his: מִדְגֵּדִים מַהְלָכָה (Midagal vehelakehem) and in 1798 by a second edition, with considerable additions, of the first volume. The approximately 1,300 biographical and approximately 1,200 bibliographical entries, which provide some formal structure, or provide detailed information on many Hebrew printed books and manuscripts, in the (Jewish) tradition of Shabbethai Bass but generally on a higher level of scholarship.17

A last attempt at achieving an overall Hebrew bibliography, including both manuscripts and printed books, is the Ozar Ha-sephorim, compiled by Isaac Benjacob (1801-1863) and edited and eventually published by his son Jacob Benjacob (1859-1926). It appeared in Wilna between 1877 and 1880. Among the approximately 15,000 descriptions, there are some 3,000 Hebrew manuscripts. Ideally, descriptions in the Ozar include information on title, author, script, language, contents, comments, textual subdivisions, translations, place, date and location. It goes without saying, however, that in a work of this scope ideal descriptions hardly ever are achieved. The Ozar was supplemented by M.M. Slatkine in 1963.18

Toward the end of the eighteenth century and in the beginning of the nineteenth century, one witnesses in Italy, at least among non-Jewish scholars, a new tendency within Hebrew bibliography to treat manuscripts and printed books separately. This tendency led to the publication of a number of catalogues of Hebrew manuscript collections, one of the best known of which is a catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts in the Vatican library, prepared by Joseph Simonius Assemanus (1687-1768) and his nephew Stephano Evdovius Assemanus (1707-1782). It was published in Rome between 1756 and 1759 as the first part (in three volumes, all published) of a larger catalogue entitled Bibliothecae apostolice vaticaneae codicum manuscriptorum catalogus in tres partes distributus. The first volume contains descriptions of the Hebrew and Samaritan manuscripts; the two other volumes describe Syriac manuscripts. The descriptive data of the 512 Hebrew and the two Samaritan manuscripts, containing thousands of different texts, are presented in a systematic manner. The first section of the description provides (if applicable) a general indication of the age of a manuscript (usually: 'codex antiquus'), format, material, the number of leaves, the type of script and occasionally a provenance; the next section provides a relatively detailed listing and discussion of the texts found in the manuscript. The last line of the description often contains a more precise dating of the manuscript (such as: 'L Codex decimoquarto Christi seculo septimo sexagiesimo').19

In 1803 Giovanni Bernardo De Rossi (1742-1831) published in Parma his three-volume MSS. Codicis hebraici Biblioth. I.B. De Rossi [...] accurata ab eodem descripsit et illustravit. It contained descriptions of his impressive private collection of 1,432 (mostly Hebrew) manuscripts, which is now in the Biblioteca Palatina at Parma.20 In his catalogue De Rossi, a catholic priest who held the chair of oriental languages at Parma University from 1769 to 1821, concentrates on the literary background of the manuscripts more than on what may be called the material side of the manuscripts, of which usually only material, format and place/and or date are given. De Rossi's biased approach was described by Zunz in the following manner:21

15 BRISMAN, History, p. 9-13; 11, 30-31; FUKS, Hebrew Typography 1, p. 3-4.
17 For a much more detailed discussion of Anulai's work, see: BRISMAN, History, p. 75-79.
18 SLATKINE, Ozar, p. 116 yadaiyhem mevarekh.
19 The descriptions should be used with caution as may be illustrated from No. 148 in the catalogue, reportedly a manuscript of the Or Zara by Isaac ben Moses of Vienna. This would be only the third remaining medieval manuscript of this classic of Ashkenazic halakhic literature but, as Umberto Cassuto pointed out, this is a case of 'fraintendimento completo': CASSUTO, Manoscritti Palatini, p. 117, n. 16; also see: ZUNZ, Hebräische Handschriften in Italien, p. 8: "Was Assemani von Bartolocci sagt, dass er über irrführt, das gilt auch von ihm selber. Further information on the Hebrew manuscripts of the Vatican Library may be found in: BOWLI, Hebrew Collections and in the catalogue in which his article was published: HAT: Visual Testimony.
20 A supplement to De Rossi, describing 175 items, was published by: PEELOUI, Catalogo.
21 ZUNZ, Hebräische Handschriften in Italien, p. 9-10.
The Manuscripts Catalogues of Moritz Steinschneider

Although Moritz Steinschneider's two probably most important bibliographical achievements are his *Catalogus librorum hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin 1852-1860) and his *Die hebräischen Übersetzungen des Miltiades und die Juden als Dolmetscher* (Berlin 1893), part of his great fame certainly also rests on his manuscript catalogues.22 His first major contribution to this field is his *Catalogus codicum hebraeorum Bibliothecae Academicae Lugduno-Batavae*, published in Leiden in 1858. It contains descriptions of the 18 Hebrew manuscripts from the collection of Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540-1609), of the 79 Hebrew manuscripts from the collection of Levinus Warner (1619-1665), and of 15 *Codices Post-Warneriani*.23 Among these 112 manuscripts there are many miscellany volumes so the actual number of texts is much higher. Steinschneider's descriptions, written in his own Latin, are typical of his bibliographical style: abundant information on texts and authors and many extremely short references to related primary and secondary sources. The often lengthy discussions of the texts (which are still of great value, especially for the Karaites manuscripts in the Warner collection) are preceded by the following technical information, printed in smaller type: material, format, number of leaves, number of columns, type of script (when a colophon is lacking followed by a provisional dating), decoration, colophons and provenances and occasional remarks related to the actual copying process (copying mistakes, strange vocalizations, etc.). His discussions of the texts always include the opening page of the text, a Hebrew title with its Latin translation, a Hebrew name of the author as (and id) provided in the manuscript and its Latin form, and biographical information on the author. The rest of the information provided depends heavily on Steinschneider's own personal interest.

Steinschneider's next important manuscript catalogue is his *Die hebräischen Handschriften der K. Hof- und Staatsbibliothek zu München*, which appeared in Munich in 1875. A second, augmented, edition appeared in 1895. In this catalogue, for which the manuscripts were sent to him in Berlin, Steinschneider was forced to be stricter than ever, to guarantee uniformity with other Munich manuscript catalogues. It contains 360 entries arranged according to their formats (folio: Nos. 1–151, quarto: 200–389, octavo: 400–418), many of which describe miscellany volumes (on account of which a subject arrangement was impossible). The entries begin with technical notes on the writing material, the number of leaves, the script, and a statement on the date of production (all printed in very small type), usually followed by the opening page of a text, its Hebrew title, the Latin name of the author, extremely abbreviated primary and secondary references and texts of colophons and old provenances. Only occasionally may additional information be found.

Steinschneider's next catalogue is his *Catalog der hebräischen Handschriften in der Stadtbibliothek zu Hamburg und der sich anschließenden in anderen Sprachen*, published in Hamburg in 1878. It contains 340 Hebrew entries (besides some in other languages), for the first time arranged according to subject. Again discussions of the texts are preceded by Steinschneider's usual technical details, printed in smaller type: material, number of leaves, script, date, colophons and provenances. Especially in this Hamburg catalogue Steinschneider provides long transcripts of Hebrew texts from the manuscripts, while the information included in the discussions of the text varies considerably from manuscript to manuscript. In terms of mere length the discussions seem to stand midway between the Leiden and Munich catalogues.

Steinschneider's last major manuscript catalogue was his *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin 2. Verzeichniss der hebräischen Handschriften*, published in Berlin in two volumes in 1878 and 1897 respectively. It contains descriptions of 259 Hebrew manuscripts. The first volume contains 124 descriptions, arranged according to their formats and their shelfmarks; the second volume describes the remaining 135 manuscripts, arranged according to subject. The basic structure of Steinschneider's entries, technical information followed by a discussion of the texts, remained unchanged; in the first volume he did refrain, however, from using smaller type for the technical information. More than in any other of his catalogues, the amount of detail provided in the descriptions seems to depend heavily on Steinschneider's personal interest. Thus a splendid decorated medieval Ashkenazi Bible codex (No. 2 in the catalogue) is described in only seven lines of text, while to a sixteenth-century medical miscellany (No. 62) he devotes more than three pages.

George Margoliouth once summarized Steinschneider's working method as follows:24

Dr. Steinschneider cultivates extraordinary fullness of detail, and he is never tired of tracing a name, a date, or any other interesting point, through all its possible bibliographical windings.

It should be noted that it is especially this 'fullness of detail', which many consider Steinschneider's weakest point; the liberties he allows himself in diverging from his standard descriptions do not enhance 'user-friendliness' of his catalogues either. But no matter how justified this criticism may be at times, it does not take away at all from his role as 'inaugurator of the modern scientific manner of describing Hebrew MSS.'25

From Moritz Steinschneider until World War II

From the Steinschneider era until the mid-thirties of this century many catalogues of Hebrew manuscript collections, both private and public, appeared, of which the most important will be discussed here.

The first catalogue that should be mentioned is *Catalogues des manuscrits hébreux et samaritains de la Bibliothèque Impériale*, written by Hirsch Zotenberg (born 1836) and published in Paris in 1866. It contains no less than 1313 Hebrew and 11 Samaritan entries, among which are quite a few miscellanies. Descriptions are arranged according to

---

22 Apart from the major manuscript catalogues discussed here, Steinschneider also produced a number of commercial catalogues. A fine example of these is his *Catalog hebraischer Handschriften, geleistem Theil aus dem Nachlass des Rabb. M.S. Chirenda*, which is a bibliographical reproduction of his autograph text ("autography").

23 An informative discussion of the history of Leiden University Library's Hebrew manuscript collection may be found in: *Hinze, Van der*, *Hebrew Manuscripts*, p. 1-19.


subject and provide a French description of the title and author, often but not always accompanied by a short Hebrew title. Considerable attention is paid to the identification of the text, especially of liturgical poetry. Occasionally one finds quotations from the manuscripts themselves, but usually the information is provided in a French paraphrase. At the end of each entry Zunenbergs provides information on the writing material, the format and, in the case of undated manuscripts, the century in which he believed the manuscript to have been produced.

In 1875 Abraham Eliezer Harkavy (1839–1919) and Hermann Leberecht Strack (1848–1922) published in St. Petersburg and Leipzig their Catalog der hebräischen Bibliotheken der Kaiserlichen Öffentlichen Bibliothek in St. Petersburg. It contains some 200 descriptions, arranged according to shelfmark, of often very early Biblical manuscripts and fragments (including a number of forgeries). The manuscripts were sold to the library by Abraham Firkowitsch (1786–1874), a Karaite leader who spent most of his life travelling and collecting books. The structure of the entries varies according to the specific character of the manuscript described. Whereas the technical information in the description is usually limited to the writing material, a statement on the type of script, the number of columns and the measurements of the text area, much attention is paid to the textual manuscripts (variant readings and spellings, masoretic notes) and their provenances.

Although it contains no more than 32 manuscript entries (including some miscellanies), special mention should be made here of the Catalog der Hebräischen und Judaica aus der L. Rosenthal'schen Bibliothek compiled by Meijer Roest (1821–1889), which appeared in Amsterdam in 1875. Roest describes his working method as follows:


Technical information is usually limited to the number of leaves and the format, but considerable attention is paid to the actual contents of the manuscripts.

A year later, in 1876, Solomon Mayer Schiller-Szinessy (1820–1890) published in Cambridge the first volume of a Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts Preserved in the University Library, Cambridge. The 72 descriptions provide information on material, measurements, number of leaves, quire structure, the number of lines, types and modes of script, and a provisional dating, followed by a Hebrew and English title and a statement on the blanks. Most important in Schiller-Szinessy's descriptions are his extensive discussions of the texts contained in the manuscripts, which provide a wealth of still useful information.

A major achievement in Hebrew manuscript research is George Margoliouth's (1853–1925) Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the British Museum, the first three volumes of which appeared in London between 1899 and 1915. 'Part IV: Introduction, Indexes, Brief Descriptions of Accessions and Addenda and Corrigenda, by J.

Levene appeared in London in 1935. Margoliouth's catalogue of no less than 1206 entries, is arranged according to subject and chronology in the first two volumes and to shelfmark in the third. Entries, which are generally very accurate and are written in lucid language, include the following: material, size, collation, disposition, physical condition, script, date, title or incipit, contents, censors, owners, scribes, colophon and bibliography.

Easily comparable in importance to Margoliouth's British Museum catalogue is Adolf Neubauer's (1831–1907) Catalogue of the Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library and in the College Libraries of Oxford including MSS. in Other Languages, Which Are Written with Hebrew Characters, or Relating to the Hebrew Language or Literature; and a Few Sanskrit MSS. A first volume appeared in Oxford in 1886, a second, partly prepared by Arthur Ernest Cowley (1861–1931) in 1906. Together with the first volume Neubauer published his Fasciculi of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library Illustrating the Various Forms of Rabbincal Characters With Transcriptions. Neubauer's effort was preceded by a Conspectus, published by Moritz Steinschneider in 1857, which listed 500 manuscripts in the Bodleian library, and was later added to his Bodleian catalogue. Eventually Steinschneider did not prepare the final catalogue and had to leave the work to Neubauer.

The first volume contains 2,602 entries, arranged according to subject. The descriptions include information on author, title, date and place of production, contents, script, dimensions, material and collation. The second volume includes an additional 316 entries. Neubauer's main concern, by the way, was the actual production of the catalogue, rather than fullness of detail. In light of the number of manuscripts that had to be described this approach was of course completely justified. In 1984–85 Malachi Beit-Arié worked in Oxford on the paleographical identification of the Bodleian manuscripts in preparation of a revision of Neubauer's catalogue. This revision is expected to appear shortly.

Two catalogues by Arthur Zacharias Schwarz (1880–1939), Die hebräischen Handschriften der Nationalbibliothek in Wien, which appeared in Leipzig in 1925, and Die hebräischen Handschriften in Österreich (außerhalb der Nationalbibliothek in Wien), Teil I: Bibel - Kabbala, which appeared in 1931 also in Leipzig, may serve as good examples of the rapid development of Hebrew manuscript cataloguing since Moritz Steinschneider. In the Vienna catalogue the 212 codices, including many miscellanies, are arranged according to subject; 80 additional fragments were listed at the end of the catalogue. In his second catalogue, also arranged according to subject and describing the remaining Hebrew manuscripts in Austria, 283 codices are listed, the majority from the collection of the Jewish community of Vienna. Arrangement and structure of the two catalogues are identical. In the heading the entries provide information on author and title, usually both

26. Roest, Catalog, p. viii. The titlepage of Roest's catalogue is reproduced on p. 32.
29. As I was kindly informed by Malachi Beit-Arié; further see: Beit-Arié, 'Paleographical Identification', p. 15, n.7.
30. The second volume, in two parts, was published in New York in 1973 by D.S. Loewinger and E. Roth. Schwarz, Hebrew Manuscripts IIA, B. Part II A, based on Schwarz's already finished manuscript, describes nineteen manuscripts of philosophical, theological, medical and scientific content; Part II B contains descriptions of 167 fragments by D.S. Loewinger and E. Roth. Amazingly this work is not available in the Netherlands as I only became aware of its existence shortly before finishing the text of this dissertation. It could not be dealt with here. I would like to thank Thomas Kolitz, Amsterdam, for this reference.
in Hebraic and in German. After this heading Schwarz provides a detailed listing of the texts included in the codex, liberally quoting from, in particular, opening pages and colophons and often critically commenting upon the texts as well. Following the discussion of the texts Schwarz gives fine codicological descriptions of the manuscripts (in the modern sense of the word), printed in smaller type and indicating: writing material (with occasionally very detailed information on watermarks), number of leaves, measurements, number of lines and columns, quire structures, foliations and pagination, catchwords; provisional dating and types and modes of script; decoration; later additions and provenances; censorship; condition and binding. Because of the high quality of Schwarz's descriptions his catalogue can still serve as an example, even for many modern catalogues.

In 1930 Gershon Scholem (1897-1982) published a subject catalogue in Hebrew of 157 kabbalistic manuscripts in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem, which was originally intended to be the first in a series of catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts of the library: *Catalogus codicum hebraicorum quot conservatur in Bibliotheca Hierosolymitana [...]. Pars prima: Cabala*. Regrettably Scholem's volume ended up being the first and only catalogue in the series. The descriptions are usually (not always) short and include information on the writing material, the measurements, the number of leaves, the number of lines, the script and possible provenances, followed by a listing with critical comment of the contents of the manuscripts. Mention should also be made of the *Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts in the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem (Except Cabbalah MSS)*, which was published in Hebrew by Bernard Issachar Joel, editor of the bibliographical journal *Kiriath Sepher* from 1928 to 1968, in Jerusalem in 1934. The 648 entries are short and describe author and title, the measurements, the number of leaves, the script and the century in which the manuscript was (or is assumed to have been) produced.

Yet another landmark in Hebrew manuscript cataloguing is David Solomon Sassoon's (1880-1942) ידיעות עברית (Ohel Davud). *Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the Sassoon Library, London*, which appeared in Oxford and London in 1932. Sassoon, of Baghdadi Jewish descent, spent a lifetime collecting Hebrew printed books and manuscripts and managed to build probably the most important private collection of Hebrew manuscripts ever collected. He describes his working method as follows:

First of all to establish the title of the book and the name of the author where such are known. Then follows a full description of the contents. The beginnings and the ends of the treatises, works, or MSS. are given. Then writing, pagination, ownership, material (vellum or paper), size, and bibliography are indicated. [...] Altogether, I tried to give as faithful an account of the character and contents of the MSS. as possible.

Sassoon more than achieved his goal, although it has to be admitted that as a result of the lengthy quotations the descriptions often are very hard to read. Nevertheless his catalogue, comprising descriptions of 1,153 manuscripts arranged according to subject, is still a very useful bibliographical tool, in spite of the fact that many highlights from the collection were auctioned by Sotheby's in the 1970s and early 1980s and nowadays appear regularly in other auctions as well.

A year later, in 1933, the Italian paleographer Carlo Benheim (born 1877) published in Florence and Milan his *Codices hebraici Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*. This catalogue of the larger part of the Hebrew manuscripts in the Ambrosian Library in Milan contains 122 entries, which have been arranged according to subject. Information includes: title, author, contents (extensively), material, size, dimensions, number of lines, collation, catchwords, script and the history of the manuscript. Methodologically Benheim's catalogue is clearly influenced by the exemplary Austrian catalogues of Arthur Zacharias Schwarz.

**Since World War II**

After the Second World War, certainly also as a result of the rapid development of Israeli scholarship in the field, one witnesses an explosive growth of publications on Hebrew manuscripts in general, and of catalogues of Hebrew manuscripts in particular. For the sake of clarity a distinction will be made here between those publications that provide descriptions of manuscripts from a number of different collections and those that intend to provide the classic catalogue of a collection.

The life's work of Aron Freimann (1871-1948) provides a link between Hebrew manuscript research before and after the Second World War. Freimann spent most of his life collecting data on Hebrew manuscripts from catalogues of public and private collections, from commercial catalogues, from secondary literature and from correspondence. He entered the information on cards in his own hand. The unfinished work (i.e. the handwritten cards) was published in New York in 1964 under the title: *Union Catalog of Hebrew Manuscripts and Their Location*. In 1973 Menahem H. Schmelzer published in New York, a useful index of the names on the cards. The 11,861 (!) cards usually provide a Hebrew title, an author in German or English transcription, a subject in German or English, a location and bibliographical references. In spite of its unfinished state and its capricious nature, which makes it difficult to use, Freimann's work remains an inexhaustible source of often unexpected information.

An even more comprehensive source of information on Hebrew manuscripts is the "Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts" at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. The Institute was founded in 1950 and since then has acquired microfilms of some 50,000 Hebrew manuscripts and some 200,000 fragments from almost all the major collections in the world. Three volumes of a *List of Photocopies in the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts* were published in Jerusalem between 1957 and 1968 by N. Alony, D.S. Loewinger and E.F. Kapfer. The first volume lists Hebrew manuscripts in Austria and Germany, the second those in Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Spain and Switzerland, the third those in the Vatican. The descriptions, basically arranged according to the shelfmarks of the libraries, usually include title, author, (estimated) date (and place) of production and old shelf-marks. More important than the listings, however, is the publication in 1989 in Paris of *The Collective Catalogue of Hebrew Manuscripts from the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts and the Department of Manuscripts of the*
The heart of the Hebrew Palaeography Project is its database, the SFAR-DATA; it is kept in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. On 24 March 1993

35 Here abbreviated (in accordance with international consensus) as: CMDHs: for a list of catalogue of dated manuscripts from the non-Hebrew world, see e.g.: LEMMER, Introduction, Nos. 230-245, p. 227-229; an evaluation of the different projects can be found in: Manuscripts dates. Premiers bilans, also see: ‘Manuscrits datés moyen-orientaux.’
36 The questionnaires have been published by: BEIT-ARIEL, ‘Premiers résultats’, Pl. XII-XXIII.
37 See the introductions in French (by Colette Sirat) and in Hebrew (by Malachi Beit-Arieh) in the first volume of ‘Notices’ of the Manuscrits médiévaux. p. 7-9 and –as is also the case in other HPP publications the Hebrew text provides more information than the French.
38 BEIT-ARIEL, The Codicological Data-base.

the database, which is as yet not available on-line, contained descriptions of 2,561 dated Hebrew manuscripts (or codicological units, to be more precise) and 1,311 undated manuscripts with a scribe’s name. The existence of 3,335 dated manuscripts was known, of which 3,172 are indeed traceable. Approximately 35 % of these manuscripts are Italian, 21 % Sephardic, 14 % Ashkenazic, 15 % Oriental (including Yemenite), 9 % Byzantine and 6 % unidentified. It should be realized that, for example, Byzantine Hebrew manuscripts appear to have been left undated much more often than manuscripts from other regions, so some caution with these statistics is indicated. The SFAR-DATA provides all searching features that may be expected from a relational database system. To give but one example: when searching for manuscripts with horizontal lines ruled in ink and vertical boundary lines ruled by plummet the database comes up with no less than 101 manuscripts, all Northern Italian and copied between 1421 and 1490. Information from the SFAR-DATA is available for researchers upon request.

Of great importance for the study of decorated Hebrew manuscripts in particular is the Index of Jewish Art: Iconographical Index of Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts, prepared by the Center for Jewish Art of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and headed by Bezalel Narkiss and Gabrielle Sed-Rajna. Until now five volumes of printed cards of Hebrew manuscript collections have been published. The first volume was published in 1976 and describes four Hagadas, the Bird’s Head Hagadah, the Erna Michael Hagadah, the Channah Hagadah and the Greek Hagadah. It contains 312 reference cards and 236 description cards. The second volume, consisting of 82 reference cards and 428 description cards, published in 1981, describes the Hiley and Bileg Hagadah, the Second Nuremberg Hagadah and the Yalwade Hagadah. The third volume describes the Rothschild Miscellany only, on 127 reference cards and 195 description cards, and was published in 1983. The fourth volume, from 1988, describes the illuminated Hebrew manuscripts of the Kaufmann Collection at the Library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and contains 281 description cards and a substantial introductory brochure, besides important corrections to earlier volumes. The descriptions include the First Kaufmann Hagadah, the Codex Mainani, the Second Kaufmann Meineh Torah, the first volume of the Tripartite Matzen, the Heilbronn Matzen, the Ulm Matzen, the Kaufmann Hagadah, the Kaufmann Petaro Siddur and the Kaufmann Italian Penitenciar. The Index of Jewish Art: Gross Family Collection 2, published in 1985, contains descriptions of 10 decorated Esther scrolls and codices, on 181 description cards. Descriptions of manuscripts include: origin, date, medium (i.e. material), collection, title, subject, rather elaborate codicological descriptions (which, in fact, provide information on most of the technical elements that are considered important nowadays) and a bibliography. The actual concern of the Index is, of course, the decoration in the manuscripts and not the codicology; descriptions of the decoration list: subject, the page in the manuscript, the technique, the situation (i.e. the position of the image on the page), a careful description of all relevant decorative elements in the manuscript and a photograph of the described image. Additional information on the date
of acquisition of the book, its price, its condition, its provenance and its bibliography may also be included. A similar approach to the Index of Jewish Art as far as the descriptions of the manuscripts are concerned, is Bezalel Narkiss’s 1982 Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles, which contains descriptions of 61 illuminated manuscripts. The entries in this catalogue follow a self-explanatory sequence. Most of the descriptive details follow the system used in other catalogues of manuscripts.

Both in the Index and in the British Isles volume codicological descriptions are not as self-explanatory as is claimed. Thus, in the codicological descriptions flyleaves are given in the statement on the size of the manuscript and the ruling is described in a somewhat uncommon, formalized manner.

It is obvious that, methodologically, the work of the Hebrew Palaeography Project overshadows much other research. Some of the more important Hebrew manuscript catalogues that have appeared since the Second World War deserve to be mentioned here, however.

In 1956 Umberto Cassuto published his Codices Vaticanici hebraici. Codices 1-115, the last Hebrew manuscript catalogue to be published in Latin! Its 115 descriptions, arranged according to shelfmark, contain extensive information on the texts included in the manuscripts, besides fairly detailed codicological descriptions and extensive information on the provenance of the manuscripts. Exemplary as Cassuto’s work may be, the fact remains that the only printed catalogue of the other Vatican manuscripts (116-453) is still that by the Assemani’s, discussed earlier in this chapter.

Especially important within the framework of this dissertation are the catalogues of the manuscripts of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana (721 entries) and of the library Ets Haim/Libraria Montezinos (458 entries), published by L. Fuxs and R.G. Fuxs-Mansfeld in Leiden in 1973 and 1975. Methodologically the two catalogues, which were arranged according to subject, claim to lean on George Margoliouth’s British Library catalogue. The general result, however, partly on account of the different nature of the collections described, is somewhat more limited in scope and detail. Another Dutch contribution is Albert van der Heide’s supplementary catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts in Leiden University Library, published in 1978. It contains additional information on the manuscripts already described by Steinschneider, of either codicological or textual content, besides descriptions of 86 additional manuscripts of various nature and importance. Van der Heide’s descriptions pay abundant attention to poetical elements in the texts.

Three modern catalogues concentrate on Oriental Hebrew manuscripts exclusively. The first is Norman Golb’s 1972 illustrated catalogue of the Spertus College of Judaica Yemenite Manuscripts in Chicago (95 entries), the second Saul L. Aranov’s 1979 A Descriptive Catalogue of the Benson Collection of Sephardic Manuscripts and Texts, now in the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada (322 entries), and the third is Victor Klugsbald of Paris’s Catalogue des manuscrits marocains de la collection Klugsbald (57 entries). All three catalogues concentrate on the contents of the manuscripts almost entirely, and give only limited information as to the technical background of the manuscripts. Especially Aranov’s catalogue is striking in this respect as it contains no codicological detail whatever. Luckily, Golb’s and especially Klugsbald’s catalogues have more to offer in this respect.

A recent Italian catalogue of great importance is Aldo Luzzatto’s 1972 ‘Catalogue of Undescribed Hebrew Manuscripts in the Ambrosiana Library’, Milan, entitled Hebraica Ambrosiana. The catalogue contains fine descriptions of 75 manuscripts, besides detailed descriptions of 27 illuminated manuscripts by Luisa Mortara Ottolenghi. The catalogue supplements Carlo Bernheimer’s 1933 catalogue. The entries, arranged according to subject, contain an elaborate heading (including for example information on the material, the measurements and the script), lengthy descriptions of the texts, a detailed codicological description and a bibliography. The catalogue was modeled after those by Margoliouth, Bernheimer and Casuto.

In Germany the last Ernst Röth and various other scholars have been involved since 1965 in the publication of four volumes of catalogues of Hebräische Handschriften in the German series Verzeichnis der orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland. Descriptions in these catalogues, varyingly arranged, are concise but adequate, usually indicating, besides author and title and place and date of production, at least the material, dimensions, script, binding, decoration, history of the manuscript and bibliographical references. Volume 1a and 1b describe 275 (150 + 125) manuscripts in the Stadt- und Universitätssbibliothek in Frankfurt, volume 2 describes 656 manuscripts in many different German libraries, while volume 3 describes the 177 Hebrew manuscripts of the H.B. Levy collection in the Staats- und Universitätssbibliothek, Hamburg.

Finally two more recent cataloguing projects deserve mention. The first, a catalogue of the illuminated Hebrew manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, is about to appear. It was produced by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna and describes one of the world’s most important collections of illuminated manuscripts. A first specimen of the catalogue was published already in 1971, and makes one eager to see more. It can be expected, of course, that in light of the rapid developments in the field of decorated Hebrew manuscript research the final result will differ considerably. Another cataloguing project of a major collection is that of the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, which is being prepared by Alexander Samsely. One of the main problems he has to deal with is the diversity of the Hebrew manuscript material in his hands, as the Rylands collection encompasses such dissimilar materials as medieval codices, Samaritan manuscripts, eighteenth-century decorated manuscripts, nineteenth-century correspondences and Esther scrolls. As such the Rylands collection is comparable to that of the Bibliotheca

41 A general outline of the Index, accompanied by a detailed manual may be found in: ‘Index of Jewish Art’.
42 NARKISS, Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles, p. 12.
43 For further information on the Hebrew manuscript holdings of the Vatican Library, see: BOYLE, ‘Hebrew Collections’.

44 LUZZATTO, Hebraica Ambrosiana, Notice (no pagination).
45 A sense of the great wealth of the BN’s collection is given in the most beautiful book on Hebrew manuscripts ever published: GABRIEL, D’une main forte.
46 See: NARKISS, ‘Manscripts hebreux enluminés’ in the end B. Narkiss did not co-operate on this project.
47 See the announcement of the project: ‘CATALOGUE’.
48 Also see: SANEL, ‘Interpreted Text’.
Rosenthaliana, not just from the literary point of view, but certainly also from the point of view of the cataloguer.

Appendix

The following comparative table is meant to give a general impression of the catalogues discussed in this Chapter. Such a general impression was considered more worthwhile than a thorough analysis, which would have led to an unacceptably detailed table. To give at least an idea of what quality is to be expected in the different catalogues an appraisal was added by assigning to the catalogues a number of bullets; the more the better. The most general information (name of the work, place, date, etc.) is left out of account here. The rubrics should be interpreted as liberally as reasonably possible, which means, for example, that a bibliographical statement on the author is considered as information on the text, while a mere statement on the format of a manuscript is considered to be codicology and a location as information on the history of a manuscript. There is no doubt that this table is influenced by personal taste and therefore biased. Its intention, however, is not to give the final word, but rather to somehow visualize the information contained in this Chapter. A further element of bias is, of course, the fact that in most cases the appraisals are based inevitably on secondary use of the catalogues only, and not on a comparison of the descriptions with the originals. The number of dots within a section is influenced primarily by the necessity to differentiate between the different catalogues discussed, rather than by qualitative criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List of entries</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Codicology</th>
<th>Decoration</th>
<th>History of the manuscript</th>
<th>Bibliography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buxtorf</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bartolucci</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bax</td>
<td>2200 (825)</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolf</td>
<td>3015</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anlai</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjacob</td>
<td>15000 (3000)</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asemmani</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeRodi</td>
<td>1432</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SteinLeiden</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SteinMunich</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SteinHamb</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SteinBerlin</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zrenzberg</td>
<td>1324</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strack</td>
<td>c. 200</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roest</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schiller-Sinz.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margoliouth</td>
<td>1206</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neubauer</td>
<td>2602 + 316</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schwartz</td>
<td>212(80) + 283</td>
<td>**********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schulm.</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joel</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sassoone</td>
<td>1153</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernheimer</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repertories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freimann</td>
<td>11861</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMHM</td>
<td>c. 50000</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHP</td>
<td>c. 5000</td>
<td>*********</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAA/Nakius</td>
<td>26 + 61</td>
<td>**********</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalogues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cassuto</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuls</td>
<td>721 + 458</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VdlHeide</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golb</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aranov</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klagesfeld</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lazarat/MO</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>**********</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VdHD</td>
<td>1108</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>***</td>
<td></td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3 A Model of Description for Hebrew Manuscripts

One of the main problems cataloguers of collections of Hebrew manuscripts like that of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana are facing is the diversity of the material under their control. Among many other things one may find medieval codices, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century decorated manuscripts, decorated marriage contracts and Esther scrolls, as well as autograph manuscripts. As it is practically impossible to publish separate catalogues of the different categories, which, obviously, would solve many problems, a methodologically consistent catalogue is all that can be aimed for. The following is an attempt to provide a model of description for Hebrew manuscripts that may lead to such a consistency, with a discussion of the practical decisions that have to be made. This discussion serves a double purpose. On the one hand, it is a guide to users of the tentative supplementary catalogue in Chapter 5; on the other hand, it may serve as an instruction for researchers who wish to follow the method presented here. As such it may contribute to the development of a more widely accepted model of description for Hebrew manuscripts.

The main goal of a listing of manuscripts is considered to be the presentation of a clearly defined collection of data relating to a handwritten source, in order to make known to a wider public (be that scholarly or lay) the specific nature of that handwritten source. As both short listings and large descriptive catalogues comply with these requirements, this definition is open to more than one interpretation; in fact that is exactly what is intended here. It is evident that researchers of manuscripts are not always able to publish large descriptive catalogues. This does not release them, however, from the obligation to make the manuscript material under their hands accessible for a wider public. Therefore the well-known codicologist Gilbert Ouy listed as one of the objectives of a modern catalogue:


Researchers of manuscripts should therefore feel obliged to publish their findings, no matter how preliminary, as soon as these may be useful to other researchers. Before going into

1 STEINZIEHER, Vorlesungen, p. 68.
2 Ouy, 'Comment rendre', p. 31.
3 One should always be aware of a certain risk involved in the publication of a preliminary listing of manuscripts; its very publication may influence negatively that of a more definitive descriptive
Preliminary Listings

With Ory's foregoing considerations in mind, I published in 1986 'An Inventory of Undescribed Hebrew Manuscripts in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana.' Descriptions in this inventory were of a preliminary nature, as they would, in due time, be superseded by more complete descriptions (many of these to be found in Chapter 5). For the same reason minor shortcomings were accepted. In *Studia Rosenthaliana* a number of basic rules were formulated, which are presented here in a slightly revised, more generalized version.

- An inventory intends to make accessible a well-defined corpus of manuscript material and to present the findings in a lucid and coherent manner.
- Any information not derived directly from the manuscript should be given between square brackets.
- For manuscripts without a title an English description of the contents should be provided. In the case that it is possible to determine the title with certainty, it should be given between square brackets.
- Maximum sizes should be given, in millimeters. Paper formats such as folio and quarto may be added to describe handmade papers.
- Where foliation and pagination are missing, the number of folia should be provided between square brackets.
- Occasionally extra information on the manuscript may be provided after the description proper.
- Only literature in which the manuscript is the primary object of study may be listed under the heading 'About the manuscript.' Secondary references should be given in footnotes.
- Bibliographical references do not have to be complete.

The following should not be listed in the inventory.

- A collation formula, which would entail a considerable delay.
- The binding, which in most cases is not of decisive importance.
- A detailed table of contents.

catalogue. In my view this risk has to be accepted, however, as in most cases the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

4 The idea of first publishing a more sketch of a collection of manuscripts is certainly not new to Hebrew manuscript research. Already in his 1907 review of Adolf Neubauer's Bodleian catalogue George Margolith spoke of 'first publishing a brief but carefully tabulated account of a collection of MSS, and then proceeding to prepare a catalogue on a full scale.' *Hebrew MSS in the Bodleian*, p. 89.

5 SCHÖNZEG, *Inventory*, p. 145-166. Basically the same rules were followed by M.H. MIRANDA-DE BOER in her 'Inventory.'

6 SCHÖNZEG, *Inventory*, p. 145-166. Basically the same rules were followed by M.H. MIRANDA-DE BOER in her 'Inventory.'

7 The notion, implicitly defended in my 1986 article, that a certain manuscript can only be listed in an inventory in case it is hitherto unknown is deliberately abandoned here. There is no reason not to make listings of other well-defined corpora according to the outline presented here.

---

A MODEL OF DESCRIPTION FOR HEBREW MANUSCRIPTS

- The provenance of the manuscripts.

These basic rules lead to the following sample description:

**Hs. Ros. 661**

תִּבְנֵי עֵどちら (mystical prayer-book for the sabbath, written by Isaac Luria (1534-1572)). Hebrew and Aramaic, with Yiddish indications. Copied and decorated by Jacob ben Judah Leib Shamas. Hamburg 1730. 126 x 86 mm. Parchment. 47 folios.

**ABOUT THE MANUSCRIPT:**


---

A very rigorous view on the necessity to make manuscript material accessible is reflected in J.P. Gumbert's *IIMM*, an *Illustrated Inventory of Medieval Manuscripts in Latin script*. In 1991 Gumbert published in Jerusalem a revised version of his introduction and of the basic rules and instructions of *IIMM,* in which he formulated four basic *IIMM* principles:

1. IIMM must aim at completeness, that is exhaustive coverage.
2. Of every MS there should be given, not only a description, but also a photograph – in actual size, of course.
3. If IIMM is to be of any use, its descriptions should contain as correct data as possible, and the more the better. But if it is to be of any use in our lifetime, it must be executed with great speed. [...] It is the speed that is the essential requirement (by way of indication: it ought to be possible for one person to catalogue 2000 items in one year).
4. IIMM must be uniform. All descriptions in all fascicles, whether of different fonts of one library, or of different libraries, or even of different countries, must contain the same data, preferably presented in the same manner, and above all collected according to the same rules.

These rules result in the following typical IIMM description:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>44</th>
<th>MS. Var. 647</th>
<th>It.-N</th>
<th>Xvmy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breviariu OFM.</td>
<td>Vellum (12 f.), 291 f.; 124x94 mm., 2 x 29 l. on 84x63 mm. (catchw. erased; rul pt-b; mar 12:12, 4). - Calendar. Penwork initials. (Original?) limp vellum cover.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

10 GUMBERT, *Illustrated Inventory. Experimental Procure* 4, No. 44.