EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 12: Continuity and Change in the Jewish Communities of the Early Eighteenth Century, Ohio State University, Columbus, August 17-19, 2015

Introduction

Why does it appear that, between the late seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth century, much of European Jewry (and elements within Ottoman Jewry as well) shifted from a generally traditional and religious way of life to a way of life that embraced non-traditional and/or non-halakhic practices and fashions?

There were no great intellectual or political upheavals within the Jewish community during this period. It was the era of the early Enlightenment and a moment of great religious and political shift in Western Europe, yet few Jews were great stakeholders in the intellectual or religious upheavals of the day. Nevertheless, the religious commitments and cultural mores of the Jewish community apparently went through profound changes in this short period. By the middle of the eighteenth century many Western European Jews conducted themselves in the manner of their Christian neighbors. Eastern European saw the beginnings of the Hasidic movement with its innovative and often counter-cultural practices. A significant number of Polish Jews became Frankists. Ottoman Jews showed the impact of Enlightenment influences and sometimes acculturated in their linguistic, economic, cultural and political habits.

Among the questions we might consider at the Workshop are these: Were Jews merely a passive minority swept up in the ferment of the surrounding society? Did they seek change within their own sphere? Were they conscious of change, or do we detect it only in hindsight? Were earlier Jews really as traditional and conforming as scholars have generally imagined? Were there internal processes in the Jewish community that can explain changes? How did the Jews in American, African and Asian colonial outposts of European lands respond to their special situation, tethered to European communities but often with far more cultural and religious latitude than Jews in the metropole? What changes occurred in the Jewish economic profile? How did Jewish communal institutions evolve? Did rural Jews have very different experiences than those in population centers? Did Jews’ relationship with the Land of Israel change significantly during this time?
Some scholars suggest a widespread model of change in this period according to which Jewish communities or movements sought to preserve the forms and terminology of tradition while introducing significant—even radical—innovations. This appears to be the case among the earliest Hasidim as well as some circles of kabbalists and Sabbateans. This mechanism for quietly oiling the engines of change promises to be a particularly rich area for investigation.
Introduction

At a time when cannibalism captured European imagination and was used as effective propaganda against the ‘other’ within or elsewhere, as well as a test case for the concept of Natural Law, it is hardly surprising to discover similar rhetoric in internal Jewish discourse of the early modern era. R. Jacob Emden’s halachic writing on the subject of modern medicine and his tenacious battle against Sabbateanism, provide illuminating examples of the use of cannibalistic imagery, as this had crystallised in colonial literature from the new world and in religious polemics on the Eucharist. Emden’s halachic position on the question ‘is it permissible to benefit from the cadaver of a dead gentile’ (*She’elat Y’avez*, 1739), makes the clear connection between cannibalism and theological heresy springing from an overly-literal reading of the scholarly canon on one hand, and the concept of the seven Noahide Laws on the other. In Emden’s opinion, the point about consuming human flesh, literally and particularly metaphorically, is what distinguishes between the sons of Noah (that is to say, Jews and Christians) and heretics, as well as between humanity and savages. This concept received significant impetus in Emden’s polemical writings against the Sabbatean heresy in the 1750s, when he became embroiled in controversy with R. Jonathan Eibeschütz and the Frankists.

The appointment of R. Jonathan Eibeschütz to head the triple community of Altona-Hamburg-Wandsbek in September 1750, soon turned into a major scandal. When amulets that he had distributed to pregnant women in Metz, Frankfurt and Hamburg were opened one after another (presumably after a number of the women had died in childbirth), they were discovered to contain the name of the messiah Sabbatai Żvi. R. Jacob Emden’s public declaration on February 4, 1751 that an amulet attributed to the new rabbi was tainted with heresy, was the opening salvo in what was to become the most volatile rabbinical controversy of the eighteenth century. In
an attempt to deflect the denunciations of his accusers, Eibeschütz provided
two commentaries of his own for the amulets, claiming that the holy names
were supposed to be read separately, and not as a connected text addressing
Sabbatai Ẓvi. The first commentary he gave to R. Shalom Buzaglo at the
beginning of the uproar. The second, for the ‘small amulet’, which he had
given to Mordechai Levi of Metz, ‘for his wife who had difficulty in
childbirth’, he published in 1755 in his book Luḥot ‘edut. As opposed to the
laconic commentary that was given to Buzaglo, the commentary in Luḥot
‘edut describes the process of gestation and birth in detail, from the fetus’
formation in the mother’s belly to the womb’s opening and the child’s
egress. Emden’s answer to Luḥot ‘edut was not slow to arrive. In 1756 he
published Shevirat luḥot ha-‘aven, in which he rejected Eibeschütz’s claims
one by one. Towards the end of the work can be found one of the most biting
and dazzling satires ever written against Sabbateanism, in which the writer
‘scoffs at the amulet’ commentary’, as Gershom Scholem mentioned in his
own hand in the margins of his copy. Emden’s version follows Eibeschütz’s
commentary in a stepwise fashion, yet describes a reverse process of turning
the fetus to stillborn. The most striking aspect of Emden’s commentary is his
extensive use of cannibalistic imagery to illustrate Eibeschütz’s claim
that the holy names in his amulet were supposed to be read apart, and not as a
complete piece. Dismantling the amulet and manipulating the names in order
to lead the public astray, is described as a ruthless, bloodthirsty orgy: after
he slept with a Lilith-like demonic woman, murderess of children, Eibeschütz
the father draws out the fruit of her womb, dissects the fetus into
pieces, flays it and finally, ‘opens his mouth in slaughter (Ezek. 21:27)’ and
‘eats the flesh of the tender child’ under the melancholy light of Saturn.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alleson-Gerberg, Shai, ‘The way of a Man with a Maiden; The Way of a Serpent upon a
Rock – R. Jonathan Eibeschütz View of Christianity in And I came this day unto
the fountain’ [Hebrew], in: P. Maciejko (ed.), R. Jonathan Eibeschütz, And I
came this day unto the fountain, Los Angeles 2014, pp. 278-300.


Eibeschütz, Jonathan , Luḥot ‘edut, Altona 1755, pp. 63a-71a.

Idelson-Shein, Iris, Difference of a different kind: Jewish constructions of race during the
long eighteenth century, Philadelphia 2014.

Kahana, Maoz, ‘An esoteric path to modernity: Rabbi Jacob Emden’s alchemical quest’,


In my youth, twenty five years ago, I saw a responsum of the Gaon, our teacher R. David Oppenheim, of blessed memory, who sent a few pages from his book which he wanted to publish in Amsterdam, but changed his mind. I still have some memory of it. It was about whether using human skin is permitted [‘al ‘esek hana’at ‘or ‘adam ‘im mutar]. And I remember that he rejoiced that he had found clear evidence in the Gemara, chapter Lulav ve-Aravah: ‘There were once two minim etc. R. Abbahu said [to Sason, one of them]: a water-skin will be made of your skin, and water will be drawn with it’.1 But this is nonsense, for it is nothing more than a scholar’s talk, mocking this heretic by answering a fool according to his folly (for it is permitted to laugh at idolaters). And I am surprised that he [i.e. Oppenheim] bothered to deal with such a trifle. This is nothing but ridicule of a heretic who is wise in his own eyes, by answering him in his own way; let them be appalled because of their shame, R. Abbahu answered mockingly. He [i.e. Oppenheim] could also have added the verse, ‘Behold, the people (etc.) [shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion], he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain’ (Numbers 23:24). This verse talks of slain idolaters and clearly says that one should eat human prey and drink his blood [she-yokh‘al teref ‘adam ve-dam halalim yishteh]. Using his [i.e. Oppenheim’s] reasoning, this verse is better. Even their meat and blood is permitted for eating like stag and deer [she-‘afilu ha-basar ve-ha-dam shelahem hutar la-‘akhilah ke-basar ẓvi ve-‘ayal] (therefore, even more so to use their skin). Indeed, the matter contradicts

---

1 The min by the name of Sason said to R. Abbahu: In the World to Come you will draw water for me, as it written: “And with joy [be-sason] shall you draw water [out of the wells of salvation]” (Isa. 12:3). He [R. Abbahu] said to him: If it was written le-Sason [i.e. for Sason], it would be as you said, but since it is written be-Sason [i.e. with Sason], a water-skin will be made of your skin, and water will be drawn with it’. Babli, Sukah 48b.
itself, for who would consider learning about prohibited and permitted and any laws from allegories and fables, whether from the Torah or Kabbalah, or from the sayings of the sages and their puzzles. Even more so, we cannot learn from what is a complete mystery. God forbid that we should understand things literally \([\text{halilah lehavin devarim ke-mashma’an}]\) and twist the words of the living God. Far be it from our sages of blessed memory from doing so! because those words were said to mock and deride. We scoff at the heretics according to their foolishness… And this is way of the wise to corner a perverted man so that he has no answer.
The Sabbatean who devoured his Son: The Emden-Eibeschütz
Controversy and Cannibalism
Shai Alleson-Gerberg, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure from Jewish history and literature. The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy, which centered around this figure, has been studied extensively. In this section, we will explore the historical context and the religious debates surrounding the figure of the Sabbath who devoured his Son. The controversy is a reflection of the broader debates over the nature of the Torah and the role of tradition in Jewish life. The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure who has captured the imagination of both scholars and laypeople alike, and his story continues to be debated and discussed in Jewish thought and literature.

1. Introduction

The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure from Jewish history and literature. The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy, which centered around this figure, has been studied extensively. In this section, we will explore the historical context and the religious debates surrounding the figure of the Sabbath who devoured his Son. The controversy is a reflection of the broader debates over the nature of the Torah and the role of tradition in Jewish life. The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure who has captured the imagination of both scholars and laypeople alike, and his story continues to be debated and discussed in Jewish thought and literature.

2. Historical Context

The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy began in the early 18th century, when the prominent Talmudic scholar Meshullam Dov Luntschi (1688-1736) published a work in which he argued that the biblical prohibition against eating the flesh of the Sabbath (Lev. 17:16) did not apply to the Sabbath of the converted. Luntschi's position was based on the Talmudic principle of 'chazakah,' which holds that a law is considered to be in force even if it is not explicitly stated in the Bible.

3. Religious Debates

The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy was a significant event in the history of Jewish thought, and it drew significant attention from both religious and secular scholars. The debate centered around the question of whether the prohibition against eating the flesh of the Sabbath was an aspect of the biblical law or a post-biblical innovation.

4. The Sabbath who Devoured His Son

The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure from Jewish history and literature. The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy, which centered around this figure, has been studied extensively. In this section, we will explore the historical context and the religious debates surrounding the figure of the Sabbath who devoured his Son. The controversy is a reflection of the broader debates over the nature of the Torah and the role of tradition in Jewish life. The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure who has captured the imagination of both scholars and laypeople alike, and his story continues to be debated and discussed in Jewish thought and literature.

5. Conclusion

The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure from Jewish history and literature. The Emden-Eibeschütz controversy, which centered around this figure, has been studied extensively. In this section, we will explore the historical context and the religious debates surrounding the figure of the Sabbath who devoured his Son. The controversy is a reflection of the broader debates over the nature of the Torah and the role of tradition in Jewish life. The Sabbath who devoured his Son is a figure who has captured the imagination of both scholars and laypeople alike, and his story continues to be debated and discussed in Jewish thought and literature.
The Sabbatean who devoured his Son: The Emden-Eibeschütz Controversy and Cannibalism
Shai Alleson-Gerberg, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Jacob Emden, Shevirat luhot ha-aven, Żółkiew [Altona] 1756, 53a-b.

[p. 53a] Now we shall consider the amulet’s interpretation [פרש. also: excrement], which is prohibited because its swollen body pleases the idolater, and from which stench arises. Therefore we should not sully our hands and stir it, so that its fetidness and stink and foulness should not get worse and defile the air. But first I wonder where the merciful [רחמן] father’s compassion (Gematria ח"ץ ['murder', 298]) is for his small son, the first to be born in his old age (after the seven-year gestation of the serpent’s son and initial coming [ראשונה בביאה] to the holy community of Metz) it being now five years after the foolish act wherein there has been no sign of blessing on his work. And this darling tender [ך] child (Gematria קמי ['amulet', 220]) amuses him daily. Despite that in Sabbath-ai [/{$\text{בשבתא}'}$] he lifts his son, with the wickedness and idolatry in him, as a son whose father longs for him; he turns cruel towards him, tortures him, rips his skin and cuts strips from his flesh to feed to Na’amiyyot [=she-demons], and cracks open his bones, opens his mouth in murder, son of falsehood and deception. Is there not in all his great deeds, much more than this small tender thing, to pour out his wrath upon them and rip them to shreds and judge them as the seed of evildoers, for their mother has played the harlot: she who conceived them, has acted shamefully with others. He pitied them, because the older sons had achieved understanding and implored him with these words: is there anyone who can cover the falsehood with lies? He did not despise their prayers nor did he know how to answer their complaints, because their cries rose up, are you not our father and you gave birth to us to do wickedness? Discern, we pray thee, whose is this signet. Please show the man, so that the old [/{$\text{נוייוס}'}$ in small Gematria: אייבשיצר, ‘Eibeschütz the enemy’, 20] and the righteous will not die. Therefore he was cruel to the foundling boy and hung an amulet on him to make him fit to come into the assembly. And now hear the charm of his deeds, to make the child [/{$\text{דל}'}$] weak [/{$\text{דל}'}$], like the legs of a lame man
which hang useless [דלי], so is a parable in the mouth of fools. In vain to circumcise the boy when his father is Sabbatai [=Saturn] the large and high wandering star whose fortune sinks into a bottomless pit, brings him down and does not raise him up, as if the child was the soul of the heretic [‘מי, possibly an acronym: יונתן מורנו’, our teacher Yonatan’], and when he was in Aquarius¹ [דלי, 44] his name became אלד [‘I will give birth to’, 35] woe to him that says to his father, what begettest thou and has conceived mischief and brings forth falsehood. Then the child became deathly ill and a letter [yod] was added to his name and he was called אלד [35+10=45] (that the boy’s name [דלי, 44] in small Gematria ע”קמי, ‘amulet’, 13]). And know that he was not content until he split his blood [דם]. After that he returned to being weak [דל, 34] because his blood had been thinned. And after the boy’s blood was spilt on the ground, he again threw out of his mouth [בдел] the letter yod with the kolel so that it [=דלי] became mem-heh [מה, 34+10+1=45].² In this way he breathed living soul into him. Again he sliced him into two and gave him milk [חלב, 40] to drink, tortured him with rope [חלב, 40]. And [the letter] heh [ה, 5] stands alone, as it is said, Do you thus requite the Lord [והזאת תגמלו לה], O foolish people (Deut. 32:6), lo, you have false seed. Afterwards heh [ה] turns to dalet [ד] and dalet to heh and blood [דם, 44] becomes mem-heh [מה, 45]. Afterwards the boy’s brain is filled with water [מים, 90] and it is not yet forbidden [treyfah], because they burst and were cut into two pieces (and here he hinted and concealed his secret, his wasting and destruction), pail [דלי] and water [מים] were connected and Reshef and Ketev meriri [=demons] ensued, and became again a childless man [אדם ערירי, 45], and lived and rose on his feet. And again he received a blow [מכה], and still lived, and made him fit to come into the assembly. Where is such a great wonder seen?! After being ripped and cut and his blood ran out, and he metamorphosed through a number of hard and bitter cycles, the fractures were healed, and then his limbs broke apart again and once again straightened out, and behold, he is fully a bridegroom to his father. And finally he suffered a great blow [מכה] with a rod, a wound of a cruel enemy striking with a hammer. Has there ever been such a terrible thing? Has anything like this evil deed been done in Israel by someone created in the image of God? And from this heartless deed in one cut, you learn about the rest of the boy’s pieces that he cut and arranged piece by piece, not simply as a loving father. And it is forbidden to correct a child’s

¹ In ancient astronomy, one of the ‘houses’ of Sabbatai-Saturn.
² Shem mem-heh (Adam) formed by spelling out in full the letters of the Tetrgrammaton (יהוה).
limbs on the Sabbath, so we will not deal with it ourselves, but only lance the abscesses and blisters that can be seen on the child, which are full of pus and fetid water. So all his flesh is corrupted and raises up vanity and vexation of spirit in swollen blisters. There is no vitality in them, only sin and wickedness. To him who tried to solve the calf’s parts in false visions, to seduce to evil, thorns will grow from his jaws. His words will bring destruction upon him and sentence him to drown in his own spittle, because his drool flows on his beard like deceptive water. We will not delay by considering the state of his soul, by removing the ragged sandal, so as not to laugh. The fool rubs his hands together and eats the flesh of the tender child. However, it is permitted to laugh at idolatry. It is time to mourn over the child who is born in sin under one of the shrubs, who has no brothers to eulogise him, only the creatures of the desert and jackals and the scops owl.

On the second cut he combined the name נבדלי and made a small mistake, because it certainly should be two words, דיי נבל [‘enough with the villain’]. We shall not stand in the filthy entrance, it is, however, worthy of mention that even at a time of danger his appetite did not abate, he is like a hungry dog with a carcass. He was not satisfied until he had slept with Zilah [צילה], the mother of demons, whose name he cried out. And he said: understand that this name comes from the verse, *Ze ha-sha’ar la-ha-Shem, zadikim yavo’u vo* [‘this is the gate of the Lord, the righteous shall enter it’ (Ps. 118:20), וההדשאלה' זדיקים יבואו בז]. He entered additional wisdom into this woman, and from this we learn that he slept with her and she bore him Zvi [צבי], who is hinted at in an acronym zadikim yavou vo. [زادיקים יבואו בז].

[53b] He is the beloved son, his lastborn, whose pieces he arranged here, and their souls bonded together [and his soul is bound up in his soul] so he crowned his skeleton [שלד] according to custom, flayed his skin from his bones, scraped it and stood it on its scabs, and his hands were fouled with the placenta [שליא] and he called him Shiloh [שלה] (to hint that it was he who came to him because it is stated that Shiloh will come), and he lied when he birthed him. From now on, he called him Tzeled Sheled [צלד שלד] Gematria (?) Yonatan [יונתן, 516], to announce that he raised him. And from this deed of chaos and deception you learn about the tangled acts in the rest of the cuts, so that there is no need to describe them in length, woe is the hour that I lost reading them, I will simply go over them quickly in passing so as not to pause too long from meditating on the Torah.

---

3 Compare to Nathan of Gaza’s treatise, *Nevu’ah mi-sefinah de-Yonah*: ‘Ze ha-sha’ar la-ha-Shem – this is our righteous Messiah; ”’زادיקים ירשו ואו – this is Zvi’. Gershom Scholem (ed.), *Be’ekvot Meshiah*, Jerusalem 1944, p. 68.

4 Compare: Gen. 44:30; 1 Samuel 18:1.
The Sabbatean who devoured his Son: The Emden-Eibeschütz Controversy and Cannibalism
Shai Alleson-Gerberg, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
A Jewish casino in Livorno
Francesca Bregoli, Queens College of the City University of New York

*Deliberacoims do Governo, Libro B, 56r-57r, Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, Livorno, Italy*

Introduction

In the spring of 1712, a Jewish casino was established in the Mediterranean port of Livorno (the casini were exclusive sites for conversation and game playing among the upper classes). Although in the seventeenth century the Jewish leadership had opposed them, it allowed this one to open as a way to prevent more dangerous forms of entertainment among young people. The venue was explicitly intended for the solace of the Livornese Jewish merchants and was given official sanction by the Grand Duke of Tuscany. In 1714, the *massari* (lay leaders) of the community assumed control of the space, by renting rooms on behalf of the community, and appointed one Isache Zamero as their agent to manage it. The following document includes some of the motivations that led the *massari* to accept the casino’s establishment, as well as the regulations they issued in order to guarantee decorum and modesty within its premises. By establishing this casino, the Livornese *massari* aimed to create an exclusively Jewish space where polite conversation over a licit game of cards was permissible; they justified game playing by considering the casino’s premises as domestic (not public), ruling

* This source comes from a collection of documents that the late Professor Renzo Toaff found and microfilmed in Livorno. He had begun translating them, but his death prevented him from publishing his work. I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of his heirs, Ephraim, Michael, and Shemaria Toaff and Shulamith Gross, who facilitated my access to this microfilmed material in order to commemorate their father and his pioneering work on the history of Livornese Jews. Transcription and translation are my own, from the microfilm in possession of the Toaff family. The original materials are held in the Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, in Livorno (Italy).
that guests should be in fact considered as house hosts. We can surmise that they hoped to strengthen specifically Jewish recreation and socialization, within a protected and monitored environment managed by the community, in opposition to the non-Jewish space of the larger society and its more “dangerous” forms of entertainment. Jewish leaders, contrary to previous assumptions about Jewish recreation in early modern societies, were thus willing to promote secular leisurely activities for certain members of the community, embracing change in the hope of policing more threatening behaviors and deviations.

**Short bibliography**
EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 12: Continuity and Change in the Jewish Communities of the Early Eighteenth Century, Ohio State University, Columbus, August 17-19, 2015

A Jewish casino in Livorno
Francesca Bregoli, Queens College of the City University of New York

Deliberacoiims do Governo, Libro B, 56r-57r, Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, Livorno, Italy

Original Text
Adì 13 marzo 1713 [1714]
[…]
I SS.ri Massari della Nazione Ebreà di Livorno, sentito il S.r Isache Zamero che rappresentava alle SS.rie LL. Molt’ll Ill.i, qualm.te con benigno rescritto di S.A.R. del di 4 Aprile 1712 era stato concesso alla m.a nazione ebraì il poter eriggere un casino, ed aprire le stanze del pubblico in sollievo delli mercanti e persone civili della medema nazione trattenendosi in onesti discorsi, e potendo quelle persone che volessero divertirsi giocare alle minchiate et ombre come si era praticato prima nelle stanze d’attenenza del S.r Eliau Valensin e doppo nelle stanze di proprieta’ de SS.ri Zacuto come a tutti e’ pubblico e notorio […]
E che havendo doppo i dd. SS.ri Zacuto proprietari di dd. Stanze dove si teneva d. casino di conversazione e giuoco licenziatoli per servirsene ad’uso di magazzino sia stato alcun tempo interrotta d.a conversazione e trattenimento, e deliberando d.o S.r Zamero far cosa grata a detta sua nazione, ed assistere in tale stanze, tenendole polite, aperte in tutti i tempi addobbate et illuminate compiacendo in tutte le cose oneste a i mercanti,

* This source comes from a collection of documents that the late Professor Renzo Toaff found and microfilmed in Livorno. He had begun translating them, but his death prevented him from publishing his work. I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of his heirs, Ephraim, Michael, and Shemaria Toaff and Shulamith Gross, who facilitated my access to this microfilmed material in order to commemorate their father and his pioneering work on the history of Livornese Jews. Transcription and translation are my own, from the microfilm in possession of the Toaff family. The original materials are held in the Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, in Livorno (Italy).
Faceva istanza pregando le SS.rie LL. molt’Ill.ri a concederli la facoltà di tenere le dette stanze del pubblico, e nelle quale si esebisce a tenere li tavolini che occorreranno adobbi e lumi necessari e persona che assista a tutto ciò che sarà necessario in dette stanze aperte per conto del pubblico sottomettendosi a quelle regole et ordinazioni che li saranno prescritte [e] date da dd.i SS.ri Massari obbligandosi a mantenere questa impresa per tre anni.

Quali SS.ri Massari essendosi pienamente informati della verità de i fatti sopra esposti e narrati da d.o S.r Zamero e particolarmente dell’essersi per più e più anni giocato all’ombre e minchiate nelle dette stanze già d’attendenza del S.r Valensin [56v] e già di proprietà de SS.ri Cesare Leone, come col motivo d’essere un onesto divertimento e non contrario alle disposizioni delle leggi per remediare i disordini ne i quali suol incorrere la gioventù.

Visto e considerato l’acetazione di rescrito e grazia concessa da S.A.R. accettata da più particolari e approvata dal seggio delli SS.ri Massari di quel tempo […] che si considera sempre fatta con l’istesso retto fine di trattenere la gioventù occupata e divertita senza scandolo […] concedono al d.o S.r Isache Zamero facoltà di tener le stanze già prese da dd. Massari a pigione per conto del comune della nazione come agente e ministro delli medemi SS.ri Massari per conto et interesse del pubblico della Nazione Ebreo, a favore dei quali, e di ciasched’uno di essi mercanti e persone civili è stata emanata la d.a Benigna Grazia e come tale intendono li dd.i SS.ri Massari che ciasched’uno di loro in particolare ed universalmente siano considerati come padroni di casa e che abbino ciasched’uno di loro […] dominio e facoltà come in casa propria, tutto ad’ogni miglior fine ed effetto, con le regole che saranno concordate da osservarsi da d. Zamero […]

Dato questo dì 6 marzo 1713

Josef Attias sen[ior]
Selomo d’Abram di Medina
Abram di Jacob Haim Pegna
David de Medina

Capitoli da osservarsi nelle stanze pubbliche di proprietà della nazione concessa da S.A.R. per sollievo de mercanti e persone civili, stabiliti in
seguito alla deliberazione dell’ill. SS. Massari del 6 di marzo 1713.

1° Che dette stanze devono aprirsi due ore avanti mezzo giorno, e doppo
pranzo di state, a diciott’ore e l’inverno a ore vent’una, e devano serarsi di
state a tre ore e d’inverno a ore quattro.

2° Che qual’unque persona che v’intervenga deva stare col dovuto rispetto, e
[57r] moderazione, senza alzare la voce, ne tenere discorsi disonesti, ne
gareggiare in dispute e contenzioni, ne parlare in danno e pregiudizio d’altri,
ma solo in novità di negozio e sopra le gazzette e nuove pubbliche e notizie
istoriche.

3° Che si deva in esse intervenire col solito abito che si va per la città, e che
sia permesso levarsi la perucca, porsi in testa qualche obietto decoroso e che
non sia tela bianca pura.

4° Che alcuno non possa introdurre in dette stanze, che mercanti e persone
civili, a tenore del comando di S.A.R.

5° Non s’ammette nelle dette stanze alcun servitore se non a portar qualche
ambasciata alla porta.

6° Che non possano nelle dette stanze fumare ne mangiare.

7° Che in dette stanze si possano fare accademie tanto di musica che di belle
lettere.

8° Non possano giocare a dado secco, ne alla bassetta, ne a primiera, ed
altri simili giuochi di minor numero di otto carte, essendo solo permesso
quelli giuochi di minchiate ed hombre che S.A.R. in detta Benigna Grazia à
concesso, e questi non continovam.te, ma interrottamente in modo tale che
alcuna persona non possa incorere nella taccia di giocatore assiduo, e
continovo, et in tutti i giuochi devansi mettere sul tavoliere il denaro, non
lassando giocare ad’alcuna persona su la parola, et in caso ch’alcuna persona
giocasse su la parola sia obbligato chi perde a non pagare, per essersi
considerato non obbligato.

9°: Che alle minchiate non si possa giocare più che un giulio il resto, et a
tutti i generi dell’hombre ad un paolo la poglia e compradiglio ed inquiglio a
quattro crazie la poglia.

X° Che per ciasched’un mazzo di carte basse si deva pagare crazie venti e
per le minchiate quattro pavoli e devano essere tutte nuove.
XI° Che ciasched’uno delli concorrenti devano contribuire con quella cortesia che li passa per aiuto delle pigioni, et spese di dette stanze una volta tanto all’anno da mettersi nel ceppo.

XII° E riconoscendo i SS.ri Massari che le loro occupazioni del Tribunale non li permettono una competente asistenza per superintendere a dette stanze, per tanto senza declinare elessero et eleggano i SS. Paltiel Arias, Rafael di Medina, e David de Isache Attias per diputati da durare il tempo di tre anni, con autorità a medesimi di provvedere all’inconvenienti che potessero succedere, et occorendo si compiegheranno con i SS. Massari per poter procedere al castigo contro di contravenisse o usasse alcuna disattenzione.

Josef Attias sen[ior]
Selomo d’Abram di Medina
Abram di Jacob Haim Pegna
David de Medina
A Jewish casino in Livorno
Francesca Bregoli, Queens College of the City University of New York

Deliberacoiems do Governo, Libro B, 56r-57r, Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, Livorno, Italy

English translation by Francesca Bregoli

Messrs. Massari of the Hebrew Nation of Livorno, after having heard Mr. Isache Zamero, who stated to Their Very Illustrious Lordships how, with a benign rescript issued by His Royal Highness on April 4, 1712, it had been granted that the Hebrew Nation might establish a casino and open public rooms to offer solace to the merchants and civilized people of the same nation, so they can be entertained in honest conversations, and those people who so wish are allowed to play the games of minchiate and ombre, in the same way as it was customary earlier on, in the rooms managed by Mr. Eliau Valensin, and later in the rooms owned by Messrs. Zacuro, as it’s public and well-known to everybody […]

And since -- after said Messrs. Zacuto, owners of said rooms where the casino devoted to conversations and games was held, dismissed it in order to use [the rooms] as a warehouse -- said conversation and entertainment has been interrupted for some time, and said Mr. Zamero -- reckoning [he could] do something valuable for his nation, and assisting in said rooms, keeping

* This source comes from a collection of documents that the late Professor Renzo Toaff found and microfilmed in Livorno. He had begun translating them, but his death prevented him from publishing his work. I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of his heirs, Ephraim, Michael, and Shemaria Toaff and Shulamith Gross, who facilitated my access to this microfilmed material in order to commemorate their father and his pioneering work on the history of Livornese Jews. Transcription and translation are my own, from the microfilm in possession of the Toaff family. The original materials are held in the Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Livorno, in Livorno (Italy).
them clean, and open at all times, decorated and illuminated, pleasing the merchants in all honest things -- submitted a plea, beseeching Their Very Illustrious Lordships to grant him the faculty of keeping said public rooms, in which he promises to keep the necessary tables, decorations and lights, and an assistant for everything that will be needed in said rooms, open on behalf of the public, following those rules and ordinances which said Messrs. Massari will prescribe and give to him, pledging to maintain this enterprise for three years,

Which Messrs. Massari, having fully established the truth of the facts mentioned above and narrated by said Mr. Zamero, and in particular of the fact that for several years [people] played the games of *ombre* and *minchiate* in said rooms, previously managed by Mr. Valensin and previously owned by Messrs. Cesare Leone, with the reason that it is an honest diversion, and one that is not against the dispositions of the laws, as a remedy to the turmoil that youth often succumbs to,

Seen and considered the acceptance of the Rescript and Grace granted by His Royal Highness, accepted by several individuals and approved by the seat of the Messrs. Massari of that time […], which is considered to have been proposed with the same rightful goal of keeping the youth occupied and entertained without scandal, […] they allow said Mr. Zamero to maintain the rooms, already rented by said Messrs. Massari on behalf of the Nation, as an agent and minister of the same Messrs. Massari, on behalf and for the interest of the public of the Hebrew Nation, in whose favor, and in favor of each merchant and civilized person, said Benign Grace was issued, and as such said Messrs. Massari wish that each of them, in particular and universally, be considered as house hosts, and that each of them have full authority as if [he were] in his own home, everything [is set] to reach the best end and effect, with the rules that will be agreed upon, to be observed by Zamero […] Issued on March 6, 1713

Joseph Attias senior
Solomon of Abraham di Medina
Abraham of Jacob Haim Pegna
David de Medina
Chapters to be observed in the public rooms owned by the Nation [which was] granted by His Royal Highness as a relief for merchants and civilized people, established after the deliberation of the Very Illustrious Messrs. Massari on the 6th day of the current month of March 1713.

1st: Said rooms ought to open two hours before midday, and [also] after lunch, at eighteen hours in the summer, and at twenty-one hours in the winter, and ought to shut at three hours in the summer and at four hours in the winter.

2nd: Whoever attends ought to maintain due respect and moderation, without raising his voice, and ought not entertain dishonest conversations, nor compete in disputes and contentions, nor speak to damage and prejudice others, but [should] only [speak] in relation to commercial news, and about the gazettes, and public news and historical information.

3rd: One should attend [the rooms] wearing the same garb, as one wears in the city, and it is permissible to remove one’s wig and to put on one’s head something decorous, and not [just] pure white cloth.

4th: Nobody ought to introduce into said rooms but merchants and civilized people, in keeping with His Royal Highness’ command.

5th: No servants are allowed into said rooms, if not to bring news to the door.

6th: They ought not smoke or eat in said rooms.

7th: It is permissible to organize academies in said rooms, both musical and literary.

8th: They ought not play *dado secco*, nor *bassetta*, nor *primiera*, nor other similar games that use less than eight cards, those games of *minchiate* and *hombre* that His Royal Highness allowed in his Benign Grace being the only ones permissible; and these [ought not be played] continuously, but rather with interruptions, so that nobody may be accused of being an assiduous and
continuous player; and in all games the money ought to be put on the table, and nobody should be allowed to play on his word -- and in case anybody plays on his word, whoever loses is obliged not to pay, since he’s considered as not obligated.

9th: It is not permissible to play more than one giulio [...] for the minchiate, and in all kinds of ombre to play a stake of one paolo, and at compradiglio and inquiglio a stake of 4 crazie.

10th: For each deck of low cards 20 crazie ought to be paid, and 4 paoli for the minchiate, and [the cards] ought to be all new.

11th: Each of the participants ought to contribute, with the courtesy they are able to, in order to offset the rent and expenses of said rooms, once a year, [and the monies are] to be put in the charity box.

12th: And acknowledging the Messrs. Massari that their occupation with the Court do not allow them the ability to competently supervise said rooms, for this reason, without declining, elected and elect Messrs. Paltiel Arias, Raphale di Medina, and David of Isaac Attias as deputies for three years, with the authority of taking care of any inconvenience that may occur, and on occasion they will consult with Messrs. Massari to be able to punish anybody who might contravene [these rules] or show any lack of attention.

Joseph Attias senior
Solomon of Abraham di Medina
Abrahm of Jacob Haim Pegna
David de Medina
Johan Kemper's (Moses Aaron's) *Humble Account*: A Rabbi between Sabbateanism and Christianity
Niels Eggerz, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

**Introduction**

Moses Aaron of Krakow, a Sabbatean rabbi, who would later call himself Johan Kemper, chose to convert to Christianity in the summer of 1696. When his mentor, the Lutheran cleric Johann Friedrich Heunisch, brought his mentee's wish before the council of the Free Imperial City of Schweinfurt, Kemper was asked to submit the reasons for his request together with a short autobiography in written form. The outcome was his *Humble Account*, which appeared in print shortly after Kemper was baptized. It is thus a somewhat typical example of the literary genre of convert autobiographies, which was quite popular in early modern Germany. These autobiographies or alternatively apologies served a twofold purpose: They were firstly to prove the convert's sincerity and secondly to show the alleged superiority of Christianity over Judaism. It is precisely for this twofold aim that these writings have to be regarded as highly problematic with regards to the factual information contained therein. In many instances it is not even clear if the respective convert wrote his own autobiography/apology all by himself, which likely also holds true in the case of Kemper. This does however not mean that these texts are useless as historical sources; for they contain valuable information both on each individual case and on broader intellectual currents as well, if read with the appropriate precaution. A close analysis of Kemper's *Humble Account* reveals a very subtle yet pronounced anti-Jewish narrative which makes use of well-established early modern stereotypes of Jews and Judaism on the one hand and standard theological arguments on the other hand. The autobiography is nevertheless more than a mediocre anti-Jewish polemical treatise, for it not only features one of the rare descriptions of the lesser known Sabbatean messianic upheaval of 1695, which was caused by the prophecies of a certain Rabbi Zadok of Grodno, but it also seems that some of Kemper’s own remarks have escaped the
censorship of his friend and mentor and thus allow a glimpse into Kemper’s own perception of his conversion.

**Bibliography**


Johan Kemper's (Moses Aaron's) *Humble Account: A Rabbi between Sabbateanism and Christianity*

Niels Eggerz, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Aaron, Moses (Johan Kemper). *Unterthäniger Bericht An einen Hoch-Edlen und Hoch-Weisen Rath zu Schweinfurth Von der wunderlichen Güte GÖttes, welche Er, der Allerhöchste erwiesen mir armen Menschen, Mosi Aaron, einem durch GÖttes Gnad bekehrten Rabbi, auß Crackau gebürtig, Nechst Angehengter demüthigen Bitt Ihm die heilige Tauff wiederfahren zu lassen.* Schweinfurt: Johann Christoph Drechsler, 1696.

Start

My birth town was to be the famous Krakow which has continually been home to over 2000 Jews, among them the noblest rabbis who usually have spread from there over all of Germany. The blessed Jewish city is, however, separated from the Christian one in such a way that there is hardly any contact between the Jews and the local Christians.

But God made me a fatherless orphan already in my second year of age and thus my upbringing became a too bitter burden for my poor mother who had heartily taken care of me at all times. I had however hardly reached the fifth year of age when the great and wonderful God said unto me as he had said unto Abraham *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee* (Gen. XII:1). For God afflicted the named city of Krakow with a fierce pestilence since the Talmud orders everyone to flee as quickly and as far away as he is able. My mother therefore hasted with me to Auspitz, where I was raised among the Christians for a time.

I may well say that the merciful Father in Heaven gave me the first sign of my conversion at this very place. For there I learnt to utter the sweet name JESUS for the first time, even though I did not grasp the meaning of this name and although it is the one to which Jacob alluded with the first letters ישו (Gen.XLIX), I still felt a peculiar strength in my heart with the result that I uttered it frequently, for which my mother chastised me severely.
Again God was soon to show his mercy to me, the then underage child, to an even greater extent. For I have to ascribe it to Him that a very famous Rabbi, a certain Rabbi Abraham Bisch from Nickelsberg, embosomed me so greatly that he did not only accommodate me in his school, but also told me frequently: I want to teach you something that only a few among us know. This was the Basuck, or the Holy Bible, for there are many rabbis who have never read the whole Bible and the Prophets. Whenever the other students engaged in idle games, the above named rabbi studied the Bible with me and this was my true Chevziba, my eyes' and my heart's desire.

There I delighted myself with the obvious prophecies regarding the Lord Messiah, which I could however not fully understand then. Nonetheless, I had hesitations because of these prophecies that would not allow me to find peace of mind. I had to partially unburden them to my mother. I considered that the Christians might be right. The Messiah must have arrived by now. The scepter of Judah has departed [from Israel] and the legislative body, the entire Sanhedrin, ceased to exist long ago: the Second Temple, which was to be elevated over the First Temple of Solomon, to which it was otherwise not at all comparable, through the advent and presence of the One who was to be the solace of all Gentiles, was destroyed long ago, as well as Bethlehem, the native town of the Lord Messiah. The lineages have intermingled and I regard what they keep on telling us eloquently about the ten tribes enclosed by the Sabbatjon River as a futile dream. How does it come that we have not heard any tidings thereof throughout all these years from the Gojim, who are allowed to travel on the Sabbath, when the named river is supposed to be inactive? And where is such a country to be located, which cannot be found by anyone, even now after the entire World has been traversed by the Christians. I cannot find in the Scripture that the Messiah dwells in Rome among the lazars, but I do however find that he is supposed to suffer, die, and to be resurrected for us. I already back then delighted in the words of Psalm LXXII:14: Precious shall their blood, namely the blood of the fallen sinners, be for Him, which is to say for the Lord Messiah and his Father, for he will therefore shed his own precious blood (1Pet. I:19).

I showed my mother that according to the Talmud the world was supposed to exist for 6000 years. 2000 years were to pass without the law, 2000 years with the law and 2000 years were to last the days of the Messiah. Where have they been? I said, as the named 4000 years have long since passed. I also found the triune Godhead both in the Bible and in the Talmud. For should it be without any reason that the Seraphim proclaim not twice, not
four nor five times, but thrice *holy, holy, holy* (Isa. VI), which an old Rab. Simeon himself explained, just as I found it later in the works of Galatinus (I.2.C.1). Holy is the Father, holy is the Son, holy is the Spirit. Aaron and his sons had to bless the children of Israel in the name of this triune God saying: *The LORD*, this is God the Father, *bless thee, and keep thee*. *The LORD*, this is God the Son, *make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee*. *The LORD*, this is God the Holy Spirit, *lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace* (Num. VI:23). Also Daniel turned to this triune God when he called out thrice: *O LORD, hear; O LORD, forgive; O LORD, hearken and do* (Dan. IX:19). God is however one (Deut. VI:4). I again compare Him to a tree with three branches, if one is supposed to employ allegories altogether in the field of such sublime mysteries. For that is the nature of a deity in three persons. And why is it written in the Talmud that the world is closed on three sides whereas the fourth side is open *Laatid lavo*? The Talmud speaks about the future, when God will judge, then he will say: If there is another god besides me, he should close the fourth side. I ask myself, why did God close three sides? Why did he not leave two open? I believe that also this is a hint to the three persons. If a fourth one wants to join, he should close the fourth side.

It would be too extensive, if I wanted to mention all of the things that seemed questionable to me already then, and which I candidly disclosed to mother one after the other as I have already mentioned. But it caused her only sorrow and distress. She wept bitterly over this and said: I have only one child and of all things he has to make me experience disgrace! She had many sleepless nights because of that and caused me great suffering as well. This was the first obstacle which I encountered with my conversion.

She thought I should be instructed in this matter and in the Talmud more thoroughly and she therefore sent me to her brother, who taught me with great diligence for half a year. Although I had not abandoned my erstwhile intention to adopt Christianity, but rather reflected on the matter better and better, I nevertheless encountered the second obstacle upon my return. For my mother coaxed me to take a wife, since it is customary among the Jews that learned men marry at a young age, because the Talmud says: Whoever enters into matrimony before the age of 18 shoots out an eye of the *Jezer hara*, which is the evil inclination. I did not only promise her to do so, but I had my wedding with Siphra, the daughter of a certain Rabbi Barach from Silesia, with whom I stayed for half a year. It is however common practice that learned men continue with their studies after they have married and I
thus betook myself with the blessings of my loved ones to Fulda, where I sojourned for three years. I then returned to my wife and fathered a son named Aaron with her, whom God may enlighten and lead to Christ along with his mother.

In the meantime the year was 1695 A.D., the rumor that the Messiah was finally about to come spread among the Jews. A great fast day was proclaimed in all of Poland, Silesia, Moravia, and Bohemia, and everyone was advised to prepare for the arrival of the Messiah. This had been brought about by a Jew from Lithuania named Rabbi Zadok, who it was claimed could work signs and wonders. The kabbalists cited inter alia Gen. II:21 ויסגור בשרתחתנה as evidence, whereby they interpreted the word בשר as meaning the good news of the arrival of the Messiah. The word תחתנה was divided in such a way that the first two letters were supposed to indicate the 408th year which had witnessed rumors about the arrival of the Messiah as well and which by then was 30 years past. The number of the remaining letters indicated the then current year of the Jewish calendar. I could quote a plethora of similar kabbalistic arguments with which they toyed back then. The rabbis professed that a profound darkness would befall the sky (I think that their hearts, minds, and senses are darkened, for they do not want to see, perceive or walk in the light of the true Shechina, the splendor of God's glory, the great light, which has come into the world to enlighten everyone, the Lord Messiah). Finally, the Messiah was supposed to arrive and reveal himself after this darkness had lasted for three days. I plagued my own body with extensive fasting, praying, and ritual immersions and I thought to myself frequently: How good it is that you paid heed to your mother's words and you haven't converted your faith and become a Christian, because in this case you would have been forced from now on to chop wood, carry water or do other such menial labor, for according to rabbinic doctrine even the lot of the princes, dukes and lords of the Christians will not be any better off in the days of the Messiah.

Finally after a long wait the long-desired day had arrived. It was the 5th of September, which proved to be somewhat dark in the beginning, wherefore the rabbis lighted their lamps with great joy and supposed that the great signs would be seen in the sky now. They also sealed all the chinks, gaps, and holes in their houses while they eloquently related that a venomous haze was about to fall, which would bring death upon all those who inhaled it. But while they were still hoping in vain, instead of a venomous haze the sun broke through the clouds and it turned out to be such a lovely day that all
creatures (except for the Jews) were happy. With that, the repeated deceit became apparent and the rabbis were only anxious about how they could palliate this deceit. The Christian clergymen, however, did not conceal this incident, but preached about it in public. The above named Lithuanian Jew was excommunicated as one who is in league with the devil.

I once more unburdened my heart to my mother in written form and showed her emphatically how many times we had already been deceived, whereas the name JESUS had spread throughout the entire world. Thereupon she was fully convinced that I would henceforth abandon Judaism and traveled therefore with great haste from Krakow to Silesia and begged me again with tears, as I had expected, to refrain from disgracing her and her family by apostatizing. Thanks be to God alone who led me, Moses, to the point at which I in accordance with the great Moses esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt, nay in the entire world (Heb. XXI:26). Meanwhile my mother stayed with me until I again departed for Franconia, determined to travel to Fulda again. In the meantime, however, I found a good opportunity in Niederwähren, where I conducted myself modestly for one year, so truly no-one could accuse me of any misdeed, and I delight in the fact that Magister Heunisch, prior to housing me, frequently inquired among the Jews about all my doings without my knowledge. They related however at all times nothing but kind and good things about me.

[…]

Because I lodged with him and saw how the Christians lived, with how much devotion they prayed to God and how confident and happy they were with their Christianity, how merry they were when they sang and talked about divine matters, etc. my heart was deeply moved and my eyes were opened for more things daily. Therefore I found no rest, day or night, but I still could not bring myself to convert to Christianity, I also still followed Jewish practice in matters of food and drink adamantly. Meanwhile we frequently conversed, especially while sitting in the garden in the evenings, about Christian matters of faith and I still remember well how the tulips, which were flowering merrily back then, caused us to talk about the resurrection of the dead and the transfigured bodies of the chosen. Nevertheless I still tried, as well as I could, to claim that rabbinic and Talmudic doctrine stated oftentimes that no-one could understand the Bible without the Talmud. That lead us to yet another matter of dispute, namely the question of upon what one should base his answers to such important
questions of faith. It was indicated to me in all modesty that Judaism was built on a sandy foundation. The Jews regard Scripture as something opaque and imperfect that no one can understand without the Talmud. But what is the Talmud? A voluminous book, whose language is not the Holy Tongue and which was not written by infallible prophets hailing from the divine wellspring, but by people – or at least compiled from their notes – who overindulged in wrath and vindictiveness to such an extent that they killed their foemen with their eyes, as did Rabbi Jochanan to Rabbi Kaina, [...] Furthermore, it is said that Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai, who is famous because of the Book Zohar and the Talmud, did so. [...] How is it possible that the spirit of God rests upon such haughty and vengeful people?

The Talmud was written by such people, who know how to subjugate the devil at will. About them and about other vices of the Rabbis who have contributed to the Talmud can be read in the book Der Jüden Talmud part 2, chapter 17, fol. 526 by the persistent Gerson. Where do you read something of that kind about Moses, the man of God, or any of the other Prophets? Rabbi Moses Bar Nachman is said to have learned a similar art from an old man whom Mr. D[ctor] Müller in his Judenthum fol. 55 however regards as the old master of a thousand arts, the old snake, which tempted our first parents to evil and which was already evil when God saw everything that he had made in the days of creation and said that everything was very good (Gen. I).

Since I have dwelled hitherto with you, Most Esteemed Gentlemen, it was frequently pointed out to me that Jewry was a rather destitute crowd. Neither do they find solace in their faith nor in their prayers, for they have no understanding of either. I asked a well-known Jew in the presence of M[agister] Heunisch, what he was praying upon washing his hands. He uttered the prayer swiftly, but when I asked him, what Netilat Jadaim meant, for which he had prayed to God, he fell silent like a fish. They do not find solace in their prayer service, which they execute without devotion and in such a way that one must be irritated by them. E. g. they have a day of fast and repentance that is called Tischa Baav and which they are supposed to observe with a penitent and compunctionous heart. This day was instituted because of the destruction of the city of Jerusalem, which is certainly a reason for them to grieve. That is to say that I firmly believe that they deserved this destruction for [the destruction that they inflicted upon] our LORD Christ. But one should only see his aversion to the way they observe the named day of penitence. They are supposed to sit on the floor the whole
day, not to put on shoes, to fast, to pray, and to attempt to halt the castigations of the just God. But someone who comes to their synagogue on such a day, will find one lying on the floor and sleeping, a second one singing a song of lamentation, and a third one laughing. The boys go hither and thither, stitch those who sleep with needles, play antics, and comport themselves disgracefully in such a way as if they were not, just like they imagine, in a house of God but in such a licentious house, in which all wantonness was approved of. I punished them often on account of this and said that it was against the word of God and the Talmud, but I was derided thereupon. It has come to that with today's Jews that they keep the word of God and the Talmud, when they wish to. If it does not please them, they deviate from both, of which I will God willing show more at another time.

[...]

But I still incessantly opposed [every argument] to the best of my ability. I was once reading the second Psalm with my landlady in order to exercise myself in reading, when I encountered the words: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee etc., it was as if my heart was struck [with bafflement]. I also paused and was thereupon asked whether I could not continue. I said: Yes, but what is it? I was answered: This has to be understood with regards to our Lord Jesus, who is the only begotten son of God, whom the Father eternally begot in a way which is unintelligible for us, and to whom he gave the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. Thereupon I again objected vigorously and made the matter ultimately depend on what the M[agister] would say thereunto, who also summoned me, after he had returned home from visiting a sick man, and showed me from the Targum and from Abenesra the deceit of Beer Mosche and that Jalad certainly meant to beget according to essence and not to ennable etc. Although I objected again that time with all my might, I found no sleep all night thereafter and I was finally coerced doubtlessly by the Holy Spirit to reveal my heart to the M[agister], which I did with a letter early in the morning, whereupon I sensed well that these were to be unhoped-for tidings for him. But he congratulated me wholeheartedly on my spiritual change and urged me to be persistent and thereby assured me that the most noble council as well as the honorable clergy would provide both for my temporal and for my eternal wellbeing as I have indeed hitherto already experienced sufficiently. I will praise this on that day in front of the Triune God whom I acknowledge and will ask for eternal recompense for all my noble benefactors.
And God opened the door of Paradise for me whilst calling unto me so to speak: *Adam, where art thou?* Thereupon my eyes were opened for the Holy Books and I became aware of my own nakedness with regards to belief, for I had not been robed yet in in the true robe of honor, namely the Blood of Christ. I, wretched man, heard the voice of God in Paradise and was afraid, but God, the Holy Spirit, moved within me and said: Go and eat from the Tree of Knowledge, which means, delve deeper in the Holy Bible, in the pure mirror, which is the Tree of Eternal Life, whoever eats from it will inherit eternal salvation. The true Tree of Life, which is shown therein, is the tree with three branches, the one God in Three Persons […]. Herewith I conclude in confident trust that you will promote my matter the sooner the better and that you will not leave my hands empty. For it also says in the Talmud: Whoever preserves a single Israelite soul helps to build the entire world.
Aaron, Moses (Johan Kemper). *Unterthäniger Bericht An einen Hoch-Edlen und Hoch-Weisen Rath zu Schweinfurth Von der wunderlichen Güte Gottes, welche Er, der Allerhöchste erwiesen mir armen Menschen, Mosi Aaron, einem durch Gottes Gnad bekehrten Rabbi, auß Crackau gebürtig, Nechst Angehengter demüthigen Bitt Ihm die heilige Tauff wiederfahren zu lassen.* Schweinfurt: Johann Christoph Drechsler, 1696.


Ich mag aber wohl sagen / daß mir der barmhertzige Vater im Himmel allhier den ersten Winck gegeben / zu meiner Bekehrung. Denn ich lernte hier erstmahls den süßen Namen JESUS nennen / und ob ich wohl nicht verstunde / was derselbiges bedeutet / und daß derselbe sey / der von Jacob in diesen Worten ישו Gen. XLIX. durch die erste Buchstaben angezeigte יבש שילה ולו / so fühlte ich doch davon eine sonderbare Krafft in meinem Hertzen / so / daß ich diesen Namen auch öfters in meinem
Munde führte / worüber ich aber von meiner Mutter mit harten Schlägen wurde angesehen.

Es erzeigte sich aber die Güte Göttis bald mit noch größern Maß / bey mir / damahls noch unmündigem Kind. Denn derselbig hab ichs zuzuschreiben / daß ein brühmter Rabbi, Abraham Bisch, von Nickelsberg bürzig / eine sonderliche Liebe zu mir gewann / so / daß Er mich nicht nur zu sich in seine Schul nahm / sondern auch offt zu mir sagte / dich will ich lehren / was unter uns wenig können. Das war der Basuck, oder die heilige Bibel. Denn es sind viel Rabbinen, welche die gantze Bibel samt den Propheten nie gar haben außgelesen. Wenn die andern Schüler müßige Spiel-Stunden hatten / so nahm gedachter Rabbi mit mir die Bibel vor / und war dieselbigen wohl meine rechte Chevziba, mein Augen- ja Hertzens-Lust.


Damit ich nun hierinnen so wohl als in dem Talmud gründlicher / ihrer Meinung nach / mögte unterwiesen werden / so schickte sie mich zu ihrem Bruder / der auch ein halb Jahr / grossen Fleiß an mir erwiesen. Ich zog so


die aber allezeit / wie sie noch gestehen / nichts als Liebs und Guts von mir geredt.


seinem Judenthum fol. 55. für den alten Tausend-Künstler / die alte
Schlange / welche mit unserer ersten Mutter nicht nur von Göttlichen
Dingen reden / sondern sie auch überreden könte. Die böse Schlange /
welche unsere erste Eltern zum Bösen reitzte / und also schon selbsten bö
war / zu der Zeit / da Gott ansahe alles was Er gemacht hatte / in den Tagen
der Erschaffung / und sagt / es ist alles sehr gut / Gen. I.

[…]

Da ich bey ihnen / Hoch-gebietende Herren / bißhero meine Wohnung hatte
führte man mir oft zu Gemüth / wie daß das Jüdenthum sey ein rechter
Trost-loser Hauff. In ihrem Glauben finden sie keinen Trost / auch nicht in
ihrem Gebet / denn sie verstehen von beyden nichts. Ich fragte in Beyseyn
Herrn M. Heunischen einen bekandten Juden / was er bete / wenn er die
Hände wasche? er war hurtig mit dem Gebet herauß / aber da ich ihn fragte /
was denn hies Netilat Jadaim, deßwegen er zu GOTT gebetet hatte / so wurde
er darauf so stumm / als ein Fisch. Sie finden keinen Trost in ihrem
Gottesdienst / welchen sie ohne Andacht / und so verrichten / daß man sich
an ihnen ärgeren muß. e. g. Sie haben einen Buß- und Fast-Tag / welchen sie
mit bußfertigem und zerknirschten Herzen begehen solten / der genennt wird
Tischa Baav. Dieser Tag ist angesetzt von wegen der Zerstörung der Stadt
Jerusalem / und hätten sie wohl Ursach deßwegen zu trauern. Denn ich
glaube gewiß / daß sie solche Zerstöhrung an unserm HERRN Christo haben
wohl verdient. Allein da solte man nur seinen Greuel sehen / wie sie solchen
Buß-Tag begehen. Sie solten den gantzen Tag auf der Erden sitzen / keinen
Schuh anziehen / fasten / beten / und dem gerechten GOTT in seine zornige
Ruthe fallen. Allein wer zu solcher Zeit in ihre Schul kommen wird / der
wird finden / daß der eine auf der Erden ligt und schläfft / der andere singt
ein Klag-Lied / der dritte sitzt und lacht / die Jungen gehen hin und her /
stechen die Schlafenden mit Nadeln / treiben Possen / und verüben eine
solche Schand / als ob sie nicht / wie sie sich doch einbilden / in einem
Gottes-Haus / sondern in einem üppichen und solchem Haus wären / in
welchem aller Muthwillen zugelassen. Ich hab sie deßwegen oft gestraft / und
gesagt: Es sey solches wieder Gottes Wort / und wieder den Talmud;
Allein man könte mich damit auß / und ist es bey den heutigen Juden dahin
gekommen / daß wo sie wollen / so halten sie Gottes Wort / und den
Talmud, gefällts ihnen nicht / so weichen sie von beyden ab / wie ich / ob
GOTT wil / solches zur andern Zeit mit mehrern zeigen wil.

[…]

EMW 2015

40

[…]

Baum deß Lebens / der darinn gezeigt wird / ist der Baum von dreyen Zweigen / der einige GOTT in dreyen Persohnen; und das ist der warhaftige GOtt / [...] Hierauf schliesse ich in getrösteter Zuversicht / Sie werden meine Sache je eher je besser fördern / und mich nicht leer gehen lassen: Denn es steht auch im Talmud: Wer eine Seele eines Israeliten erhält / der thut eben so viel / als wenn er die gantze Welt hilfft erbauen.
Illicit Sex and Law in Early-Modern Italian Ghettos

Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho

Introduction

In early modern Italian Jewish society, girls were considered eligible to work as servants from the age of ten. The lives of these female servants, young and in the majority of cases unmarried, were at times shaped by a sexual component in their relationship with their masters or co-workers. In the course of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, Italian Jewish society was challenged and even threatened by Jewish maidservants who found themselves in a liminal position in which their honor, reputation, and offspring were in a state of suspension. This presentation explores the changes in attitude toward them and illicit sexual relations within the ghetto societies that occurred in Italy between the late seventeenth century and the middle of the eighteenth century by using archival sources from both Jewish courts and civic magistracies in the cities of Venice, Mantua, and Modena during the years 1691-1751. Relationships characterized by women’s exploitation generally went unnoticed except in cases resulting in pregnancy. In early modern Italy, according to both Roman law and Jewish law Jews and Christians held to a similar definition of illicit sex specified in Latin as *stuprum*, which covers inappropriate sex ranging from consensual to the use of force outside marriage. Having sex with a virgin or a widow would have been classified as *stuprum* (*ones* in Hebrew); a sexual relationship with a married woman would have been classified as adultery.

Through a combination of paternalism, cohesiveness, innovation, and surveillance, Italian Jewish communities could contain destabilizing behaviors within the society, and reintegrate women who otherwise would have been tragically lost by obliging their seducers to marry them or to take care of them as well as their illegitimate children. As recent scholarship has demonstrated, in contemporaneous Italian Christian contexts and other European Jewish communities women in similar conditions were often rejected and left alone, along with their illegitimate offspring. If these servants were minors, their employers were considered responsible for their safety—in our context, their virginity or honor—and in cases of pregnancy employers were obliged to pay the expenses of childbirth, nursing, and supporting the child until adulthood. If the woman and the seducer were both single the court tended to pressure the accused to marry the girl, otherwise the
father had to take care of the child produced by the illicit sex rather than the mother.

**Analysis**

This presentation begins with a discussion of a case of illicit sex and pregnancy involving an abandoned baby in the ghetto of Venice, a Jewish maidservant, her Jewish master, and the Jewish community of Venice in 1691, preserved in the records of the Archivio di Stato in Venice. Relationships characterized by women’s sexual exploitation did not go unrecorded within Italian Jewish communities in the previous centuries. However, it appears that at the turn of the seventeenth century the number of such cases made public because they resulted in pregnancy was so numerous that they constituted a threat to the social balance of Italian Jewish communities. The 1691 case (document n. 1) includes an inquiry conducted by the Cattaveri, a Venetian magistracy responsible for various functions and in charge of the administration of the ghetto since 1516. On the night of July 5 a baby with a mezuzah and the indication of his birth and supposed date for his circumcision was found in a basket, abandoned in the Venetian ghetto by Jewish dwellers. The *massari* (lay leaders) of the Jewish community and the Cattaveri were immediately alerted; the latter launched an investigation in order to ascertain if the baby was Jewish or Christian and the circumstances of his birth and following abandonment. After investigation and summoning of witnesses, it was determined that the child was Jewish. A young Jewish maidservant, Corona Levi, had been seduced and made pregnant by her master, Sanson Sacerdote, in Nomi, a village on the Colli Euganei near Padua and Venice. With the complicity of a relative, the latter had taken the baby and abandoned him in the Venetian ghetto. The document under analysis is an apologetic plea written by the Venetian *massari* to the Cattaveri at the time of the inquiry in order to prove the Jewishness of the baby and to obtain his restitution. It is based on biblical sources (mainly from the Vulgate), canonical law, and observations on the customs and morality of the Venetian Jewish society of the time. The Venetian Jewish leaders built their case around four main points: Jews’ traditional refraining from proselytism in order to prove that no Jew or Jewess (or any Christian) would leave a non-Jewish child in the ghetto with Jewish objects; the prohibition according to canon laws against Christian Catholics baptizing Jewish children *invitis parentibus*; the motivation of honor and threat of potential shame to explain the silence of the parents; and the awareness of the insurgence of numerous adulterous relations and the presence of illegitimate children within the Venetian ghetto at the time.

Two years later (document n. 2) the Jewish community of Mantua had to deal with another case of a young Jewish maidservant that again involved the same master, Sanson (or Sansone) Sacerdote. The girl serving in his household, Chella Levi, had
become pregnant illicitly. The woman also could be the some of the previous case—דלי means crown (in Italian, corona). The document, preserved in the Archive of the Mantua Jewish Community, is an agreement between the Jewish community and Sacerdote: the latter maintained that he was not the father, but he took on the entailed expenditures. Eventually the Jewish community could be considered responsible for a minor servant’s loss of virginity, pregnancy, and future child—a factor that would become more and more important for Italian Jewish communities when dealing with illegitimate pregnancies in the following decades. In this case we see one of the solutions adopted in such circumstances: if servants were minors, their employers were considered responsible for their virginity and in cases of pregnancy when the fathers were not identified or found unable to provide for the girl and their future baby, the employer was obliged to pay the expenses of childbirth, nursing, and supporting the child until adulthood. In this kind of transaction the absolution of the kahal kadosh from any responsibility and charge appeared to be one of the first priorities for the Jewish lay leaders.

Evidence from the eighteenth century, preserved in the Archive of the Modena Jewish Community, shows a more-decisive and consistent intervention by the local Jewish massari and rabbis in these illicit relationships under Jewish roofs; this kind of intrusion and safeguarding of Jewish maidservants became even more evident in the second half of the century. If the seducer was identified as a servant or a relative of the employer, the rabbinical tribunal could charge the employer to guarantee that the expenses for childbirth, dowry of the girl, and support of the child through adulthood would be paid by the father of the child alone. A young woman whose loss of virginity or her honor as a widow and subsequent pregnancy were publicly known within ghetto society could thus be aided in finding a potential husband without the burden of a child born out of wedlock. If single, the man often accepted—willingly or under pressure from the Jewish community or the rabbinic court—marriage to the maidservant and reestablishing to an honored condition the woman who, voluntarily or not, had entrusted her honor and her future to him. In 1749 physician Moisè Vaigler from Mantua was forced to marry his servant, Rachel Arezzi, from Modena, whom he had seduced and impregnated; he had to add to the ketubah that he would never divorce the girl and that he would take care of their child and recognize him as his own son. In fact, when he tried to divorce Rachel two years later (document n. 3), both the Jewish courts of Modena and Mantua denied his petition. In 1751 Modena, in the case of the illicit relation between widow Ester Ventura Vigevani and Abram Gallico (document n. 4) and her pregnancy, the latter recognized his responsibilities and accepted marriage to the former under the condition of receiving the dowry amount that Esther as a widow was entitled to receive from her brothers.
Bibliography


Georgia Arrivo, Seduzioni, promesse, matrimoni: il processo per stupro nella Toscana del Settecento, Premessa di Daniela Lombardi (Rome, 2006).


Carla Boccato, “Il caso di un neonato esposto nel Ghetto di Venezia alla fine del ‘600,” La Rassegna Mensile di Israel, 44.3 (1978): 178-202. [It includes a partial transcription of the document n. 1]


Cissie Fairchilds, Domestic Enemies: Servants and Masters in Old Regime France (Baltimore, 1984).


Rebecca Kobrin, “’The Murdered Hebrew Maidservant of East New York:’ Gender, Class, and the Jewish Household in Eastern Europe and Its Diaspora,” in Marion A. Kaplan and Deborah Dash Moore, eds., Gender and Jewish History, (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2011), pp. 72-84.

Daniela Lombardi, Matrimoni di antico regime (Bologna, 2001).

[f. 148 r.] Most serene Republic, favored by the Divine Majesty for its eternal duration from its birth to this day with a true freedom that has never been interrupted and given by the Divine Majesty for its eternal duration thorough to the present; for which it [the Venetian Republic] has become famous and illustrious amid all the dominions of the universe and agreed to distribute with rational balance this precious gift to its vassals, because of which the famous city of Venice has become the only sanctuary temple of freedom for all humanity.

Most Illustrious and excellent Cattaveri, the Hebrew Nation, most humble servant of Your Excellencies, for summa gratia of her mostly devout Prince, has dwelled for many centuries under this most-merciful government with the freedom to live according to their customs and rites. And with the free control of their children and holiest laws of this most serene Homeland, they should moderate the senses and their lust so that the Jew, being satisfied in the matters of Aphrodite with pleasures both honest and permitted by her rules, should give birth only to legitimate children, in which case there would be no need to bother Your Excellencies. But given that 3,000 souls of every age and sex [live in this ghetto], it is impossible to avoid cases of illegitimate births, and in those circumstances reputation obliges that they be hidden. Since the piety of the Nations in every place requires that they be exposed, the children are exposed and then secretly housed, and with indefatigable application educated as Justice wills. Nor does the goodness of the Prince refuse the Jew a very opportune solution to his/her vicissitudes and for the safety of innocent children, one that keeps the cries of the children from being the trumpets of the shame of their parents. In this situation, the charity of the leaders of the ghetto has always been of help because, exposed outside of their houses or near them, the very same babies were welcomed and fed, thanks to resources provided by the Jewish Community (Università [ebraica]). Currently many illegitimate men who do not know their fathers live in the ghetto, raised by the charity of the leaders. There have always been and today there still are many of them for whom [illegitimate men] the lifting of this refuge would lead to a worse situation. Mothers could strangle children, throw them into the wells; a girl raped or seduced [stuprata] or a woman committing adultery could kill herself rather than being
exposed to public shame. Excellent Signori for the sake of charity, you think it right to deny her this solution. And if Piety does not convince you [otherwise], Your Excellencies should imagine [the case of] a Jewess who committed an error, what more could she do in order to hide her shame and save the son of the Religion, for herself and for the Father than what this one has done, for whom we supplicate You with bent knee.

She put the child into a bag, at night, when the ghetto is closed, at the bottom or at the top of a stairway in the ghetto, close to the headquarter of the two leaders; she attached to it a paper called a mezuza'h with a Jewish devotional prayer around it; she wrote there a report in Hebrew amid the binders that says that this baby was born on the 7th [f. 148 v.] of the month of Tamuz and this in regard to the circumcision. A woman is found ready to keep and welcome him, and will there be any doubt that the child is Jewish? Illustrious Excellencies, would you really be inclined to separate him from his parents and send him to the Piety? [lit. “alla Pietà,” a Christian orphanage in the area Pietà, on the Riva degli Schiavoni, in Venice]. To the Hospital? And if the father is wealthy and several years from now would want to welcome him, Your Excellencies would not wish to have him lose his patrimony so that he would remain miserable; or if the mother is currently committing adultery or if it is not safe for her life to declare herself publicly as the mother of this baby, once the situation changes, she would not be able to help him, and what is the fault of this creature to be so deprived?

The uncontaminated justice of Your Excellencies must be convinced that this baby is Jewish, as much from his father as from his mother. And if the father were Christian she would have taken him to the Piety [lit. Pietà] freely; she would not have attached that paper, nor the Jewish prayer. Indeed what would have been the point to leave in the ghetto, in awful conditions, a child who instead [as a Christian] could be sent to a comfortable place and favorable to his religion? Therefore the father is certainly Jewish. If also the mother, there is no doubt. A Christian [mother] and a Jewish father? Most Excellent Fathers, how could she come to the ghetto? In this case, the mother would either keep him or send [him] to the Hospital. But could Your Excellencies imagine the Jew committing a worse crime than the former? To expose himself to the disgrace a Christian woman leading a wicked life? [A woman] who could at any moment lay claim to the baby and make him [the seducer] guilty of a capital crime, this is not thinkable, nor is it something that can be conceived by the sublime minds of Your Excellencies.

But if this were the case, the scandal of this affair would already be in the open, and the Tribunal of Your Excellencies would already have heard the complaint of the mother.

Excellent signori, you should know that since the Jew is tenacious in the observance of his religion, he has no custom of proselytism. Rather, Ruth from Moab is convinced by her mother-in-law to return to her people, to the observance of her customs “Behold thy kinswoman is returned to her people, and to her gods,
go thou with her [Ruth 1:15].” Therefore, a Jew would not be trapped by this deception to bring to the ghetto a child born outside the ghetto.

Even less if the mother were Christian, in spite of the father being Jewish, the child would not be in the condition to be received among the Jews, and this resolves the controversial question and removes any doubt that this child might have been born even far away and then carried into the ghetto, rather than having been born in the Ghetto itself. In fact, according to our rites, a child born to a foreign woman is excluded from our religion and remains in that of the mother. And to disembowel any doubt from the conscience of Your Excellencies, we can adduce the unanimous decisions of our Rabbis, but you only need deign think about the following very famous case described in the Holy Scriptures in Ezra Chapters 9 and 10, which does not leave any room for doubt.

When, with the permission of Cyrus of Persia, our ancestors returned from the Babylonian Captivity to Jerusalem under the guidance of Ezra himself, they were accused of admitting during the captivity some foreign women and generating many impure children, and because of this they were the principal offenders of the Nation. Here was the accusation: “the princes came to me, saying: The people of Israel, and the priests and Levites have not separated themselves from the people of the lands, and […] For they have taken of their daughters for themselves and for their sons, and they have mingled the holy seed with the people of the lands. And the hand of the princes and magistrates hath been first in this transgression [Ezra 9:1-2].” The Princes, the magistrates have children born to Foreign Women. After a very efficacious admonishing oration delivered to the community, it was decided with unanimous acclamation to remedy the situation by sending into perennial exile the women with their children and to exclude them from the Nation. And “when Esdras was thus praying, and beseeching, and weeping, and lying before the temple of God, there was gathered to him of Israel an exceeding great assembly of men and women and children, and the people wept with much lamentation. And Sechenias the son of Jehiel of the sons of Elam answered, and said to Esdras: We have sinned against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land: and now if there be repentance in Israel concerning this, Let us make a covenant with the Lord our God, to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the will of the Lord, and of them that fear the commandment of the Lord our God: let it be done according to the law.” [Ezra 10:1-3]. So it was done and all the impure children born to foreigner women were excluded from all the families. Thus there is no way that this child could be born to another mother than to a Jewish woman.

Your Excellencies are required to administer justice. This child belongs to the ghetto. That woman received him from the mother. She keeps silent in order to not betray her; it is unlikely she can be convinced otherwise. The favor in which you hold your religion should not change the noble and righteous souls of Your Excellencies; Christian piety has always been built on the crucial tenet of diffusing
its faith to other nations and yet many illustrious popes and all the theologians forbade and rule that “Jews’ and other infidels’ children should not be baptized without “the consent of their parents,” and Thomas Aquinas rules, “Nobody should commit an injury, indeed it would be an injury if Jews’ children [f. 149 v.] were baptism without their [parents’] consent.” If therefore many holy fathers put respect for justice before that of religion, Your Excellencies should follow this example. Because as Saint Thomas [Aquinas] himself declares, “Hence it would be contrary to natural justice, if a child, before coming to the use of reason, were to be taken from its parents’ custody, or anything done to it against its parents’ wish. […] and then it should be induced not by compulsion but by persuasion [Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, II, 2, article 12].” This is surely a Jew, for all these circumstances: a Jewish baby, exposed in the ghetto during the night. With a devotional paper in Hebrew, written on parchment, with many ceremonies and a bulletin in the Hebrew language, specifying the place of the birth in the binders; found by a Jewish woman [who] offered him to the leaders, and presented under the reflection of Yours Excellencies; Jewish because of she who found him, and Jewish because of the place, time, and all the circumstances have been proven since the beginning of the trial. We therefore hope that the Justice will consider it so until there should appear proof to the contrary that moreover is declared by sworn witnesses that before being in the ghetto the baby was outside, or that it was moved to some place, or that these objects were provided deceitfully and this has to be proved with clarity in order to move Justice and the uncontaminated soul of the judge to remove the infant from the context in which he is being decided according to canon laws in C. Si expositus 87 dicet our precise case, “If [an infant] exposed in front of a church and found and welcomed by someone because of piety, it should be necessary to obtain a conclusive proof: and if the infant who has been welcomed will not be requested and recognized by ten days, the infant surely will belong to whom who had welcomed [him].” Therefore, if no contrary during the investigation emerges, it should be left to the peaceful process of the leaders of the Ghetto who in this case are his fathers (as states the Law Textus[s] in Pari de Regulis in 6° [Liber Sextus decretarium, lib. V, tit. 12, De Regulis Iuris Canonici, vol. 2, Reg. 65, col. 1124], “Because in equal fault, better is the condition of the possessor.” This [baby] is Jewish for certain, and as such and under any circumstances we hope that justice will consider [him]. This Our fathers were slaves in Egypt. The princess daughter of Pharaoh saw a baby, abandoned on the Nile, and because he was unexpectedly alive against the regal edict, “After this there went a man of the house of Levi; and took a wife of his own kindred. And she conceived, and bore a son: and seeing him a goodly child, hid him three months. And when she could [f. 150 r.] hide him no longer, she took a basket made of bulrushes, and daubed it with slime and pitch: and put the little babe therein, and laid him in the sedges by the river's brink [Exodus 2:1-3].” This is our case. “And behold the daughter of Phara
came down [Exodus 2:5],” because this is one of the children of the Hebrews [Exodus 2:6]. In front of the circumstances she supposed that the child was Jewish, then the sister came, and proposed her a Jewish nurse. She received. “And Pharao's daughter said to her: Take this child, and nurse him for me: I will give thee thy wages [Exodus 2:9].” In this way the princess speaks.

Why the princess did not doubt that this be right and in order to disseminate [her] religion does not keep him? If “this is one of the children of the Hebrews;” the son did not have the Hebrew bulletin that said the date of birth, yet he was three-month old and likewise were the Jewish children at the time condemned to pass from the cradle to the tomb, as soon as born, nor he could be three-month old, but in any case “this is one of the children of the Hebrews.” That baby did not have a devotional paper, typical custom of Jews, still da “this is one of the children of the Hebrews.” He was neither in Ghetto during the night, nor in a public canal; and “when she saw the basket in the sedges she sent one of her maids for it [Exodus 2:5],” yet “this is one of the children of the Hebrews.”

The young princess had mercy toward the child, “She opened it, and seeing within it an infant crying [Exodus 2:6].” But her compassion did not force her to change his status from slave to prince because this act would have been against justice, which requires that everyone receives his own. “This is one of the children of the Hebrews.”

She paid a nurse and she wanted a Jewish nurse, “[answered] I will give thee thy wages. The woman took and nursed the child: and when he was grown up, she delivered him to Pharao's daughter [Exodus 2:9-10].” “She answered: Go [Exodus 2:8],” because every thought brought to the conclusion that “this is one of the children of the Hebrews.” You are Augusti Principes. Excellent Cattaveri, who delegated by the Excellent Senate to our government assist us with much charity and with that exemplar justice, inherited from your glorious ancestors. When the consciousness is persuaded under any circumstance and that “this is one of the children of the Hebrews,” you should not be moved by religious zeal to have him fed by other milk than his [f. 150 v.], but rather allow to call “a Hebrew woman, to nurse the babe [Exodus 2:7],” to be fed by his own milk by birth. This is because the diffusion of the Christian faith is made broader by the example of absolute freedom, with a spontaneous conversion rather than an imprisonment during childhood, when [someone] is incapable of independent thought of which once in adulthood repent, against the scandal of each one.

But a threat of excommunication has been published [in the ghetto] and the truth has not yet emerged? “Then he is not Jewish,” someone may sustain, that where is matter of declaring herself adulterous and infame a woman cannot be convinced by whatever excommunication. In secrecy we are sure also of the crime, if we risk the censorship of the excommunication [that is] of the crime is clearly a punishment. Out of excommunication the punishment is uncertain, concealed by the sky not the tribunals. Who will be the one, who in order to escape a small, uncertain
punishment, which he can hope be moderate for the divine mercy, willingly will expose him or herself to a big one, inevitable? Usually the excommunications promise secrecy to the guilty, but those pieces of information that would derive from this excommunication, could not be communicated to Your Excellencies. Thus there is no wonder that being unsure the offender to remain anonymous, had neglected the excommunication itself, which is a weapon, and which deprived of secrecy does have unimaginable force.

Once Princess Tamar, daughter of King David, was raped by the incontinence of her brother Amnon, who then, horrified by his own excess, could not tolerate the presence of the poor raped sister anymore and he converted love in hatred, and could not anymore tolerate her at his presence, thus drove her away, “so that the hatred wherewith he hated her was greater than the love with which he had loved her before. And Ammon said to her: Arise, and get thee gone.” [Samuel 2, 13:15].

But she replied: “There is no reason to drive me away like this, which this is even worse than the other crime you perpetrated on me. She answered him: “The evil which now thou dost against me [Samuel 2, 13:16].” The poor princess considered more [151 r.] the fact that the offense would be publicly known than the offense in itself. That girl raped incestuously remained quiet, expelled and ashamed was not capable to understand by herself, but lacerated herself and furious exclaimed as possessed by the demons, “Then his servant thrust her out: and shut the door after her. And she put ashes on her head, and rent her long robe and laid her hands upon her head, and went on crying.” [Samuel 2, 13:18-19]. This explains why the threat of excommunication and a thousand other scruples are much less persuasive than public knowledge of the crime.

Indeed, it will be an act of their [of your Excellences’] uncorrupted knowledge to not oblige the parents of this miserable child to ruin their name, and maybe is of help, when they believed to have covered themselves with attention to the common and practiced solution. This will be an effect of exemplary justice toward the baby and mercy toward the parents. Gratie. Today 8 July 1691. Presented by the General Leaders of the Jews of this city.
Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho


Supplica ai Catteveri del 18 luglio 1691.

[f. 148 r.] « Serenissima Repubblica che favorita dalla Maestà Divina per l’eterna sua duratione sino da qui suoi natali d’una vera libertà non mai interrotta, per la quale s’è resa conspicua e insigne trà tutti li Dominij dill’universo, e s’è compiacciuta comunicare con ragionevole misura questa prezioso dono a suoi vassali, ond’è devenuta l’inclita città di Venezia unico Tempio per asilo di libertà al genere humano.

Illustrissimi et Eccelentissimi Cattaveri la Natione Hebrea, humilissima serva di VV. EE., per somma gratia del suo pietosissimo Prencipe, si ricovra per lungo tratto de secoli sotto questo Clementissimo Governo, con libertà di vivere secondo i riti e consuetudini loro, e con il libero possesso de suoi propri figlioli e santissime leggi di questa serenissima Patria doveriano moderare il senso e il lusso, di modo che, contento l'Hebreo nelle cose di Venere de piaceri honesti, e permessi dalle sue regole, procreasse solo legittimi parti, nel qual caso non vi sarebbe occasione d'apportar tedio alle EE.VV. Ma perché in un numero di 3000 anime d'ogni età, e d'ogni sesso, non è possibile che non succedano de’ parti spurij, ne’ quali il riguardo della riputatione obliga nasconderli, come La pietà de Popoli in ogni Loco ha stabilito d’esporli, sono esposti i Bambini secretamente sono accolti, e con indefessa applicazione educati come vuole la Giustizia, ne la benignità del Principe che all’Hebreo venga denegato quanto opportuno remedio a suoi trascorsi e alla salvezza di innocenti bambini, perché con i loro vagiti, non siano Trombe de’ vituperij de’ Genitori. In questo caso vi ha sempre supplito la carita de Cappi di Ghetto per che esposti alle lor case, ò vicino a quelle, l'infanti stessi sono stati accolti e con spese dell'Universita nutriti. Vivono nel Ghetto moltissimi illegittimi huomini che non conoscono Padre, allevati dalla carita de Cappi; ne sono stati sempre, ve ne sono hoggidi ancora; chi li leva questo rifuggio succede di peggio: possono le madri strozzare i bambini, gettarli ne' condotti; Può essere ch’una donzella stuprata, una maritata che sia incorsa in adulterio si dia da se la morte, più tosto che publicarsi. Eccellenti Signori per Carità stimano giusto negarle questo remedio, non lo persuase la loro Pietà suppongano VV. EE. un’hebra caduta in
errore, che cosa poteva fare di più per coprirsì e salvare il figliolo alla Religione, a se stessa, al Padre, di quello che ha fatto questa per la quale La supplichiamo genuflessi.

Pone il bambino in una sporta, di notte, quando il Ghetto è chiuso, sopra o’ a piedi d’una scala in Ghetto, vicina alle stanze di doi Cappi; vi si attacca una Carta detta Mezuzà, di devotione hebraica attorno; vi si scrive un boletino in lingua hebraica tra le fascie che dice è nato questo figliolino il giorno di mercoledì allii 7 [f. 148 v.] del mese di Tamuz e questo per il riguardo della Circoncisione. Si ritrova una donna pronta che lo conserva e accoglie, e vi sarà dubio che non sia hebreo? Illustrissime Eccelenze, vorran levarlo ai genitori e mandarlo alla Pietà? All’Hospital? E se il Padre è ricco e da qui a qualche anno Lo volesse raccogliere, non vengono l’EE.VV. a farle perdere la roba perché resti miserabile; se la madre ora è adultera o che non ha sicura la vita di publicarsi madre di quel bambino mutandosi lo stato delle cose non può beneficarlo, e che colpa ha quell’innocente d’esserne privato.

L'incontaminata giustizia di VV. EE. deve persuadersi che questo è Hebreo, così di Padre come di madre Hebra. E s’il Padre fosse Christiano lo avrebbe portato alla Pieta liberamente; non li poneva il boletino, non la devotione hebraica; Mà a che proposito lasciare in Ghetto, alle miserie, un figliolo che può essere posto in loco comodo e al contro alla sua Religione?

Sarà dunque il Padre hebreo certo. Se anco la madre è Hebra, non v’ha dubio. Sara la madre Christiana e il Padre Hebreo? Ecc.mi Padri, come può venire in Ghetto? La madre o lo tenerà, o lo manderà all’Hospital. Ma’ possino imaginarsi l’Eccellenze Vostre che l’Hebreo facesse un Criminale peggiore del primo? Che si esponesse alla disventura d’una Donna Christiana di mala vita? Che può ogni momento pretenderlo e farlo reo di delitto capitale, non è questo supposto, e che ponsi essere concepito dalle menti sublimi di VV. EE.

Ma se ciò fosse, si sarebbe di già allo strepito di questo negozio scoperto, e ne avrebbe il Tribunale di VV. EE. sentito dalla madre il ricorso.

Sappino Ecc.mi Signori che come l’Hebreo è tenace nell’osservanza della sua Religione, così non ha istituito propagarla a stranieri. Anzi Ruth moabita viene persuasa dalla suocera di ritornare alla sua gente, all’osservanza de suoi ritti “en reversa est cognata tua ad populum suum et ad deos suos vade cum ea [Ruth 1:15]” onde l’Hebreo non s’havera preso questo imbroglio di portare in Ghetto un fanciullo che fosse nato fuori del Ghetto.

Ma’ tanto meno quanto che se la madre è Christiana, tutto che il Padre fosse hebreo, non e il fanciullo in stato d’essere ricevuto tra li Hebrei, e questo decide il punto controverso e toglie ogni dubio, ancor che lontano, che possi essere stato trasportato questo bambino nel Ghetto, e non nato nel Ghetto stesso, Perché conforme li riti nostri, un figlio procreato con Donna straniera viene escluso dalla nostra e rimane nella Religione della madre e per sviscerarne la conscienza di VV. EE. di questa verità, potessimo addurre le decisioni concordi de nostri Rabbini,
ma’ basta che si degnino riflettere al famosissimo caso seguito, e registrato nella Sacra Scrittura in Esdra [Ezra] al Capitolo 9° e X°, che non lascia [f. 149 r] luoco a difficolta alcuna.

Ritornati i nostri dalla Captivitá di Babilonia con permissione di Ciro di Persia a Jerusalem sotto la direttione dello stesso Esdrà, vengono accusati d’havere nella Captivitá admesse alcune donne straniere e procreati molti figli spurij, e ché in quanto fossero rei principali della Natione; Ecco l’accusa. “Accesserunt ad me principes dicentes non est separatus populus Israhel et sacerdotes et Levitae a populis terrarum et […] tulerunt enim de filiabus eorum sibi et filiis suis et commiscuerunt semen sanctum cum populis terrarum manus etiam principum et magistratum fuit in transgressione hac prima [Ezra 9:1-2]” Li Principi, Li Magistrati hanno figli di Donne Straniere.

Doppo una efficacissima oratione, fatta al Popolo di rimprovero, si delibera per rimedio con universale acclamatione, di essigliare le Donne straniere perpetuamente con li loro figli e escluderli dalla Natione. E “sic ergo orante Ezra et inplorante eo et flente et iacente ante templum Dei collectus est ad eum de Israhel coetus grandis nimis virorum et mulierum puerorumque et flevit populus multo fletu et respondit Sechenia filius Iehihel de filiis Helam et dixit Ezrae nos praevaricati sumus in Deum nostrum et duximus uxores alienigenas de populis terrae et nunc si est paenitentia Israhel super hoc percutiamus foedus cum Deo nostro ut proiciamus universas uxores et eos qui de his nati sunt iuxta voluntatem Domini et eorum qui timent praeceptum Dei nostri secundum legem fiat [Ezra 10:1-3]”. Così fu fatto e furono esclusi da tutte le Famiglie gli figli spurij nati da Donne straniere. Non può dunque in maniera alcuna questo fanciullo essere da altra madre che di Dona hebrea.

Sono le EE. VV. tenute d'esercitare Giustitia. Questo fanciullo è di Ghetto. Quella donna l’ha ricevuto dalla Madre. Tace per servarle fede; Non c'e probabilità che persuada il contrario. Il favore della Religione non hà d'alterare l'animi retti e giusti di VV. EE.; la Christiana Pieta ha’ sempre havuto per instituto fondamentale di propagare la sua fede all' altre Nationi e pure molti somi Pontefici e tutti li Teologhi unanemi prohibiscono e decidono che “Pueri Judeorum et aliorum infidelium non sunt baptizandi invitis Parentibus”, e decide Tomaso d'Aquino "Nemini facienda est injuria, fieret autem Judaeis injuria si eorum filii [f. 149 v.] baptizarentur eis invititis.” Se dunque tanti Santi Padri antepongono il rispetto della Giustizia a quello della Religione, VV. EE. hano da secondare questo esempio perché come dice il medesimo San Tommaso [Unde] contra iustitiam naturalem esset si puer, antequam habeat usum rationis, a cura parentem subtrahatur, vel de eo aliquid ordinetur invitis parentibus. Et tunc est inducendus ad fidem non coactione, sed persuasione [Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, II, 2, article 12].

Questo è Hebreo certo, per tutte le circostanze; un Bambino hebreo, esposto in Ghetto di notte tempo. Con una carta di Devotione hebraica, scritta in membrana, con molte cerimonie, con un boletino e si in idioma hebraico, denota il punto della
nascita dalle fascie; Ritrovato da Donna hebrea l’ha offerito a Cappi, si presentava sotto i riflessi di VV. EE. Hebreo per chi lo ritrova, Hebreo per il loco, per il tempo, e per tutte le Circostanze che vengono giustificate dalla formazione al Processo; Tale speriamo, che ebbe la Giustitia Considerarlo, sino ch’apparisca Prova in contrario, e Che venga da Testimonij giurati deposito, che prima d’essere in Ghetto fosse fuori, o’ che sia stato trasportato in qualche luoco, o che quei segni, siano stati con arteficio apposti e questo deve essere provato a chiare note, per potere havere motivo la giustizia e incontaminata anima del Giudice, da toglierli quel stato in cui è essendo deciso per le leggi canoniche in C. Si expositus 87 dicet il nostro caso preciso, “Si expositus ante ecclesiam cuiusquam fuerit miseratione collectus, contestationis ponat epistolam: et si is qui collectus est intra decem dies quaesitus agnitus non fuerit, securus habeat qui collegit”. Non apparendo dunque in contrario, deve esser lasciato al pacifico processo de Cappi di Ghetto che in questo Caso Le sono Padri; così dicendo la Legge Textus in Pari de Regulis in 6° [Liber Sextus decretarlium, lib. V, tit. 12, De Regulis Iuris Canonici, vol. 2, Reg. 65, col. 1124], “Quod in pari [in the original, delicto vel] causa potior est Conditio Possidentis”.

Eran schiavi i nostri Padri in Egitto. La principessa figlia del Re’ Pharaone vedde un bambino esposto nel Nilo, perché era tenuto vivo di contrabando, contro l’Editto reggio, egressus est post haec vir de domo Levi accepta uxore stirpis suae quae conecpit et peperit filium et videns eum elegantem abscondit tribus mensibus cumque iam celare non posset [f. 150 r.] sumpsit fiscellam scirpeam et linivit eam bitumine ac pice posuitque intus infantulum et exposuit eum in carecto ripae fluminis [Exodus 2:1-3]. Questo è il nostro caso. “Ecce ante descendebat filia Pharaonis [Exodus 2:5],” ut “De infantibus hebreorum est hic [Exodus 2:6].” Alle circostanze fece un supposto, che il fanciullino fosse hebreo, la sorella, le propone una balia hebrea, la riceve. “Accipe ait puerum istum et nutri mihi ego tibi dabo mercedem quam [Exodus 2:9]”. Così parla la principessa.

Perché la Principessa non dubia che sia giusto e per propagare la Religione non se lo tiene? Se “de infantibus Hebreorum est hic”; Non haveva il figliolo il boletino hebraico, che dicesse è nato il tal giorno, Haveva tre mesi e pure erano li bambini hebrei all’hora condannati da passar dalla Culla alla Tomba, subito nati, ne poteva esser di tre mesi, ad ogni modo “de Infantibus Hebreorum est hic”. Non haveva quel fanciulino una Carta di devotione, solita tenersi da Hebrei, e pure “de Infantibus Hebreorum est hic”; Non era in Ghetto di notte tempo, né in un canale publico, “quae cum que vidisset Phigellarum in Papirione quae cum vidisset fiscellam in papyrione [Exodus 2:5]”, e pure “de infantibus Hebreorum est hic”. Haveva compassione la reggia Donzella del bambino, “Cernensque in ea parvulum vagientem, miserta eius est” [Exodus 2:6]. Non però la compassione la indusse di cambiarli lo stato da un schiavo ad un Principe, perché la Giustitia vi repugnava, quale vuole che ad ogn’uno si dia il suo “de infantibus Hebraeorum est”.

EMW 2015 56
Le paga la balia e la vuol Hebra, [respondit] ego tibi dabo mercedem tuam suscepit mulier et nutritit puerum adultumque tradidit filiae Pharaonis respondit vade [Exodus 2:9-10], perché ogni congettura concludeva che “de infantibus hebreorum est hic”. Principi Augusti, siete voi Ecc.mi Cattaveri che delegati dall’Ecc.mo Senato al nostro governo, ci assistete con tanta Carità, e con quell’esempiare Giustizia, hereditata da vostri Gloriosi progenitori. Quando la consienza è persuasa per tutte le circostanze e che “de infantibus hebreorum est hic”, non si lascino portare dal zelo di Religione, a voler che sij nutrito d ’altro latte, che dal suo, [f. 150 v.] Ma’ permettino che chiamino “hebraeam mulierem quae nutrire possit infantulum” [Exodus 2:7], che si notrisca del suo natio latte, perchè la diffusione della Christiana fede, si rende più ampia con l’esempio di una liberta assoluta, con una spontanea conversion che non si facci con detenzione in età infantile, in capace di cognizione del che fatti adulti, si pentino, contro scandalo d’ogn’uno.

Mà s’è pubblicata una scomunica e non si e manifestato il vero? Dunque non è Hebreo dirà forse alcuno, che de dove si tratta di publicarsi adultera, et infame una Donna, ora non ci è riguardo di scomunica che persuasa. Nel secreto siamo sicuri anche del delitto, se incoriamo nella censura della scomunica, del delitto è castigo certo palese, L’infamia perpetua e figli che perder la vita da mag.si senza rimedio, quando sia pubblico. Della scomunica è castigo incerto, occulto dal cielo non da Tribunali. Chi sarà quello, che per fuggire una pena piccola incerta che puo’ sperarsi moderata della misericordia divina, volontariamente si esponerà ad una grande inevitabile. Le scomuniche per ordinario promettono secretezza, a Rei, ma’ quelle notizie che da questa scomunica fossero risultate, non potevano non essere partecipate alle VV. EE., Onde non è meraviglia che non essendo sicuri li Rei di restare occulti, habbino negletta la scomunica stessa, che è un’Arma, e che toltale la secretezza non ha forza immaginabile.

Violata la Principessa Tamar, figlia del Re David, dall’incontinenza del fratello Ammon, questo inhoridito dall’enormità dell’eccesso non può più sopportare la presenza della povera sorella stuprata se li converte L’amor in odio, non la può tolerare più alla sua presenza, La scaccia da se, “nimir ita ut maius esset odium quo oderat eam amore quo ante fecisti [Samuel 2, 13:15]”. Ma questa risponde “non vi è già cagione di così cacciarvi, che è un male maggiore di quell’altro che tu mi hai fatto quae respondit ei maius est hoc malum quod nunc agis adversum me quam quod ante fecisti [Samuel 2, 13:16]”. Piu stima la [f. 151 r.] povera Principessa la pubblicazione dell’infamia, dell’infamia stessa. Quella che stuprata incestuosamente sta quieta; Scacciata e palesata non puo’ capire in se medesima, Mà come forsenata si squarcia e furiosa esclamava come indemoniata, “eiecit itaque eam minister illius foras clausitque fores post eam and quae aspergens cinerem capiti suo scissa talari tunica inpositisque manibus super caput suum ibat ingrediens et clamans [Samuel 2, 13:18-19]”. Ecco la raggione
perche censura di scomunica, ne mille altri scrupoli di conscienza, sono molto meno della pubblicazione del delitto.
Sara dunque atto della loro incorrotta sapienza di non obligare li Genitori di questo infelice a precipitare la loro reputazione e forse l’aiuta, quando hanno creduto coprirsi con sicurezza sotto il comune e praticato ricovero. Sara questo un effetto d'esemplare giustizia con l'infante, e di carità con li Parenti. Gratie. Adi 18 luglio 1691 - Presentata da Cappi Generali de gl'Hebrei di questa Città»
Illicit Sex and Law in Early-Modern Italian Ghettos

Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho

Biblioteca Comunale di Mantova, Archivio della Comunità ebraica di Mantova, filza 52, fascicolo 2, 16.1.1693

Mantua 16 of January 1693
We the undersigned declare, as we have been requested, that some months ago arrived in this city (Mantua) from Nomi, Chella, the daughter of Vivian Levi, a young, destitute girl, who for many years was a servant in Nomi, in the house of Mister Sanson Sacerdote, and because it was found she was pregnant, after many negotiations and confrontations with the very same Sanson on the side of our community even if he was still insisting he was not responsible for the pregnancy, it was agreed on and decided that the girl would be escorted back to Nomi at Sacerdote’s expense. [This was decided] in order that this our community would never have to sustain any supplement or any expense because of the future birth, assures Sansone with the tocco della mano, which among us is like an oath, in order to absolve the very same community in anything and from anything, and according to this agreement, she was sent there [back to Nomi] and we assure that this is the truth, so we declare and we are ready to put an oath in order to confirm our act.
Leone Brilli, I confirm what is above.
Nacman de Angelis
Biblioteca Comunale di Mantova, Archivio della Comunità ebraica di Mantova, filza 52, fascicolo 2, 16.1.1693

Li 16 gennaio 1693 Mantova
Facciamo fede noi sottoscritti e si richiesti come à mesi passati capitò da Nomi in questa Città, Chella di Vivian Levi, giovine povera, che per molti anni servi in Nomi in casa del Signor Sanson Saccerdote, e trovata quella gravida, doppo molti discorsi e dibattimenti fatti dà noi col medesimo Sanson per l’Università nostra, ancor ch’egli affermasse non esser gravida di lui, si concertò e stabili che si facesse ricondur à Nomi à spese d’esso Sacerdotte affin che questa nostra Università non havesse maj a soccombere ad aggravio, ò spesa alcuna à causa del parto che dovesse nascere, pigliando egli in sè col tocco della mano, che tra noi vale comme giuramento à sollevare la medesima università in tutto, e per tutto, et in ordine a tal concerto, colà fù da noi mandata e per essere tal la precisa verità, così attestiamo per corroborarlo col nostro giuramento occorrendo,
Leone Brilli affermo quanto sopra
Nacman De Angelis
Illicit Sex and Law in Early-Modern Italian Ghettos

Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho

Archivio della Comunità ebraica di Modena, Busta 71 Stupri provvidenze date in casi simili, fascicolo n. 2. “Accademia di Mantova che dichiara indissolubile il stato matrimoniale contratto dal Dottore Moisè Vaigler colla Rachelle Arezzi di Modena,” 14 dicembre 1751.

14 of December, 1751 – Accademia in Mantua that declared indissoluble the matrimonial status stipulated by Doctor Moisè Vaigler with Rachelle Arezzi from Modena.

In the suit between Mrs. Rachel Arezzi from Modena on the one hand and Mr. Doctor Moisè Vailer [sic] on the other, once the positions were explained in the trial by the two respective attorneys, the Excellencies Mister Rabbi Josef Galico and Mister Rabbi Zara Jacob Sacerdoti, being also seen, and examined with much attention the documentation included and in deep consideration of what was necessary, invoking, we determine and rule that Vailer [sic] not be permitted to annul against aforementioned Rachel’s will the marriage stipulated with her. We declare this marriage absolutely valid, [Vaigler] being obliged to provide the support for the aforementioned wife and other obligations as such that are incumbent on every husband toward his wife, in agreement with the typical ketubah, declaring in addition that the son delivered by the very same Rachel be recognized as the son of the very same Vaigler, and this, in spite of the opposition advanced by the very same Vaigler, and in his name, is how it is.

In our Accademia in Mantua, December 14, 1751.

Leon Mendola
Leon Finzi
Aron Cases

Today 14 the very same
I, the undersigned, delivered an identical document written sua manu by the aforementioned excellent Mister Rabbi Zara, In fede Codiel Orefice shammash.
Modena December 19, 1751
I, the undersigned, assure that I have collected and copied the above sentence from an original that arrived from Modena word for word.
Abram Vita Graziani in the Holy Community of Modena.
Nella causa vertente fra la Signora Rachel Arezzi di Modena da una parte e il Signor Dottor Moisè Vailer dall’altra, sentite le cose espostesi in Giudizio contraditorio dalla rispettiva loro procuratori eccellenze S. R. Josef Galico e S. R. Zara Jacob Sacerdoti, come anche viste, e ponderate con tutta attenzione le carte presentate e considerate maturamente quanto occorreva, Invocandosi, determiniamo e sentenziamo, che non possa il Vailer sciogliere contro il volere della detta Rachel il matrimonio contratto seco lei quale dichiariamo di tutta validità, dovendo soccombere per l’avvenire al mantenimento di detta moglie, e a tutt’altro, tanto quanto è obbligato ogni marito verso la moglie, a norma dell’usitata chedubà, dichiarando in oltre, che il maschio partorito da essa Rachel debba essere riconosciuto per Figlio di esso Vailer, e tutto ciò, non ostante l’opposto dal Vailer medesimo, ed in suo nome, come così.

Dalla Nostra Accademia li 14 dicembre 1751 in Mantova.

Leon Mendola
Leon Finzi
Aron Cases

Adì 14 detto
Io sottoscritto hò consegnato una similla in propria mano del detto Eccellente Sig. R. Zara Sacerdote, In fede Codiel Oreficie Sagrestano.
Modena li 19 dicembre 1751

Faccio piena fede io sottoscritto di aver colazionato e copiato la di sopra sentenza d’un Urigginale venuto da Mantova Verbo ad Verbo,
Abram Vita Graziani nella santa comunità [ebraico] di Modena.
Illicit Sex and Law in Early-Modern Italian Ghettos

Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho

Archivio della Comunità ebraica di Modena, Busta 71 Stupri provvidenze date in casi simili, fascicolo n. 3 Obbligazione d’Abram Gallico di sposare l’Ester Donati Vedova Vigevani per aver avuto commercio seco lei, 29 aprile 1750

Today 29 of April 1750
Having knowledge of a dishonest intercourse between Abram Gallico from Carpi and Ester Ventura of the deceased Leon Vigevani, in a way that the very same woman is supposed to be pregnant by the aforementioned Abram, who has been called by the illustrious representants of the vaad and asked if he is willing to cover or make honest that relation of his by marrying, making legitimate at the same time the child that will be or would be born.

[Gallico] answered that, being the aforementioned Ester is truly pregnant and that marrying her is the right thing to do, declared his obligation as well as the receiving of the stipulated dowry, according to her wedding with her late first husband, and so being Pellegrino Donati here present, brother of the aforementioned Ester, he assumes this obligation on the occasion of the wedding for the sum declared in the first dowry contract. In addition, the aforementioned Abram Gallico promises and assures that even if she [Ester] were not pregnant and therefore he would not be obliged to marry her according to the law, he would be happy to marry her, as long as from the Kahal Kadosh [Jewish community] the issur [permission] will be given, and for the commitment to which is expressed here in this act Aron Gallico, brother of the aforementioned Abram with all his goods and for condition of everything there [contained in the act] expressed with the tocco del drappo, according to the Jewish custom kizur kinian and tocco della mano instead of a longer oath taken by both parts, Pellegrino Donati on one side and the aforementioned brothers [Abram and Aron Gallico] on the other for what concerns each part respectively and in the presence of two witnesses.

I, Abramino Padoa, one of the witnesses as above.
I, Paris Sanguinetti, one of the witnesses.
I, Abram Gallico, declare what is above.
I, Aron Gallico, declare what is above.
I, Pellegrino Donati, affirm.
Illicit Sex and Law in Early-Modern Italian Ghettos

Federica Francesconi, The College of Idaho

Archivio della Comunità ebraica di Modena, Busta 71 Stupri provvidenze date in casi simili, fascicolo n. 3 Obbligazione d’Abram Gallico di sposare l’Ester Donati Vedova Vigevani per aver avuto commercio seco lei, 29 aprile 1750

Adì 29 Aprile 1750
Essendo saputo trascorso di disonestà tra Abram Gallico di Carpi con l’Ester Ventura del fù Leon Vigevani, in modo tale, che viensi la medesima suposta in cinta dal predetto Abram il quale chiamatosi dali Illustri rappresentanti del vaad per instando da lui se sia disposto di coprire o onestare questo suo trascorso col matrimonio, ligittimando nello stesso tempo il parto che sarà è fosse per nascere. Rispose che trovandosi veramente la ditta Ester incinta e volendo il giusto di sposarla, sarà sempre pronto, affermando di obbligo suo come che li venghi somministrato la preclusa somma di dote, a tenore di suo maritaggio col defunto primo letto, come così si obbliga Pellegrino Donati qui presente fratello della antedetta Ester, in occasione del matrimonio la somma pronunziata nell’Istromento primo dotalis, in oltre il suddetto Abram Gallico promette, e s’obbliga quando anco non fosse incinta, e che delle leggi non vi fosse l’obbligo, e contento di sposarla, sempre che dal kahal kadosh li venga qui permesso il issur, e per la manutenzionedì quanto sta espresso nel presente foglio toccante l’asserito il medesimo, s’obbliga il detto Abram Gallico fratello dell’antedetto Abram con tutti li suoi Beni e per condizione di tutto li espresso col tocco del drappo secondo l’uso ebraico dinominato kizur kinian e toco della mano in luoco di giuramento grave legale d’ambi le parte esso e da Pellegrino Donati per una, e l’antedetti fratelli per l’altra parte per quello spetta à ciascheduna di essa rispetivamente ed alla presenza di due testimonij.
Io Abramino Padoa uno de Testimonij ut sopra.
Io Paris Sanguinetti uno di Testimonij.
Io Abram Gallico affermo quanto sopra.
Io Aron Gallico affermo quanto sopra.
Pellgrino Donati affermo.
Experience is Proof: Texts versus Observation in Eighteenth-Century Italy

Debra Glasberg Gail, Columbia University

Introduction:

The late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries marked a significant period in the transformation of scientific scholarship. The Latin philosophical tradition’s dominance waned as empirical methods gained credence. University educated men of science began to trust information actually seen and tested more than knowledge contained in books, especially ancient ones. The larger implications of this transformation -- the questioning of the authority of the written word of the Bible and the accompanying narrative of the origins of the universe -- have received significant scholarly attention. The smaller shifts in the way individuals weighed textual and empirical sources of authority, however, has been largely overlooked. The work of Italian rabbi and physician Isaac Lampronti (1679-1756), whose years as a student and teacher overlapped with these shifting grounds, provides a significant entry point into the subject. Lampronti saw the rabbinic and scientific systems as fundamentally compatible and accordingly employed his personal medical knowledge throughout his encyclopedia of Jewish law, the *Pahad Yitzhak*. Examination of two passages from his work shows both the influence of empirical authority on rabbinic scholarship and the continued importance of ancient texts, even non-Jewish ones. Through such analysis, historians can better understand the influence and reach of the new epistemology and the complex hierarchies of authority that emerged in the era.

Bibliography:

Useful studies on observation, experience, and empiricism in the early modern period include:


For more on science and Jewish law in the early modern period see:


Experience is Proof: Texts versus Observation in Eighteenth-Century Italy

Debra Glasberg Gail, Columbia University


*Dam nidah* - See Pliny Book 9, Chapter 15,1 who says the following but in another language: “There is nothing more wondrous and amazing about women than their menstrual blood, for [contact with it] turns wine sour, [it causes] the fruit of the earth to become barren, [as well as] shoots to die and garden seeds to burn up. The fruit of trees falls off if the [menstruating] women happen to sit on them. The bright glimmer of mirrors becomes darkened from the glance of the menstruating woman, the sharpness of the iron is blunted, and the gleam of ivory dulled. Dogs become crazy and rabid if they happen to eat the blood of a menstruating woman and their bite is infected with a poison from which they cannot be cured.”2

The previously mentioned scholar [Pliny] returned to these words in Book 28, Chapter 6.3 And all the iniquities attributed to this blood were absolved, and in agreement with him were Fallopio,4 Rodericus Ma-Castro [Rodrigo de Castro],5

---

1 The correct citation is actually Book 7, Chapter 15. This is a printing error. The manuscript says Book 7.
2 There are only a few small differences between the Latin original and Lampronti’s translation, namely the absence of the last few clauses about hives of bees, bronze and iron rusting, and a horrible smell filling the air. The structure of Lampronti’s rendition is otherwise faithful to the Latin.

Latin original: “sed nihil facile reperiatur mulierum profluvio magis monstrificum. acescent superventu musta, sterilescent contactae fruges, moriuntur insita, exuruntur hortorum germina, fructus arborum [quibus insidere] decidunt, speculorum fulgor adspectu ipso hebetatur, acies ferri praestringitur, eboris nitor, alvi apium moriuntur, aes etiam ac ferrum robigo protinus corripit odorque dirus aera, in rabiem aguntur gustato eo canes atque insanabili veneno morsus inficitur.” Translation by WHS Jones: “But nothing could easily be found that is more remarkable than the monthly flux of women. Contact with it turns new wine sour, crops touched by it become barren, grafts die, seeds in gardens are dried up, the fruit of trees falls off, the bright surface of mirrors in which it is merely reflected is dimmed, the edge of steel and the gleam of ivory are dulled, hives of bees die, even bronze and iron are at once seized by rust, and a horrible smell fills the air; to taste it drives dogs mad and infects their bites with an incurable poison.”

3 The printed text says Chapter 6, but the manuscript says Chapter 7. In Chapter 7, Pliny discusses the therapeutic use of saliva. Elsewhere in Book 28, however, he discusses the positive benefits of menstruation. For example, Book 28, Chapter 10 says: “Many kinds of illness are cleared up by the first sexual intercourse, or by the first menstruation; if they do not, they become chronic, especially epilepsy.” And in Book 28, Chapter 23 Pliny mentions that women are powerful and hailstorms are driven away by menstrual blood.

4 Gabriele Fallopio (d. 1562) was a Paduan anatomist known for his anatomical studies of the reproductive organs, especially his identification of the uterine tubes.
Guglielmo Balogno [Guillaume de Baillou], and Daniel Sennert and others, as one can see in their books.

In spite of this, the instances that we see every day teach us how many sicknesses come to women who do not have a menstrual flow and also how many come to those who do at the time of their flow. And every day we have seen with our eyes and our ears have heard that the men and women who eat the blood by way of a philtre [magic potion] no longer have a memory, a bitter darkness [i.e. melancholy] controls them, they become mad, and their madness waxes and wanes according to the phases of the moon, and others become lepers.

The cure for this sickness can be accomplished in many ways that should be performed by experts in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding as is written in medical books: One drama of pearls thin like dust with water of melissa fillo; One to two scrupolo of trochisci viperni, The Conciliator mentions only one

---

5 Rodrigo de Castro (d. 1627) was a converso physician who wrote an important two-volume gynecological work, De universa mulierum medicina, which was printed widely throughout Europe in the seventeenth century.

6 I searched the following medical bibliographies and resources and Guillame de Baillou is the only name that seems to possibly match the Italian version transliterated into Hebrew by Lampronti as seen in the text: James Ricci, The Genealogy of Gynaecology: History of the Development of Gynaecology Throughout the Ages (Philadelphia: The Blakiston Company, 1950); Wellcome Historical Medical Library, A Catalogue of Printed Books in the Wellcome Historical Medical Library, (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1962); Leslie T. Morton and Robert J. Moore, A Bibliography of Medical and Biomedical Biography (Brookfield, VT: Gower, 1989); Alain Besson ed., Thornton’s Medical Books, Libraries and Collectors: A Study of Bibliography and the Book Trade in Relation to the Medical Sciences (Vermont: Gower, 1990). The exact work Lampronti may have referenced is: Guillaume de Baillou, De Virginum et Mulierum Morbis liber, in quo multa ad mentem Hippocratis explicantur (Paris, 1643). For a note on Guillaume de Baillou’s role in the development of gynecology see: Helen King, Midwifery, Obstetrics and the Rise of Gynaecology: The Uses of Sixteenth-Century Compendium (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 16.

7 Daniel Sennert (d. 1637) was a German physician and prolific author of books on chemistry, alchemy, and medicine. He is chiefly known for his contributions to atomic theory, but his medical writings, including Practicae medicinae (Volumes 1-6) were also widely circulated. Book 4 of Practicae medicinae specifically covers female illnesses. In Book 4, Section II, Part 2 Sennert addresses a question as to whether menstrual blood is negative in its quantity or quality and he answers that it only offends in quantity (based on the Hippocratic/Galenic understanding that women have too much blood in their bodies), and that there is nothing inherently bad or toxic about the blood itself.

8 As far as I can tell, none of these individuals made statements about the magical or toxic qualities of menstrual blood itself. They do, however, talk about female illnesses, some of which are closely related to menstruation, either caused by it or by the lack thereof.

9 Drama/dracma is a measurement equal to 1/16 of an ounce.


11 Melissa officinalis (lemon balm) was a widely used medicinal herb, often prepared with water. Nicholas Lemery (d. 1715) discussed melissa water specifically in his pharmacological work, Farmacopea Universale. See: Lemery, Farmacopea Universale (Venice, 1720), p. 391. I reference this text because I have seen Lampronti mention it specifically on other occasions in the Pahad Yiḥak.

12 Scrupolo is a measurement equal to 1/3 dram.
remedy, the *belzoar*;¹⁵ And also very effective is the seed of the *cavolo*¹⁶ and the stomach of the rabbit;¹⁷ Very helpful is the *theriaca*,¹⁸ two *dracmas* with *fumaria* water.¹⁹ The sick person's drink should be boiled wine with *melissa* herb or wine in which the previously mentioned herb has been steeped. Above all,²⁰ he should increase the washing of his body, always in warm water with boiled herbs in it.

---


¹⁴ The *Conciliator* is a scholastic medical written by Paduan physician Pietro d’Abano (d. 1313). In 1472, an edition of the *Conciliator* was printed together with Pietro d’Abano’s short treatise on toxicology, *De veneris eorumque remedis*. There Abano discussed the therapeutic qualities of the bezoar stone.

¹⁵ The bezoar stone (a small mass found in the stomach) was long considered an antidote to poison. A short article on the bezoar can be found in the 1743 edition of the *Giornale de’letterati: Giornale de’letterati, Della Pietra Belzoar, Articolo XXII*, (Rome, 1743), p. 274-5. Morgagni also mentions a substance containing the bezoar stone in his exchange with Lampronti: *The Clinical Consultations of Giambattista Morgagni*, p. 155, see footnote 555, p. 389.


¹⁸ *Theriaca* was one of the most common ancient and medieval medicinal cures, often considered a universal cure-all. See Barkai, p. 221.

¹⁹ *Fumaria officinalis* is a medicinal herb discussed by both Lemery and Morgagni.

²⁰ The manuscript reads: “ויריחו רבח הלא ים.”
Experience is Proof: Texts versus Observation in Eighteenth-Century Italy

Debra Glasberg Gail, Columbia University


"dam nidah" (Venice, 1750) (first printed edition); Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale de France, Ms. Hebrew 481, f. 266r (manuscript original).

*鸚鸌* פלינייו ספר תשי פרק ט"ו בדבר אלה אבל בלשון אחר: אין דברפלא ומتماع בנשים יותר מדם נדותן עיין כי התירושמחמיץ פירות הארץ היו עקרות ומותתינה, הנטיעות וזיצי הננות ישרפו. ויפלו לארץ פירותה אם במקרה הנשים ישבו עליהם. אור נוגה אשר במראות יהיה אפל מפני ראות עיני הנדה, בהן חודד הברזל יבוטל, ויחשך מראה שק הפיל. שהטים יהיו הכלבים וא.recycle אם במקרה יאכלו דם נדה, וונשיבתם נשיכת לענה וראש לא תוכל להרפא. והזרח החכם הנ"ל על כל הדברים אלה בספר כ"ח פ"ו, רודרי'קו מאקאסט'רו, גוליי'למו באלון'יו, דניאל סיניר'טי ואחרים כאשר יוכל לראה הרואה בספריהם.

ועם כל זה המעשים אשר אנו רואים בכל יום הם מלמדים אתנו כמה חולאים באים על הנשים שאין שופעות דם נדה וכמה באזונות השופעות בזמן יציאתו. ובכל יום ויوم יזיעו ואוזנו ושמעו כי的人 והנשים אשר יאכלו דם הזארכים אניד פעלו, ורודה וקיבה ארנבת; גם ומתקים יתקים וחולף על דרכי רבים אשר תעשה על יד הקיאים בחכמה ותבונה רבה ככתוב בספרינו: הפני'נים דקים כעפר דרא'מה אחת עם מי מליס'סא פיללו; טרקי'שי ויפירני מסקרופולו אחד עד שני שנים; הקונצילה'טור מזכיר לרופת יחידה ההברז'אר; ו Cũng טוב מאד הוא זרע קאנו'לו וקיבה ארנבת; תועיל מאד התירי'אקא דראקמא'ס שתים עם מי פומארי'אה. שתיה חולה תהיה יבושל עם עשב מליס'סא או יין שנשרה בו העשבה של הימים, ועל כל ירבה לרחוץ גופו תמיד במים חמים עם עשבים מובושלים בו. ומכרו רופאים רבים יכלו רות את חולי הנשים בדרכים שונות ARISING מחכמה."
Experience is Proof: Texts versus Observation in Eighteenth-Century Italy

Debra Glasberg Gail, Columbia University

Nital ha-lev - Removal of the heart whether by hand or by sickness: terefah. Shulḥan ‘arukh, Yoreh de’ah: siman mem, se’if heh.¹ The issue of a peacock without a heart came before our yeshiva and after discussion, we ruled it a terefah even though one of the teachers was inclined to rule leniently, for here and there we found the kanei [pipes] of the heart that are called in Ḥulin the shorashei and sehosei. But we do not consider them the heart itself as Maimonides wrote in Chapter 6 of hilkhot sheḥitah and so forth, and in Chapter 14. And everyone wrote intelligently that if any of the organs we discussed is punctured, the animal is pasul; the same is true if one of the organs is missing, and so forth.

And even if logic makes this matter seem impossible, since no creature can live without a heart, nonetheless the spirit of God speaks through the sages of blessed memory and they do not contradict reality. And according to the rule that is written: regardless of whether [the absence of the organ occurred] by the hands of man or on account of sickness, this and that are proven through experience. I saw it in the writings of the great Rabbi Del Bene, that the wife of R. Del Bene, the daughter of the rabbi, the author of the Be’er ‘esek,² thus the daughter and wife of a haver,³ saw with her eyes in Lugo a gentile castrating a rooster to turn it into a capon⁴ and the heart was pulled out along with the testicles. And in spite of this the capon did not die. And [this is because] any creature like this, even if it cannot live for 12 months, can live for an hour, a day, or a month without a heart. And also on account of illness it disintegrates and is destroyed little by little.

¹ The printed text says se’if aleph, but this is a misprint. The manuscript clearly reads mem.
² Shabbtai Be’er Fonte, Be’er ‘esek (Venice, 1674).
³ Lampronti is arguing here that the woman is a trustworthy witness because she is both the daughter of a rabbi and the wife of a rabbi.
⁴ A capon is a castrated rooster, considered a delicacy because the hormonal and behavioral differences resulting from the castration make the meat more tender.
And even though the words of our rabbis do not need support, we found and saw in the book *Mappamondo Istorico* written by the priest Foresti, see there Book 2, page 84v, and these are the words translated from Italian into Hebrew: “And also the Caesar, on the day of his death by the hands of his enemies [the conspirators] while offering two cows, said they both did not have a heart. And also of the sacrifice, Natius Ceasar explained that it was missing both a heart and a liver.” See there.

And Gur ’Aryeh Levi Finzi seʿif katan 3, on *Shulḥan ‘arukh Yoreh de’ah siman* 40 wrote these words: “Because I have seen people mocking the words of the sages saying it is impossible for any animal to live without a heart, I decided [saw fit] to copy the words of Aristotle found in the book *Goren nakhon* Part 2, Section 3: And Alexander heard from Aristotle his mentor that worry shrinks a person’s heart and destroys it, and he wanted to establish the truth of the matter so he took a type of animal that resembled a human in its nature and imprisoned it for several days in darkness and commanded it be given enough food for it to survive, and afterwards he took it out and slaughtered it and found the heart destroyed and disintegrated.’ Thus blessed be the one who chose them and their teaching.”

And in the responsa of the great Rabbi Zevi of Amsterdam #74, 76, 77, 78 I saw that he struggled to prove that it is impossible to find an animal or bird that can live without a heart, see there his proofs, but they are not irrefutable and experience proves this. And he [Hakham Zevi] of blessed memory wrote [once], and again a second and third time, and he brought the responsum of Naftali Kohen. But who would deny the *terefut nital ha-lev* of a healthy and fat chicken when the *nital* occurred on account of illness? And even if the removal occurred by human hands, if it was not when it was slaughtered immediately [then who would ever deny its *terefut*]?

[Cross reference:] ’Ever she-‘im nital terefaḥ.

---

5 The *Mappamondo Istorico* (Historical World Map), written by Italian Jesuit Antonio Foresti, was first printed in 1690 in Parma. In 1715, the Venetian printer Girolamo Albrizzi reprinted the work as the first part of a more comprehensive universal history; the later volumes of the collection were written by Apostolo Zeno, one of the founding editors of the *Giornale de’ Letterati d’Italia*, Domenico Suarez, and Silvio Grande.

6 Gur Aryeh Levi Finzi, *Shulḥan ‘arukh Yoreh de’ah* (Glosses) (Mantua, 1721), Section 40, Comment 3.

7 The *Goren Nakhon* is a sixteenth-century collection of three classic philosophical texts: *Tikun midot ha-nefesh* by Solomon Ibn Gabirol, *Sefer musrei ha-filosofim*, and the *Sefer ha-tapuaḥ* attributed to Aristotle. The volume was edited by Joseph Ashkenazi of Padua and printed in 1562 in Riva di Trento. The specific quote here is found in Ibn Gabirol’s *Tikun midot ha-nefesh: Goren nakhon, helek* 3, sha’ar 2 (Riva di Trento, 1562), p. 13v.

8 Zevi Hirsch b. Jacob Ashkenazi, *She’elot u-teshuvot Ḥakham Zevi* (Amsterdam, 1712) #74, 76, 77, 78.

9 This phrase is a quote from B.T., *Shabbat* 61a.
Experience is Proof: Texts versus Observation in Eighteenth-Century Italy

Debra Glasberg Gail, Columbia University

Introduction

This primary text, dated 11 October 1720, is taken from a *pinkas* belonging to the Jewish community of Padua. It concerns the establishment of an *eruv hatserot*, a boundary covering most of the city in which Jews would be permitted to carry possessions on the Sabbath. References to contemporary *eruvim* ordinarily appear in responsa literature. Perhaps uniquely, this document provides communal context for the construction of the Padua *eruv*. In so doing, it sheds light on the social and religious lives of Italian Jewry in the first half of the eighteenth century.

Padua’s Jewish community at the time consisted of approximately seven hundred people. Three official synagogues populated the ghetto – serving the respective Ashkenazic, Italian, and Sephardic populations – but the different ethnic groups lived under one political banner (unlike Venetian Jewry, for instance, which technically consisted of separate communities). As such, the Padua community employed only one rabbi, who was responsible for all religious matters.

The rabbi involved in the construction of the *eruv*, Isaiah Bassan, strengthened the community’s relations with the Mantuan rabbinate. Although Padua had been under Venetian control for centuries, the Jews of Venice and Padua were not particularly connected on a rabbinic level during the first half of the eighteenth century. In contrast, through Bassan and others, the Jews of Padua and Mantua retained strong rabbinic and social ties spanning several decades, demonstrating that communal identity could be defined across political, economic, and cultural boundaries.

Contemporary documents in Padua *pinkasim* refer to a drop in religious observance and a struggle to maintain a presence in the community’s once thriving *bet midrash*. Yet, despite or because of this, members of the community’s scholarly elite, including men with rabbinic ordination and/or
medical degrees, formed a confraternity called *Mevakshe Hashem*, which was devoted to studying and copying mystical texts. Core members of the group were inspired by Bassan, and especially his father-in-law Benjamin Kohen Vitale, and later teamed with Moses Hayim Luzzatto in an attempt to form a 'perfected community.'

The document’s appearance as a copied text in a manuscript owned by the Pesaro rabbi Isaiah Romanin, who had been a member of both *Mevakshe Hashem* and Luzzatto’s circle, suggests that this *eruv* was deeply significant to kabbalists in Padua. Luzzatto himself considered it to be Bassan’s great *tikun*. As such, the document reflects the nexus of general communal behavior and a rabbinic attempt at religious rectification. It may also elucidate a mentality that (self-) identified rabbis as mystically responsible for communal spiritual welfare.

**Bibliography**


Tsevi Ashkenazi, *She’elot u-Teshuvot Hakham Tsevi* (Jerusalem, 2004), no. 6.


---

1 Luzzatto used the term קיבוץ השילוחות in his introduction to theosophical Kabbalah, *Derekh Hashem*.


With God’s Help

From one generation to the next, our ancestors have removed obstacles from the path of the people so that they not unwittingly stumble into sin, particularly [with respect to] those prohibitions relating to the Sabbath. Because many simpletons carelessly remove and bring in possessions from the ghetto to the outside and from the outside to the ghetto, against the words of our sages, the honorable Shemariah Conian, one of the memunim, and the honorable Samuel Katz Cantarini, one of the parnasim, saw it good and efficacious to establish an eruv as had been done in other communities in Italy, such as those in Mantua and Reggio, in order to permit [people] to carry items in and out [of the ghetto] without unwitting iniquity.

Because the eruv cannot be constructed from outside the ghetto to within the ghetto or from within the ghetto outwards except with permission from the Minister of the Treasury, as is well-known in our law, they went before the honorable camerlengo, Signore Giacomo Contarini, and informed him of the content of the request. He graciously heeded their voice, and granted the necessary permission according to the law. Although it may be a common assumption among the masses that such an eruv would necessitate having the keys of the city handed over for a short time, this is a total error as known to erudite individuals. Therefore, we did not need to do so at all. So the rabbi Judah Briel of Mantua wrote to our rabbi, and these are his words: “people can only dream about having the keys to the city handed over. The custom to establish an eruv began in my day, while the leader of our community was Rabbi Moses Zacut (of blessed memory), and there was no other activity except to give one ducat to his excellency the Duke, and also,
afterwards, [to provide] officials of his honor the Emperor with coffee and chocolate.” These were the words of the aforementioned rabbi.

And so, we also gave the honorable camerlengo mentioned above a pair of silk stockings, and he gave us consent for a 50-year period to establish the eruv in the synagogue according to the law. And with this, [people have] permission to carry out and bring in, from the ghetto to the outside and therefrom to the ghetto, and to carry things throughout the entire city — except for the Castello,4 which we left forbidden according to the law and the enactment of our sages. And so it was on Friday, the eve of the Fast of Atonement, 5481 [= 11 October 1720].

---

4 Jews were permitted to carry throughout the city, except in the Castello Carrarese at the southeast corner of the city on the Bacchiglione River. At the time, the Castello may not have been in use. Between 1767 and 1777, its main tower was transformed into an astronomical observatory known as Specola.
EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 12: Continuity and Change in the Jewish Communities of the Early Eighteenth Century, Ohio State University, Columbus, August 17-19, 2015

“Jewish Space and Spiritual Supremacy in Eighteenth-Century Italy”
David Sclar, Princeton University

Padua, Archivio della Comunità Ebraica di Padova, no. 13, p. 168:

1

1 A copy by Isaiah Romanin appears in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Mich. 439 (Neubauer 2239), fol. 138r.
Introduction

The following extracts are taken from the travel diaries of two Pietist missionaries of the Institutum Judaicum et Muhammedicum in the Prussian city of Halle (Saale) who journeyed throughout the Holy Roman Empire as well as to several other Europeans countries such as Poland, the Netherlands, Denmark and England in the 1730s. They visited numerous Jewish communities in big cities like Hamburg, London or Amsterdam, as well as in small towns and in even smaller villages. In their journals, the ‘studiosi’ recount their encounters with Jews and their conversations with them. In order to achieve their goal of convincing the Jews to accept the Christian truth, they used the German-Jewish vernacular in their conversations, avoided polemic attacks and argued primarily with the Old Testament and rabbinical sources. Although the testimonies of the missionaries represent outside reflections on Jewish life and are not free from biased judgments, they did not seek to demonize the Jews. In fact, the reports can be considered authentic rather than products of fiction, since in most cases there are two different accounts, written separately by each of the missionaries, which corroborate the respective report, and there is also enough historical evidence to confirm large portions of the accounts independently. Most of all, they are extremely detailed, recording not only ‘successes’ in proselytizing Jews (which were fairly seldom), but also Jewish criticism and even hostility towards Christianity. A closer look at the reports therefore reveals the manifold forms of Jewish reactions to and interactions with the traveling ‘studiosi’.

In addition to the recorded conversations, the diaries contain numerous descriptions of the various Jewish communities, their living situation and communal structures. In that respect, they reveal precious information concerning Jewish settlements, especially in small towns and in the countryside (‘Landjuden’), on which we hardly have any substantial source material. But also their accounts of visits to the larger kehillot can shed some light on communal dynamics and tensions with the surrounding world.
The following first two documents recount two visits of the Pietist students to the town of Celle and the encounters they had with Isaac Wetzlar, author of the *mussar*-work ‘Libes briv’\(^1\), in 1732 (No. 1), as well as with his relatives and the rest of the local Jewry in 1733 (No. 2). The third document is a description of the second visit the missionaries paid to the Jewish community in Frankfurt (Main) in 1733 (No. 3), when after a previous visit, during which they had mainly talked to Jewish scholars, they wanted to concentrate on finding ‘inclined souls’ among the mass of the city Jews. This selection of documents should help create a basis for comparison between the religious attitudes of ‘normal’ Jews in big communities with strong rabbinical and secular leadership and those of Jews in smaller Jewries with no permanent presence of clerical authority.

Concentrating on the Jews of Celle as a representative case of Jewish attitudes towards non-Jews in many rural areas of Germany in the first half of the 18\(^{th}\) century, I would highlight the remarkable openness they displayed vis-à-vis the missionaries. This openness stands in strong contrast to the reserved and sometimes even hostile attitudes recorded in many larger and more cohesive urban communities (such as Frankfurt). In my opinion, this kind of openness reveals fascinating information about the religious condition of such Jewries. On the one hand, the Jews of Celle were kind to the Christian strangers who were evidently trying to proselytize them, while on the other hand, they displayed a strong self-assurance and self-confidence in matters of faith throughout their conversations with the missionaries. Their openness can thus be regarded as an indication of strong religious stability and certitude. In addition, the Jews seem to have exchanged impressions amongst themselves on their interactions with the missionaries, keeping their community informed and unified. Jewish openness towards the Christian world is therefore not necessarily an indication of communal disintegration or religious decay, as has been suggested in previous research.

Finally, these findings need to be placed in relation with the grievances uttered in Isaak Wetzlar’s social criticism about the poor religious state of his “dear brothers and sisters in this [long enduring] exile”\(^2\). Wetzlar, who was a prominent member of the Celle community and was familiar with the situation in many other Jewries due to his frequent business travels, expressed a very

---

\(^1\) The book is also known as *עולם עמודי ספר*.
\(^2\) This quote is taken from the opening sentences of the ‘Libes briv’. See FAIERSTEIN: Libes Briv, p. 43.
negative view on some of his contemporary coreligionists, a view which he enunciated in his ‘Libes briv’ as well as in his interaction with the missionary Widmann (document No. 1). To what degree was his critique also directed at the Jews from his hometown? I will argue that the behavior and the religious knowledge displayed by his fellow Jews could be perceived to some degree as a confirmation, but mostly as a contradiction of Wetzlar’s commentaries.

Suggested reading:

On the Pietists’ mission to the Jews and the travel journals of the missionaries:

- **BELTZ, WALTER**: The Importance of Diaries in Methodological Discussions regarding Religious Studies (Germ.), in: Jewish History Quarterly (2006), No. 4, 496-503.

- **BOCHINGER, CHRISTOPH**: Dialogues Between Travelling Studiosi and Jews from Religious-Studies Perspective (Germ.), in: JHQ (2006), No. 4, 509-520.


- **RYMATZKI, CHRISTOPH**: The Theological Argumentation of the Institute's Writings for the Mission to the Jews and the Jewish Reactions to this (Germ.), in: JHQ (2006), No. 4, 615-626.


On the ‘Libes briv,’ Isaac Wetzlar and the Jewish community of Celle:

- **FAIERSTEIN, MORRIS**: The Libes Briv of Isaac Wetzlar, Atlanta 1996.


EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

Volume 12: Continuity and Change in the Jewish Communities of the Early Eighteenth Century, Ohio State University, Columbus, August 17-19, 2015

The Religious Condition of German Jewries in the First Half of the 18th Century. Rural and Urban Communities in Comparison
Avi Siluk, Goethe University Frankfurt on the Main

1. An extract from the travelling journal of JOHANN GEORG WIDMANN on his journey to Northern Germany, 01.07.1732, Archives of the Francke Foundation in Halle (Saale), Main Archive (AFSt/H), K 55

First Visit of Pietist Missionaries to the Town of Celle, September 1732

174r: On the 16\textsuperscript{th} [of September 1732] early in the morning, I arrived safe and sound in Celle. It was a market day which was suitable for many various conversations. I would like to report of one especially. Several Jews live outside the city gate, right next to the street, where I came from. Amongst them was particularly the Jew-home of Wetzlar! An old Jew was sitting in front of the door, and I started to talk with him in a Jewish manner [= in Yiddish]. He was taken by surprise by the unexpected salutation, and called the house mother, who immediately stepped outside and considered me at first to be a MESCHAMED\(^1\), and then ----, until I handed her a \textit{Jewish-German Letter}\(^2\), and she assured, that such a letter must be from other hands. The woman recognized the letter immediately and said: A distinguished gentleman has given us, because my husband has often businesses with important persons, the same letter as a present and said: ‘A MESCHAMED has written it’. I: The matter is exactly the opposite. I can deliver you this information that these letters are being printed in Halle, in our BES MEDRAS [=school], and the MECHABER [=author] is a good Christian. Woman: My husband would very much like to see you. Please come at 2 o’clock in the afternoon. He would be at home then. I: I would like to give you \textit{LEB BANIM}.\(^3\) The woman took it. I would like to give you a third tract, a \textit{MEISE BUCH}.\(^4\) The woman accepted it also, so I gave her a fourth book, a \textit{OR LES}

---

\(^1\) With Meschamed, Widmann meant undoubtedly Meschumad, i.e. a convert.

\(^2\) It cannot be clarified completely whether Widmann meant the so called big or small missive. The small (and missing) missive [starts with: \textit{ישראל בני כל על אם}] was published already in 1729. The big missive [usually referred to as \textit{אהבה מכתב}] was published on the 14th of January 1732. Both works were written by Johann Müller or are attributed to him.

\(^3\) It was another missionary tract: Joannis Anastasii Freylinghausenii [萊席教士的許多使命 [...] דאש מרץ פין דן [...] קינדרן על בני כל על [...] שילוחים אורטיאל ראטיטו רקרט Jo. Henr. Callenberg, Halle 1731.

\(^4\) [Acta Apostolorum in Germanicum Judaeorum Initiateur in vulgare Judaeorum idioma transferri curavit Jo. Henr. Callenberg, Halle 1731.]}
She took them all, and repeated the invitation.

I entered the house, as they were about to say the blessing, and I saw several Jews sitting at the table. The Jew Wetzlar welcomed me in a friendly manner. He lay the Abrabanel in front of himself and talked to the other Jews during the meal. His first story was the repetition of the account on how he received the *Jewish-German Letter*, only that he had been asked [by the person who gave him the letter (A.S.)] to give his judgement on the letter. He had considered the matter and reached the conclusion, that a MESCHAMED couldn’t have made it, because they [= converts (A.S.)] never speak well about Jews; a Jew couldn’t have made it either, because there are several things inside that wouldn’t befit Jews; therefore, the letter was made by a good friend of the Jews, who had done well to have written in such a manner.

Now, back then, he wished he could have met the author and he still had the same desire to get acquainted with such a person. That is why he was glad I came to his house. I: There is not much love amongst the BENE ADAM [=human beings], they view and treat each other as if hatred, jealousy and persecution would be the best of virtues. Wetzlar: Such words I longed to hear for a long time. The world is poorer when one has no love. A righteous Jew cannot hate a Christian. [Only] a rude [Chunk], who never studied and wander about like cattle in the countryside, without SECHEL [=brain], he is like a Jew who understands nothing. But, a righteous Jew has to be grateful to the Christians a lot, because he has protection from them, and a Messiah has made a great deeds amongst you. If someone is a righteous Jew, though, he has [=must have] other thoughts. I: A Christian has also such MIZVOS [=commands], which commend the love towards all people, even against enemies, because they must not rest, but overcome the bad with the good. A Jew: There used to be a man here, Leyser, who was highly educated. He is dead now, and I am sorry that the others are not disposed as he was. I: Some are of the opinion that you, for example, don’t want CHELEK [=part] or GORAL [=fate] with the GOJIM [=non-Jews]. Against that, the Christians find such PSUKIM [=verses], which speaks differently [175r] of the days of the MASCHIACH. That means naturally that BENE ISRAEL should stay a GOI ECHAD [=one nation], Jes.31. As long as we cannot measure the sky above, it is EMES [=truth] that the JEHUDIM have virtues. A Jew: We are God’s first-born sons and we shall stay that. One can recognize it, because we are being kept so long and so wondrously [alive/as HIS people

---

*EREB.*

5 She took them all, and repeated the invitation.

idioma transferri curavit ediditque Io. Henr. Callenberg, Halle 1731.

יהודה יוחנן (actually Johannes Müller): שירת ישראל והרומא במשיח ע’hui, כרוא בלט נבר.لهיאר תינן ישים ויאפר בחתם ירא בלט נבר, Halle (Saale) 1728. In this case, it was probably the addition from 1732.
(A.S.). I: Yours is the childhood, the splendor [of] SCHECHINA [=God’s indwelling within his people], the TORAH, the BERIS [=covenant] […] and the promise of MASCHIACH. These are your privileges, and even Paulus didn’t take them away! But it is yet to consider that in the days of MASCHIACH AMMIM RABBIM [=many nations] should become LEAM [=one people] for God. Neither humans nor cattle were allowed to go to HAR SINAI, otherwise they would have had to be stoned or shot to death; but AMMIM RABBIM should flow to the HAR [=mountain] of the MASCHIACH. Jew: The man speaks truly well.

Woman: Because of that I invited him to come. Having heard this, Wezler sat next to me, offered me something to eat and drink but I only thanked him for his politeness. Wezler tried again, meaning to honor me, but I apologized and lamented that on the roads, one hears so many explanations on the words of God that if one is to trust the PERUSCHIM [=interpretations], one doesn't know anymore what Emes or SCHECKER [=a lie] is. Wezler: I myself love Abarbanel and search my PERES [=interpretation] in him. I: He is one of the kindest and best of rabbis but I am reluctant to follow anything, which is not clear and obvious from God’s holy word; the PERUSCHIM do not serve as a solid ground.

Wezler: I have read your books, your Catechism⁶, I have read the Catholic books. They talk a lot about the nature of PESILIM [=idol]. I also drink a glass of wine with a Lutheran, if you will offer me the best proof ------. I have come to learn that they believe only in one God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

I: We can talk as much as we want. In the end, it all means that all flows in just one godly being. Wezler: I have talked to you much [175v], but I will not accept it, when one makes another God besides the Only God. He is so unified that his unity has no match. I: We also consider this unity so strong, that not even the slightest addition could be accepted. Wezler: The ADONAI ZIDKENU [=God is our justice] is the leading aspect in Jeremiah; I once told a superintendent here that Jerusalem was called ADONAI SCHAMMAH [God heard], that ARON BERIS [=ark of the covenant] was called ADONAI. He said from the pulpit that someone had given him the light, but afterwards I have found out that he was only flattering. I: This is the most important thing: nobody can ask for SCHEM CHAVUI [=hidden name] of God; he wants to be recognized and no one can deny that HAMISBEACH [=sacrificial altar], ARON BERIS, JERUSCHALAIM bear

---

⁶ Wetzlar probably refers to: ספר טקסי משיח ההולך עםтя משיחים: עדת השם, ת arma יישורא יד טאני פנ שד, תואר לי איזט דייס, דייל קירינד, פון דעם גלויבן און פון דערערנוג פון דער גמיינדער מישיחים [...]. [Augustana confessio in germanicum Judaeorum idioma transferri curavit ediditque Io. Henr. Callenberg […]], Halle 1732. It could also be that he was referring to the missing work of CASPAR CALVÖRS: JudenKatechismus, das ist, kurtzer weg des lebens zu dem Meßia und heylande der welt, gezeiget dem hause Israel; den unbekehrten zur erleuchtung, den bekehrten zur stärckung: aufs neue mit einer vorrede herausgegeben von Johann Heinrich Callenberg, Halle 1732.
God's name because God had lay his name himself in peace; nobody believes in a second or third God. Wezler: I know you only believe in one God. I: We also have the SCHMA[?] Marcus 12. Our MASCHIACH did not make himself into any God, that is why we should understand what is written in misch.(!) ch. 8, of the CHOCHMAH [=wisdom], which was there before the beginning, before the days of eternity, and that we also understand what Mich. ch. 5 tells about an origin at the very beginning, before the days of eternity, and what was the DEAH [=opinion] of the KEDOSCHIM [=saints] – Prov. 30 v. 3,4,5. Wezler: The answer to this has already been given. I: The answer is here and there, but we believe that a Messiah, meaning just DAM and BASER, cannot offer GULA [=redemption]. Only God himself shall be the GOEL [=redeemer] – Es. 54. He calls himself MELECH [=king] and we find such PSUCKIM as in Es. 60 v. 1, 2, in KUMI URI [=come, awake] that Jehovah appears when MASCHIACH appears. How can that be?

[176r] Wezler: I have read in the Catechism that Messiah had suffered. I have read that the Father is eternal, the Son is eternal, the Holy Spirit is eternal but there are no three eternals but only one Eternal God. I have read that God has taken upon himself to suffer. But he only suffered in the [earthly] time; how can the Son be as the Father since the suffering was in time, in which the Father did not suffer and yet one should be the same as the other. I: You will not find answers this way; the MASCHIACH was killed as a being of BASER and DAM, but he was brought to life again in his spirit, by the divinity at his side, and was given the strength to arise from the dead. If all the world's BESER and DAM [=flesh and blood] came together, no CIPPURET [=atonement] or ZEDEK OLANIM [=eternal justice] would have any effects. However, it is said in Es. 43 that the BRIS burdened God with our sins and so we must understand from this that the weight and the burden come from God. Jew: How can it be, though, that he suffers and [the other] one doesn't suffer, if they are one? I: They are not one in sufferings because a deity could not suffer; that is a misunderstanding. When Israel rebelled against the SCHCHEINAH in the MIDBAR [=desert] and complained, and angered the RUACH HAKODESH [=Holy Spirit], it is said that the Israelis rebelled against God. The TORAH mentions a MALACH [=angel] – Es. 23 – and still it is written that they argued with the MALACH. Thus, God makes things into his own. Wezler: I am happy to talk about anything but not about God being AB, BEN and RUACH. I: You don't understand the matter completely because in the EMUNAH NOZERIM [=Christian belief] one is not baptised BESHEMOS [= in the names of, pl.] but BASCHEM [= in the name of, sg.] AB, BEN and RUACH HAKODESH. What NOZERIM understand differently by
AB BEN VERUACH is PANIM, in German “persons”; PANIN(!) appear in your books. Jew: Where? I: In the 13 articles of faith where it is written: BESCHUM PANIM [=under no circumstances]. Wezler: If one wishes to talk of figures, then he would be a JACHID [=singular]. I: PANIM is not explained or defined by figures or shapes, those are not in God, everything is RUCHIOS. If one explained RUACH HAKODESCH [176v], SCHECHINAH, MIMRA DI ADONAI and METATRON well, you could see everything in the same light.

Jew: I would like to know more about this. I shall keep believing in the one living God. I: That is right; one would reject it [=the belief in one Got (A.S.)] only then, if ELOCHIM ACHERIM [=different gods] would be preached; that is the true AVODAH SARAH [=idolatry]. Wezler: I hold a very high opinion of this book, ספר חוכת הלבנה 7, which teaches the SCHAAR [=gate] to recognize the JACHID; the SCHAAR will be opened so that God will be recognized from the Book of Genesis, followed by the SCHAAR of AVODAH [=work/service], [to teach (A.S.)] that we are bound to serve God. Afterwards comes the SCHAAR of our sins, the SCHAAR of humiliation, the SCHAAR of TSCUBE [=repentance], and the SCHAAR of the AHOLOT [?]. This SEPER was written by Rabbi Bechai bar Joseph, and was translated into the German-Jewish vernacular in Amsterdam. I have bought it three times for my children. Whoever lives so [=according to this book (A.S)] will stay in the right [path (A.S.)] I: This is the SCHAAR Torah, but how do we get to the point, where we can enter the SCHAAR of the utter love, without any AVERO [=sins]. And, because no BEN ADAM is without JEZER HARO8 [=the evil inclination] and his own sin, where stands the gate of CIPPORAH [=atonement]. Wezler: I cry out to God, and speak: You are an EL RACHUM [=a merciful God], You know that I cannot help myself, I am your creation, You have made me, therefore is my hope solely with You. Thus, I seek God’s mercy. I: That is a good beginning. If God demands faith and faith requires to keep God’s word, commitment, plight and promise, even if reason cannot conceive it; how can we reach then the truth.

Wezler: Yes, we must reach the state of bliss through our belief. I: If we can achieve bliss through our faith, the way it is written, ZADIK BAEMUNATO JCHJEH [=the righteous shell live in his faith]; which is the word of faith? I have found it in Es. 50: ‘through his recognition, he will be my servant’; the righteous will do a lot of justice.

In that manner, I explained what Christians believe. Wezler asked about my name (177r) and then wrote it down on the table. He thanked me for the books I

7 Actually ספר חובות הלבנה = Duties of the Heart, from Bahya ibn Pakuda (approx. 1050-1120, Zaragoza).
8 The Pietists understood this concept as the ‘original sin’.
had given him and said: his love for Christians originated in this word, because He (Jesus) had left us such a great work. I compare this Wezler to Hirsch Kaiser\(^9\) although he is a younger. He doesn't think too highly of Jews but will swear that no good Jew will scorn true Christians and that the work, if explained clearly, pleased him well. He admitted that he is exactly like the AM RAZIM[?], no unyielding Jew. He recognized that the Evangelists were better, but lamented that one cannot find many LAMDANIM [=scholars] who can truly speak to Jews with the SCHORESCH [=root]. I promised him that, with God's help, more and more ideas of Christianity will be explained with clarity to the Jews. So much as to that. [May] God, who has awoken this heart to search for the truth, will make others follow, so that they would walk with God, as if they were redeemed from blindness and thus could reach the True Light.

\(^9\) = A Jew from Fürth, with whom the missionary Widmann held long conversations at the beginning of that year (1732) and to whom he developed a friendly relationship.
Erster Besuch des Missionars Widmann in Celle, September 1732:


---

1 Widmann meinte mit Meschamed zweifelsfrei Meschumad, d.h. ein Konvertit.

Ich: Ein Christ hat auch solche MIZVOS [=Gebote], welche die liebe gegen alle menschen gebieten, und solten es auch feinde seyn, dann sie sollen keine ruhe üben, sonder das böse mit gutem überwinden.


---


5 [...] was war das bekannteste Missionsschrift der Pietisten aus Halle. (eigtl. Johann Müller).[...]簡単な言語に翻訳され、1728年、ハレ（ザール）に出版された。この場合、おそらく1732年の追加分が含まれている。]
Volk Israel] sollen bleiben ein GOI ECHAD [=ein Volk] Jes. 31. so lang man den
Himmel oben nicht messen kann, es ist auch EMES [=Wahrheit], daß die JEHUDIM
bleiben es auch, welches nur daran zu erkennen, daß wir so lange Zeit und so
wunderlich erhalten werden. Ich: Euer ist die Kindschaft, die Herrlichkeit
SCHECHINAH [=Einwohnung Gottes im Volk], die TORAH der BERIS [=Bund], der
a----h, und die verheißung von maschiach. Das sind eure Vorrechte, die hat auch
Paulus nicht benomen! Aber es ist doch bedenklich, daß in der tagen des
MASCHIACH AMMIM RABBIM [=viele Völker] sind Gott LEAM [=zu einem Volk].
Zum HAR SINAI [=Berg Sinai] durfft weder menschen noch Vieh gehen, oder
sie müßten gesteinigt, oder mit einem geschoß erschoßen werden, aber zum
HAR [=Berg] des MASCHIACHS fließen AMMIM RABBIM [=viele Völker]. Jud:
Der Mann redet Warhafftig guth. Frau: Ich hab ihn darum laßen kommen.

Hierauf setzte sich Wezler näher zu mir, bott mir etwas an, was
verlangen möchte, bedanckte mich aber vor die Hofflichkeit. Wezler hielt noch
einmahl an, und war bedacht, mir eine ehre anzuthun, ich entschuldigte mich
aber und klagte daß auff einen reisen sonderlich wahr genommen, so viele
erklärungen des Wortes Gottes, wann man den PERUSCHIM [=Interpretationen]
nach gehen wolte, so wüßte keines mehr, was EMES [=Wahrheit] oder SHECKER
[=Interpretation] suche in ihm. Ich: Er ist eine einer von den gellindisten, und
besten Rabbiner, aber ich halte darvor was nicht in Gottes heiligem wort selbst
klar und deutlich zu finden, ohne die PERUSCHIM [=Interpretationen] das beruhe
auf einem ungewisenen grund. Wezler: Ich habe gelesen Eure bücher,
euren catechismus, ich habe gelesen der Catholischen Bücher, da steht viel
vom wesen der PESILIM [=Unreinen], ich trincke auch mit einem Lutherischen
noch ein Glas wein, wie sie mir dann werden das Zeugnis geben, daß der beste
werde seyn worin(?) ich habe gefunden, daß sie nur einen Gott glauben, und den
Gott Abrahams, Isaacs, und Jacobs. Ich: Man mag reden so vie man
viel, so fleiset alles ein in ein einiges gottliches unzertrennliches wesen.

Wetzler: Ich hab viel mit ihnen geredet [175v] aber davon rede nicht,
wan man außer dem Einigen Gott noch ein Gott machet, dann er ist so einig,
daß seine Einigkeit ihres gleiche nicht hat. Ich: Wir sehen auch so starck
auff die Einigkeit daß nicht der geringste zusamten satz kann gedultet werden.

6 Es handelt sich entweder um

6 Es handelt sich entweder um... [Augustana confessio in germanicum Judaeorum idiomael transforferii curatur ediditque Io. Henr. Callenberg [...], Halle 1732, oder um die vermiessene Schrift Caspar Calvörs: Judenkatechismus, das ist, kurter weg des lebens zu dem Meßia und heylande der welt, gezeignet dem hause Israel; den unbekehrten zur erleuchtung, den bekehrten zur stärckung: auß neue mit einer vorrede herausgegeben von Johann Heinrich Callenberg, Halle 1732.

Ich: Wir haben das SCHMA Marc. 12 auch unser MASCHIACH hat sich selbst zu keinem Gott gemacht, das sagt ferne, darauf kommt es an, daß wir verstehen, was misch. c. 8 steht, von der CHOCHMAH [=Weisheit], die gewesen, vor anfang, vor den tagen der ewigkeit, auch daß wir verstehen, was Mich. c.5 von einem ausgang von anfang vor den tagen der ewigkeit geredet wird, und was da seye die DEAH [=Meinung] der KEDOSCHIM [=Heiligen] Prov. 30 p.3,4,5.


leydet nicht, und doch sind sie eins. Ich: Sie sind eines nicht nach dem Leyden, dann die Gottheit kann nicht leyden, es ist ein mißverstand. Wann Israel gemarert wider der SCHECHINAH in der MIDBAR [=Wüste], wann sie gemurert, und erbittert den RUACH HAKODESCH [=Heiligen Geist], so heißt es, sie haben gemurert wider Gott, es spricht die TORAH von einem MALACH [=Engel] Es. 23 und doch stehet, daß sie wider den MALACH gestritten. Gott eignet sich also etwas zu.


Ich: das ist die SCHAAR TORAH aber wie kommen wir darzu, daß wir eintreten in die SCHAAR von Vollkommener liebe, ohne einige AVERO [=Sünde(n)]. Und weil kein BEN ADAM [=Mensch] ohne JEZER HARO [=Erbsünde8] ist und eigene sunde, wo stehet die SCHAAR zur CIPPORAH [=Sühne].

Wezler: Ich schreye zu Gott, und spreche: du bisst ein EL RACHUM [=gnädiger Gott], du weisset daß ich mir selbst nicht helfen kann, ich bin dein geschöpff, du hast mich gemacht, darum stehet

8 Eigtl. die Fähigkeit zum Bösen. So übersetzten die Pietisten von Halle diesen Begriff ins Deutsch.

9 = Ein Jude aus Fürth, mit dem der Missionar Widmann lange Gespräche zu Beginn des Jahres 1732 führte und eine freundschaftliche Beziehung entwickelte.
Second Visit of the Pietist Missionaries to the Town of Celle, September 1733

[144r] Dec. 2nd: … We arrived at Celle … The Jews of this town lives in the outskirts. There are approx. 10 to 12 families, some are rich especially Wetzlar, which is also said to be the most educated.

Dec. 3rd: we went together to his [Wetzlar’s] house, because my companion decided to talk to him this time, especially after the honorable Mrs. Münchhausen recommended him to us […]. Unfortunately, he was away, but his son stood at the door and was friendly towards us. He said, that he [Wetzlar] would return home tomorrow. He still has the three books my companion had given him. They were locked in a cabinet, in order to be kept in good shape. My companion showed him Yoreh Deah and the Jewish-Letter, and asked him to deliver them to his father. Wetzlar’s son apologized, and said he didn’t know if he was allowed to accept them. My companion then handed them to another Jew who arrived at the scene. [144v] The Chassan also came along, and wanted to know, what kind of books we were carrying. He looked at them and was surprised to see, that Yoreh Deah was translated into German. They believed it was a part out of their Talmud. My companion had removed the introduction

---

1 The episode with Mrs. Münchhausen, which took place in Hanover a short time before, could be found in the same diary AFSt/H K 57, folio 126 r(ecto).

2 = A missionary tract, which was written by the Halle missionaries. The name Yoreh Deah [Teacher of Knowledge] is a reference to a medieval work by the Jewish scholar Jaacov ben Asher, and is (more importantly) being recognized as part of Joseph Karo’s Shulchan Aruch (שולחן ערוך).

3 Most probably, it was Mikhtav Ahava (מכתב אהבה), which is believed to have been written by Johannes Müller, the author of Or Le’et Erev (אור לעת עד). See also Document 1, footnote No. 5.
from one of the copies, as he [later] explained to me. In the meantime, other Jews gathered around us, and we distributed several books amongst them. One of the inhabitants in Wetzlar’s home received the Epist. to the Romans and another letter. Two others got each a YOREH DEAH and a Jewish Letter. Besides that I gave a woman a Letter. God, let it become a blessing amongst them!

The Jews here were more affable than in Hanover. They let you talk to them and took the books for an examination and kept them. We were not able to engage in a lengthy conversation because they all had work to do, so we started heading out. On our way to the inn, where we wanted to have our breakfast, we’ve noticed a man and a woman observing us from a window across the street. This motivated us to go over there after we finished our breakfast. The man wanted to speak to us at the door, but the woman asked us if we would like to come in for a while. Soon enough, my companion handed over the Letter. The man looked at it and said: I can see now, your whole matter is to proof, that MESCHIACH already arrived and you would then explain that the 53rd Chapter of Isaiah speaks of him. Using chapter 52, my companion showed him, that it must have referred to the messiah. But the Jew could hardly wait [for the entire explanation (A.S.)], and he said he wanted to ask him something. He had asked this question many pastors, but no one could explain it to him in a way he could understand and accept. HINNE ANI SCHOLEICH LOCHEM ES ELIHU HANOBI LIPHNE 60 JOM ADANNOI [=AD HAJOM?] HAGADUL VEHANAUROH 6 [=]. My companion responded out of Ies. (?) 11, where the horrible day to come down upon Jerusalem is also mentioned. He combined the two verses, and reached the following conclusion: because the JOM HAGADUL VEHANAUROH had already been bestowed upon Jerusalem and destroyed it, and, in addition, the land was hit by a CHEREM, now must follow also the other part of the prophecy. The Jew was not convinced yet, but he also didn’t have any time left, so we’ve agreed to return at 5pm.

My companion gave him the YOREH DEAH and he kept it together with the Letter. The woman told us, that she has already heard of my companion a year ago. The Jew Meyer and his wife had been living at the inn ‘Zum Weißen Roß’ when he stayed there, and they told her that they had great HANOAH [=delight], and pleasure listening to him, because he speaks such good Hebrew. This was probably the main reason for these people to want to talk to us.

---

4 The Preface was an address to the Christian reader in Latin and would have immediately revealed the true character of the book.
5 In a Yiddish translation.
6 Malachi 3:23.
... we went to the Jew in the town's outskirts. The Jew had left the house, so we sat down with the wife and their little children. After she received us in a friendly manner, the woman took the opportunity to speak. She repeated what she heard about my companion at the inn ‘Zum Weißen Roß’ the previous year. The Jew Meyer, his wife and other Jews all testified that they had a great HANAE [=delight] from his speech. She recounted also that the rabbi in Hanover fasted each and every day of the year, and that he never eats before the evening and even then he only eats a herring. My companion replied that this cannot be called fasting. There are many amongst us, who also eat only once every 24 hours. Fasting is only [good] if it is being utilized, so that one could fast in his soul, or to direct his heart to God and the godly matters. [146r] She asked us, if we were not married and then congratulated us for being blissful, because we had more time to [invest] in God’s word, and not to [waste] it with raising children. She was also told, what the main purpose of our journey was, because she wanted to know, why we didn’t become preachers? It was something that many Jews throughout the land asked us.

Finally, my companion showed her clearly, why the Jews’ prayers must be unpleasant and dissatisfying to God, which is also the reason why their prayers are not being answered. This affected her, and a blessed scruple awoke in her.

Finally, the man arrived, but stayed hidden on the side in order to avoid the discussion. But, since he noticed, that we weren’t going to leave, he came inside, took the Letter and the YOREH DEAH and said, he had read it, and recognized, that it was written against them. My companion ---- ----, if he wanted to say, it was a lie. Jew: No, he didn’t mean to say it so uncouthly. He is just saying that it is written against the Jews. We would explain that chapter 53 talks of the MESCHIACH, he knew that already, but you cannot do that. My companion translated to him Zach[arias] 111, Dan[iel] 9 and the previous chapter, No. 52, in order to show him that it necessarily meant the messiah. I found it very appeasing, that this Jew expressed his doubts or points of disagreement so courteous, using always the phrase: he cannot grasp, and then, for example: that we are redeemed through the blood of the MESCHIACH, or that he is supposed to be the king of the world, because he was not published in front of the whole world.7 After that had been explained, [he still argued] that there are still so

7 The account of the second missionary was recorded in the form of a conversation: Jew: I cannot believe that one can die before the others, it is also not written about your MASCHIACH as you said it. It is against all reason! These were the word the Jew said with great affectation. I: Look at the one who has our SCHALOM [= peace], he was not a RASCHA [= bad person] because he used no deceive, and this very SCHELOMENU [= our
many nations who haven’t recognized him. After answering all his questions, my companion reached the subject of Elia from the morning, and elucidated the matter to him, using mainly the comparison between the state of Elia and that of the mystery.

After he heard all of that, he kept the Letter and the YOREH DEAH, and one could sense that he had the desire to keep searching for the truth. I wish him divine blessing for that. Otherwise, [I can recount that (A.S.)] he is the Jew responsible for the distribution of the alms (a GABBE). I never learned his name. He wore black clothes and seemed poor. The next time we’ll travel through this region, he will be our first visit.

…

[146v] Dec. 4th. This morning we went together and looked for other opportunities to conduct conversations with some Jews, but we couldn’t find anyone. We went to see Wetzlar, who had returned home, but he was getting a shave when we got to him. He sent his wife to apologize on his behalf, for he didn’t have any time available. He had just come back, and when his beard is shaven, he would have to leave immediately. We therefor went on, and were content with ourselves for the time being, because we used this good occasion to hand him some new books.

Since we didn’t see anyone else, we went back to the house, where we have been the day before, but the Jew was not home. We took our leave from the woman and because the weather was good, took off at noon and left Celle behind.

peace] is a cleansing for our sins.  Jew: Indeed, but that does not mean that he died for our sins.  I: At v. 9 it says clearly CI NIOSAR MEEREZ CHAJIM = He was extirpated from the land of the living. That is a real death. And at v. 6 we read that he had been carrying all our sins and God (?) on him. MEDICCA MIPAESCHAENU [= healing from our sins] are big sins....  Jew: If Jesus were the Messiah and the King, the entire world would have had to know that. You say, he was King, but others don’t; who knows for sure how it actually was.  I: It was published in Ex. C ii as God promised, he is pictured as a NES [= wonder] and the OMOS [= nations] understand that. He who is accepted by the OMOS is a declared Messiah, but he is granted no honour by the RESCHAIN [= the evil ones] and such are killed because they argue against Christianity. [...]  Jew: The GOMMORA [= section of the Talmud] doesn’t say that he will be a King.  I: A King is a MASCHIACH.  Jew: I don’t mean a king like all other kings of the world.  I: You can see it in this chapter; divine things will be spoken of him. The heathen would ask him like a nation asks their God Es. ch. 8. He rules and judges according to his heart, not according to what he sees or hears. [...]  Jew: To believe all of this is not reasonable at all!  I: it seemed as if it would be against all reason, when Abraham needed to kill his son, from which a great people should be born.  Jew: God tested him.  I: Abraham didn’t know that, and Isaac also believed it, and followed God’s commanded to take wood to death and he let himself be bound, because God’s word is to be believed, also over reason. AFSt/H K 56, fól. 217" (emphases A.S.).
The other missionary added his own impression from this (his second) visit to Celle.

The Jew Wetzlar had come home the night before. I went to the door of his study with my companion, but he was just getting his beard shaved. He apologized because he had to work all day. He hoped we would not think ill of him for that. I noticed from all these things that this Jew who had taken a book in his home, together with others has already reported everything [to him = Wetzlar]. Wetzlar [in the previous encounter with Widmann (A.S.)] has reached the point, where we talked about Christ’s godliness, and I was prepared to give him numerous proofs on that. But since “YOREH DEAH“ also talks about that, he will be able to reflect on this question using it. One needs to eliminate and to tear down many Jewish strongholds, until one can start laying the ground [for conversion (A.S.)] and bring the Jews onto the right path. The ones in Celle are easier to talk to than others. This comes as a result from their belief, that they can win the arguments with gentility and flattery. But one should try harder with Wetzlar, because his folks still prove themselves affectionate and friendly.

---

8 AFS/H K 56, fol. 219v.
Ein Auszug aus dem Reisetagebuch von JOHANN ANDREAS MANITIUS auf seiner Reise in den Harz, nach Franken, Hessen u. Norddeutschland, 01.01.1733, AFSt/H, K 57

Zweiter Besuch der pietistischen Missionare in Celle, September 1733

144r: (Überschrift) Zell d. 2. u. 3. Dec. 1733. Besuch des Jud Wetzlers …


---

1 Die Episode mit der Frau Münchhausen fand kurze Zeit davor in Hannover statt. Siehe darüber im gleichen Tagebuch, Bl. 1266.
3 Wahrscheinlich handelt es sich um Mikhtav Ahava (מעכתב אהבה), der vermutlich von Johann Müller, der Autor des Or Le’et Erev (אור לעת erev), verfasst wurde. Siehe auch Dokument 1, Fußnote Nr. 5.
4 Die Vorrede war eine Adressierung an den christlichen Leser auf Latein und hätte vermutlich den wahren Charakter des Buchs sofort verraten.


In einer Jiddischen Übersetzung.
Maleachi 3:23.

Endlich kam der Mann aber verborgen, denn er war nur deßwegen auf die Seite gegangen, daß er der Unterredung entgehen möchte. Als er aber merckte, daß wir nicht weggingen, kam er herein nahm den Brief und das Joreh Deah, u. sagte vom Brief, er habe es gelesen, und wohl gesehen, daß es ihnen gantz contrair geschrieben wäre. M. Gef. war(?) deutsch heraus, er will sagen es sey Scheker, Jud. Nein so grob wolle ers nicht sagen, er sage nur es sey ihnen contrair, das 53. Cap. Erklärten wir vom Meschiach, das wiße er wol, das könten sie aber nicht thu. M. Gef. machte es ihm deutsch aus Zach. 111, Dan. 9 u. dem vorhergehenden 52 Cap., daß nothwendig der Messias müß. gemeinet seyn, Es gefiel mir wohl an diesen Juden, daß er so artig seine dubia oder zweiffelspuncke vorbrachte, immer mit der Redensart: er könne es nicht begreiffen, daß d. Ex. Wir durch das Blut des Meschiachs erlöset würden, it[em] daß er ein König der gantzen Welt sey, da er doch nicht vor der gantzen welt öffentlich als ein Solcher erklärt worden, auch so viel Völcker noch wären, die ihn nicht dafür erkennen könten7, Endlich kam m. Gef. da er ihm diese puncte

beantwortet hatte auch auf den heutigen punct vom Elia und erläuterte ihm solches nach den --------, sonderlich durch die gegeneinanderhaltung des Zustandes Elia mit dem Zustand des Gehamnis(?)

Als er dieses alles mit angehöret, behielt er doch den breif und das Joreh Deah, u man merckte an ihm, daß er einige lust bekomen hatte der wahrheit weiter nachzuforschen, dazu ich göttlichen Seegen wünsche, Er ist sonst derjenige, der den Armen den Allmosen austheilen muß (ein GABBE) den Namen dieses Juden habe ich nicht erfahren, er trug ein schwartzes Kleid und schien ein armer zu seyn, wenn wir wieder durchreisen sollten, so wird er von uns zuerst besucht werden.

…


Da wir weiter niemanden sehen und finden könten, gingen wir in das Hauß, wo wir gestern gewesen, er war aber auch nicht zu Hause, daher wir kurtz von der Frau Abschied nahmen, und weil es noch gut Wetter war, machten wir uns diesen Mittag noch auf den Weg u. verließen Zelle.”

gehabt, und eben dieser, SCHELOMENU [=unser Frieden] ist medicca, um unserer Sunder wilien.  Jud. Ja, das heißt noch nicht, daß er um unserer Sunder willen gestorben seye.  Ich. P.9 stehet es klar CI NIOSAR MEEREZ CHAJIM = Er ist außerottet aus dem land der Lebendigen. Das ist ein wahrer todt. Und p. 6 lesen wir, daß er unsere aller Sünde getragen, und Gott auf ihn solche anlaufen(?) lassen. MEDICCA MIPAESCHAENU [=Heilung von unseren Sünden] sind große Sünden...

Jud. Wann Jesus der Mesias und König wäre, so müßte er vor der gantzen welt publiciret worden seyn. Ewer sagt, Er seye König, der ander nein, wer weiß da, was gewesen.  Ich. Er ist ja publicirt Es cii. So, wie es Gott verheißen, dann er stehet als ein NES [Wunder], und die OMOS [Nationen] verstehen es. Welchen die OMOS annehmen, der ist ein erklärter Meßias, aber es sind RESCHAIM [Bösen], die geben ihm die Ehre nicht, und solche werden getödtet, die streiten wider Christum. …


Der andere Missionar fügte diesen Eindrücken hinzu.  


\footnote{AFSt/H K 56, fol. 219 v.}
The Religious Condition of German Jewries in the First Half of the 18th Century. Rural and Urban Communities in Comparison

Avi Siluk, Goethe University Frankfurt on the Main

3. The Diary of JOHANN ANDREAS MANITIUS about his journey to the Harz district, Franconia, Hesse and Northern Germany starting 1/1/1773, AFSt/H, K 57

The Missionaries' impressions on their second visit to Frankfurt am Main:

[62v] In a conversation with a Mr. Gentzel in Frankfurt am Main:

We ... learned ... partly about the situation with the local Jewry; He was able to provide some strange and remarkable information, on the one hand about his own occasional conversations with some who were happy to listen to him, on the other hand about the conversations of others, particularly Hochmann von Hochenau1, who has publicly preached to them in their school here. Also, he mentioned a book in his possession, an octavo printed in German and Hebrew by one BOOCK in Leipzig in 1720, wherein the Christian teachings from Jewish Books were rendered to them in their own words; he recounted that when he gave this book to the Jew, the latter kissed it and eagerly took it with him to read it, yet returned after a while and eventually said in distress that he had been subjected to HEREM because of the book. The same harsh procedure is apparently still being applied nowadays. ...

63v [...] The Frankfurt Jews' show lack of interest in the studiosi:

On October 3rd, we both went out, and since it was Shabbat, we walked straight through the Jews' Lane. At their school, we saw a familiar Jew who had previously been present during my companion's conversation with Anschel Worms and who affably greeted us in the forecourt of the school. My companion said we had returned to see how they would celebrate their SCHABBAS BERESCHIS (the time they start reading the first Book of Moses at

---

1 Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau (1670-1721) was considered a radical Pietist and cofounder of the separate community in Berleburg (Hesse).
their school again) and asked whether they had attained a \textit{Goulle} [=redemption] in the meantime. Yet his only reply to this was that Anschel Worms was at home at the moment and that we would find him there if we wished to speak to him. This, however, was not our intention; for the time being, we were planning to make a general assessment of their outer state, as well as show ourselves in public, so that anyone with a secret desire to speak to us could be on the lookout for us, knowing we had returned. We then left and walked all the way down the lane until we passed the general Jews' kitchen and then out on the narrow lane. \textit{[64r]} Afterwards, we went and stood on the great bridge over the Main, where I had spoken to several folks the year before, but it was only a yet unwed Jew and his fellow who came to us. We were just reading \textit{Bereschis} [=Genesis] 5/5 and my companion repeated our discourse about the \textit{cosnaus aur}, a term hereafter used for priestly garments; he was showing how God had taught the \textit{Adam} priestly garments and the way to reconcile with God. He thereupon gave him the Gospel according to Luke, asking him to return it, as he would find him here on the bridge from time to time. He [the Jew] listened to the exposition without objection, eagerly took the book and perused it on the bridge. We have not gotten it back to this day, the \textit{7th} of the month, as I am writing this. [...] 

\textit{An attempt to purposely bypass people of learning and to reach ‘sympathetic’ or ‘inclined’ souls:}

\textit{[64v]} As we were heading into Frankfurt, my companion said that this time he had no great desire to dispute with the men of learning. He instead wished to have good occasion to become acquainted with the hidden souls whom God had already secretly selected and prepared, as it were, since he was hoping to achieve more with them than with the former, who kept him from performing the actual Blessed Work with all their talk. ...

\textit{Conversation with the merchant's widow Alleinsinn, who was supposed to help the studiosi in their quest for the 'hidden souls':}

... after my companion had indicated the final objective\textsuperscript{2} of our visit, she spoke of a Jewess named Simla, who had a strong desire for Christ, yet had difficulty believing in the principle of the Holy Trinity. However, she led a proper life and performed many deeds of love... \textit{[65r]} ... she said that the Jewess Simla (a widow who did not live on the Jews' Lane, but amongst the Christians, yet had wicked offspring who would immediately denounce her if one were to go to her

\footnote{\textsuperscript{2} = The general conversion (of the hearts) of the Jews to Christ and Christianity.}
and address matters of faith) [had] fallen into poverty. Her friend had heard of this and had brought her things to help her out of her hardship. [...] She further recounted that the Jewess had often visited Mr. D. Dusedang in Offenbach, who knew her and several other devout Jews. She was also familiar with the Jew Gerson, who did not reveal any inclination towards the Christian religion, yet was a judicious Jew who was happy to discuss matters of faith with Christians. He had been put under pressure several times, which made him tame, she said. [...]  

*Conversation with the separatist* D. Dusedang in Offenbach

(65v) [...] C.d. October 5th. We went to Offenbach [...] in order to further ascertain the presence of hidden good souls amongst the Jews in this place which is only one hour away from Frankfurt. Upon our arrival at his house, after a cordial reception, we disclosed this our wish to him, and he spoke of a Jewess with an inclination towards Christianity, saying she often came to visit him and had even joined him at the (separatists') gathering several times. He did not mention her name, but it was probably Simla. He did not wish to acquaint us with any of the local Jews, but said there were righteous souls amongst them as well. He spoke of one man, now deceased, who would spend no more than three kreutzers a day along with his wife and had done his utmost to steadfastly abide by God's law as best he could. He had done many good deeds amongst the needy Jews as well as the Christians, and whenever he saw a poor man, he would call for him and lend him money. When the man wanted to return it, he would say: Keep it, you might need it more than I do. He eventually acknowledged on his deathbed that God was a very holy God indeed, and His law was of such perfection that it was impossible for any mortal to abide by it. 4 [...]

(67r) October 7th was a rainy day, and the studiosi could not leave their lodgings until the afternoon; they split up, one of them went on the bridge and the other one into town. Manitius, who went to the bridge, found no opportunity for me this time. I went down to the water, where several Jews were getting on the ship, but I was unable to achieve anything there. I eventually went into town and there I saw my companion standing in the middle of the street and talking to 6 to 8 Jews. I went past, thinking God would provide me with an opportunity as well, and indeed there was a Jew who was just heading off because he lived in a village an hour away from here. I asked him whether he had earned much that

---

3 Also known as Radical Pietists, because they avoided the general church service and instead held private (edifying) congregations.
4 This was an argument frequently used by the Pietists. According to them, only the Messiah could redeem mankind from their sins.
day and whether he still had desire to trade. He inquired whether I had anything to offer, and I said yes, if it suited him. When I showed him the booklet, he said, oh, that is one of the new books! and walked away. I continued on and encountered a familiar rabbi from Friedberg whom I had previously conversed with here on the bridge as well as in Darmstadt. We instantly recognized each other and greeted each other cordially, and I asked: How have you been? [67v]

Jew: All is well, thank God. I praise God above all, whatever my state, as we owe praises to our Lord for the bad as well as the good. He then told me that he was planning to marry off his daughter and that his lottery was about to be drawn. I eventually asked him whether he had read one of the booklets I had brought to Friedberg, and he said: Oh yes, but! He said nothing more, and I said I had a new book now which I would recommend him to peruse carefully. Yet his manner suggested such indifference that I said nothing further than: I am well aware that some are so full of desire for DIBRE AULOM HASSEH [=things of this world] that they are unable to think of OLAM HABBO [=afterlife]. This is how I took my leave, yet he noticed that I had reprimanded him thus and said: No, OLAM HABBO has to be considered above everything else. So pious and holy were the words this wayward, stubborn Jew could utter, and yet he maintained his proud convictions! […]

October 8th: [68r] […] In the afternoon, I went out on the bridge to speak to Jews. After I had waited for quite a while, a wild young fellow approached me, wishing to do some trading. I told him that I had something to offer, but that I already knew in advance it would not suit him. When I showed him a booklet, he leapt some 8 paces away from me, as though I had wanted to do him harm. Standing thus far away from me, he said I was a MESCHUMED [=convert]. An older Jew, a musician living in Offenbach, joined us and said, no, he does not look like a MESCHUMED to me. I said: Look how the poor man flees the good booklet; this is how one reacts when tries to talk to him of DIBRE AULOM HABBO. No, said the other one, the musician, that is the fear talking, since we are in GOLUS [=exile/diaspora] and the man knows we have to be wary. I thereupon testified that he should not think I would go about it like Eisenmenger5, I was trying to change everything for the better and it was out of love for the JEHUDIM that I spoke to them. Since he then boasted about being well-traveled, having

5 The Author of the famous anti-Jewish polemical work „Judaism Unmasked“: JOHANN ANDREAS EISENMENGER: Entdecktes Judentum oder Gründlicher und wahrhafter Bericht, welchem gestattet die verstockten Juden die hoheheilige Drey-Einigkeit, Gott Vater, Sohn und Heil. Geist erschrecklicher Weise lästern und verunehren, die Heil. Mutter Christi verschmähen, das Neue Testament, die Evangelisten und Aposteln, die Christliche Religion spöttisch durchziehen, und die gantze Christenheit auf das äusserste verachten und verfluchen […] Frankfurt/Main 1700.
read the Bible and knowing the difference between all the religions, I asked him to tell me about CHADDESCH EMUNAH [=religious renewal], as I wanted to ascertain whether he really had knowledge of it. He was reluctant to speak, but I eventually prompted him to say: You believe that your Messiah was the real Messiah and that he will return magnificent and glorious. Now, if he does return and manifest as what you say he is, we will also believe it. You believe him to have been a great NOBI [=prophet], yet how come he is ELOHAI TOPHLE EMUNEH [=God of the (nonbelievers?)] but makes himself PSILIM [=false gods]? I said: It is true that you can soon overcome TOPHLE EMUNEH and throw them out with God's Word, but I am keen to see how you can overcome CHADDESCH EMUNEH; that should prove a little more difficult, since they stand too firmly in God's Word. He said we should not be speaking there and suggested I should go to Amsterdam, where I would be informed presently. I testified that one could speak to me in confidence and I would make sure no harm would come of it to the Jews, yet he excused himself, saying this was not appropriate in the street (we had almost walked all the way through Sachsenhausen and the vineyards). He told me he would prefer if I came to talk to him in Offenbach and mentioned his name was Joseph Geiger. He praised many things about D. Dusedang, of whom I have already mentioned something above, as much as is necessary. [...] [69r] On October 9th I went out before noon, looking for opportunities to speak to Jews, and encountered one from Pergel, which is situated close to this place. When I showed him the Jewish-German Letter, he wanted to buy it off me for 1 kreutzer, but I sold him the JOREH DEAH for it and gave him the Letter as a gift. He quickly hurried away, but I managed to tell him that he would be able to extract a lot of CHOCHMA [=wisdom] from the booklet if he would LEINEN [=learn] it with KWONE [=intention]. He asked whether I was a book peddler.

I: No, I carry these books with me as a traveling student, and wherever I find a good man, I present one to him, the way I did with many copies in Hesse. He asked whether I had been there in the lane. (Meaning the Jews' Lane, which is simply called "the Lane" [in Greek (A.S.)]). I: Yes, I have been there, but I do not trade in books. He: But it does not say where it has been printed. I: It is a quick read if you apply yourself to it, and the booklet particularly shows how the MASCHICHIM [=Christians], who think so highly of the MESCHIACH,

---

6 It is not clear, what the missionary referred to here. It could be that he was talking about the followers of Shabbetai Zvi.
7 See document 2, footnote No. 2.
8 The Pietists referred to themselves as messianic, in order to emphasize the fact that they have already accepted the (true) Messiah.
can provide clear proof from THAURE NEBIIM and KSUBIM. Thereupon we parted. [...] 

October 10th [...] my companion went to the Jews' Lane and I went home, because he preferred to go on his own. I, however, did not have the heart to go this time, may God forgive me if I have thus sinned against Him. My heart was fully shuttered, as I had noticed that the folk here have grown very unyielding. Yesterday, on AREF [=evening] SCHABBAS, I approached an old man, but we got no further in the conversation than discuss that some Jews thought more highly of the ESREVARBE [=24 (books of the Old Testament] and others of the GOMOREHE [=gemara] and TALMUD, and he confessed that he abode by the ESREVARBE. He quickly took leave from me because he noticed I wanted to speak of good things to him, which caused me pain. May God have mercy on this poor folk and open up their hardened hearts, so that the healing waters of the sweet Gospel can flow into them. [...] 

[74r]: October 11th [...] We arrived in Offenbach at midday, and upon entering the town encountered an old Jew on the street who informed us that up to 80 families lived there and that the RAAF [=rabbi] of this KEHÜLLE [=community] was in Friedberg, but there was a learned BIMKUM [=substitute] or VICE-RAAF in town. When two Baumeister, or Jewish judges, walked past, he informed us that they were settling litigations that day, since they had nothing else to do, and that the BIMKUM ought to be present there at 1 o'clock as well. [...] 

Hardly had we gotten up and started walking down the street, when a Baumeister followed us rather stormily. My companion approached him, and he obliged, since he had wanted to speak to us anyway. [76r] He immediately asked whether we were selling books. We said, not today, for it is SCHABBAS. 

Jew: Could it be that we had distributed some? My companion: We only give a book away when we come across a judicious, devout man who can use it properly and read it. No books have been distributed to the common folk. As he wished to look at one, my companion showed him the JOREH DEAH, but he returned it straight away and uttered the following bold words: Were it not Sunday, I would take you to the magistrate, and again he said he would take us to the magistrate if we remained there until the evening. My companion said we had no reason to fear that and might as well be the first ones, since we knew very well what we were doing. He added that since we always bore God and the authorities in mind on our travels, we would be able to answer for everything. As Jewish men, women and children gathered around us during the conversation.

---

9 This was how the Jewish leaders in Frankfurt am Main were called.
with this man and wanted to jeer us, my companion made it even clearer that we had no reason to fear the authorities, saying: If you wish to continue this way, we shall go to the magistrate and have you arrested. Be warned and make sure you treat traveling students (he expected us to be treated like baptized Jews) properly, so you do not get into trouble. We do not wish to get you into trouble, but you must give travelers the politeness and respect that they give to you, and have we not treated you in a friendly way? You are aware that we went to see the rabbi. We have not caused harm to anyone here, and you have no reason to fear that we will afflict any damage to you, the way it happened 25 years ago, when your school was closed down until you paid a hefty fine. Upon hearing these words, the Baumeister became fearful, entreating us to pay no mind to the ignorant women [76v] and to take no offense at what he had said. He apologized that they had be cautious, because they have been warned once before not to get into trouble again. This satisfied both us and him, so we wished each other SCHALOM and parted. I found my companion's threat to have the Jews arrested somewhat harsh, since I believe that a Christian should rather suffer, as long as the reason is his intention to warn the Jew and keep him from getting himself into trouble, as well as the intention to avoid complicated circumstances. Nevertheless, I approve of it and find it is a sensible way to proceed.

We therefore would have had nothing to fear and would have been able to visit Mr. D. Dusedang, but my companion considered it best to spare him this time, so that he should not have anything to answer for on our account, seeing as the authorities did not particularly favor him ... We thus went straight out of town and left this poor Jewry to the merciful love of God. Oh, how wretched and woebegone are people who, prompted by the evil foe, become so hardened and unyielding and wrongfully reject the precious truth. The rabbi had declared, among other things, that he who had a book would be called out in school in the evening and would have to turn it in. When my companion encountered him on the bridge in town the day after, he therefore asked him whether the book had been called out. Yet he refused to admit to anything and said that nothing could be called out since nothing had been handed out. […]

(77v) … (during a conversation with a local Christian scholar, the latter explains why he thinks their message fails to reach the Jews)

He claimed the great obstacle on the Jews' side was that they had completely and utterly forbidden anyone amongst them to show any inclination towards Christians and their books. This is what kept most of them from really reflecting on the truth...
When the blessed Spener\textsuperscript{10} was banned by the local magistrate from delivering his teachings on the Jews' Lane, I was told this could not have happened \textit{ex theologis rationibus}, but \textit{ex politicis}, which he quoted in one of his Theologische Bedenken. […]

\textbf{[79r] October 13\textsuperscript{th} [1733]} … \textit{[Conclusions on the Frankfurt Jews]}

We thus left Frankfurt am Main after approaching as many hidden good souls as we could and having the necessary books \textit{secretly} delivered to them. We also publically encountered them, I outside the Lane and my companion also on the Lane. We also had occasion to spread a small number of books amongst them and have some conversations, but lastly the Frankfurt Jews have proven to be steadfast and zealous in their superstition and have probably put a strict ban on our books. Since they are so devoted to trade here and fear the rabbis' ban more than God, we have little access, but we hope that God will therefore grant us even better access in other places.

\textsuperscript{10}Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), is considered to be the founder of German Pietism.
In einem Gespräch mit einem Hn. Gentzel in Frankfurt am Main:

Wir … hörten … theils wie es hier mit der Judenschaft stehe; Er wuste einige artige und remarquable Nachrichten zu geben, theils wie er selbst bisweilen Gelegenheit gehabt mit einigen zu sprechen, die ihn gerne gehöret, theils wie auch andere solches gethan, als sonderlich der Hochmann von Hachenau¹, der ihnen hier öffentlich in der Schule gepredigt hätte. Item er habe ein Buch gehabt, welches 1720 in Leipzig von einem Namens Boock in octav deutsch und Hebräisch gedruckt worden, worinn die Christliche Lehre aus Jüdischen Büchern mit ihren eigenen worten vorgetragen wäre, als er solches dem Juden gegeben, habe ers geküßt und eifrig zu sich genommen, um solches zu lesen, über eine Zeit aber ist er wiedergekommen, und hat gantz betrübt endlich gesagt, er sey über das Buch in den Charem gethan und also hart sollen sie noch jetzo verfahren. …

Eine ziemliche Interessenlosigkeit der Frankfurter Juden für die Studiosi:


¹ Ernst Christoph Hochmann von Hochenau (1670-1721), ein „Radikalpietist“ und Mitbegründer der Separatisten-Gemeinde in Berleburg (Hessen).

Gezielter Versuch, die Gelehrten zu umgehen und ‚geneigten‘ Seelen zu erreichen?:

64v Als wir nach Frankfurth hereingingen sagte mein Gefährte dieses mahl habe er keine grosse Lust mit den Gelehrten viel zu disputieren, sondern er wünschete gute Gelegenheit zu haben, daß er mit denen verborgenen Seelen möchte bekannt werden, welche Gott schon heimlich gezogen und gleichsam preparirt hätte, denn bey seolchen hoffe er ein mehrers aus zurichten, als bey den erstern, weil solche nur redeten, ihn abzuhalten von der eigentl. Geseegnten Arbeit.

… Gespräch mit einer Kauffmanns Wittwe Alleinsinn, die den Studiosi bei der Suche nach den ‚verborgenen Seelen‘ helfen sollte: … als nun mein Gefährte den Entzweck² ours Besuchs angezeigt hatte, meldete sie von einer Jüdin namens Simla, daß sie ein eifriges Verlangen nach Christo hätte, allein den Punkt von der Dreyeineigkeit zu glauben, sey ihr zu schwer, indeßen führe sie einen guten Wandel, sey auch reich an Wercken der Liebe, … (65r) … die Jüdin Simla (eine Wittwe welche auch nicht in der Jüden-Gäße wohnet, sondern unter den Christen, aber böse Kinder hat, die sie gleich angeben würden, wenn man zu

² = Die allgemeine (Herzens-)Bekehrung der Juden zu Jesus und dem Christentum.

Gespräch mit dem Separatisten3 D. Dusedang in Offenbach

(65v) […] C.d.5. Octobr. Nach Offenbach gingen, […] um weiter zu erforschen, ob nicht auch an diesem Ort, der nur eine Stunde von Franckfurth gelegen ist, verborgene gute Gemüther unter den Juden sind. Als wir zu ihm kamen, und nachdem wir freundlich von ihm empfangen waren, dieses unser begehren eröffen, sagte er von einer Jüdinn, daß sie dem Christenthum sehr nahe wäre, dieselbe sey oft bey ihm, und so gar einige mal mit in (der Separatisten) Versammlung gewesen, er nannte den Namen nicht, aber es war vermutlich die Simla. Von den hiesigen wolte er uns keinen bekannt machen, doch sagte er, daß auch unter ihnen redliche Gemüther wären. Einer sey vordem alhier gewesen, der aber nun gestorben, der habe mit seiner Frau des Tages nicht mehr als drey Kreutzer verzehrt, und sich äußerst beflissen das Gesetz Gottes so viel ihm nur möglich gewesen, unverbrüchlich zu halten, sonderlich habe der Juden den armen, auch unter den Christen, viel gutes gethan, wenn er einen dürftigen gesehen, habe er ihn zu sich gerufen und Geld geliehen, wen ers denn wiederbringen wollen, hat er gesagt: Behalts nur, vielleicht habt ihrs nöthiger als ich, zuletzt habe er doch auf seinem Sterbe-Lager bekennen müßen, daß Gott ein sehr heiliger Gott sey, und sein Gesetz so vollkommen, daß es ein sterblicher Mensch unmöglich halten könne.4 […]

(67r) Der 07.10. war ein regnerischer Tag, erst nachmittags konnten die Studiosi ihre Unterkunft verlassen; sie haben sich aufgeteilt, der Eine ging auf die Brücke, der Andere in die Stadt. Manitius, der zur Brücke ging, fand keine Gelegenheit dieses mal für mich, ich ging hinunter an das Waßer, da etliche Juden in das Schiff stiegen, aber auch da konnte ich nichts anbringen, endlich ging ich auch in die Stadt, und da sahe ich meinen Gef. Mitten auf der Strasse

3 Auch als Radikalpietisten bekannt, weil sie sich von den allgemeinen Gottesdienste fern halten und stattdessen private (erbauliche) Versammlungen veranstalten.

4 Dieses Argument brachten die Pietisten auch immer wieder vor. Deswegen ist der Messias nötig, der die Sünden der Menschen auf sich nimmt und sie dadurch erlöst. Ein wichtiges Argument für die Richtigkeit des Christentums.
zwischen 6. bis 8. Juden stehen und reden, ich ging auf der Seite weiter und
gedachte, Gott werde mir auch Gelegenheit bescheren, so kam auch ein Jude der
eben hinaus gehen wolte, weil er eine Stunde von hier auf einen Dorff wohnet,
ich fragte ihn, ob er heut viel gewonnen? ob er noch Lust zu handeln hätte? Er:
Ob ich denn was hätte? Ich sagte ja, wenn es ihm nur anstande! als ich das
Büchlein zeigte, sagte er, o das ist eins von den neuen Büchern! und ging davon.
Ich ging weiter, da begegnete mir ein bekannter Rebbi aus Friedberg, den ich
ehemals hier auf der Brücken, und in darmstadt gesprochen, wir kannten uns
gleich und bewillkomten uns freundlich, ich fragte: Wie ists bis daher
alles, es mag mir auch gehen, wie es will, wir sind schuldig unsern Herrn Gott
toben fürs Böse so wohl als für das gute. Darauf erzählte er mir daß er jetzt
seine Tochter aus steuren wolle, und daß seine lottery nun bald werde gezogen
werden, ich fragte ihn endlich, ob er denn nun die Büchlein gelesen hätte, da ich
einen nach Friedberg gebracht? Er: Ach ja, aber! Weiter sagte er nichts, ich
sagte hingegen, jetzt habe ich ein ganz neues Buch, das möchtte ich ihm
wünschen, daß ers einmal mit Bedacht läse! Allein er bezeugte mit Geberden
sich so kalsinnig, daß ich weiter nichts sagte als: Ich weiß wohl daß mancher so
voll ist von begierde nach DIBRE AULOM HASSEH [=den Dingen Dieseits‘], daß
er an OLAM HABBO [=Jenseits/Nachwelt] nicht gedencken kann. Und damit nahm
ich Abschied, er merckte aber wol, daß ich ihn damit reprimindiren wolte, und
sagte, Nein OLAM HABBO geht vor alles vorgezogen werden. So from und heilig
konte dieser verkehrte harte Jude sprechen, und blieb doch in seinem stolzten
Sinn! […]

d. 8. October: [68r] […] Nachmittags ging ich aus auf die Brücke mit Juden zu
sprechen, als ich eine ziemliche Zeit gewartet hatte, kam endlich ein junger
wildcr Bursch zu mir, und wolte etwas handeln, ich sagte, daß ich zwar was
hätte, aber ich wüste schon zum voraus, ihm würde es nicht anstehen, als ich
nun ein Büchlein zeigte, sprang er bis 8 Schritt von mir gleich als wenn ich ihn
etwas Leides hätte zufügen wollen, da er von ferne stünde, sagte er ich wäre ein
MESCHUMED [=Konvertit], ein anderer älterer Jude, der ein Musicant und zu
Offenbach wohnhaft war, kam dazu und sagte, nein, ich sehe ihn für keinen
MESCHUMED an, ich sagte: seht wie der arme Mensch vor [68v] das gute
Büchlein fliehet, so geht’s einem, wenn man nur lauter DIBRE AULOM HABBO [=
Dinge des Jenseits] führet, Nein sagte der andere, der Musicant, das macht nur
die Furcht, wir sind in GOLUS, der Hn. weiß wir müßen uns in acht nehmen, da
bezeugte ich daß er nicht meinen dürffe, daß ich es also machen werde, wie der


⁶ Es ist nicht klar, welches Werk die Missionare hier meinten. Vielleicht sprach er über die Anhänger Schabbetai Zwis.

⁷ Siehe Dokument 2, Fußnote Nr. 2.
mir, und wo ich einen guten Mann finde, so schenkte ichs ihm wol, wie ich dann in Heßen viel verschenckt hätte. Ob ich hier in der Gaße gewesen?


74r: D. 11. Octobr […] Wir kamen also mittags in Offenbach, und trafen beym Eingang einen alten Juden auf der Straße an, der uns die Nachricht gab, daß hier bis 80. Familien wohnhafft wären, der Rabbiner [=Rabbiner] dieser Kehüll[e] [=Gemeinde] sey in Friedberg, es sey aber hier ein gelehrter Bimkum [=Stellvertreter] oder Vice-Raaf, ferner gingen eben zwei baumeister9, oder Jüdische Gerichtsherrn vorbey, da sagte er uns zur Nachricht, daß sie heute die streitige Sachen abthäten, weil sie sonst nichts zu thun hätten, und würde der Bimkum um 1. Uhr auch dabey seyn müßen […]

Als wir kaum aufgestanden waren, und die Straße hinunter gingen, kam ein Baumeiser ganz hitzig hinter uns her, m.Gef. redete ihn an, und er war bereit zur Antwort, weil er ohndes gern mit uns reden wollen, er fragte [76r] Er fragte bald, ob wir Bücher verkauften? Wir sagten heut nicht, es ist Schabbas. Jud. Ob wir nicht welche ausgetheilt hätten?  M.Gef. wir geben kein Buch hinweg, als wo wir einen verständigen fromen Mann antreffen, der es brauchen und lesen

8 Die Bezeichnung der „Messianischen“ gaben sich die Pietisten selbst, um zu betonen, dass sie den (wahren) Messias bereits erkannt haben.
9 Die jüdischen Vorsteher in Frankfurt hießen so.
kan. Unter dem gemeinen Volck ist kein Buch gekomen, wie er nun eins begehrt zu sehen, so zeigte ihm mein Gef. das JOREH DEAH, er gab es aber bald zurück, und ließ die verwegene Worte von sich hören: Wenn es nicht Sontag wäre, so wolte ich mit ihnen zum Amptmann gehen, bald ließ er sich noch einmahl hören: Wenn wir bis Abend hierbleiben, so wolte er mit uns zum Amtmann gehen, M. Gef. sagte, daß wir uns dafür gar nicht zu fürchten hätten, wir wolten die ersten seyn, denn wir würsten wohl was wir thätten, und hätten auf unsern Wegen allezeit Gott und die Obrigkeit vor Augen, daß wir alles wol verantworten könten. Als sich nun bey der Unterredung mit diesem Mann Jude und Jüdische Weiber u. Kinder um uns herum versamleten, und uns zum Spott haben wollen, so zeigte mein Gef. ihnen noch mehr, daß wir uns für der Obrigkeit nicht zu fürchten hätten, sagte: Wenn ihr so fort mocht, so gehen wir zum Amptmann und laßen euch in Arrest nehmen, seyd gewarnet und gehet mit reisenden Stüdenten (dann er mochte uns für getaufte Juden ansehen) also um, wie sichs gebühret, damit ihr nicht in Schaden kommt, denn wir begehren euch nicht in Schaden zu bringen, ihr müßt aber Reisenden die Höflichheit und Ehrerbietigkeit erweisen, die man euch erweiset, sind wir nicht freundlich mit euch umgegangen, daß wir bey dem Rabbi gewesen, das wißet ihr, Niemand haben wir hier was zu leyde gethan, ihr habt euch auch nicht zu fürchten, daß ihr durch uns werdet in Schaden kommen, wie es vor 25. Jahren geschehen, da man euch die schule so lange zugeschloßen, biß ihr ein schweres Straffgeld gegeben. Der Baumeister als er solches hörte wurde bald angst und bange und bat, daß wir doch auf die unverständige Weiber nicht requrdiren [76v] möchten, was er gesagt, solten wir nicht so übel nehmen, sie müsten genau acht geben, weil sie einmal gewitzigt wären, damit sie nicht wieder in Schaden kämen. Damit waren nun wir und er zufrieden, daher wir uns einander SCHALOM wünschten, und aus einander gingen. Daß mein Gef. den Juden mit dem Arrest drohete, dunckte mir etwas hartes zu seyn, indem ich dafür halte, daß ein Christ lieber leyden solte, allein wenn es aus der Absicht geschehen, den Juden abzuhalten und zu warnen, daß er sich nicht selbst in Schaden bringe, und aller weitläufigkeit zu entgehen, so billige ichs und lobe es als ein Kluges Verfahren.

Nun hätten wir uns zwar nichts zu fürchten gehabt, und also den Hr. D. Dusedang wol besuchen können, m.Gef. aber hielt es für beßer ihn diesesmahl zu verschonen, damit er nicht unsertwegen in einige Verantwortung käme, zumahl da ihn die Obrigkeit nicht allzugewegen seyn ... Wir gingen also nun grade zur Stadt hinaus, und ließen diese arme Judenschaft der erbarmenden Liebe Gottes über. O wie elend und jämmerlich sind die Menschen welche sich durch Antrieb des bösen Feindes so verpallisadiren(?) und sich bevestigen
und die edle Wahrheit in ihrer Ungerechtigkeit aufhalten. Der Rebbi hatte unter
anderen auch diese Worte hören lassen, daß er werde ausgerufen werden auf dem
Abend in der Schuh, wer ein Buch habe, müßte es doch hergeben, daher ihn
mein Gef. der ihn des andern tages wieder in der Stadt auf der Brücke
angetroffen, gefragt hat, ob das Buch aus gerufen sey? Da er aber nichts
gestehen wollen, sondern gesagt, weil nichts ausgetheilt wäre, dürfte man nichts
ausruffen. …

(77v) … (in einem Gespräch mit einem lokalen christlichen Gelehrten, erzählt
dieser, warum seiner Meinung nach, die gute Botschaft an die Juden nicht
gelangt)

Auf Seiten der Juden sey dieses eine große Hinderniß, daß sie alles aufs
scharffste verboten hätten unter sich, daß keiner sich darff was mercken lasßen,
daß er eine Neigung zu den Christen und ihren Büchern habe. Daher die meiste
abgehalten würden, der wahrheit recht nachzudenken…

78v: Daß dem sel. Spener¹⁰ ehemals, als er in der Juden-Gaße auch hat lehren
wollen, solches vom Magistrat alhier sey verboten worden, wurde mir gesagt,
daß es nicht habe können EX THEOLOGICIS RATIONIBUS gesprochen, sondern EX
POLITICIS, die er in einem seiner Theologischen Bedenken angeführt. …


Solchergestalt verließ wir nun Franckfurth am Mayn nach dem wir die
verborgene gute Gemüther so viel wir diesemahl gekönt, aufgesucht, und durch
andere ihnen die nöthige Bücher heimlich zuzustellen besorgt haben, öffentlich
sind wir auch wohl, ich außer der Gaße, mein Gef. auch in der Gaße ihnen
nachgegangen, haben auch einige wenige Bücher mit guter Gelegenheit unter sie
gbracht, auch einige Gespräche gehalten, aber das Zeugniß behalten die
Franckf. Juden, daß sie hart und eifrig sind in ihren Abergläuben, haben auch
vermuthlich ein scharffes Verbot wieder unsere Bücher ausgehen lasßen, und
weil sie hier dem Handel so sehr ergeben, und sich für den Bann der Rabbinen
mehr als für Gott fürchten, so haben wir wenig Eingang, wir hoffen aber Gott
werde uns an anderen Orten wieder desto beßern Eingang schenken.

¹⁰ Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705), gilt als Begründer des Pietismus.
The End of Jewish Democracy in 18th Century Prague

Joshua Teplitsky, Stony Brook University

One intriguing register for considering continuities and changes in Jewish life in the early eighteenth century is the constitution of the autonomous Jewish community, or *kehilla*. This institution of Jewish self-government was formed at the nexus of the imposition of governments on the one hand and Jewish collective investment in the legitimacy and utility of this form of association, on the other. The range of services and duties executed by the *kehilla* were critical for managing daily life and structuring power relations both between Jews and their neighbors and among Jews themselves. Therefore, the means by which some attained leadership in the *kehilla*—ie, its process of election and appointment—were at times as important as the legislation it drafted. In a premodern system often structured by clientage and patronage, and in which legislation relied not on an impersonal bureaucracy to execute it but upon deeply personal ties of obligation, moments of election could be decisive for far-ranging policies and programs.

Although Jewish communal leadership appears to have been determined by elections in the earlier centuries of this period, by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries an increasing trend towards permanent ruling oligarchies can be discerned. A standing patriciate is in evidence in Frankfurt by the 1620s, and Prague, while it maintained a contentious partisan structure throughout the seventeenth century, succumbed to a permanent oligarchy in 1703.

The following document represents the decisive moment (on November 10, 1703), when Emperor Leopold decreed an end to Jewish democracy in Prague, and replaced it with a standing governing body. Of particular note are a number of salient themes, including the relationship between royal/imperial fiat and Jewish self-government, the function of the kehilla as a tax-farming entity as the critical basis for its legitimacy in the eyes of the state, royal awareness of factionalism and strife among Jews, and, subtly but importantly, efforts by the Habsburg monarchy to bring Jewish administration into line with other denizens of the realm.
Dear faithful,

Given that the Prague Jewish community has lapsed into long-term strife, factionalism, and disorder on account of its property tax and classification, and its own arrangements several years prior of other assorted large taxes and contributions have led both to vexation on Our part and that of the public, and thus has itself drawn around its neck many varied damages, by which it has descended ever deeper into debt, almost without hope of emerging, and such that it is already well-known to the obedient ones that in order to cope with this corrosive evil a profitable arrangement has been made between our Royal Court Chamber and Samuel Isaac Sachsel, Primas of the Prague Jews, and Wolf Frankel on April 6, 1702, for the length of three years, in which Jewish taxes and other public contributions will henceforth rightly and indeed anticipatedly will be paid to our royal chief tax collection point, and the fuss and the resultant expensive execution will be overcome.

Therefore, in order, to Our great pleasure, to bring a complete cessation to Jewish quarrels—of which we have already in many ways, and nearly continually been bothered in the excitement preceding taxation and classification—we have also been moved to confirm the sheltered Perdon-lease and its established contract, as here decided, with all of its included points and clauses, including those set by Our Royal Court Chamber until June 20 of the current year, to begin anew for another three years after the conclusion of the first triennium on April 6, 1705. And to that end we have issued through our Bohemian Chancellery, to Our royal government in Prague, that the aforementioned lessees Samuel Isaac Sachsel and Wolf Frankel with all the members of their consortium are powerfully protected and they, by their appointment, shall receive all the extensions of assistance and prompt help
from the Prague Magistrates for the collection of the Perdon and the prevention against fraud and collusion with Christian merchants.

And concurrently we especially remind ourselves that the harmful factions and the protestations at the triennially repeating election caused great agitation among the Jews of Prague, and indeed that on account of it some trouble-making Jews—not motivated as much by communal need as by fiendish disposition and by harboring private passions—impugned the selection of those chosen in nearly every previous Jewish election, so that not only our offices but nearly every position has come under attack. These Jewish conflicts have been protracted over the long term and in emulation of their ambitions quite a few of the “smaller” members have plunged into confusion. And so now our Royal Court Chamber along with the Bohemian Court Chancellery on the 12th of March of the current year, in considering the various customary concessions of the Prague Jews, and given thought, consultation, and consideration to the matter, has come to the finding that just as the quarrelsomeness and frequent complaints regarding the taxation and classification of the Prague Jews have been solved through the healthy means of the Perdon lease, so too the Prague Jewish elections have been the reason for factional dispute the pressure of grievances, and in order to achieve the goal of a steadfast tranquility both for the Jewish community itself and for the general need for stability, the Jewish vote could be abolished and--just as the Christian faithful do--a consistent and perpetual magistracy could be constituted. This is mostly because the lease-arrangement includes a classification of all of the Prague Jews, which necessarily has to be undertaken each time before the election. It [the classification system] would have required a significant change anyway and consequently is rightly to be abolished. Not to mention that all the great and unnecessary expenses that were spent during the several weeks of the election process for the sworn scribes, the Jewish criers, soldiers and other things can be spared in the future and also the Jews will no longer enter into factionalism and fiendish collusion when they see that that positions are not in play every three years. Rather they are awaited only with the death of one of the Jewish Elders or the other positions, or if their completion happens in another and only through the well-established credentials that have been already approved by our Chamber and Justice-workers prior to the attempt of the remaining Jews, so that the Prague Jewish community may remain in administrative calm and tranquility, which we graciously intend.

As graciously ordered, appointed, and consented to for eternity, that heretofore the formerly necessary Prague Jewish election will no longer be carried out, rather a continual and perpetual Jewish magistracy with proceed, therefore to that end the
incumbents in these positions—the lawfully and properly elected Elders, Assessors, and minor functionaries from most recent election insofar as they were not restricted through the Perdon contracts—will be firmly established. The number of the Jewish Council will not be altered, rather it will follow the precedent system of 27 people: 5 Elders, 5 Community Elders, and 17 Assessors, preserved perennially. But should one of the registered elders, officers, or other Jewish officials die and his position become vacant in any other way, then three subjects shall be nominated by the Elders for the vacated position, and our Royal Bohemian Chamber will advise the choice of one of them. Otherwise, so that there is little likelihood of complaints originating against the Jewish Magistracy (and especially the assessors, whose duty and responsibility is limited to the promotion of justice), every three years the Commission appointed by our Royal Bohemian Chamber will undertake a visitation of the Elders, Community Elders, Assessors and other officers—as briefly and with as minimal cost as possible—and convey to our Royal Court Chamber in its offices to verify and confirm or otherwise will discover that should one of them not comport himself to his duties and instructions, and has instead exceeded against them, then one such as this will deservedly be punished or, upon discovery, be removed from his office and another shall be dispatched and appointed in his place.

You are thus graciously ordered duly as others to take note to record everything in the proper order and to publish our gracious order regarding the confirmation and prolonging of the Perdon lease as well as the perpetual Jewish magistracy, so that you follow it with all obedience and ensure that the Prague Jews persist in loyal observance of it, and that those who loudly oppose it are banished, and Jews will no longer—according to our gracious order and intention—hold an assembly, rather, this is utterly forbidden under penalty of being disbarred from office, and of this to observe steadfastly and with all seriousness.

Vienna, 10 November 1703.
To the Royal Bohemian Chamber.
The End of Jewish Democracy in 18th Century Prague
Joshua Teplitsky, Stony Brook University


Leopold.
Lieber Getreuer,
Governo zu Prag haben ergehen lassen, daß vorberichte Pachter Samuel Isac Sachsel und Wolf Frankel mit ihren Mit-Consorten darbey kräftigst geschützet und ihnen auf ihr beschehendes Anmelden von denen Pragerischen Magistraten zu Einbrinung des Perdons und Verhütung derer Unterschleißungen und Collusionen mit denen christl. Kaufleuten alle verlangende Assistenz und schleunige Außhilfe contra quoscunque unweigerlich geleistet werden solle; Und zumählen wir auch unβ anebst erinnern, daß sie schädliche factiones, und reclami bey denen hiebevor Singulis triennis wiederholten wahl Actibus unter der Pragerischen Judenschafft sich erregt haben und alßo zwar, daß wegen deren von einigen Unruhigen Juden nicht so wohl ex motive denn gemeinschaftlichen Nutzen zu befördern als vielmehr auf feindhäsigen Gemüth und hegender privat passion fast bey allen vorgegangenen jüdischen Wahlen impugnirter qualitätentam Eligentium quam Electorum nicht nur unßern Cameral, sondern auch jegliche Stellen vielfältig angegangen, dieße jüdische Strittigkeiten auf lange Zeit hinaus protractiret und inmittelst die Pragerische Judenschafft ob ambitiosam Emulationem ihrer etlich weniger Membrorum in die größeste Confusiones gestürzt worden und nun aber unßer kayl. Hofkammer bey denen mit unßer böhm. Hoffkanzley v. 12 März umstehenden Jahres wegen verschiedener die Prager Judenschafft concernirender passuum gepflogen Concessio auf die gedanken gerathen und nach reifferder Sachen Ueberlegung für gut befunden hat, daß gleich wie die ehemalige wegen der Anlaag und Classification derer Prager Juden entstandene Zankereyen und häuffige Klagen durch daß saluberrimum medium der Perdonsverpachtung gänzlich kassiret worden, Alßo auch die ratione der Prager Jüdischen wahl sich gemenlich erhebende Factiones Zwistigkeiten und gravamina gedrücket und eine beharliche tranquilität sowohl zu ihrer und der Judenschafft selsteigenen alß auch der gemein weesen Nutzen stabiliret mithin um dessen Zweck zu erreichen die Jüdische wahl Aufgehebt und wie bey denen Christen treulich ein beständig und perpeturlicher Magistrat constituirt werden könte und dieses zwar principaliter daruben, weilen mehr besagte Wahl ohne dem schon durch die Perdonsverpachtung und derentwegen immermehr cessirender Classification der Prager Juden, welche sonst es jedesmal als ein necessarium Antecedens vor der Election tractiret und umgerichtet werden missen, in praecipuis substantialibus eine große Veränderung bekommen und daßo alß eine Consequenz auch gar füglich zu kassiren stunde, zugeschweigen, daß auf solche weisse nicht allein die hierbei, und bey denen durch etliche wochen lang gedauerte wahl actibus auf die geschwohren Schreiber, Jüdische Ruffer, Soldaten und sonst aufgewendete
große doch dabei unnötige sumptus ins künfftige zur Erspahruung kommen, sondern auch die Juden, wann sie seheten, daß sie singulis trienniis nicht zu deren Ambtern duch die vormahls bey ihnen in zwung (?) gegangene factiones und feindliche Collndirungen [sic!] gelangen konten; sondern entweder den Todesfall eines auß den Jüdischen Eltesten und anderen Beamten oder aber die in andere weisse sich ereignete Erledigung dieses oder jenes jüdischen officy erwarthen und solches durch eigenes wolverhalten meritiren müsse von selbsten schon acquiesciren unßere Cameral und Justizmittel vor dem vielfaltigen Anlauf der Juden entübriget mithin bey der Pragerischen Judenschafft aller in behöriger Ruhe und Tranquilität, als welche wir gnädigst intendiren, verbleiben werde. Alß verordnen setzen und wollen win vor allemal hiermit gnädigst, daß hinfüro die sonst gebräuchlich gewesen Prager Jüdischen Wahl nicht mehr vorgenommen, sondern ein beständig und perpetuirlicher jüdischer Magistrat constituirtet, folgsam zu diesem Ende die dermalen in deren Ambtern sitzende und zugleich bey nächst voriger wahl rechtmässig und ordentlich elegirte Elteste Beysitzern, und geringe Bediente, in soweith solche durchdie Perdons verpachtung mit (?) restringiret worden sind, bey ihren officij beharlich gelassen, der Numerus des jüdischen Raths nit alterirt sondern nach derselben hiebevorigen Sisteme inn 27 Personen als 5 Eltesten 5 Gemeindeeltesten und 17 Beisitzern und andern jüdischen Bedienten mit Tods abgehen und dessen Stellung quocunque alio modo vacant werden mochte alßdann von ihren Eltesten drey Subjecta zu der erledigten Function uns. kön. böhm. Kammer ad ratificandum eingereichet und auf einen derselben Competenten positive eingeraten; In übrigen aber und damit sich der Jüdische Magistrat und sonderlich die Beysitzer, alß welche nur zur Beförderung der Justiz gewidmet hegend (?) in denen schranken ihrer Pflicht und der Instruction gemäss verhalten, mithin sich keiner über selben so leichtlich zu beklagen ursach haben möge, daß alle 3 Jahre durch die ex gremio unserer k. böhm. Kammer Deputirte Commissarios gleichsam eine visitation der Jüdischen Eltesten, gemeinen Eltesten, Beisitzern und andere Bediente jedoch quam brevissime und mit geringen Kosten, alß es immer geschehen kann, vorgenommen und solche alda entweder vermittelst uns. k. Hofkammer in ihre Ambter bestätigt und confirmirt oder aber da sich befindete, daß sich jemandt auß ihnen seiner Pflicht und Instruction gemäß nit verhalten, sondern dawider excedirt hätte, ein solcher als dann condigne abgestraffet oder nach befund der Sache plane ab officio amovirt und ein ander an statt praemisso modo surrogirt und eingesetzt werden kann.
Befehlen Euch dem nach hier mit gnädigst, daß ihr so eins als andere gehörig ad notam nehmet und diesen unsern so wohl wegen der Confirmation und prolongirung der Perdons verpachtung alß auch des Jüdischen Magistrat perpetuity halber geschöpften gnädigsten Willen und resolution debito loco publiciren lassen, solcher in allem gehorsamst nachleben und die Pragerische Judenschaft zu denen punctualien in allerunterthänigsten observanz anhalten, die dawider strepitirende gänzliche ab und zur Ruhe zu verweisen, mithin denen Juden wieder die unßer gnädigste Verordnung und Intention ganz und gar keine Conventicula verstattet, sondern solche allerdings und zwar sub peone pepetuae inhabilitatis ad officia verbethen und darob festiglich und alles Ernst halten sollet. Daran x.

Wien, 10 Nov. 1703.
An die königl. böhm. Kammer.
Striking a Pietist Chord: Isaac Wetzlar’s Proposal for the Improvement of Jewish Society
Rebekka Voß, Goethe University

In 1748/49, Isaac Wetzlar of Celle in Northern Germany completed *Libes Briv* (Love Letter), a Yiddish proposal for the improvement of Jewish society. Upon addressing his Jewish brothers and sisters with scathing ethical and religious criticism, Wetzlar articulates an urgent call for spiritual and social renewal by outlining a concrete, pragmatic proposal for a reform of Jewish education. Scholars have typically read this work in the context of Jewish ethical literature and as a document from the Early Haskalah. The presentation examines German Pietism and especially the Pietist mission as a previously unexplored, third major point of reference that can inform a more nuanced historical classification of this and similar works. I argue that German Pietism should be considered a significant factor for the question of change and continuity in the Jewish communities of the early eighteenth century.

In order to initiate exploration of the complex relationship between Central European Judaism and eighteenth-century Pietism selected sources are discussed that concentrate on the links between *Libes briv* and the contours of German Pietism. These sources demonstrate that Isaac Wetzlar’s *Love Letter* (edited and translated into English by M. Faierstein) substantially engages the concepts and initiatives encompassed by Pietist missionary efforts to Jews. The diaries of two travelling missionaries from the Institutum Judaicum in Halle who came to Celle several times in the 1730s as part of their quest to convert Jews document that Wetzlar engaged in theological discussions with at least one of them (cf. presentation by A. Siluk, source 1, “Travelling Journal of Johann Georg Widmann, 1732”). The missionaries’ diaries, housed today in the Archives of the Francke Foundation in Halle, also prove that Wetzlar owned and read several of the Pietist publications that were authored in Yiddish for a Jewish audience and distributed to Jews by missionaries. Among them were two commonly issued treatises by the Gotha pastor Johann Müller, *Mikhtav Ahavah* (1703, 1732 etc.; see source 1, “Diary of Johann Andreas Manitius, 1731”) and *Or le-Et Erev/Likht kegn Ovndzayt* (1728, 1731 etc.). Müller’s writings made a
lasting impression on the future author of *Libes briv* as its reading on the backdrop of Müller’s theological concepts shows. Müller’s major line of argument is the same in the two mentioned works as well as in his so-called „Minor Epistle“ (Kleines Sendschreiben, 1729). While the Yiddish original is lost, source 2 presents an unknown English translation by a certain Mr. Martini, enclosed with Manitius’s diary of March 28, 1735.

The sources introduce Isaak Wetzlar’s *Love Letter* as a calculated response to the challenge posed by Pietist missionaries and Christian critiques of Jewish life: Wetzlar’s call for religious and social renewal seems to compete with contemporaneous Christian Pietists over the preferable vision for eighteenth-century Central European Jewry.

Reading Isaak Wetzlar’s *Love Letter* as a product of Jewish-Pietist interaction and entanglement suggests that the quest for genuine piety represented a vital, hitherto largely unrecognized arena of Jewish-Christian encounter. Comparative analyses of *Libes Briv* and similar Jewish proposals for reform against the backdrop of Pietism have the potential to deepen our overall understanding of early eighteenth-century Jewish notions of change, religious renewal and social reform in a century when change and modernization were being promoted in both societies.

Select Bibliography


*Jewish History Quarterly* 4 (2006), Special Issue.


Striking a Pietist Chord: Isaac Wetzlar’s Proposal for the Improvement of Jewish Society
Rebekka Voß, Goethe University

Diary of Johann Andreas Manitius about his stay in Danzig, his journey to Königsberg and Pomerania as well as to Franconia and Hesse (November 12, 1731)

Archives of the Francke Foundation, Halle, box 52 (AFSt/H K 52)

Translated and annotated by R. Voß

[...]

Fol. 260: (Conversation with a certain Gottschalck about a Jewish printing house in Frankfurt/Oder, which he operated and where writings in both Hebrew and Yiddish were printed.)

Fol. 261: (It is reported that the Hebrew-German version of the New Testament by Johann Müller is largely bought by preachers, but but Jews did acquire it as well. Gottschalck, however, was skeptical about Müller’s missionary program. He said:)

[...] good Müller wants to convert the Jews, but it may not have been of much use.

(A conversation with a Studioso, a student, Mr. Prove. Mr. Prove showed to Manitius [...])

[...] a Jewish Scriptum on a quarto sheet and reported that a Jew had sent it to him expressly. When his parents voluntarily gave him one or probably even two groschen, he left the house indignantly and grumbling, saying that if he were to sell everything like that, he would starve. He said he could not read it and I should have a look. The title was this:
Love Letter to all hoping prisoners of hope\textsuperscript{1}: To all the exiled sons of Israel who wait for redemption, written in loving kindness for Rosh Hashana 1703\textsuperscript{2}

**Fol. 262:** In the beginning, as I hadn't looked at the date, I thought it was a purely Jewish book, made in this new year, both invoked by and refuting our letter (i.e. the Minor Epistle), because it was alarming to me that a Jew had brought it to the house and given it expressly to a scholar. […]

But when I read it and saw that Isaiah chap. 53 explains about the Messiah, very strongly emphasizing sacrifice and atonement, and when I found in the conclusion (of the book): ‘You beloved sons of Israel, I beg you, don’t take my humble writing amiss; I wrote to you in cordial love and I don’t wish to mislead you to do, God forbid, idol worship or become uncircumcised (Christians), but only you should do true penitence and receive forgiveness so salvation will come to Israel, speedily in our days, amen.’ I did not know how to interpret it. But I later read it carefully in its entirety together with Mr. Widmann and we realized that almost the same arguments and style were found here as in *A Light in the Evening*\textsuperscript{3} and the letter\textsuperscript{4}. Therefore and because we took into account the date 1703, we thought that it stemmed from the same Mr. Müller who had made the rest. As I had heard from Mr. Prove that the Rabbi who had previously been chased away from Berlin upon interpreting Isaiah 53 with reference to the Messiah had come here, we soon entertained the idea that it was him who had edited it, with a different date. In a word, we did not know how to handle it. On Tuesday, Mr. Widmann took it among the Jews. He met an old Jewish typesetter who

---

\textsuperscript{1} Zechariah 9:12

\textsuperscript{2} [Johann Müller], *Mikhtav Ahavah … an Ale Bene Goles Yisroel*… (Frankfurt/Oder, 1703). Starting in 1732, it was reprinted many times by the Institutum Judaicum in Halle. In contrast to Müller’s so-called “Minor Epistle,” *Mikhtav Ahavah* was dubbed the “Major Epistle” (Großes Sendschreiben). Cf. below fn 4.

\textsuperscript{3} Yochanan Kimhi [Johann Müller], *Or le-Et Erev…*, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Halle: Institutum Judaicum, 1731). *Or le-Et Erev* was reprinted numerous times in Halle starting with its first edition in 1728.

\textsuperscript{4} The reference is to the “Minor Epistle,” printed in 1729. While the Yiddish original is now lost, an English translation from 1735 is extant in the Archives of the Francke Foundation in Halle, AFSt/H K 52 (source 2).
claimed he knew the typeface and that it had been printed here, since he had seen them help (with it) (?). It surprises us that the book is (still) being sold today. Today (Wednesday) as I am drafting this, we meanwhile intend to inquire about it at the printing house. As I am finally sending this letter back, the beloved and valued brother told me about a new and good example of a baptized Jew (in) Doebiz, 9 miles from here on the road to Berlin, where also several Jews live.

**Fol. 267:** (Gottschalck tells about Aaron Margalitha, who had been baptized 24 years before and had become a university professor. He uses the very same references “from the rabbis” for his dissertation and argumentation “that our letter and *Or Le-et Erev* contain, too.”)

[...]
Striking a Pietist Chord: Isaac Wetzlar’s Proposal for the Improvement of Jewish Society
Rebekka Voß, Goethe University

Tagebuch von Johann Andreas Manitius über seinen Aufenthalt in Danzig, seine Reise nach Königsberg und Pommern sowie nach Franken und Hessen (November 12, 1731)

Archives of the Francke Foundation, Halle, box 52 (AFSt/H K 52)

Transcribed by A. Siluk, annotated by R. Voß

[Fol. 260: (Conversation with a certain Gottschalck about a Jewish printing house in Frankfurt/Oder, which he operated and where writings in both Hebrew and Yiddish were printed.)

Fol. 261: (It is reported that the Hebrew-German version of the New Testament by Johann Müller is largely bought by preachers, but but Jews did acquire it as well. Gottschalck, however, was skeptical about Müller’s missionary program. He said:)

[... ] der gute Müller wolle die Juden bekehren, aber es mag wenig genutzt haben.

(A conversation with a Studioso, a student, Mr. Prove. Mr. Prove showed to Manitius [ ... ])

[ ... ] ein jüdisch Scriptum auf einen Quart-bogen und referirte, daß solchen ein Jude express zu ihm herauf geschickt habe, und als ihm seine Eltern einen oder wol gar zwey groschen frey willig gegeben, sey er unwillig und murrend(?) aus dem Hause gegangen, und habe gesagt: ,wenn er alles so
hätte verkaufen sollen, so würde er haben Hungern müßten. Er könne es nicht lesen, ich möchte es doch ansehen, der Titul lautet also:

Mikhtav Ahava... an Ale Bene Goles Yisroel... (Frankfurt/Oder, 1703). Starting in 1732, it was reprinted many times by the Institutum Judaicum in Halle. In contrast to Müller’s so-called “Minor Epistle,” Mikhtav Ahava was dubbed the “Major Epistle” (Grobes Sendschreiben). Cf. below fn 4.


¹ Zechariah 9:12
² [Johann Müller], Mikhtav Ahavah... an Ale Bene Goles Yisroel... (Frankfurt/Oder, 1703). Starting in 1732, it was reprinted many times by the Institutum Judaicum in Halle. In contrast to Müller’s so-called “Minor Epistle,” Mikhtav Ahavah was dubbed the “Major Epistle” (Grobes Sendschreiben). Cf. below fn 4.
³ Yochanan Kimhi [Johann Müller], Or le-Et Erev…, 2nd ed. (Halle: Institutum Judaicum, 1731). Or le-Et Erev was reprinted numerous times in Halle starting with its first edition in 1728.
⁴ The reference is to the “Minor Epistle,” printed in 1729. While the Yiddish original is now lost, an English translation from 1735 is extant in the Archives of the Francke Foundation in Halle, AFSt/H K 52 (source 2).

Bl.267: Gottschalck erzählt von einem vor 24 Jahren getauften Juden, der ein Professor auf der Academie war, namens Aaron Margalitha. Dessen Dissertation und Argumentation weisen die gleichen Stellen „aus den Rabbinen“ auf, „die eben auch also unser brief und OR LEET EREF [Licht am Abend] hat.“

[⋯]