Introduction to the special issue: The Jewish Bookshop of the World

Aspects of Print and Manuscript Culture in Early Modern Amsterdam

To the memory of Shlomo Berger (1953-2015)

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The first Hebrew book printed by a Jewish printer in Amsterdam was a Sephardi-rite prayer book, completed on 13 Tevet 5387 (1 January 1627).[1] On its title page (figure 1), the twenty-four-year-old Lisbon native Menasseh ben Israel used a phrase from the end of the Israelites' desert wanderings as chronogram to denote the year he began printing: וישכן ישראל בטח, *Thus Israel dwells in safety* (Deut. 33:28). The three Hebrew words tell of fear and refuge, of persecution and safety, of ends and beginnings. Nearly every family among the Portuguese Jews for whom Menasseh printed this prayer book lived with the traumas of life in fear of the Inquisition. Some, including Menasseh's own father, arrived in Holland crippled by physical torture. In Amsterdam they were finally beyond the reach of the Inquisition (at least as long as Dutch armies kept Spanish armies at bay), free to live as Jews and free to pray (or not) from books like this one.

1 On Menasseh, see Sina Rauschenbach, *Judaism for Christians: Menasseh ben Israel (1604-1657)*, trans. Corey Twitchell (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2019); Steven Nadler, *Menasseh ben Israel: Rabbi of Amsterdam* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2018); A.K. Offenberg, *Menasseh ben Israel (1604-1657): a biographical sketch* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel Instituut, 2011). On Menasseh as a printer, see Leo Fuks and Renate Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography in the Northern Netherlands, 1585-1815: Historical Evaluation, and Descriptive Bibliography* (Leiden: Brill, 1984 and 1987), vol. 1, 99-114 (historical essay) and 114-34 (descriptive bibliography), 135 (short title list of non-Hebrew publications). On the 1627 prayer book, see there, 114, noting only the copy in the Bodleian Library. Four other copies are known to me: in Merton College, Oxford, the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Marsh's Library in Dublin and the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem. The colophon (f. 391v) noting the date the payer book was completed differs from the date on the title page (וישכן = [5]386).

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סדר תפלות

כמנהג קהל קדש ספרד

והוספנו על הראשונים לכה דודי ז
ומזמורי המועדים וקדושי ג׳ רגלים ו
וזולתם מלבד שהעמדנו כל דבר ודבר ע
על סדר השנה למען יקל על כל איש ל
למצא מבוקשו

נדפס עתה במצות הגבירים

אפרים בואינו ואברהם צרפתי
באמשטילרדאם

בבית מנשה בן ישראל שנת
וישבן ישראל בטח

Figure 1: Seder Tefilot… *Title page of the first book printed by Menasseh ben Israel, completed on January 1, 1627. Merton College Library, Oxford, shelf mark 74.A.11. Reproduced by kind permission of the Warden and Fellows of Merton College, Oxford.*

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Expressions of relief and gratitude for Dutch asylum run through Menasseh's oeuvre.[2] Fifteen years later, the opportunity arose to convey them in person to the son of the leader of the Dutch Revolt, when Stadholder Frederik Hendrik visited Amsterdam's recently united Portuguese synagogue with his son William, the latter's fiancée Mary and her mother Henrietta Maria, Queen Consort of Charles II. Menasseh's address on that occasion – a florid exercise of learned rhetoric and a political confession of Jewish loyalty to both the States General and the House of Orange – has made the royal visit a set-piece in historical writing about Jews in the Low Countries.[3] Yet if Menasseh's address was deliberately calibrated to the Old Testament lens through which many Dutch saw their deliverance from a common Spanish enemy, it also rang true. The emergence of one of the most dynamic and prosperous centers of Jewish life in the early modern world intertwined with the rise of an independent Dutch Republic, its pluralistic society, its distinction (if not complete separation) between secular and religious authorities, its absorption of waves of immigrants and refugees from the Southern Netherlands, France and beyond, its mercantilism, entrepreneurship and dazzling cultural life.

One domain in which this *Schicksalsverwantschaft* is particularly conspicuous is the history of the book. The mid-seventeenth century moment when the erstwhile rebel provinces of the Spanish Empire emerge from the Peace of Münster as the free and prosperous United Provinces coincided

2 Rauschenbach, *Judaism for Christians*, 188. The case of Menasseh's friend and patron, David Jessurun, illustrates the emergence of this *topos* in Dutch-Sephardi writing. See Adri K. Offenberg, "The First Jewish Poem in Praise of the City of Amsterdam by David Jesurun, 'El Poeta Niño'," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 44 (2012): 217-220; Adri K. Offenberg, "David Jesurun and Menasseh ben Israel," *Zutot* 8, no. 1 (2011): 31-40.

3 See David Franco Mendes, *Memorias do estabelecemento e progresso dos judeos portuguezes e espanhoes nesta famosa citade de Amsterdam. A Portuguese Chronicle of the History of the Sephardim in Amsterdam up to 1772 by David Franco Mendes*, edited with introduction and annotations by L. Fuks and Mrs. R.G. Fuks-Mansfeld M.A. and a philological commentary, analysis and glossaries by Dr B.N. Teensma = *Studia Rosenthaliana* 9 (1975): 51-53; see also e.g. Yosef Kaplan, "The Jews in the Republic until about 1750: Religious, Cultural and Social Life," in *The History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, ed. J.C.H. Blom, R.G. Fuks-Mansfeld, I. Schöffer, trans. Arnold J. Pomerans and Erica Pomerans (Oxford and Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1996), 161; Yosef Kaplan, *An Alternative Path to Modernity: The Sephardi Diaspora in Western Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 33; Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1999), 67-68; Benjamin Fisher, "For God and Country: Jewish Identity and the State in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," in *Jewish Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honor of David B. Ruderman*, ed. R. I. Cohen, N.B. Dohrmann, A. Shear and E. Reiner (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press; Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2014), 50-62.

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with Amsterdam surpassing Frankfurt as the most important center for the European book trade and surpassing Venice as the most important center for the printing of Hebrew and Jewish books.[4] In ways that book historians have yet to map comprehensively, the very decade that saw Amsterdam's take-over as "Bookshop of the World" also saw its emergence as the Jewish bookshop of the world.[5]

From its very first issue, *Studia Rosenthaliana* has approached the history of the Jews in the Netherlands in part through the history of the book. If this approach seems self-evident, it is also driven by local circumstances. Jewish book culture writ large – the writing, editing, printing, binding, trading, collecting, and reading of books in Hebrew, Aramaic, Spanish, Portuguese, Yiddish, Latin, Dutch and French – forms an inextricable part of Dutch Jewish history. The good sense of telling Dutch Jewish history through book history also springs from much of the surviving evidence and the wealth of local material resources: the *Ets Ḥaim–Livraria Montezinos* library, the oldest Jewish public library in the world[6]; and the *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana*, the nucleus of which is the magnificent collection of Leeser Rosenthal (1794-1868), which his son bequeathed to the city of Amsterdam in 1880 and from which this journal takes its name.[7]

4 Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World: Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2019); Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective: 1650, hard-won unity* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004).

5 See R.G. Fuks-Mansfeld, "The Hebrew Book Trade in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century," in *Le Magasin de l'Univers. The Dutch Republic as the Centre of the European Book Trade*, ed. C. Berkvens-Stevelinck, H. Bots, P.G. Hoftijzer and O.S. Lankhorst (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1992), 155-168; Meir Benayahu, "The Shift of the Center of Hebrew Printing from Venice to Amsterdam and the Competition with Jewish Printing in Constantinople," in *Meḥkarim al Toldot Yahadut Holland*, ed. Joseph Michman (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1975), 1:41-68 [Hebrew].

6 David Sclar, "A Communal Tree of Life: Western Sephardic Jewry and the Library of the Ets Haim Yesiba in Early Modern Amsterdam," *Book History* 22 (2019): 43-65; Emile Schrijver and Heide Warncke, *18 highlights from Ets Haim. The oldest Jewish library in the world* (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 2016).

7 See *Omnia in Eo: Studies on Jewish Books and Libraries in Honour of Adri Offenberg, Celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana in Amsterdam*, ed. Irene Zwiep, Emile Schrijver, F.J. Hoogewoud, Sammy Herman, Resianne Fontaine, Julie-Marthe Cohen, Shlomo Berger (Leuven: Peeters, 2006) (= *Studia Rosenthaliana* 38/39); *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana. Treasures of Jewish Booklore Marking the 200th Anniversary of Leeser Rosenthal, 1794-1994*, ed. Adri K. Offenberg, Emile G.L. Schrijver and F.J. Hoogewoud, with the collaboration of Lies Kruijer-Poesiat (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press 1994).

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Few aspects of Jewish history in the Netherlands are not illuminated by ongoing scholarly discoveries among the manuscripts, printed books and ephemera in these invaluable collections. As historians of the early modern Low Countries have placed the Book (print, publishing, the book-trade, written communication, textual scholarly practices, education and literacy) at the heart of Dutch Golden Age culture[8], so book history has offered multiple vantage points for surveying and understanding many of the most significant developments of Dutch Jewish history. These include the vernacular halakhic manuals that taught Iberian New Christians how to become New Jews, the theological and polemical treatises in which Portuguese Jews wrestled with their own Catholic culture and the baroque Spanish drama, poetry and other literary genres in which they expressed an abiding pride in their Iberian heritage. Book history has also helped scholars understand the emergence of West-Yiddish learned culture; explore the composition, copying and circulation of clandestine manuscripts; appreciate the history of religious and secular mentalities and practices of private and public collecting; trace changes in book design, illumination and conspicuous consumption; and tell social, economic and intellectual histories of Jewish-Christian relations. Looking farther afield, historians have discovered ways in which books printed "with Amsterdam letters" shaped Jewish cultures across the early modern world, conquering both Central-European Jewish readerships and the constellation of Western Sephardi communities from Hamburg and London to Paramaribo and Newport that orbited around Amsterdam's *Esnoga*. Much of this research was pioneered in the back pages of this journal.

This special double issue of *Studia Rosenthaliana*, devoted to aspects of Jewish book culture in early modern Amsterdam, therefore continues a longstanding tradition. But the following nine articles, most of them by early career scholars, also break new ground. They uncover hitherto unknown primary sources and draw attention to neglected books, scholars, printers, print professionals and other *passeurs de texte*. They reconstruct connections and relations between Amsterdam printers and Jews from London, Fulda, Prague, Vilna, Carpentras, Venice, Algiers, Hebron and beyond. Ranging from the early seventeenth-century to the mid-twentieth century and building on the invaluable bibliographical instruments of Hebrew and Iberian printing in the Northern Netherlands (by Leo Fuks

8 Dirk van Miert, "Education," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Helmer J. Helmers and Geert H. Janssen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 333-349.

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and Renate Fuks-Mansfeld, by A.K. Offenberg and Harm den Boer), these articles also engage with recent trends in Jewish history more widely and in book history more generally. Among these trends are a renewed focus on the rhetoric and functions of title pages, approbations, prefatory verse and other paratexts; on the social circumstances and craftsmanship of editing; on the organization and visualization of knowledge; on broadsheets, pamphlets, auction catalogues and other ephemera; on the persistence and flourishing of manuscript culture in the age of print, on literacy and entrepreneurship among women, and on connecting Holland with Europe and Europe with the non-European world, especially with North Africa and the Levant.[9]

Eliezer Baumgarten and Uri Safrai turn to the first decades of Jewish life in Amsterdam in the early seventeenth century and to Moses Zacuto, legal scholar, Hebrew poet, and one of the major Kabbalists of his time. Zacuto was born in Amsterdam and received his early education there. He studied in Germany and Poland, where (as Joseph Melkman showed in these pages) his family had business interests, before spending the rest of his life in Venice and Mantua.[10] Baumgarten and Safrai read a set of manuscripts now in Amsterdam, Budapest, Jerusalem, London, Moscow, Oxford, Parma and the Vatican to reconstruct the ways in which Zacuto remained connected to his erstwhile teachers in Amsterdam. In so doing, they demonstrate that Zacuto did not abandon their kabbalistic and magical teachings for the Lurianic traditions from the Galilee that he did so much to disseminate in Italy and beyond. And they suggest how Zacuto's mature work, the lexicon of divine names known as *Shorshei haShemot*, reflects those abiding connections.

In the past decade, few books have had a more wide-ranging and creative impact on early modern book history than Ann Blair's study of the way scholars and print professionals designed sophisticated tools for the organization of knowledge and the efficient retrieval of the massive amounts of information that flooded sixteenth-century

9 For a recent state of research, see Emile G.L. Schrijver, "Jewish Book Culture Since the Invention of Printing (1469 - c. 1815)," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism: Volume 7, The Early Modern World, 1500-1815*, ed. Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 291-315.

10 Joseph Melkman, "Mozes Zacuto en zijn familie," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 3, no. 2 (1969): 145-155.

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Europe.[11] As Tamara Morsel-Eisenberg has shown in a ground-breaking dissertation, early modern Jewish scholars used print to organize halakhic literature in sophisticated ways too, and for similar purposes.[12] **Elad Schlesinger**'s contribution to this issue is a study of the reception of a book that played an inestimable role in the early modern organization of Jewish law and custom, Joseph Karo's *Shulḥan Arukh*. Schlesinger considers four books printed in Amsterdam between 1661 and 1708: (1) the edition of the *Shulḥan Arukh* by the Lithuanian refugee Moses Rivkes, author of the apparatus known as *Be'er ha-Golah*; (2) the commentary *Siphtei Kohen* on *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Ḥoshen Mishpat*, by the Lithuanian rabbi Shabbatai Katz, known as the *ShaKh*; (3) the compendium *Shulḥan Tahor*, composed in Hebrew by the London rabbi Joseph Pardo and edited posthumously by his son David Pardo together with the Amsterdam rabbi Solomon d'Oliveyra, and translated into Spanish; and (4) the commentary by the Polish rabbi Isaiah ben Abraham known as *Ba'er Heitev*. Schlesinger shows how Karo's code could function simultaneously as a paradigm for the organization of *halakhah* for a rabbinic elite and as a *vademecum* for Jews raised as Iberian Catholics finding their way to a halakhically observant Jewish life. The early editorial history of the *Shulḥan Arukh* has long been emblematic of major leitmotifs in the history of the Jewish book: the dynamics between manuscript and print culture, between medieval and early modern canons and curricula, and between Sephardi and Ashkenazi traditions.[13] Schlesinger's discussion of these four publications shows how the context of Amsterdam in the second half of the seventeenth century allowed for scholars of Sephardi and Ashkenazi traditions to revisit the way the *Shulḥan Arukh* straddled the abiding boundaries between them. Finally, Schlesinger tells a history of reception in order to understand something critical to the meteoric success of the *Shulḥan Arukh*: its capacity to remain both fluid and

11 Ann M. Blair, *Too Much to Know: Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011). See also the preface by Roger Chartier to the French translation in Ann M. Blair, *Tant de choses à savoir: Comment maîtriser l'information à l'époque moderne*, trans. Bernard Krespine (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2020).
12 Tamara Morsel-Eisenberg, "The Organization of Halakhic Knowledge in Early Modern Europe: The Transformation of a Scholarly Culture" (PhD dissertation, University of Pennsylvania 2018).
13 See Elchanan Reiner, "The Ashkenazi Elite at the Beginning of the Modern Era: Manuscript versus Printed Book" in *Jews in Early Modern Poland*, ed. Gershon David Hundert (London and Portland, OR: The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1997) (= *Polin* 10), 85-98 (esp. 96-98); Yaacob Dweck, "What is a Jewish Book?," *AJS Review* 34, no. 2 (2010): 367-75.

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constant, a book edited and elaborated across disparate editions and commentaries as well as an abstract organizing idea.

Among the *dramatis personae* of early modern Dutch Jewish history is a colorful line-up of Christian millenarians and religious enthusiasts from England to Bohemia who came to Holland in the hope of hastening the end times by converting Dutch Jews to Christianity. The very first books printed in Amsterdam that used Hebrew type alongside Latin, some twenty years prior to Menasseh ben Israel's firstling, were occasioned by the religious disputation between the Amsterdam rabbi David Farrar and the English preacher and Hebrew scholar, Hugh Broughton.[14] Menasseh himself, the foremost living spokesperson for Judaism in the eyes of many contemporaries (and in his own), looms large in the scholarly literature on this subject, much of which has focused on his numerous Christian interlocutors. **Jeannine Kunert and Alexander van der Haven** tell the story of the Danish merchant and messianic visionary Olliger Paulli, who moved to Holland in 1695. Paulli's life and times in Amsterdam – his interactions with the city's non-conformist circles, Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jews, Jewish converts to Christianity and Christian converts to Judaism, and with cunning, clandestine printers – did not end happily. His attempts to establish a new church were comically unsuccessful, and the story culminates in 1701 with Paulli's imprisonment and permanent exile and the arrest of his Dutch printers. In Kunert and Van der Haven's captivating telling, the story of this 'religious entrepreneur' sheds light on a figure known to Heinrich Graetz but long hidden in historiographical shadows. Paulli's escapades also serve as a cautionary tale against the all-too-common insistence on Amsterdam's vaunted religious toleration and freedom of the press and as a reminder of the powers of the city's Reformed authorities, if not to censor print prior to publication then at least to exert substantial juridical control over books and their makers after the fact – in this case, to ensure an author's arrest and his printers' punishment.

Historians of the book know that Walter Benjamin was wrong about moveable type: individual copies of books reproduced mechanically a

14 Yosef Kaplan, "Between Calvinists and Jews in Seventeenth Century Amsterdam," in *Conflict and Religious Conversation in Latin Christendom: Studies in Honour of Ora Limor*, ed. Israel Jacob Yuval and Ram Ben-Shalom, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 277-303. For Broughton's involvement in the first Hebrew books printed in Amsterdam, see Kirsten Macfarlane, *Biblical Scholarship in an Age of Controversy: The Polemical World of Hugh Broughton (1549-1612)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming). I am grateful to Dr Macfarlane for sharing parts of her book with me prior to its publication.

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thousand-fold can carry the aura of singular, handmade works of art. Much recent book-historical research has foregrounded the material text, questions of ownership and provenance and practices of binding, collecting, reading and annotation that can make an early printed book as unique as a manuscript. At the chronological end of this issue, **Martina Mampieri** dives into the library of the historian, bibliographer and bibliophile Isaiah Sonne (1887-1960). Now housed in the Ben Zvi Institute in Jerusalem, Sonne's library consists to a remarkable extent of books printed in Amsterdam (second in number only to books printed in Venice), of which Mampieri provides a helpful list in an appendix. Mampieri's study of manuscript annotations in these books allows her to reconstruct several *longue-durée* histories of ownership, circulation, transmission and provenance between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries. As bibliographer, bibliophile and historian, Sonne had an abiding fascination for Dutch Jewry, from his 1925 dissertation on Spinoza onwards. Mampieri's study of the copious notes that Sonne himself left in his books, often on loose slips and cards, underpins her reconstruction of multiple connections between Sonne's particular copies of Amsterdam editions and his scholarship.

The remaining five articles, gathered in the second half of this special issue, deal in one way or another with the eighteenth century. In the historiography of Dutch Jewry, the eighteenth century has long sat awkwardly between the seventeenth century's dazzling Golden Age and the revolutionary years of emancipation at the end of the eighteenth century. Bart Wallet and Irene Zwiep have recently offered a reappraisal of the eighteenth century in Dutch Jewish history, considering it on its own terms and from the perspective of a *Sattelzeit*.[15] In their emphasis on the interchange between Sephardi and Ashkenazi intellectual innovations, their foregrounding of ongoing and growing Jewish immigration, and creative responses to contemporary cultural trends, many of the contributions in this issue expand on Wallet's and Zwiep's reappraisal.

Yakov Z. Mayer resurrects one of the numerous Central European Jews who make their way to Amsterdam in the early eighteenth century: Elijah of Fulda, the first Ashkenazi Jew in the early modern period to write

15 Bart Wallet and Irene Zwiep, "Locals: Jews in the Early Modern Dutch Republic," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism: Volume 7, The Early Modern World, 1500-1815*, ed. Jonathan Karp and Adam Sutcliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 894-922. See also Irene Zwiep, "Jewish Enlightenment Reconsidered: The Dutch Eighteenth Century," in *Sepharad in Ashkenaz: Medieval Knowledge and Eighteenth-century Enlightened Jewish Discourse*, ed. Resianne Fontaine, Andrea Schatz, and Irene Zwiep (Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 2007), 281-311.

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a commentary on the Palestinian Talmud. Mayer mines the *haskamot* of Elijah's edition of the Palestinian Talmud's tractate *Shekalim* (Frankfurt a.M.: s.e. [Christoph Balthasar Wust?], 1689) and of his major edition of twelve tractates from the Palestinian Talmud (Amsterdam: Moses ben Isaac Dias, 1710), to reconstruct this obscure author's biography and his strategies in bringing his work to print. Mayer traces Elijah back to his *kloyz*, arguing that it was not in the traditional *yeshiva* with its fixed curriculum but rather through the elite institution of the *kloyz* and the freedom it offered particularly gifted students that the study of the Palestinian Talmud could make its first headways into the early modern Ashkenazi learned world. Mayer meticulously connects Elijah to a host of contemporary figures who were involved in his publication efforts, including such major rabbis as David Oppenheim and Ṣevi Ashkenazi (known as *Ḥakham Ṣevi*). Elijah's origins are unknown, and he disappears from the historical record without a trace. Except, that is, for his scholarship and its *Nachleben*: Elijah's work had a long-lasting and transformative effect on the subsequent editorial history of the Palestinian Talmud. In Mayer's hands, a fine-grained history of a single edition can form a vital chapter in a vast history: carrying a manuscript, a collection of *haskamot*, and a dream across the dangerous roads of eighteenth-century Europe to Amsterdam, Elijah of Fulda changed the face of one of the major works of classical rabbinic literature.

In the Spring before he printed his first book, Menasseh ben Israel approached Nicolaes Briot, one of the Dutch Republic's myriad refugees from the Southern Netherlands and the owner of the finest type foundry in Amsterdam. Based on a specimen sheet of Hebrew script, likely by the scribe Michael Judah Leon, Briot cut new type for the press Menasseh planned to establish.[16] "The famous 'Amsterdam Type' begins with Nicolaes Briot cutting for Menasseh after handwritten models approved by Michael Judah Leon," the historian of typography John A. Lane has written. "Together, these three men set the style of Sephardi printing types until, three hundred years later, designers turned back to older models for fresh inspiration."[17] Yet Hebrew scribal art did not come to an end with the flourishing of print. Indeed, one aspect of Jewish book culture to which book historians and historians of art have been devoting increasing attention is the persistence

16 The contract between Menasseh and Briot, signed 18 March 1626, is transcribed in "Notarial Records Relating to Amsterdam Portuguese Jews before 1639," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 32, no. 1 (1998): 88.

17 John A. Lane, "Nicolaes Briot and Menasseh ben Israel's first Hebrew types," in *Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana. Treasures of Jewish Booklore*, 28. See also Schrijver, "Jewish Book Culture".

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of manuscript culture in the age of print and the dynamic relationship between the two. Early modern manuscripts could be lavish works of art: the versatile scribe and artist Salom Italia, who arrived in Amsterdam from Italy in 1641, has been the subject of several illuminating studies in the past decade.[18] In early modern Europe, keeping texts in manuscript also served as a mechanism of self-protection. Carsten Wilke has been reconstructing and editing the fascinating corpus of clandestine anti-Christian polemics that Jews copied by hand and circulated in manuscript only.[19] The study of manuscripts copied in early modern Amsterdam has thrown light on various practices of reading. Among the remarkable seventeenth-century manuscripts rediscovered in the *Ets Ḥaim* library to which scholars have drawn attention in recent years are a copy of the oldest Spanish translation of Erasmus's *Praise of Folly* and a Spanish translation of the *Qur'an*, further enriching our understanding of the extraordinary breadth of non-Jewish literacy among certain Western Sephardim.[20] Manuscript culture did not just persist alongside print, it was also shaped by it in turn. Emile Schrijver has explored the revival and artistic creativity of Hebrew manuscript culture in the eighteenth century, focusing on Aryeh ben Judah Leib Trebitsch, the first scribe to use "Amsterdam letters" (the clear square type typical of Amsterdam Hebrew printing) as his own model. In a sense, Trebitsch's work represents the eclipse of Michael Judah Leon's collaboration with Briot and

18 Sharon Assaf and Emily D. Bilski, *Salom Italia's Esther Scrolls and the Dutch Golden Age* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel Instituut/Joods Historisch Museum, 2011); Shalom Sabar, "A New Discovery: The Earliest Illustrated Esther Scroll by Salom Italia," *Ars Judaica* 8 (2012): 119-36.

19 Carten Wilke, "Clandestine Classics: Isaac Orobio and the Polemical Genre among the Dutch Sephardim," in *Isaac Orobio: The Jewish Argument with Dogma and Doubt*, ed. Carsten Wilke (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2019), 57-76; idem, *The Marrakesh dialogues: a gospel critique and Jewish apology from the Spanish renaissance*, critical edition and study by Carsten L. Wilke (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2014).

20 Jorge Ledo and Harm den Boer, eds., *Moria de Erasmo Roterodamo: A Critical Edition of the Early Modern Spanish Translation of Erasmus's Encomium Moriae* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Harm den Boer and Pier Mattia Tomasino, "Reading the Qur'ān in the 17th-Century Sephardi Community of Amsterdam," *Al-Qanṭara* 35, no. 2 (2014): 461-491. Yosef Kaplan, "Spanish Readings of Amsterdam's Seventeenth Century Sephardim," in *Jewish Books and their Readers: Aspects of the Intellectual Life of Christians and Jews in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Scott Mandelbrote and Joanna Weinberg (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 312-341; Benjamin Fisher, "God's Word Defended. Menasseh ben Israel, Biblical Chronology, and the Erosion of Biblical Authority," in *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age: God's Word Questioned*, ed. D. van Miert, H. Nellen, P. Steenbakkers, and J. Touber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 155-174.

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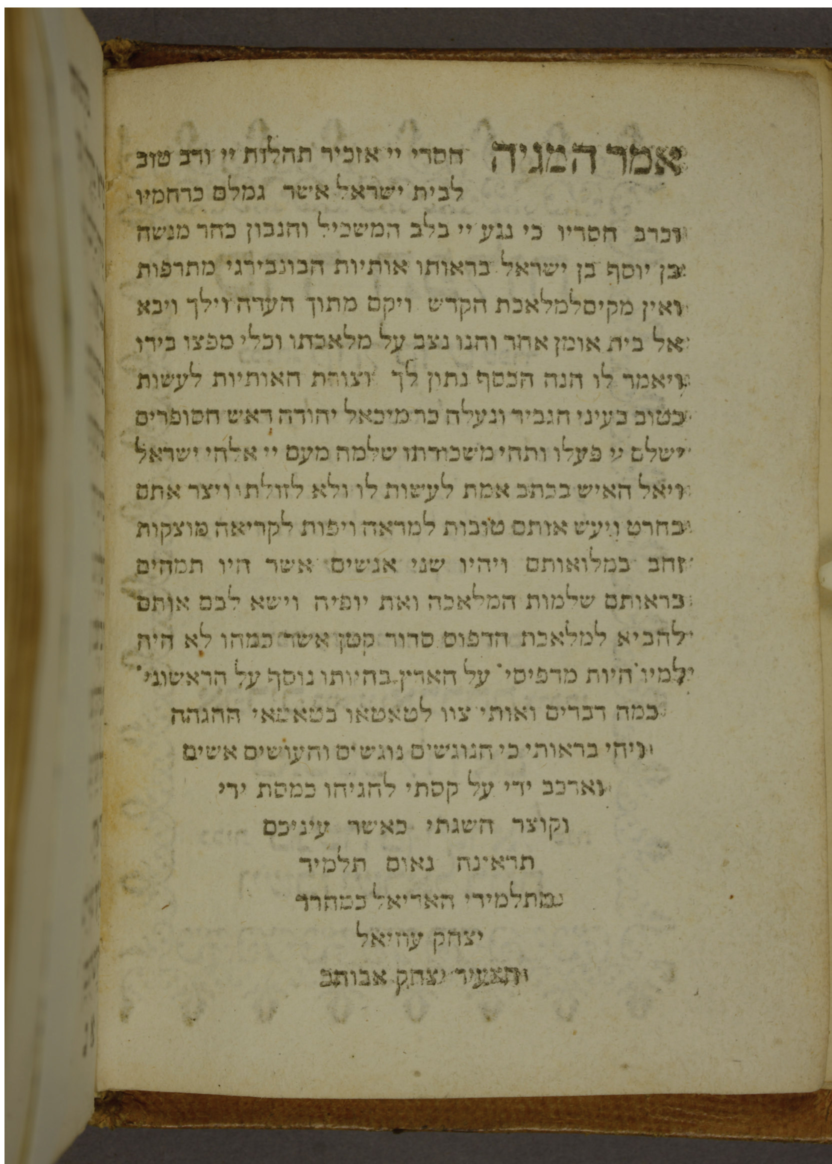

אמר המגיה חסדי יי אזכיר תהלות יי ורב טוב
לבית ישראל אשר גמלם כרחמיו
וכרב חסדיו כי נגע יי בלב המשכיל והנבון כהר מנשה
בן יוסף בן ישראל בראותו אותיות הכונבירגי מתרפות
ואין מקים למלאכת הקדש ויקם מתוך העדה וילך ויבא
אל בית אומן אחר והנו נצב על מלאכתו וכלי מפצו בידו
ויאמר לו הנה הכסף נתון לך וצורת האותיות לעשות
כטוב בעיני הגביר ונעלה כה״ר מיכאל יהודה ראש הסופרים
ישלם ע׳ פעלו ותהי משכורתו שלמה מעם יי אלהי ישראל
ויאל האיש בכתב אמת לעשות לו ולא לזולתו ויצר אתם
בחרט ויעש אותם טובות למראה ויפות לקריאה מוצקות
זהב במלואותם ויהיו שני אנשים אשר היו תמהים
בראותם שלמות המלאכה ואת יופיה וישא לבם אותם
להביא למלאכת הדפוס סדור קטן אשר כמהו לא היה
למיו היות מדפיסי על הארץ בהיותו נוסף על הראשונים
כמה דברים ואותי צוו לטאטאו במטאטאי ההגהה
ויהי בראותי כי הנוגשים נוגשים והעושים אשים
וארכב ידי על קשתי להגיהו כמסת ידי
וקוצר השגתי כאשר עיניכם
תראינה נאום תלמיד
מתלמידי האריאל כמהר״ר
יצחק עוזיאל
והצעיר יצחק אבוהב

Figure 2: Seder Tefilot (*Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel, 1627*), *prefatory note by Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, describing Menasseh having new type cut under the supervision of "the best of the scribes," Michael Judah Leon. Merton College Library, Oxford, shelf mark 74.A.11. Reproduced by kind permission of the Warden and Fellows of Merton College, Oxford.*

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of the relationship between script and print: the formative impact of print culture on the written word.[21]

In his contribution to this issue, **Roni Cohen** shows us a backstory to Amsterdam's manuscript culture: a collection of sixteen private letters of an apprentice scribe, fourteen-year-old Moses Samuel ben Asher Anshel Gendringen, that survive in a small booklet for Purim that he copied in Amsterdam in 1713, now in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana. Cohen studies these letters as valuable egodocuments that record a voice rarely heard either in the historiography of Dutch Jewry or in the early modern history of the book: the young adult. In the very first issue of *Studia Rosenthaliana*, the indefatigable Amsterdam archivist and book-historian Isabella van Eeghen showed how Gerrit Huygen, a Delft-born bookbinder and book-seller who worked for several Jewish printers in Amsterdam in the late seventeenth century, arranged for Jewish orphans to apprentice themselves to a bookbinder.[22] Roni Cohen recovers a later chapter in the history of Amsterdam's book world, shedding light on a figure of eighteenth-century Jewish scribal culture of which we still know very little: the apprentice.

One major recent shift in focus in the history of the book and the history of scholarship is what Anthony Grafton calls "the social history of editing." Grafton upends the still all-too-common assumption of a separation of labor between solitary authors at work in silent studies and print professionals in noisy, bustling printing shops. In a richly illuminating new collection of essays, Grafton shows just how much hard, artisanal and collaborative manual work the production of an early modern book demanded from authors themselves.[23] **Noam Sienna**, in his contribution to this issue, follows Grafton's lead and takes us into the inky-fingered world of an eighteenth-century Amsterdam printing shop. Sienna shares his thrilling discovery, in the Beinecke Library, of the manuscript *Vorlage* of the 1739 *editio princeps* of *Sefer Hatashbeṣ*, a collection of responsa by the Majorcan-Algerian rabbi Shim'on bar Ṣemaḥ Duran (1361-1445). The primary protagonist of Sienna's brilliant chapter is Meir Crescas, a Mediterranean merchant who travels from his native Algiers to Amsterdam, carrying the manuscript now in

21 See Emile G. L. Schrijver, "'Be-Otiyyot Amsterdam': Eighteenth-Century Hebrew Manuscript Production in Central Europe; the Case of Jacob Ben Judah Leib Shamas," *Quaerendo* 20, no. 1 (1990): 24-62; idem, "The Eye of the Beholder: Artistic Sense and Craftsmanship in Eighteenth-Century Jewish Books," in *Images* 7:1 (2013): 35-55.

22 Isabelle H. van Eeghen, "Casper Pietersen Steen, een drukker van Hebreeuwse boeken in Amsterdam (1692-1703)," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 1, no. 1 (1967): 51-65, at 51-52.

23 Antony Grafton, *Inky Fingers: The Making of Books in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2020).

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New Haven, with the express purpose of publishing the *Sefer Hatashbeṣ*. Sienna's identification of this manuscript as well as a host of other archival sources allow him to reconstruct the editorial history of this book, from Crescas's collection of subscriptions in North Africa to the final, handsome Amsterdam edition. Sienna shows, first, "how the material facets of book production both relied on and reinforced the various networks — intellectual, financial, religious, communal, familial, social — that linked Jewish communities around the Mediterranean Basin and beyond, across class, nationality, and language." Deciphering the multiple annotations in Sephardi and Ashkenazi cursive hands in the manuscript, Sienna then reconstructs Crescas's collaboration with the print professionals working for Hartog Alexander van Em(b)den (1696-1767), a printer known by his Hebrew name Naftali Herz Levi Rofé. In so doing, Sienna offers a Jewish example of Grafton's social history of editing. In particular, Crescas's editorial collaboration with Menachem Amelander, author of a Yiddish chronicle of world history and a Yiddish translation of *Sefer Yosippon* (studied insightfully by Bart Wallet), offers an extraordinary case of what Sienna calls "the multicultural and multilingual environment of the printing house," which "demonstrates that these communities did not live in isolation, but had vibrant commercial and intellectual relations." Yaacob Dweck has recently observed that "one way to assess the rigor and intensity of learned life in Jewish North Africa in [the early modern period] is through the history of Hebrew printing in Venice and Amsterdam."[24] Sienna's article abundantly corroborates that observation and constitutes one of the most fine-grained *Entstehungsgeschichten* of a major early modern Hebrew book.

Ahuvia Goren's article looks at a double publication, the *Orot ha-Miṣvot* and *Emek Binyamin* (1753) of Benjamin Dias Brandon (1715-1752), which Brandon's friends Isaac Cohen Belinfante, Raphael Meldola and Isaac Palache edited shortly after his death. Brandon and his friends were members of the circle of David Franco Mendes and in many ways the true protagonist of Goren's article is Amsterdam's Portuguese-Jewish literary and intellectual milieu in the eighteenth century, of which, as Irene Zwiep has shown, Franco Mendes is an emblematic figure.[25] Building on the work of Zwiep, Yosef Kaplan, Avriel Bar-Levav, and David Sclar, Goren shows ways in which members of that milieu both continued seventeenth-century

24 Yaacob Dweck, *Dissident Rabbi: The Life of Jacob Sasportas* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2019), 39.

25 Irene E. Zwiep, "An Echo of Lofty Mountains: David Franco Mendes, a European Intellectual," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 35, no. 2 (2001): 285-296.

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traditions (by blending halakhic genres with polemic defenses of rabbinic authority) and departed from them (by incorporating contemporary developments in natural science, such as theories of atomism). In a set of original essays, Bar-Levav has argued that among the most significant aspects of Jewish book culture in early modern Amsterdam was a new *idea* of Jewish literature as a total library, that transformed ideals of erudition, ways of organizing knowledge as well as scholars' relationship to books as material texts.[26] To illustrate both that milieu and that governing idea, Goren includes a reading of Belinfante's ingenious poem, "The Scholar in his Study," about which Albert van der Heide wrote in these pages forty years ago.[27] Composed entirely of the titles of Hebrew books, Goren writes, "the poem becomes a magnificent *mise-en-abîme*: a praise of books consisting of Hebrew book titles; a love-song to the library that looks like its shelves."

If the history of the book in Amsterdam can illuminate the learned culture of North-African Jewry, it also opens windows onto the intellectual life of Levantine Jews. In his contribution to this issue, **Oded Cohen** tells the story of Mordechai Tama, who travelled from Hebron to Amsterdam in order to print his grandfather's commentary on *Midrash Mekhilta*. Once in Amsterdam, Tama had a promotional specimen page printed, of which Oded Cohen discovered the apparently unique copy in the Library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, bound together with the original manuscript of the commentary. Tama failed to publish his grandfather's work, but he stayed on unperturbed, dazzled and welcomed by Amsterdam's Portuguese Jews. Oded Cohen focuses on Tama's two successful publications in Amsterdam, published together in 1765: Solomon b. Meshullam Dapiera's *Maskiyot Kessef*, a medieval glossary of homonyms, and the collection *Pe'er ha-Dor*. Containing one hundred and thirty-eight previously unpublished *responsa* by Moses Maimonides,

26 Avriel Bar-Levav, "Textual Intimacy and the Bond of Reading between the Expulsion from Spain and Amsterdam," in *Paths to Modernity: A Tribute to Yosef Kaplan*, ed. Avriel Bar-Levav, Claude B. Stuczynski, and Michael Heyd (Jerusalem: Shazar, 2018), 145-168; idem, "The Religious Order of Jewish Books: Structuring Hebrew Knowledge in Amsterdam," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 44 (2012): 1-27; idem, "Amsterdam and the Inception of the Jewish Republic of Letters," in *The Dutch Intersection: The Jews and the Netherlands in Modern History*, ed. Yosef Kaplan, (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 225-37; idem, "Between Library Awareness and the Jewish Republic of Letters," in *Libraries and Book Collections*, eds. Yosef Kaplan and Moshe Sluhovsky (Jerusalem: Shazar, 2006), 217-218 [in Hebrew].

27 Albert van der Heide, "De Geleerde in sijn Kamer," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 14, no. 2 (1980): 228-238.

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Pe'er ha-Dor belongs among the more important Hebrew books printed in the eighteenth century. Tama translated them from the Judaeo-Arabic, from a manuscript (now in the Royal Library in Copenhagen) that had belonged to rabbi Jacob Sasportas. By the time Tama arrived in Amsterdam, the manuscript was in the hands of Sasportas's grandson and namesake. A precious but complex family heirloom, the manuscript represented a tangible bridge to the North-African world from which the elder Jacob Sasportas had come to Amsterdam in the mid-seventeenth century (where he worked as a corrector for Menasseh ben Israel's press). But it was also a symbol of rupture from that world: the family had passed on the manuscript itself, but not the Arabic literacy necessary to read it. Tama had come to Amsterdam with a manuscript, too, but once there it was his command of Arabic that Amsterdam's Sephardim found most valuable. In this way, Tama's work translating Judaeo-Arabic into Hebrew offers a critical chapter in eighteenth-century Dutch Jewish history about which we still know far too little: the dynamics of the encounter in Amsterdam between Western-Sephardi and Levantine Jews.[28]

Broadsheets, handbills, posters, occasional pamphlets, and other ephemera have been the subject of ongoing research in Dutch book history. In Andrew Pettegree's and Arthur der Weduwen's recent estimation, the total print production of the Dutch Republic in the seventeenth century amounted to at least 357,500 editions of which some 295,000 (c. 82.5%) consisted of two printed sheets or less. The vast majority of material printed and consumed in the seventeenth-century United Provinces – the information that kept the State and its economy running and the jobs that kept Dutch printing shops afloat – had short-term intended use. Most of these publications survive in unique copies if at all (Pettegree and Der Weduwen speak of "the lost world of cheap print, printed to be used and worn out").[29] Printed ephemera have abounded in the study of Dutch Jewish history, too, from rabbinic eulogies for communal use and the flurry of broadsheets that helped spread the Sabbatian movement to the pamphlets that Christian missionaries and scholars such as Hugh Broughton, Samuel Hartlib and John Drury

28 See Matthias B. Lehmann, *Emissaries from the Holy Land: The Sephardic Diaspora and the Practice of Pan-Judaism in the Eighteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).

29 See most recently, Andrew Pettegree and Arthur der Weduwen "Forms, Handbills and Affixed Posters: Surveying the Ephemeral Print Production of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic," *Quaerendo* 50, no. 1-2 (2020): 15-40; Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World*, 3.

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addressed to Jews throughout the early modern period.[30] In this domain, as in so many others, Menasseh ben Israel played a pioneering role, from his above-noted address to Stadholder Frederik Hendrik, which he promptly printed and distributed in Portuguese, Latin, and Dutch, to the catalogue he printed in 1648, the very first sales catalogue of Hebrew and Jewish books printed by a Jewish bookseller.[31] As Emile Schrijver has observed, the study of ephemera represents one of the major frontiers of research into early modern Hebrew and Jewish printing.[32] In the case of early modern Hebrew and Jewish ephemera, too, survival often depends on one or two copies.[33] Several contributions to this special issue of *Studia Rosenthaliana* study ephemera of one kind or another. Kunert and Van der Haven reconstruct much of their account of Olliger Paulli from his pamphlets. And Oded Cohen shows how quickly a Jewish immigrant in the mid-eighteenth century could learn to employ the single-sheet 'print-on-demand' services of Amsterdam's Hebrew printers; in Tama's case, to print a specimen-page as part of a promotional campaign to publish his grandfather's commentary.

Another area in which book-historical research in non-Jewish contexts has helped scholars understand aspects of Jewish book history is the study of paratexts, exemplified by Shlomo Berger's research on the history of the early modern Yiddish book.[34] Scholars of early modern Hebrew poetry are rereading a particular subset of paratexts – prefatory verse – in this regard. Michela Andreatta has called attention to the importance of Hebrew

30 On Broughton's pamphlets, see Macfarlane, *Biblical Scholarship in an Age of Controversy*; for those of Hartlib and Drury, see Nadler, *Menasseh*, 135.

31 See L. Fuks and R. Fuks-Mansfeld, "Menasseh ben Israel as a Bookseller in the Light of New Data," *Quaerendo* 11, no. 1 (1981): 34-45.

32 Schrijver, "Jewish Book Culture"; *Storm in the Community: Yiddish Polemical Pamphlets of Amsterdam Jewry 1797-1798*, selected, translated an introduced by Jozeph Michman and Marion Aptroot (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 2002). Anna de Wilde's ongoing research project focuses on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Hebrew catalogues of private libraries printed in the Dutch Republic. See Anna de Wilde, "How to Understand *'al yede*? Title Pages of Hebrew Private Library Catalogues Printed in the Dutch Republic during the Long 18th Century", *Zutot* 17, no. 1 (2020): 74-82.

33 On a polemical pamphlet in the name of the printer Joseph Athias, surviving in two copies, see Theodor Dunkelgrün, "Like a Blind Man Judging Colors: Joseph Athias and Johannes Leusden Defend their 1667 Hebrew Bible," *Studia Rosenthaliana* 44 (2012): 79-115. On a unique copy in the Bodleian Library of a pamphlet with eulogies for Moses Mercado by Saul Levi Morteira and Jacob Sasportas, see Marc Saperstein, *Exile in Amsterdam: Saul Levi Morteira's Sermons to a Congregation of "New Jews"* (Cincinatti: Hebrew Union College Press, 2005), 536-543 and Dweck, *Sasportas*, 56-57.

34 Shlomo Berger, *Producing Redemption in Amsterdam: Early Modern Yiddish Books in Paratextual Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 75-86.

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prefatory poems as historical sources, which offer "a mirror of contemporary Jewish society and its cultural practices, as well as both personal and intellectual relationships that linked the scholars and rabbis of the time."[35] Several contributions to this issue of *Studia Rosenthaliana* offer close and thoughtful readings of paratexts – in Hebrew, Aramaic, Spanish, Portuguese – attesting to the way Berger's work on this subject has become a point of reference for Jewish book history. Long before Berger's study, scholars began drawing attention to the multiple functions and uses of another subgenre of paratext: *haskamot* (rabbinic approbations).[36] The collecting of *haskamot* by hopeful editors in view of a new edition recurs throughout the following pages as a vital process in the making of an early modern Hebrew book. And in the case of *Ḥakham Ṣevi*, Yakov Z. Mayer also shows how a rabbi could use his *haskama* creatively to an end entirely different from that which motivated the request that he write it.

A phenomenon closely related to the collecting of *haskamot* was the raising of funds for publication by subscription. Many years ago, Peter van Rooden and Jan-Willem Wesselius showed how Jacob Abendana, a Portuguese-Jewish scholar from Hamburg who lived for many years in Amsterdam before moving to London, introduced the practice of publication by subscription in the Low Countries.[37] Yakov Z. Mayer, Noam Sienna and Oded Cohen explore ways in which this practice continued in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, spreading deep into European and Mediterranean Jewish communities.

Amsterdam's role as the most important center of early modern Hebrew and Jewish printing and book trade between c. 1650 and c. 1800 has become a commonplace.[38] But exactly how a center attracts, seduces, shapes and wrestles with the periphery (or with multiple peripheries, or with other centers), differs from case to case. The contributions

35 See Mošèh Zacuto, *L'Inferno Allestito*, ed. and trans. Michela Andreatta (Milano: Bompiani, 2016), 19.

36 See i.a. Meir Benayahu, *Copyright, authorization and imprimatur for Hebrew Books printed in Venice* (Jerusalem: Mekhon Ben Zvi, 1971) (Hebrew); Berger, *Producing Redemption*, 75-86.

37 Peter van Rooden and Jan Wim Wesselius, "Two Early Cases of Publication by Subscription in Holland and Germany: Jacob Abendana's *Mikhlal Yophi* (1661) and David Cohen de Lara's *Keter Kehunna* (1668)," *Quaerendo* 16, no. 2 (1986): 110-130

38 Pettegree and Der Weduwen, *The Bookshop of the World*, 333-338; Fuks-Mansfeld, "The Hebrew Book Trade in Amsterdam"; Benayahu, "The Shift of the Center of Hebrew Printing from Venice to Amsterdam"; Herbert Zafren, "Amsterdam: Center of Hebrew Printing in the Seventeenth Century," *Jewish Book Annual* 35 (1977-78): 47-55.

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to this issue are a set of such case-studies, bringing that commonplace to life with new protagonists, manuscripts, editions, and stories of success and of failure. In the following pages, numerous people travel to Amsterdam across great distances and at great risk, carrying one manuscript or more, in order to print their own work, that of a deceased family member or a book for a particular community: Elijah of Fulda, Mordechai Tama from Hebron, Meir Crescas from Algiers, David Pardo from London; Menachem Monish Chajes with a manuscript of his late father-in-law Shabtai Kohen's commentary on *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Ḥoshen Mishpat*, and a young Provençal scholar named Abraham of Monteux carrying the *maḥzor* of Carpentras. As each of them must have discovered, a metropolis contains a multitude of centers in itself. Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies have suggested fruitful parallels between Jewish, German Lutheran and English Puritan book culture in early modern Amsterdam.[39] That kind of comparatism is missing from much Jewish book history, and it is one that a future book historian would do well to pursue. Peter Burke's study of exile in the history of knowledge, which sets Amsterdam's Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jewish printers in a breathtaking cultural and intellectual panorama of the past five hundred years, offers an example (if an inimitable one) of how much can be gained from longue-durée, comparative and connected histories.[40]

For all the novelty of material and interpretation in the following contributions, one is struck by the way they uphold the pioneering character of Menasseh's press and the 1627 prayer book that scholars from Jeremias Hillesum onwards have considered the beginning of the tradition of Hebrew printing in Amsterdam.[41] If the place of North African and Levantine Jews in Amsterdam's book culture remains one of the frontiers of research in early modern Jewish book history, that history begins with Menasseh: the third book he ever printed, completed within five months of his 1627 prayer book, was a Hebrew grammar by his teacher, rabbi Isaac Uziel of

39 Frijhoff and Spies, *Dutch Culture in a European Perspective*.

40 Peter Burke, *Exiles and Expatriates in the History of Knowledge, 1500-2000* (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2017), 45-48.

41 J.M. Hillesum, "Uit de wordingsgeschiedenis der Hebreeuwsche drukkerijen in Amsterdam," in *Gids voor de tentoonstelling der Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana ter gelegenheid van het driehonderd-jarig bestaan der Hebreeuwsche typographie in Amsterdam 1627-1927* (Amsterdam: Universiteitsbibliotheek, 1927), 12. Moritz Steinschneider was the first to point out that this prayer book, of which he had been unaware hitherto ("hucusque ignota"), was the first book that Menasseh printed. See M. Steinschneider, *Catalogus librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin: Friedlaender, 1852-1860), 322-323 (nr. 2129).

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Fez.[42] And among the very last, in 1654, was part of *Mekor Ḥaim*, a kabbalistic commentary on the *Shulḥan Arukh* by Ḥaim ben Abraham ha-Cohen of Aleppo. If the printing of Yiddish books would become indispensable to Amsterdam's role in early modern Ashkenazi culture, that, too, began with Menasseh, whose press published the first Yiddish book in Amsterdam, David ben Menaḥem Ha-Cohen's rhymed biblical paraphrase *Mizmor leTodah*.[43] One of the two investors Menasseh acknowledged on the title page of the 1627 prayer book was the physician Ephraim Bueno, whom Rembrandt would depict in a painting and an etching and who would finance several subsequent publications, including the 1661-64 edition of the *Shulḥan Arukh* discussed in Schlesinger's chapter. Menasseh's press begins a tradition of patronage and of outside investment in Amsterdam Hebrew printing that Christian investors like Hendrik Laurensz soon discovered. Menasseh's activities as a bookseller to non-Jews helped make Amsterdam the foremost Jewish Bookshop of the Republic of Letters and established connections on which others, such as the brothers Jacob and Isaac Abendana, would build. If Jewish responses to philosophy and natural science would become one of the hallmarks of the Western Sephardic "alternative path to modernity" (to use Yosef Kaplan's term), it was Menasseh who printed the first Hebrew book to mention Copernican theory, by Galileo's student Joseph Solomon Delmedigo.[44] And the global history of the early modern Hebrew book goes out from Menasseh's modest home printing shop, too. Isaac Aboab da Fonseca, Menasseh's fellow student and later rabbinic rival, served as the 1627 prayer book's corrector and editor (figure 2). After the Dutch conquered Pernambuco, Aboab would leave Amsterdam to serve as the *Ḥakham* of Recife from 1642-1654, the first communal rabbi and first Hebrew author in the New World.[45]

42 Isaac Uziel, *Ma'aneh Lashon* (Amsterdam: Menasseh ben Israel, 1627). See Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography*, p. 115 (no 147).

43 Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography*, p. 127 (no. 176).

44 See Fuks and Fuks-Mansfeld, *Hebrew Typography*, vol. 1, 116-117; Nadler, *Menasseh*, 55; Jacob Adler, "Joseph Solomon Delmedigo: Student of Galileo, Teacher of Spinoza," *Intellectual History Review* 23 (2013): 141-157.

45 Adri K. Offenberg, "A Mid-Seventeenth-Century Manuscript of the (Unpublished) Hebrew Grammars of Menasseh ben Israel and Isaac Aboab da Fonseca Recovered," *Zutot* 3 (2003): 98-107; Anne Oravetz Albert, "The Rabbi and the Rebels: A Pamphlet on the Herem by Rabbi Isaac Aboab da Fonseca," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 104, no. 2 (2014): 171-91; Moisés Orfali, "Paraphrastic Commentary to the Pentateuch by Isaac Aboab da Fonseca," in *Portuguese Jews, New Christians and 'New Jews'. A Tribute to Roberto Bachmann*, ed. Claude B. Stuczynski and Bruno Feitler (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 334-360.

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In our interconnected and globalizing age, book-historical scholarship is taking ever more cross-cultural, comparative approaches, looking beyond the national boundaries that shaped the monumental bibliographical projects of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[46] As the central node in a mercantile empire that by the mid-seventeenth century stretched West to Brazil, the Caribbean, and New Amsterdam and East to Java, Formosa and Dejima, the history of the book in Amsterdam has long invited global approaches. Dutch trade routes across the Atlantic and up through the Baltic also connected Sephardi and Ashkenazi Jewish worlds to Amsterdam, and to each other. If a global history of the early modern Jewish book remains to be written, this issue of *Studia Rosenthaliana* may serve as a set of preparatory studies.

Many years ago, the bibliographer Avraham Ya'ari devoted an article to books written during a plague.[47] This collection of studies, produced during a global pandemic, takes no pleasure in joining that company, but its contributors are all the more grateful to this journal's editorial board for their forbearance, to reviewers for their generosity of time and criticism, and to the Amsterdam University Press. In particular, I would like to thank Rachel Boertjens, Kirsten Macfarlane, Yakov Z. Mayer, Chantal Nicolaes, Alexander van der Haven, Verity Parkinson, Irene van Rossum, Emile Schrijver, David Sclar, Zvi Stampfer and Julia Walworth, and the participants in the 2019 Oxford Seminar "The Mishna between Jews and Christians in Early Modern Europe." Above all, my thanks go to Irene Zwiep, to whom I first pitched the idea for this special issue one sunny afternoon in Cambridge, and to the eleven authors of the following articles for their work in circumstances of unforeseen difficulty.

The memory of my late friend Shlomo Berger has been a merry companion as this issue took shape. Our paths intertwined in many of the places

46 See, e.g., Ku-ming (Kevin) Chang, Anthony T. Grafton, Glenn W. Most, eds., *Impagination. Layout and Materiality of Writing and Publication, Interdisciplinary Approaches from East and West* (Berlin: DeGruyter, forthcoming); James Raven, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020); Simon Eliot and Jonathan Rose, eds., *A Companion to the History of the Book*. Second edition (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2020); Joseph P. McDermott and Peter Burke, eds., *The Book Worlds of East Asia and Europe, 1450-1850* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015); Michael F. Suarez SJ and H.R. Woudhuysen, eds., *The Book: A Global History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

47 Avraham Yaari, "Books Written During A Plague," in *Meḥkarei Sefer: Studies in Hebrew Booklore* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1958): 90-99 (Hebrew).

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where lovers of the Hebrew book meet: Oxford's Broad Street, Amsterdam's Oude Turfmarkt, Antwerp's Vrijdagmarkt, Philadelphia's Walnut Street. Ten years ago, Shlomo accepted my first academic article in English for publication in the pages of this journal, as he, Elchanan Reiner and I shared a pint at the Turf Tavern after a day's work in the Bod. Five years later, we met for the last time, at Oxford once more, where Shlomo had invited me to participate in the Oxford Seminar "Jewish Books in Amsterdam, 1650-1850: Authors, Producers, Readers and the Construction of Jewish Worlds." Our conversation spilled over from the seminar room into the King's Arms, where we sat with Bart Wallet and Symon Foren deciphering a poem on a tombstone at Ouderkerk aan de Amstel. And in a sense, that conversation is flowing still, as Shlomo's work continues to speak in these pages. May his memory be a blessing.

About the Author

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