

ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

A Pattern of Moderation: Rabbi Isaac Aboab's *Menorat ha-Maor*

Dov Schwartz

The article discusses the thought of Rabbi Isaac Aboab's *Menorat ha-Maor*. Its thesis is that Aboab's book reflects the philosophy of wide Jewish-Spanish circles in the following ways:

1. Moderation.
2. Philosophy played an important role in this thought.
3. Halakha and religious ethos are the essential components of this philosophy.

The article exposes the similarity between the thought of Rashba's circle and that behind *Menorat ha-Maor*, and makes a clear distinction between this book and Al-Nekawa's book. It also discusses issues raised in Aboab's book, such as creation, miracles, immortality etc.

Did Rav Natronai Gaon Use the Tosefta in his Responsa?

Binyamin Katzoff

The arguments for the notion that the work known to us as the Tosefta was studied in the geonic academies derive in part from an apparent reference to it as part of the routine study of Rav Natronai bar Hilai Gaon (RNG), head of the Academy of Sura in the mid-ninth century, and from the possibility that in several other responsa RNG quotes *baraitot* from the Tosefta, or bases his opinion on *baraitot* from the Tosefta even though they are not explicitly quoted. An examination of the relevant passages reveals that in fact Rav Natronai did not quote from the Tosefta but, rather, from the Bavli, or – in one case – from



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an otherwise unknown work; and that the reference in Responsum 39 to routine study, if at all of the Tosefta, has to do with a particular group of specialists, the “*Tanaim*.” This leads to the conclusion that though all or parts of the Tosefta may have been known to specialists, it was not used in any significant way by Rav Natronai, who based his responsa almost exclusively on the Bavli – which alone was elevated to canonical status during the Geonic era. A consequence of this conclusion concerning RNG is that the literature of each of the Geonim must be examined separately to assess properly the extent to which they used our Tosefta and, accordingly, to determine the ways in which the Tosefta was transmitted.

A New Survey of the Talmudic Commentaries of R. Abraham B. Isaac Ab-Bet-Din

Shalem Yahalom

In traditional writings and in the relevant literature there is an understanding regarding the scope of the commentaries written by R. Abraham B. Isaac Ab-Bet-Din in Narbonne (“Rabi”). The aim of this research is to study in depth the quotations that were preserved from his commentaries. Such research will hopefully provide a more reliable picture of the actual scope of his work. It will also attempt to differentiate between R. Abraham B. Isaac and his student and son-in-law, R. Abraham B. David, who are often both referred to in short as “Rabad”. This differentiation may also contribute to the above-mentioned study. Using these methods, large parts of the “Rabi” commentary will be reconstructed.

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A New Examination of the Attribution to Samuel ibn Tibbon of Two Collections of Glosses on the *Guide of the Perplexed* and of a Commentary on the *Account of the Beginning* with an Appendix Containing a Partial Edition of the Commentary

Carlos Fraenkel

In this paper I discuss two large collections of glosses on the *Guide of the Perplexed*, as well as a commentary on the *Account of the Beginning* “according to Maimonides’ view,” which several scholars have attributed to Samuel ibn Tibbon. The identification of the commentary’s author – in the manuscript designated as “Ibn Tibbon” without indication of the first name – bears directly on the attribution of one of the gloss collections. Besides Samuel ibn Tibbon, Moses ibn Tibbon and Abba Mari ben Eligdor have been suggested as authors. I first show that what are supposedly two parts of the same commentary in Ms. Oxford 2282 in fact belong to two different works, and that the arguments against Samuel and in favor of Moses ibn Tibbon are mostly based on the part that is not attributed to “Ibn Tibbon.” I further show that the excerpt in Ms. Oxford cannot be part of *The Lamp of the Searcher*, Ibn Tibbon’s lost commentary on the Torah, but that it may well reflect an early stage of his reception of Maimonides’ thought which would also fit with his continuous interest in issues related to the *Account of the Beginning*.

Although Samuel ibn Tibbon’s authorship of the commentary is thus possible, both internal and external evidence clearly speak against attributing the gloss collection in the same manuscript to him. This holds true also for the gloss collection in Ms. Oxford 2280. Their content is unrelated to Ibn Tibbon’s known glosses, as well as to his work in general. In addition, the author refers to treatises he wrote and makes use of kabbalistic doctrines, none of which is any form related to Ibn Tibbon’s work and thought.

In the appendix, I present an edition of the portion of the commentary on the *Account of the Beginning* extant in Ms. Oxford 2282.

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**Regarding the Order of the Printed Edition of the
*Terumat ha-deshen***

Edward Fram

At first glance, Rabbi Israel Isserlein's *Terumat ha-deshen* (Venice, 1519) appears to be organized according to Rabbi Jacob ben Asher's fourteenth-century legal code, '*Arba' ah Turim*. However, a closer examination reveals that Jacob ben Asher's topical format was not strictly adhered to. The organization of the work was not the work of the author. Three manuscripts of the *Terumat ha-deshen* that predate the printed edition show that the *Terumat ha-deshen* was originally organized very differently; in fact, it was not organized topically at all. This suggests that the reorganization of the work was done at the time of printing. Printers attempted to improve the marketability of their products by making them easier to use. The reorganization of *Terumat ha-deshen* according to a topical rather than what appears to be a haphazard organization was a step in this direction. The failure of the organizer to follow the rubric of Jacob ben Asher's *Tur* suggests that this code had yet to permeate the mentality of halakhic scholars of the early sixteenth century.

**A Unique Manuscript: Its History, Editing,
and Copyists' Mistakes**

Moshe A. Zipor

The cumulative experience of editing old manuscripts has progressively improved our ability to get very close to the original form of the texts. The situation is different when it comes to a work that is extant in a unique manuscript that is full of mistakes. On the surface, there is nothing to which we can compare it, and the editor must employ various methods to decipher incomprehensible or corrupt passages. There is also the question of whether particular errors are due to the copyist or to the original author.

A unique manuscript of this sort, containing R. Joseph Hayyun's commentary on Ezekiel, is discussed. Various types of copyist errors are considered. Some mistakes, however, can clearly be traced back to the author.

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For example, in the commentary on 37:23ff., the commentary presents a long list of divine promises. But in the consecutive numbering, two promises are referred to as the “fifth,” and the misnumbering continues to the very end of the list, where the sixteenth promise is presented as the fifteenth. Had the copyist been responsible for this lapse, after a few lines he would surely have noticed that his count was not the same as that in his Vorlage. But, if the misnumbering was a feature of the manuscript being copied and he had been working mechanically, he might well not have realized that he had already written “the fifth promise” a few lines earlier.

What is special about the present case, however, is that it can be demonstrated that this manuscript (or at least large parts of it) was taken down from oral dictation; that is, one person read aloud from the Vorlage and the copyist(s) wrote what he (or they) heard. This is an efficient working method, because the copyist does not have to keep searching for his place, which minimizes the risk of haplography or dittography. Many examples of scribal errors of this kind, which can be explained only as a result of such a working method, are supplied. Understanding how a particular copyist worked can help uncover mistakes and resolve textual cruxes.

The Geniza Fragments in the Munich Library

M. B. Lerner

A minor collection of 16 (actually 17) Geniza fragments bearing the shelfmark: Cod. hebr. 419, I-V, is extant in the Bavarian State Library, München. These fragments were acquired by the archaeologist Dr. Hermann Thiersch on a visit to Egypt in 1900, and originally served as a “bonus” thrown into a deal for the purchase of 137 non-Jewish fragments, the overwhelming majority of them – ancient Greek papyri.

Even though mid-twentieth century cataloguers of the collection, as well as certain savants who dealt with the Munich fragments, do not seem to have been aware of their Geniza origin, some scholars (Sh. Sharvit; Y. Yahalom; M. B. Lerner) nevertheless, reached such a conclusion. The evidence furnished by a half-page fragment stemming from Midrash Ruth Rabba, par. 5-6 (419, V, 1), which has been mated with its quarter-page counterpart located in the

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Geniza collection of the Cambridge University Library (T-S C 2. 216, fol. 5), is quite conclusive. However, the collection *in toto* has not hitherto been identified as deriving from the Cairo Geniza.

The usage of the Munich fragments in scholarly literature is summarized and certain instances of scholarly neglect are also noted.

The author elaborates on three of the fragments:

- (1) BT Nidda (419, II, 4). Remains of chapters 2 and 10. This fragment derives from a manuscript that contained selected chapters from Tractates Nidda, Sanhedrin and Bava Qamma (*et al?*). It apparently reflects a study curriculum that prevailed during the geonic period. An appendix is devoted to an analysis of fol. 2a, which is practically unreadable
- (2) M Makhshirin and Tevul Yom (419, II, 5). In his catalogue of the fragments, E. Roth did not properly identify the exact source, and also neglected to note the scribe's inclusion of explanations in Judeo-Arabic, as well as the vocalization and sporadic cantillations.
- (3) A Deed of Partnership[?] (419, V, 2). This document in Judaeo-Arabic, the contents of which are not completely clear, was apparently written by the renowned early twelfth-century scribe, R. Halfon b. Menasse.

The Geniza fragments in the Munich Library seem to indicate that, in other instances too, Geniza fragments may have found their way into regular library collections.

The second part of the present study, which is devoted to the fragment containing a unique version of *Sheiltot de-Rav Ahai* to parts of Exodus (419, III), was published in *Te'uda*, XV (1999), pp. 161-188.

Editing of the book *Orot* by Rabbi A.Y. Kook

Meir Munitz

In recent years, increasing numbers of manuscripts of Rabbi A.Y. Kook's writings are being published in their original form. This enables the in-depth analysis of the editing of his writings as they had hitherto been unknown to us. These writings are based on Rabbi A.Y. Kook's manuscripts which were edited by others.

This paper examines the editing of *Orot* by Rabbi A.Y. Kook's son, Rabbi Z.Y. Kook, by comparing most of the clauses published in *Orot* with clauses

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appearing in the original manuscripts. This comparison reveals a long list of significant editorial changes introduced by Rabbi Z.Y. Kook. These changes, listed in the paper, indicate general trends regarding the manner in which Rabbi Z.Y. Kook carried out his editorial work.

The changes made can be divided into two main categories. The first is emphasis and clarification of points made. The second category, in contrast, involves making points less obvious or removing them. The first category is particularly evident when the subject of the Redemption is discussed. In his editorial work, Rabbi Z.Y. Kook emphasizes and clarifies the fact that we are in the process of the Beginning of the Redemption, and the implications of this. The second category of editorial change is more frequently applied. Firstly, it is utilized to attenuate criticisms written by Rabbi A.Y. Kook. This general trend is found in respect of criticism directed at several targets: not only is criticism of haredi Judaism toned down, but also criticism of secular Zionism, of the Nations of the World, and even of Christianity. A further area subject to editorial toning down is radical and daring ideas in various fields. Rabbi Z.Y. Kook diminishes statements made against areas of narrow religious faith, and also reduces the attention paid to heresy and secularism as effectors of purification and correction of such faith. He also reduces Rabbi A.Y. Kook's tone of universalism, and his openness to the secular world, to general culture, and to material and bodily concerns.

The paper also discusses claims, arising from research done since Rabbi A.Y. Kook's original manuscripts began to be published, that Rabbi Z.Y. Kook's editing significantly changed his father's teachings. However, notwithstanding the findings reported in this paper, it is difficult to support such a far-reaching claim on the basis of Rabbi Z.Y. Kook's editorial intervention in clauses published in *Orot*. Even though the changes made by Rabbi Z.Y. Kook are significant, they do not basically change the overall picture of the book. The general messages are preserved, even if conveyed in a more delicate or less far-reaching manner than in the original manuscript.

This fact is explained mainly in view of the conclusion arising from the results of the comparison, namely, that even though Rabbi Z.Y. Kook did have an ideological motivation in emphasizing some specific points while blurring others, his main motivation was to reduce the risk that Rabbi A.Y. Kook would be subject to attack and conflict. Rabbi Z.Y. Kook, in his editing work, attempted to reduce the potential of certain statements for causing conflict. This was done by toning down and attenuating his style, and by



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changing statements which could have been taken out of context and used by his opponents. All this was done, however, without making basic changes to the general thrust of Rabbi A.Y. Kook's teachings as presented in *Orot*.