



ENGLISH ABSTRACTS

**The Discourse on Maimonides' Principles:
Between Continuity and Change**

Eli Gurfinkel

This article introduces a renewed analysis of the continuous discourse on the principles of Jewish faith, pointing out the linkage that exists between the historical and the philosophical processes within the Jewish societies in each generation, from medieval times until today.

Many important researchers have noted the existence of lists of principles throughout the twelfth century, and the fact that this field was partially abandoned during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. They also noted the revival of the field during the latter part of the fourteenth and the fifteenth century, after which it was reabandoned, until the advent of the Enlightenment.

In this paper, I utilize newly published sources and reanalyze known sources, and assert that, since Maimonides introduced his list, the study and research in the field of the principles have continued unabated. I suggest that the alterations in the field noted by my predecessors be understood as reflections of the changes in philosophical concepts and attitudes throughout the ages, and should not be evaluated from a merely quantitative perspective.

Indian Thought among the Jews of Yemen:

Mir'at al-Ma'Ani

Y. Tzvi Langermann

The Jews of Yemen drew on a variety of sources for their *midrashim*, including works from India. One book from the Indian subcontinent had a particularly strong impact: *Mir'at al-Ma'Ani*, a treatise on yoga, to which additional

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materials were added in the course of its reception in Islamic culture. This book is cited by a number of Yemenite Jewish authors, and several parts of the book itself are extant, transcribed in the Hebrew alphabet. In this study, I present all of the citations found in the Yemenite *Midrash*, in the original Judeo-Arabic, accompanied by Hebrew translations and analyses.

The Maharal of Prague's Revisions of the *Turim*

Gadi Gizbar

The literary works of the Maharal of Prague are diverse and, beyond his philosophical works and his explanation of Rashi's works on the Torah, also include interpretations of the Talmud and religious literature. From his religious works, he is known for revising all four parts of the *Turim*. However, a large part of this work has not survived. From the revisions attributed to the Maharal, currently at the disposal of students, are his innovative ideas on *Yoreh Deah*, published as an essay, and the revision of *Even Haezer*, published by El Amekorot in 1955, with the blessing of Rabbi Baruch Samuel Werner.

This article examines these innovations through a bibliographical lens. It reviews the manuscripts and patterns of the revisions, the relationships between them and the reliability of their attribution to the Maharal of Prague. An analysis of the revisions to the *Yoreh Deah* columns indicates many discrepancies in the printed editions, and, through comparison, points out the advantages of the various manuscripts and copies. After examining the data that led to the revision of *Even Haezer* being attributed to the Maharal of Prague, we concluded that it should not, in fact, have been attributed to the Maharal, and that we do not have the Maharal's revision of *Turim* but, rather, a revision of *Yoreh Deah*.

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**Botanic-Talmudic Terms in *Sefer Ha-Ma'arich*:
An Evaluation of Rabbi Menachem Lonzano's Interpretation of
Botanic Terms in the Literature of the Sages**

Abraham Ofir Shemesh

It was intended that Menachem Lonzano's *Sefer Ha-Ma'arich* complete the literary enterprise of R. Nathan ben Jehiel (eleventh-century Italy), *Sefer Ha-Aruch*. This updated book was designated for various groups who spoke Arabic, Spanish, Italian and Turkish, with the aim of introducing them to the terms used by the Sages in their own languages. Lonzano is portrayed as a scientist, with a systematic and orderly way of thinking. In a short and purposeful essay, he presents an identification of the plants.

Lonzano immigrated to Israel, where he lived and worked. Most of his identifications seem to have been based on an interpretive tradition that drew on foreign sources, with negligible influence from his residing in Israel.

There are scholars who expressed appreciation of Lonzano's work, but others disapproved of it. Scholars like the renowned linguist Rabbi Immanuel Löw and Yehuda Felix did not use his book, perhaps because they did not appreciate his contributions to the botanic-Talmudic field. Our impression from Lonzano's identifications is that they are quite reasonable, although they relate only to a limited number of plants mentioned in rabbinic literature.

Editing of the Book *Orot HaKodesh* by Rabbi A.Y. Kook

Meir Munitz

This paper examines the editing of the book *Orot HaKodesh*. The paper is based on a systematic comparison between clauses published in the book and the original clauses written by Rabbi A.Y. Kook (which were published in the book *Shemona Kevatzim*). This comparison shows that there is a list of

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significant editorial changes that were introduced during the editing. These changes, presented in this paper, can provide an indication of general editorial tendencies.

Most of the changes and amendments indicate a tendency to blur and soften the messages in Rabbi Kook's manuscripts. The main trend is one that seeks to reduce Rabbi Kook's critical tone as regards accepted concepts in Judaism, and the daring changes that he thought should be made to them. A further trend is the removal and amendment of anything that Rabbi Kook wrote in the first person. Many of the amendments in these two categories apply to clauses dealing with that that originates from within a person in general, and the manifestation of this in particular. A different type of editing attenuates criticism of secular fields of wisdom, rationalism and philosophy; however, there are also amendments that work in the opposite direction, seeking to diminish the role played by philosophy in Rabbi Kook's thinking. A similar contradiction can be found also in the question of nationalism versus universalism, with some amendments seeking to emphasize one of these concepts at the expense of the other, and others doing the reverse.

Against the background of these contradictions, and an examination of the editorial process, this paper concludes that the editorial changes made in *Orot HaKodesh* cannot be ascribed exclusively to the editor – Rabbi David Cohen (“HaRav Hanazir”). Rabbi Tzvi Yehuda Kook and Rabbi Charlap apparently were also involved in making editorial changes. The contradictions in editorial policy arise from the differences in their approaches.

This paper discusses claims that arose in academic research to the effect that the editing of Rabbi A.Y. Kook's writings significantly altered his teachings. However, even though this paper presents significant changes that were made, they do not basically alter the general picture arising from the book. The general messages are preserved, even if they are more delicate and less far-reaching than they were in the original manuscript. One exception stands out, where the editing did change the picture of Rabbi Kook's teachings – as presented in *Orot HaKodesh* – namely the deletion of the personal dimension. This deletion of experiences of revelation about which Rabbi Kook wrote, the descriptions of his personal world and of everything written in the first person, did indeed contribute to the well-organized philosophical system presented in the book, and to the almost complete concealment of the personal aspect of Rabbi A.Y. Kook's original writings.



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Em Habanim Semecha: A Canonic Treatise or a Dialectical Composition?

Yitzhak Hershkovitch

This paper studies the book *Em Habanim Semecha* (Budapest, 1943), authored by Rabbi Yissakhar Shlomo Teichtal, which is considered by many to be a Religious-Zionist ideological work. By means of historical and philosophical analysis, I claim that the book was written in three major phases, reflecting three different stances of the author, each at a different point in time. In the first phase, Teichtal articulated an Orthodox outlook, yet with a mystical linkage to the Land of Israel. However, in the phases that followed, Teichtal modified his perceptions, and called for an activist mode of redemption. As opposed to his earlier thoughts, he addressed the Israeli nation and called for auto-redemption. The third phase is unique because of its social critique on Orthodox leaders, who educated their adherents to a segregated vision of the nation, excluding all non-observant Jews.

In conclusion, *Em Habanim Semecha* is not a homogenous treatise, and is not a classic Religious-Zionist work. Rather, it is a dialectical work, in which several optional outlooks are presented in order to encourage a free and productive discourse on the question of redemption within the Orthodox sector.

Hebrew Book Bibliography: State of the Research 1976-2006

Ester Lapon-Kandelshein and Gila Prebor

In 1976, Talmudic scholar Prof. Israel Ta-Shma published a study summarizing the achievements of modern bibliographic research of the Hebrew Book. From his study, it is apparent that, from the early period of “Wissenschaft des Judentums” until the publication of Ta-Shma’s study, great effort has been put into discovering and documenting the cultural treasures of the Jewish people, in order to establish a necessary foundation for conducting research into Judaic Studies. However, according to Ta-Shma, scientific research of

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the Hebrew Book has not been established as an independent discipline.

In the course of time, research in this field has developed, and additional aspects have been added beyond traditional bibliographic listing. Researchers in the Humanities and the Social Sciences, from the fields of Biblical Studies, Talmud, History, Sociology, Information Science, etc. have shown interest in the Hebrew Book. By making this field an interdisciplinary one, Hebrew Bibliography has had aspects added to it that provide a comprehensive view of the Hebrew Book and its influence on society and culture, like the view of the *Livre et Société* movement.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the current state of research in the discipline of Hebrew Book Bibliography since the publication of Ta-Shma's study (1976), to examine the research period of the past thirty years, and to identify developments in the bibliographic research of the Hebrew Book.

Identification of the Manuscript BNF Hébreu 153

Judith Kogel

This article deals with the MS BNF Hébreu 153, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris. According to the Zotenberg & Munk Catalogue and the Institute for Microfilmed Manuscripts in Jerusalem, this codex, whose 48 folios are bound in complete disorder, contains a lacunary text of Midrash Ruth.

While trying to reconstruct the original manuscript, we concluded that it contained three different texts, *Midrash Ruth*, *Sefer ha-Bahir* and the Kabbalistic commentary on the prayers by Menahem Recanati. We were able to identify the categories of manuscripts to which they belonged because of their similarity to the versions of these works included in BNF Hébreu 802.

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The Writers of Articles in *Kiryat Sefer* as Agents of Culture

Zeev Gries

Kiryat Sefer was a pioneer among Hebrew bibliographical reviews published in Eretz Israel. From its first issue, published in 1924, all of its publications contained articles. It should have represented the various sections of the National and University Library, including the research done in the Oriental Institute as well as in the Humanities as a whole. However, the history of *Kiryat Sefer*, from its inception, is the history of Jewish Studies, which made this quarterly its main platform for presenting Jewish bibliography.

Enthusiastic young Zionist scholars, for whom the study of our nation's literature in general and its bibliography in particular was part of the Jewish renaissance in its homeland, wrote the articles that appeared in the articles section. Among these scholars were some of the most famous researchers of Jewish Studies in days to come. Gershom Gerhard Scholem, who began his career as a librarian in the National and University Library is an outstanding representative of these young scholars. In *Kiryat Sefer* Scholem published his research on the Library's collection of manuscripts as well as his findings in his travels abroad, searching for Kabbalistic literature. Scholem found the cornerstone for his great achievements in the study of Kabbalah in *Kiryat Sefer*.

The articles in *Kiryat Sefer* contained new studies in Jewish bibliography written by bibliographical experts and librarians, such as Arie Toiber of the National and University Library, who first published there his bibliography of books printed in Hebrew in Eastern Europe, beginning with the Jewish printing in Koretz. This first article gave rise to a dispute between him and Isaac Rivkind, a famous bibliographer working in the USA. Shmuel Wiener of St. Petersburg published his bibliography of Passover *Haggadot*, which later became a springboard for an enlarged bibliography published by Abraham Ya'ari and Isaac Yudlov.

New articles on the writings of great Jewish traditional scholars were written by historians such as Israel Heilperin, who described the works of Yom Tov Lipman Heller, the author of *Tosfot Yom Tov* on the Mishnah. The Book Review section yielded presentations of important new books, such as Abraham

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Marmurstein's description of the monumental work of Israel Davidson, *Otzar Hashirah Vehapiyut*.

The section entitled: "Out of the Library Treasures," became a rich resource for the presentation of interesting excerpts from the manuscripts housed in the Library. Rabbi Simchah Asaf published fragments of halakhic literature in this section, as well as the writings of Moses Mendelssohn and his contemporaries.

All of these became agents for the distribution of the fruits of the research into Jewish literature in manuscripts and printed books, and a stimulant for a growing interest in the great literary legacy of our people, and the creation of a new Hebrew culture.

A Database for the Research of *Talmud Yerushalmi*

Moshe Pinchuk

Talmudic scholars have long recognized the importance of quotations and references to the *Talmud Yerushalmi* (TY) in medieval exegeses as a powerful tool for TY research. A comprehensive compilation of all such quotations and references could well serve TY scholars in their quest. With the advent of computer and internet technology, such a database can readily be assembled and made available to all.

We describe exactly such a database. In particular, the method applied to create this database is explained, with its strengths and weaknesses. The various search options that can be applied to this database are also discussed.