

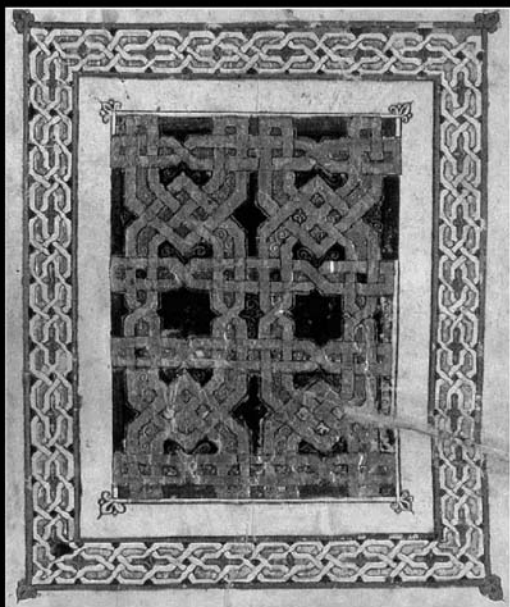
THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD \* BRILL

# Jewish Book Art Between Islam and Christianity

The Decoration of Hebrew Bibles  
in Medieval Spain

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*Katrin Kogman-Appel*



THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD \* BRILL

JEWISH BOOK ART BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

# THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN IBERIAN WORLD

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VOLUME 19



# JEWISH BOOK ART BETWEEN ISLAM AND CHRISTIANITY

*The Decoration of Hebrew Bibles in Medieval Spain*

BY

KATRIN KOGMAN-APPEL

TRANSLATED BY

JUDITH DAVIDSON



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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

Dedicated to the Memory of  
Meir Ayali (1913–2001)

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## PREFACE

Medieval Spain was extremely fertile ground for cultural exchange between ethnic groups, religions, and countries. Each of the kingdoms of the Iberian Peninsula—Al-Andalus, the Crown of Aragon, Navarre, Castile, and Portugal—had Muslim, Christian, and Jewish inhabitants. The peninsula's unique political situation engendered encounters between these different cultures, and the results can be found in abundance in literature, philosophy, and science. In this setting, Jewish art, which by nature is eclectic and yet has its own forms and messages, developed a unique character. It absorbed attributes of Islamic and Christian art, which fused with Jewish artistic tradition and Jewish written tradition translated into visual messages. This variegated culture was further enriched by influences from France, with which the countries had political relations. Its horizons were also widened by international trade, as can be seen, for example, in its echoes of Italian style.

All of these aspects—Islamic and Christian art, Jewish tradition, and external influences—come to the fore in the decoration of Hebrew Bibles produced in Spain in the Middle Ages. This book, first published in Hebrew in 2001, is an attempt to compile the history of the illuminated Bibles of Spain and define the characteristics of the various schools of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries in different parts of the Iberian Peninsula. Still, it should not be viewed as a comprehensive survey or a complete catalogue of the illuminated Bibles of Spain. Rather than striving to review or catalogue a maximal number of books, the discussion centers on the manner in which the encounter between the cultures contributed to the development of the art of the Hebrew book.

A note should be added regarding the transliteration of Hebrew names and terms. Where English versions of Hebrew names exist, they are used throughout the text. Where transliteration was necessary, I used a system that is easily readable, on the one hand, but makes clear distinctions between similar sounds, on the other. The letter *chet* is therefore transliterated as *ch*, instead of *h*, to distinguish it from *he*; *khaf* is transliterated as *kh* to distinguish it from *chet*; *kuf* is transliterated as *q* to distinguish it from *k*, which stands for *kaf*;

the letter *tsade* is transliterated as *ts*, since this is phonetically the closest sound.

For the translation of primary sources, I relied on academic translations whenever available. References to the latter are given in the footnotes. In cases where the translations diverge from the Hebrew original, they have been modified. In some cases, translations have been altered also for the sake of consistent terminology, especially in texts that discuss the Temple implements.

The following chapters spring from a lecture delivered in February 1997 at the annual conference of the College Art Association in New York, in a session devoted to the subject “Spain before Spain”—that is, before the merger of the Crown of Aragon and Castile at the end of the fifteenth century. I would like to thank Pamela Patton, who organized the session, and Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo, who moderated the discussion, for their comments and ideas. I am also indebted to John Williams, whose extensive knowledge of the arts in Spain served as a constant source of inspiration, especially in the two years that I spent as a research associate at the University of Pittsburgh.

I was greatly assisted by the Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts and the Codicological Data-Base of the Hebrew Paleography Project of the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. The acquisition of the pictorial material was funded with the aid of research grants put at my disposal by the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. The translation of the book into English was made possible by a grant from the Memorial Foundation of Jewish Culture.

Many people contributed directly or indirectly to the discussion that appears in this book, among them Malachi Beit-Arié, Michel Garel, Dalia-Ruth Halperin, Harvey Hames, Boaz Huss, Bianca Kühnel, Sara Lipton, Rachel Milstein, Yael Okun, David Raizman, Elisabeth Revel-Neher, Kurt Schubert, and Shalom Tsabar. Haim Finkelstein has to be thanked for his help in designing the maps, and Yuval Kogman for the English version of the maps and diagrams.

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The Hebrew text was translated by Judith Davidson, Jerusalem, to whom I am grateful, especially for her patience with repeated revisions. The English version contains numerous updates, mostly of bibliographic nature, and others resulting from further insights. Chapter Six is the result of more substantial changes and includes material that appeared in a paper published in 2002 in the *Art Bulletin*, about a year after the Hebrew version. Many thanks go to the staff of Brill Academic Publishers in Leiden, Julian Deahl, Marcella Mulder, and Ingrid Heijckers.

A warm place in my heart is reserved for two dear friends who made a special contribution to this work. Ursula Schubert first introduced me to the world of illuminated Hebrew manuscripts many years ago. Meir Ayali, to whose memory the book is dedicated, was the founder and editor of the Heillal Ben-Hayyim Library at Hakibbutz Hame'uchad Publishing House, which produced the Hebrew version of this book; he gave me unceasing encouragement and support throughout the many years of our friendship. Both are no longer with us, and I deeply regret that they did not live to see the publication of this book.

Beer-Sheva, September 2003

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## INTRODUCTION

Illuminated Bibles are among the most fascinating manifestations of Jewish culture in medieval Spain. Their profuse decorative patterns were usually borrowed from an Islamic repertoire; only gradually did they absorb the motifs common in Gothic art, which was dominant when the art of Spanish Jewry developed in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. Particularly striking in these books is the nearly total absence of narrative and figurative images. Representational art can be observed only as images of the Temple in a rather abstract, symbolic form. Narrative images amount to only a few hints lurking in the margins. Figurative images are not seen at all, except in a few unusual books. The following pages concentrate therefore often on the meaning of ornament, or, rather, on the meaning of particular choices of forms in ornamental decoration in the cultural-historical context of medieval Sephardic Jewry.

Surprisingly little attention has been paid to Sephardic illuminated Bibles until now. No book has been devoted exclusively to this topic; it is discussed only in general works on Jewish art or Hebrew manuscripts, and in a few articles. Among the first scholars dealing with Sephardic Bibles in the early 1920s was Rachel Wischnitzer, who wrote an article on the First Kennicott Bible in Oxford.<sup>1</sup> Jacob Leveen's 1944 book on the Hebrew Bible in art<sup>2</sup> devoted a chapter to the decoration of Bibles in the Middle East and Spain, and discussed the influence of ornamental patterns from the Middle East on Sephardic Bibles, describing the Farhi, Lisbon, and First Kennicott Bibles in some detail.

The First Kennicott Bible, one of the most sumptuously decorated manuscripts of medieval Spain, was discussed again a short time later by Bezalel Cecil Roth.<sup>3</sup> In an appendix to his article, he also described the Second Kennicott Bible, attributed to Joshua ben Abraham ibn Gaon, a native of Soria, in Old Castile, whose work will be discussed in Chapter Four. In another article, Roth explored the mutual

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<sup>1</sup> Wischnitzer (1921).

<sup>2</sup> Leveen (1944).

<sup>3</sup> Roth (1952); see also Roth (1957); Roth (1961).

influences between Jewish and Christian art, and continuity in Jewish art from late antiquity to the Middle Ages. Sephardic Bibles<sup>4</sup> were also discussed in this article.

Most of the early research focused on depictions of the Temple, which are typical of Catalan manuscripts of the fourteenth century. Joseph Gutmann, for example, dealt with the eschatological aspects of the iconography of the Temple depictions.<sup>5</sup> Carl Otto Nordström studied the textual sources in the Bible and in the writings of Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi) and Maimonides.<sup>6</sup> Like Roth before him, he saw a continuous tradition between depictions of the Temple in late antiquity and those in manuscripts from the Middle East and Spain. He even analyzed the influence of the iconography of Temple depictions on Christian art.<sup>7</sup> A lengthy article by Thérèse Metzger, published in two parts in 1969 and 1970, deals with the iconographic classification of the Temple depictions<sup>8</sup> and discerns two main types. Metzger's discussion is mainly a description of the characteristics and a classification of examples according to iconographic details; it does not yield far-reaching conclusions with regard to the development of the types, their history, or their cultural context.

In 1969, the first edition of Bezalel Narkiss's book on illuminated Hebrew manuscripts<sup>9</sup> was published. In its introduction, an attempt was made for the first time to discuss the Sephardic Bibles in the broad context of the art of the Hebrew book. Narkiss finds many influences from illuminated Bibles from the Middle East, and suggests that the decorative traditions common in Sephardic Bibles were passed down from their Middle Eastern predecessors through books from Islamic Spain. After the publication of Narkiss's book, similar works were published, such as Gutmann's *Hebrew Manuscript Painting*,<sup>10</sup> Kurt and Ursula Schubert's volume on the art of the Jewish book,<sup>11</sup> and the later, Hebrew edition of Narkiss's *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts*,<sup>12</sup> all of which are general surveys. Narkiss and the Schuberts see a great deal of continuity in the illustration of Bibles in the Middle

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<sup>4</sup> Roth (1953).

<sup>5</sup> Gutmann (1976); Gutmann (1967–68).

<sup>6</sup> Nordström (1968).

<sup>7</sup> Nordström (1964).

<sup>8</sup> Metzger (1969–70).

<sup>9</sup> Narkiss (1969).

<sup>10</sup> Gutmann (1978).

<sup>11</sup> Schubert (1984).

<sup>12</sup> Narkiss (1984).

East and Spain, while Gutmann considered the conclusions with regard to continuity to be erroneous.

More detailed works were published in the 1970s by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna. The first, co-authored with Narkiss, deals with one of the books attributed to Joshua ben Abraham ibn Gaon,<sup>13</sup> while the second discusses the Toledo school in the thirteenth century and its influences on Burgos.<sup>14</sup> Previously, a study on the Damascus *Keter*—believed to have originated in Burgos—was published by Yissachar Yoel.<sup>15</sup> Thérèse Metzger dealt at length with the illuminated *masorah* in Sephardic manuscripts and suggested a classification of the Bibles based on specific motifs used in the *masorah*, and their style.<sup>16</sup>

A major milestone in the historiography of the Sephardic Bibles is the 1982 catalogue of Hebrew manuscripts from Spain and Portugal in British libraries, which was compiled by Narkiss, Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, and Anat Tcherikover.<sup>17</sup> This book contains a lengthy discussion of issues relating to Sephardic Bibles and their decoration. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover divide the manuscripts into schools and study the attributes of the groups that emerge. The books discussed in this work are described in great detail and many illustrations are included. Although the catalogue does not deal with important manuscripts located outside of England and Ireland, it is the only attempt to date to reconstruct the history of the illuminated Sephardic Bible.

In the early 1990s, Sed-Rajna added two works, the first on Sephardic manuscripts in general, but with a great deal of attention to the Bibles,<sup>18</sup> and the second dealing specifically with the Toledo schools and their influence on the work of Joshua ben Abraham ibn Gaon<sup>19</sup> in Tudela, Navarre. That period also saw the publication of Thérèse Metzger's article identifying the signature of Joshua ibn Gaon on the illuminated *masorah* of the Cervera Bible in Lisbon. This discovery significantly changed our view of the characteristics of the different schools, since the Cervera Bible had been attributed

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<sup>13</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971).

<sup>14</sup> Sed-Rajna (1978); see also Sed-Rajna (1974).

<sup>15</sup> Yoel (1962).

<sup>16</sup> Metzger (1974).

<sup>17</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982). For a critique, see Metzger (1986).

<sup>18</sup> Sed-Rajna (1992).

<sup>19</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990).

until then to areas in Castile and Catalonia, but not to Tudela and its environs.<sup>20</sup>

The present book is the first to deal with the history of the illuminated Sephardic Bible in a general context. Its focus is placed on the cultural encounters reflected in the different types of ornamentation. The imprint of the centuries-long presence of the Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula on the cultural history of Spain is evident in this art in manifold ways. Even though all of the illuminated Bibles were produced under Christian rule, and in some cases even in regions that had no Muslim presence whatsoever, their decoration is dominated by visual language borrowed from Islamic culture. In Chapter Six, I will discuss this phenomenon and analyze the historical background and cultural context of Spanish Jewry with an eye to the ornamental styles and their repertoire of forms. The other chapters deal with the schools of illustration in Castile, Navarre, and the Crown of Aragon from various points of view. Much of the material has not been examined in the past and initial research still lags behind. Therefore some of the following chapters will deal with initial descriptions and traditional analyses of the formal language in order to clarify basic issues of date and origin, which the historical context is unable to provide: of most of the patrons and other people involved in the making of the Bibles we have no information whatsoever, except their names. Traditional formal analysis is therefore the only means to rely on, when basic data is to be determined.

A question that repeatedly arises in the course of compiling a history of book illumination is the matter of continuity and tradition as opposed to originality and innovation, an issue that has been given a great deal of attention in the past fifteen years or so. Producing a manuscript in the Middle Ages largely involved the act of copying. The role of the scribe was to write out a text with maximal faithfulness to the original. In most cases, the original text was right in front of the scribe. Scholars refer to scribes as “copiers,” and the most commonly used term for the production of a manuscript that includes writing and illustration is “copying a manuscript”—hence the belief that copying is also a major part of illustration and ornamentation. According to this assumption, just as a scribe copies a text, so, too, the illustrator copies the ornamentation.<sup>21</sup> “Continuity”

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<sup>20</sup> Metzger (1990).

<sup>21</sup> Based on a the methodology developed by Kurt Weitzmann (1947). Others

in this sense is the repetition of ornamental patterns and iconographic details in various manuscripts as a result of copying.

I will examine the extent to which this continuity determines the artistic character of Sephardic Bibles of all types in various periods. Continuity and tradition have played a particularly crucial role in the study of the art of the Hebrew book and have often been overestimated. The roots of thirteenth-century Sephardic Bible decoration have been sought in manuscripts from the Middle East dating from the tenth century onward, based on the assumption that this tradition had a direct continuation in Islamic Spain.<sup>22</sup> Since no traces of illustrated books from the Islamic period have survived, this theory of continuity remains within the realm of conjecture. Many observations in this book cast doubt on it, and this issue will be debated repeatedly in various contexts. Moreover, this line of research has not yielded any conclusions about the place of the Sephardic Bibles—or any other Hebrew illuminated manuscripts—within a broader context of visual culture, book history, and manuscript production.

Although in the following discussions descriptions of formal features of the decoration will play a considerable part, my purpose differs largely from the perspective of traditional art historical research. Recent art history—abandoning formal analysis—deals rather with issues of patronage and function as observed through content and meaning. Due to the aniconic approach in the Sephardic Bibles, this is a path that can be taken only to a limited extent. The approach offered here reads formal details, ornamental motifs, the choice of a particular style in preference to another, and techniques as significant bearers of cultural identity and analyzes them from the point of view of cultural history. Furthermore, detailed description of the drawing and painting technique of a particular scribe or decorator reveals a great deal about the division of labor in the late medieval Sephardic book industry, a field hitherto entirely neglected. And finally, ornaments are an important part of the visual culture of Sephardic Jewry. The fact that the decoration of Hebrew Bibles is confined almost exclusively to ornament underscores this point in particular.

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have argued in favor of originality and innovation—e.g., Dodwell (1993); Cutler (1989); Lowden (1992).

<sup>22</sup> For example, in Narkiss (1984), 32–33, and in Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 13–15.

As the brief remarks above indicate, and as will be further clarified, the art of decoration of Sephardic Bibles is characterized by a combination of different formal languages—decorative elements used in Islamic culture, combined with those reflecting Gothic art. This phenomenon stems from the coexistence of the three cultures. However, in order to gain a thorough understanding of these different approaches to the visual language and the appearance of motifs associated with the various cultures, I will first focus on life in Spain, its cultures, its diverse populations, and the dynamic that spurred cultural exchanges between south and north, and between Christianity, Islam, and Judaism.

Chapter One therefore outlines the main political processes that took place in Spain in the Middle Ages, and describes the different populations and the interactions between them. It is not the aim of this chapter to provide a detailed history of Spain or a history of the Jews living there, but rather to clarify various points that are crucial to an understanding of Jewish art. The discussion focuses on the cultural exchanges and the character of the various populations at the time of the production of the illuminated Bibles. Chapter Two briefly suggests the possible sources of inspiration for the various types of decoration in the Sephardic Bibles. This kind of information provides the background necessary for understanding the attributes and changing character of the art of the Jewish book, particularly that of the Bibles.



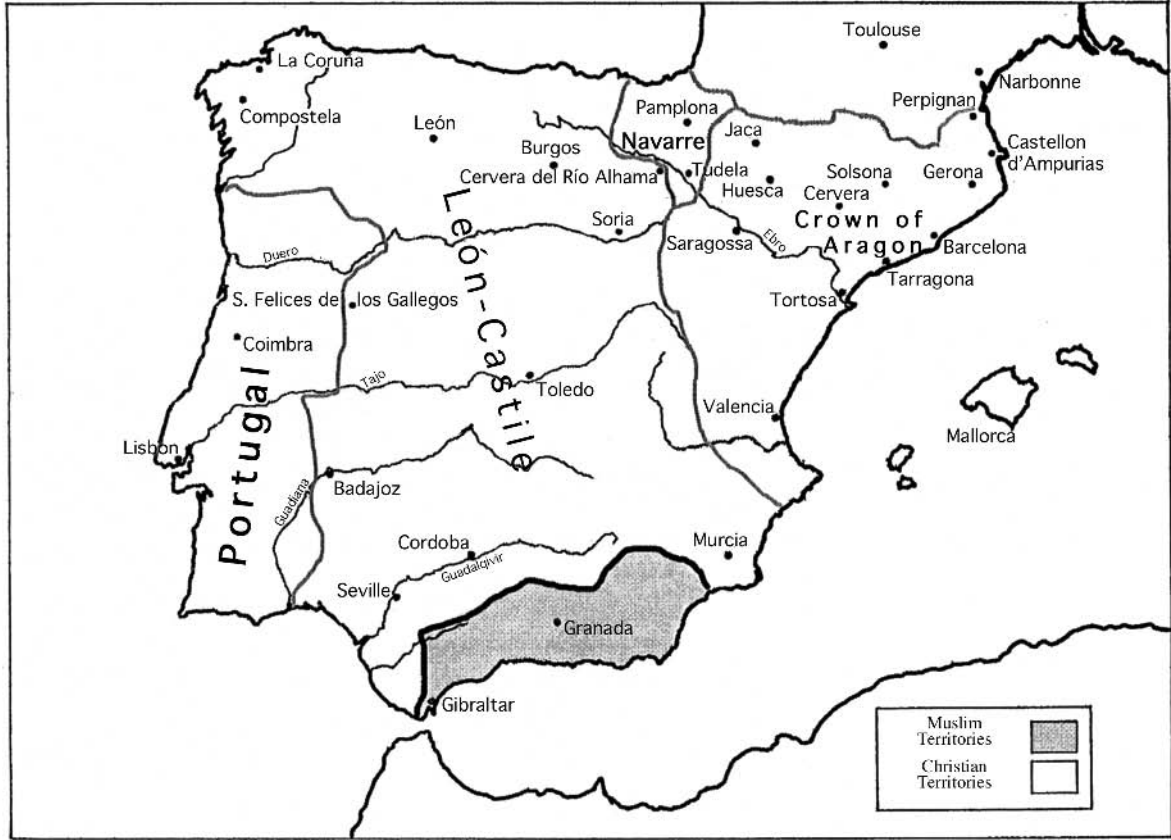


MAPS

Map 1: *Muslim Iberia, 711-1013*



Map 2: Iberia in 1212



MAPS

Map 3: Iberia, 1246-1492

## CHAPTER ONE

### ACCULTURATION, ASSIMILATION, AND *CONVIVENCIA*: THE IBERIAN PENINSULA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

#### *Islam and Christianity*

The earliest extant Sephardic illuminated Bible was produced in Toledo in 1232, when the city had been in Christian hands for nearly 150 years, and twenty years after the major Christian victory at Las Navas de Tolosa, the turning point of the Reconquest (see map 2).<sup>1</sup> The remainder of Al-Andalus was still held by the Almohad dynasty; another four years were to pass until Cordoba fell to the Christians. In a few years, the Crown of Aragon would grow to its maximum size and include Valencia. In 1260, when the famous Damascus *Keter* was produced in Castile, the map of Spain looked completely different. Most of the Jews of Spain, whose cultural life had flourished under Umayyad rule and later—after the breakdown of the caliphate—in the small emirates known as the Taifa kingdoms, were now under Christian rule. They increasingly had to cope with the hostility of the Christian establishment. Tangible signs of the Church's animosity could already be seen in other countries, such as France, which expelled the Jews at the end of the thirteenth century.

Some of the Jews of France emigrated to Spanish countries, but a half-century later, the Jews of Spain, as in the other European countries, were blamed for the outbreak of the Black Plague (1348–49) and brutally persecuted. Toward the end of the century, in 1391, anti-Jewish riots began in Seville and cast their shadow on the Jewish communities in nearly all of the Iberian Peninsula. After many years of growing animosity toward the Jews, the events of 1391 sparked massive violence and a profound crisis in the life of the communities. Up until the outbreak of the epidemic, the population of Catalonia prospered, and produced some of the finest illuminated

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<sup>1</sup> For surveys of the history of Spain in the Middle Ages, see, for example, O'Callaghan (1975); MacKay (1977); and Reilly (1992).

manuscripts in the history of Jewish art. After 1348, the communities generally did not have the means to support this type of artistic activity, and only a few more works were added. The manuscripts produced in the workshops of the fifteenth century were significantly less sumptuous.

The history of medieval Spain is replete with political and military events that alternately unified and divided the various parts of the Iberian Peninsula and caused a great deal of interaction between Muslims and Christians, with Jews often serving as catalysts. The peninsula was taken from its Visigothic rulers by Muslim forces in 711 (map 1). When Charles Martel stopped the advance of the Muslims in the Battle of Poitiers of 732 and captured Narbonne in 751, not only did he end the Muslim presence in southern France, but he also opened the way to political contact with northeastern Spain, later to be known as Catalonia. Naturally, Carolingian influence played an important role in that region. In 778, Charlemagne passed through the Pyrenees and conquered Pamplona. In 785, Louis the Pious conquered Gerona, and in 801, Barcelona. In those years, the Catalan counties were being consolidated as the Spanish March, under the rule of the Carolingians. In the course of settling the area with people from southern France, several duchies were created.

At the time, the border between Al-Andalus and the Christian areas ran along the Duero River and northward beside the river's springs, crossed the Ebro River, circumvented Tudela, and descended a bit southward toward the Mediterranean coast, which it reached slightly south of Barcelona. North of this border, Christian countries formed, first in Cantabria, Asturias, and Galicia. In order to fortify the frontier, several castles were built in the area, and as a result, the entire region would eventually be called Castile. Burgos was founded as a Christian center in 896. West of this region, the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre developed.

From an ethnic and cultural standpoint, the Christian region was not homogeneous. The Christians of Castile, León, and Galicia, as well as those under Muslim rule, regarded themselves as the perpetuators of the Visigothic tradition—using, for example, the Visigothic liturgy, which is different from the liturgy customarily used in Rome. The inhabitants of Catalonia, on the other hand, identified with the Carolingian world, and had very close ties with France.

In the tenth century, Navarre was the most powerful of the Christian kingdoms. Under the rule of Sancho III the Great, all of the Christian

regions, apart from Catalonia, were unified. Before his death, Sancho, following the example of the Carolingian rulers, divided his kingdom among his three sons, bequeathing Navarre and parts of eastern Castile, including Burgos, to Garcia III, the rest of Castile and eastern León to Fernando I, and Aragon to Ramiro I. Each of the sons was given the title of king, and the regions under their rule became separate kingdoms.

Ferdinand was the most powerful of the three sons, unifying León and Castile and conquering the areas of Castile that were under Garcia's rule. He also took Coimbra, on the Atlantic coast, from the Muslims. The balance of power in the Iberian Peninsula shifted in favor of the Christian countries, and most of the Muslim emirates paid taxes to Ferdinand. The rulers of the Christian kingdoms in the tenth and eleventh centuries instituted a population policy aimed at settling the area south of the Duero River, which had been inhabited by Muslims for a short time and then deserted.

In 1085, the son of Fernando I, Alfonso VI, conquered Toledo, the first significant turning point of the Reconquest. At the same time, ties with the Roman Church became closer and the pope became increasingly involved in political developments in Spain. From then on, the Christian conquest of a Muslim area of the peninsula was considered a crusade, and sometimes was even given military assistance, mainly from France. The fighting on Spanish soil was occasionally joined by English Crusaders making their way along the Atlantic coast en route to the Holy Land.

The conquest of Toledo caused another crisis in Muslim society, which was already shaken by the breakdown of the caliphate. The emirate of Saragossa, now the northernmost outpost of the Muslims, remained exposed to constant Christian attacks. With the aid of military forces from northern Africa, the Muslims staved off the advance of the Castilians, but eventually the northern African forces ended up taking over Muslim Spain. Fighting on behalf of the Almoravid sect, they conquered all of the Muslim territory apart from the emirates of Saragossa and Valencia.

Catalonia had close ties with France and commercial relations with cities in Italy, and even with Al-Andalus, but contact with the Christian lands in the west was blocked by the emirate of Saragossa. At the end of the eleventh century, the Christian rulers succeeded in penetrating the Muslim area between Catalonia and Aragon, thereby opening the way to contact between those two lands. Alfonso

I of Aragon conquered Saragossa in 1118, Tudela and Tarazona in 1119, and Calatayud in 1120. In 1126, Soria became part of the kingdom of Castile. As a result of these developments, Catalonia was no longer cut off from the other Christian lands, and in 1137, it united with Aragon in a federation, the "Crown of Aragon," with each country preserving its own political, cultural, and social character. Each country had its own capital (Barcelona was the capital of Catalonia and Saragossa was the capital of Aragon), its own language, and its own political institutions. When Aragon and Catalonia united, the merger between Aragon and Navarre was disbanded and Navarre became a small independent kingdom under the rule of Sancho IV. Shortly after the conquest of Tudela by Alfonso I of Aragon, it fell to Navarre.

In the meantime, northern Africa underwent political changes that would later have a strong impact on Muslim life in Al-Andalus as well. The early twelfth century saw the emergence of the Almohad sect in northern Africa. Between 1130 and 1163, its members overthrew the Almoravid kingdom; they reached Spain in 1147, and by 1172, all of Al-Andalus was in Almohad hands. The instability in Al-Andalus and the advance of the Almohads led to relatively close cooperation between the Christian kings and resulting additional Christian conquests of Muslim territory. In 1212, the Christians won one of the most important victories in the history of the Reconquest, in the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. This battle, perceived as a great crusade, was supported by Pope Innocent III and was joined by numerous mercenaries from France, Germany, and Italy (map 2).

In 1230 (map 3), with the death of Alfonso IX of León, Castile and León finalized their unification, which lasted until the end of the Middle Ages and altered the balance of political power in Spain. Instead of the many Christian lands of the early Middle Ages, there were now two dominant powers: Castile and the Crown of Aragon. Nearby Navarre, Galicia, and Portugal continued to exist as independent kingdoms. While Catalonia was strengthening its position in the Balearic Islands, Castile continued to take over Muslim areas. In 1236, Cordoba fell into the hands of the Christians, and Ibn al-Ahmar, ruler of Cordoba, retreated to Granada, a small area that remained in Muslim hands until the end of the fifteenth century. The last stage of the Reconquest took place in 1245 with the conquest of Valencia by the Catalans.

The political map now stabilized, and the borders between the

countries became distinct. In 1258, Jaime I, king of Aragon, relinquished all of his political interests in Catalonia and southern France and retained only the territories that were part of the Spanish March in the Carolingian period; among these territories were Roussillon and the city of Perpignan,<sup>2</sup> which was the locale of a workshop for Hebrew manuscripts in the early 1300s.

The fourteenth century was a period in which the Christian countries grew strong, but also a time of much dissension between those countries; moreover, the Black Plague of 1348–49 led to serious crises and a significant drop in population. Aragon ended its dispute with France and gained control of the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, and Corsica, thus putting itself in a dominant position in the western Mediterranean. Under Jaime II (1291–1327), Alfonso IV (1327–36), and Pedro IV (1336–87), the Jewish schools of painting flourished, and in these years—until the outbreak of the epidemic—the most impressive manuscripts in the history of Spanish Jewish illumination were produced. It is surprising that similar works from fourteenth-century Castile did not survive. More modest schools arose in Castile only in the fifteenth century.

In the 1350s and 1360s, there were bitter disputes between Pedro IV and his rival, Pedro the Cruel of Castile, and the entire period was marked by insecurity. The havoc wrought by the epidemic added to the general sense of decline and despondency. Terror and brutality dominated political life not only in the kingdom of Pedro the Cruel but also in the other countries. Pedro the Cruel maintained fairly close ties with Granada and found Muhammad V to be a loyal ally against the Crown of Aragon. The latter had strong ties with France, but French support came mainly in the form of unemployed mercenaries who crossed the Pyrenees after the war between France and England.

Pedro the Cruel was murdered in 1369, and his half-brother Enrique rose to power in Castile, marking the beginning of the rule of the Trastámara dynasty. The main aim of the latter was to unify the Iberian Peninsula under its rule. Political marriages were the main means of achieving this goal, and this policy was particularly successful in 1469, when Fernando of Aragon married Isabella of Castile.

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<sup>2</sup> For a recent study of the populations of Perpignan and the interaction between them, see Daileader (2000).



*The Population of Al-Andalus*

The population of the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages was extremely diverse.<sup>3</sup> All of the countries had minority groups. Christians lived in Al-Andalus, Muslims in the Christian countries, and Jews in all of the regions. This situation gave rise to unique cultural influences—some internal, brought by minority groups, and some external, imported from outside Spain. Political and commercial relations between Al-Andalus and the Christian countries also opened the way to reciprocal influences. In addition, there were cultural exchanges with areas outside the peninsula, also mainly a result of various political or commercial contacts. The relations between these populations, and the cultural exchanges that took place in the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages, are a major key to understanding decoration schemes; they also help explain certain choices and preferences on the part of the Jewish artists, which were partially conscious and deliberate, even conveying a certain message, and partially unconscious and an integral part of the artistic language of the area.

In the eighth century, Muslims, mainly Berbers from northern Africa, joined the local Hispanic population. The Visigoths who ruled the area until the arrival of the Muslims had comprised only about twenty percent of the total population. With the Muslim conquest, part of the local population converted from Christianity to Islam and formed the Muwalladun class; the rest, comprising about thirty percent of the total population of Al-Andalus,<sup>4</sup> remained Christian, and eventually became known as Mozarabs. The term indicates that they borrowed various elements of the Islamic lifestyle and culture. They apparently spoke Romance, the dominant language among the Iberian population, whereas Arabic was used only by the political elite. Some assume that the Mozarabs also had a command of Arabic.

The extent of the Mozarabs' acculturation into the Muslim society is not known for certain. Some claim that the name "Mozarabic" is a derogatory term coined by extreme Christian elements who disapproved of the fact that they underwent any acculturation, however minimal. But their integration into the Islamic culture was not

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<sup>3</sup> For information on the various populations in the Iberian Peninsula, see MacKay (1977), 37–38.

<sup>4</sup> Reilly (1992), 20–21.

as extensive as their name would have us believe.<sup>5</sup> The Mozarabs, like their fellow Christians in the northwestern part of the peninsula—and even to a larger degree—saw themselves as renewers, or perpetuators, of the Visigothic Christian tradition.

From the ninth century onward, many efforts were made to settle the Christian areas in the north with Mozarabs from the south, and several colonies were founded, mainly in Galicia and Old Castile. The Mozarabs brought with them a culture, an artistic tradition, and technology from Al-Andalus, and thus became one of the channels for cultural exchanges between the two worlds. Yet they had a clear and well-defined Christian identity, which was distinctly different from that of the Muslim population in Al-Andalus. Since the Mozarabs and the Christians in the northern kingdoms were politically disconnected from Europe, they dealt with the problem of cultural identity by accentuating the continuation of the Visigothic tradition. After the completion of the Reconquest in the mid-thirteenth century, there were no longer any Christians living under Muslim rule in Spain, and the identity of the Mozarabs became blurred.

### *Minorities in the Christian Lands*

Before the conquest of Toledo in 1085, very few Muslims and Jews lived in the Christian countries. The population was composed of local inhabitants, Mozarabs, and Franks who had crossed the Pyrenees and settled in the area. Migration from the north intensified in the eleventh century, when pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela became a mass movement. Many of the pilgrims settled in the Iberian Peninsula. One of the numerous cultural influences that reached Spain as a result of the contact with the north was Romanesque architecture. Monastic reform was another trend that came down to Spain from France and contact with the Cluny Monastery resulted in its establishing many branches beyond the Pyrenees.

In that period, most signs of the Mozarabic culture began to disappear: the Visigothic script that had been used hitherto by Iberian Christians was replaced with the Carolingian one used in Europe, and the Mozarabic liturgy was replaced with the Roman rite. These

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<sup>5</sup> Glick (1979), 176–77.

processes ultimately led to the integration of Christian Spain into the European Church, but at that time, they were an innovation for northwestern Spain. Catalonia, on the other hand, had a relatively high percentage of residents of French descent due to its close ties with the Carolingian kingdom, which stemmed from the political interests of Charlemagne and his descendants in the area, the establishment of the Spanish March, and the Carolingian conquest of Barcelona. The cultural imprint of Mozarabic Christianity was minimal in this area. Prayer services had always been conducted according to the Roman liturgy, and many cultural contacts had been maintained with scholars in the Carolingian court. The Catalans' only exposure to the Islamic culture came through trade contacts with Al-Andalus.

### *The Mudéjar Communities*

The conquest of Toledo by Alfonso VI of Castile added a new aspect to political life in the kingdom: for the first time since the beginning of the Reconquest, most of the Muslim population chose to remain in Christian territory and accepted the sovereignty of the king of Castile. Up until then, the Muslims would choose to leave their homes and go southward to areas under Muslim rule. Those Muslims who accepted Christian hegemony subsequently became known as Mudéjares. They were constantly under pressure from the Muslim world to leave the Christian kingdoms and come to live in Al-Andalus. The result was a steady stream of Mudéjares southward.

The status of the Mudéjares was similar, at least in theory, to that of the Jews,<sup>6</sup> though their situation—like that of the Jews—was different from one place to another. For example, their status in Murcia was unique in that they were landowners and enjoyed a relatively large amount of freedom.<sup>7</sup> The Mudéjares who lived in the territories of the knightly orders on the seam between Al-Andalus and Castile were known for being responsible for their own personal security. In northern Aragon, the Mudéjares were not a significant part of the population and they apparently lived in very small urban

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<sup>6</sup> An example of a comparative approach to Mudéjares and Jews in the Crown of Aragon can be found in Lourie (1990); see also Glick (1992).

<sup>7</sup> Harvey (1992), 70.

communities.<sup>8</sup> Unlike Jewish society of the time, Mudéjar society did not have an upper, affluent class,<sup>9</sup> and throughout the Crown, their social status was rather low. Like the Jews, they were *servi camerae*, “serfs of the royal chamber”—a status constituting full and direct legal dependence upon the king.

Most of the Muslims still preferred to leave the conquered regions, and those who remained had to move to the outskirts of the towns. Still, Muslims continued to comprise a significant percentage of the local population.<sup>10</sup> The Mudéjares had the right to keep their property, bear arms, and observe their religion (though usually only after the main mosques were transformed into churches), and they were not expected to join the Christian armed forces fighting against Al-Andalus. The usual taxes were imposed on them. For the most part, this was a rural population, though there were concentrations of Muslims in the large cities as well. The Muslim communities, called *al-jama*, lived in separate neighborhoods, known as *morerias*.

The last stages of the Reconquest, in the mid-thirteenth century, again led to many demographic changes. With the conquest of the southern region of Catalonia, and particularly with the conquest of Valencia in 1245, an especially large community of Mudéjares was added to Catalonia, which up until then had had no Muslim population.<sup>11</sup> Until its conquest, Valencia had served as a haven for Muslims, who migrated there from conquered territories. Now, most of the Muslim population withdrew to the south, and northern Valencia was populated with Catalans. The Muslims and Christians lived apart from each other, and most of the rural population was Muslim.<sup>12</sup> Following the Mudéjar uprising in Valencia in 1248, many of the Mudéjares were expelled, but a large segment remained, and their descendants lived there until the seventeenth century. The Islamic culture in Valencia was preserved for a long time after the Reconquest; Mudéjar pupils from other areas were sent there to study Islamic culture.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 98–99; Lacarra (1981); Utrilla Utrilla and Esco Sampirez (1986).

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of the differences in social structure of the Mudéjar and Jewish communities in the Crown of Aragon, see Lourie (1990), 35–51.

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of the Mudéjar communities in Aragon, see *ibid.*; Harvey (1992), 98–137.

<sup>11</sup> For a recent study of one of the Valencian communities, see O’Connor (2003).

<sup>12</sup> Reilly (1992), 348–49.

<sup>13</sup> Harvey (1992), 100–101.

When political calm prevailed after the main stages of the Reconquest had been completed, the situation of the Mudéjares stabilized. In the second half of the fourteenth century and during the fifteenth, the Mudéjar communities lived in the Christian lands without significant incident. As the years passed, they specialized in occupations that were not usually practiced by the Christians, chiefly ceramics and the various building trades, and thus acquired a certain status for themselves. Since these were not prestigious occupations, the Mudéjar monopoly in various fields did not arouse the competition of the Christian population, and any instances of hostility or aggression toward the Mudéjares were in a religious and ethnic context.

### *The Jewish Communities*

Before the Christian conquest of Toledo, the Jews of the Iberian Peninsula were concentrated in Al-Andalus. This period in the history of the Jewish people—the time of the caliphs and the emirates—was often referred to as the “Golden Age” of Spanish Jewry.<sup>14</sup> In recent years, various scholars have raised doubts as to this view of the history of the Jews in the Muslim countries in general and in Al-Andalus in particular,<sup>15</sup> but it was undoubtedly a period of political, cultural, and economic prosperity.<sup>16</sup> The communities were large and affluent, and Jews sometimes assumed key positions in the Muslim government.<sup>17</sup> The career of Samuel ibn Nagrila, the Naggid, who handled Granada’s foreign affairs, and that of his son and successor Joseph, who stirred up malevolence among Muslim officials, clearly demonstrate how shaky was the ground on which such positions were built. Following the murder of Joseph in 1066, the entire Jewish community of Granada suffered brutal persecution.<sup>18</sup>

After the Reconquest, the Jewish community and its dispersal changed significantly.<sup>19</sup> Many Jews remained in the new Christian

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<sup>14</sup> The history of Spanish Jewry is discussed in this spirit by Ben-Sasson (1969); more recently, Mann (1992), still adheres to this notion.

<sup>15</sup> For various perspectives of this issue, see Cohen (1994), xv–xxi.

<sup>16</sup> For the history of the Jews in Islamic Spain, see Ashtor (1966) and in the Islamic lands in general, see Lewis (1984). For a comparative approach to the Jews in the Islamic lands and Christian Europe, see Cohen (1994).

<sup>17</sup> With regard to key positions, see Glick (1979), 172–73.

<sup>18</sup> For details, see Gampel (1992), 19.

<sup>19</sup> For the history of the Jews in Christian Spain, see Neumann (1944); Baer (1962); Kriegel (1979); Gerber (1992). Recently, more specific studies have appeared;

territories, and were joined by others who had fled the fanatically anti-Jewish policy of the Almoravid and Almohad dynasties. In 1135, for example, the Jewish neighborhood in Cordoba was destroyed, and in the time of the Almohad dynasty, many synagogues were devastated.<sup>20</sup> A few of the Jews of Al-Andalus left the Iberian Peninsula and headed for the Middle East. The Jews in the Christian territories lived under the aegis of the Christian kings, but in the eleventh century their situation began to deteriorate as a result of the influence of the Church; it was also threatened by the presence of immigrants from the north, among them Crusaders and mercenaries who brought with them the anti-Jewish attitudes that prevailed in Central Europe. Despite this general trend, many Jews still held key positions.

In the thirteenth century, in the last stages of the Reconquest, and in subsequent decades, the Jewish communities in Spain were beset with internal dissension. Jewish cultural life was strongly affected by a dispute about the teachings of Maimonides that raged between rationalists and their opponents, who included scholars exploring mysticism. In the context of this controversy, the Book of Zohar was written in the 1280s. Tension also developed between different classes following changes in the social structure, and between court Jews and scholars who disapproved of the latter's lifestyle.

### *Cultural Exchange*

Apart from the emergence of the first Mudéjar community, the Christian conquest of Toledo caused other changes in the demographic map of Spain and different types of interaction between the various communities. The Jewish and Mudéjar communities were given a similar legal status, with certain rights and many restrictions. This status was somewhat similar to that of *dhimmis*—Christians and Jews under Muslim rule—but this system did not prove workable in the Christian countries. In Islamic society, the laws pertaining to minorities and the status of *dhimmis* were better developed and more binding. In Christian society, on the other hand, the laws relating to the status of the religious minorities were relatively easy to vio-

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see especially Assis (1997); Assis (1992); Beinart (1992). For Navarre, see Leroy (1985); Assis and Magdalena (1990).

<sup>20</sup> Ben-Dov (1989), 23–24.

late, there were many loopholes, and they could be amended by local rulers.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the presence of Muslims in Christian territory gave the population a completely new character and culture.

The conquest of Toledo not only gave rise to the first Mudéjar community, but also added a large Jewish population to Castile. The number of Jews in the Christian territories continued to increase after many Jews migrated northward. The city of Huesca, conquered in 1096, is a salient example of the change in the population after the Christian conquest. This city, whose population numbered 2,000–3,000 at the time, had a thriving Muslim community with a vibrant intellectual life, as well as a Jewish community. It also had a sizable Mozarabic community, which maintained an episcopal see.<sup>22</sup> Huesca—the first city in Aragon to have a Mudéjar community—was the third-largest city in the Christian territory after Toledo and Barcelona, and contributed greatly to the demographic change and cultural atmosphere in the area.

Scholars offer different estimates of the distribution of the various communities in those years. The total population of the post-Reconquest Crown of Aragon is estimated to have been about one million. Aragon had about 500,000 inhabitants, of which about twenty-five percent—approximately 125,000—lived in pre-Reconquest areas. Most of them were Christians; there was a Muslim minority and a relatively small Jewish community. The other 375,000 lived in conquered regions. According to Bernard Reilly, in the conquered regions, the Muslim population numbered approximately 280,000—more than fifty percent of the total population of Aragon.<sup>23</sup> Many Mudéjares and the Jews were concentrated in Huesca. Angus MacKay, on the other hand, took into account the migration of Muslims southward and therefore estimated the proportion of Muslims in Aragon to have been only about thirty percent,<sup>24</sup> which is approximately 170,000. In any event, there was a large number of Mudéjares in Aragon after the conquest, significantly altering the ethnic and cultural character of this region.

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<sup>21</sup> Glick (1979), 168–69.

<sup>22</sup> Reilly (1992), 113.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 162–63.

<sup>24</sup> MacKay (1977), 37–38; these figures correspond with Nirenberg's estimate, Nirenberg (1996), 23.

In addition to the Mudéjares, some 95,000 former Mozarabs and Jews lived in the new areas of Aragon.<sup>25</sup> David Nirenberg estimates that there were 20,000 Jews in Aragon, about 25,000 in Catalonia, and 10,000 in Valencia.<sup>26</sup> In that period, Mudéjares also joined the population of Catalonia following the conquest of Tarragona, Tortosa, and Llerida. According to MacKay, the population of Catalonia and the conquered regions at that time was about 500,000, and Muslims comprised thirty to thirty-five percent of the total population.<sup>27</sup> As a result of the Black Plague, the population dropped to approximately 350,000 in the second half of the fourteenth century.<sup>28</sup> If we take into account the high concentration of Muslims in the southern part of the Crown, we can conclude that half of the Crown's total population was Muslim, with only a small number in Catalonia (about 6,000 according to Nirenberg)<sup>29</sup> and northern Aragon, and the majority in the region of Valencia.

The population of Castile in the mid-thirteenth century is estimated to have numbered from four to five million, including about 300,000 Mudéjares and Jews.<sup>30</sup> At the time of the conquest of Toledo, Mudéjares comprised the majority of the city's population. The Mozarabic community constituted fifteen to twenty-five percent of the total population, and the Jewish community comprised about fifteen percent.

It should be taken into account that these numbers were constantly changing. There was a large and steady migration in both directions: Muslims moving southward to Al-Andalus and Mozarabic Christians moving to the Christian lands.<sup>31</sup> The Black Plague struck mainly in Catalonia and was a dominant factor in its economic decline in the late fourteenth and fifteenth. Between the mid-fourteenth century and the end of the fifteenth, Catalonia's population dwindled from 450,000 or 500,000 to 278,000; the population of Barcelona dropped from about 50,000 to 28,500.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> According to Reilly's estimation, Reilly (1992), 162.

<sup>26</sup> Nirenberg (1996), 26.

<sup>27</sup> MacKay (1977), 37–38.

<sup>28</sup> O'Callaghan (1975), 459–60.

<sup>29</sup> Nirenberg (1996), 23.

<sup>30</sup> Vicens Vives (1952); see also O'Callaghan (1975), 459–60.

<sup>31</sup> Reilly (1992), 232.

<sup>32</sup> MacKay (1977), 105.



Tax records from various dates provide information about the distribution of the Mudéjares in the Christian lands. According to these records, in 1293–94 there were Mudéjar communities in Old Castile—in Segovia, Avila, and Palencia, and a relatively small community in Burgos.<sup>33</sup> These northern communities were of recent origin, having migrated from the south,<sup>34</sup> apparently because they had skills needed by the Christians. Other Mudéjar communities existed in the border regions between Old Castile and the Crown of Aragon—that is, in the province of Soria.

According to tax records from 1495, communities existed, for example, in Agreda, Cervera, Dezza, Aranda, and Molina de Aragon. The Mudéjar communities in Toledo and its environs were surprisingly small, though exact figures for Toledo from earlier periods are lacking. At the end of the fifteenth century, larger communities existed in the vicinity of Cordoba, despite the considerable migration from this region in the thirteenth century due to the fighting during the Reconquest.

The Iberian countries traded with each other and with countries outside the peninsula. Despite the animosity between Muslim Al-Andalus and the Christian countries, the borders were not hermetically sealed. Throughout the entire period there were three main trade routes between Al-Andalus and the Christian countries: along the Guadalquivir River from Cadiz to Barcelona via Seville, Cordoba, Toledo, Medinaceli, and Saragossa; along the Guadiana River from Lisbon to Valencia, Tarragona, and Barcelona; and from Alcaciras to Valencia via Malaga and the Mediterranean coast.<sup>35</sup> Catalonia had trade relations with Al-Andalus, whereas in the western kingdoms trade played only a secondary role. As the Christian kingdoms grew stronger, their economic situation also improved, and luxury products were imported to Asturias from Al-Andalus.<sup>36</sup> This development led to the beginning of a decline in the situation of the Jewish communities. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, the Jewish communities in Catalonia and León were strong, affluent trade colonies, but the rise of the Christian middle class led to the imposition of

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<sup>33</sup> Harvey (1992), 68.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>35</sup> Reilly (1992), 11.

<sup>36</sup> Glick (1979), 132–33.

restrictions on Jewish trade, dealing a heavy blow to their economies.<sup>37</sup>

In Catalonia, especially in Barcelona, international trade played a central role. After the conquest of Mallorca, Catalonia's commercial power steadily grew, until its decline as a result of the outbreak of the Black Plague in the mid-fourteenth century. Barcelona initially traded with coastal cities in southern France, and then with Sicily, northern Italy, northern Africa, and—in the fourteenth century—Sardinia. From the beginning, trade with the Muslim countries in the Mediterranean basin played an important role in commercial life, though these contacts were harshly criticized by the Church. Catalan colonies existed in Alexandria in 1264 and subsequently in Tunis, Damascus, and Beirut. For a long time, Barcelona remained a principal center of international trade, largely due to its geographical position, which enabled it to develop ties with several of the trade cities in Italy, mainly Pisa and Genoa; these contacts constituted an additional channel for cultural exchange.

In the same period, international trade developed at a slower pace in Castile and Portugal. For a long time, industry in Castile—a very large area with a low population density—barely succeeded in supplying all of the local needs and there was a large trade in items imported from other countries. With the beginning of international trade, Castilian and Portuguese merchants developed commercial contacts—via the Atlantic Ocean—with England, Flanders, and France. But for the most part, commerce in the thirteenth century was dominated by merchants from Genoa, who maintained colonies in such cities as Seville, Cadiz, Jerez, Murcia, Cartagena, and Lisbon. In the fourteenth century, Castile's commerce intensified, and Castilian trade colonies were established, mainly in England and Flanders.

In the second half of the fourteenth century, the Iberian Peninsula's involvement in international trade changed considerably. The conquest of the Strait of Gibraltar by the Genoese, with the participation of Castilian and Basque forces, enabled passage between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. From then on, the main trade routes generally shifted from north to south, which weakened Barcelona and contributed to the post-epidemic economic and cultural decline of Catalonia. Since the war between Castile and Aragon, Barcelona's

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 160.

access to the Atlantic Ocean had been blocked, and in the fifteenth century the city was almost completely cut off from commerce. In the meantime, Castilian trade attained unprecedented success. The only city in Catalonia that was not harmed by these developments was Valencia, a port city frequented by Genoese merchants.

The cultural interaction in this period between the countries in the peninsula and between them and other countries has long been a subject of great interest to scholars. In the 1940s, Americo Castro was among the first to view Spanish culture as the product of interaction between the three “castes,” as he called them—Christian, Muslim, and Jewish.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, he was among the first to use the term *convivencia*—coexistence—in connection with the peninsula’s cultural life.<sup>39</sup> He was referring to the interaction between the latter two “castes” (the Arabic-speaking Islamic culture, and the Jewish community) and the Romance-speaking Christian culture. According to Castro, this interaction led to significant changes in Christian culture until it ultimately became very different from the Roman-Hispanic and Visigothic cultures.

Thomas F. Glick maintains that the interaction between the cultures also depends on the characteristics of different social levels. In the past, he says, historians based their assessment of cultural exchange in Spain on two misconceptions. The first was the notion that when ethnic groups are in conflict with each other there is no possibility of cultural exchange, since cultural interaction does not take place. The second was a failure to distinguish between acculturation and assimilation.<sup>40</sup>

Despite the political and military conflict between Christian Spain and Al-Andalus, cultural exchange took place in various spheres and circumstances. Muslim artists, for example, were known for their expertise in high-relief ivory carving. Their work was greatly admired by the Christians, and the Mozarabic workshops in the Monastery of San Millan de la Cogolla modeled their work on the carving style

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<sup>38</sup> Castro (1971); his view was opposed to that of Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz (1956), who claimed that the relations between Muslims and Christians were too antagonistic to enable positive interaction. The Spanish identity, in the opinion of Sánchez-Albornoz, did not spring from cultural exchange, but from the “Spanish nature,” originating in the Roman-Hispanic and Gothic character, without Semitic elements.

<sup>39</sup> About the *convivencia* controversy, see Nirenberg (1996), 8.

<sup>40</sup> Glick (1979), 165–66.

of the Muslim workshops in Cordoba.<sup>41</sup> Mudéjares, on the other hand, were initially dominant in the building trade but, following a large southward migration of Mudéjares, the community lost capable artisans and builders; at the same time, the French building tradition came to the fore. The dynamics of cultural exchange were determined to a large extent, though informally, by migrants, merchants, pilgrims, and other travelers.

Each culture had something to offer the others, but various factors determined the degree of influence. Glick distinguishes between a “donor culture” and a “recipient culture.” How much a culture receives is determined, for example, by economic needs, tastes, and fashion—mainly with regard to artistic and architectural styles; it also depends on technological needs, the extent of openness to change and innovation, political antagonism, and differences in religious leanings. Political conflict not only does not stop cultural exchange, it can even become a creative force when there is competition between the opposing cultures.<sup>42</sup>

As for the confusion between acculturation and assimilation, Glick defines acculturation as a cultural process, and assimilation as a social one. The main reason for social differentiation in the Middle Ages was religion.<sup>43</sup> Cultural exchanges between different groups in the society will not necessarily lead to social proximity.<sup>44</sup> Mutual cultural fertilization is thus not necessarily a result of assimilation, nor will it necessarily lead to it. The acculturation process was easier for Jews in the Islamic society than in the Christian society, says Glick, because the Islamic culture also had secular aspects. The Jews’ acculturation process in Al-Andalus reached its peak at the end of the tenth century, when they became an integral part of Arabic culture. In Glick’s opinion, not only did the Jews take an active part in Islamic culture, but this cultural interaction also played a creative role, strengthening the distinct characteristics of the Jewish culture in Al-Andalus.<sup>45</sup> This high degree of acculturation created a symbiosis between the two cultures, which can be seen in abundance in Jewish art. Further in this book, we will see to what extent this cultural symbiosis deter-

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 285.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 166–67; for a similar, more recent definition, see Marcus (1996), 8–13.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 174–75.

mined the character of the decoration of the Bibles, even though they were produced in a Christian environment, and even in areas, such as Barcelona and Perpignan, that had had no Muslim presence in the past.

After the Reconquest, there was a change in the Jews' acculturation processes. Since religion was the dominant cultural element in Christian society, there was less fertile ground for acculturation.<sup>46</sup> And yet, because the Jews were so flexible in dealing with the cultures in whose midst they lived, they played a crucial role in all types of cultural exchange. Thus they constituted a catalyst between donor culture and recipient culture.

According to Glick, both Al-Andalus and the Christian kingdoms tended to isolate the minorities in their midst from a religious standpoint, but not economically.<sup>47</sup> Each society's culture operated between these two elements: on the one hand, it functioned as an expression of religious life, and on the other, it had a strong connection to the economy. Glick presents the example of the marketplace as opposed to the trade guilds. Marketplaces, as venues for encounter between various ethnic or religious groups, were an important factor in cultural exchange. The trade guilds in Christian Spain, on the other hand, tended to be closed to religious minorities. Glick emphasizes that before the Christian conquest of Toledo, the cultural interaction between the Muslims and the Christians was substantively different from what it was in the period that followed. Until 1085, there was a clear boundary between the two worlds and interaction occurred between two different states; afterward, this interaction also took place within the society of the Christian countries and through the Mudéjar minority.<sup>48</sup>

As noted earlier, the extent of acculturation of the Mozarabs in Al-Andalus is not known for certain. Presumably, the Mozarabs comprised different groups with varying degrees of willingness to acculturate. The Mozarabs who migrated northward in the ninth and tenth centuries and settled in the new Christian countries were by nature less prone to acculturation than were the Mozarabs who remained in Al-Andalus and continued the acculturation process until

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 176–77.

<sup>47</sup> Glick (1992), 5.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

the Christian conquest. There is no doubt that among the latter, the Islamic influence was stronger than it was among the former.<sup>49</sup> In any event, the spheres of cultural activity in which the Mozarabs were involved remained limited to a Christian context,<sup>50</sup> and the Jews functioned more flexibly among the “foreign” cultures. The Mozarabs’ importance lay mainly in the fact that they were a catalyst for the transfer of Islamic culture from Mozarabic Christianity to northern Christianity, but they generally remained in the Christian sphere and did not participate in what the Islamic society had to offer in the realm of secular culture. Later in this book, we will try to ascertain if Mozarabic art played any role in the creation of the decorative patterns used in Jewish manuscripts.

Like the Mozarabs in Al-Andalus, the Mudéjares in the Christian countries were not particularly open to acculturation. They tended to retain their Islamic traits and resisted most factors that encourage acculturation.<sup>51</sup> However, the various communities reacted differently to their environment. The Mudéjar communities in Castile and Aragon were different from those in Valencia in that they spoke Romance. The Muslims in southern Valencia, where they were a majority of the population, continued to speak Arabic.<sup>52</sup> The Christian society, on the other hand, was occasionally quite open to Islamic influences, which sometimes became fashionable and left a strong imprint on Christian art and culture.

Until the mid-thirteenth century, the idea of Reconquest was the dominant element in the lives of the Christians in the countries of northern Spain and determined the character of political life. The aspiration remained alive, at least in theory, even after the conquest of Cordoba and Valencia. However, other matters took priority in the political life of Castile; the dream of reconquering Granada was pushed further and further aside, and the conquest itself was postponed. Cultural life in Granada did not particularly flourish under Nasrid rule. Few illuminated manuscripts survive, and in the middle of the fourteenth century the main section of the Alhambra Palace was built and decorated in a typical, opulent Nasrid style.

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<sup>49</sup> Glick (1979), 192–93.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 288–89.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>52</sup> Harvey (1992), 15.

At the end of the Middle Ages, Islamic influence was less dominant in Christian culture than it was in the past, but at times there was a renewal of contacts with the Muslim south. Pedro the Cruel (1350–69) and Enrique IV (1454–74) were influenced by the Islamic lifestyle in Granada and they had close ties with this small country. As a result, they—mainly Enrique—were strongly censured by the aristocracy, sparking Christian hostility to the Mudéjares and a revival of the idea of Reconquest.

As noted, the Jewish communities played an important role in cultural exchange between Al-Andalus and the Christian countries. For example, the Jewish communities in Tudela and Saragossa—which before the conquest were both within the realm of the Taifa kingdom of Saragossa—maintained close ties with the Jews of Navarre and Catalonia. Translation projects were another example. Recognition of the Islamic world's technological and scientific achievements, particularly those of Al-Andalus, made translation an important cultural factor in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>53</sup> Islamic culture in Spain served as a bridge between East and West, between Arabic and Latin, and between the classical world and medieval Europe. Through the translations that were produced in Spain in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, most of the classical tradition was passed on to Christian Europe. Already in the tenth century, interest in Islamic science and its transfer to Christian culture pervaded the cultural atmosphere of the Monastery of Ripoll in Catalonia, a center that attracted scholars from all over Europe. In the first half of the twelfth century, groups of translators worked in Saragossa after its conquest by the Christians, and in Pamplona, Logroño, Barcelona, and Toledo. In the late twelfth and throughout the thirteenth centuries, Toledo played a dominant role in the translating enterprise.<sup>54</sup> Intellectual life blossomed in Castile, especially under Alfonso X, the Wise. Jewish and Christian translators normally worked in teams, with the Jews translating from Arabic into the vernacular and the Christians putting the texts into Latin.

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<sup>53</sup> MacKay (1977), 81–82.

<sup>54</sup> There is disagreement with regard to Toledo's importance in the translation enterprise. In Angus MacKay's opinion, Toledo's status as a major center even before the mid-twelfth century has been overestimated. He stresses the activity in other cities and describes this phenomenon as occurring all over Spain, see MacKay (1977), 81–82.

Based on Castro's concept, the notion of *convivencia* has been further developed to define this cultural climate.<sup>55</sup> This definition of late medieval life in Iberia as *convivencia* has been criticized, however, by some scholars as romanticizing the situation of the Jewish and Mudéjar minorities and their effort to cope with their Christian environment.<sup>56</sup> As defined recently by Benjamin Gampel in the context of fifteenth-century Navarre,<sup>57</sup> it can only refer to coexistence and cultural and economic interaction between the three cultures, but certainly not to a peaceful era of mutual tolerance. This period of *convivencia* thus also marks the final phase of the transmission of ancient and new knowledge from Islam to Christian Europe.

The role European culture, such as Romanesque and Gothic art, played in the development of Spanish culture, compared with the impact of Islam, is a subject of dispute and this is not the place to attempt to settle it. There is no doubt that the strengthening of the Christian countries tightened the bond with Christian Europe, but the Islamic past, the achievements of Al-Andalus in the various spheres of culture and technology, and the presence of the Mudéjar communities—all left their mark on the culture of Spain even after the Reconquest.

To sum up, in the cultural exchanges between Christianity and Islam, both cultures played the roles of donor and recipient culture, though the general direction of influence was from South to North. The cultural interaction with Islam transpired on various levels. It began as interaction between small and relatively weak Christian countries and the blossoming caliphate of Al-Andalus, with the Jews as an important factor in its dynamic. These were cultural exchanges between hostile cultures, but with the recognition that Islam had much to contribute. The second level was interaction between Al-Andalus and the Christian kingdoms, at the time when there was a balance of power between the two. The ground was thereby prepared for interaction at the third level: between the Mudéjares and the Christians, when the Mudéjar communities were in a low social position, and the character of their cultural contribution to the

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<sup>55</sup> It guided, for example, an exhibition entitled "*Convivencia*," in 1992 in the Jewish Museum in New York; for the catalogue see Dodds, Glick, and Mann (1992).

<sup>56</sup> See Nirenberg (1996), 8–10; for a discussion of scholarly approaches to the history of the Jews under Christianity and Islam, see also Cohen (1994), especially xv–xvii.

<sup>57</sup> Gampel (1998), 117.



Christian population was by nature completely different from the contribution of Al-Andalus to the Christian countries. In the process, Christian Spain's ties with the North grew stronger, a connection that led to the integration of Christian Spain into Europe. This process gradually led to an intensification of the French influence on cultural life in Spain, and a dwindling of the Islamic element.

From the end of the fourteenth century onward, a blend of the Islamic and Gothic styles can occasionally be observed in the arts. Ceramics in Granada, for example, developed with considerable influence from the Islamic countries, and in turn influenced Mudéjar ceramics in the north. On the other hand, Gothic elements crept into the pottery style in Granada, and in many figurative scenes European attire can be discerned. Pottery from Granada was imported into Valencia and greatly influenced ceramics there. Pottery and tiles from Valencia were exported as far as the cities in southern France. The cultural exchange reached its peak in a relatively long period of peace, from 1350 to 1406, and was manifested, for example, in wall paintings in the *sala de los reyes* in the Alhambra in Granada, in part reminiscent of French Gothic art.<sup>58</sup> As we will see later, the blend of the Islamic and Gothic stylistic traditions is also visible in the decoration of Hebrew Bibles of the period.

In the small kingdom of Navarre, the cultural interaction between Christianity, Islam, and Judaism was different from that in the other countries of the Iberian Peninsula. This country emerged simultaneously with the other Christian countries, but at times was fought over by Castile and Aragon. Various elements contributed to the cultural uniqueness of this region, where on the one hand, Pamplona was conquered in the eighth century by Charlemagne, and on the other, Tudela was established in the ninth century as the northernmost Islamic stronghold of Al-Andalus. Cultural exchange between the Christian society in Navarre and the Islamic society in Al-Andalus; the unique character of the Taifa kingdom of Saragossa, to which Tudela belonged before the Christian conquest; the Mudéjar community that blossomed after the Christian conquest; and close political ties with France all left their imprint on the culture of this country. After the conquest of Tudela by the Christians, a small but well-to-do and highly influential Mudéjar community remained there.

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<sup>58</sup> Stewart (1974), 22–23; Grabar (1992), 58, fig. 39.

As a city that had been founded by the Muslims and was later a home for a Mudéjar community with special status, Tudela became a center of Mudéjar culture, whose Muslim inhabitants were not only members of the lower rural class but also a flourishing urban community.<sup>59</sup> The Muslims in Tudela did not suffer from religious persecution. They were permitted to join the armed forces of Navarre and a few even attained key positions in the government. This special status was rooted in the policy of Alfonso I, who sought to encourage the Muslims to remain in the city after the conquest in 1119.<sup>60</sup> Here, too, as in the other regions, the Mudéjares had certain occupations that enabled them to contribute to Christian society. The Mudéjares of Navarre were considered experts in horse-breeding, horsemanship, and the manufacture of riding equipment and weapons.<sup>61</sup>

At the same time, the Jews of Navarre<sup>62</sup> were granted a similar status, quite different from that of their coreligionists in other regions. The Mudéjares and the Jews lived in their own neighborhoods in Tudela, but were not prevented from living in other areas of the city. In 1340, Tudela had a population of approximately 8,000, of which about 1,200 were Jews and 300 were Mudéjares.<sup>63</sup> Jews lived in Tudela even before the Reconquest, and in the time of the caliphate and the Taifa kingdoms played a crucial role in cultural exchange between South and North. Jews and Muslims lived there together many years before the Christian conquest, and while the lives of the Jews of Al-Andalus changed for the worse under the fanatic rule of the Almoravids and Almohads, the Jews of Tudela experienced no radical change.

In the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Navarre took in many Jews who had been expelled from France.<sup>64</sup> The rights of the Jews were more or less preserved even in the days when Navarre was under French rule. When Jewish books were burned in Paris in 1240, the Jews of Navarre were permitted to keep their books.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> Harvey (1992), 138–39; Garcia Arenal (1984).

<sup>60</sup> Harvey (1992), 139.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>62</sup> On the Jews of Navarre, see Leroy (1981); Leroy (1985); Assis and Magdalena (1990); Carrasco (1993); for a recent reappraisal of the situation of the Jews in Navarre, see Gampel (1998).

<sup>63</sup> This assessment is according to Leroy (1985), 9.

<sup>64</sup> On the immigration of Jews from France between 1329 and 1354, see Carrasco (1993), 57–73.

<sup>65</sup> Assis and Magdalena (1990), 21.

They were allowed to possess swords or knives and even to hold land—rights that were not commonly granted in other Christian countries. This status attracted Jews from Castile and Aragon, particularly when they were experiencing hard times, such as after the disputation between Christians and Jews in Tortosa in 1414.

Still, violence against Jews eventually reached Navarre as well. It came as a consequence of the reigns of the Champagne dynasty (1234–1305), the kings of France (1305–28), and the Evreux dynasty (1328–1464).<sup>66</sup> Signs of violence began to appear as early as the thirteenth century, mainly in periods of political instability in Navarre—for example, before the arrival of Thibault I of Champagne, in 1235. Other outbreaks of hostility against the Jews came in 1276 when the *judería* of Pamplona was destroyed, in 1320 with the rise of the shepherds' movement,<sup>67</sup> and, again, in 1328, before the reign of Jeanne and Philippe d'Evreux, an outbreak that had a particularly strong impact on the community of Estella. Nevertheless, it should be noted that at the time of the Black Plague in 1348–49, and also during the 1391 persecutions, the Jews of Navarre were not harmed, nor were they significantly affected by the mass conversions that took place following the disputation of Tortosa. In 1492, a number of Jews who had been expelled from Castile escaped to Navarre. However, in 1498—under pressure, it seems, from Fernando<sup>68</sup>—all of Navarre's Jews were expelled, apparently following contacts between the Jews of Navarre and forced conversos in Aragon.

In spite of the decline in the situation of the Jews in Navarre in the fifteenth century—which was also connected to the general decline in Navarre's economy in that period—there is no doubt that the relatively tolerant approach to Muslims and Jews in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, unique in comparison to other areas, contributed greatly to the cultural interaction between Jews, Muslims, and Christians; echoes of this interaction can be observed in the decoration of Hebrew manuscripts.

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<sup>66</sup> For details on this period in the history of the Jews of Navarre, see Assis and Magdalena (1990), 33–41.

<sup>67</sup> Nirenberg (1996), 43–126.

<sup>68</sup> On the extent of this pressure, see Gampel (1998).

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ARTISTIC ENVIRONMENT OF ILLUMINATED SEPHARDIC BIBLES

The Jewish illuminators of the medieval Sephardic Bibles drew inspiration for their work from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Some scholars consider a major source of inspiration—both for ornamental patterns and iconography—to have been Middle Eastern Jewish art from the tenth century onward. They believe that there was a continuous development of iconographic themes from late antique Jewish art, through manuscripts from the Middle East, to the Sephardic Bibles. The assumption is that the basic character of the ornamental schemes, the types of pattern, and the iconographic themes were established in the past and enriched with local styles—mainly Mudéjar and Gothic. However, studies that have been conducted to date have not determined the true extent of influence of the Jewish visual tradition relative to that of local contemporary art or innovations, and it is not clear in what spheres tradition played the main role and in what spheres local art was dominant.

In order to shed some light on this question, we need to review, even briefly, the potential sources of inspiration. As I have noted, hardly any figurative art is found in the Sephardic Bibles, a fact that rules out Christian narrative art as a source and limits our interest in Christian art to the field of ornamentation alone. The main sources of inspiration were the cultures of the Middle East—Islamic and Jewish alike.

#### *Manuscripts of the Qur'an*

The earliest manuscripts of the Qur'an had a broad format, and many of the later ones were produced in a square format. Due to the restriction regarding figurative art in Islam, decoration in Qur'an manuscripts is confined to ornamentation.<sup>1</sup> Islamic art has used cal-

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<sup>1</sup> For surveys of illuminated Qur'an manuscripts, see, for example, Ettinghausen

ligraphy as a decorative element from its beginnings. The first decorations had different degrees of functionality, and they were inserted between verses and before each new *sura*. In addition, decorations in the margins marked the fifth and tenth verses.<sup>2</sup>

The development of abstract patterns as a by-product of the non-figurative approach in Islamic culture reached its peak in the emergence of carpet pages in the tenth century. Carpet pages are full pages of geometric ornamentation, sometimes combined with vegetal patterns. An early example appears on a single page in Dublin (Chester Beatty Library, MS 1406) that is no longer attached to the original manuscript.<sup>3</sup> It is either from Syria or Egypt and is dated to ca. 900. Distinct Byzantine influences can be discerned in this page, and yet it also contains most of the characteristics of later Islamic specimens. The delicate penwork decoration in the background represents an important element of Eastern ornamentation, namely, *horror vacui*, which is manifested by a densely packed composition. On the left side of the page is a protrusion in a stylized foliage pattern, a kind of decorated medallion, often referred to as *ansa*, a term borrowed from Hellenistic architecture.<sup>4</sup> Another element typically found in early decorated Qur'an manuscripts is an ornate notation of the total number of verses.<sup>5</sup> As we will see, both types of decoration have parallels in Hebrew Bibles from the Middle East and Spain.

In the western part of the Islamic world,<sup>6</sup> Kerouan developed as a center of book art and calligraphy. In Spain,<sup>7</sup> Andalusian script developed as a unique type, based on Maghrebi script. As in other parts of the Islamic world, Andalusian Qur'an manuscripts of this period usually have a square format. The oldest illuminated Qur'an from Spain that is dated with certainty (1090) contains decorations

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(1962), 167–68; Avrin (1974), 168–95; Lings (1976); Déroche (1983); and Déroche (1992). On the principles of decoration and the significance of the various motifs, see Lings (1976), chap. 3. On Islamic ornamentation in general, see Baer (1998).

<sup>2</sup> For examples of this type of decoration in early Qur'an manuscripts, see Lings (1976), figs. 1–21; for western examples, see *ibid.*, figs. 6–9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 168.

<sup>4</sup> For example, Avrin (1974).

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, 177.

<sup>6</sup> On manuscripts of the Qur'an from the Maghreb and Spain, see Lings (1976), 203–205, figs. 94–105.

<sup>7</sup> On the art of the book in Islamic Spain, see Khemir (1992); on Iberian manuscripts of the Qur'an, see Raby and James (1992), 87–92.

at the beginning of each *sura* (Uppsala, University Library, MS O BJ. 48):<sup>8</sup> gold calligraphy against a decorated background and an *ansa* in the outer margin. At the end of each verse is a small decorated medallion. This book clearly demonstrates to what extent these decorations were functional and rooted in scribal practice.

The total absence of illuminated Qur'an manuscripts from the time of the caliphs and the Taifa kingdoms is quite astonishing, even when we take into consideration the fact that the political situation following the Reconquest was not conducive to the preservation of Islamic manuscripts. After all, the conditions of the Reconquest did enable the preservation of manuscripts from the Almoravid period and the Nasrid dynasty in Granada. Accordingly, it might be asked if this art was at all practiced in the time of the caliphs and the Taifa kingdoms. It should be noted, though, that despite the cultural blossoming of Spanish Jewry in those days, not a single illuminated Bible has survived from then either.

Valencia apparently became a center of illuminated book production in the twelfth century.<sup>9</sup> In Cairo (General Egyptian Book Organization, MS Masahif No. 196), there is a Qur'an from Valencia with calligraphic ornamentation at the beginning of each *sura*, with a protruding *ansa*. Various decorations mark the verses.<sup>10</sup> Another Qur'an that represents this tradition was produced in 1182 and is now in Istanbul (Istanbul University Library, MS A 6754).<sup>11</sup> A copy of a text on the Muslim tradition, written in the eleventh century by al-Qudai Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Salamat ibn Ja'far ibn Ali, was produced in Valencia in 1172–73 and is now in Rabat (Royal Library, No. 1810).<sup>12</sup> Like manuscripts of the Qur'an, this text has ornamentation at the beginning of each chapter, and medallions and an *ansa* separating one verse from the next. There are also annotations in the outer margins, with the lines of script arranged in decorative geometric shapes, a zigzag pattern in two parallel lines—an Arabic equivalent to Hebrew micrography.

Other manuscripts were produced in Cordoba; they are stylistically close to the Valencia school. A manuscript from 1143, now in

<sup>8</sup> Dodds, *Al Andalus* (1992), no. 74.

<sup>9</sup> For further information and a full list of manuscripts, see Raby and James (1992), 88–92.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Ettinghausen (1962), 173; Lings (1976), figs. 100–101.

<sup>12</sup> Dodds, *Al Andalus* (1992), no. 77.

Istanbul (Istanbul University Library, MS A 6755),<sup>13</sup> includes carpet pages that are designed in a centered interlace pattern, which emerges from an eight-rayed star in the center (fig. 1). The interlace pattern appears in spared ground technique—that is, in the color of the parchment on an ornamented or colored background; in the center of the page are additional interlace patterns in light blue with white highlights—a technique most likely influenced by Gothic painting. The carpet pages also feature penwork in blue ink displaying delicate vegetal motifs with an abundant use of gold. On the left side is an *ansa* with a vegetal pattern that is more stylized than the penwork and is similar to that of stucco sculpture in later Islamic architecture. The manuscript also contains a colophon framed with ornamentation similar to that of a carpet page.

These books exhibit a recurring decoration program: ornamentation of the beginning of each *sura* with an *ansa*, marking of verses, and carpet pages. The repertoire includes many stylized vegetal motifs, as well as the guilloche type interlace pattern, usually in gold on a black background. These types of decoration reflect what was also commonly used at that time in northern Africa.<sup>14</sup>

Decorated Qur'an manuscripts were produced in the thirteenth century as well. One example is a fragment from Seville dating to 1227, now in Munich (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. arab. 1).<sup>15</sup> The colophon is designed as a carpet page densely packed with patterns. The black inscription appears within a large medallion against a background of gold and penwork in stylized vegetal motifs. A similar motif appears in corners outside of the medallion. This page has two frames: the outer frame is designed in a guilloche pattern typical of Islamic decoration, and the interior frame is painted pink with a delicate pattern in white lines. This example, too, reflects the influence of the techniques commonly used in European painting of that period. Similar to the earlier examples, this manuscript also displays marginal medallions (fig. 2).

After the conquest of Cordoba and Valencia in the mid-thirteenth century, this tradition of decorating Qur'an manuscripts was apparently confined to Granada. No decorated Qur'an manuscripts from Mudéjar communities have come down to us—not even from Valencia,

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., no. 75.

<sup>14</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, no. 79.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., no. 80.

where Islamic culture continued to flourish under Christian rule. This absence is probably due to the fact that book production and writing in general were not a flourishing industry among the Mudéjares, due, it seems, to their relatively low social status.<sup>16</sup> A decorated Qur'an from this period, apparently from Granada, is now in Tetouan, in a private collection. On one of the pages, the opening of a *sura* is decorated with an architectural pattern of two gates with polylobed arches.<sup>17</sup>

In this period, interlace patterns had an even denser design than had previously been customary. The various stylized patterns reflect the architectural ornamentation commonly used in Nasrid and Mudéjar architecture. The interlace patterns in carpet pages are not always centered, but are often continuous and create an illusion of continuing infinitely beyond the frame. Units of ornamentation appear repeatedly, and in the center of each unit is an eight-rayed star composed of diagonal lines. The result is that the diagonal lines and their points of intersection dominate the overall design. A Qur'an from 1304 in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. arab. 385) is an example of this design (fig. 3).<sup>18</sup> Such patterns were very common in Mudéjar architecture from the thirteenth century onward, and they were especially popular in later Mudéjar art. They were also used frequently in furniture design, woodwork (such as doors and *minbars*), textiles (fig. 4), tiles, and other ceramic work.<sup>19</sup> According to Richard Ettinghausen, this design signifies the integration of Spanish Islamic art into an "international style," which was in use throughout the Islamic world and reached its peak in the mid-fourteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

### *Hebrew Manuscripts from the Middle East*

The earliest decorated Hebrew Bibles are close in date to the first Qur'an manuscripts with carpet pages. In the past, the Ben Asher

<sup>16</sup> Regarding the Crown of Aragon, see Lourie (1990), 49.

<sup>17</sup> Khemir (1992), 117–18, fig. 3.

<sup>18</sup> Dodds, *Al Andalus* (1992), no. 85; Lings (1976), figs. 104–105.

<sup>19</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, nos. 118 and 119.

<sup>20</sup> Ettinghausen (1962), 173, reproduction on 174.



Codex in the Karaite Synagogue in Cairo (Gottheil 34)<sup>21</sup> was considered the earliest illuminated book, since it bears a colophon that apparently dates it to 894–95. The codex contains only Prophets. However, recent research conducted by Malachi Beit-Arié, Colette Sirat, and Mordechai Glatzer suggests that the manuscript was produced only in the eleventh century.<sup>22</sup> The decoration of the codex mirrors that of Islamic books, and Ettinghausen did not rule out the possibility that this tradition of ornamentation is rooted in Hebrew manuscripts, and specifically in the Karaite communities.<sup>23</sup> Leila Avrin, on the other hand, conjectured that the Qur'an to which the Dublin page belonged was preceded by other manuscripts that did not survive.<sup>24</sup>

Our knowledge of Hebrew illuminated Bibles from the Middle East and northern Africa is only partial. Not only have many of the manuscripts at our disposal survived solely as fragments, depriving us of some components of the ornamental schemes, but there has also been little in-depth research on the subject. Only the Ben Asher Codex has been studied extensively, by Avrin.<sup>25</sup> Other books and parts of books are preserved in the British Library and have been described in brief by Jacob Leveen.<sup>26</sup>

The richest collection of Middle Eastern manuscripts from the early Middle Ages is the Firkovich Collection in the National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg (formerly known as the Public Library of Leningrad), which for many years was not accessible to researchers from the West and from Israel. Adding to the difficulty is the fact that Abraham Firkovich inserted many changes and forgeries in his collection, mainly of inscriptions and dates.<sup>27</sup> The decorated books in the Firkovich Collection were first discussed by Vladimir Stassof and David von Güzburg in the early 1900s,<sup>28</sup> and recently in a

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<sup>21</sup> The collection of manuscripts in the Karaite synagogue in Cairo was catalogued and described in Gottheil (1905). For the Ben Asher Codex, see, no. 34, 639–41; see also Avrin (1974).

<sup>22</sup> Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2000), 28, with additional literature on the problem of the authenticity of this manuscript.

<sup>23</sup> Ettinghausen (1962), 169.

<sup>24</sup> Avrin (1974), 176.

<sup>25</sup> Avrin (1974).

<sup>26</sup> Leveen (1944), 66–104.

<sup>27</sup> For a very general review, see Narkiss (1984), 24–36; see also Avrin (1974), 196–236.

<sup>28</sup> Stassof and von Güzburg (1905).

revised, and updated edition by Bezalel Narkiss.<sup>29</sup> In the third chapter of the latter, entitled “Near Eastern Hebrew Bible Illumination and Its Influence on Western Europe,” Narkiss summarizes his conclusions with regard to the continuity that he sees between the Middle Eastern and Sephardic schools of manuscript illumination. In his opinion, this continuity plays a crucial role in the history of Hebrew manuscripts in Spain.

Currently, a catalogue of dated Hebrew manuscripts is being produced by Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer. Three volumes covering the period from the earliest beginnings until 1149 have appeared so far.<sup>30</sup> The majority of dated books from the early Middle Ages are of Middle Eastern or north African provenance, few are from Italy, one is from Spain, and there are none from other parts of Europe. However, most of the decorated books from the Middle East and north Africa are undated and therefore not included in the catalogue. Rachel Milstein recently studied the symbols incorporated in the decoration of the Bibles.<sup>31</sup>

A detailed analysis of the relationship between the Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East and those produced later in Spain has yet to be made. The first step in such an analysis is to review the ornamental schemes commonly used in these books. Then we need to isolate the elements that indicate continuity, and see how substantial a role they play in the ornamentation relative to innovations or elements deriving from other sources. Such an analysis can then lead to an exploration of the work practices of the illuminators: the extent to which they relied on Hebrew books as opposed to Islamic ones, how much they relied on manuscript models at all, how frequently they chose their patterns from other arts, and how much innovation they introduced into their work.

These questions come to mind as a result of recent reflections on earlier methodologies applied to the study of Byzantine and western manuscript illumination. The findings of studies using Kurt Weitzmann’s recensional approach<sup>32</sup> usually point to a large degree of iconographic continuity. In the context of the Sephardic Bibles, the question of iconographic tradition arises mainly in the case of depic-

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<sup>29</sup> Narkiss (1990).

<sup>30</sup> Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2002).

<sup>31</sup> Milstein (2001).

<sup>32</sup> Weitzmann (1947).

tions of the Temple. Numerous studies based on Weitzmann's views maintain that Jewish Temple imagery has followed a continuous tradition since late antiquity.<sup>33</sup> There is undoubtedly a continuity from a conceptual standpoint—that is, the existence of Temple depictions as such and their meaning. However, as to the continuity in terms of visual similarity of the forms, the design, and the details, there is a great deal of disagreement. This subject will be addressed repeatedly in this book. Apart from the issue of Temple imagery, the discussion of decoration and its sources yields interesting conclusions with regard to the continuity question and sheds light on the work habits of the scribes and illuminators. These conclusions, which will be discussed further on, also have ramifications for the analysis of figurative illustrations and for other iconographic issues. With regard to the Sephardic Bibles, we will find that the illuminators' practices varied greatly when it came to selecting ornamental patterns.

As in the case of the Qur'an manuscripts, the ornamentation of the Hebrew books is rooted in functionality: it was used to mark the beginning of verses, weekly portions (*parashot*), biblical books, and the like. All of these elements undoubtedly stimulated ornamentation, and all of these types of decoration are closely linked to calligraphy. Due to the distinct resemblance between the ornamental patterns in Hebrew Bibles and those in Islamic art, it has been suggested that they originated in the Karaite communities, whose affinity to the Islamic culture was particularly strong.<sup>34</sup> Some maintain that Moses ben Asher was a Karaite.<sup>35</sup> The Ben Asher Codex in Cairo contains many types of ornamentation that are also common in other Middle Eastern Bibles and later recur occasionally in Sephardic Bibles. It includes numerous carpet pages,<sup>36</sup> which are characterized by both centered and continuous interlace patterns. Some of them also have *ansae* similar to those in carpet pages in Qur'an manuscripts, as well as stylized vegetal decorations, geometric ornamentation, and architectural motifs.

An especially interesting aspect of Middle Eastern Bibles in general and the Ben Asher Codex in particular can be found in the design of the *masorah magna*, the masoretic commentary added to the

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<sup>33</sup> On Temple depictions, see Revel-Neher (1984); Revel-Neher (1998).

<sup>34</sup> Leveen (1944), 68; Ettinghausen (1962), 169; Narkiss (1984), 24.

<sup>35</sup> Narkiss (1984).

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, *ibid.*, fig. 10.

biblical text in the lower and upper margins. It is written in micrographic script in geometric shapes—mostly V patterns, but sometimes more complex patterns such as hexagons, circles, drops, and the like. Parallels to this type of decoration can be found in the above-mentioned treatise by al-Qudai Abu Abdallah Muhammed copied in Valencia.<sup>37</sup> Some of the carpet pages also include micrographic decorations, many of which display architectural motifs. Decorative micrography would later become an extremely popular feature throughout the Jewish world.<sup>38</sup> Most of the Sephardic Bibles have a large amount of micrography, both in the *masorah magna* in the margins and as an integral part of the design of carpet pages.

Apart from the carpet pages and micrography, the Ben Asher Codex contains other types of decoration: stylized leaves, geometric patterns, and frames for the verse counts at the end of each book. Like micrography, these types of ornamentation are more closely linked to the sphere of writing than to that of the art of book illumination. Most of it was probably done by scribes and not artists. The same is true of micrographic sections in the carpet pages. The lines of the micrography served as contours for forms that were then filled in with colored patterns.

The Firkovich Collection includes a group of eight loose pages with carpet designs (MS II B 12),<sup>39</sup> in the following referred to as “Firkovich 12.” A few of these pages can be dated to the tenth century, and the rest to the thirteenth. The earlier carpet pages feature micrographic designs without any painted addition. One of them comprises a variety of geometric patterns—rhombuses, hexagons, and rectangles—and another depicts a gate, which is composed of similar geometric shapes. The latter echo the architectural carpet pages in the Ben Asher Codex. Narkiss interprets this motival resemblance as a stylistic relation, and therefore conjectures that the Firkovich pages were produced in the land of Israel.<sup>40</sup> This assumption requires deeper study, especially in light of the reservations expressed by Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer with regard to the early dating of the Ben Asher Codex.

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<sup>37</sup> See above, 36 in the discussion of Qur’an manuscripts.

<sup>38</sup> Avrin (1981); Metzger (1974); Ferber (1977); Avrin (1979); Gutmann (1983).

<sup>39</sup> Narkiss (1990), 37–38, figs. 9, 10.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

The Firkovich Collection also includes three other fragments, which are dated to the first half of the tenth century. It is not clear if they were produced in the land of Israel or in Egypt. One, known as the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch (National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 17), was signed in 929 by Solomon Halevi ben Buya'a.<sup>41</sup> It became famous mainly for its depictions of the Temple implements. These are, in fact, the only Temple depictions that can be found in Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East (figs. 5 and 6), and they serve as the sole basis for the theory of a continuous tradition of Temple depiction in Jewish art from late antiquity to the late Middle Ages.<sup>42</sup> The question, however, is, whether one case can be considered a tradition. Those supporting the continuity theory must rely on numerous hypothetical assumptions about the existence of additional Temple depictions in the Middle East, and of illuminated Hebrew manuscripts in Muslim Spain that could have served as a link in this artistic tradition. No such examples have come to light. In any event, the next depiction of the Temple implements appears only at the end of the thirteenth century in Spain (figs. 30 and 31). Avrin assumed that the depictions in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch signify the end of the late antique tradition, rather than a link to the later one or its beginning.<sup>43</sup>

Many scholars<sup>44</sup> also maintain that the architectural ornamentation in some of the micrographic carpet pages in the Middle Eastern Bibles symbolizes the Ark of the Covenant. Abstract architectural patterns appear, as noted, in the Ben Asher Codex, the pages of Firkovich 12, and later works. The contention that these patterns are allusions to the Ark of the Covenant is certainly within reason. However, it does not constitute support for the assumption that there was a continuing tradition, since this motif is not known in Sephardic Bibles, neither from a formal and stylistic standpoint nor in terms of iconography.

The First St. Petersburg Pentateuch contains additional decorations—for example, a dedication in large letters against an ornamented background, an element that recurs later in many manuscripts from the Middle East and northern Africa, but not in Sephardic

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<sup>41</sup> Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2000), vol. 1, 53–64; Narkiss (1969), 24, figs. 11, 69, pl. 1a; see also Nechama and Sievernich (1991), 415.

<sup>42</sup> This issue was summarized and discussed by Revel-Neher (1998), 116–61.

<sup>43</sup> Avrin (1974), 204.

<sup>44</sup> Narkiss (1990), 34; Avrin (1978); Revel-Neher (1984), 137–38; Milstein (2001).

ones. It also contains carpet pages that are very close to Islamic counterparts.<sup>45</sup> The delicate pen ornamentation marking the *parashot*, however, has a continuation in Spain, as do the micrographic frames for the Songs of Moses in Chapter 15 of Exodus and Chapter 32 of Deuteronomy. At the end of each book of the Bible, a decorated frame surrounds the verse count. Decorations of this kind also appear later in Spain. They may be rooted in a similar custom in manuscripts of the Qur'an.

It thus emerges that the types of decoration for which a continuing tradition can be traced—decorated *parashah* signs in pen and ink, micrographic *masorah* with geometric patterns, and ornamentation to mark the verse count—are related to writing. The text was copied from an original, usually placed in front of the scribe. On the other hand, many colophons credit someone—the scribe or another person—with checking and correcting the text. In most Bibles, many corrections can indeed be found. It can therefore be concluded that many scribes knew the vocalized text of the Bible and the *masorah* by heart, wrote them from memory, and then checked their work and made corrections with the aid of an authorized text.<sup>46</sup> And so, even the process of writing did not always involve copying in the pure sense of the word. This also weakens the case vis-à-vis the copying of decoration. But even if the text was written from memory, the work was done with close attention to the original and with the aim of producing a manuscript that would be as faithful to the original as possible. It follows that the decoration that was related to writing and, in many cases, was done by scribes, was guided by the same approach. In other words, in these spheres, there would be a stronger tendency to be faithful to the original.

On the other hand, in the painted decorations executed by artists, there is much less continuity. Even if it can be assumed that from a conceptual standpoint, the Temple depictions in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch continue a tradition that began in late antiquity and is found in numerous mosaic pavements in late antique synagogues in Israel (fig. 35), from a visual standpoint we do not have a sufficient basis for comparison. Artists sometimes based their work on an existing idea, which they developed, but did not neces-

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., n. 12.

<sup>46</sup> Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985), 16.

sarily copy an actual model directly. Later we will see that this was also the case with regard to Temple depictions created in Spain.

Some of the decoration types that appear in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch have parallels in other fragments in the Firkovich Collection that are dated to the mid-tenth century: examples are the so-called Mevorakh fragment (Firkovich Collection, MS II B 262)<sup>47</sup> and the Aharon ben Abraham fragment (Firkovich Collection, MS II B 263, 267).<sup>48</sup> Since these are not complete manuscripts, it is difficult to evaluate their significance in terms of the development of decoration programs.

A few decorated Hebrew manuscripts from the second half of the tenth and the early eleventh century have survived. Many of the carpet pages in these manuscripts are decorated with architectural patterns that have parallels in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch, Firkovich 12, and the Ben Asher Codex. A striking example is the Second St. Petersburg Pentateuch (National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 8), probably from 1020–21. The book also includes a part that should be dated to the thirteenth century.<sup>49</sup> It contains carpet pages, architectural motifs, and other types of decoration in the micrographic *masorah* and in the body of the text, between the lines.<sup>50</sup> The latter undoubtedly has its origins in the separation of verses of the Qur'an; it appears in a few Hebrew manuscripts, mainly from Egypt, and has no continuation in Sephardic illumination.<sup>51</sup>

Carpet pages of a different character, closer in nature to Islamic parallels and lacking architectural patterns, can be found in another example from this group, a Hebrew Bible written in Arabic script

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<sup>47</sup> Narkiss (1984), pl. 1b; Narkiss (1990), 62–63, figs. 14–15; Nechama and Sievernich (1991), 416.

<sup>48</sup> Narkiss (1990), 38, 58–60, fig. 11. The pages in Firkovich 267 bear a distinct resemblance to a group of other fragments that are kept together with the Ben Asher Codex, and Avrin does not rule out the possibility that they belong to the same book; see Avrin (1974), 205.

<sup>49</sup> See Narkiss (1990), 64–67; Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2000), vol. 2, 27–41 with numerous reproductions, pl. 1–6. The scribe of this manuscript, Zechariah ben Anan, wrote another Bible in 1028, Gottheil (1905), no. 13, 627–29 with modest micrographic decoration, see Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2000), vol. 2, 60–71.

<sup>50</sup> Narkiss (1990), fig. 18.

<sup>51</sup> See, for example, London, British Library, MS Or. 9879 (First Gaster Bible), Leveen (1944), 68; and Narkiss (1990), 37–39, fig. 22; Nechama and Sievernich (1991).

(London, British Library, MS Or. 2540, fig. 7).<sup>52</sup> They are composed of a series of rectangular frames, one within the next, each frame containing a different vegetal pattern. As in their Islamic counterparts, an *ansa* appears in the margin.

The most outstanding book in this group is the St. Petersburg Bible, also kept in the Firkovich Collection (MS II B 19a). It is the only complete Bible from this period.<sup>53</sup> The manuscript was written in 1008<sup>54</sup> by Samuel ben Jacob. Another Bible produced by the same scribe and containing similar decorations is found in the Karaite Synagogue in Cairo (Gottheil 14).<sup>55</sup> Both manuscripts are replete with carpet pages that combine micrographic outlines with coloring. In a few of these pages, the tradition of architectural patterns continues;<sup>56</sup> others feature repeating geometric patterns—for example, a pattern of rhombuses in micrography with circles inside them (fig. 8). The same pattern recurs similarly at the beginning of the fourteenth century in Bibles from Roussillon (figs. 89, 93, and 99). Another carpet page contains a large micrographic star pattern (fig. 9), foreshadowing the various centered interlace patterns that are commonly found later in Islamic and Hebrew manuscripts in Spain (col. pls. IX and X). The micrographic star pattern turns up again in Spain at the end of the thirteenth century, in Toledo and Roussillon (figs. 32 and 88). In both the St. Petersburg and the Cairo Bibles, some of the carpet pages are enclosed in calligraphic frames comprising large letters. In addition to carpet pages, these two manuscripts also feature frames surrounding the verse counts at the end of each biblical book, decorated *parashah* signs, and *masorah* decorations in micrography. The ornamentation of pages containing the Songs of Moses is especially rich.

The British Library in London possesses another Bible, which, according to Leveen, served as a source of inspiration for Sephardic Bibles (MS Or. 2363).<sup>57</sup> Even though neither its date nor its prove-

<sup>52</sup> Leveen (1944), 68; Narkiss (1990), 35 and 38.

<sup>53</sup> See the facsimile edition of the St. Petersburg Codex, Freedman (1998); Beit-Arié, Sirat, and Glatzer (1997, 1999, 2000), vol. 1, 114–31.

<sup>54</sup> There is uncertainty with regard to the translation of the date due to the fact that it is noted according to five different calendars. According to the Hebrew calendar, it was written in 1008; *ibid.*, 117–18; Narkiss (1990), 50–53.

<sup>55</sup> Gottheil (1905), no. 14, 629–30; Avrin (1974), 211; Narkiss (1990), 52.

<sup>56</sup> Narkiss (1984), pl. 2.

<sup>57</sup> Leveen (1944), 70–71.



nance could be determined with any certainty,<sup>58</sup> this book is of considerable importance in the attempt to reconstruct the history of the Sephardic Bibles' decoration schemes. It features ornamental markings for the *parashot* with stylized vegetal patterns (fig. 10), a decorated frame with verse counts at the end of each book (fig. 11), frames for the Songs of Moses (fig. 12), and *masorah* decorations in geometric patterns (fig. 13); many examples of such decorations can later be found in Sephardic Bibles.

In short—the art of decorating Bibles in the tenth and eleventh centuries developed in the Middle East and with strong links to Islamic book art. Carpet pages, decorated chapter headings, marking of *parashot*, and verse counts all have parallels in Islamic design. The variety of colors used by the artists also corresponds with that of manuscripts of the Qur'an.<sup>59</sup> These Hebrew manuscripts are notable for an especially large degree of homogeneity.<sup>60</sup>

Later schools existed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. From this period we also find decorated manuscripts from the Maghreb. Not very much information is available with regard to the Maghreb group, but due to the political relationship between the Maghreb and Islamic Spain, particularly from the eleventh century on, it is worthwhile to examine the decorative schemes characteristic of the manuscripts of this group. Not all types of decoration observed in the earlier periods were popular to the same extent in the Maghreb schools. For example, dedicatory inscriptions in large letters existed, but they are not commonly found in these books, and ornamentation seldom appears between the text lines. In the Tlemcen Pentateuch of 1225 (Firkovich Collection, MS II B 168),<sup>61</sup> there is a carpet page with a colophon and decorations for the Songs of Moses. Carpet pages, apparently from this period, are also found in the later section of the Second St. Petersburg Pentateuch.<sup>62</sup>

The Firkovich 12 fragments include decorated pages that are different in character from the earlier ones described above. Among them is an uncolored micrographic carpet page displaying a centered

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<sup>58</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, 39, describes the script as Persian or Babylonian and dates the book to sometime between the 11th and the 12th centuries; see also Leveen (1944), 71.

<sup>59</sup> See Avrin (1974), 179–80.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 219.

<sup>61</sup> Narkiss (1990), 67–68, pl. XIX.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 64–67, fig. 17.

geometric pattern.<sup>63</sup> Also striking is the calligraphic frame in large letters around the pattern. Frames of this type already appeared in the eleventh century in the St. Petersburg Bible and the Gottheil 14 Bible in Cairo, and they would later become a distinct feature of Sephardic Bibles (for example, figs. 23, 30, and 32). Uncolored micro-graphic decoration for entire carpet pages would also recur later in Spain (figs. 32, 37, and 38).

On another page of the Firkovich 12 fragments, it is possible to discern further innovations that had an influence on the illumination of Sephardic Bibles:<sup>64</sup> an interlace pattern that forms elongated hexagons running in various directions with an emphasis on diagonal lines. This design is a harbinger of the later continuous interlace patterns in Mudéjar and Nasrid art in Spain, examples of which can frequently be found both in Hebrew and Islamic manuscripts (col. pls. I, IX, X, figs. 1 and 3). The page is framed in an interlace pattern of the guilloche type, executed in spared-ground technique. This type of decoration is rare in earlier manuscripts, but it appears in the St. Petersburg Bible (fig. 8).

The Firkovich Collection includes another single page (MS II B 269), which Narkiss associates with the above-mentioned Mevorakh fragment from the tenth century.<sup>65</sup> It features a continuous pattern of rhombuses with a circular decoration inside them. The continuous pattern and the density of composition do not conform to the stylistic conventions of the tenth century.<sup>66</sup> A decoration of a similar kind first appears in the St. Petersburg Bible in the early eleventh century (fig. 8). Calligraphic frames like those in the Firkovich 269 page also became more popular in this later group of manuscripts. As noted above, the rhombus pattern would return—together with the calligraphic frames—in Catalonia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. It can therefore be assumed that this very page should be dated no earlier than the eleventh century. It cannot be ruled out, however, that it belongs to the later group from the Maghreb.

Other books, apparently from the Maghreb, have similar features—uncolored micro-graphic carpet pages, calligraphic frames, and

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 8.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 7.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>66</sup> In the stylistic analysis of the various schools, Narkiss himself maintains that the style of the tenth century was characterized by relatively airy compositions (1990), 38.

micrographic *masorah*. Fragment MS II B 1539 in the Firkovich Collection—an undated single page—is a carpet page with a centered rosette of a type known from the St. Petersburg and Gottheil 14 Bibles, and later from Sephardic manuscripts.

Finally, also worth mentioning are two uniquely decorated manuscripts, whose origins and dates are unknown. In one of them, also part of the Firkovich Collection (MS II B 116), the micrography in the margins of the text is replete with vegetal and floral patterns that have no parallels in other Middle Eastern manuscripts. To a certain extent, these decorations were forerunners of vegetal patterns that later came into common use in Sephardic Bibles. The second book, in the Karaite synagogue in Cairo (Gottheil 18),<sup>67</sup> has a particularly large amount of micrographic decoration in the margins, some of them symbolic in character.<sup>68</sup> The book also has micrographic carpet pages with a variety of architectural motifs, including horseshoe arches. The horseshoe arch plays a central role in Visigothic, Islamic, and early medieval architecture in Spain, as well as in Hebrew manuscripts. It appears in the Maghreb under Sephardic influence, but it is not known in Egypt.<sup>69</sup> And so it seems that this manuscript is also from the Maghreb. Apart from the horseshoe arches, it includes additional motifs that reappear later in Spain.

A few important points emerge from this short survey. First, Middle Eastern Bibles did not commonly feature Temple depictions. This fact sheds light on the question of continuity, since Temple images have been presented as a major argument in the discussion. Later in this book, I will compare the depiction in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch with those in the Sephardic Bibles and reach further conclusions. As for decorative patterns, however, continuity can be discerned, first of all, within the group of Middle Eastern manuscripts. The most salient example is the architectural pattern in the carpet pages, which is created by micrographic lines; this design does not recur in Sephardic Bibles. Other types of decoration—such as the abundant use of micrography in the margins and on carpet pages, specific micrographic patterns, decoration of *parashah* signs, and decorative frames at the end of each biblical book—all indicate a continuous tradition. But this continuity existed mainly in those fields

<sup>67</sup> Gottheil (1905), no. 18, 631–32.

<sup>68</sup> Milstein (2001).

<sup>69</sup> I thank Rachel Milstein, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem for pointing this out to me.

of decoration that are close in character to the work of the scribes. In the sphere of painted decoration, on the other hand, to which depictions of the Temple also belong, innovation and influence from the immediate environment overruled tradition. In the upcoming chapters, I will attempt to verify this conjecture.

### *Christian Art in Spain*

The eighth century was a pivotal period for Christian culture in Spain. The political center of Christian Spain was the kingdom of Asturias and its capital, Oviedo. Within this region arose numerous churches that combined a Visigothic architectural and artistic tradition with many elements borrowed from early Christian and Carolingian art. The classicistic (though non-figurative) wall paintings in the Church of San Julian de los Prados clearly evince their early Christian roots and their connection to Carolingian art.<sup>70</sup> In this period, Beatus of Liébana wrote his commentary on the Apocalypse. This text later became very popular, and numerous illuminated copies of it are still extant (fig. 77). The legend regarding the discovery of the Apostle James's remains, which led to the construction of the first church of Santiago de Compostela, also arose in the eighth century. With the migration of Mozarabs to northern Spain and the establishment of many monasteries there, a change took place in that region's approach to architecture, sculpture, and painting. Scholars have devoted a great deal of study to the Visigothic and Islamic impacts on early medieval art in Spain. The development of architecture and architectural sculpture was accompanied by a rich tradition of illumination of manuscripts, mainly those of the Bible and the New Testament and Beatus of Liébana's commentary on the Apocalypse.

Although this art was frequently referred to as "Mozarabic art," there remain only a few works that can justifiably be called "Mozarabic" in the full sense of the term—that is, created by the Mozarabic population in Al-Andalus. In 988, a manuscript of the Latin version of the Bible was produced. Its name, *Biblia Hispalense*, indicates

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<sup>70</sup> Dodds (1990), chap. 2, 27–28, with additional bibliography on Asturian architecture, see figs. 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, and 30; *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 113–14.

that it was produced in Seville. Today it is in Madrid (Biblioteca Nacional, cod. vit. 13–1).<sup>71</sup> The canon tables are arranged in columns that are decorated with architectural elements. The design is replete with allusions to forms common in Islamic design, with horseshoe arches intermingling with round arches. The use of numerous arches—usually polylobed and superimposed—is in itself a common characteristic of Islamic architecture. The arches in the canon tables of the *Biblia Hispalense* rest on pillars lavishly decorated with stylized floral patterns largely borrowed from an Islamic repertoire of forms.

The horseshoe arch became a hallmark of Mozarabic architecture throughout Spain. In Al-Andalus, it appears in the ruins of the churches in Bobastro<sup>72</sup> and Santa Maria de Melque.<sup>73</sup> Its roots lie in seventh-century Visigothic architecture—as in the Church of San Pedro de la Nave (fig. 14) or the Church of Santa Comba de Bande.<sup>74</sup> It was adopted by Muslim architects, who slightly altered its shape (mainly its proportions), intricately decorated its voussoirs, and added a rectangular frame known as *alfiz*. This form of the horseshoe arch first appears in one of the gates of the Great Mosque of Córdoba, which later—after its conversion into a church—became known as the Puerta de San Estebán (fig. 15). With the development of Christian architecture in Islamic Spain and in the Christian countries to the north, the Visigothic horseshoe arch was revived in its original form, sometimes supplemented with Islamic features, such as the *alfiz*.<sup>75</sup> Over the years, the horseshoe arch became an element unique to Spanish architecture, and it represents both Islamic and Christian Spain of the early Middle Ages.

Evidence of early medieval architecture can be found in several churches that have survived from that period,<sup>76</sup> such as San Miguel de Escalada.<sup>77</sup> The design of this building, which contains many

<sup>71</sup> Williams (1977), 84, pl. 5.

<sup>72</sup> Dodds (1990), 58–59, figs. 58, 59.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, figs. 56, 57.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 7.

<sup>75</sup> The development of the horseshoe arch as an element transmitted in Spain from one culture to another and the evolution of other architectural elements are discussed at length in Dodds (1990), chap. 1. On the question of the Islamic influence on early medieval art, see also Schlunk (1965).

<sup>76</sup> Dodds (1990), 70–71; *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 121–62. Both articles have references to additional sources and earlier bibliography.

<sup>77</sup> Dodds (1990), figs. 37–43.

horseshoe arches and reliefs on column capitals and screens,<sup>78</sup> combines a Visigothic tradition with a few Islamic influences.<sup>79</sup> This architecture is characterized by an absence of any sign of influence from the north, such as Carolingian construction or art.

Other evidence of the culture of Christian Spain in the early medieval period is found in illuminated manuscripts of the Bible, such as the *Biblia Hispalense* or a Bible produced in 920, now in the Monastery of San Isidoro in León (Cod. 6).<sup>80</sup> The canon tables of the latter are decorated similarly to those of the *Biblia Hispalense*, though the patterns are more stylized and the entire design is extremely flat. Another illuminated manuscript was produced in 960 in Valeránica; it, too, is now in San Isidoro (Cod. 2, fig. 16).<sup>81</sup> In this period, the first illuminated copies of Beatus of Liébana's commentary on the Apocalypse appeared.<sup>82</sup>

Islamic influences on this art are not as strong as might be expected in the cultural context in which it was created.<sup>83</sup> They were exhaustively studied by John Williams.<sup>84</sup> As Karl Werckmeister has shown, distinctly Islamic motifs could be used in iconography to convey a negative message. For example, in the León Bible of 960, the Philistine attackers are portrayed as Muslim horsemen.<sup>85</sup> In a Beatus manuscript in New York (Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 644), the whore of Babylon (Apoc. 17) is depicted with Islamic elements, and Belshazzar's feast (Dan. 5:1–5) is presented under a typical Islamic horseshoe arch.<sup>86</sup>

Most of this art was created in the Christian kingdoms and hardly any Mozarabic art or buildings from Al-Andalus have been found. Therefore, the name "Mozarabic" is occasionally challenged<sup>87</sup>—espe-

<sup>78</sup> See, for example, *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), no. 77.

<sup>79</sup> Schlunk (1965), 915–16.

<sup>80</sup> Williams (1977), pls. 3, 4.

<sup>81</sup> Williams (1965); Williams (1967); Williams (1977), pls. 8–11; Williams (1999).

<sup>82</sup> Williams (1977), pls. 21–22. On illuminated Beatus manuscripts, see Williams (1993); Mentré (1996).

<sup>83</sup> For architectural contexts, see Schlunk (1965).

<sup>84</sup> Williams (1994), vol. 1, 143–77.

<sup>85</sup> This issue and other ways of dealing with Islamic influences in illustrations of manuscripts were discussed by Werckmeister (1965); see also *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 112 (in a chapter that was also written by Werckmeister).

<sup>86</sup> Williams (1977), 77, pl. 19.

<sup>87</sup> The name "Mozarabic" was given to ninth-to-eleventh-century art and first appears in Gomez Moreno (1951), 394–409; with regard to architecture, see a sum-

cially since it connotes a high degree of adaptation to Islamic culture at a time when Christian culture in northern Spain actually emphasized its difference from Islamic culture. Early medieval painting is characterized by bold, rich colors, nearly total flatness, and an absence of any illusion of space and depth. Hardly any link to Carolingian painting can be found here.<sup>88</sup>

At the beginning of the tenth century, the city of León replaced Oviedo as the capital of Asturias. From then on, the entire region was referred to as the kingdom of León. During this stage of the Reconquest, in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, León was the Christian kingdom most actively involved in the struggle against the Muslims. Under Fernando I (1053–65) and his son Alfonso VI (1065–1109), Christian Spain forged ties with other countries in Europe. In art, this development manifested itself in the appearance of the Romanesque style throughout northern Spain. An example is the early Church of San Isidoro in León, whose layout can still be reconstructed and some of whose walls still exist.<sup>89</sup> Cultural variations and use of the unique style of the past would yet occur, but by and large, art in Spain dovetailed with European art from that time on. Traces of the prolonged Muslim presence can be found in the art of the Mudéjares in Christian Spain, and the early medieval heritage had a strong impact on the development of a unique figure style in Spanish Romanesque painting. In the thirteenth century, illuminated manuscripts produced at the court of Alfonso X, the Wise, of Castile still contained echoes of methods and ornamental patterns that were customary in the tenth and eleventh centuries, as can be observed, for example, in the ornamental frames in manuscripts of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (fig. 17).<sup>90</sup>

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mary of this issue in Dodds (1990), 49; with regard to manuscripts, see Williams (1977), 16–7; see also Mentré (1996), 12–41.

<sup>88</sup> Slight Carolingian influences are discernable only from the mid-tenth century on, see Williams (1977), 21–23.

<sup>89</sup> *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 167–68.

<sup>90</sup> Madrid, Library of the Escorial, MS T. I. 1; for a facsimile edition, see *Cantigas* (1979); see also Keller and Cash (1998).

*The Art of the Mudéjares*

A particularly interesting expression of the encounter between Christians, Muslims, and Jews is the Mudéjar design prevalent in architecture and architectural sculpture throughout Christian Spain from the twelfth century onward.<sup>91</sup> The Mudéjares specialized in construction with bricks, stuccowork, and woodwork. At a time when the Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals were built in the large cities, Mudéjar craftsmen left their imprint on small churches in the cities<sup>92</sup> and on various structures in small towns in rural areas. Mudéjar art was popular in secular construction in Christian cities, sometimes as an expression of certain political affiliations, as in the time of Pedro the Cruel of Castile in the mid-fourteenth century. The Mudéjares therefore played an increasing role in architecture and various other crafts, such as architectural sculpture, pottery, and the production of tiles. Their unique design left its mark on all areas where they lived in large concentrations. A particularly interesting manifestation of Mudéjar art can be found in the synagogues that survived in Iberia, and whose repertoire of forms is indebted almost exclusively to Islamic art.<sup>93</sup> It should be remembered, however, that only a few of the synagogues that existed in the Iberian Peninsula have survived.

The Mudéjar builders retained the Islamic artistic language of the past and enriched it with elements that were popular at the time in Al-Andalus and northern Africa. Several churches built in Aragon, for example, reflect a style that was then widely used in Al-Andalus, which was under the rule of the Almohad caliphs.<sup>94</sup> In other words, Mudéjar art not only involved the preservation of Islamic motifs from the past, but was a dynamic phenomenon that kept changing under direct influence from Nasrid Granada and the Maghreb. This fact is crucial to our understanding of Sephardic Jewish art and the choice of motifs and forms in both synagogue architecture and manuscript illumination.

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<sup>91</sup> For a general survey, see Borrás Gualis (1990).

<sup>92</sup> See Raizman (1999).

<sup>93</sup> On synagogues in Spain in general, see Ben Dov (1989) and Cantera Burgos (1984).

<sup>94</sup> MacKay (1977), 90.



Mudéjar art is characterized by an absence of figurative motifs and by a preference for abstract decoration with stylized geometric or floral patterns. As noted, one of the hallmarks of this art is an abundant use of arches of various shapes: the horseshoe arch in its Islamic version, polylobed, intersecting, and superimposed arches.

Many questions arise in connection with this art. They stem mainly from the parallel emergence of Romanesque and Gothic architecture following the post-Reconquest integration of Spain into Christian Europe, and from the development of various contacts with the north. The styles coexisted but rarely intermingled. Instances of the intermingling of Mudéjar elements with Romanesque architecture can be found, for example, in the transept arches in the Church of San Isidoro in León,<sup>95</sup> in the courtyard of the Monastery of San Juan de Duero in Soria,<sup>96</sup> and in the stucco ceilings in the Monastery of Las Huelgas in Burgos. Scholars have not yet decided on a proper definition of Mudéjar art and there is no consensus as to the full meaning of the term. Some scholars refer to it as art created by Muslims, whereas others define it in its broader sense, as art that includes Islamicizing formal elements but is created by Christians or Jews.<sup>97</sup> It is also not clear what types of Christian religious construction evidence a preference for Mudéjar architecture and the use of Islamic formal elements. The question is whether Mudéjar can be defined in terms of urban and rural construction. In other words, were the churches in the cities built and decorated in a Romanesque or Gothic style, sometimes by French artisans, while those in the villages were built by Mudéjares? Was there competition between Mudéjar and Christian French builders? Can Mudéjar art be defined from a regional or chronological perspective? Or can we assume—as proposed by Jerrilyn Dodds—that the Mudéjar design was sometimes employed to convey an ideological message?<sup>98</sup>

Distinct examples of the use of the Mudéjar design in secular construction can be found in the palace of Alfonso XI in Tordesillas,

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<sup>95</sup> *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 167–73, with a picture of the transept arch on p. 172 and related bibliography.

<sup>96</sup> *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 24 with a reproduction.

<sup>97</sup> See mainly Lambert (1993); Torres Balbas (1949); Borrás Gualis (1990); Dodds, *Mudéjar Tradition in Architecture* (1992); for a summary of this issue, see Raizman (1999).

<sup>98</sup> Dodds, *Mudéjar Tradition and Synagogues* (1992).

which subsequently became the Monastery of Santa Clara (fig. 18), and in the Alcazar, the palace of Pedro the Cruel in Seville.<sup>99</sup> The use of Mudéjar design in synagogues indicates a large degree of adaptation to Islamic culture on the part of Spanish Jews, and numerous examples of this phenomenon can be found in a period when most of Spain's Jews were already living under Christian rule.

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<sup>99</sup> Pedro's palace is not really an example of Mudéjar construction in its full sense, since it was the work of builders from Granada; Raizman (1999), 202–203.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CASTILIAN WORKSHOPS OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY

#### *The Earliest Illuminated Bible*

The earliest extant Sephardic decorated Bible was signed in 1232 by Israel ben Moses ibn Casares for a patron by the name of Elisha<sup>1</sup> (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 25).<sup>2</sup> A small book (185×220 mm), it contains modest ornamentation of various types. On a few of the pages,<sup>3</sup> spared-ground frames and medallions (fig. 19) appear against a background of brown ink. The same ink was used for the text. The decoration includes guilloche-type interlace patterns, stylized vegetal patterns, and other kinds of abstract ornamentation. The formal language is entirely indebted to Islamic art. The medallions are reminiscent of the *ansa* decorations in illuminated manuscripts of the Qur'an produced from the eleventh century on in Granada, Cordoba, Seville (figs. 1, 2, and 3), and Valencia; the latter was still under Islamic rule when Paris 25 was signed.<sup>4</sup>

The book contains a variety of scribal decorations. Various portions of the text are enclosed in micrographic frames (fig. 20) in guilloche patterns similar to the spared-ground ones. Some of the pages display the *masorah magna* in zigzag lines. Such micrographic decorations exist, as noted, already in the earliest decorated Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East (fig. 13). The book also contains markings for the weekly portions. These follow two different systems: the *parashot* are marked according to the Babylonian annual reading cycle, while the *sedarim* are also indicated according to the Palestinian triennial cycle (fig. 21). The latter are marked with the letter *samekh*, and the *parashot* are indicated with the abbreviation *parash*. Thin and

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<sup>1</sup> See colophon on fol. 397v.

<sup>2</sup> Zotenberg (1866), 3–4; Garel (1990), 58–59.

<sup>3</sup> Fols. 8r, 397r, 397, 398r.

<sup>4</sup> For an example with frames using similar interlace motifs as those in Paris 25, see a Qur'an attributed to Valencia in the Nasser Khalili collection, Raby and James (1992), cat. no. 20 with reproductions.

delicate ornamentation enhances the *seder* marks, in brown ink similar to that used for the text. The *parashah* signs are in the same ink, but their decoration, which somewhat imitates that of the *seder* marks, is in another, darker ink. This decoration was probably inserted by another hand. The same dark ink was used for various corrections in the text<sup>5</sup> and perhaps also for the list of the biblical books at the beginning of the volume.<sup>6</sup> The custom of decorating the *parashah* and *seder* indicators is also known from Middle Eastern Bibles (fig. 10). Finally, the lists of the *haftarot* are decorated with calligraphic frames of a type similar to those that had been used on carpet pages since the eleventh century in northern Africa, though here the line of enlarged script is accompanied by two micrographic lines. As ornamentation for text columns, these frames are an innovation.

The colophon does not state where the book was produced. Bezalel Narkiss attributes it to Toledo.<sup>7</sup> Gabrielle Sed-Rajna does not mention the book at all in her article on manuscripts from Toledo and Burgos, but in connection with other books, she attributes Bibles with *seder* markings to Toledo.<sup>8</sup> We will see below that though the use of *seder* indicators was indeed customary in that city, such a practice is also known in other places in Castile.<sup>9</sup> Maimonides reports:

The simple custom in all of Israel is that the [reading of the] Torah is completed in one year . . . And there are those who complete (the reading of) the Torah in three years, and this is not a simple custom.<sup>10</sup>

As was customary in most places in Spain, the book is bound in gatherings of eight leaves. We know that gatherings of six were common in Toledo.<sup>11</sup> However, since this is not the only practice there, the eight-leaved quires do not constitute clear-cut proof of a provenance other than Toledo. Moreover, most of the types of decoration correspond clearly to other Toledan manuscripts of that period. Like other Toledan Bibles, Paris 25 contains only little painted ornamentation and most of the decoration is micrographic or calligraphic.

<sup>5</sup> For example, on fol. 79r.

<sup>6</sup> Fols. 3v and 4r.

<sup>7</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 18–19.

<sup>8</sup> See Sed-Rajna (1978), 6–7.

<sup>9</sup> For example, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, cod. hébr. 82; Zotenberg (1866), no. 82, written, according to the colophon, in Burgos. For a listing of the *sedarim* according to three different systems, see Yoel (1962), 126–32.

<sup>10</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 2, *Hilkhot Tefillah* 13, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Beit-Arié (1981), 43; Sed-Rajna (1978), 6–7.

Another Bible in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 105)<sup>12</sup> contains a colophon stating that it was produced in Toledo in 1197–98; it is bound in gatherings of six leaves and has very modestly ornamented *seder* marks. A manuscript in Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2025),<sup>13</sup> however, whose colophon states that it was written in Toledo in 1256, is bound in quires of eight leaves. It has indicators of both *parashot* and *seidarim*, only a few of them decorated, and calligraphic frames of the type found in Paris 25. The *masorah magna* is generally written in straight lines, but occasionally it is rendered in simple zigzag patterns.<sup>14</sup>

Several features of Paris 25—the micrographic *masorah*, the frames for the Songs of Moses, the decoration of the *seder* marks, and the calligraphic frames—have their roots in the decoration of Middle Eastern manuscripts; all of them are the work of the main scribe or the masoretor. But the design of the more ornate decoration of medallions and frames has no specific parallels in earlier Hebrew manuscripts. It is indebted mainly to Iberian Islamic art.

In connection with Paris 25, Narkiss, Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, and Anat Tcherikover mention another Bible, today in the University Library of Cambridge (MS Add. 465).<sup>15</sup> This book is larger than Paris 25 by more than 10 cm (285×330 mm). It has no *seder* marks, but designates the *parashot* only; these marks are more ornately ornamented than the *seder* marks in Paris 25, and they are executed in gold and ink of various colors. Their design imitates vegetal shapes, though with a great deal of stylization.<sup>16</sup> The book also contains micrographic decoration of the Songs of Moses, but in patterns that are completely different from the ones in the Middle Eastern and Maghrebi Bibles or in Paris 25. It features vegetal patterns, foliate designs, and candelabrum-like trees,<sup>17</sup> a motif that would become especially popular in Catalan Bibles in the fourteenth century.

<sup>12</sup> Zotenberg (1866), no. 105; Sed-Rajna (1978), 7.

<sup>13</sup> Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 38.

<sup>14</sup> In the Holkham Library there is a Bible with similar features (MS 2): calligraphic frames and decorated *parashah* and *seder* markings. Sed-Rajna (1978), 7, attributes it to Burgos even though it has no colophon. Like Paris 82, this book includes verse counts in geometric shapes at the end of the biblical books.

<sup>15</sup> Schiller-Szinessy (1876), no. 13, 16–19; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 18–19, figs. 1–3; Reif (1997), 54–55.

<sup>16</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 3.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

Beyond the micrographic decorations of the Songs of Moses, the *masorah magna* of Cambridge 465 is not decorated at all, but painted decorations mark the end of the Pentateuch and the end of Prophets.<sup>18</sup> Comparing the latter to parallels in Paris 25, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover determine that Cambridge 465 is of Castilian origin.<sup>19</sup> Apart from the general Islamicizing character of the painted decoration in comparison with Paris 25, there is no evidence that enables us to clearly attribute the Cambridge manuscript to Castile or to date it with any certainty, and any claim with regard to its origin or date must remain hypothetical: it has no colophon or *seder* markings, and it is bound in gatherings of eight leaves. The design and motifs of the micrographic decoration are not typical of the Castilian school—though this does not mean that these types were not known in Castile—and they have no roots in Jewish manuscripts from the Middle East or the Maghreb.

Nor does the candelabra design clearly indicate provenance: such candelabra designs appear, for example, in a Bible in the University Library in Madrid (MSS 1, formerly shelf-marked MS 118 Z 42, fig. 22), which contains a notation that it was sold in 1280 in Toledo. Apart from numerous candelabra patterns this book features a wide range of micrographic decorations. Since the candelabra pattern later became very popular in Catalonia, Thérèse Metzger infers that the manuscript originated there.<sup>20</sup> However, the book may not only have been sold in Toledo, but it may also have been produced there, or elsewhere in Castile, since it contains *seder* marks, a characteristic that has no parallels outside Castile. Judging from Cambridge 465 and the Madrid manuscript, it is conceivable that the candelabrum pattern in fact originated in Castile, in spite of its rarity there and its later popularity in Navarre and Catalonia later on. Moreover, the design of the Madrid candelabra differs widely from their later Catalan relatives (figs. 105, 108, and 120).

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., fig. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>20</sup> Metzger (1974), 99.

*From the Marseilles Bible to the Damascus Keter*

More detailed information exists on the work of illuminators and scribes in Toledo in the second half of the thirteenth century, and the picture that emerges with regard to those years is clearer. At least two workshops left distinct traces: the names of scribes (members of the Ben Israel and Ibn Merwas families), notation of dates, or a certain degree of formal and motival homogeneity in the decoration. Sed-Rajna has already pointed out the prominence of the Ben Israel family of scribes, whose members are mentioned in documents, on tombstones, and in colophons. On the basis of her findings, the family's history can be reconstructed.<sup>21</sup>

Israel ben Isaac ben Israel signed two Bibles, one in 1222, now in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Kennicott 7),<sup>22</sup> the other in 1241, now in New York (Jewish Theological Seminary, MS Luzki 44n). The same name is mentioned in documents from 1236<sup>23</sup> and 1248.<sup>24</sup> Chaim ben Israel—probably his son—signed two Bibles. The first, from 1272, is in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 26).<sup>25</sup> The second, signed in 1277, became famous for its decorations and is commonly referred to as the “Parma Bible” (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2668).<sup>26</sup> Abu-Omar ben Israel—perhaps Chaim's brother—is mentioned in a document from 1292.<sup>27</sup>

The Bibliothèque municipale in Marseilles possesses two volumes of another Bible (cod. 1626); it lacks a colophon<sup>3</sup> but a note appended to it in 1562, when it was in Safed, states that it was written by Isaac ben Israel.<sup>28</sup> The exact date of this manuscript cannot be established with any certainty, but on the basis of an analysis of the decorations, it should be dated to ca. 1260.<sup>29</sup> Hence, it was not written

<sup>21</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), 301–302; her discussion is based on documents that were published by Pilar León Tello (1979).

<sup>22</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 2331.

<sup>23</sup> León Tello (1979), no. 211.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 147.

<sup>25</sup> Zotenberg, (1866), 26; Sed-Rajna (1978), 7, the date noted there (1256) is erroneous.

<sup>26</sup> Tamani (1968), 46, no. 1; Antonioli Martelli and Mortara Ottolenghi (1966), no. 32; Sed-Rajna (1978), 7; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), 3, no. 1.

<sup>27</sup> León Tello (1979), no. 240.

<sup>28</sup> Sed-Rajna (1978), fig. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Sed-Rajna (*ibid.*), 20–21, dates the book to ca. 1250 on the basis of a stylistic comparison with the decoration of the Damascus *Keter* (see below for a discussion

by the father of Israel ben Isaac ben Israel, who was active in 1222, but rather by a member of a later generation, probably another brother of Chaim Ben Israel. Isaac's name is also mentioned in a document from 1282<sup>30</sup> and on a tombstone from 1297.<sup>31</sup> A document from 1270 is signed by Israel ben Isaac,<sup>32</sup> and this name is mentioned again in 1292<sup>33</sup> and on a tombstone from 1303.<sup>34</sup> In those years, Menachem Hameiri of Perpignan (1249–1316) praised the scribal skills of Israel ben Isaac, maintaining that a Bible written by him was the most accurate.<sup>35</sup> There is no certainty as to whether Hameiri was referring to his contemporary, Israel ben Isaac, or to his ancestor, who was active in the first half of the century.

Sed-Rajna notes that Israel's name is mentioned by Isaac Abravanel in his commentary on the Book of Amos.<sup>36</sup> But here, too, it is not certain to whom Abravanel was referring.<sup>37</sup> Abravanel was discussing the vocalization of the word *bid'mesheq* (Amos 3:12) and the question whether the word should be written with a *shin* (*bid'mesheq*) or a *sin* (*bid'meseq*). He maintained that "Rabbi Israel" and "Ibn Merwas" wrote it with a *sin*.<sup>38</sup> An examination of the manuscripts of the Ben Israel family and Ibn Merwas reveals that in all of them, *bid'mesheq* is written with a *shin* as is common in other versions of the Bible. Abravanel was either mistaken, or the manuscripts he commented did not survive. Therefore, I am unable to determine to whom he was referring. The information mentioned above, suggests a reconstruction of the family relationships between the scribes (diagram 1).

The books attributed to Israel ben Isaac ben Israel from 1222 (Kennicott 7) and 1241 (New York 44), as well as Chaim ben Israel's 1272 Bible in Paris (Paris 26), contain only modest ink decorations. These are functional decorations made by the scribe, *parashah* and

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of what I believe to be later additions to the Damascus *Keter*). Due to these features, Sed-Rajna refers to its entire decoration scheme as a more advanced type.

<sup>30</sup> León Tello (1979), no. 212.

<sup>31</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), 302.

<sup>32</sup> León Tello (1979), no. 187; Sed-Rajna (1990), 302, attributes this document to Israel ben Isaac, who worked between 1222 and 1248. But it cannot be ruled out that it refers to a man by the same name from another generation.

<sup>33</sup> León Tello (1979), no. 258.

<sup>34</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), 302.

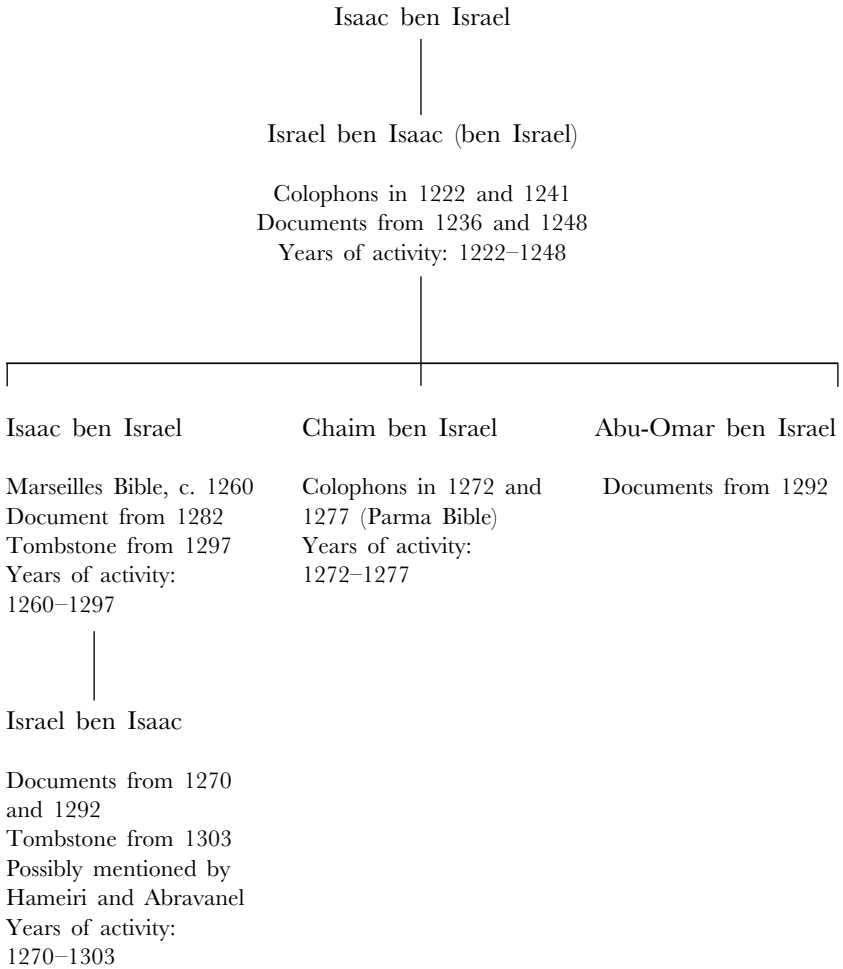
<sup>35</sup> Hameiri (1957), 48; see also Garel (1990), no. 31.

<sup>36</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), 302.

<sup>37</sup> Abravanel (1960), commentary on Amos 3:12.

<sup>38</sup> Sassoon (1932), vol. 1, 2.



Diagram 1: *The Ben Israel Family*

*seder* marks, verse counts at the end of the biblical books in micrography in geometric shapes, and the like.<sup>39</sup> New York 44 and Paris 26 also contain calligraphic frames. In contrast, two other manuscripts in this group also contain painted decorations: the Marseilles Bible features the first colored carpet pages in the Toledo school (fig. 23) and the Parma Bible was the first Bible to include a depiction of the Temple (figs. 30 and 31).

<sup>39</sup> Sed-Rajna (1974), with numerous reproductions in various manuscripts from Toledo and Burgos.

The Marseilles Bible has survived only partially; the first volume, the Pentateuch, has been lost<sup>40</sup> and another part is now in St. Petersburg (National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 53). The book is quite large (235×280 mm) and replete with carpet pages;<sup>41</sup> these pages feature scroll designs that form medallions framing various vegetal motifs, including palmettos. The technique by which the carpet pages of the Marseilles Bible were created was already common in the eleventh century and can be observed, for example, in the St. Petersburg Bible of 1008 (figs. 8 and 9): the pattern is drawn in pen and ink in thin lines, with micrographic lines running parallel to them. The colored fillings in the Marseilles Bible, however, are executed in a way different from the method used in the St. Petersburg Bible. In the latter, the pattern itself is hardly colored, whereas the spaces between the motifs are filled; stylized vegetal ornamentation is added in pen above the color that fills the backgrounds, a type of decoration not found in the Marseilles Bible, in which the vegetal motifs themselves were given treatment in color. The carpet pages in the Marseilles Bible are framed in a row of calligraphic script. Their roots lie, as noted, in the scribal decoration of Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East and the Maghreb.

Although carpet pages are well known in Middle Eastern book art and the technique that was used by the illuminator of the Marseilles Bible was already common in Hebrew books in the Middle East, in his choice of motifs he relied on architectural sculpture rather than on manuscript models. As Sed-Rajna demonstrated, medallions with stylized leaves, some carved in stone, others in wood, are common in architectural decoration throughout the Islamic world in general and in Spain in particular.<sup>42</sup> Sed-Rajna lists a variety of examples, including one from mid-eleventh-century Toledo (fig. 24). The motif can also be found on small art objects, such as a silver box from 976 in the Cathedral Treasury in Gerona.<sup>43</sup>

The fact that the medallion pattern was very popular in architectural decoration but is not found in manuscripts sheds further

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<sup>40</sup> The first volume, cod. 1636/I, bound together with this Bible, does not belong to the original manuscript.

<sup>41</sup> For more reproductions, see Sed-Rajna (1978), col. pl. 1, fig. 10; Garel (1990), no. 32. For reproductions from the volume found in St. Petersburg, see Sed-Rajna (1978), fig. 12.

<sup>42</sup> Sed-Rajna (1978), 18–19, figs. 15–19; Sed-Rajna (1992), 137.

<sup>43</sup> Dodds, Glick, and Mann, no. 9, 208–209.

light on the question of continuity in the Sephardic Bibles. The illuminator of the Marseilles Bible indeed borrowed the idea of the carpet page from illuminated manuscripts, and he further developed a technique that was already known. However, for the design of the specific patterns, he chose to rely on other arts accessible to him in his environment. At the same time, it should be noted that he was not influenced by the prevailing artistic trends in his immediate environment and utterly ignored Christian Gothic art. The cultural world reflected in the design of these pages is exclusively Islamic.

The carpet pages of the Marseilles Bible did not remain an isolated phenomenon. Two thirteenth-century carpet pages decorated with the technique used in the Marseilles Bible and containing similar motifs are bound together with a three-volume Bible from the fifteenth century, now in Copenhagen (Kongelige Bibliotek, Cod. Hebr. VII–IX, fig. 25).<sup>44</sup> In 1260, a Bible was copied by Menachem ben Abraham ibn Malikh for Isaac bar Abraham Chadad. The book, which is relatively large (270×302 mm), is now in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (MS 4°790). The colophon is not clearly readable, but the names of the scribe, the patron, and the date can be discerned. The last word, “in Burgos,” however, is readable only under ultraviolet light. This is the result of overwriting or some other sort of correction or change. The manuscript was therefore attributed to Burgos. After having been discovered in the nineteenth century in Damascus, the book became known as the Damascus *Keter*.<sup>45</sup> Yissachar Yoel discovered that both the scribe and the patron of the Damascus *Keter* were members of known and documented Toledan families,<sup>46</sup> and suggested that they migrated from Toledo to Burgos. Indeed, in the design and other aspects, the book reflects the best of the Toledan tradition: both the *parashot* and the *sedarim* are marked (fig. 28); numerous carpet pages adorn various parts of the book (figs. 26 and 27); and their design is analogous to that of the Marseilles Bible (fig. 23), and very similar to that of the fragment in Copenhagen (fig. 25). Like those in the Marseilles Bible, the medallion motifs can be compared to parallels in architectural

<sup>44</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994); see Sed-Rajna (1978), 17, fig. 14, and Sed-Rajna (1992), 136, fig. 56, and no. 13.

<sup>45</sup> See Weiser (1992), no. 1. A single page is now in the museum of the synagogue of Samuel Halevi Abulafia in Toledo. See *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>46</sup> Yoel (1962), 123.

sculpture (fig. 24). But alongside the stylized foliage pattern, the Damascus *Keter* also contains carpet pages with interlace patterns, executed in the same technique (fig. 27).

Many carpet pages, like the lists arranged in narrow text columns at the beginning of the volume, feature calligraphic frames, which were common, as we have seen, in manuscripts from Toledo. Some of the carpet pages, on the other hand, are framed with vegetal patterns. Sed-Rajna discerned this change from the Marseilles Bible and maintains that this is a stylistic development that justifies the assigning of an earlier date to the Marseilles Bible. She argues that the Damascus *Keter*, whose exact date is known, has a richer and more refined style.<sup>47</sup> Another look at the decorations reveals that in fact this change was not a stylistic development but simply a case of enriching with additional patterns. The character of the lines, formal language, and technique are quite similar in both manuscripts and therefore there is no reason to assume that the Marseilles Bible considerably predates the Damascus *Keter*. The stylistic resemblance actually indicates a proximity in time. The difference is not in the stylistic features but rather in the fact that the Damascus *Keter* was enriched with frames decorated in various patterns that replaced some of the calligraphic frames. The difference therefore lies in the choice of motifs rather than in the style.

I noted above that the Damascus *Keter* also includes decorated *parashah* and *seder* marks. The *parashah* signs were decorated in pen with simple vegetal patterns whose formal language echoes that of the carpet pages. The decoration of the *seder* marks, on the other hand, speaks another language (fig. 28): they are fully painted, and were, most likely, the work of another hand. The colors are different from those in the carpet pages, and the colorization reflects a technique common in Gothic manuscript painting. The range of colors is richer and includes use of white dots to produce highlights. As in the carpet pages, gold is used extensively, but in a much thicker layer. The heavy black outlines are not found in the carpet pages. Some of the decoration of the *seder* marks has iconographic significance—albeit only hinted—and Sed-Rajna has already noted this.<sup>48</sup> She considers these decorations to reflect an early stage of narrative

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<sup>47</sup> Sed-Rajna (1978), 20–21.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

illumination which developed later in Hebrew manuscripts. Among them it is possible to discern the highly stylized shapes of human heads.<sup>49</sup> In some cases, the *seder* sign is painted over the *masorah parva* and hides it. In light of these observations, there is no doubt that another artist executed these illustrations and they may even have been added at a later stage.

At the end of each biblical book—as in many other Sephardic Bibles—the number of verses is noted in micrographic script, usually laid out in geometric shapes (fig. 29). The number of *sedarim* was added to these counts, also in micrographic script but inserted by another hand and in different ink.<sup>50</sup> At that time, painted decorations were also added to these inscriptions, and judging from their technique, using heavy layers of gold and thick black contours, they are the work of the illuminator who decorated the *seder* marks (fig. 28). Consequently, we can conclude that the ornamentation of the *seder* marks, the noting of the number of *sedarim*, and the painted decorations at the end of the books were not included in the original layout of the Damascus *Keter* but were added later by another hand.

The original decoration program of the Damascus *Keter* faithfully reflects the tradition common in Toledo and was most likely produced at the same time as the Marseilles Bible and the Copenhagen fragment. The great similarity in the design and execution of the carpet pages also indicates that the illustrator of the Damascus *Keter* was associated with the workshop that produced the Marseilles Bible. As noted, the scribe and patron may have been from Toledo. The anonymous illuminator may have been connected to that city as well. The *sedarim* were probably already marked at this initial stage, as is customary in many Bibles from Toledo.

The later additions, on the other hand, do not reflect the tradition of manuscripts from Toledo but rather the artistic language that was customary at a later stage—around 1300—in northern Castile and Navarre. In the works of Joshua ibn Gaon—which will be discussed in the next chapter—there are decorations with hinted iconographic meaning in the margins of the text, and the technique that

<sup>49</sup> Fol. 153v, Sed-Rajna (1978), fig. 22; fol. 154v.

<sup>50</sup> As Yoel (1962), 126–32, has observed, these counts, the *seder* markings, and the list of *sedarim* at the beginning of the book reflect three different systems of *sedarim*.

he uses is similar to the later decoration of the Damascus *Keter*.<sup>51</sup> Considering the fact that the word “Burgos”—readable only under ultraviolet light—was probably written over an erased word, it can probably be suggested that the manuscript was produced in Toledo in 1260 and typical Toledan decoration types were applied. Toward the end of the century, it might have traveled to Burgos, where the location in the colophon was probably changed and the decoration of the *seder* markings, the *seder* counts, and the painted decorations of the verse and *seder* counts were added in a technique and formal language common in late thirteenth-century northern Castile and adjacent areas.<sup>52</sup>

### *The Parma Bible*

As we have seen, Chaim ben Israel signed two Bibles. The first, Paris 26, was produced in 1272, and the second, the Parma Bible, in 1277. Paris 26 lacks even functional scribal decorations. The Parma Bible, on the other hand, contains abundant decoration, and some of it is unique among the manuscripts that were produced in Toledo. From the standpoint of decoration, the only common denominator between the two Bibles is the calligraphic frames around the columns containing the list of *sedarim* and *parashot* in Paris 26, and around the tables listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali in the Parma Bible. The Parma Bible features a micrographic carpet page in a large centered star pattern (fig. 32), which constitutes an innovation in Sephardic manuscripts. Since this type of decoration is known from Middle Eastern books—the St. Petersburg Bible (fig. 9), for example—it can be assumed that the use of it in the Parma Bible is based on models from the Middle East or northern Africa. The two final pages, including the colophon, are decorated with micrographic frames similar to those of Paris 25. The verse counts at the end of the biblical books are written in

<sup>51</sup> Narkiss (1984), 32 and 77, notes that the strong “eastern features” of the decoration of the Damascus *Keter* are accompanied by typical western-Gothic elements. In light of the analysis made here, what seemed to Narkiss to be a stylistic contradiction is, in fact, a result of a later addition.

<sup>52</sup> Yoel (1962), 127, assumes that some modifications in the marking of the *sedarim*, namely the third system (see n. 50), were applied at a later date, when the manuscript may have been in Egypt.

micrography in simple geometric shapes, as observed also in other manuscripts of the Castilian school. The *masorah magna*, on the other hand, is written in straight lines with no decoration apart from an occasional simple zigzag pattern. The book thus reflects conventions common and widely known in the environment of the scribes. The Parma Bible contains indicators of the *parashot* and the *sedarim*, but they are not decorated.<sup>53</sup>

The depiction of the Temple appears on fols. 7v and 8r (figs. 30 and 31). This is the first such depiction in Spain, and in its general design it foreshadows similar renderings that would become common in fourteenth-century Catalan Bibles (in particular figs. 86 and 87). Scholars are divided as to whether this depiction was indeed part of the original design of the book, or was added at a later stage. Joseph Gutmann considered it an addition from the fourteenth century, in accordance with what was customary then in Catalonia.<sup>54</sup> Before him, Thérèse Metzger analyzed the iconography of the Temple implements in the Sephardic Bibles and assumed that this decoration was an original part of the manuscript.<sup>55</sup> Sed-Rajna rejected Gutmann's claim and relied on Malachi Beit-Arié's observation during a codicological examination of the book.<sup>56</sup> The scholars who believe that the depiction is original conclude that the pattern was produced in Castile and borrowed later in Catalonia, as opposed to Gutmann, who maintained that it is an exclusively Catalan phenomenon. The fact that the type of composition in the depiction of the Temple has no parallels in Castile, and that the iconographic tradition that it represents is, on the other hand, well known in Catalonia, strengthens Gutmann's claim. Nevertheless, it cannot be ruled out that the design was created in Toledo, survived only in one manuscript, and made its way to Catalonia.

The quire in which the depiction of the Temple appears is indeed an original quire of the book, but its originality still does not guarantee that the illustration was drawn in 1277. Since there is no other painted decoration in this book, such as *parashah* or *seder* marks, carpet pages, or frames for the marking of the verse counts, it is difficult

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<sup>53</sup> The decoration of the psalm markings that appears from fol. 281 on is not part of the original design of the book and was done in the early modern period.

<sup>54</sup> Gutmann (1976), 138–39.

<sup>55</sup> Metzger (1970–71).

<sup>56</sup> Sed-Rajna (1978), 21. Kurt and Ursula Schubert also assume that the depiction is original; Schubert (1984), 81.

to resolve the issue. An examination of the ruling patterns of the first two gatherings leads to the conclusion that the pages with the depiction of the Temple were at least meant to have some kind of illustration and no text (diagrams 2 and 3).<sup>57</sup>

The Book of Genesis begins on fol. 15v. Fols. 1–15r were intended for lists arranged in columns and for various decorations. Hence the pricking and the ruling were done on these pages in a way that was different from that of the pages that were meant to contain the biblical text. Fols. 1, 2, and 3r are blank. On fol. 3v, there is a dedicatory inscription and fols. 4r–7r contain tables arranged in two columns enclosed in calligraphic frames. On fols. 7v and 8r, we find the depiction of the Temple, also with calligraphic frames for each page. Fols. 8v and 9r are blank, apart from calligraphic frames of the same type. Fol. 9v contains the micrographic carpet page, and it, too, has a calligraphic frame (fig. 32). The micrographic writing in these frames was done by the same hand that wrote the micrography in the carpet pattern itself; that is, there is no doubt that the carpet page was part of the original decoration program. Fols. 10v, 11, and 12r are blank, apart from calligraphic frames. On fol. 12v, there are more lists. This manner of formatting the pages continues until fol. 15r, and as stated, the biblical text begins on fol. 15v.

In accordance with the changing character of these pages, the ruling, too, is done in different ways. It is engraved with a hard point without ink, and the pressure has transferred the ruling from one page to the next; on the second page, it is less distinct. The technique of ruling pages in pairs according to the order of the pages within the quire was commonly used, especially in Spain.<sup>58</sup> From the manner in which the book is ruled, we can get some idea of its plan, and it emerges that its original layout was not fully realized. Usually, the ruling was done, as was the pricking, on recto pages, but since the needs changed several times in the course of preparation of the first two quires, the ruling could have been done on a verso page as well. Fols. 1, 2, and 3r are completely blank and unruled. Fol. 3v is different from all the other pages and contains a dedicatory inscription in relatively large letters. For this purpose,

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<sup>57</sup> For information on ruling practices in general, see Beit-Arié (1981), 72–80; for recent observations, see Beit-Arié (2003), chap. 1.

<sup>58</sup> Beit-Arié (1981), 75.



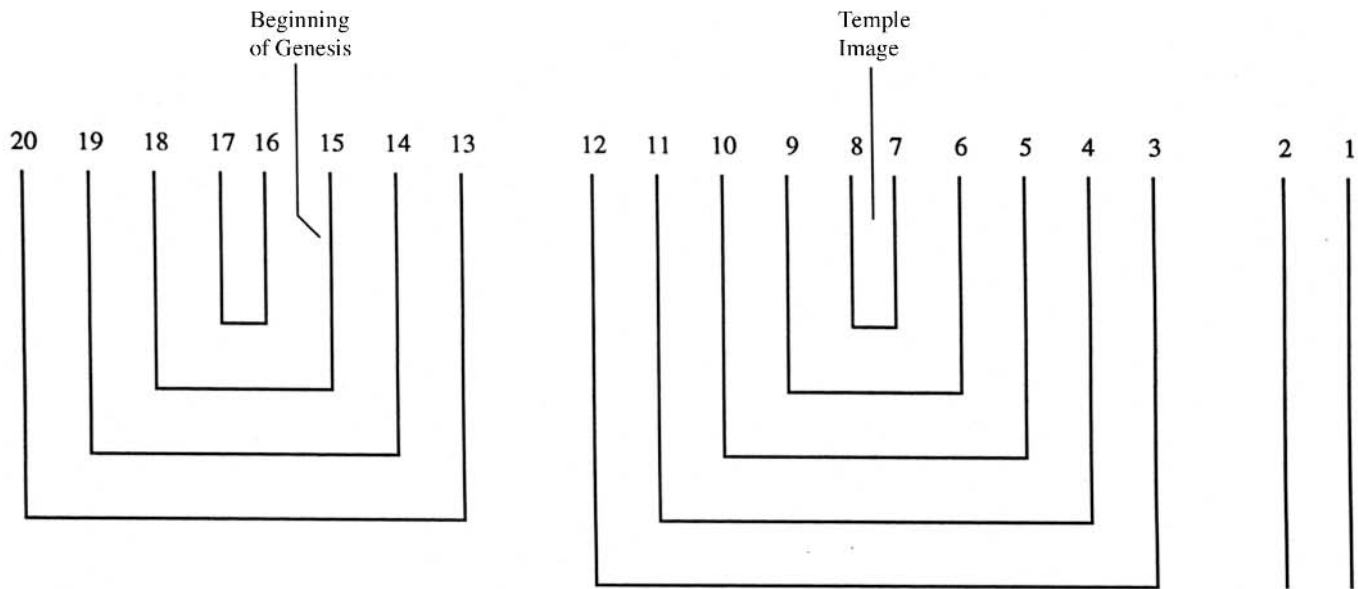
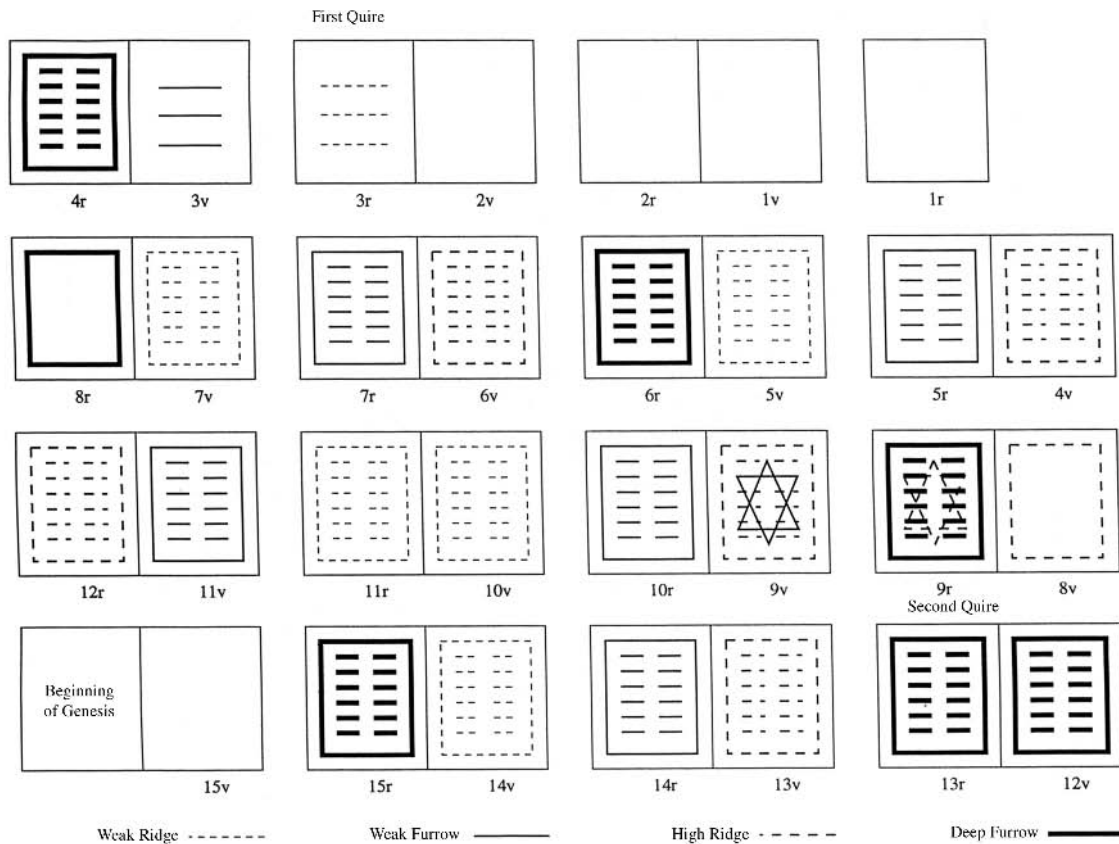


Diagram 2: *The first two quires of the Parma Bible*

Diagram 3: *Ruling in the first two quires of the Parma Bible*

special ruling was done on this page, and its traces appear on fol. 3r as very weak ridges. On fol. 4r, the first page with lists arranged in columns, the ruling appears in engraved lines, which sink into the texture of the parchment, and pass to the other side of the leaf—4v—as ridges (see diagram 2). The ruling passes to fol. 5r as furrows, which are ridges on fol. 5v, though here the lines are quite weak. Fol. 6r received the same treatment as fol. 4r—the engraving lines created ridges on fol. 6v, furrows on fol. 7r, and very faint ridges on fol. 7v (fig. 30). This folio contains, as noted, the right-hand side of the Temple depiction. Fol. 8r (fig. 31) should have been the next to receive new ruling, but it was left unruled, which indicates that it was designated for illustration from the outset. The illustration may have been meant to be spread over three folios, since fol. 8v is not ruled either (apart from lines for the calligraphic frame). This page indeed remained blank.

New ruling was done on fol. 9r, which means that this page was meant to contain text in columns, but the text was not inserted and, apart from its frame, the page remained blank. The ruling created ridges on fol. 9v (fig. 32), but here, too, the text was not written, and the micrographic carpet page was inserted instead. The masoretor who created this decoration added a different ruling for the star design, with a weak engraving whose impression barely appears on the other side of the page (fol. 9r). Fol. 10r contains no text, the impression of the ruling appears as weak furrows; fol. 10v contains barely visible ridges.

The fact that the ruling was not renewed on fol. 11r indicates that it, too, was meant to contain some decoration. Fols. 11v and 12r also remained blank. On fol. 12v, the ruling pattern for lists was renewed—but here an exception was made and the ruling was done on a verso page. Therefore the lines now pass in the opposite direction: they are distinct furrows on fol. 12v, ridges on fol. 12r, and faint furrows on fol. 11v. The ridges on fol. 11r can hardly be seen. On fol. 13r, which also contains lists that continue until the beginning of the Book of Genesis, the ruling was renewed according to the customary fashion and it passes to the other pages. This is also the beginning of the second quire. Finally, for the biblical text, of course, the ruling changed, according to the needs of the text, and was done without frames.

This analysis, too, does not prove with certainty that the depiction of the Temple is part of the original decoration program, but it at

least indicates that the pages containing the depiction—and several other pages that remained blank—were probably meant for decoration and not for text. It further shows that though the insertion of a micrographic carpet page broke with the originally planned layout, it belonged beyond doubt to the initial design executed in 1277. The assumption that the depiction of the Temple was part of the original design is thus certainly conceivable. The fact that the calligraphic frames were already in place when the illuminator began the Temple depiction—as indicated by faint color stains overlapping with the inner micrographic lines of the calligraphic frame discernible on both pages—does not prove anything either, since the artists normally worked after the pages were laid out and much of the scribe's work was completed. The calligraphic frames on some of the blank pages show that this was the first step toward writing and decorating. The fact that the artist used another ink and colors, and that the script of the inscriptions accompanying the Temple implements is different from that of the scribe of the text, does not constitute any proof or indication that the depiction is not part of the original design. It only attests that the artist was not the scribe. This method, too, is common in other manuscripts; usually, the drawn decoration was done by an artist, and only simple ornamentation in pen and ink was done by the scribe himself.

To sum up: an examination of the codicology of the Parma Bible reveals that the Temple depiction may have been part of the original design. In fact, the codicological information supports the assumption that it was part of the original plan. On the opposite side stands Gutmann's iconographic argument, which has a certain validity. We are left, then, without a possibility of resolving the issue.

The Parma Bible has received special attention mainly due to the representation of the Temple implements (figs. 30 and 31), as this may have been the first depiction of its kind in Spain. Many scholars have dealt with various aspects of the subject, and Carl Otto Nordström and Thérèse Metzger have devoted detailed discussions to its iconography.<sup>59</sup> The appearance of the Temple implements again raises the question of continuity and innovation. The fact that the theme of the Temple and the Tabernacle is known both in late

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<sup>59</sup> On the textual sources, see Nordström (1968); an additional discussion noting most of the literary sources can be found in Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 102–103; for an iconographic classification, see Metzger (1970–71).

antique Jewish art and in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch (figs. 5 and 6) raised the possibility of an iconographic dependence between these works and the Sephardic renderings of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. In what follows this issue will be reexamined.

Fol. 7v (fig. 30) contains a depiction of a seven-branched menorah, together with its wick tongs and ash scoops on each side, and a three-stepped stone. On the left-hand side above appear the Tablets of the Law, the cover of the Ark (*kaporet*), and two cherubs. A simple frame makes all of them one unit—the Ark of the Covenant—though from the standpoint of shape and spatial perception, the depiction bears no relation to the description of the Ark in Exodus (Chapter 25). Under the Ark unit are incense vessels and in the lower left-hand corner is the showbread table with two vertically arranged stands of showbreads. On fol. 8r (fig. 31), we see the golden altar as a gold square with horns, and to its left the stepped sacrificial altar, with the meshwork decorating the lower step and a ramp attached to its left horn. Under it we can see the basin, the pedestal, and the ram's horn (*shofar*); under the golden altar are the jar of manna, the dry staff, the flowering staff, and a pair of trumpets.

The depictions are somewhat crude and they are painted in gold with black outlines against the background of the parchment. The outlines are careless and in some places the painting seems sloppy. In the parts in which the gold has peeled, the underdrawings beneath appear clearer, cleaner, finer, and made by a steadier hand. All of the implements, apart from the two altars and the ramp, are accompanied by captions. The depiction is completely flat, with the implements appearing as gold silhouettes spread over the parchment without any connection to the space around them. This abstract approach—despite the representational character of the depiction—is consistent with that of the ornamental carpet pages in other manuscripts.

At the same time, the way in which the implements are depicted does not indicate the intention of the illuminator to organize the implements as a precise schematic map, as had been done since the end of the twelfth century in the writings of Maimonides (fig. 33).<sup>60</sup> The arrangement of the implements on the Parma pages is apparently arbitrary, with no relation to the position meant for them according to the text. The picture reflects the description of the

<sup>60</sup> Wischnitzer (1974).

implements of the Tabernacle in Exodus (Chapters 25–30) and is not based on the description of Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings 6–7). There is no detail that indicates a specific connection with the Temple. The description of the Tabernacle implements in Exodus is more detailed than the one in Kings, and therefore it is natural that a visual depiction would be based on it, even if it is meant to show the Temple. Though the depiction faithfully reflects the text, it does not accompany Exodus 25, but rather serves as a kind of opening page for the entire Bible.

The research of Nordström and others after him<sup>61</sup> found that the depiction is not based only on the biblical text, but, to a large extent on the discussion in the Mishna (the *Menachot* and *Tamid* tractates), Rashi’s commentary on Exodus, and the Book of Temple Service, the eighth book of Maimonides’ *Mishne Torah*. Rashi and Maimonides indeed dealt extensively with the physical form of the Temple implements, as opposed to Nachmanides, for example, or Abraham ibn Ezra, who concentrated more on verbal or spiritual meanings and dealt less with appearance. Research has dealt hitherto with the use of the writings of Maimonides and Rashi, without any distinction between them. In many details there is indeed no conspicuous difference between the descriptions provided by Maimonides and those offered by Rashi, but revisiting the sources reveals that in spite of their similarity to each other, the likelihood is that it was mainly the commentaries of Maimonides that influenced the design of these pages, and not those of Rashi.

The relevance of such a search for textual sources is not merely to gain a full or close to full understanding of the image vis-à-vis the most suitable text. I do not believe that the illuminators had a particular text before their eyes while depicting the Temple or creating any other images. Text sources in the sense in which I use them here are a key to finding the cultural identification of the illuminators, the patrons, and other people who stand behind the images. The correspondence of an image to one text as opposed to another suggests a certain degree of familiarity on the part of the illuminators or the patrons not only with this text, but with the cultural world behind it. It is this cultural world behind the images that is the focus of the following paragraphs. Whether a particular vessel

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<sup>61</sup> Nordström (1968); Metzger (1970–71); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 102–103.

had legs or not is not the main issue here, neither am I concerned with whether it was Rashi, Maimonides, or Ibn Ezra who said how a certain implement looked. Determining whose text is the closest to the images becomes therefore a matter of who in a broader sense provided the concepts reflected in the depictions.

Another way of dealing with concepts that may stand behind the pictures was recently pursued by Eva Frojmovic, who bases her analysis on more general statements about messianism, the meaning of the Temple, wisdom, light, and other concepts.<sup>62</sup> Since such general statements do not necessarily correspond to the pictorial details, the latter together with their textual counterparts provide more specific information about the “spiritual fathers,” so to speak, behind any given image. This specific information can then guide us to the more meaningful concepts and their cultural significance.

Exodus 25 begins with detailed instructions for the preparation of the Tabernacle, but the depiction in the Parma Bible is very abstract, and many details suggested by either Maimonides or Rashi are not expressed in the picture. Many details are missing from the stylized depiction of the Ark: the poles, the rings, the golden rim, and the legs that Ibn Ezra maintained were attached to the Ark.<sup>63</sup> The cherubs with the outstretched wings over the Ark’s cover accord with the biblical text (Ex. 25:18–20). On the other hand, the depiction in the Parma Bible and all of the later depictions include the jar of manna and the staff of Aaron. This fact is not surprising, since it is explicitly stated in the Bible that the two should be kept in front of the Ark. Their position, however, is mentioned neither in the description of the Tabernacle nor in that of the Temple, but rather in those verses that relate to the jar of manna (Ex. 16:33–34), and those that refer to the flowering staff (Nm. 17). It is indeed known according to the text that the two objects were kept in the Holy of Holies

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<sup>62</sup> Frojmovic (2002) interprets the Temple images in light of such concepts found in Nachmanides’ writings. Tempting as it may be to link the late medieval view of Nachmanides’ circle on these issues with the images in question, an examination of the particular implements and their specific details as described and referred to by Nachmanides does not confirm her results (see below). My observations on the books as complete entities and their decoration program beyond the Temple images does not confirm them either, since they mirror a cultural background largely different from that of Nachmanides’ circle. The most prominent feature in this respect is the predominance of the Islamicizing idiom: the aniconic approach and its cultural significance, see below, chap. 6.

<sup>63</sup> Commentary to Ex. 25:12.

(Nm. 17:10), but the description of the Tabernacle in Exodus does not evoke an immediate image that includes them. Rashi's commentary, too, does not evoke an image that includes the jar and the staff. Maimonides, on the other hand, expands on the description and stresses the presence of the jar of manna and the staff of Aaron beside the Ark explicitly:

There was a stone in the Holy of Holies, at its western wall, upon which the Ark rested. In front of it stood the jar of manna and the staff of Aaron. When Solomon built the Temple, knowing that it was destined to be destroyed, he built underneath, in deep and winding tunnels, a place in which to hide the Ark. It was King Josiah who commanded that the Ark be hidden in the Place which Solomon had prepared; as it is said: And he said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, that were holy unto the Lord: 'Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel did build; there shall no more be a burden upon your shoulders; now serve the Lord your God' (2 Chron. 35:3). The staff of Aaron, the jar (of manna), and the oil for anointing were also hidden with the Ark. All these did not reappear in the Second Temple.<sup>64</sup>

Visualizing Maimonides' text—unlike Exodus and Rashi—involves thus the jar of manna and the staff adjacent to the Ark. It is therefore not surprising that they are not missing from any of the Sephardic depictions, and some indeed appear right beside the Ark.<sup>65</sup> In the Ashkenazic depiction of the Temple in the Regensburg Pentateuch, which was produced in that city ca. 1300 and is now in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem (MS 180/52, fig. 34) the jar and the staff are missing,<sup>66</sup> and the picture appears to have been designed according to another source. This does not mean that Ashkenazic sages claimed that the place of the jar of manna and the staff was not beside the Ark, but simply that the visualization of Rashi's text, for example, not focusing on the staff and the jar, resulted in a different image.

Between the Ark and the showbread table there are two unlabeled items. If we compare them with depictions from the early fourteenth century in Roussillon (fig. 86) that have a distinct iconographic similarity to the Parma Bible, we can conclude that they are “incense

<sup>64</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah*, 4, 1; for the English version, see Lewittes (1957), 17.

<sup>65</sup> On the Catalan depictions of the Temple, see below, chap. 5, 156–68.

<sup>66</sup> For a detailed discussion of this illustration, see Revel-Neher (1998), 87–88.



saucers,” as the caption in one of the later examples explains.<sup>67</sup> In relation to the showbread table, the Bible mentions four different items (Ex. 25:29): bowls (*qe'arotav*), saucers (*kapotav*), cups (*qasotav*), and censers (*menaqotav*).<sup>68</sup> Both Rashi and Maimonides comment on all of them. They both interpret the saucers of the table as “two saucers for the incense (*b'zikhim*) to be put on the table next to the stands,” in Maimonides’ words.<sup>69</sup>

The showbread table itself is not described in detail in the Bible and the text does not clarify how the bread is arranged. The table is made of acacia wood, coated with gold; it has a frame around it, a gold molding for the rim, and rings and poles for carrying (Ex. 25:23–27). The text (Ex. 25:29–30) provides details of the accompanying implements:

Make its bowls, saucers, cups, and censers from which drink offerings may be poured; make them of pure gold. Put the showbread on the table to be always before me.

Lv. 24:6 mentions that the loaves are to be arranged on the table in “two stands, six to a stand.” These stands—to be imagined as shelf structures of some kind—are discussed more extensively by Rashi and Maimonides. With regard to the *qasotav*—generally understood as cups—Rashi explains otherwise:

These had the form of halves of hollow canes which are split along their length (bab. Talmud, *Menachot* 96a). [Articles] similar to these were made of gold and three of them were set in a row above each loaf so that another loaf (that above it) should rest on top of the ‘canes’; thus they (these canes) separated one loaf from another so that air could enter between and they would not become mouldy (bab. Talmud, *Menachot* 97a).<sup>70</sup>

Maimonides goes into yet more detail:

The Table had four golden staves, branching out in their upper ends, to support the two rows of the Showbread—two staves for one row and two staves for the other row. These are referred to in Scripture

<sup>67</sup> See chap. 5, 135.

<sup>68</sup> English quotations from the Bible are based on *The Oxford Study Bible* (1992); in some cases this version does not literally reflect the Hebrew text, and therefore I occasionally modified the translations.

<sup>69</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah*, 3, 14.

<sup>70</sup> Rashi’s commentary on Ex. 25:29. For an English version, see Silberman (1930), 136.

as *qasotav* (Ex. 25:29). It also had twenty-eight rods of gold, each of them like a hollow cane split in half; fourteen rods for one row and fourteen rods for the other row. Scripture refers to these as *menaqyotav* (censers, *ibid.*) . . . and the molds in which the Showbread was made, called *qe'arotav* (bowls, *ibid.*) The fourteen rods were used as follows: The first loaf (of the Showbread) was placed upon the Table itself. Between the first and the second loaves were put three rods, and so on: between each two loaves there were three rods; except that between the fifth and sixth loaves there were only two rods, because there were not more loaves on top of the sixth. We thus find fourteen rods for each row.<sup>71</sup>

The depiction in the Parma Bible is indeed too abstract for us to understand the precise structure of the shelves and the arrangement of the loaves. But it is Maimonides—and not Rashi—who stresses that there is nothing to cover the upper loafs and that, rather, the structures are open upward. The shelf structures are similarly depicted in the Parma Bible. Finally, Rashi and Maimonides offer similar descriptions of the shape of the loaves. In Maimonides' words:

Each loaf of the Showbread was quadrangular in shape; for it is said: bread of the faces (Ex. 25:30); namely, it should have several faces. Each loaf was ten handbreadths long, five handbreadths wide and seven fingerbreadths high. The Table was twelve handbreadths long and six handbreadths wide. Each loaf was placed lengthwise against the width of the Table, thus extending on either side two handbreadths. The extending end on either side was folded over upward, with a space being left in the middle between the two ends. Thus one loaf was laid upon the other until six loaves were ranged together. The same arrangement of six loaves was made beside this for the second row.<sup>72</sup>

This shape is faithfully reflected in the depiction of the loaves in the Parma Bible.

The visual rendering of the menorah also appears to be based on Maimonides' commentary.<sup>73</sup> It is Maimonides who stresses that there is a flower over the base of the menorah, which accords with the depiction in the Parma Bible; he also stresses that the wick tongs and ash scoops of the menorah are not from the same talent, which can explain why these implements appear separately in the picture.

<sup>71</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah* 3, 13–15; Lewittes (1957), 16.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, *Hilkhot Temidin Umusafin* 5, 9; Lewittes (1985), 269.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah* 4; Lewittes (1957), 17.

The three-stepped stone is also mentioned in Maimonides' text, but not by Rashi.<sup>74</sup>

The Parma Bible shows the two altars. According to the Bible, the sacrificial altar (Ex. 27:1–8) is coated with copper, and has mesh-work in its lower section, and these details can be seen in the picture. Its stepped shape is based on the text of the Mishna,<sup>75</sup> but these steps were not used for ascent; for that purpose, the priests used the ramp (*kevesh*), which is also mentioned in the Mishna,<sup>76</sup> and later in the texts of Maimonides and Rashi.<sup>77</sup> The altar implements that are mentioned in the Bible are not depicted in the Parma Bible, but only in the later manuscripts. The depiction of the golden altar accords with Maimonides' description in that it is a cube, as Maimonides describes it.<sup>78</sup> It is missing the roof that is mentioned only by Rashi.<sup>79</sup>

At the bottom of the page with the altars are a pair of trumpets and a *shofar*, as the caption notes. The depiction of the *shofar* is based on Leviticus,<sup>80</sup> and the trumpets are mentioned in Numbers.<sup>81</sup> Maimonides' Book of the Temple Service contains an extensive discussion of the musical instruments that were used in the Temple; especially prominent among them are the trumpets, whose precise shape is described minutely.<sup>82</sup>

Maimonides discussed the Temple in great detail, and all of Book Eight of *Mishneh Torah* was devoted to the subject. In his commentary on the Mishna, too, he wrote at length about the Temple. The earliest extant manuscript of the Mishna commentary is dated to the end of the twelfth century and is now in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Poc. 295). Some maintain that it was written by Maimonides himself.<sup>83</sup> A detailed drawing of the Temple appears beside the text (fig. 33). This drawing<sup>84</sup> is different in character from the depiction

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 3, 11, based on Mishna *Tamid* 3, 9.

<sup>75</sup> *Middot*, 3, 1.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 3, 3.

<sup>77</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah* 1, 6, Lewittes (1957), 6; Rashi's commentary on Ex. 27:5.

<sup>78</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechirah*, 1, 17; the measurements are 1×1×1 ell.

<sup>79</sup> Rashi's commentary on Ex. 30:1.

<sup>80</sup> Lv. 25:9.

<sup>81</sup> Nm. 10:2–10.

<sup>82</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963) 8, *Hilkhot Klei Hamiqdash*, 3, 4–5, Lewittes (1957), 51.

<sup>83</sup> Stern (1955).

<sup>84</sup> For a later example (Gerona, 1306), see Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, cod. heb. 173, fol. 1v; Nordström (1968), fig. 24.

of the Temple in the Parma Bible and its purpose is informative and not decorative. It maps out the precise position of each element, but it does not concentrate at all on the details of the implements. The menorah is drawn in only a few lines, the showbread table and the golden altar are simple squares, and the same applies to most of the other elements. Only the sacrificial altar is depicted more precisely; as opposed to the other elements, which are seen from above, the altar is shown from the side, so that its steps are clearly visible. To its left is the ramp, depicted as triangle.

There is actually a great deal of similarity between this depiction of the sacrificial altar and its parallel in the Parma Bible, and it is quite conceivable that the Parma version was influenced by the drawings in the writings of Maimonides. All of the other elements in the Maimonides drawings are not sufficiently detailed to serve as a model for an illustration of a decorative and not only informative nature. It is also interesting to note that there are no previous depictions of the sacrificial altar—neither in late antique Jewish art (fig. 35) nor in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch (figs. 5 and 6).<sup>85</sup> From the thirteenth century on, such drawings became a regular part of the manuscripts of commentary on the Mishna and *Mishneh Torah*.

The above comparison brings us back to the question of continuity—from the late antique depictions of the Temple, to illustrations in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch, and to those from Spain. The continuity theory was first raised by Cecil Roth,<sup>86</sup> was adopted by Narkiss in his book on illuminated Hebrew manuscripts,<sup>87</sup> and was recently discussed again by Elisabeth Revel-Neher.<sup>88</sup> In Narkiss' opinion, the foundations of decoration were laid in the Middle East;<sup>89</sup> from there, they passed to Islamic Spain, where they were copied and then served as models for later copies that were produced in Christian Spain. It should be reiterated, that no decorated Hebrew manuscripts survive from Islamic Spain. Narkiss considers this con-

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<sup>85</sup> This depiction is also completely different from the drawings that were inserted as illustrations to Rashi's commentary. See, for example, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Michael 384, fol. 142v, Narkiss (1974), fig. 8.

<sup>86</sup> Roth (1953); for a recent critique on Roth's approach, see Frojmovic (2002), 94–95.

<sup>87</sup> Narkiss (1984), 29; see also Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 102.

<sup>88</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), 61–62.

<sup>89</sup> See also Narkiss (1990), chap. 3.

tinuity to be one of the foundations of Sephardic book illumination.<sup>90</sup> This assumption was rejected by Gutmann,<sup>91</sup> Thérèse Metzger,<sup>92</sup> and recently Bianca Kühnel, due mainly to the absence of a visual similarity between the Middle Eastern and the Sephardic depictions. Kühnel emphasizes the iconographic differences between the Sephardic depictions and their predecessors, and finds the models for Sephardic illustration in Latin manuscripts.<sup>93</sup>

Frojmovic, in her recent reading of the Temple images, argues that even if models were used, the copies “might have been extremely similar in appearance. But not in *meaning*.”<sup>94</sup> There is, however, also a significant lack of similarity in appearance, a fact that certainly sheds interesting light not only on meaning in a broader cultural context, but also on the practice of late medieval Jewish book production. Revisiting the issue of continuity thus changes not only our view in regard to meaning, but the resulting observations are relevant on three levels: first, on the more practical-technical level of book production and book history; second, on the level of exchange with the surrounding cultures; third, on the level of Jewish cultural history and the changing meaning of the Temple depictions.

As I have noted, some degree of conceptual continuity can undoubtedly be observed: representation of the Temple, the Tabernacle, or some of their implements in mosaic floors in late antique synagogues (fig. 35) is an expression of the perception of the synagogue as a substitute for the Temple, and depictions of the Temple in Bibles attest to the perception of the book as a “minor Temple,” hence Sephardic Jewry refers to it as *miqdashya*—an abbreviated form for “the Temple of God.” There is also no doubt that the messianic message is common to all of the depictions to some degree; Revel-Neher’s discussion gives us a detailed look at these contexts.<sup>95</sup>

The dominant shape of the Ark of the Covenant in Jewish art of late antiquity, which over the course of time developed into an iconographic convention, is a rectangle with a semicircle on top of it.

<sup>90</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 14.

<sup>91</sup> Gutmann (1967–68); Gutmann (1978), Introduction.

<sup>92</sup> Metzger (1970–71).

<sup>93</sup> Kühnel (1999).

<sup>94</sup> Frojmovic (2002), 98.

<sup>95</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), 61–62; for a recent further, but different look at the messianic aspects, see Frojmovic (2002).

Revel-Neher traced this shape throughout late antiquity and considers it a product of a conceptual integration of the Ark of the Covenant with the shrine in synagogues, at a time when the synagogue was perceived as a substitute for the Temple.<sup>96</sup> In late antique Jewish art, this shape characterizes not only symbolic depictions but also narrative ones. By the sixth century, it played a role in Constantine of Antioch's (Cosmas Indicopleustes) perception of the cosmos as being shaped like the Tabernacle that God showed Moses on Mt. Sinai.<sup>97</sup> An expression of the connection between the Tabernacle and the shape of the cosmos—specifically, the shape of the “short side” of the cosmos, which was perceived by Constantine to be in the form of a rectangular box<sup>98</sup>—can be found in various depictions of the cosmos both in Byzantine and in Latin manuscripts.<sup>99</sup> In later Jewish art, there are echoes of this symbolism in Bibles from the Middle East, in which this motif appears in nearly complete abstract form, and arranged as micrographic carpet pages.<sup>100</sup> It should be noted, however, that this shape is absent from depictions of the Temple implements in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch (figs. 5 and 6).

The Sephardic depictions of the Temple—in both the Parma Bible and its successors—contain entirely new and different conventions for the Ark of the Covenant: a rectangular frame around the Tablets of the Law in some of the manuscripts, and the tablets with the poles attached to each side in others (fig. 107). The rectangle with the semicircle that is so typical in late antiquity does not return in this context. Uncharacteristic depictions are found in one of the Catalan Bibles (which will be discussed further on) and in the Sarajevo Haggadah from the mid-fourteenth century (Sarajevo, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, fig. 36), which scholars believe to have been illuminated in the Crown of Aragon. This Haggadah is decorated with a particularly opulent series of narrative illustrations culminating in a depiction of the celestial Temple “that will be built speedily in our days,” as the accompanying inscription notes. This depiction combines the old and new concepts,<sup>101</sup> and at the same

<sup>96</sup> Revel-Neher (1984), 71–130.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 178–82. See also Laderman (2000).

<sup>98</sup> Revel-Neher (1984), 178–82, with reference to additional literature.

<sup>99</sup> See Broderick (1984).

<sup>100</sup> See chap. 2, 43.

<sup>101</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), 94–95, 109.

time preserves the convention that was used in late antiquity and in the meantime had disappeared from Jewish art. Moreover, it also has echoes of the cosmology of Constantine of Antioch in that this specific shape of the late antique Ark convention returns within the manuscript as a frame for the world in the depiction of the universe.<sup>102</sup> This design is also used as a basis for the depiction of the facade of the synagogue in the picture showing the congregation coming out of the building after prayer services.<sup>103</sup>

The iconography of the Sarajevo Haggadah is very complex and has still not been discussed extensively. However, in comparison to the depictions of the Temple of the same period, the picture in the Haggadah is unique in that it preserves the late antique convention of the Ark of the Covenant not only conceptually but also in terms of shape. In the Sephardic Bibles, this convention plays no role. As the analysis of the Parma Bible shows, the Ark of the Covenant is depicted by means of other formal elements, and these continue to develop in later Bibles. This observation casts great doubt on the assumption of continuity of iconographic details.

Our knowledge of the depictions of the Temple implements in Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East is limited to the two above-mentioned illustrations in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch, depictions of a few isolated implements in two other manuscripts,<sup>104</sup> and the architectural motif in some of the carpet pages, a motif that is identified as a symbol of the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>105</sup> The details in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch are so stylized that it is difficult to identify them. On one of the pages (fig. 6) it is possible to discern a seven-branched menorah, another object that is difficult to identify (Metzger sees it as a showbread table),<sup>106</sup> the Tablets of the Law, and a column that probably represents the Yakhin or Boaz pillars of Solomon's Temple. It is also difficult to analyze the entrance to the Tabernacle. In Ex. 26:37 five screen posts are mentioned, and these perhaps might be the geometric shapes in the lower part of the page, but it is difficult to guess what the round tablets are

<sup>102</sup> Broderick (1984); see recently Kogman-Appel and Laderman (2004).

<sup>103</sup> Fol. 34a.

<sup>104</sup> London, British Library, MS Or. 2363 and MS Or. 1467. For a detailed description, see Metzger (1970–71), 403.

<sup>105</sup> See chap. 2, 43.

<sup>106</sup> Metzger (1970–71), 404.

meant to be.<sup>107</sup> Various other accompanying vessels—jars, bowls, and the like—can also be seen. On the other page (fig. 5), the implements are presented in a similar fashion, though the menorah has angular rather than rounded branches and the picture includes Yakhin, Boaz, the dry staff, the flowering staff, and an altar. The Tablets of the Law appear above the menorah—each tablet as a framed unit, and the two linked by an open triangle above them. Flanking the tablets are wings—just a hint of the cherubs.

There is not very much similarity between these depictions and the one in the Parma Bible. If the depictions in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch indeed include Yakhin or Boaz, this would mean that they incorporate details relating specifically to Solomon's Temple. The depiction in the Parma Bible, on the other hand, is faithful to the textual description in Exodus, without taking into account the specific elements of Solomon's Temple. Moreover, a few stylized details in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch do not comprise sufficient information on which to base a comparison with Sephardic illustrations, and most of the implements depicted in the Parma Bible and in later Bibles have no parallels in the St. Petersburg Pentateuch. Apart from these two depictions, we find only a few marginal elements in Middle Eastern manuscripts: a jug in MS Or. 1467 in the British Library<sup>108</sup> and the Tablets of the Law in MS Or. 2363, also in London.<sup>109</sup>

Where parallels exist, the similarity is not great. The depiction of the menorah in the Parma Bible is different from depictions in the St. Petersburg Pentateuch; the cherubs are different, as is the altar. There is nothing in the Sephardic Bibles that is similar to the object that Metzger identifies in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch as a showbread table, and the table in the Parma Bible is completely different.

What remains, then, is the general concept of representing the Temple implements in a Bible. This idea has continuity, but in the iconographic details there is not enough visual resemblance to enable us to speak in terms of copying from models or of a continuous iconographic tradition. Finally, as was noted in the previous chapter, the Sephardic depictions contain no trace of the architectural

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<sup>107</sup> Metzger (1970–71), 405, assumes that these are bases for the screen posts.

<sup>108</sup> Fol. 43r.

<sup>109</sup> Fol. 73v.



motifs that figure so prominently in the carpet pages of the St. Petersburg Bible<sup>110</sup> and in other manuscripts.

We know nothing about the decoration of Bibles in Islamic Spain. We cannot even say with certainty if it was customary to illustrate manuscripts. If it was, we have no information as to whether the decoration was only abstract or if Temple implements also appeared. Our look at the early Bibles from Toledo did not reveal many elements that could point to continuity, except in those decorations that were inserted by the scribes. The fact that several Bibles predating the Parma Bible contain no depictions of the Temple indicates the absence of a continuous tradition. The design of the first carpet pages in Toledo according to patterns from architectural sculpture instead of manuscript models, on the one hand, and the absence of Temple depictions from most of the early Bibles, on the other, certainly cause us to wonder if these Middle Eastern types of decoration were accessible to Jewish book artists in Spain before the thirteenth century. The decoration of Bibles in the Islamic period may have been confined to simple ornaments, such as frames with stylized vegetal or geometric patterns. Not only do we not know anything about illuminated Hebrew manuscripts from the Islamic period, we also do not have any information about Islamic manuscripts that were produced in Spain before the twelfth century.

When the illuminator of the Parma Bible created the picture of the Temple, he probably was aware of the Middle Eastern iconographic tradition and even took the basic idea from it. He probably was also familiar with the depictions in Latin manuscripts and was influenced by them to some extent. However, in most of the details he created a new iconography, and did so with a close familiarity with the writings of Maimonides and the drawings accompanying them.<sup>111</sup> Like the other Bibles of its time, the Parma Bible is faithful to the Islamic tradition and artistic perception—as evidenced by the

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<sup>110</sup> Narkiss (1984), pl. 2.

<sup>111</sup> An exceptional case is a tablet from the Herodian period, which was found in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem and is now in the Israel Museum, see Avigad (1970). The depiction on the tablet has not been preserved in its entirety: it includes the menorah and another two shapes, which Narkiss interprets as the left-hand corner of the golden altar and the left-hand side of the showbread table, see Narkiss (1974). Narkiss' analysis is based on a comparison of these remnants with Sephardic depictions of the type found in the Parma Bible. This specific comparison is indeed convincing, but the absence of additional details and the fact that connecting links are missing do not enable us to come to far-reaching conclusions.

carpet page and the abstract depiction of the Temple implements, which are arrayed flatly against the white background. This element is based entirely on the Islamic visual language, with no role played by the Gothic artistic language of the Christian surroundings.

*Joseph ben Judah ibn Merwas*

Between 1300 and 1334, Joseph ben Judah ibn Merwas signed three Bibles featuring various decorations. In 1300, he produced a Bible that is now in the British Library in London (MS Or. 2201).<sup>112</sup> The second Bible, formerly in the Sassoon Collection<sup>113</sup> and now in Toronto (University Library, MS Friedberg 4), was written in 1307. In 1334, Ibn Merwas wrote a third Bible for Judah Ben Asher in Toledo. This book was also formerly part of the Sassoon collection (Ms. 1208).<sup>114</sup> In general, these manuscripts reflect the Toledan tradition, but they also have a number of features—all in the domain of scribal decoration—that had already developed in the Middle East. decorations are the work of the scribe and the masoretor (if the masoretor was another person): *parashah* and *seder* marks decorated in delicate penwork in a similar fashion to the decoration of Paris 25; the *masorah magna* micrography in simple geometric patterns; decorated verse counts at the end of each book in the form of geometric shapes;<sup>115</sup> carpet pages in micrography in various continuous geometric patterns (figs. 37 and 38);<sup>116</sup> frames for the Song of Moses in Exodus, drawn in an interlace pattern, similar to parallels in micrography (fig. 39); and calligraphic frames for columns at the beginning of the book and for the carpet pages. These types of decoration are borrowed from the repertoire of forms and motifs of Islamic culture and completely ignore the Gothic art in Ibn Merwas' environment.<sup>117</sup>

<sup>112</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 52, 21–23; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 20–22, pointing out an error in the original date, which they identified with ultraviolet light.

<sup>113</sup> MS 508, Sassoon (1932), vol. 1, 2.

<sup>114</sup> Put on sale at Sotheby's in London in June 1994, *Sotheby* (1994), no. 28.

<sup>115</sup> See, for example, Sed-Rajna (1978), fig. 3.

<sup>116</sup> With regard to the Toronto manuscript, see Sed-Rajna (1990), fig. 1.

<sup>117</sup> It is also worth noting that the book in London is composed of gatherings of six leaves.

An incomplete Bible in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (MS 4<sup>o</sup>1112) has characteristics that are very similar to Ibn Merwas' books.<sup>118</sup> The volume has no colophon, but there is a good likelihood that it was Ibn Merwas' work. Like his manuscripts, it contains micrographic carpet pages, calligraphic frames, modest decoration of the *masorah magna*, and other such elements. The carpet page patterns are identical to those in the Bibles of Ibn Merwas. Moreover, the book is bound in six-page quires. The book also contains a poem praising the accuracy of the scribal work; the poem is known from several works from Toledo. Such a poem appears in the above-mentioned New York Bible of Israel ben Isaac and in the Toronto Bible, signed by Ibn Merwas.<sup>119</sup>

There is another book with similar features in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. héb. 13).<sup>120</sup> It contains several micrographic carpet pages that bear a strong resemblance to those of Ibn Merwas in terms of patterns and formal language.<sup>121</sup> Michel Garel assumes, on the basis of the book's format and style of writing, that it was produced in Burgos—thereby ruling out the possibility that it was written and decorated by Ibn Merwas.<sup>122</sup>

The manuscript in London also contains a remnant of a depiction of the Temple (fig. 40),<sup>123</sup> but the picture is different in character from those in the Parma Bible (figs. 30 and 31). The book was rebound at a later stage, which disrupted the arrangement of the pages, changed the position of the depiction of the Temple, and even caused the loss of part of it. The depiction is, in fact, a schematic map of the Temple and not a decorative, symbolic representation of the kind that appears in the Parma Bible. And yet, the manner in which it is drawn is different from that of the informative drawings in the manuscripts of Maimonides' commentary on the Mishna and *Mishneh Torah*, and the few implements that are shown are depicted in more detail.

<sup>118</sup> This similarity was pointed out by Sed-Rajna (1978), 7, and Metzger (1974), 102.

<sup>119</sup> See Weiser (1992), 29. I have doubts about the date noted in this catalogue—ca. 1250—due to the similarity to Ibn Merwas' Bibles, which are dated to the first half of the fourteenth century. Jerusalem 1112 was most likely produced in the same period.

<sup>120</sup> Zotenberg (1866), 2–3; Sed-Rajna (1978), 7.

<sup>121</sup> For a reproduction of fols. 158v–159r, see Garel (1990), no. 33.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>123</sup> For a detailed description of this illustration, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 21.

In the fragment, we can see only the sacrificial altar and the slaughterhouse. Additional elements, whose identity is not clear, appear in the upper part. The object on the right-hand side, comprising two rectangles, one large, one smaller, is identified by Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover<sup>124</sup> as the *magrefah*, a musical instrument described in the Mishna.<sup>125</sup> Nordström, on the other hand, identifies it as a floor plan of the Temple and of the Holy of Holies.<sup>126</sup> He compares the jars and the basins with parallels in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch,<sup>127</sup> but it should be noted that the shapes of these vessels are, in general, customary in Islamic design. The more significant details, the altar and the slaughterhouse, have no parallels in the St. Petersburg Pentateuch. Of the implements depicted, only the altar serves as a basis for comparison with the Parma Bible, and it indeed is similar in its basic components, though the shape of the ramp is a bit different. This altar, too, was probably designed according to the drawings in the manuscripts of Maimonides' commentary. The depiction of the implements and their details reflects what is written by Maimonides—as does the shape of the altar with the ramp, which includes a *revuah* (a hollow where ritually impure fowls were placed), “on the western side of the Ramp.”<sup>128</sup> The depiction of the slaughterhouse, the rings, and the tables accords with what is written in the Mishna.<sup>129</sup> The drawings in the manuscripts of Maimonides' commentary (fig. 33) show the slaughterhouse only as schematic rectangles without details, and the Parma Bible does not contain a depiction of it.

Ibn Merwas did not use a depiction such as the one in the Parma Bible or a similar manuscript as a model. He did, however, work with similar textual sources, though the result is different. The visual language he used differs from that of the Parma Bible in that his aim was to present a relatively precise map to provide practical information—an approach that is consistent with the drawings in the writings of Maimonides. The visual language of the Parma Bible is decorative and symbolic and there is no special effort to include every single item. And so, in intention, visual language, and design

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> *Tamid*, 3, 8.

<sup>126</sup> Nordström, *Miniatures* (1968), 102.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> *Mishneh Torah* (1963), 8, *Hilkhot Beit Habechira* 2, 14, Lewittes (1957), 12.

<sup>129</sup> *Middot*, 3, 5.

of details, the two depictions are different from each other. They do, however, have two common denominators: they both draw from the manuscripts of Maimonides' writings—both textually and visually—and they both reflect the artistic language of Islamic culture. Those are the roots that gave rise to the decoration of the Bibles in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Further in this discussion, after relating to other schools, I will elaborate with regard to the cultural significance of these roots in the broader context of the Jewish world in the Iberian Peninsula at the end of the Middle Ages.

To sum up, the cultural center of the Jews of Castile was in Toledo and most of the Castilian illuminated Hebrew manuscripts were produced there. There was a wide variety of decoration relative to the small number of books that have survived. Decorations made by the scribes were often rooted in the tradition of Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East and the Maghreb. When it came to painted decorations, on the other hand, the inspiration came directly from contemporary Islamic art or the designs were innovative. The carpet pages from Castile draw only minimally from patterns that were customary in Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East. Only in technique are the carpet pages of the Marseilles Bible, the Copenhagen Bible, and the Damascus *Keter* reminiscent of the earlier art of illumination. For the patterns themselves, the illustrators chose from sources that could be found in their immediate surroundings, especially Islamic architectural sculpture.

Micrography plays an important and unique role in the decoration of the Hebrew book in general, and in that of Sephardic Bibles in particular. Besides appearing on the carpet pages, micrography in geometric patterns can also be found in the micrographic *masorah* in the upper and lower margins of the biblical text. The manuscripts that were discussed in this chapter are characterized by use of extremely simple geometric patterns. The micrography in Hebrew manuscripts is discussed extensively in the various publications of Leila Avrin.<sup>130</sup> The Sephardic examples are dealt with by Thérèse Metzger<sup>131</sup> in the course of trying to determine if this characteristic is unique to Jewish art or was influenced by other cultures. In this context, it is interesting to note again the zigzag patterns in the

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<sup>130</sup> See mainly Avrin (1979); see also Gutmann (1983).

<sup>131</sup> Metzger (1974).

manuscript of al-Qudai Abu Abdallah Muhammad, which was written in Valencia in 1172—during the Almohad period.<sup>132</sup>

*Echoes of Christian Art*

The University Library in Cambridge possesses a Bible (MS Add. 3203)<sup>133</sup> that, like Cambridge 465, does not provide any clear-cut information as to its place and date. Only the fact that it is bound in gatherings of six leaves permits us to attribute it to Toledo. As in Paris 25, calligraphic frames surround columns of text,<sup>134</sup> a characteristic typical of manuscripts from Castile and especially from Toledo. Between fols. 9v and 10v are calendars of the years from 1279 to 1515, and therefore the manuscript can be dated to 1279 (fig. 41).<sup>135</sup> The book includes later additions alongside the original decoration, and these were inserted, most likely, in the middle of the fifteenth century. The manuscript contains no micrographic decorations, but painted ornaments that decorate the beginning of each book (figs. 42 and 43). Above the text columns are colored stripes, from which medallions emerge. This type of decoration is strongly reminiscent of the embellishments of the beginnings of *suras* in illuminated manuscripts of the Qur'an (fig. 29).

The calendar page mentioned above is arranged decoratively and was designed as a carpet page in a checkered pattern (fig. 43). This particular type was based neither on Islamic interlace patterns nor on any Middle Eastern Hebrew predecessors, but rather on early medieval Christian patterns from Spain. One of the many examples of such decoration is found in a manuscript of Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. lat. 2169, fig. 44). Mireille Mentré finds that this pattern bears a resemblance to Persian carpets,<sup>136</sup> and discusses them as indicators of Christian-Islamic cultural exchange. But the specific pattern for the Jewish carpet page was probably taken from a nearby Christian man-

<sup>132</sup> See chap. 2, 00.

<sup>133</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 164; Reif (1997), 56.

<sup>134</sup> Fols. 2r–5r.

<sup>135</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 164.

<sup>136</sup> Mentré (1996), 98.

uscript and not more distant eastern sources. The checkered pattern also appears in Spain in the bindings of books.<sup>137</sup>

Like most Sephardic Bibles, Cambridge 3203 also contains *parashah* indicators, and psalm numbers decorated in delicate inkwork similar to that of Paris 25.<sup>138</sup> In short, the Islamic formal component exists in this manuscript as well and it is still dominant, though it is accompanied by characteristics apparently rooted in early medieval Christian Spanish art.

A Christian Spanish influence is more strongly in evidence in another manuscript, which is noteworthy in many respects (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Can. Or. 94).<sup>139</sup> This book, too, was given various additional decorations at a later stage. The original decoration (fig. 45) echoes several of the characteristics of early medieval Spanish art, as typical in the spheres of ornamentation and coloring and preserved as late as the thirteenth century in the court art of Alfonso X of Castile (1252–84). A group of manuscripts of the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*, which were produced in Toledo during Alfonso's reign, are characterized by frames in bold colors and by patterns that are abstract and simple compared to the vegetal patterns that were customary in thirteenth-century, Christian Spanish illumination (fig. 17). The figure style, on the other hand, definitely reflects the prevailing approach in Gothic art.<sup>140</sup> The decoration of Oxford 94 is similar in character to these frames.

At the beginning of the volume are tables containing the lists of the textual differences of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali. These lists are written in text columns and framed with stylized pillars and ornate polylobed arches. Arches of this type are common, as noted, in Islamic architecture in general and in *Mudéjar* architecture in particular, and they also found their way to the ornamentation of Qur'an manuscripts from Spain.<sup>141</sup> The area above the arches is decorated with animal figures. The ornamentation of the pages, the employed patterns and their coloring are reminiscent of the frames in the manuscripts of the *Cantigas*.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> See, for example, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 502.

<sup>139</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 7; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 39–41, figs. 72–77.

<sup>140</sup> Two illuminated manuscripts survived, see, for example, Madrid, Escorial Library, MS T. I. 1, facsimile edition, Madrid 1979; see also Keller and Cash (1998).

<sup>141</sup> See chap. 2, 38.

The use of arches for decoration of text arranged in columns is borrowed from the canon tables of the manuscripts of the New Testament that were common all over the Christian world and appear in Spain from the tenth century onward. Examples can be found, among others in the *Biblia Hispalense* and the Bibles of 920 and 960, now in San Isidoro in León (fig. 16). Only the shape of the arches is a distinctly Islamic element; the use of the arches as such, the character of the decoration, and the colorization reflect Christian influence.

The book also contains decorations of the *masorah magna*. These are more complex in terms of the selection of forms than are the corresponding decorations in Paris 25 and include zigzag patterns, little arches and squares, interlace patterns, and knots. All of these decorations remain in the sphere of geometric patterns.

The formal language of the decoration of the columns in this book is somewhat similar to that of the ornamentation accompanying narrative illustrations in a Haggadah from Castile that is now in London (British Library, MS Or. 2737, fig. 46).<sup>142</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover compared this Haggadah with manuscripts from the court of Alfonso X,<sup>143</sup> and Narkiss labeled it the “Hispano-Moresque Haggadah.” In his book on the Golden Haggadah, Narkiss calls it by this name for the first time and mentions a Spanish-Islamic, Eastern, and Italian influence.<sup>144</sup> In *Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts in the British Isles*, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover define the stylistic roots of this Haggadah more extensively, and relate it to the art of illustration at Alfonso’s court and its roots in early medieval Spanish manuscripts, which are also defined as “Hispano-Moresque.”<sup>145</sup>

This term is misleading for a few reasons. “Moresque” is a word from the root *moros* (moors), a traditional, but antiquated name, neither scientific nor precise, for the Muslim population in Spain.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, the style of the manuscripts from Alfonso’s time and their early medieval predecessors, as well as that of Oxford 94 and

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<sup>142</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), no. 609; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 45–46, figs. 79–105.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>144</sup> Narkiss (1970), 43–44; see also Narkiss (1984), 30.

<sup>145</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 45–46.

<sup>146</sup> The expression *moros* still comes up today in the press in reports on violent incidents in Spain. It is used to refer to foreign workers from Morocco, and there is no doubt as to its negative connotations.



London 2737, is identified as an artistic tradition that is different from the Islamic ("Moresque") tradition. This art is rooted in the Christian culture of northern Spain in the Reconquest period. This culture was nourished, as noted, by the Visigothic and other traditions including Islamic influences that penetrated Christian Spain together with the immigration of Andalusian Christians northward. However, we cannot determine that the dominant element of this tradition is the Islamic influence. The opposite is true: the purpose of this art was to underscore the uniqueness of Christian art and its difference from the Islamic culture.

Apart from Oxford 94's similarity to the art of Alfonso's court in Toledo, the manuscript has no clear features—not even *seder* marks—that would enable us to attribute it to that city. It also bears no distinct resemblance to other Hebrew books originating in Toledo, such as Paris 25, the Ben Israel group, and the manuscripts of Ibn Merwas. Finally, it should be reiterated that this book and its decoration are unique in the context of illuminated Bibles of the period, and more than other Bibles it reflects a tendency to rely on the visual language common in Christian manuscript painting.

A few conclusions emerge from this survey of thirteenth-century Bibles from Castile. The Islamic influence on the design of the early Hebrew Bibles is dominant. The local Christian Spanish tradition of the early Middle Ages also served as a source of inspiration, but only minimally. The Gothic art that prevailed in the cultural environment in which these books were produced did not manifest itself, except in the later additions to the Damascus *Keter*. Decoration of these Bibles is an expression of the fact that the culture with which the patrons and artists of these books identified and in which they lived, developed, studied, wrote, and created was still the Islamic culture—approximately 200 years after Toledo came into Christian hands.

After this burgeoning in the production of illuminated Bibles in Castile in the second half of the thirteenth century, there was a pause in this activity, and it would resume only in the second half of the fifteenth century in new schools that arose in various regions in southern Castile and in Portugal. In the fourteenth century, the art of the book was concentrated mainly in Catalonia, Aragon, Roussillon, and Navarre.

As to the question of the continuity between the manuscripts from

the Middle East and those that were produced in Castile, we can conclude that it existed in various decorations executed by the scribes. In painted illumination, however, what stands out first and foremost is the absence of homogeneity within the group of manuscripts from Castile. Only a few characteristics recall earlier traditions of illumination. The use of the Temple depiction in the Parma Bible and the Bible of Ibn Merwas in London is a remote echo of the Temple depictions in the First St. Petersburg Pentateuch. Though there is a conceptual continuity here—comparison of the Bible with the Temple—in terms of visual resemblance the depictions differ greatly from each other, and none of them reflects the details as they are drawn in the St. Petersburg Pentateuch.

Another echo of the earlier Middle Eastern tradition is the technique of painting applied in the carpet pages in the Marseilles Bible and its relatives. This technique, combining lines of micrography with paint, was developed in the Middle East. But there was no influence in terms of form and specific details. Instead of the stylized architectural patterns that were so common in the Middle East—patterns that apparently symbolize the Ark of the Covenant—we find other decoration types, borrowed from Islamic architectural sculpture found in all of the Islamic lands, especially in Spain.

Moreover, as will emerge from an analysis of the later manuscripts, this early group had very little influence on later works. Only the depiction of the Temple in the Parma Bible would have a continuation, but this is an exceptional case and there is no certainty as to whether it indeed was part of the manuscript's original design. Moreover, Gutmann maintained that the depiction was added later on the basis of Catalan examples, though the chances are good that the depiction is original. Decoration of columns with arches at the beginning of Oxford 94 would become a popular element in later Bibles in other forms. In the Castilian context of the thirteenth century, however, this design is unique. Although the use of the carpet pages establishes some degree of continuation, in the specific motifs and patterns there is no connection to the Castilian group.<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Influences of these patterns are considerable during the fourteenth century in the Rylands Haggadah, Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS heb. 6, Loewe (1988); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 86–93, fig. 281, for example.

The type of decoration of the Marseilles Bible and the Damascus *Keter* would never return, and that of Cambridge 3203, rooted in early medieval Spanish art, would appear only once. The painted decoration in the other books is rooted exclusively in the Islamic tradition, and specific parallels to Middle Eastern Jewish illumination cannot be found. The absence of data for specific comparison, together with the relatively modest decoration in some of the manuscripts before us, especially in books such as Paris 25; the lack of homogeneity and the search for inspiration from Islamic culture, on the one hand, and that of the earlier—and less dominant—Spanish Christian culture, on the other, all create an impression of a new beginning, and not of a continuous tradition.

The artistic sources from which the decorations in these books drew are thus first and foremost Islamic. The few elements borrowed from Spanish Christian art preserve characteristics of the Spanish artistic tradition from the period before Iberian culture joined with that of Christian Europe, and before the international Gothic style entered Spain. At the end of the thirteenth century, Gothic style was already common in most regions in Spain, but it did not leave its mark on Hebrew Bibles. The figurative illustrations in the manuscripts of the Cantigas, for example, are completely rooted in it—only the decorative frames are reminiscent of the earlier tradition. The decoration of Hebrew Bibles, on the other hand, utterly ignores the arts most dominant in its environment.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### JOSHUA IBN GAON AND JOSEPH HATSARFATI

In Tudela in the summer of 1300, the masoretor Joshua bar Abraham ibn Gaon completed the *masorah* in one of the most sumptuous Bibles in the history of illuminated manuscripts in Spain (Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72). The micrographic script of the *masorah* is particularly attractive, featuring various geometric and vegetal patterns, including candelabrum-like trees and numerous depictions of animals and dragons (fig. 47). The biblical text was written, as a colophon informs us, by Samuel bar Abraham ibn Nathan, who adds that he wrote the Bible in the city of Cervera, where he lived when he was recuperating from a fracture in his leg. He began his work on July 30, 1299, and finished it on May 19, 1300,<sup>1</sup> only three weeks before Joshua began his part of the work in Tudela.

Another, quite unusual colophon<sup>2</sup> tells us that the illuminator Joseph Hatsarfati (the French) was responsible for the painted decoration of the book, though it does not say where and when he did this work: “I, Joseph, the French painted and completed this book.” Joseph was a well trained and skilled artist, who, unlike his Castilian predecessors, was familiar with motifs and techniques common in Gothic book art. His repertoire of motifs includes a wide range of Gothic architectural designs, floral patterns, and animals. And, most strikingly, he breaks with the Castilian tradition of aniconic decoration and includes several human figures and even a narrative scene (fig. 75).

Due to Samuel’s colophon, the manuscript is known as the Cervera Bible. This name is somewhat misleading, since there is no consensus among the scholars as to whether the reference was to Cervera in New Castile—not far from Toledo—or Cervera in Catalonia. Moreover, there is no indication that the decoration is connected in any

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<sup>1</sup> Fol. 434r: from the first day of the month of Elul in the year 5059 until the last day of the month of Iyar in the year 5060.

<sup>2</sup> Fol. 449r, Gutmann (1978), pl. 10; on information illuminators provide about themselves in manuscripts, see Zirlin (1996).

way to either of these two. As I will argue here, it was probably done in Tudela as well.

Joshua ibn Gaon and Joseph Hatsarfati are two rare examples of illuminators known by their name, and there is good reason to assume that they knew each other. Tracing the two men's careers—especially that of Joshua for whom we possess more information—provides us not only with an important chapter in Jewish book history, but also with an interesting picture of the cultural backgrounds of the two, as well as of manuscript production in Navarre and northern Castile in general.

Our knowledge of Joshua ibn Gaon's work comes primarily from micrographic texts readable only with a magnifying glass. Those in the Cervera Bible were published in 1992 by Thérèse Metzger.<sup>3</sup> These texts mention his name, his origin in Soria in Old Castile, and the fact that at the time the *masorah* was written, he was in Tudela, Navarre. The texts are unusually specific with regard to the dates: Joshua's work on the project began on "Thursday, the twentieth of Sivan, 5060" (June 8 or 9, 1300)<sup>4</sup> and ended on an unknown date in the following month of Tammuz. Joshua claims that he wrote the *masorah* of the entire Bible, and mentions that he did this work for Rabbi Sasson of Cervera.<sup>5</sup> Metzger discovered that despite what is said several times about the completion of the *masorah* of the entire Bible, some of the work was done by another hand.<sup>6</sup>

The information available with regard to Joshua ibn Gaon was first discussed in an article co-authored by Bezalel Narkiss and Gabrielle Sed-Rajna in 1974,<sup>7</sup> and was subsequently dealt with in the catalogue of Sephardic illuminated manuscripts in Britain by Narkiss, Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, and Anat Tcherikover.<sup>8</sup> More recently it was reconsidered by Sed-Rajna in various articles,<sup>9</sup> and by Thérèse Metzger.<sup>10</sup> Apart from the *masorah magna* in the Cervera Bible, Joshua's work is known from three other manuscripts signed by him. On the

<sup>3</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1992), 5–6, figs. 1–20.

<sup>4</sup> Fol. 11r. According to Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 9, the 20th of Sivan in that year fell on a Wednesday, and therefore it is probable that an error occurred.

<sup>5</sup> Fol. 29r.

<sup>6</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 7.

<sup>7</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971).

<sup>8</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 22–34.

<sup>9</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990); Sed-Rajna, *Manuscripts* (1992).

<sup>10</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990).

basis of common characteristics, scholars have credited him with work on three more, unsigned Bibles.

In none of these books is his work confined to the *masorah* only. Micrographic signatures similar to those in the Cervera Bible appear in a Bible in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20).<sup>11</sup> Joshua again mentions his name, and informs us that he wrote the *masorah*,<sup>12</sup> and that he, in fact, wrote the main text as well.<sup>13</sup> Michel Garel suggests that in one of these signatures, Joshua hints that he also executed the decorations.<sup>14</sup> He again mentions Soria as his city of origin, and Tudela as the city in which he stayed while working on the book.<sup>15</sup> He also indicates the date, Marcheshvan 5061 (between late October and early November, 1300),<sup>16</sup> that is, after the completion of the work on the Cervera Bible. The patterns of the micrographic decorations (fig. 48) are very similar to those in the Cervera Bible (fig. 47). As the latter, they include animals, dragons, vegetal patterns, candelabrum-like trees, and geometric patterns, among them interlaces.

In another book, in Dublin (Trinity College Library, MS 16),<sup>17</sup> now containing only the Books of the Prophets, Joshua states only his name without providing any further information.<sup>18</sup> The wording of this note is similar to other such notes in Paris 20, and therefore Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover assume that this book, too, was produced in Tudela. The design of the micrographic decoration (figs. 50, 51 and 52), the motifs, and the repertoire of the forms are indeed strikingly similar to those in Paris 20. Moreover, the script in both Bibles was most likely done by the same hand. If we take all of these features into account, together with Joshua's claim in Paris 20 that he is the scribe and not only the masoretor, we can certainly accept the contention that Dublin 16 was written by Joshua in Tudela.

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<sup>11</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971); Garel (1990), no. 45.

<sup>12</sup> Fol. 69v.

<sup>13</sup> Fol. 58v.

<sup>14</sup> Garel (1990), no. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Fol. 49r

<sup>16</sup> See Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 9, n. 58. Most of the signatures were quoted in full in Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971), 259. This article also includes a detailed description of the manuscript. See also Sed-Rajna (1990).

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed description, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 30–33, figs. 28–42.

<sup>18</sup> Fol. 13r.

The Bodleian Library in Oxford possesses a manuscript known as the Second Kennicott Bible (MS Kenn. 2).<sup>19</sup> At its beginning we find two folios (today referred to as fols. 1v and 2r) containing remnants of a plan of the Temple. These pages were part of a larger plan, which originally must have spread over a parchment sheet four times the size of the manuscript. Today's fol. 2r (fig. 53) belongs above fol. 1v.<sup>20</sup> It is not certain that this depiction of the Temple was originally meant to be part of the book with which its fragments are now bound.

On their reverse side is an unusually detailed colophon whose wording is different from that of colophons of other manuscripts. It relates only to the plan of the Temple and it spreads over both pages. On each page, the colophon text is framed with a spared ground interlace pattern (fig. 54). This colophon describes the plan and is signed by Joshua, who states, among other things:

And I, the small and young Joshua bar Abraham . . . ibn Gaon of Soria, wrote and painted while I was learning from the sage Rabbi Isaac bar Gerson for the worthy . . . Moses ibn Chaviv. . . .

At the end of the page is a sentence expressing his hope that the Temple will be built "speedily in our days." He concludes with the words "Amen Amen," which are arranged in the center of the last line. The patron's name—Moses ibn Chaviv—is written on the seventh line of fol. 2v in different ink, lighter in color than the rest of the text. The letter *mem* of "Moses" protrudes a bit beyond the margins of the text. The fact that the name is squeezed into a given space suggests that it either replaced that of a different, original patron, or that its space was determined in advance and left blank. At the end of the folio, following "Amen Amen" and beginning on the same line, the words "And finished in the month of Adar of the year 5066 (between late February and early March 1306) in Soria" are added in the same light-colored ink as the patron's name. The adding of "and finished" beside the words "Amen Amen" breaks the original composition of the centered concluding line. Though the

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<sup>19</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 2323; Roth (1952); for a detailed description, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 24–30, figs. 9–27.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 10, with an additional plan that emphasizes the details and enables easier orientation. Roth (1952) even assumed that these were two unrelated fragments. This error was corrected by Metzger (1969–71), 410, n. 2.

additions are in a lighter-colored ink, they are written in the same script, in all likelihood by the same hand.

There is no doubt that the colophon relates only to the plan and not to the entire Bible—the text does not mention the book at all. It can also be assumed that the last line and the patron's name were not written close to the time of the preparation of the plan, but at a later stage, possibly at the time of the sales transaction that took place in Soria in spring 1306. In any event, the date noted relates to the plan, and perhaps in fact only to its sale—and certainly not to the production of the entire book. Since, as will be pointed out below, there is good reason to believe that Joshua wrote the Bible and the *masorah* as well, it is conceivable that the plan was sold together with the Bible and perhaps was already bound together with it at the time it was sold. The book contains no other colophon, but some of the micrographic texts contain wordings commonly found in Joshua's works.<sup>21</sup> In short, from the colophon of this plan we learn that Joshua was not only a masoretor, but also a scribe and illuminator and that when he prepared the plan he was a young man paying tribute to his teacher.

As to the Second Kennicott Bible itself, we have no conclusive evidence of when and where it was written. However, Joshua's handwriting in the colophon of the plan can easily be identified as that of the scribe of Paris 20 (compare fig. 54 to 58, for example). The script of the Second Kennicott Bible exhibits the same personal style (fig. 55).<sup>22</sup> Its micrography is decorated with geometric and vegetal patterns (figs. 55, and 56) that are very similar to those in Paris 20, Dublin 16, and the Cervera Bible, but it lacks depictions of animals and dragons.<sup>23</sup>

The Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris preserves another manuscript attributed to Joshua (cod. hébr. 21).<sup>24</sup> It contains a note that he "made" the first quire (col. pl. I). This quire does not contain any part of the Bible itself, but a variety of texts typical for the initial

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>22</sup> The script that appears, for example, in the Cervera Bible and belongs to Samuel bar Abraham ibn Nathan, is similar in style, but clearly reflects another hand. The handwriting is denser than that of Joshua and the horizontal lines are thicker.

<sup>23</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 3, casts doubt on the suggestion that the book and the *masorah* were written by Joshua ibn Gaon.

<sup>24</sup> Garel (1990), no. 46.



pages of Bibles. The Book of Genesis begins only on the first page of the second quire. It is not explicitly stated if this “making” refers only to the decorations—and the first quire contains a variety of painted embellishments—or the text as well. The signature is incorporated in the painted decoration of the first carpet page. However, there is no difference between the script in the first quire (fig. 64, for example)—including the signature itself—and that of the other quires. It is possible to identify them all as Joshua’s hand, which is known from the manuscripts mentioned above. Metzger finally discovered that Joshua is also named as the masoretor on fol. 263v together with a mention of the place, Tudela, and the date, 5062 (1301–1302)—that is, about a year after the beginning of the work on the *masorah* of Paris 20.<sup>25</sup> Surprisingly, Paris 21 is different from the other books in that it contains very little micrographic decoration, the most prominent characteristic of Joshua’s work in the other books. The *masorah* is decorated with a few very simple geometric patterns. It is also different from a codicological standpoint. For example, the text is written in three columns instead of the two that are customary in the other books from that group (figs. 50, 51, and 55).

On stylistic grounds, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover attributed two incomplete manuscripts to Joshua and his workshop. A manuscript in Parma includes the Pentateuch and few additional books of the Bible, (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2938).<sup>26</sup> Two volumes containing only a selection of books are now in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Opp. Add. 4<sup>o</sup>75, Add. 4<sup>o</sup>76).<sup>27</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover suggest that the two manuscripts—Parma 2938 and Oxford 75/76—are parts of the same book. However, this contention does not seem reasonable, since they both include the same books—for example, the Book of Joshua. The script of the main text is completely different in the two manuscripts. The writing in the Parma manuscript is more elongated than that of the book in Oxford, whose

<sup>25</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 2, and n. 16.

<sup>26</sup> Tamani (1968), 53; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 23; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 14.

<sup>27</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), vol. 1, nos. 68 and 69; for a detailed description of MS Add. 4<sup>o</sup>75, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 33–34; MS Add. 4<sup>o</sup>76 is not mentioned there, but it is presented by Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 2, footnote 10, as part of no. 75. Metzger expresses doubt that this manuscript belongs to the Joshua ibn Gaon group.

script is consistent with the style of writing that is known to us from Joshua's other books.

Neither does a look at the micrographic decoration support this assumption. The Oxford volumes are notable for their micrographic design in simple, stylized geometric and vegetal patterns (fig. 57). Their repertoire of forms is strikingly similar to that of the Second Kennicott Bible (figs. 55 and 56). However, the micrographic decoration in the Parma manuscript<sup>28</sup>—differs greatly from that of Oxford 75/76 in its formal language. It does contain motifs similar to those in Paris 20, Dublin 16, and the Cervera Bible (figs. 47, 48, and 51). They are similar in form, but the proportions of the animals' body parts, for example, are different, as is the character of the micrographic lines—those in the Parma manuscript (fig. 49) tend to be wavier and form wider circles than those in Paris 20, Dublin 16, and the Cervera Bible. The patterns in the Parma manuscript do not feature many internal lines on the bodies of the animals, as are found in the other books. Only a few patterns are genuinely similar, and they were presented comparatively in Thérèse Metzger's article on *masorah* decorations.<sup>29</sup>

Other comparisons in that article and of the manuscripts in general indicate, in my opinion, a distinct difference in the design of the animals' bodies, eyes, and tails, and in the stylized acanthus leaves at the tips of the tails. The resemblance between Parma 2938 and Paris 20 or the Cervera Bible is limited to the use of a similar repertoire of animals and dragons, vegetal patterns, and the candelabrum-like tree pattern. Joshua may have been involved to some—though extremely limited—extent in the writing and decorating of the *masorah*, but he was certainly not the only person responsible for this work. In all likelihood, the Parma manuscript was produced in Tudela at around the time that Paris 20, for example, was produced. The work may have been done under Joshua's influence or even supervision, but his role in its actual execution would have been very small.

On the ground that Soria was mentioned repeatedly as Joshua ibn Gaon's birthplace, and that the Second Kennicott Bible was assumed to have been produced there, based on the erroneous read-

<sup>28</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 23.

<sup>29</sup> Metzger (1974), pls. CVII and CVIII.

ing of the colophon of the Temple plan as referring to the entire book, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover attribute the whole group of Ibn Gaon's manuscripts to this city and maintain that the work is representative of the Castilian schools of Bible decoration.<sup>30</sup> They make an exception with regard to Paris 20 and Dublin 16, which they assume to have been produced in Tudela. Accordingly, they propose that Joshua's biography be reconstructed as follows: He was born in Soria, where he worked around 1300, producing the Oxford-75/76 manuscript and Parma 2938. That year, he visited Tudela, where he worked on Paris 20 and Dublin 16. After returning to Soria, he produced the Second Kennicott Bible in 1306 and Paris 21. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover were not aware of the mention of the date in the micrography, neither was Sed-Rajna, who dated it to ca. 1310.<sup>31</sup>

Revisiting the manuscripts and examining the facts emerging from the above analysis give us a new perspective of Joshua's career. First of all, it can be observed that the repertoire of forms and motifs is not entirely identical in the manuscripts in the group, but underwent a certain degree of development. A comparison between the micrographic patterns in Oxford-75/76 (fig. 57) and those in the Second Kennicott Bible (figs. 55 and 56) indicates a great deal of specific similarity between the two books. They both contain only geometric and vegetal patterns, and lack depictions of animals. In both manuscripts we also find zigzag patterns, small arches, and interlace patterns. All of these decorations are also found in Paris 20, Dublin 16, and the Cervera Bible. There, however, they accompany the more dominant depictions of animals and dragons. Moreover, the geometric and vegetal micrographic patterns in Oxford-75/76 and the Second Kennicott Bible are simpler than their counterparts in Paris 20, Dublin 16 (fig. 52), and the Cervera Bible.<sup>32</sup> The design is similar in its basic form, but it is a bit stiffer and less refined, as can be observed in particular in the vegetal patterns: the edges of the leaves are sharper and the lines straighter (fig. 55) than those of the leaves in Paris 20 (fig. 48), Dublin 16 (fig. 52), and the Cervera Bible, which have more softly rounded lines and evidence more refined work.

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<sup>30</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 22–23.

<sup>31</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), 306.

<sup>32</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 3, 14, 16.

From the sparsity of the repertoire of forms and the stiffer style, we can conclude that the two manuscripts in Oxford were produced at the beginning of Joshua's career. Later, his technique became more refined and his repertoire of patterns was enriched with depictions of animals and dragons. There is no way of proving this assumption definitively, since the two books in Oxford are not dated. If indeed there was such a development from a simple style and limited repertoire to a more refined style together with a richer repertoire, the two Bibles in Oxford predate 1300, the year when the *masorot* of Paris 20 and the Cervera Bible were written. This conclusion contradicts the later dating of the Second Kennicott Bible, but confirms the assumption that the colophon of the Temple plan does not refer to the entire volume. In the other manuscripts—those that, in my opinion, are a bit later—there is a great deal of unity in the formal language.

Apart from micrographic decoration, a variety of painted embellishments and pen ornamentation can be found in the manuscripts attributed to Joshua ibn Gaon. Whereas there is no doubt of his hand in the decorative micrography, judging from his signatures and a comparison of patterns in the signed books with those in the unsigned books, no such certainty exists with regard to the other decoration types. A closer look at the latter can lead to more firm conclusions as to his specific role in the creation of the Bibles in whose production he was involved. Once we understand the scope of his work, we can make an attempt to reconstruct his professional history.

With regard to the painted decoration, we have several pieces of information. First, the plan of the Temple (fig. 53) attached to the Second Kennicott Bible is Joshua's work—he states this fact explicitly. Second, the carpet page on fol. 1v in Paris 21 contains, as noted, an inscription that tells us that Joshua “made” the first quire. The fact that this inscription is incorporated into the painted carpet design (col. pl. I) indicates that he is referring not only to the writing of the quire, but also—and even mainly—to the decoration. Moreover, as we have also noted, this quire contains no biblical text, only a variety of other texts arranged in columns; the Book of Genesis begins on the first page of the second quire. The fact that on these pages, the decoration plays a very dominant role provides us with further evidence that Joshua produced the painted decoration. From a hint in a micrographic text in Paris 20, it emerges that he prob-

ably did the painting for this manuscript as well. Finally, we know that the painted decorations in the Cervera Bible were *not* done by Joshua, but by Joseph Hatsarfati.

The plan in the Second Kennicott Bible shows the northern area of the Temple, though this section is marked erroneously as the southern side. It includes some of the chambers, the women's section, the passageway to the men's section, the slaughterhouse, the chamber of hewn stone, the entrance to the sanctuary (*qodesh*), the menorah, and the place of the *traqsin*—that is, the passageway from the sanctuary to the Holy of Holies (*qodesh qodashim*). No part of the Holy of Holies is depicted in the surviving section of the plan. The area of the slaughterhouse is a mirror image of Ibn Merwas' depiction from Toledo (fig. 40), and the two are probably based on a common visual source. To the left of the slaughterhouse it is possible to discern the lower-right-hand section of the stepped sacrificial altar. This remnant of the altar is also similar to Ibn Merwas' parallel depiction and to the depiction in the Toledan Parma Bible (fig. 31). On the other hand, the *magrefah*<sup>33</sup> above the slaughterhouse is depicted and shaped differently from what Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover identified as a *magrefah* on Ibn Merwas' plan. In the other depictions of the Temple—such as that of the Parma Bible—the *magrefah* does not appear at all.

The menorah in the Second Kennicott Bible is seen only partially and its branches are angular, a shape that is not customary in the other Sephardic renderings of the Temple. It is difficult to get an idea of the precise shape of the base of the menorah. The stepped stone is not visible at all, another feature that makes the depiction different from its parallels. Displayed above the menorah are incense saucers as indicated in the accompanying caption. The saucers are depicted both in the Parma Bible and similarly in later Catalan followers, but their shape is not at all similar to that of the saucers in Joshua's depiction. Since the plan is not complete, there is no possibility of comparing other details to Ibn Merwas' plan or the rendering of the Temple in the Parma Bible.

The sections of the Temple are accompanied by captions that Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover succeeded in reading with the aid of ultraviolet light. According to these scholars' analysis, the

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<sup>33</sup> See above, chap. 3, n. 90.

details are based largely on what is written in the Mishna tractates *Middot* and *Kelim*.<sup>34</sup> Many of the captions quote the texts *verbatim*. On the other hand they do not contain exact quotations from Book Eight of Maimonides' *Mishne Torah*—though it should be noted that with regard to the sections that appear on the plan, the text in the Mishna is more detailed than the corresponding text of Maimonides, which itself is based on the Mishna. The detailed text in *Middot* is definitely in keeping with the plan's intended function as an informative source that is based on most of the available data.

The reading of Ibn Gaon's plan of the Temple does not lead to far-reaching conclusions. It does not have a great deal in common with Ibn Merwas', apart from the precise shape of the details of the slaughterhouse and the fact that the information is presented in the form of a plan with a meticulous and scientific approach, rather than a decorative and symbolic one, such as that of the plan in the Parma Bible. Joshua ibn Gaon's approach aims at a higher degree of precision than that of Ibn Merwas, who, though he sets out the details in the form of a plan, arranges them in abstract strips, which is not as helpful for orientation as the plan produced by Ibn Gaon. The latter has nothing in common with the depiction of the Temple in the Parma Bible, apart from the lower steps of the sacrificial altar. Again, familiarity with the complete plan would provide a broader basis for comparison. Still, the comparisons of the slaughterhouse and the shape of the sacrificial altar indicate the development of conventions with regard to some of the elements that are common to both the decorative and scientific approach—though this finding applies only to a few of the details, and certainly not to all of them.

Paris 20 contains small marginal depictions of a few Temple implements (fig. 58). Thérèse Metzger compared some of these to parallels in the plan in the Second Kennicott Bible.<sup>35</sup> A menorah with angular branches appears there, for example,<sup>36</sup> as does an implement in the shape of a bowl, whose counterpart is referred to in a caption in the Second Kennicott Bible as "the golden stand." This comparison, which is limited to these two implements, nevertheless shows a distinct similarity in shape and painting technique, a finding

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<sup>34</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 24–26, including the details of the inscriptions.

<sup>35</sup> Metzger (1969–71), figs. 1 and 2.

<sup>36</sup> Fol. 54r.

that, together with Joshua's hints that he is not only the scribe and masoretor of Paris 20, led scholars to assume that he also executed the painted decoration of Paris 20.

Paris 20 also contains painted depictions of the ritually pure and impure animals (Dtn. 14:3–18, fig. 59). Analogous images of animals, such as the bull, for example (fig. 60) can be found among the micrographic patterns of the same book. This feature is another clue that Joshua was responsible for the painted decorations. Furthermore, animals and dragons in a design identical to that of the micrography appear in the corners of several pages at the beginning of the book, surrounding circles containing calendars (fig. 61). Some of them are presented as spared ground motifs against a colored background and some are colored in gold. This comparison between animal motifs in the micrography of Paris 20 and its painted decoration returns us to the Second Kennicott Bible. The latter contains carpet pages in various patterns, including one that displays dragons' heads (fig. 62) analogous to those in the micrographic patterns in Paris 20, Dublin 16 (fig. 51), and the Cervera Bible.<sup>37</sup> Another carpet page in the Second Kennicott Bible is framed by a strip of stylized acanthus leaves,<sup>38</sup> whose design is similar to that of the floral micrographic patterns in that book (fig. 55), that is, those vegetal patterns that have a stiffer design than their counterparts in Paris 20, Dublin 16, and the Cervera Bible.

If I am correct in assuming that the micrographic patterns in the Second Kennicott Bible predate those in Paris 20, it can be concluded that the earliest animal patterns of Joshua's work appeared as painted patterns in the Second Kennicott Bible, and then came into use somewhat later in micrography as well. Animals of a similar design appear in the Second Kennicott Bible in the spandrels of the arches that decorate columns listing the precepts at the beginning of the book (fig. 63). As in Paris 20, some of these animal motifs are colored in gold, and others appear in spared ground technique. However, their design is slightly cruder than in Paris 20 (fig. 61). In various details, mainly in the dragons' faces and eyes, Joshua's hand can be traced, and again it seems that his work became more refined between the Second Kennicott Bible and Paris 20.

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<sup>37</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), fig. 16.

<sup>38</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 17.

More analogies are found, as mentioned in the animals in the spandrels framing the circles in Paris 20 (fig. 61) and Paris 21. These correspond largely with the micrographic decoration of Paris 20, Dublin 16 (fig. 51), and the Cervera Bible. The painted dragons appear mainly as spared ground design, they are larger than those in the micrography, and their bodies fit the shape of the spandrels whereas the circle serves as part of the frame. The layout of the circles and spandrels thus defines the area in which they appear.

Narkiss and Sed-Rajna, somewhat underestimating Ibn Gaon's skills as a creative designer, assumed that the micrographic and painted animal and dragon patterns were created by means of stencils.<sup>39</sup> This assumption is challenged by slight differences in the design of the details, different animal proportions and sizes, and the fact that in certain cases, such as the area outside the circles in Paris 21, the animals' shape is fitted into the shape of the circles and the corners. An examination of the micrographic patterns also reveals that they were written above hard point underdrawings with very delicate lines that can still be discerned under the micrographic script. These lines are quite freely drawn, sometimes lack precision, and it is evident that they have been corrected.

Another type of decoration dominant in Joshua's books is the carpet page. In the Second Kennicott Bible, they feature continuous interlace patterns. More refined versions of these designs appear in Paris 20.<sup>40</sup> Nearly identical carpet pages appear in Paris 21 (col. pl. I).<sup>41</sup> Here the design is especially rich and refined.

As opposed to most of the Castilian manuscripts, the *parashah* signs in Joshua's Bibles have painted decorations (figs. 66 and 73);<sup>42</sup> there are no *seder* markings in Ibn Gaon's Bibles. In many of these the notation *parash* is enclosed in a rectangular frame decorated in a stylized vegetal motif. These marks bear some resemblance to the decoration of *parashah* signs in Cambridge 465, described in the preceding chapter.<sup>43</sup> As noted, the Castilian origin of this manuscript is not certain. In view of its similarity to Ibn Gaon's work, which is also seen in the use of vegetal patterns in the micrography, we might

<sup>39</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971); see also Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 23.

<sup>40</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971), fig. 15.

<sup>41</sup> Sed-Rajna (1990), fig. 8.

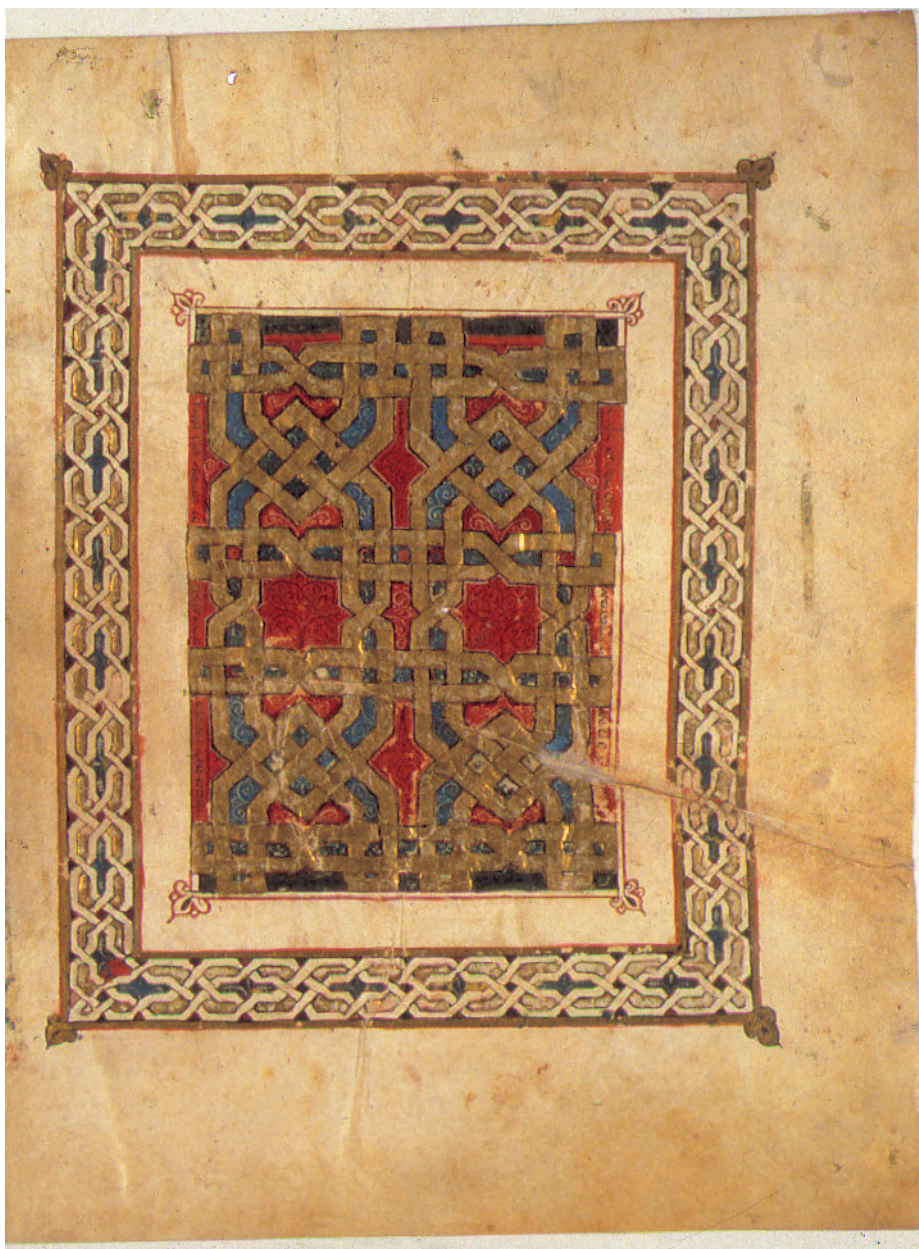
<sup>42</sup> Apart from the Oxford manuscript which lacks the Pentateuch.

<sup>43</sup> See above, chap. 3, 59–60.



## ILLUSTRATIONS

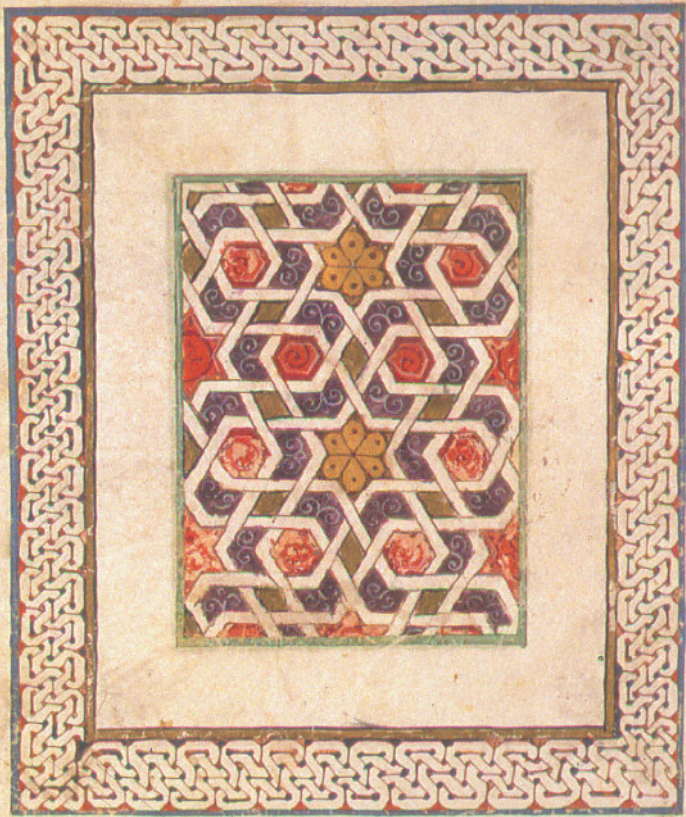
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I. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 21, Tudela, 1301-1302, fol. 1v  
(photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



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III. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 21, Tudela, 1301-1302, fol. 368r  
(photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



IV. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 7r  
(photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



V. Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 16, Tudela (?), c. 1300, fol. 68v (photograph: with permission of the board of Trinity College Library, Dublin)



VI. London, British Library, MS Harley 1528, Catalonia, first half of the 14th c., fol. 8r  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)





**בן נפתלי**

אשר על הבית  
כי אם מעשה  
יען היריב  
רך לבבך והבנע  
על העמוד  
אשר קטר  
ואת מרכבות  
ואת המוכות  
יתרהנם תשארים  
אשר הוא מקד  
שנת תשע עשרה

**ישעיה**

ובפרשכם  
לכן נא ונביחה  
ואם תמאט  
ימסקרות עינים  
היו בחוקקים  
את כל מעשה  
כי אם חסד  
אמרת לבבך  
מושל ארץ  
יולילי מואב  
זהוה רגם  
זהוה ציצת  
ורונם ילכו לרח  
בלי חזקו כי תרגם  
קו דתו  
ואין שם מלוכה  
המבליעני יי

**בן אשר**

אשר על הבית  
כי אם מעשה  
יען היריב  
רך לבבך והבנע  
על העמוד  
אשר קטרשמה  
ואת מרכבות  
ואת המוכות  
יתרהנם תשארים  
אשר הוא מקד  
שנת תשע עשרה

**ספר**

ובפרשכם  
לכונא ונביחה  
ואם תמאט  
ימסקרות עינים  
היו בחוקקים  
את כל מעשהו  
כי אם יחיה  
אמרת לבבך  
מושל ארץ  
יולילי מואב  
זהוה רגם  
זהוה ציצת  
ורונם ילכו לרח  
בלי חזקו כי תרגם  
קו דתו  
ואין שם מלוכה  
המבליעני יי

**בן נפתלי**

עשר ידותלי  
האנחלהלני  
ויבא רדי אל ביתו  
את אשר ישעתה  
ומי צור מבלעני  
אשר סתקן הטד  
אתה מלאך

**מלכים**

המבליע  
המך ירך  
אם אדוה  
השפתו לו  
משענת בידך  
אל השדה  
תוא ובמחנהו  
כהשדהו  
השליט אשר למך  
ותנה אין שם  
וראה שם  
אשר על נדו  
את המכות  
את כל הקדשים  
לאמר מבי  
הן תפועה  
כספר תורת משה  
לאמר סעל הטאת  
כי אם כמפסגם  
המבליעני יי  
דבר המוך הנדל

**בן אשר**

עשר ידותלי  
האנחלהלני  
ויבא רדי אל ביתו  
את אשר ישעתה  
ומי צור מבלעני  
אשר סתקן הטד  
אתה מלאך

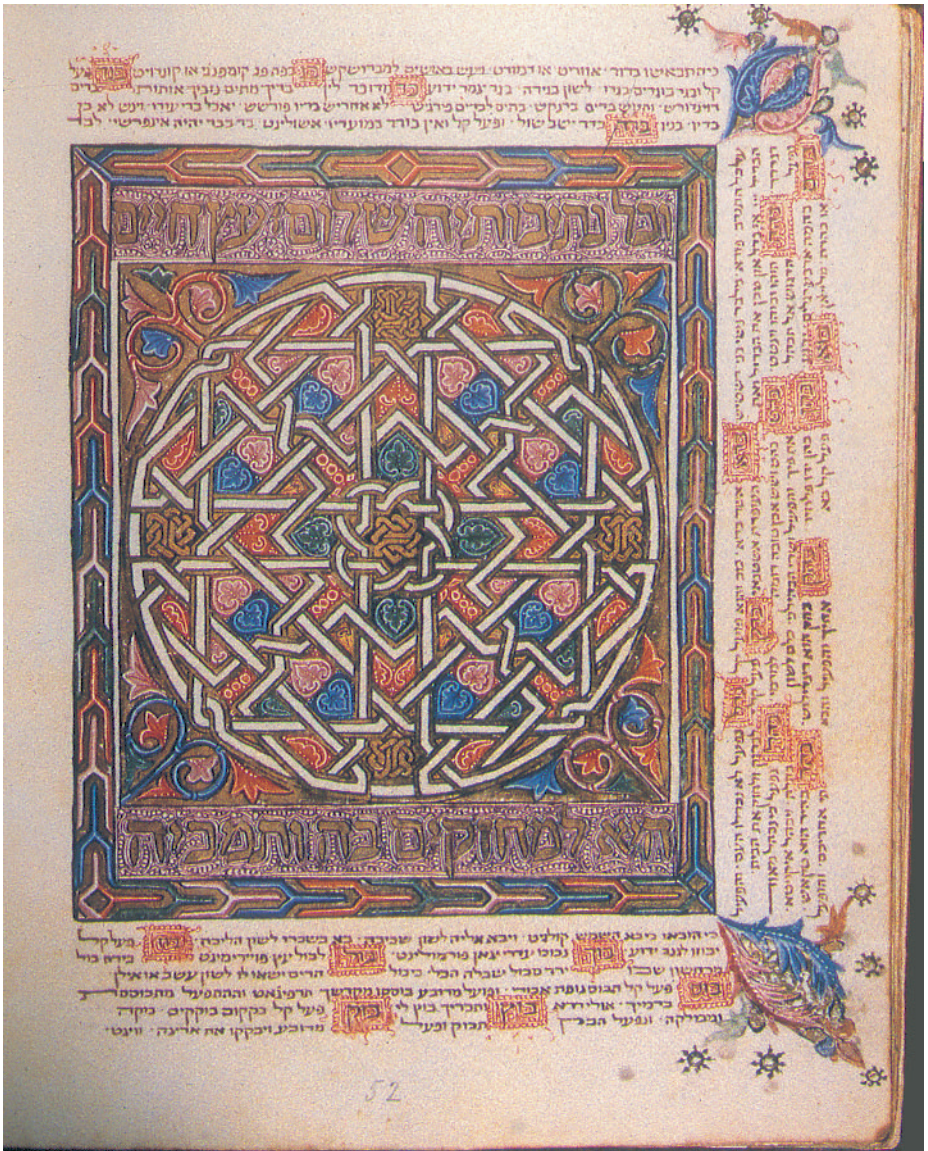
**ספר**

ויטבלך  
המך ירך  
אם אדוה  
וישפתו לו  
משענת בידך  
אל השדה  
הוא ובמחנהו  
כהשדהו  
השליט אשר למך  
ותנה אין שם  
וראה שם  
אשר על נדו  
את המכות  
את כל הקדשים  
לאמר מבי  
הן תפועה  
כספר תורת משה  
לאמר סעל הטאת  
כי אם כמפסגם  
המבליעני יי  
דבר המוך הנדל

VII. London, British Library, MS Harley 1528, Catalonia, first half of the 14th c., fol. 4r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



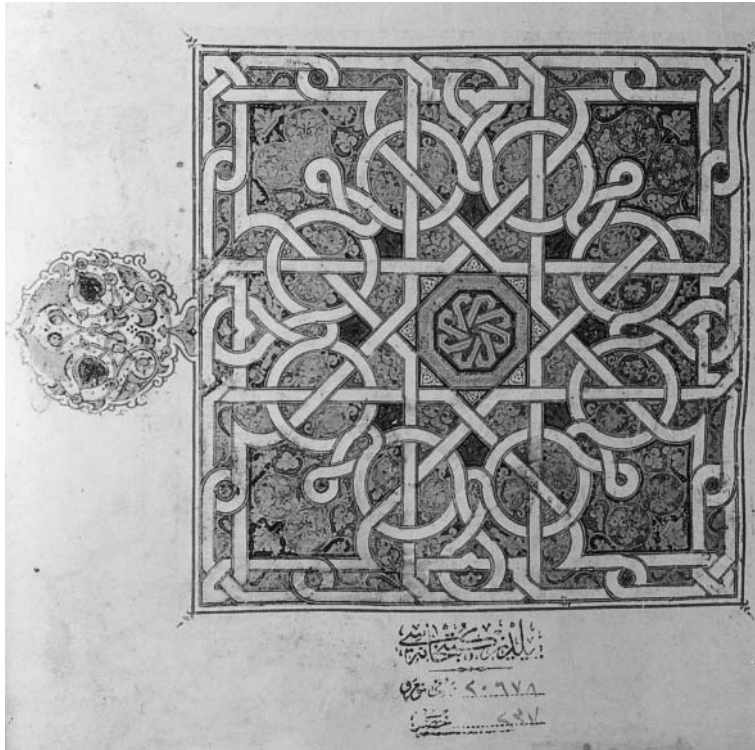
VIII. London, British Library, MS Add. 15250, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 2r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



IX. Former Sassoon Collection, MS 368, southern France (?), 1366-82, fol. 52r (photograph: with permission of R. David Sassoon, Jerusalem)

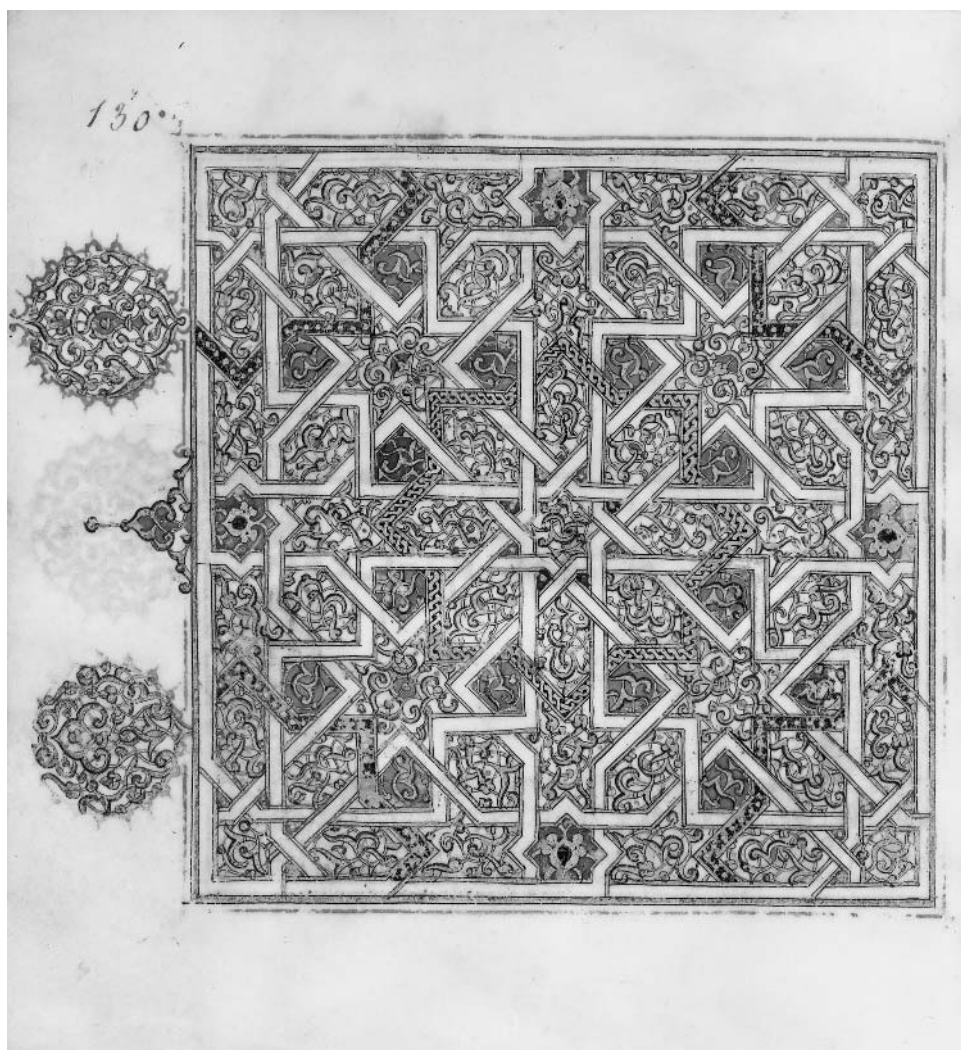


X. Former Sassoon Collection, MS 368, southern France (?), 1366–82, fol. 70r  
(photograph: with permission of R. David Sassoon, Jerusalem)

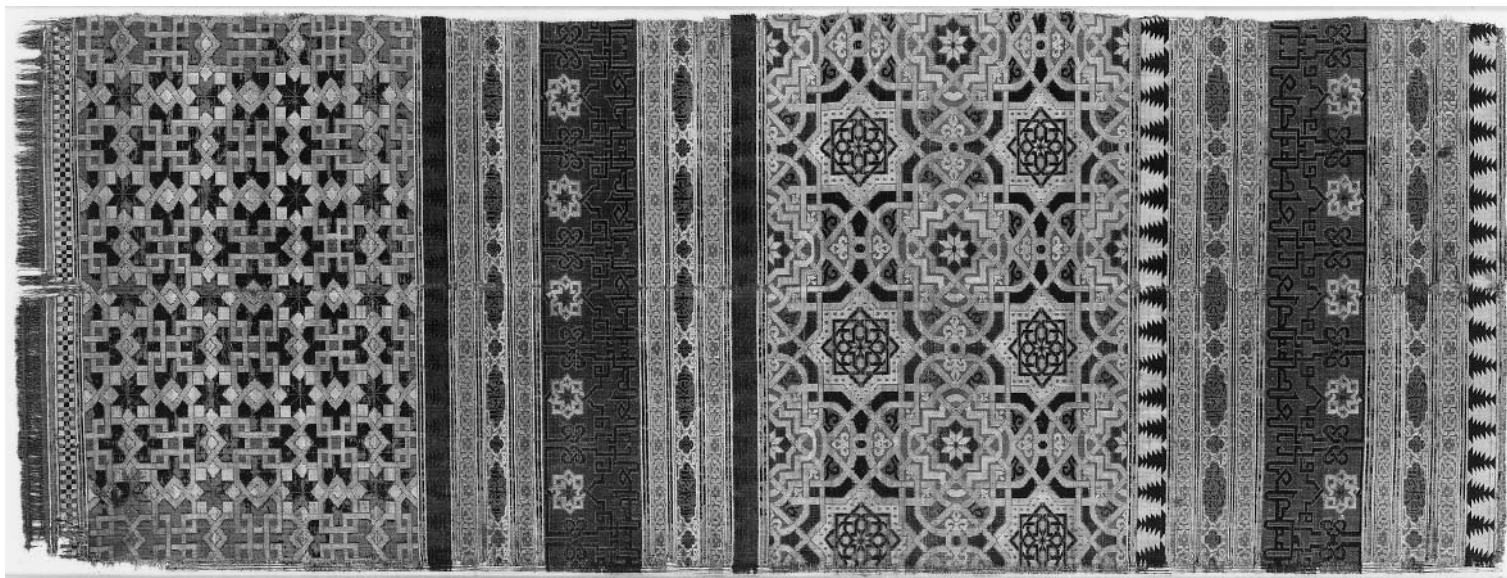


1. Istanbul, Istanbul University Library, MS A 6755, Cordoba, 1143, fol 3r (photograph: after Dodds, *Al-Andalus* (1992) with permission of the Istanbul University Library)

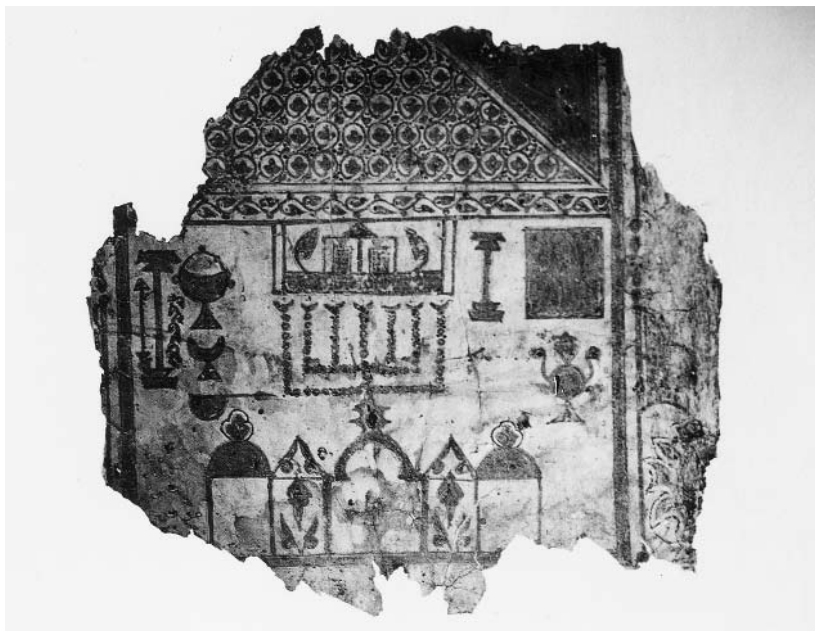
2. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. arab. 1, Seville, 1227, fol. 120r (photograph: with permission of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek)



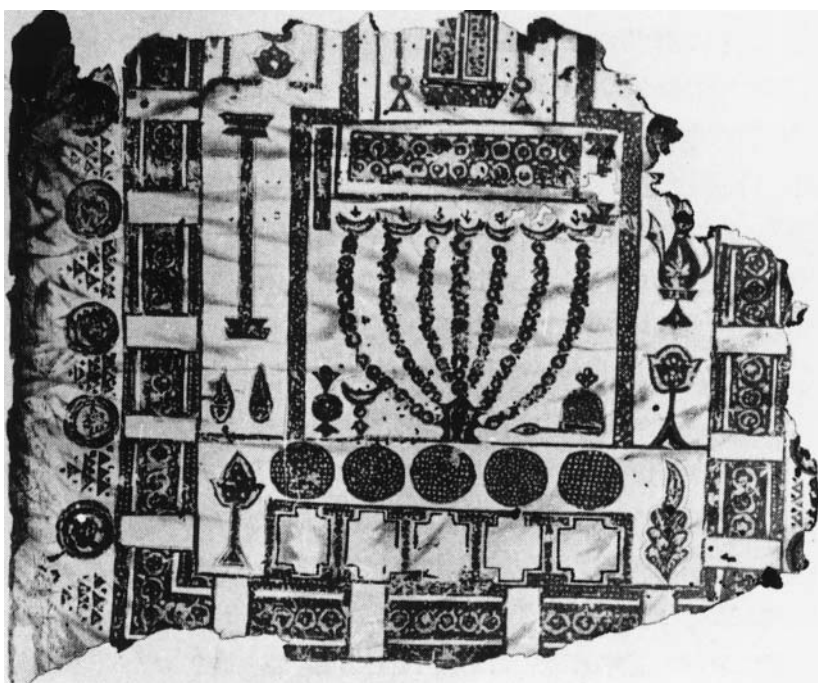
3. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. arabe 385, Granada, 1304, fol. 130r  
(photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



4. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 29.22, Granada, 14th-15th c., textile  
(photograph: with permission of the Metropolitan Museum of Art)

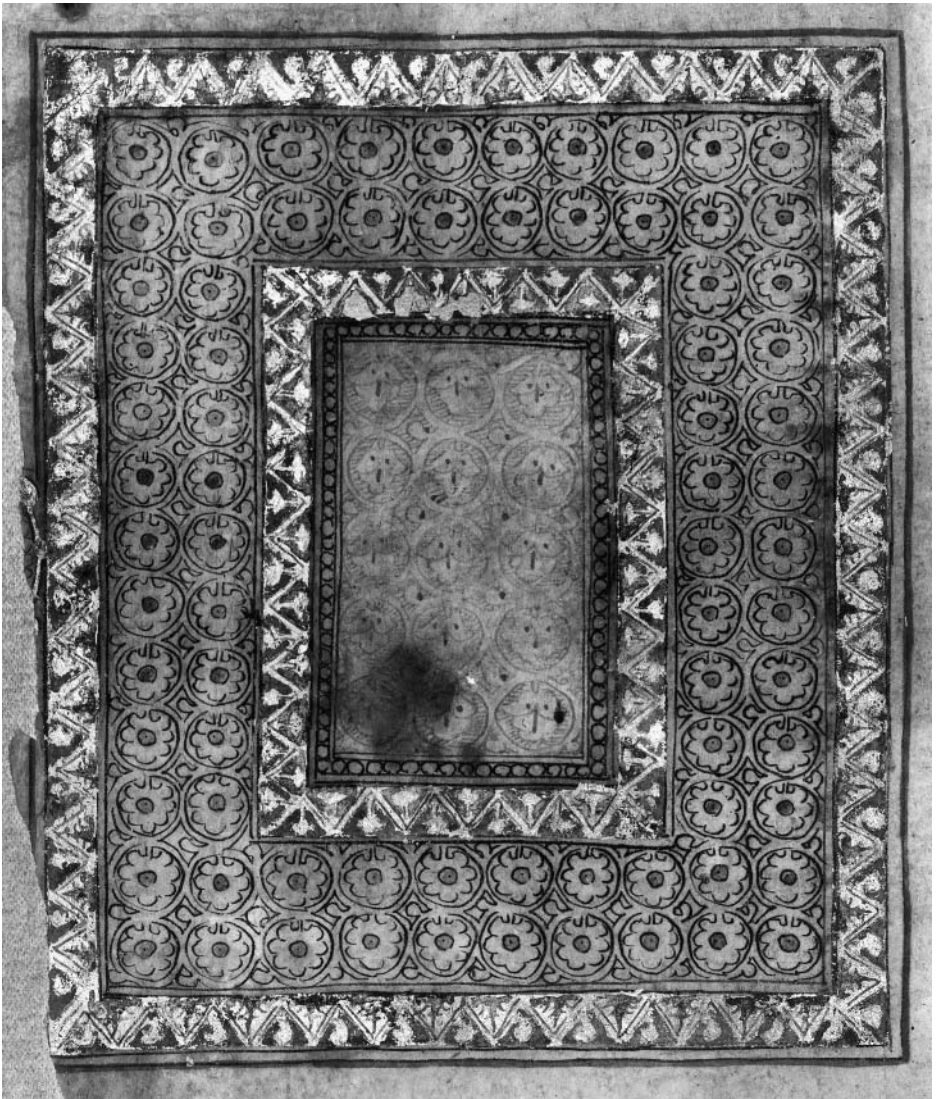


5. St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 17, Egypt or Middle East (?), 929, fragment (photograph: after Narkiss (1984) with permission of the National Library of Russia)

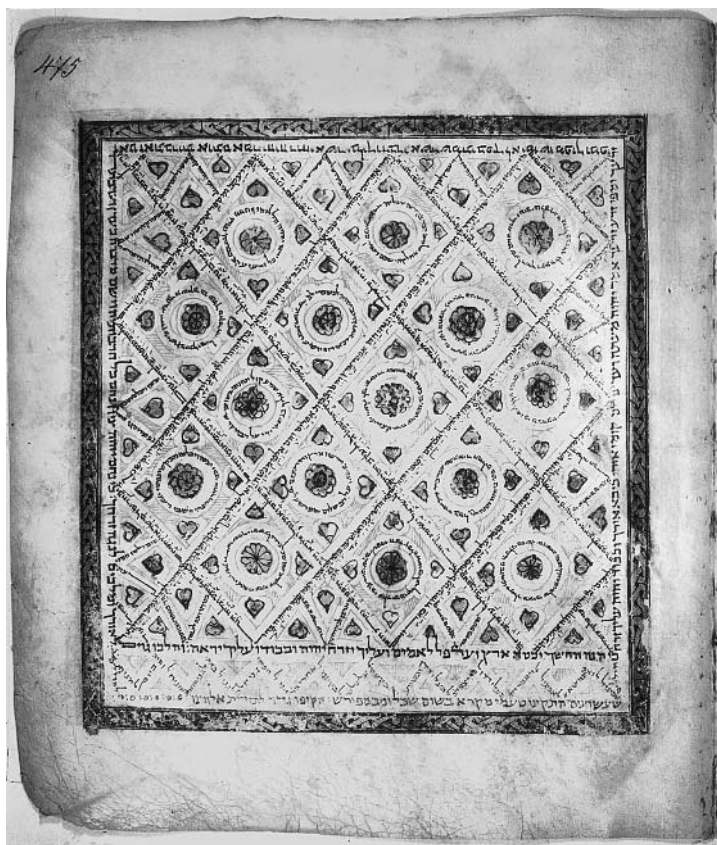


6. St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 17, Egypt or Middle East (?), 929, fragment (photograph: after Narkiss (1984) with permission of the National Library of Russia)





7. London, British Library, MS Or. 2540, Middle East, 10th or 11th c., fol. 3v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



8. St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 19a, Egypt, 1008, fol. 475r (photograph: after Narkiss (1984) with permission of the National Library of Russia)



9. St. Petersburg, National Library of Russia, Firkovich Collection, MS II B 19a, Egypt, 1008, fol. 474r (photograph: after Narkiss (1984) with permission of the National Library of Russia)



10. London, British Library, MS Or. 2363, Middle East, 10th or 11th c., fol. 90v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



11. London, British Library, MS Or. 2363, Middle East, 10th or 11th c., fol. 39v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



12. London, British Library, MS Or. 2363, Middle East, 10th or 11th c., fol. 68r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)

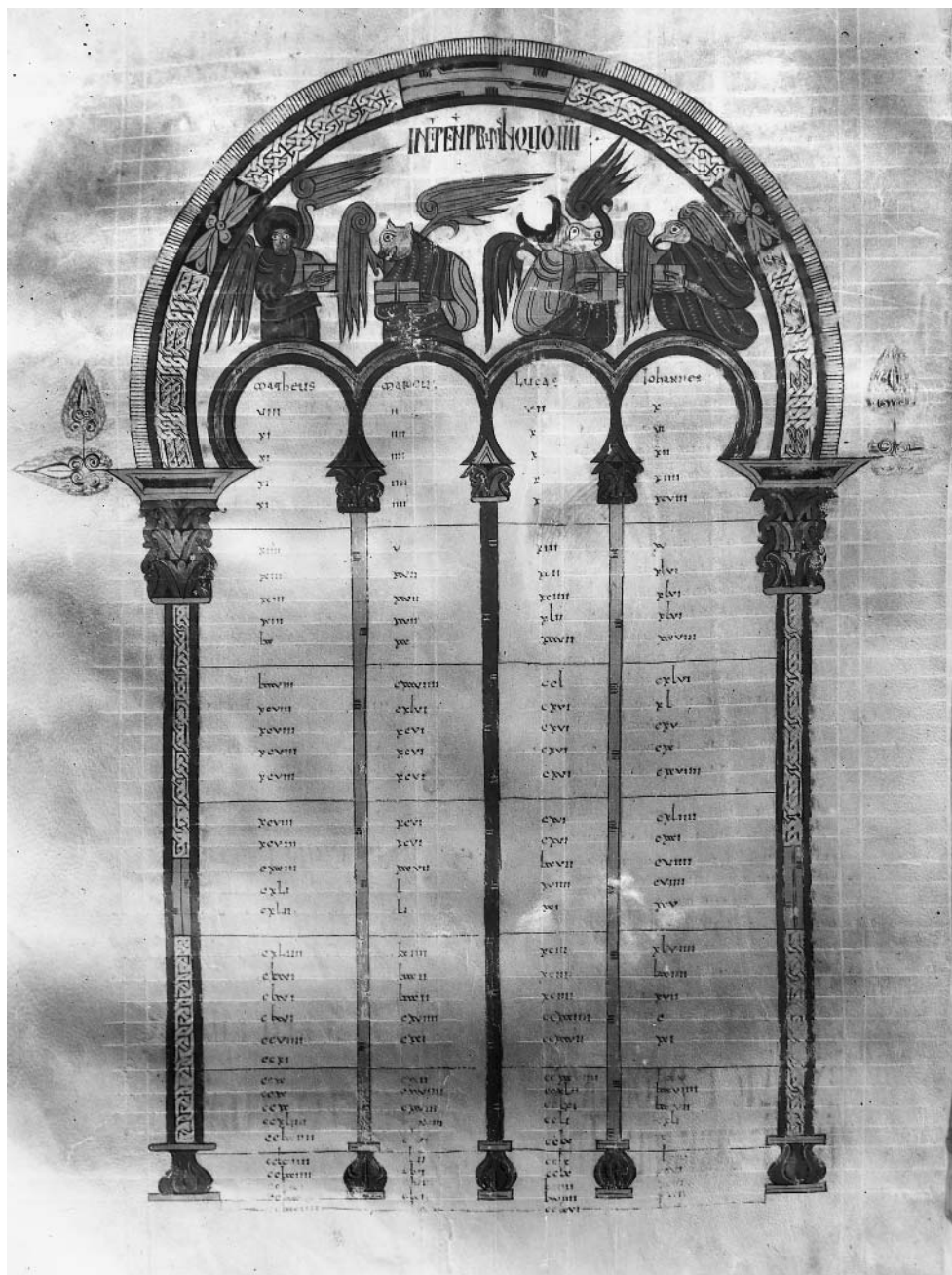


13. London, British Library, MS Or. 2363, Middle East, 10th or 11th c., fol. 101r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)

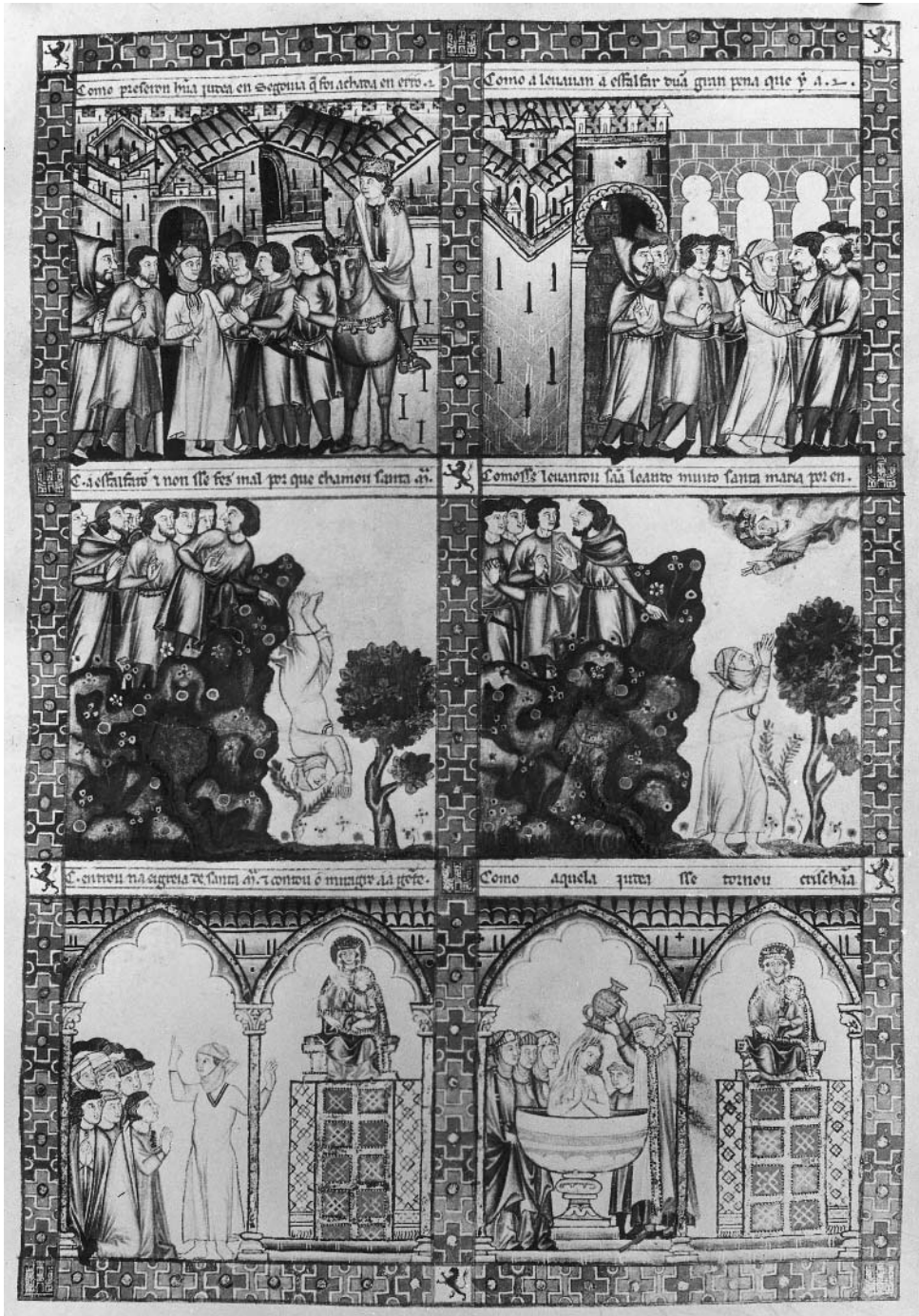


15. Cordoba, Great Mosque, Puerta de San Estéban, 8th c. (photograph: with permission of the Institut Amatller d'art Hispànic, Barcelona)

←  
14. San Pedro de la Nave, 7th c., interior (photograph: with permission of the Institut Amatller d'art Hispànic, Barcelona)



16. León, Coll. San Isidoro, Cod. 2, Valerianica, 960, fol. 396v (photograph: with permission of the Institut Amatller d'art Hispànic, Barcelona)



17. Escorial, MS T. 1. I, Castile, second half of 13th c., Cant. VII (photograph: with permission of the Institut Amatller d'art Hispanic, Barcelona)



18. Tordesillas, Santa Clara, formerly Palace of Alfonso XI (courtyard), second half of the 14th c.  
(photograph: K. Kogman-Appel)





19. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 25, Toledo, 1232, fol. 397r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



20. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 25, Toledo, 1232, fol. 9v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

אחיו יוסף ישלח לך בשר ויבשר  
בנימין אחיו יוסף לא שלח יעקב את אחיו  
כי אמר פן יקר אנטאסו ויבא בני ישראל  
לשקר בתוך הכמים כי היה הרעב בארץ  
כנען ויוסף הוא השליט על הארץ הוא  
הפ שביד לכל עם הארץ ויבא אחיו יוסף  
וישתחוו לפניו אפיס ארצה וידא יוסף את  
אחיו ויסוס וינכר אליהם וידבר אתם  
קשות יאמר אליהם מאן באתם ויאמרו  
מאן נבשר לך בשר אבי ויבך יוסף את  
אחיו והסלם הפרחו ויבך יוסף את החיות  
אשר הולס להם ויאמר אליהם מדוע יסאם  
לראות אדני ועזרת הארץ באתם ויאמרו  
אלה לא אדני ועזרנוך כבאל שער אב  
מלנו בני אש אחד רענו כנס אנחנו לאחיו  
עזרנו מדוע יסאם אליהם לא כיעות  
הארץ כאתם לראות ויאמרו שנים יש  
עבדך אחים אנחנו בני אש אחד בארץ  
כנען והנה הקטן את אבנו היום והאחר  
אננו ויאמר אליהם יוסף הוא אשר דבנתו  
איתם לאמר מדוע יסאם באתם ויאמרו  
היפועה אסתנו אומיה כי אסבכו אחיכם  
הקטן הנה שלח חמס ארץ ויבך את אחיכם  
ואתם האסרו ויבנתו יבך לכם האמת איתכם  
ואסלא היפועה בידנו מדוע יסאם ויאספה  
איתם אדני שמר שלשת ימים ויאמר אליהם  
יוסף בלם השלישי ואת עשורו ואת  
הארץ אעירא אסכנס אתם אחיכם  
אחד יאסר בביתו שמרכס ואתם לכו  
הכאו שבר עבדו פתתכם ואת אחיכם  
הקטן תכאו ויאמנו רב ריכם ולא

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תמותו וינישכן ויאמרו איש אל אחיו  
אבל אשכים אתנו על אחינו אשר ראנו  
ערת נפש בחתנונו אלנו ולא שמיענו  
כזבאה אלנו הצרה הזאת וינישך ראובן איתם  
לאמר הלא אמרת אלי כסדר אמר אל  
החטא ויבדל ולא שמיענו ונסדמו הפך  
נדרשו וחסל לא ידעו כי שמיעו יוסף כי תפולין  
ביתם ויסכמו עליהם ויבך וישב אהבה  
וידבר אליהם ויוסף כאתם את שלש עונות  
אתו ידעתי וינישך וינישך וינישך וינישך  
בר ויהי שב כספיהם איש אל שקו וילתת  
להם צרה רבד וינישך להם קו וישא את  
שכרם על חמיהם וילתת כספיהם ויפלה הארץ  
את שקו לתת מספוא לחמור ובעלן וירא  
את כספו והנה הוא בני אמתותיו ויאמר  
אל אחיו הליב כספיהם ויפלה האמתות  
וינאלם ויחדו איש אל אחיו ולאמר מה  
זאת עשהו אלה לנו ויבא אל יעקב  
אבותם ארצה כנען ויערולו את בני הקרית  
אתם לאמר ידבר האיש אלנו הארץ אתנו  
קשורות ויתן איתנו כספיהם את הארץ ויאמר  
אליו כנס אתנו לאחינו מדוע יסאם עשר  
איתנו אחים כנען אבתי הארץ אתנו וחקטן  
היום את אבתי בארץ כנען ויאמר אלנו  
האיש אלנו הארץ באת אדני כי כנס אתם  
אחיכם האחר רעחו אתנו ואת עובדנו כנען  
החולב והכאו את אחיכם הקטן אל  
וארצה כן לאמר יסאם כי כנס אתם  
את אחיכם אתו ללכם ואת הארץ ויבך  
ויהי חמור קום שקיהם והנה איש ערול  
כספו בשקו וירא את אלוות כספיהם ויבך

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וְעָמְרוּ אֵלֶיךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְנִשְׁמָעוּ בְּקוֹלְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ

21. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 25, Toledo, 1232, fol. 44v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

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נאמטמס ורחצורלס  
והששפתת העין ואקחה  
פתלם וסערולכם אתה  
תערכו מעלן עפרכם על  
עברכם ואמרו כן תנשו  
כאשר דברתי וימחר אברהם  
האחה אל שרה ואמר מה  
שרשם אם קמה פת לישו  
ועשית עות ואר הקרין  
אברהם ויקח כן ברך וטוב  
וימארה הער וימחר לעשות  
אתה וילוח המאה חרוב וכך  
הקבר אשר עשה ויוק לבנים  
והוא עבר עליהם תחת העץ  
ויאכלו ויאמרו אי אשה  
אשרך ויאמר הנה באה  
ויאמר שוב אשוב אלך בער  
חיו ותחיו בן שרה אשרך  
ושרה שמעת פתח האר ווא  
אחריו ואברהם ושרה וקנס  
כאם בימים חדל והיה ושרה  
ארב בגשים ויתעק שרה  
בקרה לאמר אחי בלהה  
היתה לי עדתי וארעו ויאמר  
והוא אל אברהם לפתח צחקה  
שרה לאמר האג אג אג אג  
ואני וקנתי חילא מיתו דבר  
למומר אשוב אלך בעת חיה  
ולשרה בן ויתחל שרה  
לאמר לא צחקתי ביראה  
ויאמר לא צחקתי ויקמטט  
האגשים וישפט על פני סרם

ואברהם חרך עמס לשרהם  
ויהוה אמר המכסה אני  
מאברהם אשר אני עשרך  
ואברהם חיו יהוה לנו נר  
ועצם ועברטו כל ימי הארץ  
כי ירעתי למען אשר יעשה את  
בני ואת בתו אחר וישמר  
הרד יהוה לעשות צדקה  
וישפט ולמען חבא יהוה על  
אברהם את אשר דבר עמי  
ויאמר יהוה ונקת סרם וממו  
כרבה והמאתם כי כרה מאו  
ארה ואראה הכעקתה  
הבאה אלי עשומה ואם לא  
אדעה ויעימס האגשים לר  
סרטה ואברהם עורנו עמר  
לפני יהוה ויעש אברהם ואמר  
האף תקפה ערוק עמר שש  
אני וישחמש ערוקם כיתוך  
העיר והאת הספה ולא תשא  
למקום למען חמשים הצדיקם  
אשר בקרה חלה חך בעשת  
כדבר תוה להמית ערוק עם  
רשע ויהוה כערוק קרשע  
חלה חך השפט מן הארץ  
ועשת משפט ויאמר יהוה אם  
אמצא בכרם חמשים ערוקם  
מתוך העיר ועשאתי למי המקום  
בעבורם ויעו אברהם ויאמר  
חתיא חתיא חתיא חתיא חתיא  
ואני עבר ואמר אולי יחסון  
חמשים הצדיקם חמשה

התשיתו בחמשה את בלה  
העיר ויאמר לא אשחית את  
אמצא שם ארבעים וחמשה  
ויסך עור דבר אליו ויאמר  
אלי ויצאן שם ארבעים ואמר  
לא אעשה מעמר הארבעים  
ויאמר אלי חר לא ראו ואתה  
אולי ויצאן שם ששים ואמר  
לא אעשה אם אמצא שם  
ששים ויאמר חתיא חתיא  
לדבר אל ארץ אלי ויצאן שם  
עשרים ויאמר לא אשחית מעמר  
העשרים ויאמר אל חר  
לא ראו ואתה חר חמסות  
אולי ויצאן שם עשרה ויאמר לא  
אשחית מעמר העשרה ויאמר לא  
יהוה כאשר בלה לדבר אל  
אברהם ואברהם שב למקומו  
ויבאו שם חמלאים סרם  
בערבותו וישב בשער סרם  
ויראו ויקם לקראתם וישתחו  
אפס ארצה ויאמר הנה נא  
את סרתי ואת מית עברכם  
ולעוה העיר וכן וישפוטם  
והלקתם לדרככם ויאמר לא  
כדבר חר עני ויצאן עם מאד  
ויקראו ויבאו ארצות ויעש  
לחמשתו וישתחו אפס ויאמר  
סרם וישבו ואנשי עיר אגשו  
סרם וקבו על הבית מער וער  
וקוה חמס מקוצו ויקראו  
לוט ויאמר לו אה האגשים



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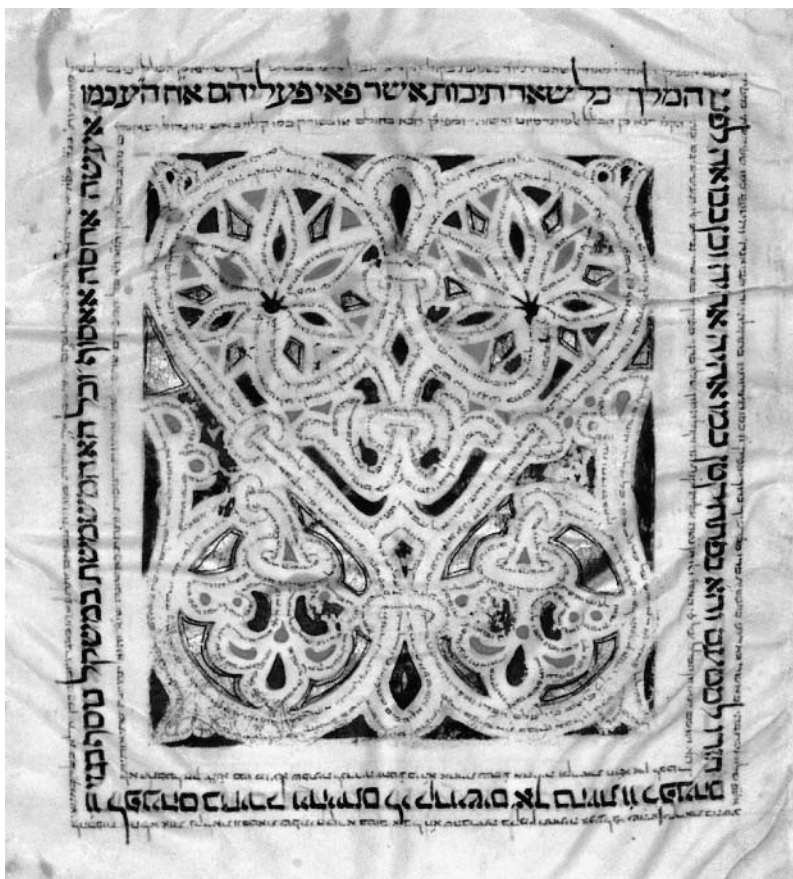
22. Madrid, Biblioteca Historica. Universidad Complutense de Madrid, MSS 1, Toledo (?), 1280 (?), fol. 8r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Historica. Universidad Complutense de Madrid)



23. Marseilles, Bibliothèque municipale, cod. 1626, Toledo, ca. 1260, fol. 232v (3r) (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque municipale)



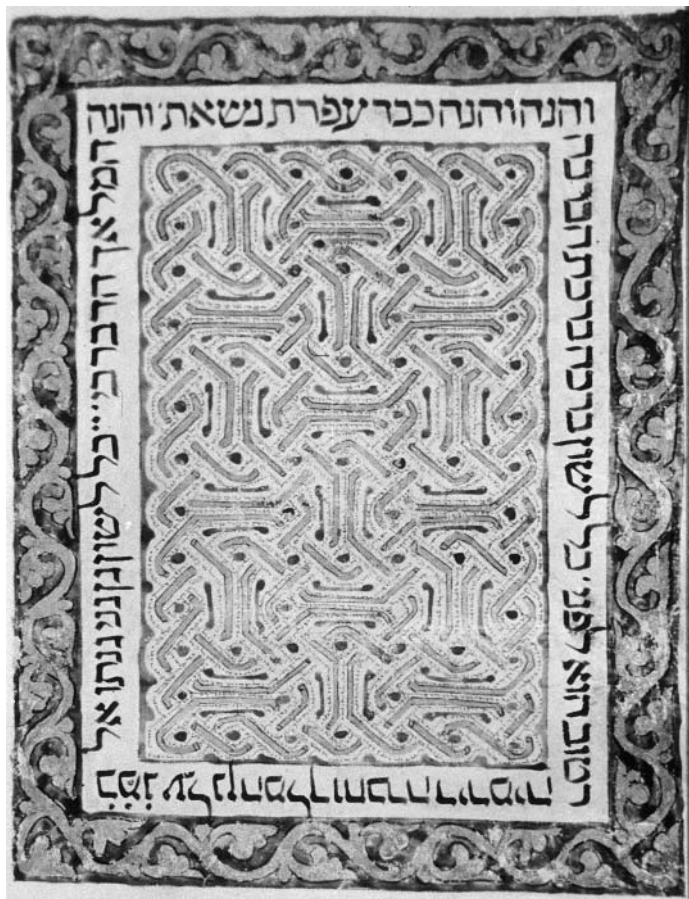
24. Toledo, Museo de Santa Cruz, relief, probably from the palace of Al-Ma'mun, Toledo, c. 1050 (photograph: with permission of the Museo de Santa Cruz)



25. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. VII, Toledo (?), c. 1260, fol. 65r (photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)



26. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 4<sup>o</sup>790, Toledo (?), 1260, and Burgos, late 13th c., fol. 114r (photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)



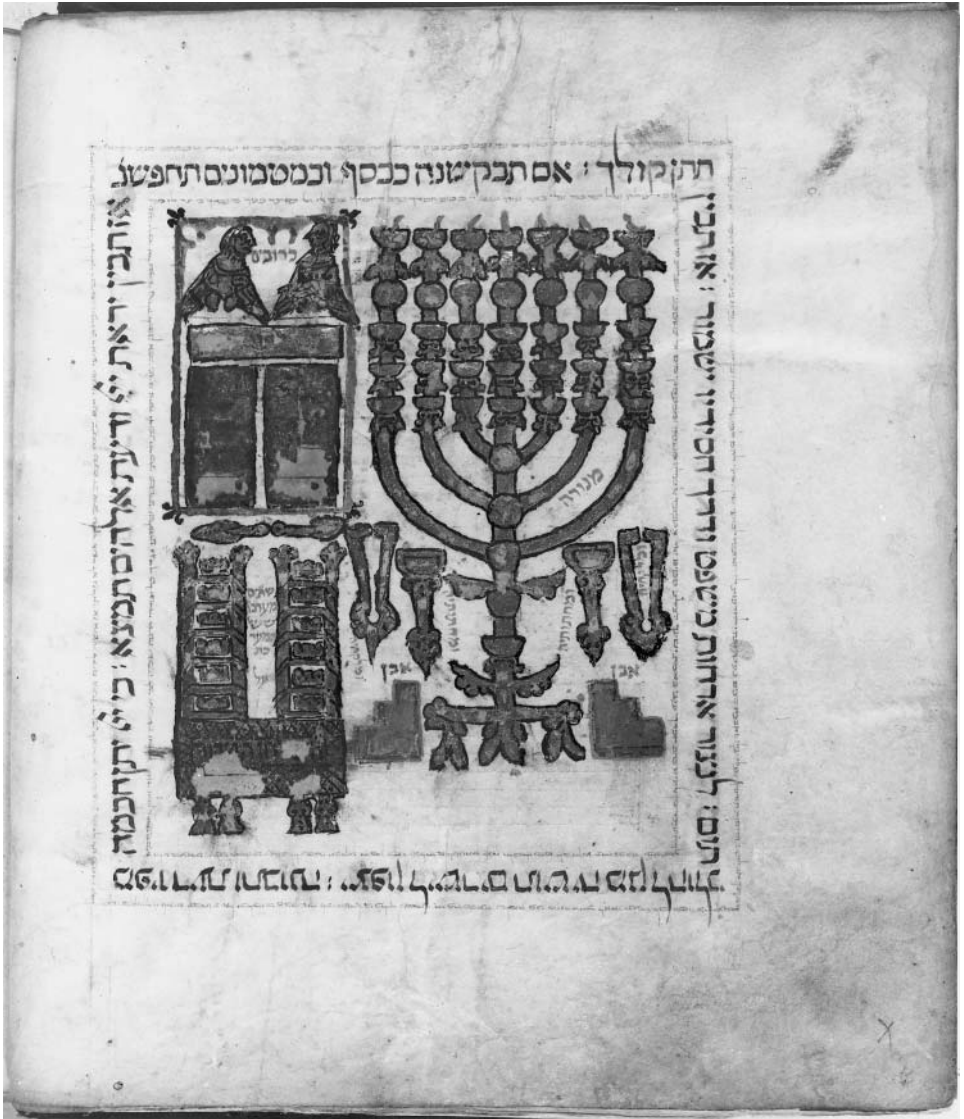
27. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 4<sup>o</sup>790, Toledo (?), 1260, and Burgos, late 13th c., fol. 310v (photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)



28. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 4<sup>o</sup>790, Toledo (?), 1260, and Burgos, late 13th c., fol. 248r (photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)

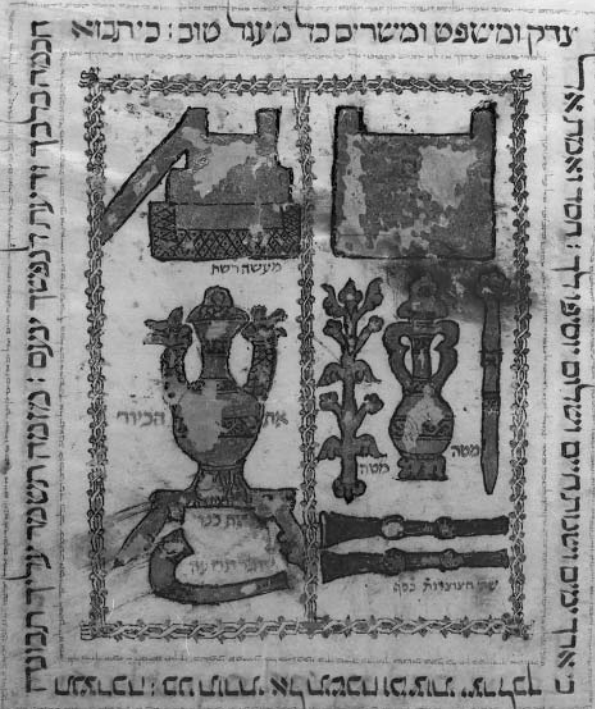


29. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 4<sup>o</sup>790, Toledo (?), 1260, and Burgos, late 13th c., fol. 263r (photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)

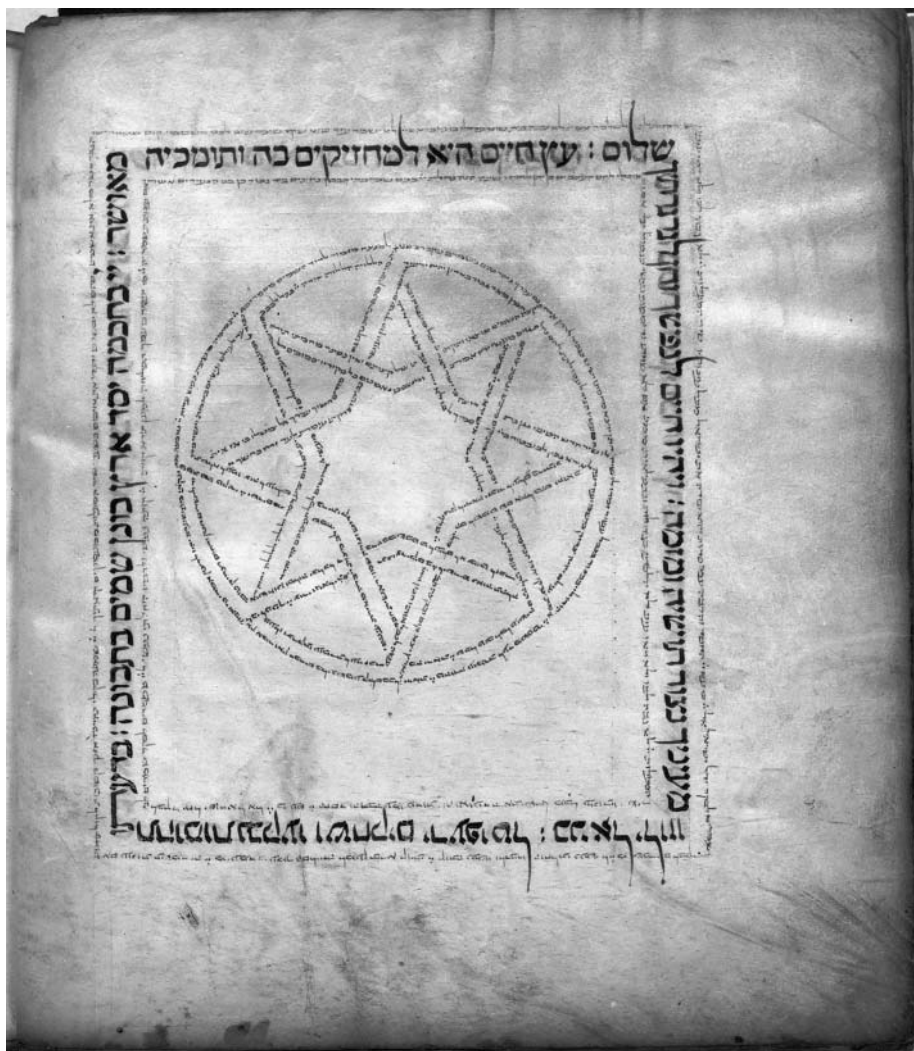


30. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2668, Toledo, 1277, fol. 7v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)

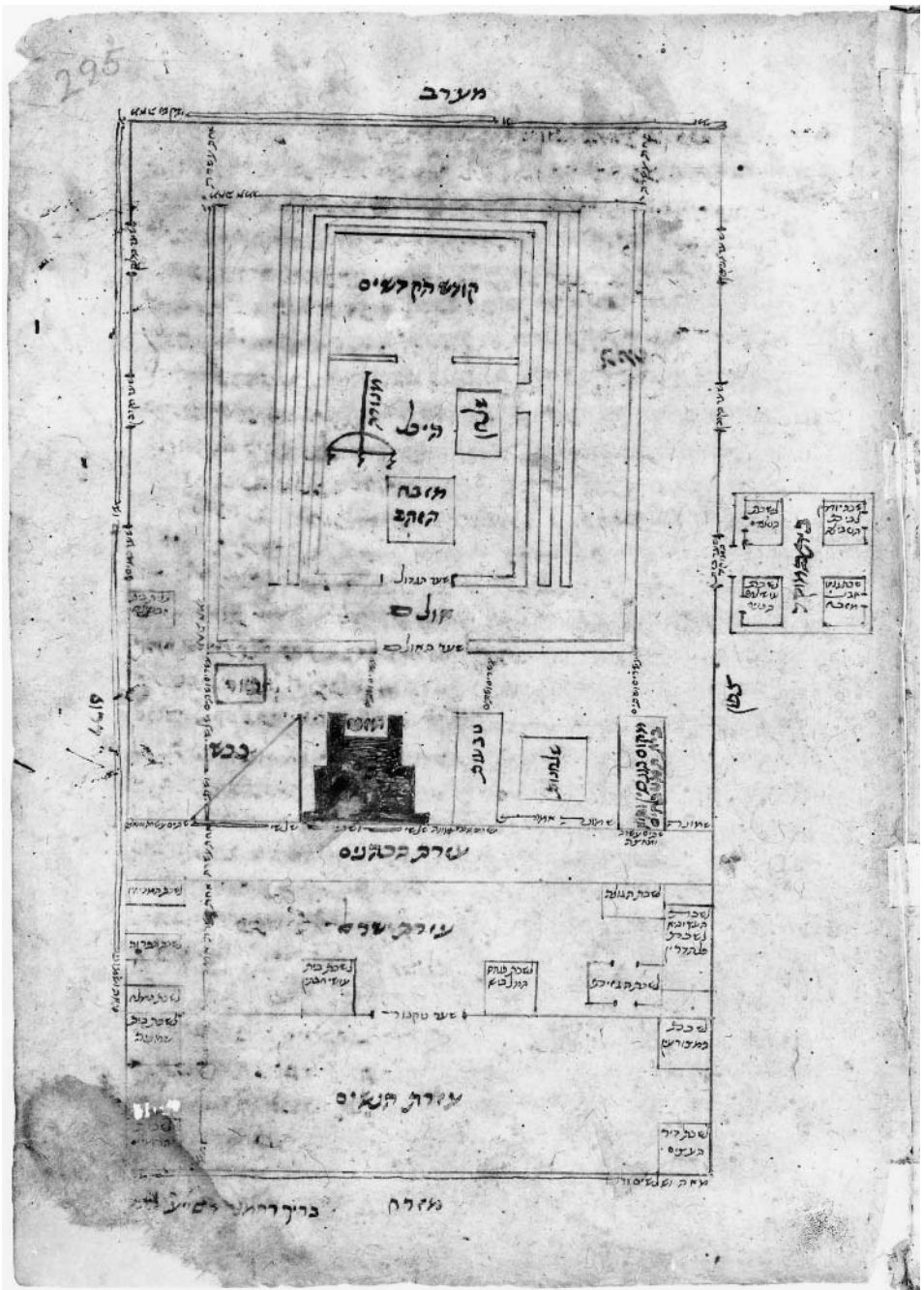




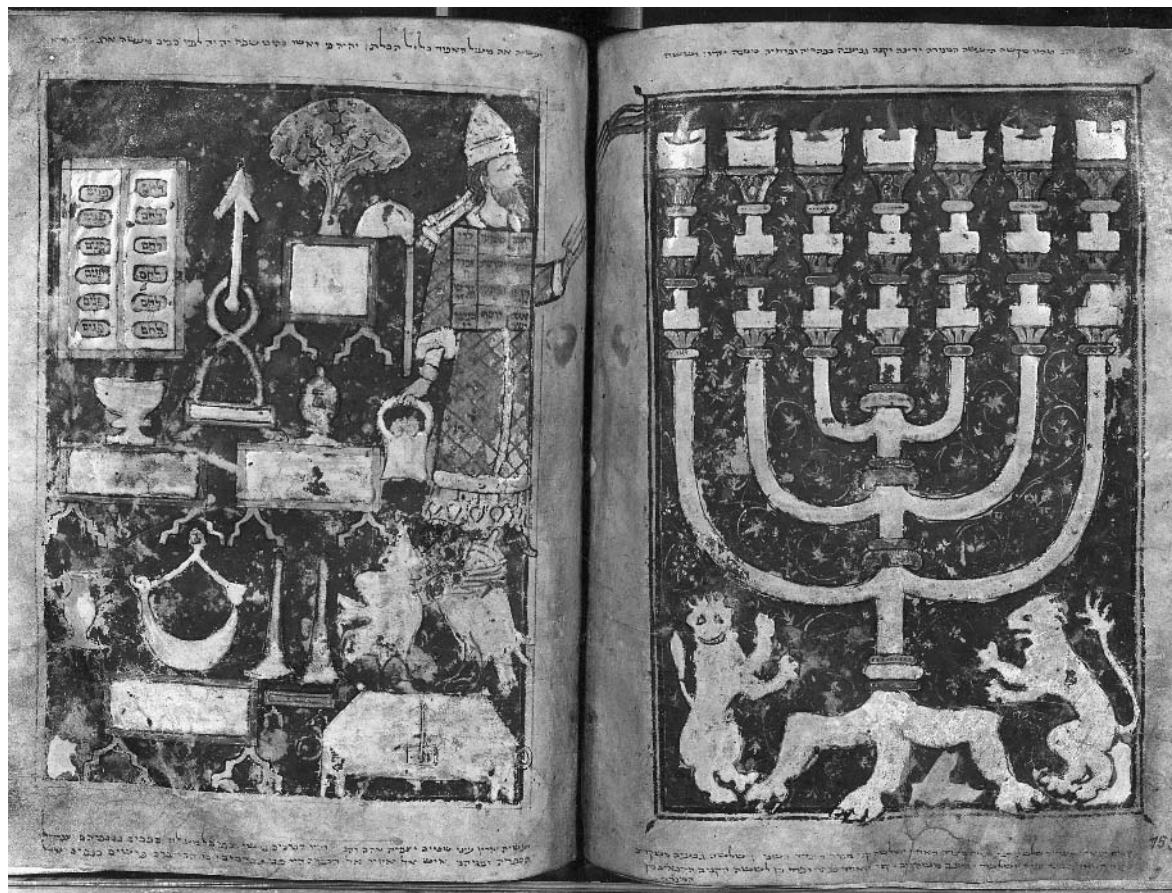
31. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2668, Toledo, 1277, fol. 8r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)



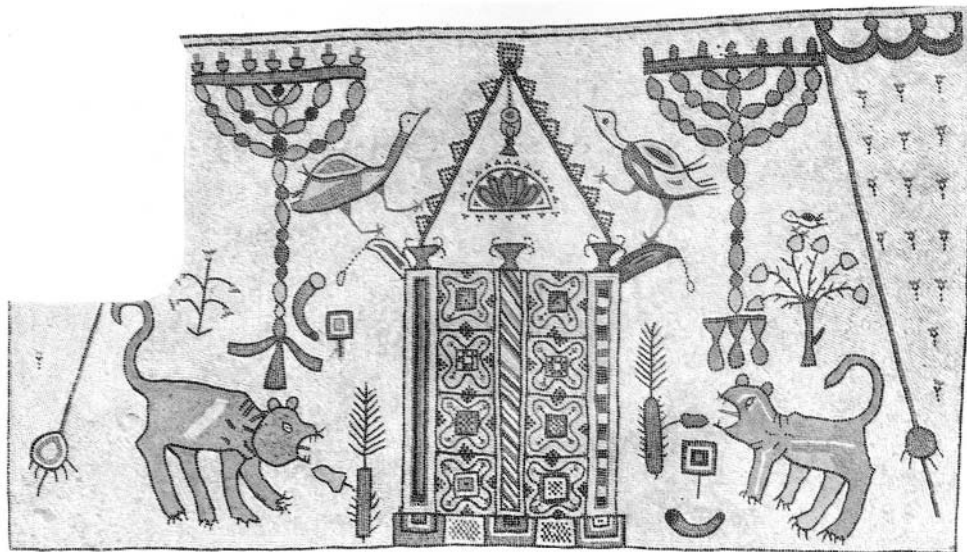
32. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2668, Toledo, 1277, fol. 9v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)



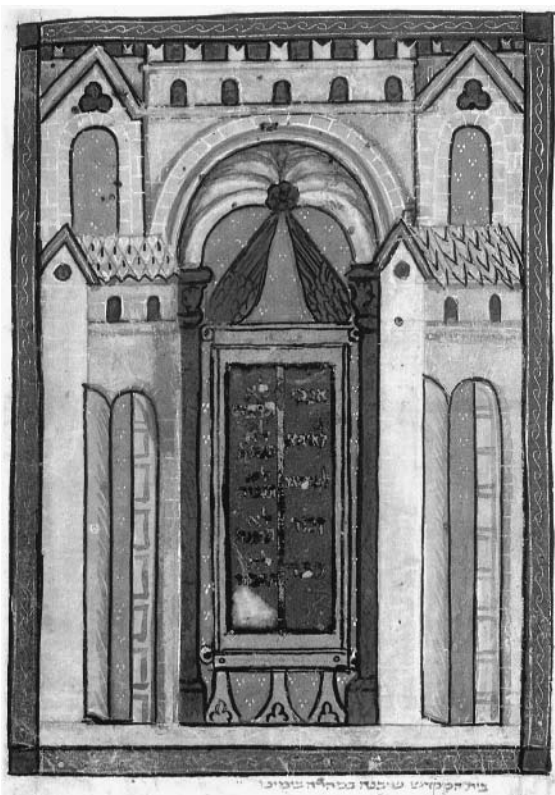
33. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Poc. 295, Spain or Egypt, end of the 12th c., fol. 295r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



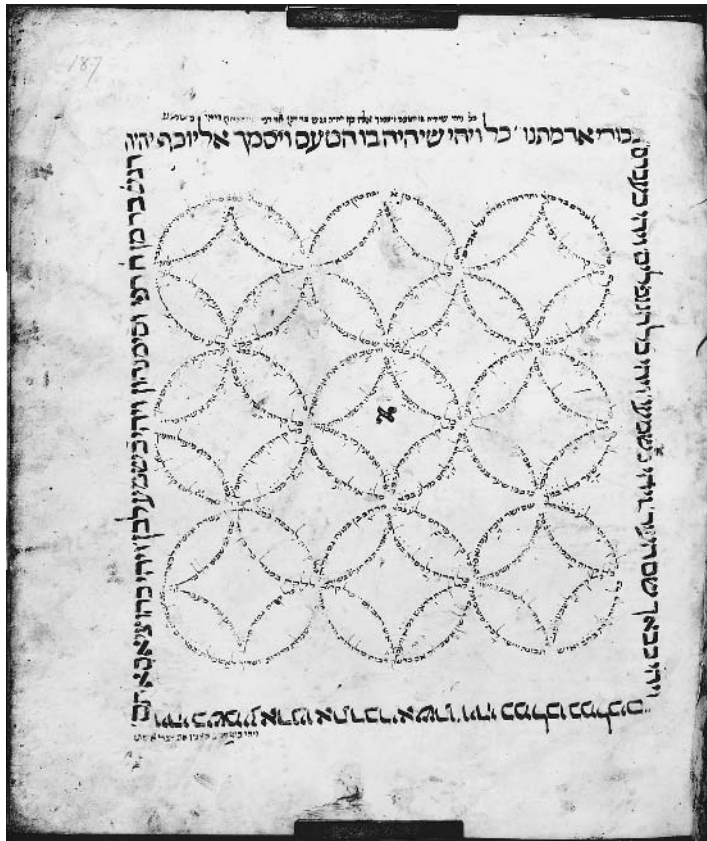
34. Jerusalem, Israel Museum, MS 180/52, Regensburg, c. 1300, fol. 156r (photograph: with permission of the Israel Museum)



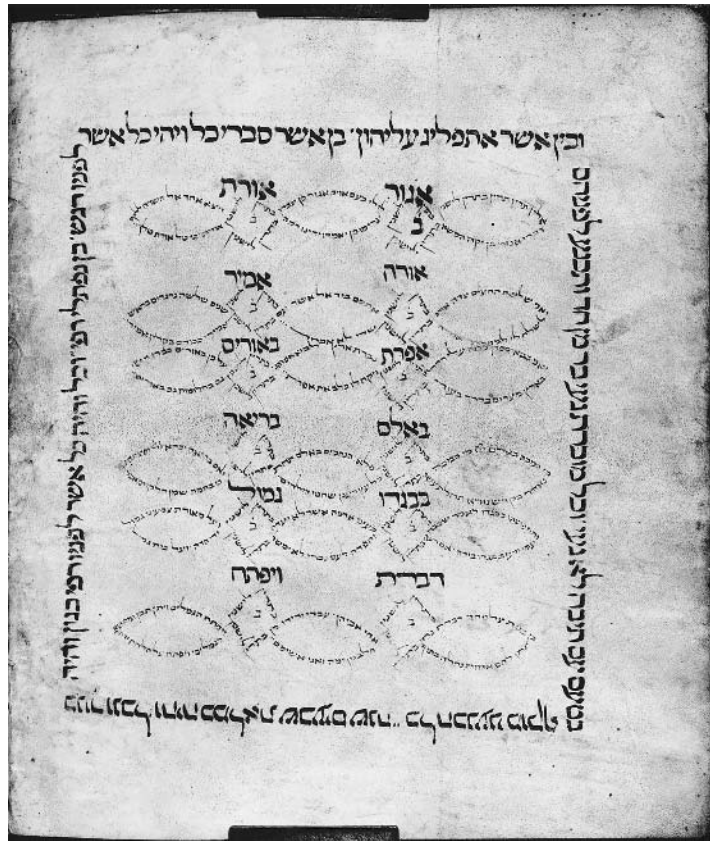
35. Beit Alpha, mosaic floor, 6th c (photograph: with permission of the Israel Antiquities Authority)



36. Sarajevo (National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina), Crown of Aragon, first half of the 14th c., fol. 32r (photograph: with permission of the Jewish Community, Sarajevo)



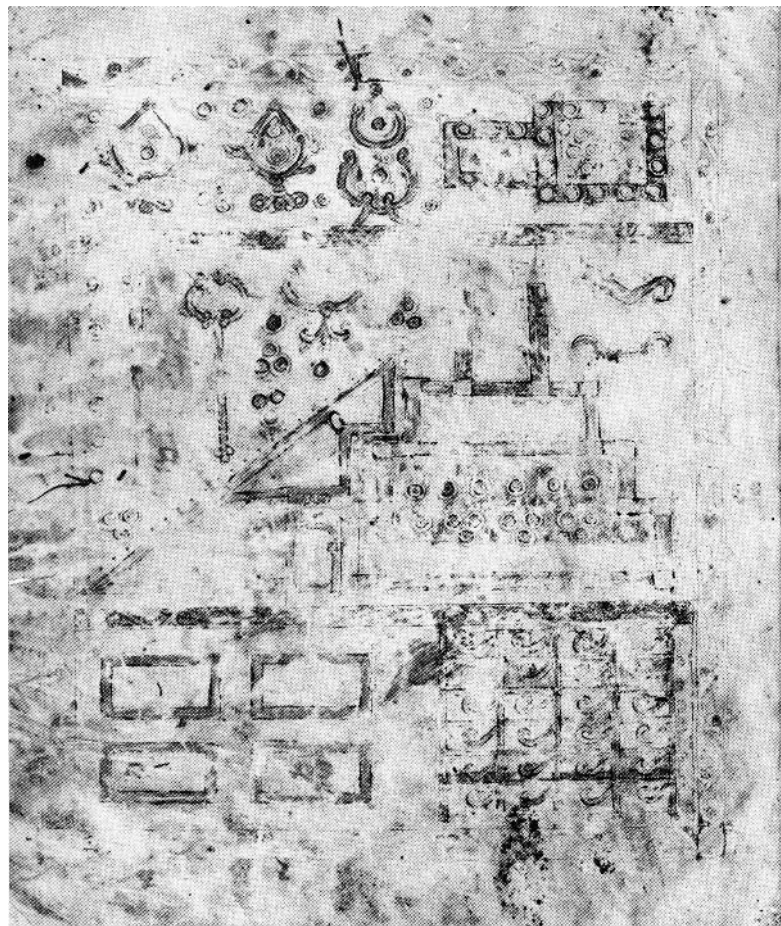
37. London, British Library, MS Or. 2201, Toledo, 1300, fol. 187r  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



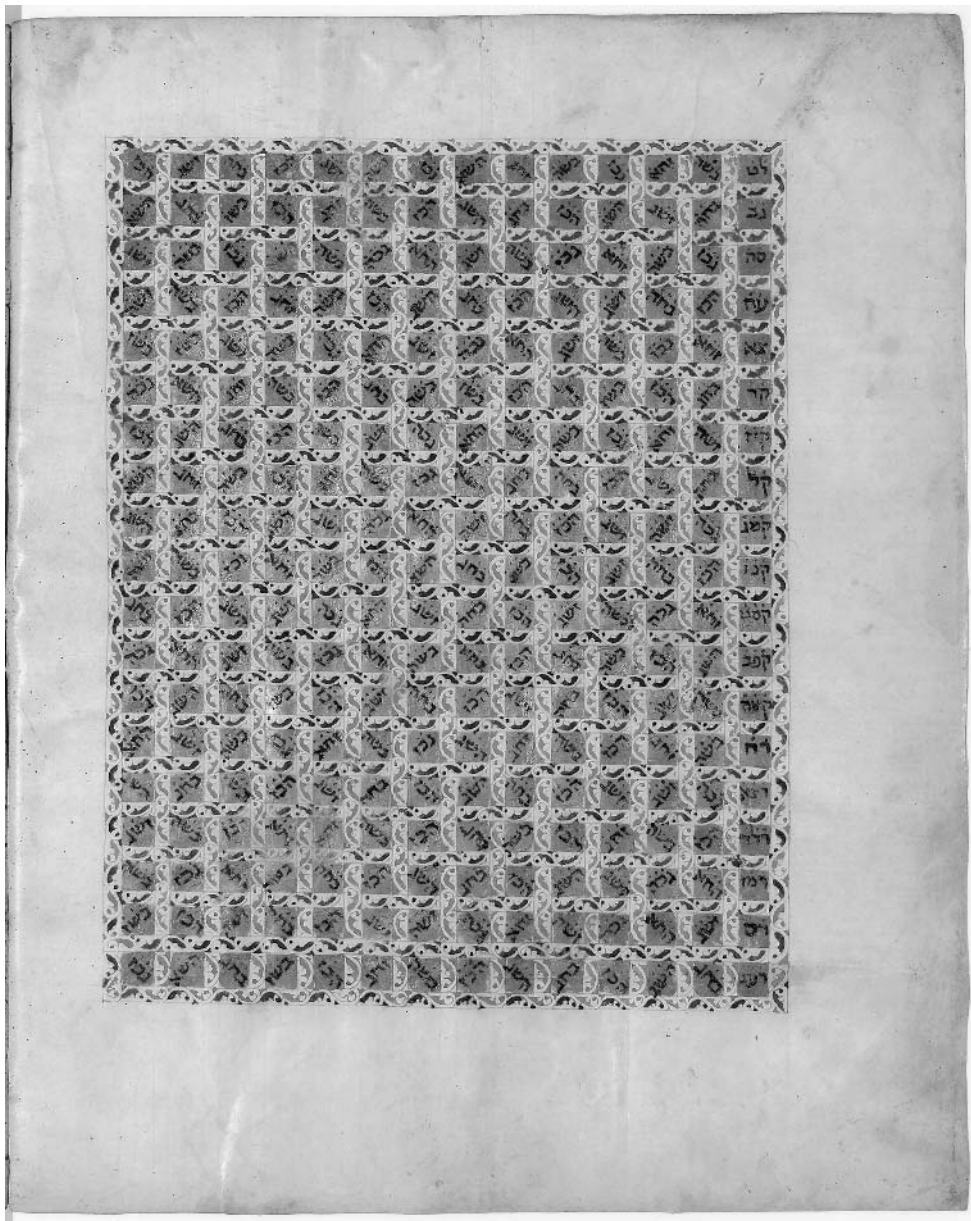
38. London, British Library, MS Or. 2201, Toledo, 1300, fol. 187v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



39. London, British Library, MS Or. 2201, Toledo, 1300, fol. 34v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



40. London, British Library, MS Or. 2201, Toledo, 1300, fol. 2r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



41. Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 3203, Castile (?), 13th c., fol. 9v  
(photograph: with permission of Cambridge University Library)





מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון

אנה חסדה על הקיקיון אשר לא  
עמלה בו ולא נדרתו שבזלילה חיה  
ובן לילה אבדו ואני לא אחוס על  
נגונה העיר הגדולה אשר ישפה  
הרבה משתים עשרה רבן ארס  
אשר לא ידעמון זמינו לשמאח  
ובהמה רבה



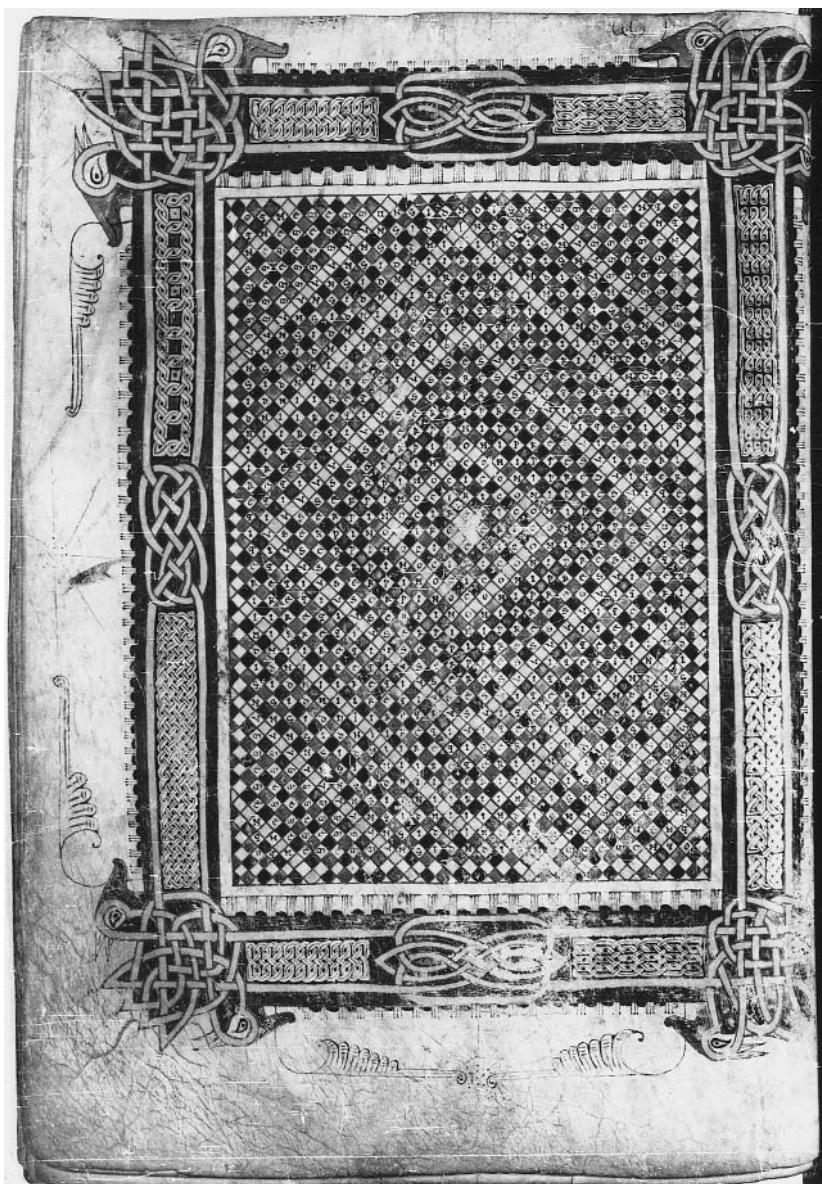
דבר יהוה אשר היה אל משה ואל  
בני ישראל אחי יחזקיה מלכי יהודה  
אשר היה על שמרון וירושלם ושמע  
עמים בלם הקשיבו ארץ ומלאת  
ויהאדני יהוה כבס לעד ארע מהלכו  
קר שויכיהנה יחיה ויצא ממקומו ודרך  
ודרך עד במתי ארץ וינבטו ההרים  
תחתיו וחעמקים יתבקעו עמו ונג  
מפגע האש כמזים במזרס במזרד  
כפשעו יעקבלו ואת וכתטאותנות  
ישראל מפשעו יעקבלו ואשמדון  
ומיבמות יהודה הורא וירושלם  
ושמתי שמדון לעושה הלה למטע  
לכסו והנרתי לניאכניה ויסדה אנה  
וברפסילה יתנו ובר אתנעהו ושרפ

כאש וכל עצמה אשים שממה  
כי מטתן זונה קצתה וע אתן זונה  
ישוכני על זאה אספרה ואיללה  
אילכה שילדו ערוס אעשה מספר  
כתנים ואמר ככנתי עתה וימא עשה  
מכותיה מכאה עד יהודה נגע עד  
שער ימי עד ירושלם כנתי אלהנו  
כבו אל הנטו בבית לעפיה עפר  
התפר שהיו עבר ולכסו שבת שפר  
ערוח בשת לא יצאה וישבת עאנן  
מספר בית האצו יקח מהם ענתו  
ביהלה לטובו שבת מרתו מירדע  
מאת יהוה לשער ירושלם רתם  
המזככה לרכש וישבת לבי שראשה  
חטאתה היא לכת עיון מכך נמצאו  
פשיעו ישראל לכן תתני שלוחים  
על מזר שתתבתי אבוי לאבוב  
למלכי ישראל ועד הירש אגידך  
וישנת מרשה עד עד לם ימא נכוד  
ישראל קרה וגו' עד בגת ענניך  
הרחקו קרחתך בגשר כילו ממך  
הויח' שביאן ופעל  
רע על משכבותם כאור הנקור  
יעשה בני ישראל ידם ויחמרו שדות  
ונזרו בהם ונשאון עשקונך וביתו

מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון

מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון  
מחברתו ב יחד עם דב נולד ויחינון

43. Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 3203, Castile (?), 13th c., fol. 585r (photograph: with permission of Cambridge University Library)



44. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, nouv. acq. lat. 2169, Castile, 10th or 11th c., fol. 21v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



45. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Can. Or. 94, Castile, 13th c., fol. 4v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



46. London, British Library, MS Or. 2737, Castile, last quarter of 13th c., fol. 72v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



שנה ליואש מלך יהודה מלך יהואש  
 בן יהואחז יל ישראל בשמרון שיש  
 עשרה שנה ויוצא הרע בעני יהו  
 לאסר ככל חטאות ירכנס בן עבד  
 אשר החטיא את ישראל מה הך :  
 ויהו דמי יואש וכל אשר עשה ונסתו  
 אשר נלחם עם אמציה מלך יהודה  
 הראהם כתובים על ספר דברי הימים  
 למלכי ישראל וישב יואש עם אנתו  
 ודרכים ישב על מסאו ויקרס יואש  
 בשמרון עם מלכי ישראל :  
 ואלישיע בנה את חליו אשר ימות  
 בו וקר אליו יואש מלך ישראל ויקר  
 על פניו ויאמר אבי אבך דכ ישראל  
 ופרשיו ויאמר לו אלישיע קשת  
 וחצים ויקח אליו קשתות וחצים ויאמר  
 למלך ישראל הרכב ידך על הקשת  
 וירכב יהוה וישם אלישיע ידו על ידי  
 המלך ויאמר פתח תחלון קדמה  
 ופתח ויאמר אלישיע ויהו ויאמר  
 חזת שויעה ליהוה חזת שויעה בנים  
 והבית את ארם כאפק על כה יאמר  
 קח החצים וקח ויאמר למלך ישראל  
 הן ארצו יך של שפניסו ויעה וקנה  
 עליו איש האלהים ויאמר להסתחטש  
 או יש שפניסו אוהבית את ארם עד  
 כלה ועתה של שפניסו תסח את ארם  
 ומת אלישיע וקברוהו ונדודו  
 מואב יכאו כארץ בא ישעיה :

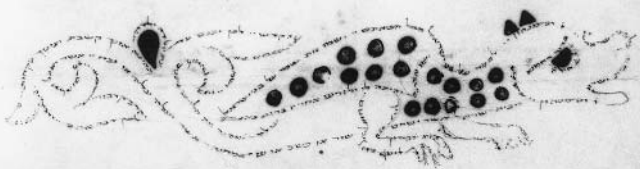
יעדו ויקשו קרס ויבואת יואש  
 בת מלא הדד סלא ויזכר בו שמינת  
 והחנדי מן שטר יעברו וחסו וימת  
 ויקרס אותו עם אנתו בניד דוד וימלך  
 אמציה בן תחתיו :  
 בשנת עשרים שליש שנה  
 ליואש בן אחזיה מלך יהודה מלך  
 יהואחז בן יהואל ישראל בשמרון  
 שסני עשרה שנה ויוצא הרע בעני  
 יהוה וילך את חטאת ירכנס בן נט  
 אשר החטיא את ישראל לא סר  
 מסתו ויהראף יהוה כישראל ויתנם  
 כד הואל מלך ארם וכד בן הדד בן  
 הואל מל הימים ויהל יהואחז את פני  
 יהוה וישמין אליו יהוה כרואה את  
 לחו ישראל כלחץ אתם מלך ארם :  
 חת יהוה לישראל מושיעו ויגדלו  
 מתודת ארם וישבו בני ישראל  
 כאלהם כתמל של שם : אך לא  
 סו מחטאות בית ירכנס אשר  
 החטי את ישראל מה הך ועם  
 האשרה יעדה בשמרון כי לא  
 השאיר יהואחז עם מן אס חמישים  
 פריסו עשרה רכב עשרת אלפים  
 רתי מואבס מלך ארם וישם סנע  
 יד שויהו דמי יהואחז וכל אשר  
 עשה ונסתו הראהם כתובים על  
 ספר דברי הימים למלכי ישראל :  
 וישב יהואחז עם אנתו ויקברוהו  
 בשמרון וימלך יואש בן תחתיו :  
 בשנת שלשים ושש



47. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 207r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)

לכל חטאתם אהתבשנה ויעש  
כאשר צוה יהוה את משה  
וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר דבר  
אל אהרן ואל בניו ואל כל בני ישראל  
ואמרת אליהם זה הדבר אשר  
צוה יהוה לאמר איש איש מבית  
ישראל אשר ישחט שור או כשב  
או יגזל צמחה או אשר ישחט מהו  
למחנהו ואל פתח אהל מועד לא  
בניאו להקריב קרבן ליהוה לפני  
משכן יהוה דם יחשב לאיש הוא  
דם שפך ונכרת האיש הוא מקרב  
עמו ולמען אשר יביאו בני ישראל  
את זבחיכם אשר הם זבחים על פני  
השדה והכי אם ליהוה אל פתח  
אהל מועד אל המזבח ונחחו זכרו  
שלמים ליהוה אתם וזרק הכהן  
את הדם על מזבחה יהוה פתח אהל  
מועד והקטיר ההלבלב לריח ניחח  
ליהוה וזל אמצחו יעד את זבחיכם  
לשעולם אשר הם זנים אחריהם  
חקת עולם תהיה זאת להם לדורתם  
ואלהם תאמר איש איש מבית  
ישראל ומן הגר אשר יגור בתוכם  
אשר יעלה על האזן ואל פתח  
אהל מועד לא יביאנו לעשות אתו  
ליהוה ונכרת האיש הוא מעמיו  
איש איש מבית ישראל ומן הגר  
הגר בתוכם אשר יאכל כל דם ונכרת

וכאחרון אל אהל מועד ופישט את  
בגדיו המד אשר לבש כבאו אל הקדש  
והניחם שם ורחץ את כשרו במים  
במקום קדוש ולבש את בגדיו ויעא  
ועשה את עלתו ואת עלת העם וכפר  
בעדו וכעד העם ואת חלב החטאת  
יקטיר המזבחה והמשלח את  
השיער לעזאזל וכבש בגדיו ורחץ  
בשרו במים ואחריו יבוא אל המזבח  
ואת פל החטאת ואת שיער החטאת  
אשר הוכת את דם לכפר בקדש  
ויניא אל מזבח למחנהו ושרפו  
כאש את ערתם ואת נשרם ואת  
פרשם והישרה אתם ונכס בגדיו  
ורחץ את כשרו במים ואחריו יבוא  
אל המזבח ויהיתה לכם לחקרת  
עולם כחדש השמיני יעשור  
החדש תענו את נפשותיכם וכל  
מלאכה לא תעשו האזרה והגר  
הגר בתוכם בני ביום הזה וכפר  
ועל כן לטהר אתכם מכל חטאתיכם  
לפני יהוה תטהרו וישבת שבתיו היא  
לכם ועשתם את נפשותיכם חקרת  
עולם וכפר הכהן אשר ימשח אתו  
ואשר ימלא את דולבן חתת אבז  
ורכש את בגדיו המד בגדיו הקדוש  
וכפר את מקדש הקדש ואת אהל  
מועד ואת המזבח וכפר ועל הכהנים  
ועל כל עם הקהל וכפר והיתה זאת  
לכם לחקת עולם לכפר על נפשותיכם



48. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 74v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



49. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2938, Tudela (?), c. 1300 (?), fol. 237r  
(photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)



50. Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 16, Tudela (?), c. 1300, fol. 178v  
(photograph: with permission of the board of Trinity College Library, Dublin)



תעניתו לרבים... ארבעה עשרה... יום כיפור... תעניתו לרבים... ארבעה עשרה... יום כיפור... תעניתו לרבים... ארבעה עשרה... יום כיפור... תעניתו לרבים... ארבעה עשרה... יום כיפור...

יגשתי עשר ליגשתי עשר החדש בנה  
הפרעתו מן בני אפרים ועל מחלקתו  
יעשרים וארבעה אלף השנים  
יעשר ליגשתי עשר החדש חלו  
הנטופתי ליגשתי אל ועל מחלקתו יעשר  
וארבעה אלף ועל שבטי ישראל  
לראובן נגיד אלי עורן זכרי לשמעון  
שפטו בו מענה ליו השבירה  
בן קמואל לאהון יצוקו להורה  
אליהו מאחי דוד לישישנר עמדי בן  
מיכאל לזכרון ישמיעהו בן  
יעזריהו לנפתלי ירמיות בן יעריאל  
לכני אפרים הושיע בן עזריהו לחזק  
ישכנן מנשה יואל בן פריהו לחיצו  
המנשה גלעד יהו בן זכריהו לנחמן  
יעשיאל בן אננן לדן יעראל בן  
ירחם אלפי שובי שבטי ישראל ולי  
גשא דוד מספרם למכן יעשרים שנה  
ולמטה כי אמר יהוה להרבות ארץ  
ישראל ככוכבי השמים יואב בן נדביה  
החל למנות ולא כלה ויהי בואת קצף  
יעל ישראל ולא יעלה המספר במספר  
דברי הימים למך דוד ועל  
אצרות המלך יעמות בן יעראל ועל  
האצרות בשדה בערים ובכפרים  
ובמגדלות יהונתן בן עזריהו ועל  
יעשי מלאכת השדה לעבודת הארמה  
ועל בן מלוב ועל הכרמים  
שמיע הרמתי ועל יטבתמים לאצרות  
היון זכרי השפמי ועל הויתים  
והשקמים אשר בשפלה בעל חג  
הגרדי ועל אצרות השמן ועשיו  
ועל הקרן הרינים בשרון שטרי  
השרוני ועל הקרן בעמקים יאפט בן  
יעדלי ועל הנמלים אוביר

הישמיעאל ועל האתנת יהויהוהמוני  
ועל הצאן היו ההגרי כל אלה ישרי  
הרכיש אשר למך דוד ויהונתן  
דוד דוד יוצן איש מבין וסופר הו  
ויחאל בן חכמוני עס כני המלך  
ואחיהל יועני למך וחוי הארכי  
רע המלך ואחרי אחיהל יהודיע בן  
כניהו ואחרי אשר זכא למך יואב  
ויקהל דוד את כל ישרי ישראל ישרי  
השבטים ושרי המחלות המישרים  
את המלך וישרי הארץ ושרי המאות  
וישרי כל רכיש ומקנה למך ולנענו עס  
הסרסים והגזורים ולכל גבור חיל אל  
ירושלם ויקם דוד המלך על רגליו  
ויאמר שמיעו אחיו יוצמי אני עם  
לכם לבנות בית מנחה לארון ברית יהוה  
וליהם רגלי אלהינו והכינותי לבנות  
והאלהים אמר לי לא תבנה בית לשמי כי  
איש מלחמות אתה ודמים שפכת  
ויבחר יהוה אלהי ישראל מי מכל בית  
אבי להיות למך על ישראל לעולם  
כי בוודה נבחר לנגד ובית יהודה בית  
אני ובגג אני בירעה להמלך יעל כל  
ישראל ומכל בני כרבים כנסת עלי  
יהוה ויבחר בשלמה בנ לי שבת על  
כסא מלכות יהוה על ישראל ויאמר  
לי שלמה בנך הוא יבנה ביתי והינחתי  
מי בחרתי בו לי לבן ואני אהיה לו לאב  
והכינותי את מלכותי על יעולם אם  
יחוק לעשות מצותי ומישפטי כיום  
הזה ויעתה לעיני כל ישראל קהל  
יהוה וכאזני אלהינו שמרו ודרשו כל  
מצות יהוה אלהיכם למען תרשו את  
הארץ הטובה והנחלתם לבעככם  
אחריכם על יעולם ואתה שלמה בנ



51. Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 16, Tudela (?), c. 1300, fol. 166v (photograph: with permission of the board of Trinity College Library, Dublin)

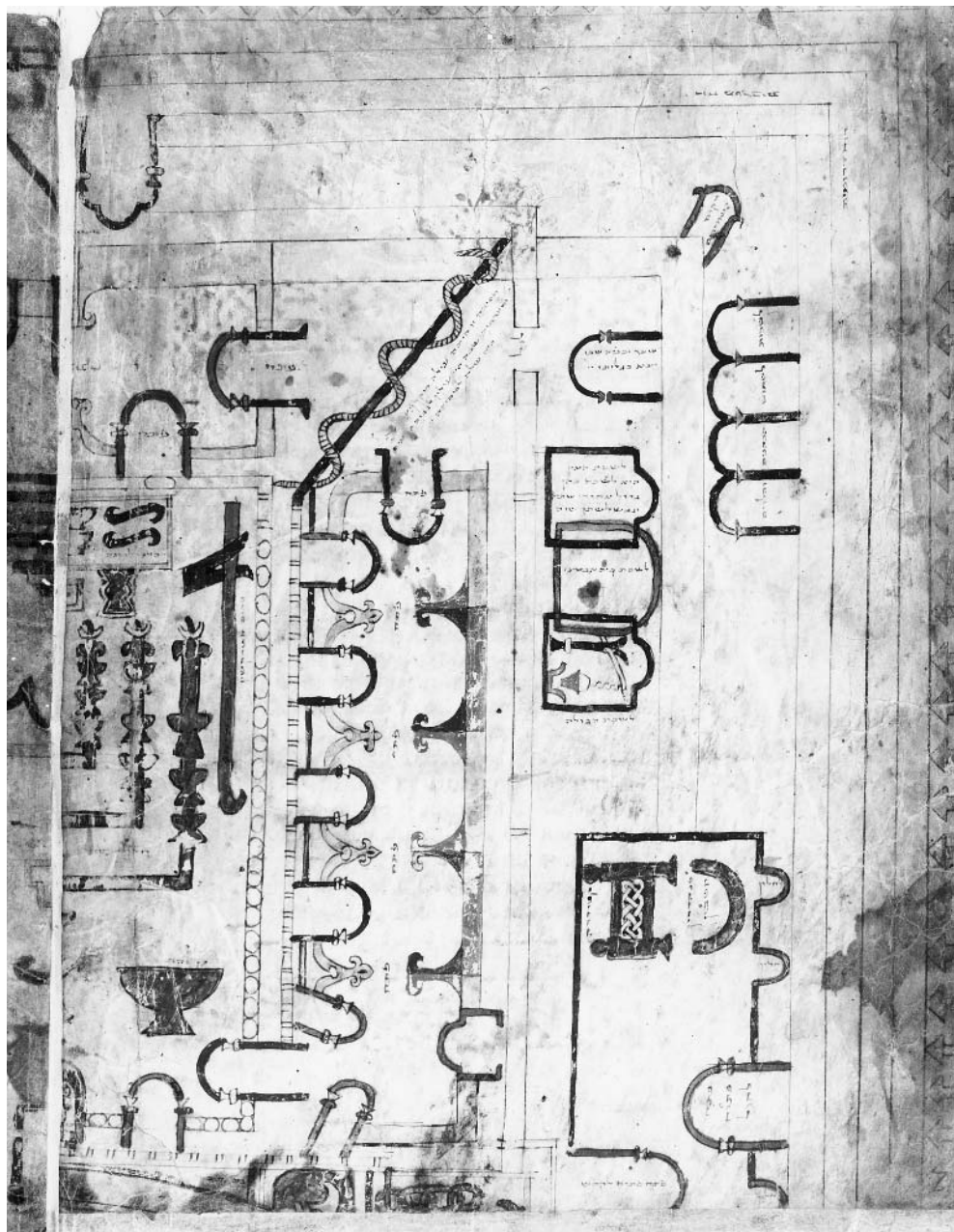
דברי הימים ב' פרק כ"ד  
למנוח בן סדקיהו  
למנוח בן סדקיהו  
למנוח בן סדקיהו  
למנוח בן סדקיהו

והיכאשר יללו שיעריו שלם ילפני  
השבת ואמרה ויסגור הדלתות ואמרה  
אשר לא יפתחום עד אחר השבת  
ומנעיה העמדת על השערים  
לא יבא משא מום השבת: וילינו הדבילים  
ונכרי כל ממכר מחוץ לירושלם פעם  
ושבתים: ואעידה בהם ואמרה אלהים  
מדוע אתם למס נגד החומה אם תשנו  
יד אשר לא בנס מן היעת ההיא לא באו  
משבת: ואמרה ללויים אשר  
היו מטהרים וכאום ישמרים השערים  
לקדש את יום השבת גם זאת זכרה לי  
אלהי וחוסה עלי כרב חסדך:  
גם כמים ההם ראיתי את היהודים הושעו  
בשנים אשר דוריות ימנויות מואכיות:  
ובנהם חני מדבר אשר דורית ואעם  
מכירים לדיבר הדורית ובלישון יעבו גם:  
ואריב ינכס ואקלס ואפה מהם אנשים  
ואמר גם ואשב יעם כאלהים אם תתנו  
נתכם לבניהם ואם תשא מבנתיהם  
לכנם ולכם: הלא יל אלה חטא שלהם  
מלך ישראל ובנוים הרבים לא היה מלך  
כמה ואהוב לאלהיו היה ויתנהו אלהים  
מלך על כל ישראל גם אתנו החטינו  
הגשים הנכריות: ולכם הנשים צלעית  
את כל הרעה הנדולה הזאת למען  
באלהינו להשיב משים נכריות: ומכני  
יודיע בן אלישיב הסנה הנדול חרץ  
לסנבלט החרני ואנריהו מעליו וזנה  
להס אלהיו על נאלי הפנה וברית הכנה  
והלויים וטהרתם מכל נכר ואעמיהו משמות  
למעם וללויים איש במלכתו וילקח בן יעצני  
מענתם מוכנות ולכמרים זכרה לי אלה לטובה

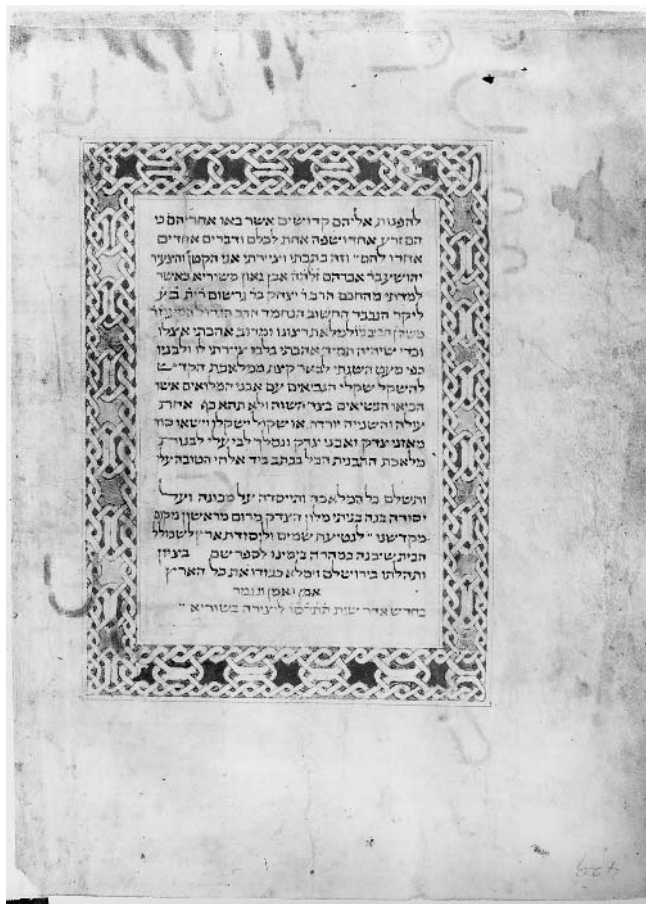
ספר מלכות דוד  
למנוח בן סדקיהו  
למנוח בן סדקיהו



52. Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 16, Tudela (?), c. 1300, fol. 154v (photograph: with permission of the board of Trinity College Library, Dublin)



53. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 2r  
(photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



54. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 2v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



55. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 31v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



56. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 37v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



57. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Opp. 75, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 38v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

ומת בני ישראל מזבח שלמיהם  
 הרומתם ליהוה ובעני הקדש אשר  
 לאהרן יהיו לבנו אחריו למשחה  
 בהם ולמלאכם את ידכם ושבעו  
 ימים ולבשכם הכהן תחתו מבנו אשר  
 יבא אל אהל מועד לשרת בקדש  
 ואת אל המלאים תקח וכשלת את  
 בניו במקם קדש ואכל אהרן וננו  
 את בשר האזל ומת הלאם אשר  
 כל פתח אהל מועד ואכלו אתם  
 אשר כפר בהם למלא את ידכם  
 לקדש אתם וזר לא יאכל ביקדש  
 כסוואם יותר מכשרה המלאים ומן  
 הלחם יעד הבקר ושרפת ארת  
 הנותר באיש לא יאכל כי קדש הוא  
 ועשית לאהרן ולבנו ככה ככל  
 אשר צוית אתה שבעת ימים  
 המלאים ופיר הטאת תנישה על  
 ידם על הכפרים והטאת על  
 המזבח בכפרך עליו ומישחת אתו  
 לקדשו שבעת ימים תכפר על  
 מקדש וקדשת אתו והיה המזבח  
 קדש קדשים כל הנוגע במזבח  
 יקדש וזה אשר  
 תנישה על המזבח כבשים בני שנה  
 שנים ימים ומת הלאם אתה הכבש האחד  
 תנישה בכפרך ואת הכבש השני  
 תנישה בין הערבים ויעלו בלית  
 כלל בשמן תנישת ביעה היון וסך  
 רביעת ההיון לבש האמר

ואת הכבש השני תנישה בין הערבים  
 כמנחת הכפר וכנסכה תנישה להלחם  
 נחח אשה ליהוה ועלת תמיד לרדת  
 פתח אהל מועד לפני יהוה אשר  
 אויעד לכם שמה לדבר אליך ישוב  
 וענדתי שמה לבני ישראל ועקדש  
 ככדיו וקדשתי את אהל מועד  
 ואת המזבח ואת אהרן ואת בניו  
 אקדש לכהן ליוזשכני בתוך בני  
 ישראל והייתי להם לאלהים וידעו  
 כי אני יהוה אלהיהם אשר הוינאתי  
 אתם מארץ מצרים לטוב בניכם  
 אני יהוה אלהיהם



This block contains faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page, likely bleed-through from the reverse side or a secondary text block.

58. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 57r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

ויבחר בזה יהוה אלהיך להיות לו  
 לעם סגולה מכל העמים אשר על  
 פני האדמה:  
 תאכל כל תועבה ואת הבהמה  
 אשר תאכלו ישודו שיה כשבים  
 ושה עזים: אל דבני ויחמוד ואין  
 ודישן ותאוזמר וכל בהמה  
 מפרסה פרסה ושקעת יסע עשה  
 פרסת מעלה גרה בבהמה אתה  
 תאכלו: אך אתה לא תאכלו ממני  
 הערה ומפריסי הפרסה השסועה  
 את הנבל ואת הארנבת ואת השטן  
 כי מעלה גרה המה ופרסה לא תפריסו  
 טמאים הם לכם: ואת החזיר כי  
 מפריסי פרסה הוא לא גרה טמא  
 הוא לכם מבישרם לא תאכלו ונגמלו  
 לא תגעו:  
 תאכלו סמ אשר במים כל אשר לו  
 כנפיד וקשקשת תאכלו: וכל אשר  
 אין לו כנפיד וקשקשת לא תאכלו  
 טמא הוא לכם:  
 צפור טהורה תאכלו: וזה אשר לא  
 תאכלו מהם הנשר והפרס והעונה:  
 והראיה ואת האיה והדיה למיניה:  
 ואת כל ערב למיניה: ואת בר  
 היענה ואת התחמס ואת הישאף  
 ואת הכץ למיניה: ואת הכוכ ואת  
 הינשוף והתנשמת והקאת ואת  
 הרחמה ואת השרך: והחסידה  
 והאנפה למיניה והדוכית והעטלף

ויבחרו באבנים ומת כי בקש להרוץ  
 מעל יהוה אלהיך המושיאך מארץ  
 מצרים מבית עבדים: וכל ישראל  
 ישמעו ויראו ויאן ולא יכפו לעשות  
 כדבר הרע הזה בקרבך:  
 כי תשמע באחת עירך  
 אשר יהוה אלהיך נתקד לשבת  
 ישם לאמרו: ונא אנשים בני בליעל  
 מקרבך ודדו את ישיבי עירכם  
 לאמר עשה ונעבדה אלהים אחרים  
 אשר לא ידעתם: ודרשת וחקרת  
 ושאלת הישב והנה אמת נכון  
 הדבר עשיתה התועבה הזאת  
 בישראל: הנה תכה את ישיבי העיר  
 ההוא לפי חרב החרם אתה ואת כל  
 אשר בה ואת בהמתה לפי חרב:  
 ואת כל שללה תקבץ אל תוך רחמי  
 ושרפת באש את העיר ואת כל  
 שללה כלי ליהוה אלהיך ויהיה  
 תל עולם לא תבנה עוד: ולא יבנן  
 בידך מאומה מן החרם למען ישב  
 יהוה מחרון אפו ונתקד רחמים  
 ורחמד והרבך טאשר נשבע לאבתך:  
 כי תשמע בקול יהוה אלהיך לשמו  
 את כל מצותיו אשר אנכי מצוה  
 הם לעשות הישר בעיני יהוה  
 אלהיך:  
 בנים אתם ליהוה אלהיכם לא תעזבו  
 ולא תשימו קרחה בין עצמכם למתו:  
 כי עם קדוש אתה ליהוה אלהיך



59. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 114v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

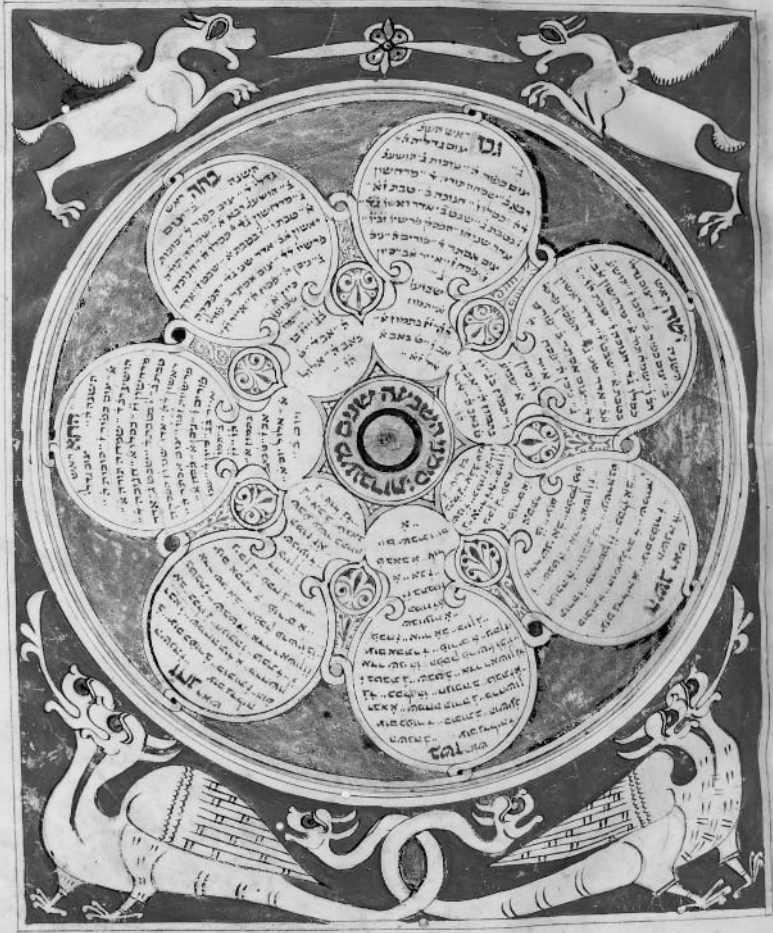
אתמיזי כי העדר בין מאה שנה ימות  
והחוטא בין מאה שנה יקלל וכונו  
בתים וישכיו ונטיעו כרמים ואכלו  
פרים ולא יכנו ואחר ישבל לא יטעו  
ואחר יארל כי כמי העין מי עמי  
ומעשה ידי הם בלו כחור לא יענו  
לדיק ולא ילדו לכהלה כי זרע ברוי  
יהיה המה וצאצאיהם אתם יהיה  
טרם יקראו אנע אענה עוד הם  
מדברים ואנע אישמע זאב וטלה  
ירעו כאחד ואריה כבקר יאכל תבן  
ונחש יזפר לחמו לא ירעו ולא ישחוו  
בכל הר קדשי אמר יהוה  
כה אמר יהוה השמים נכאי והאון  
הדום רגלי אי זה בית אשר תבנו לי  
ואיזה מקום מנוחתי ואת כל אלה

קול יהוה שלם גמול לא יכיוו כטרם  
תחיל ללדה כטרם יבוא הכל לה  
והמליטה זכר מי שמע מנאת ומי  
ראה כאלה היו חל ארץ ביום אחד  
אם יולד נוי פעם אחת כי הלה גם  
ילדה עיון את בנה: האנע אי שמיר  
ולא אוליד יאמר יהוה אם אנע המלוד  
ועצרת יאמר אלהיך  
שמחו את ירושלים ועלו כהמל  
אהביה שישו אתה מישו של כל המתאמני  
עליה למען תינקו וישביעתם מישד  
תעמיה למען תמיעו והתענעתם  
מזיו כבודה  
כי כה אמר יהוה הנני נטה אליה  
כנהר ירושלים וכנחל ירושף כבוד נמים  
וינקתם על נד תנשאו ועל זרבים ותשעשעו



60. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 254r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)





61. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 8r  
 (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



62. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 299v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



63. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 2, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 5r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

אתחיל לדבר ונבורה: שנתנה מיד הצולה

מחזור רס"ח	מחזור רס"ג	מחזור רס"ד
מחזור רס"ט	מחזור רס"א	מחזור רס"ב

והגבורה: ה' התורה: דבר אל זיונך: א' ושלום ונבורה: ויעזו ועוצם ויקרה:

64. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 21, Tudela, 1301-1302, fol. 2r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



ונתר ונזם ועטרה: וננחלה לאום יפה זכרה:

להיות נקיים בשמו שפרה לילה לל האל הגדול והנורא: ושהחלנו

מצות שמה ולמדנו אך נסתב ונקר אה: ומי נמחה בעלם

מחזור עזרא שנת ה'אלפים	קלאים וישו תקופ קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ כשלו תקופ קלם ספ כזא תקופ קלה ספ השלם תקופ קלם ספ זבא תקופ קלה ספ בשנה תקופ קלה ספ זחא תקופ קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ בשנה תקופ קלם ספ זחא תקופ קלם ספ השא תקופ קלם ספ זבא תקופ קלם ספ זשה תקופ קלם ספ זשז תקופ קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ כזה תקופ קלם ספ זשז תקופ קלם ספ חזא תקופ	מחזור עזרא שנת ה'אלפים	קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ כשלו תקופ קלם ספ כזא תקופ קלה ספ השלם תקופ קלם ספ זבא תקופ קלה ספ בשנה תקופ קלה ספ זחא תקופ קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ בשנה תקופ קלם ספ זחא תקופ קלם ספ השא תקופ קלם ספ זבא תקופ קלם ספ זשה תקופ קלם ספ זשז תקופ קלם ספ הכז תקופ קלם ספ כזה תקופ קלם ספ זשז תקופ קלם ספ חזא תקופ
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הזה ויקרא: ונמשלו האותיות לנפך וישוהם

65. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 21, Tudela, 1301-1302, fol. 2v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

ויהי שלח אחרי הולידו את שירה  
 ישלש שנים וארבע מאות שנה וילד  
 בנים ובעותו ויהי עבד  
 ארבעי עשרים שנה וילד את שלושה  
 ויהי עבד אחרי הולידו את שלושת  
 שנה וארבע מאות שנה וילד בנים  
 ובעותו ויהי שלש שנים  
 שנה וילד את שלושה מאות  
 הולד את שלושה שנים ובעותו  
 שנה וילד בנים ובעותו  
 ויהי עשרים שנים ויהי שלש  
 שנה וילד את שלושת רבעי שנה  
 הולדו את שלושה שנים ובעותו  
 שנה וילד בנים ובעותו ויהי  
 שש עשר שנים שנה וילד את נחור  
 ויהי שש עשר שנה וילדו את נחור  
 מאתים שנה וילד בנים ובעותו  
 ויהי נחור תשיעי עשרים  
 שנה וילד את מרחה ויהי נחור  
 אחרי הולידו את מרחה תשיעי עשרה  
 שנה ובעותו שנה וילד בנים ובעותו  
 ויהי תרעה שנים  
 שנה וילד את אברם את נחור  
 ואת הרן וזארה תולדתה תרעה  
 הולד את אברם את נחור ואת הרן  
 והרן הוליד את לוט וזימת הרן על  
 בערחה אבי צארין כולדתה נאור  
 משד יסוניה אברם ונחור להם  
 נשים שם אשת אברם שרי ושם  
 אשת נחור מלכה בת הרן אבי

בלכה ואבי סכה וזמרה ושרי וצורה  
 אין לתולדו ניקח מרחה את אברם  
 בנו את לוט בן הרן בנו בענו ואל שרי  
 בלה אשת אברם בנו ונאור אבם  
 נאור נשים ילדתה צורה פניו  
 ונאור ער הרן וזימתה שרי ושם  
 זימתה חמיש שנים ובעותו  
 שנה וזימתה הרן פרו  
 ויאמר יהוה אל אברם לך וצד  
 מארצך וימורד דבק וזימתה אבי  
 אל הארץ אשר ארצו ונאור  
 לטן גזול ואברם וזארה יסו  
 והיה מרחה ונאור כל מוכרת  
 ונכרלה אחר עבד כבד כל  
 משפחה האדמה הולד אברם  
 כשיר דבר אליו ויהי וילד את  
 לוט ואברם כח חמיש שנים ובעותו  
 שנה בעניו כחן ויקח אברם  
 את שרי אישור ואת לוט בנאור  
 ואת פרדו שם אבדו וכשן ואת  
 הנפיש אשר יגישו בהן ונאור ילדת  
 אריה פניו נכיר ארצה פניו  
 ויעבד אברם צארין ער מקום  
 ששם שר אליו מורה והנעני און  
 בארץ ונחור יהיה אל אברם אימו  
 לזרע אמן את הארץ והאתו ימן  
 שש מוכה ליהוה העראה אליו  
 וינקה מיטם ההרה מפרס לבית  
 אלו שם אלה בית אל מיט וזען  
 מפרס נכר שם מוכה ליהוה ונחור

פרש

פ"ה  
 פ"ו  
 פ"ז  
 פ"ח  
 פ"ט  
 פ"י  
 פ"יא  
 פ"יב  
 פ"יג  
 פ"יד  
 פ"טו  
 פ"טז  
 פ"יז  
 פ"יח  
 פ"יט  
 פ"כ  
 פ"כא  
 פ"כב  
 פ"כג  
 פ"כד  
 פ"כה  
 פ"כו  
 פ"כז  
 פ"כח  
 פ"כט  
 פ"ל  
 פ"לא  
 פ"לב  
 פ"לג  
 פ"לד  
 פ"לה  
 פ"לו  
 פ"לז  
 פ"לח  
 פ"לט  
 פ"לס

יוסף מאתה... ביום חמשה עשר...

אלים אבלי		חלוף בן	
כשדה כלמה אלהא		אלשר ובן נפתלי	
שואמלכי ישראלם		מד נביאים הראשונים	
יקר בעל ואמיתל	כא	וישכבו ישמה	כא
וכנפח מזרחא	כב	וישכבו שמה	כב
מלכי יהושע	כג	והזויתם את אבי	כג
מלכי יהושע	כד	והזויתם	כד
וישכבו כל הילי הכתוב	כה	והזויתם יודיש מפעלות	כה
להמחנה ומי ישרא	כו	הכנעני	כו
יקראתה כל בני עמא	כז	ממדות הפסח	כז
יקראתה כל בני עמא	כח	ואמר לו רפי	כח
וימה יהושע את כל האר	כט	ואמר לרפי	כט
את כל הארץ	ל	ואמר לו כי אנכי דני	ל
אשר על שפת הים	לא	אתמהנה ישראל	לא
שפת הים	לב	אתמהנה	לב
כי עשה ליברה	לג	והזרימו את כל אשר	לג
כי עשה	לד	והזרימו	לד
ואת כל עיר המלכים	לה	הנערים המבוגלים	לה
ואת כל עיר המלכים	לו	המבוגלים	לו
רק את כל האדם	לז	אשר ילכדנו יהודה	לז
את כל האדם	לח	אשר ילכדנו	לח
מבלי ימה	לט	ואת בני ואת בני	לט
מבלי ימה	לכ	ואת בני ואת בני	לכ
ויהלכו בארץ	לד	וכלי שראל עמו	לד
ויהלכו בארץ	לז	וכלי שראל	לז
ויהלכו בארץ	לח	ושמרים ושפמו	לח
ויהלכו בארץ	לז	ושפמו	לז
ויהלכו בארץ	לז	מיקרבים הם	לז
ויהלכו בארץ	לז	מיקרבים הם	לז

יש ישוב ל' עמל

67. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Opp. 75, Soria or Tudela (?), late 13th c., fol. 2v (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

**מחזור דיעה**

שנת ה' אלפים ר"פ  
ל' יורה: בתתלו ל' ינאת  
מזרים: אלק תתלו ל' ינאת  
אונה לחרבן: תתלו ל' ינאת  
ז' למחזור ק"ג: אל למחזור  
העם: אל ל' ינאת: אל  
לשכחה: ב' ינאת

**מחזור דיעה**

ה' אל' דיעה ל' ינאת  
בתתלו ל' ינאת: אל  
לשכחה: אל לחרבן: ינאת  
ל' ינאת: אל לקפס: אל למחזור  
קפס: אל ל' ינאת: ינאת  
ל' ינאת

א	לע	קיל	לח	תק	פוש	ש	א
ב	רמ	כימ	הכז	תק	מחן	מרום	
ג	לע	כימ	בש	תק	למד	עניע	
ד	לע	כי	בש	תק	השב	ורא	
ה	לע	כי	ז	תק	ממ	מי	
ו	לע	כי	ז	תק	של	ברא	
ז	לע	כימ	בש	תק	וע	אלה	
ח	לע	כימ	ז	תק	הן	המו	
ט	לע	כימ	הש	תק	חוח	במס	
י	לע	כימ	ז	תק	ער	עב	
יא	לע	כימ	ז	תק	עמ	לכל	
יב	לע	כיל	ז	תק	מד	בשם	
יג	לע	כימ	הכז	תק	בש	יקרא	
יד	לע	כימ	בש	תק	בן	מרום	
טו	לע	כימ	ז	תק	קב	אונם	
טז	לע	כימ	ז	תק	גם	ואמין	
יז	לע	כימ	בש	תק	ראש	כה	
יח	לע	כימ	ז	תק	למד	איש	
יט	לע	כימ	ז	תק	שום	איש	

א	לע	הכז	תק	על	שאו
ב	לע	כי	בש	תק	נפש
ג	לע	כי	ז	תק	מד
ד	לע	כימ	ז	תק	בש
ה	לע	כי	ז	תק	מק
ו	לע	כיל	ז	תק	קב
ז	לע	כי	ז	תק	גם
ח	לע	כימ	ז	תק	ראש
ט	לע	כי	ז	תק	למד
י	לע	כי	ז	תק	של
יא	לע	כי	ז	תק	גם
יב	לע	כי	ז	תק	חסר
יג	לע	כי	בש	תק	באר
יד	לע	כי	ז	תק	כמד
טו	לע	כי	הכז	תק	פוש
טז	לע	כי	בש	תק	יעב
יז	לע	כי	ז	תק	עמ
יח	לע	כי	הכז	תק	וחנ
יט	לע	כי	בש	תק	מקן

68. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 6v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



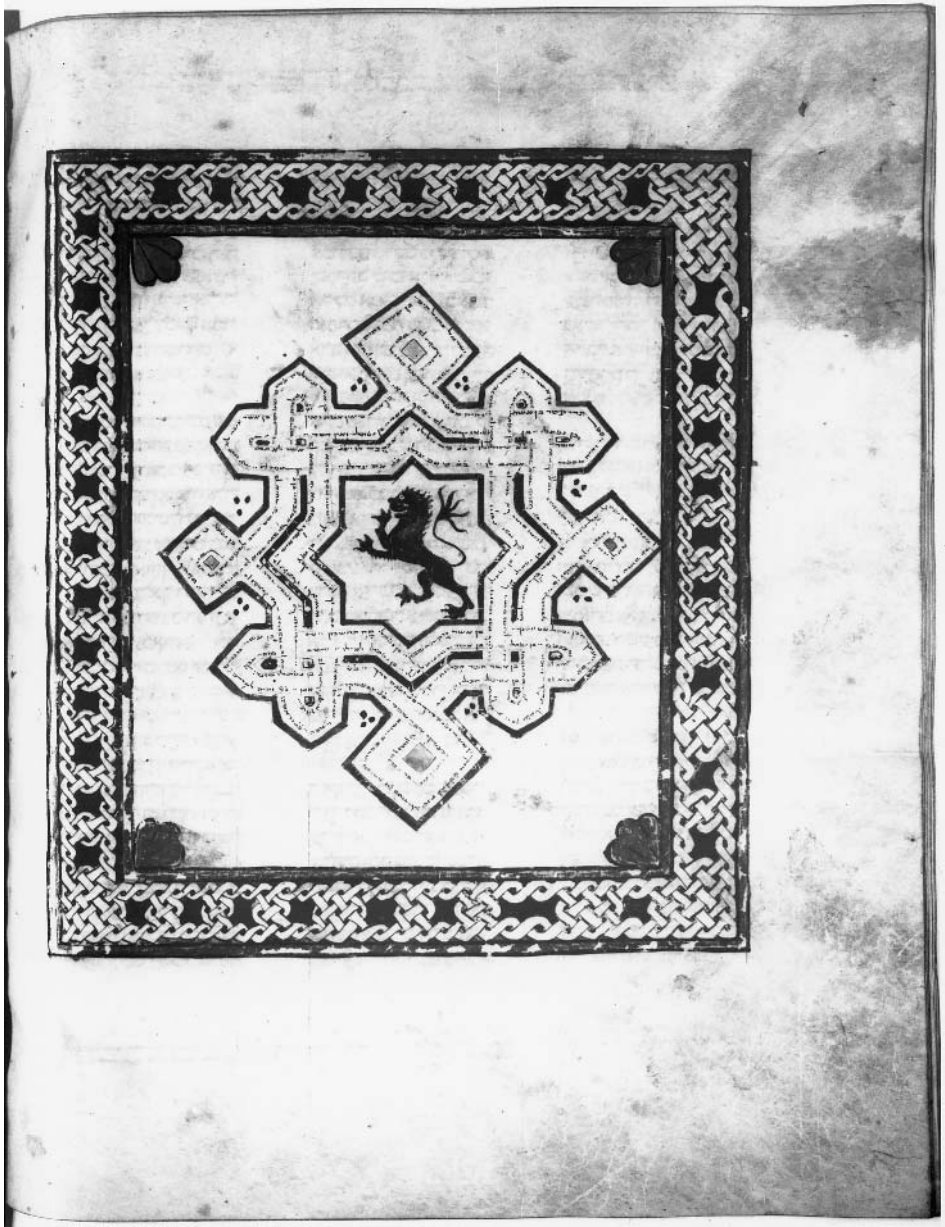
**ספר הנקוד**

האלך מכין זהיר ותלמיד  
אל ספר קדיש אור נהיר וזו  
לבי דבר טוב ולישועי עט  
סופר מהיר רחש לבי  
דבר טוב אומר אני מעט  
למלכים שבעה ערובים ותנו  
לך נהלים בך העונדי והשוני  
והמשרתים והנסיכים ואיש  
לך נטיענים בדרכי הטיענים  
סברי הקודכים והמה חכמים  
מחוכמים ואאיר אור כהיר  
להולכי חשכים ואורה דרכים  
לנבעים סופרים ונקודים קורא  
ולומדים יורכים לא יכינו ולא  
ישכילו כי יאמינו כי ישמאלו  
ודרך ישרה לא דרכו בחשכה  
יתהלכו וזה יקרה להם כניעט  
השתדלותם ומרוב יענותם  
לדווש ולהור חכמה על כל  
אשר נציטה בספרי הקדמוני

ביצלי המסור והקבלו  
לכן נבדה רוחי אהתי אנוני  
הינעיר דוד ביוסף קמחי  
לחבר ספר בנקוד ומעצמים  
וכללים מויצלים לכל סופ  
ונקוד ועל ספר שוקד  
יניצאם בו מסודרים עור  
יעררים בלי נמליקחם ודרך  
נקלה ילמדם ולא יישכחם וקח  
וקראתי שם הספר הזה יעב  
סופר למען ימיצא בו הסופר  
כתבתי בו דרך כלל כתבו התנוני  
מלה אחת והכתובות שתי מלות  
הם מסופקות לרוב הסופרים  
וזן התיבות שהן קרי ולא כתב  
ואישרהם כתב ולא קרי וכן  
ישאר כללים היצריבין בכתב  
ספר תורה חלקתי הספר  
הזה לשליטה ישערים  
השיער הראשון בכתבה הש  
השיער השני בנקוד השיער  
השלישי בטיעמים

69. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 434v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)





70. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 21, Tudela, 1301-1302, fol. 263v  
(photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



71. Tudela, S. Magdalena, portal, 12th c. (photograph: K. Kogman-Appel)



72. Soria, S. Domingo, portal, second half of the 12th c. (photograph: K. Kogman-Appel)



ולפי האלהים ותמלא הארץ חסם  
 וירא אלהים את הארץ והנה נשחקה  
 כי השחית כל בשר את דרכיו  
 הארץ: ויאמר אלהים  
 לנח קח לך כל בשר כל  
 הארץ חסם מפני שהם והנני משחיתם  
 את הארץ ויעשה לך תבת עצי גפרור  
 קנים תעשה את התבה וכפרת אתה  
 מבית ומחוץ בכפר וזה אשר תעשה  
 אתה שליש מאות אמה ארך התבה  
 חמישים אמה רחבה ושלשים אמה  
 קומתה ונהר תעשה לתבה ואל אמה  
 תכלנה מלמעלה ופתח התבה בצידה  
 תשים תחתים שנים וישראלים תעשה:  
 ואני הנני כביא את המבול מים על  
 הארץ לטחת כל בשר אשר בורח  
 חיים מתחת השמים כל אשר בארץ  
 יגיעו הקמתי את בתי יאתך וזאת  
 אל התבה אתה וכנך ואישתך ושני  
 בערך אתך וזמביל החי מכל בשר שנים  
 מכל תביא אל התבה לחיות אתך וזכר  
 ונקבה יהיו מהעוף למיניהן ומהבהמה  
 למינה מכל רמיית האדמה למיניהן  
 ושנים מכל יבאו אלך לחיות:  
 ואתה קח לך מכל מאכל אשר  
 יאכל ואספת אליו והיה לך ולחם  
 לאכלה ויעשנה ככל אשר צוה  
 אתו אלהים כן עשה ויאמר יהוה  
 לנח בא אתה וכל ביתך אליה תב  
 אתך ראיתי צדיק לפני בדור הזה:



הולידו את נח חמישה עשר שנה  
 והמיט מאת שנה ויולד בנים וזמנתו  
 ויהי כלי למך ישבע ושבע שנה  
 ושבע מאות שנה וזמנתו  
 ויהי נח בן חמש מאות  
 שנה ויולד נח את שם את חם ואת  
 יפת ויהי כי החל האדם לרבע  
 פני האדמה וקנות ילדו להם וידאו  
 כע האלהים את בנות האדם כי טה  
 הנה ויקחו להם נשים מכל אשר  
 בחר ויואמר יהוה לאידון דורו  
 באדם לילך בשנים הוא כשר והיו  
 ימיו מאה וצערים שנה הנפלים  
 היו בארץ במים חסם ונס אחריו  
 כן אשר יבאו בני האלהים אל בנות  
 האדם וילדו להם המה הנבדים  
 אשר מיעולם אנשי השם:  
 וראוהו כי רעת רעת האדם  
 כארץ וכל יצר מחשבת לבו רק  
 רע כל היום ויעים יהוה כי עשה את  
 האדם כארץ ויהי ענין אל לבו ויאמר  
 יהוה אכחה את האדם אשר בראתי  
 מיעל פני האדמה מאדם עד בהמה  
 עד רמיש ועד עוף השמים כי נחמה  
 בני עשיתם וונה מצאחן בני יהוה:  
 אלה תולדת נח נח איש צדיק תמים  
 היה בדורו את האלהים התהלך  
 נחו ויולד נח שלשה בנים את שם  
 את חם ואת יפת ונחשחת הארץ



73. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 13r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

INIERE EIA FOQUALTER  
 VNA FOE SUCU SEPIE  
 DIGNTV RAPERISSIME

**C**PERARE NOE DC LERE  
 a dixit dñs. dñs. tempus  
 est enim hominū lūmāna  
 ut dñs. qui vpleat dñs. vñ  
 multam corum. ardece dñs. p. dōct  
 ca. dñm. omniā. Faciat q. aibi  
 vñm. de hōis. quid dñs.  
 indos. ea. nidos. facis  
 carbas. mīnubis  
 cura.

Sunt et haur fabricum pōmā  
 lūctus homo no. mīnubis qm. mūd  
 mōna. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 sollicita. unimū. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 lūspice. p. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 ruc. p. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 mōnubis. ea. con. lūm. dñs. dñs.  
 nūm. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 facis. vñm. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 longi. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 cubitū. lūctū. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 facis. vñm. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 consum. mīnubis. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 Et. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 carbas. mīnubis. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 mōna. mīnubis. dñs. dñs. dñs.  
 dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs. dñs.



74. New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 644, Castile, c. 950, fol. 79r (photograph: with permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library)

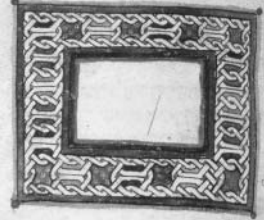


75. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 304r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)



76. Bermuda, Floersheim Trust (formerly Sassoon Collection, MS 82), Soria, 1312, p. 481 (photograph: after Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985))

עם נקודות הכסף עד שהמלך נמסנו  
 ערד יתן רחמי: יגור המור דודי  
 בין ישרי יליון: איטל הכפר דודי  
 גברמי יעזריו: הנך יפה  
 ריעתי הנך יפה יענך יונם: הנך יפה  
 דודי אף נעם אף יעשגו ריענך:  
 קדות כתנו ארזים רחוטו כרותים:  
 אע חכעלת השרון שושנת העמקס:  
 כשושנה בין החוחים קן ריעתי בין  
 המנות: כתפוח כעצי היער קודו בין  
 המעס כעלו חמדתי וישתת ופריו  
 מתוק להכי: הכיאני אל כיתתיו ודעו  
 עי' אהבה סמכונו באי שיות ופדעו  
 סתפוחים כי חולת אהבה אני: שטאלו  
 תחת לראשי וימינו תחבקני השבעת  
 אתכם נעת ירושלים כנצאות או  
 כאלות השרה אם תגידו ואם תעווו  
 את האהבה יעד ישתחפן:  
 קול דודי העונה כא מדלג על  
 ההרים מקפץ על הגבעות: דומה  
 דודי לינבי או ליגפר האלים העתזה  
 ילמד אחר כהל נומ שניח מן החלולת  
 כניץ מן החרכים: ענה דודי ואמר לי  
 קומי לך ריעתי יפת ולכי לך: כי הנך  
 הסתו יצר העשם חלף חלך לזה העשם  
 נראו בארץ יעת חמיר הגיץ קול העור  
 נשמי נ בארצנו התאעה חננה פניה  
 והנפנים סמור עתנו ריה קומי לכו  
 ריעתי יפתי ולכי לך: יונתי נחתי הפלע  
 בסתו המדונה האני אתמראן השמיני  
 את קולך כי קולך יעב ומראך נאווה:



**ו**ד השירים אשר לשלמה  
 ישקל מנשקות פיה כי  
 טובים דוד מין: לדיח  
 שמעך טובים שמן וטרק ישכך על  
 מן ילמות אהמך ימנעני אחרך  
 עויעה הכיאני הפלך חריו נעלה  
 ובטחה כן נמדה דודך מין שישו  
 אהמך: שחורה אע נאווה כנור  
 ירושלם כאהלי קוד כריעת שלמה  
 אלת אני שאני שחורות שישופתי  
 השמיש כנעמי נחובי שמני נשנה  
 את הכרובים כמי שלי לא נטרתי:  
 הנדה לי שאהבה נפשי אכה תריעה  
 אכה תרנין כנערים שלמה אהיה  
 כעטיה על ערדו חרדך: אס לא תיע  
 לך יפה נעשים יא לך כנעמי האן  
 ריע את ד יתך על משנות חריוניס  
 לסתו כרכבי פריעך  
 דמיתך ריעתי: נאוו להיך כתורים  
 עארך כפרוים: תורי והכענשה לך

יד אהב משה יגור המור דודי יענך יונם הנך יפה ריעתי הנך יפה יענך יונם הכיאני אל כיתתיו ודעו עי' אהבה סמכונו באי שיות ופדעו סתפוחים כי חולת אהבה אני שטאלו תחת לראשי וימינו תחבקני השבעת אתכם נעת ירושלים כנצאות או כאלות השרה אם תגידו ואם תעווו את האהבה יעד ישתחפן קול דודי העונה כא מדלג על ההרים מקפץ על הגבעות דומה דודי לינבי או ליגפר האלים העתזה ילמד אחר כהל נומ שניח מן החלולת כניץ מן החרכים ענה דודי ואמר לי קומי לך ריעתי יפת ולכי לך כי הנך הסתו יצר העשם חלף חלך לזה העשם נראו בארץ יעת חמיר הגיץ קול העור נשמי נ בארצנו התאעה חננה פניה והנפנים סמור עתנו ריה קומי לכו ריעתי יפתי ולכי לך יונתי נחתי הפלע בסתו המדונה האני אתמראן השמיני את קולך כי קולך יעב ומראך נאווה

77. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 370r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)

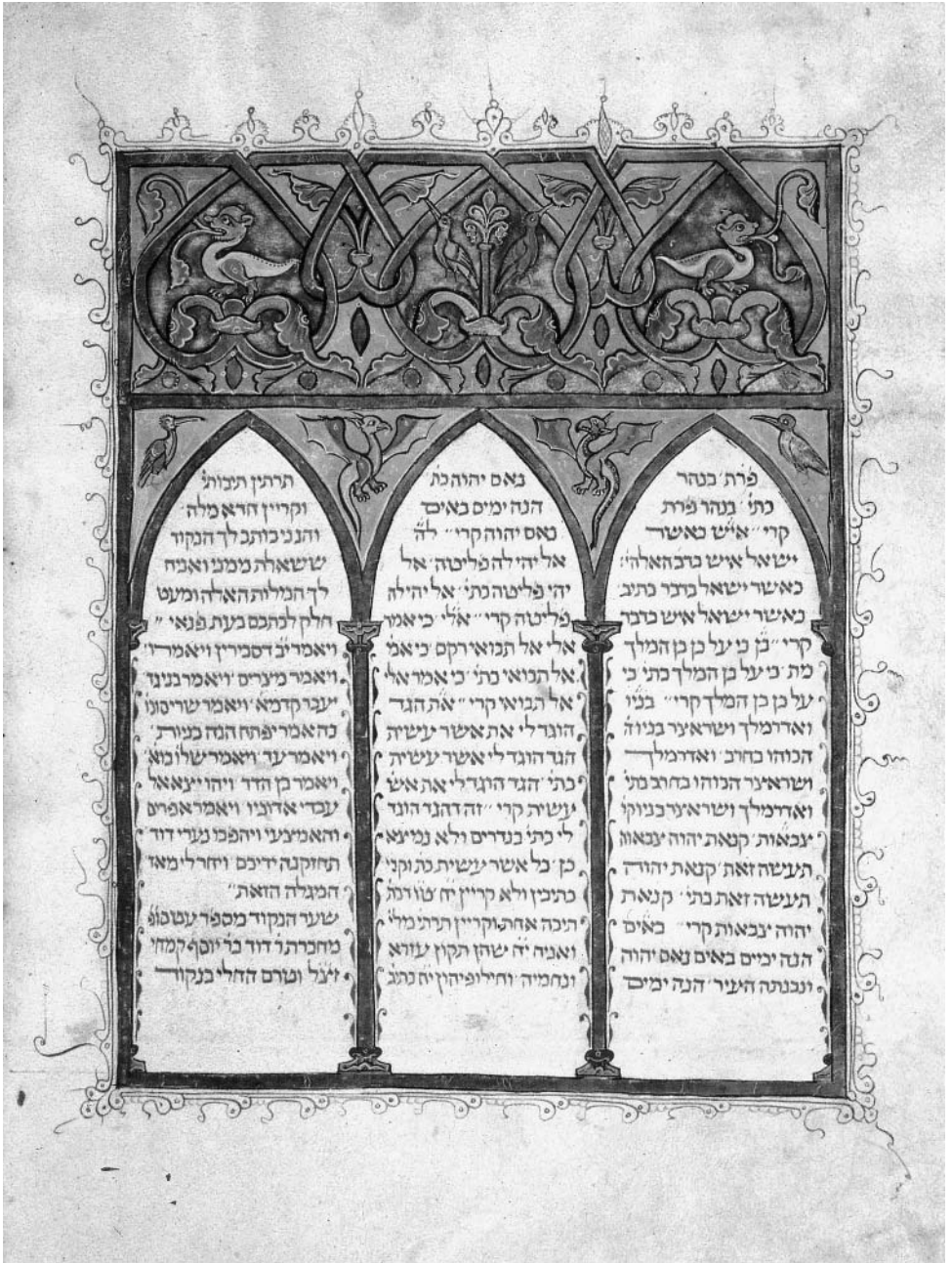
# תהי

יתה אל יהוה משה עבד יהוה ואמר  
 יהוה אל יהוה עבדך משה  
 שטרי העם לאמר יצרו עמך ופחיתו  
 עמך את הדרן הזה עשה וכל העם  
 כי בעוד שלשת ימים ילך מן הארץ  
 הדרן הזה ואל תהי עמך  
 אשר יהוה אלהיכם עתה ילך מן הארץ  
 ולראובן ועד יהוה שבת המנשה  
 אמר יהושע לאמר זכור את הדרן  
 אשר עשה אלהיכם משה עבד יהוה  
 לאמר יהוה אלהיכם כעשה לכם ועתה  
 לכם את הארץ האחת עשרים שנה  
 ומקניכם ישבו בארץ אשר נתן לכם  
 משה עבד יהוה ואתם תעבדו ומתו  
 לפני אלהיכם כי נפשו תמול ועתה תבא  
 עד אשר ינה יהוה לפתחכם כמנהגו  
 ובהמה את הארץ אשר יהוה  
 אלהיכם נתן לכם וישבתם לארץ  
 ירשתכם ויהשתם אותה אשר נתן  
 לכם משה עבד יהוה כעשה הדרן  
 מורה שמי שנתן את הדרן  
 לאמר כל אשר עשיתם עשה ואמר  
 כל אשר תעשה עבדך וכל אשר  
 ישמעו אל משה כן נשמעו אלך  
 דק יהוה יהוה אלהיך עבדך כאשר  
 היה עם משה כל אשר עשה  
 את עבדך ולא ישיב את עבדך לך  
 אשר תעשה ואת עבדך חזק ואמין

ואתם תעבדו ואת הארץ אשר נתן  
 לאבותם לתת להם חזק ואמין כעשה  
 לשמר לעשות ככל העושה אשר  
 עשיתם עבדך אל חסד כעשה עמך  
 ושמואל יביע תעבדו ככל אשר  
 תירד לאביהם כפי העושה ההם כפי  
 והעשיתם וימסו ליה למען תשמרו  
 לעשות ככל הכתוב כי כוונת העושה  
 את עבדך ואת השביל יהוה עושה  
 חזק ואמין אל תעו ואל תחזו כי

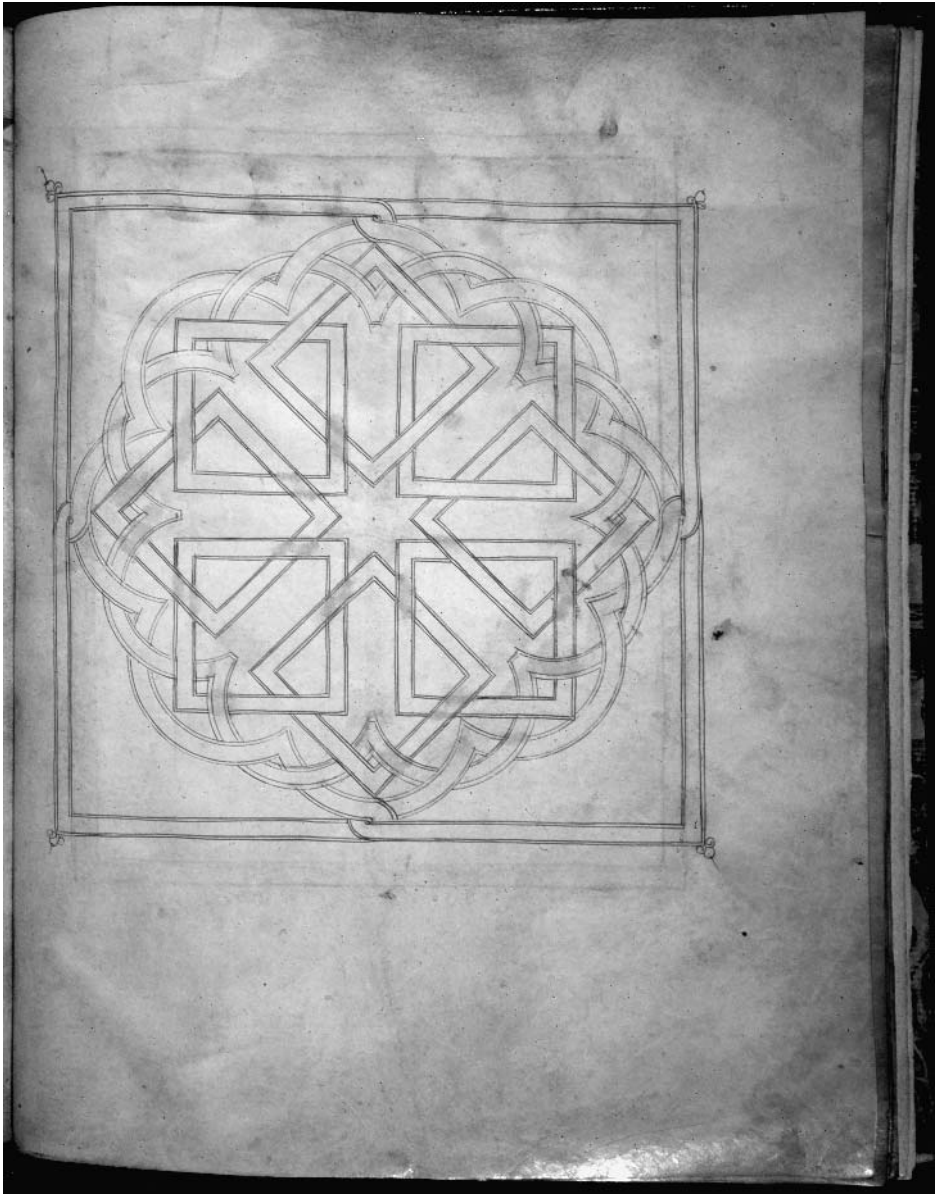


78. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 20, Tudela, 1300, fol. 129r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



79. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 435v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)

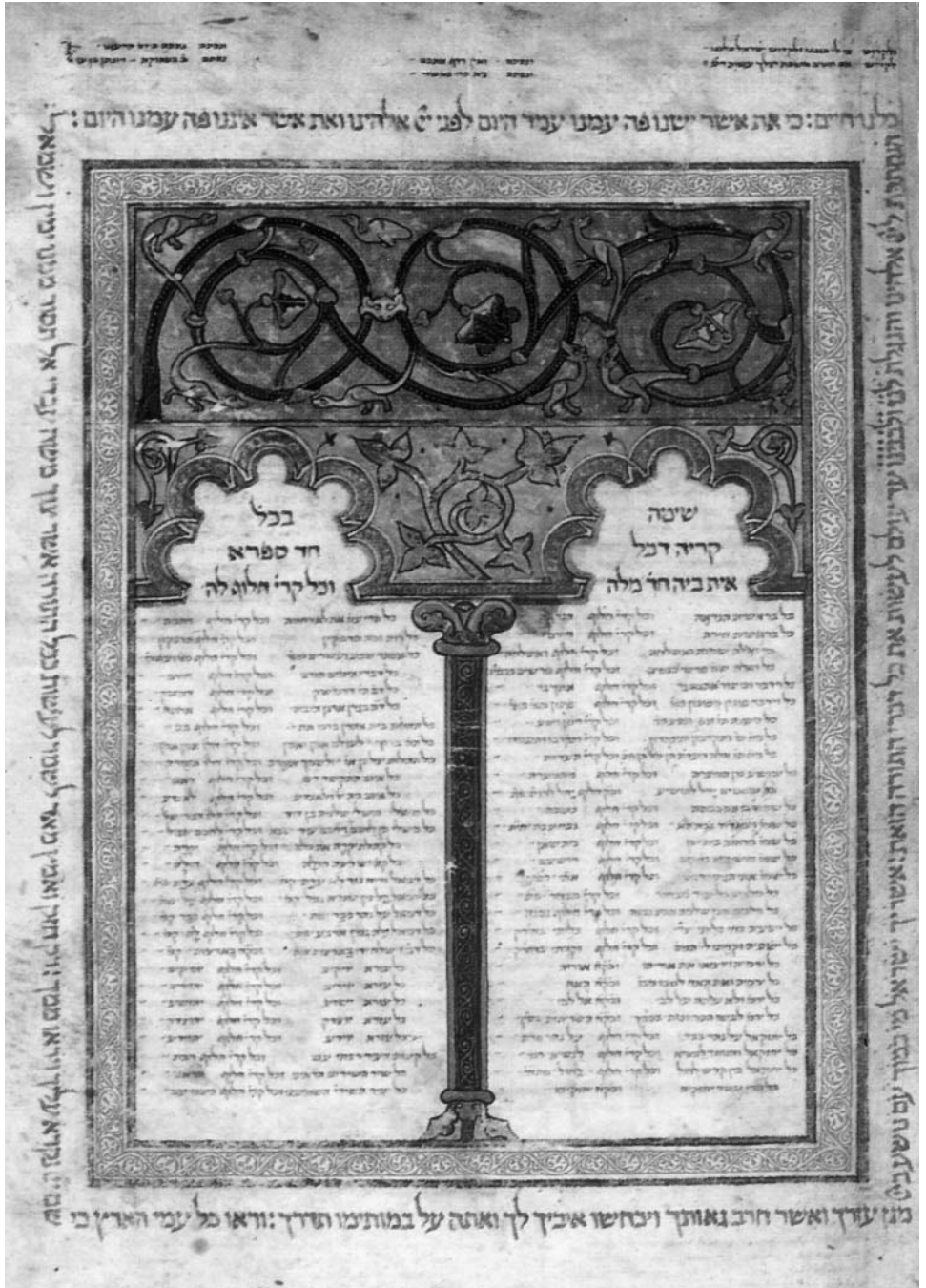




80. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 9v  
(photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)



81. Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional, MS Il. 72, Cervera and Tudela, 1299-1300, fol. 443r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Nacional)



82. Bermuda, Floersheim Trust (formerly Sassoon Collection, MS 82), Soria, 1312, p. 761 (photograph: after Nechama and Sievernich (1991))



83. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 8<sup>o</sup> 2221, Spain, 13th-14th c., fol. 54v (photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)



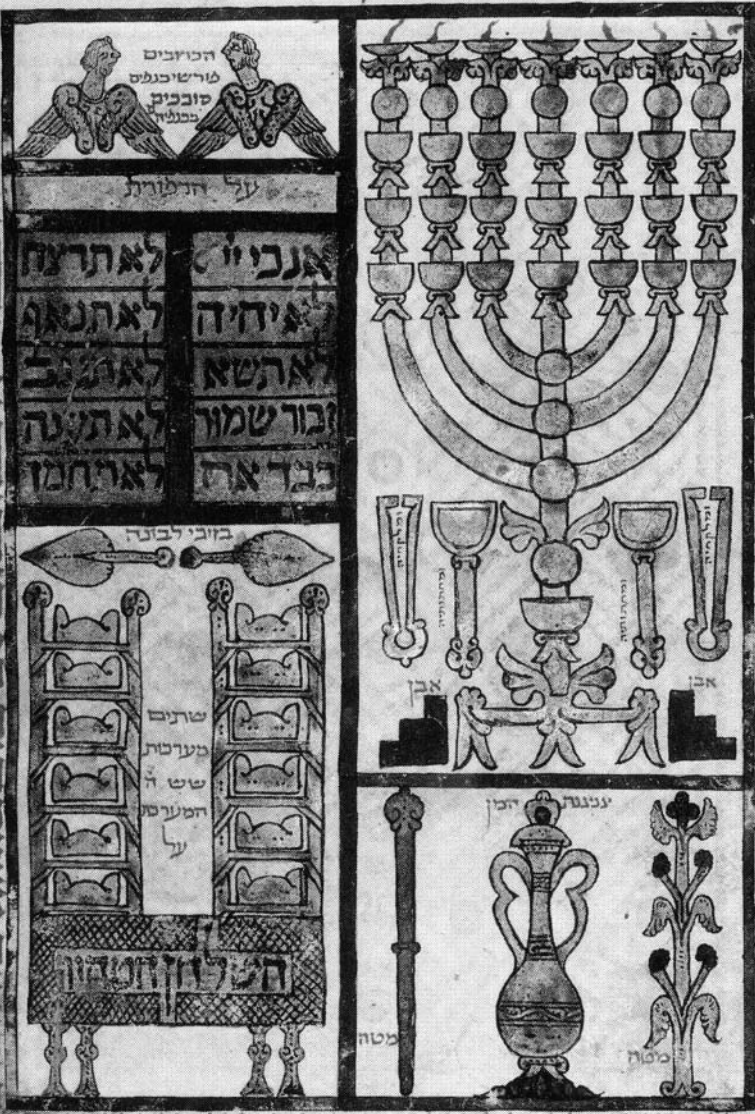
הנפלים היוכארוץ פנים  
החסונם אחריכ אשר  
יכאובע האלהים אל  
בעת האדם וילדו להם  
המה הנכרים אשר  
מעולם אנשי השם  
וירא יחזה בירבה רעת  
האדם בארץ וכל יצור  
מה שבת לבשר קרני  
כל היום וינחם יהוה כי  
עשה את האדם בארץ  
ויתעצב אל לבו ויאמר  
יחזה אמחה את האדם  
אשר בראתי מעל פני  
הארמה מאדם עד  
בהמה עד רמש ועד  
עוף השמים כי נחמתי  
מי אישותם ונח מצאתו  
מעני יהוה  
אלה תולדת נח איש  
צדק תמים היה בדתו  
אתה אלהים התחלך  
נח ויורד נח שלשה

בנים את שם את הסואת  
יפת והשחת הארץ לפני  
האלהים ותמלא הארץ  
חמס וירא אלהים את  
הארץ והנה גשחתה  
כי השחית כל בשר את  
דרבוע הארץ  
ויאמר אלהים סלח  
קץ כל בשר שנבא לפני  
מלאה הארץ חמס  
מפעם והנני משחיתם  
את הארץ עשה לך  
חנת עצי גפר קנים  
תעשה אתה תכה וכפות  
אתה מבית ומחוץ ככפר  
וזה אשר תעשה אתה  
שלשים אות אמה ארך  
התכה חמישים אמה  
רחבה ושלשים אמה  
קומתה צדד תעשה  
רתכה ואר אמה תכלנה  
מלמעלה ופתח התכה  
בצדה תשים תחתים  
ישעם ושלשים תעשה



85. Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, cod. 8<sup>o</sup> 2221, Spain, 13th-14th c., fol. 6v  
(photograph: with permission of the Jewish National and University Library)

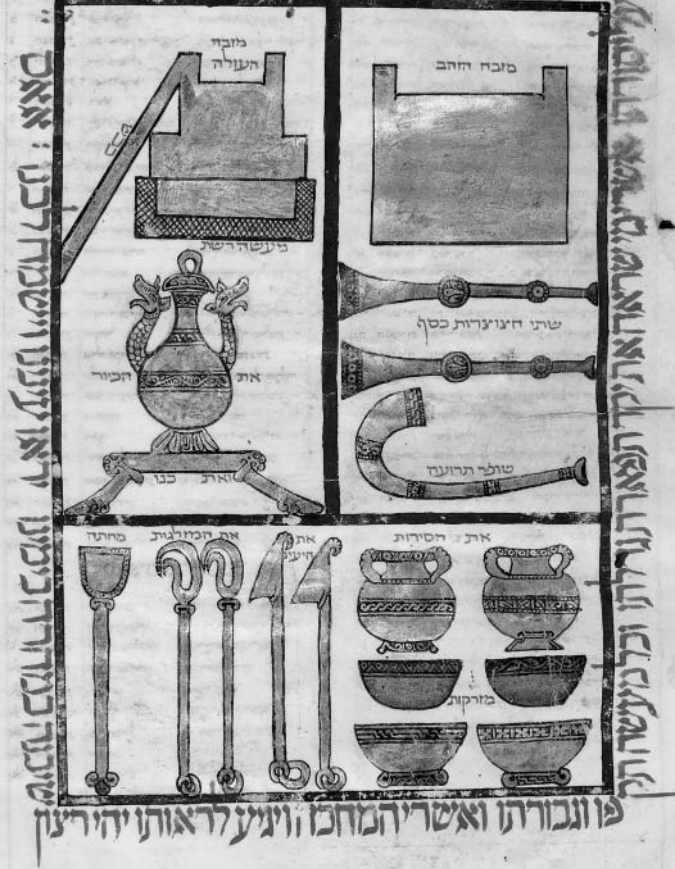
וזה מעשה המערה מקשה זהכעד ירכהעד



86. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7, Perpignan, 1299, fol. 12v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

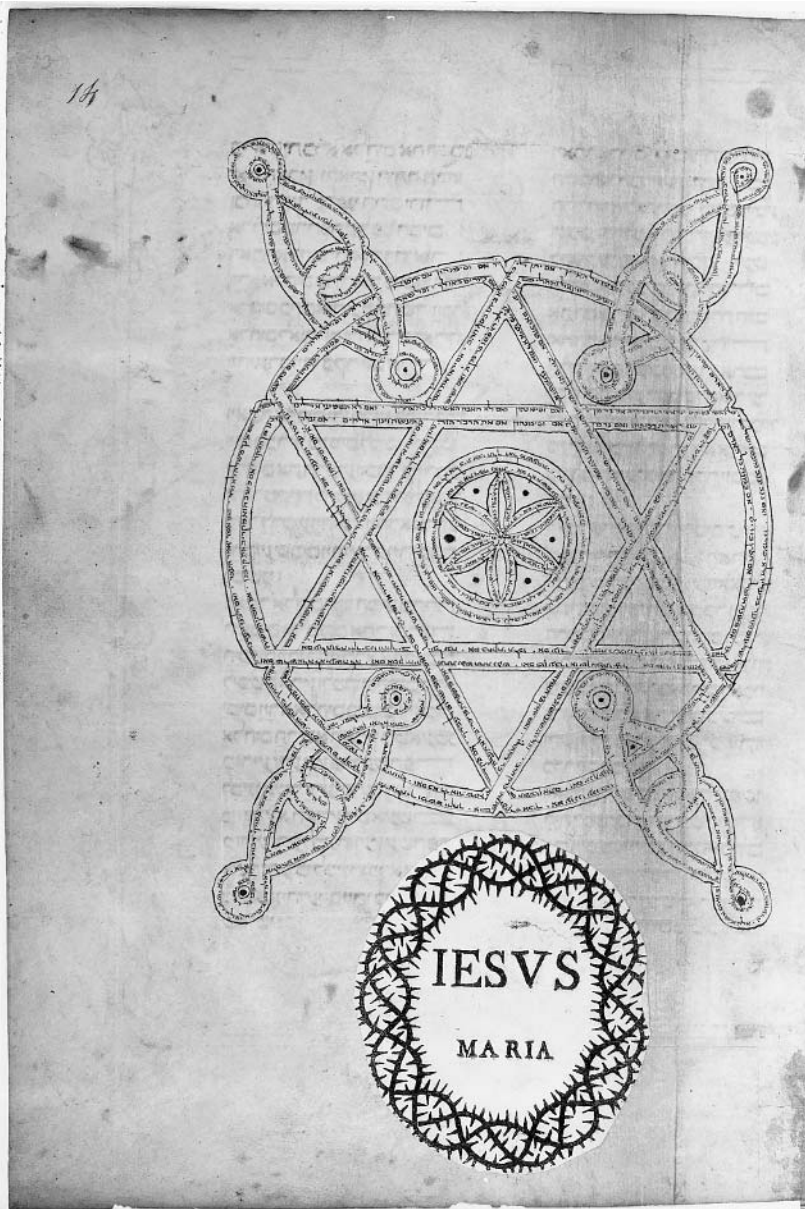
12  
13

כל אלה כהיות היכל על מכונתו ומקדש הקדש

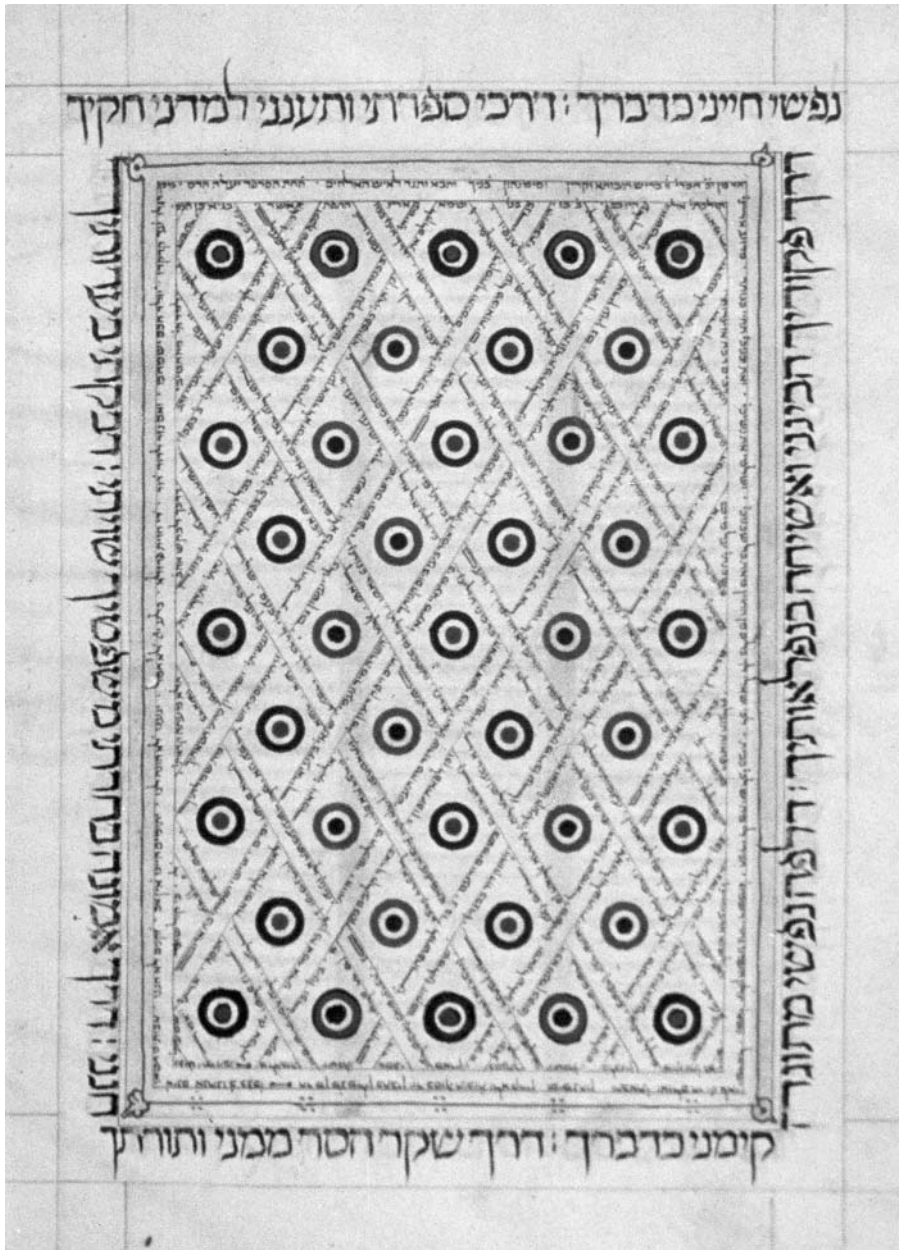


87. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7, Perpignan, 1299, fol. 13r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)





88. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7, Perpignan, 1299, fol. 14r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



89. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7, Perpignan, 1299, fol. 11v (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)

10

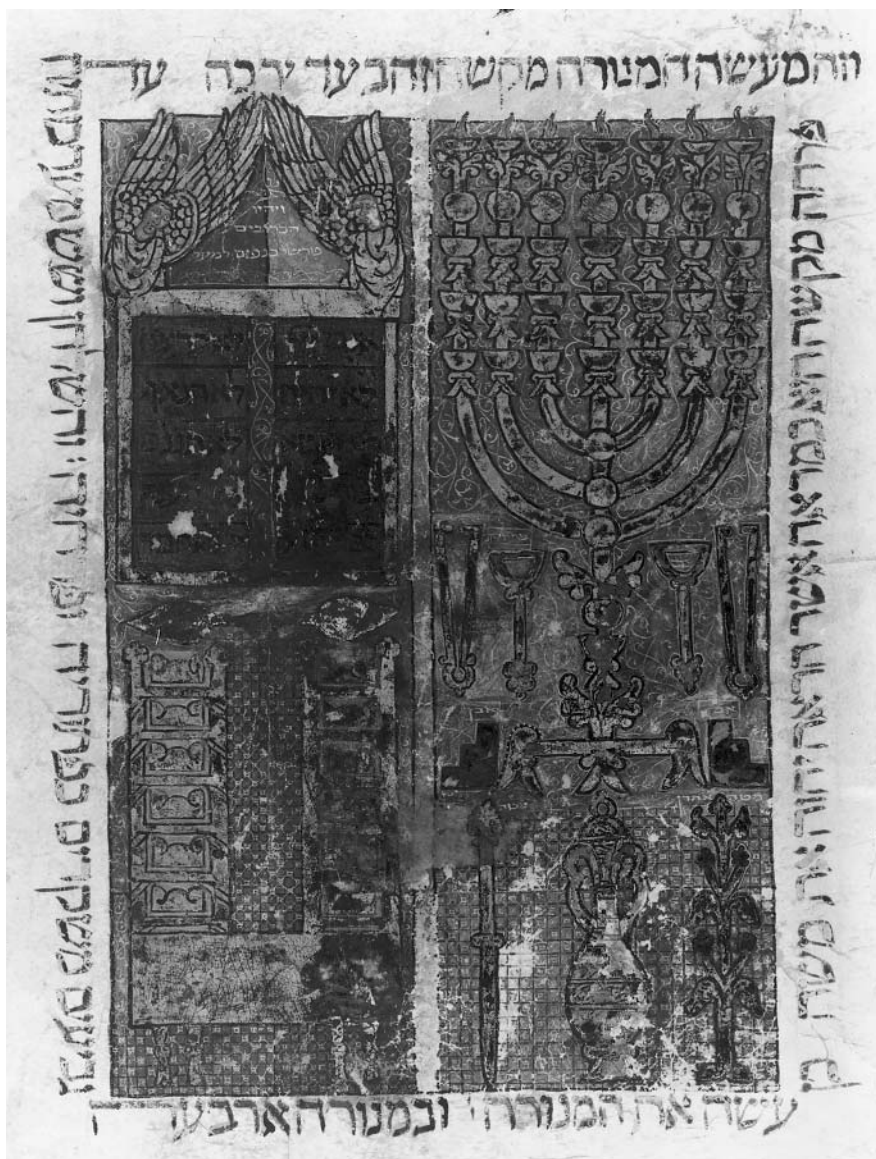
אַתְּ נִחַר וְאֵת חַרְךָ וְאֵת חַרְךָ  
 חִרְחַרְךָ חֹלֶדְךָ אֶת אֲבִירֶיךָ אֶת  
 נַחֲרִיךָ וְאֵת חַרְךָ וְחַרְךָ חֹלֶדְךָ אֶת  
 לִטְּךָ וְאֵת חַרְךָ עַל פְּנֵי חַרְךָ אֶלֶיךָ בָּאֵין  
 מִלְּךָ כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי כִּי  
 וְנִחַר לְחַם נְשִׁים שָׁם אֶת אֲבִירֶיךָ  
 שָׁרִי וְשָׁם אֶת נַחֲרֵךְ מִלְּךָ פֶתַח  
 חֶרֶן אֶלֶי מִלְּךָ וְאֶלֶי מִלְּךָ וְאֵת  
 שָׁרִי עֲקֵרָה אֵין לְחֹלֶדְךָ וְלִקְחָהּ  
 אֶת אֲבִירֶיךָ כִּי וְאֵת לִטְּךָ כִּי כִּי  
 כִּי וְאֵת שָׁרִי מִלְּךָ אֶת אֲבִירֶיךָ  
 וְיִגְאֵל אֲבִירֶיךָ כִּי כִּי לְכָתֹב  
 אֶרֶץ כִּנְעָן וְיִגְאֵל עַד חֶרֶן וְיִגְאֵל  
 שָׁם וְיִגְאֵל מִלְּךָ חִמְשָׁן שָׁנִים  
 וְיִגְאֵל שָׁנִים וְיִגְאֵל מִלְּךָ כִּי כִּי  
 וְאֶתֶּן יְהוָה אֶת אֲבִירֶיךָ לְךָ  
 כִּי יִגְאֵל וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן  
 אֶת חֶרֶן אֶתֶּן אֶתֶּן אֶתֶּן וְאֶתֶּן  
 לְךָ חֶרֶן וְאֶתֶּן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 כִּי יִגְאֵל חֶרֶן וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
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שָׁרִי וְיִגְאֵל חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
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 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
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 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
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 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן  
 חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן חֶרֶן

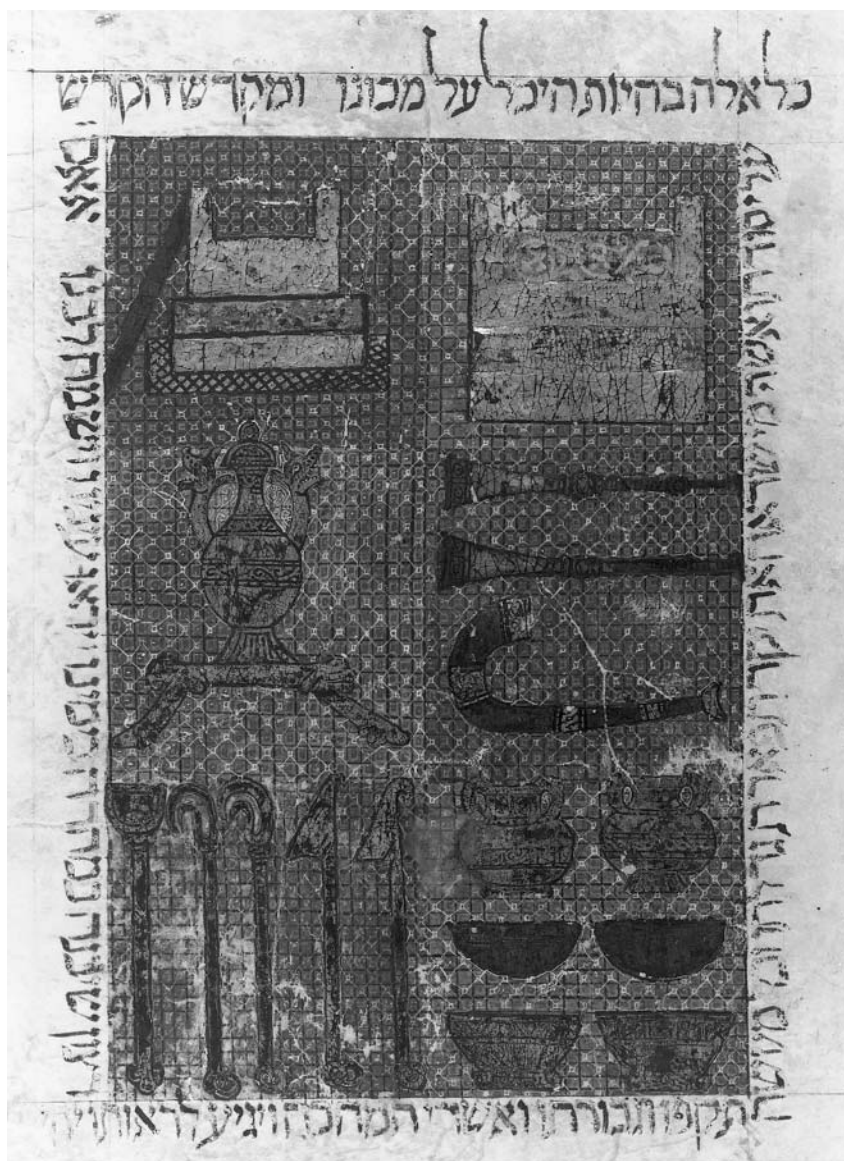


וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע  
 וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע  
 וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁמַע

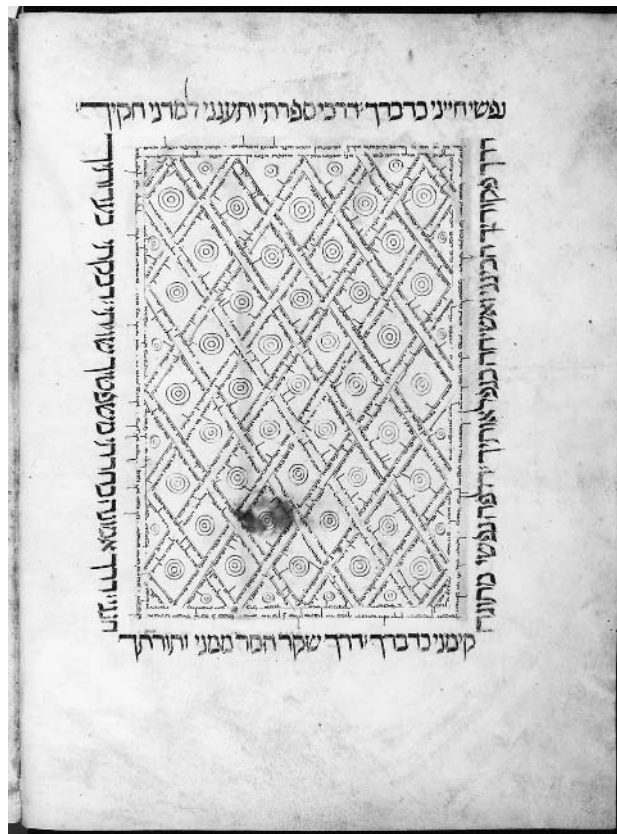
90. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7, Perpignan, 1299, fol. 20r (photograph: with permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France)



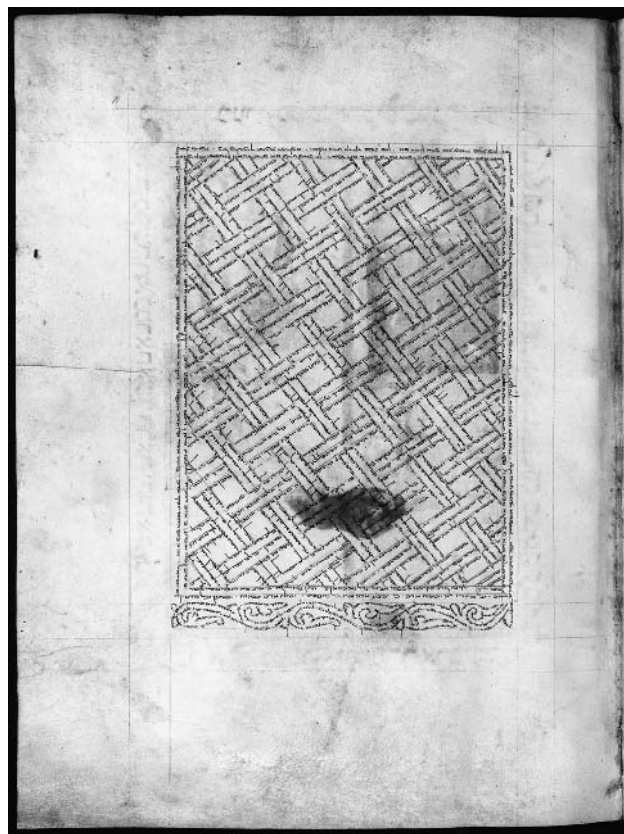
91. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. II, Roussillon (?), 1301, fol. 11v  
(photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)



92. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. II, Roussillon (?), 1301, fol. 12r (photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)

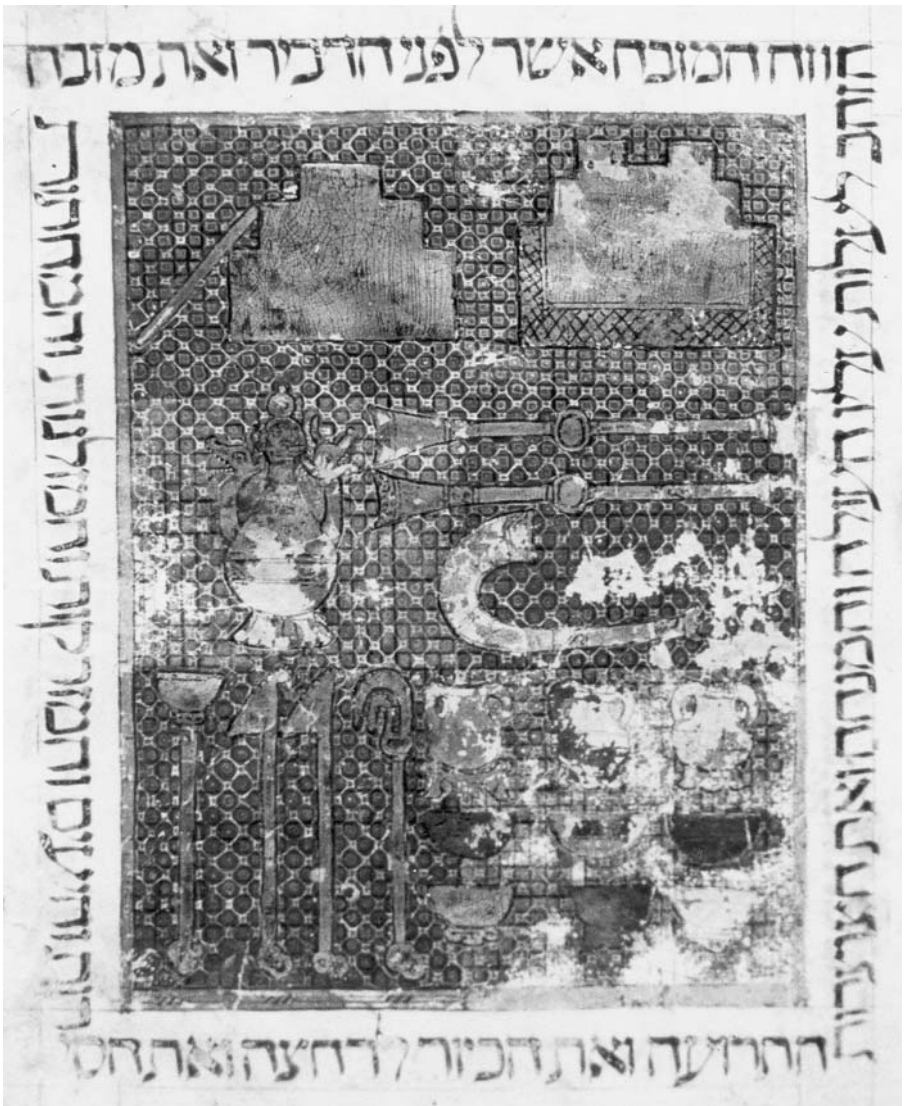


93. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. II, Rous-sillon (?), 1301, fol. 10v (photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)



94. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. II, Rous-sillon (?), 1301, fol. 11r (photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)





96. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS M. 8.4., Catalonia or Roussillon, first quarter of the 14th c., fol. 10r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Estense)





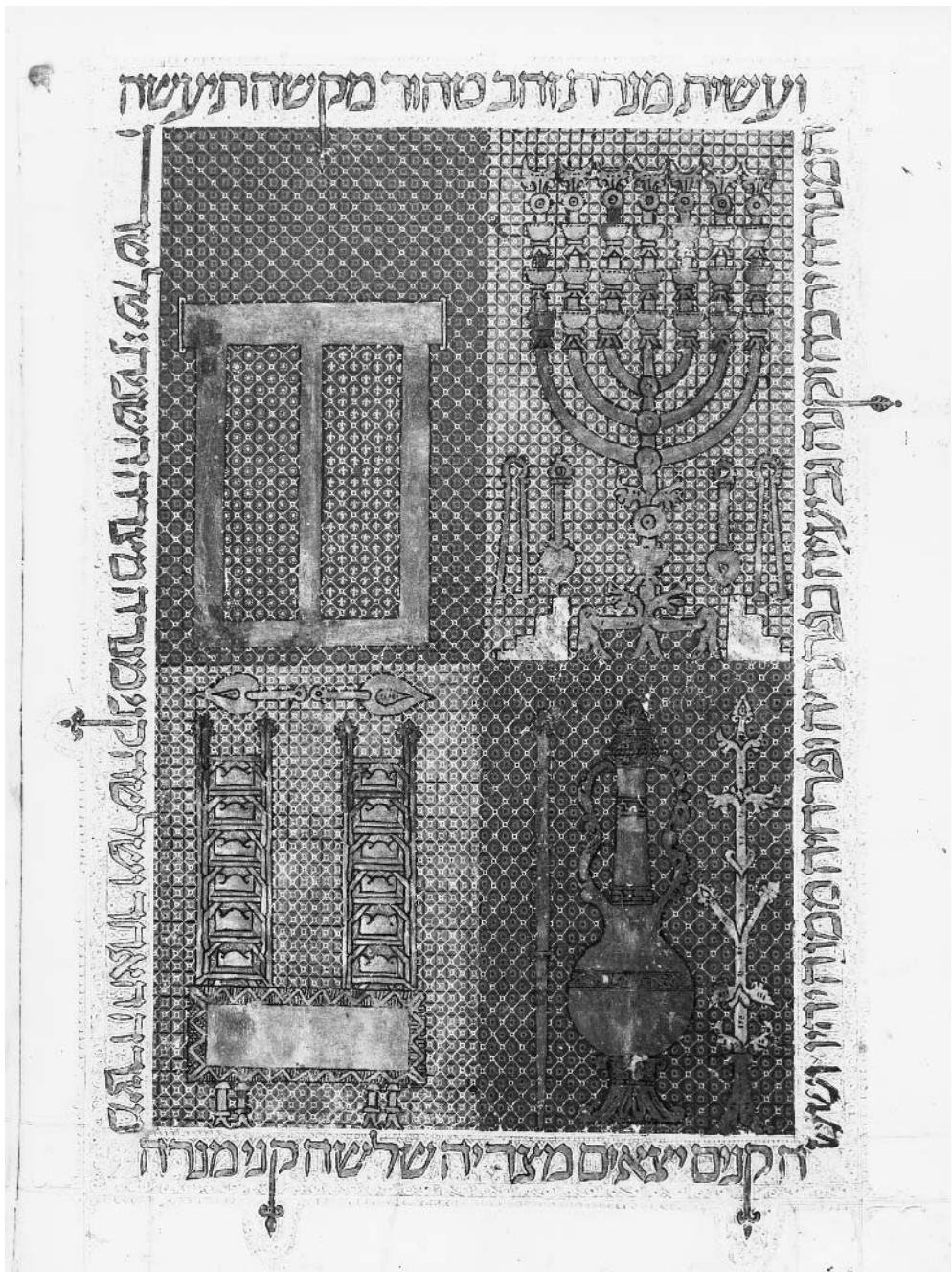
97. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS M. 8.4., Catalonia or Roussillon, first quarter of the 14th c., fol. 4v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Estense)



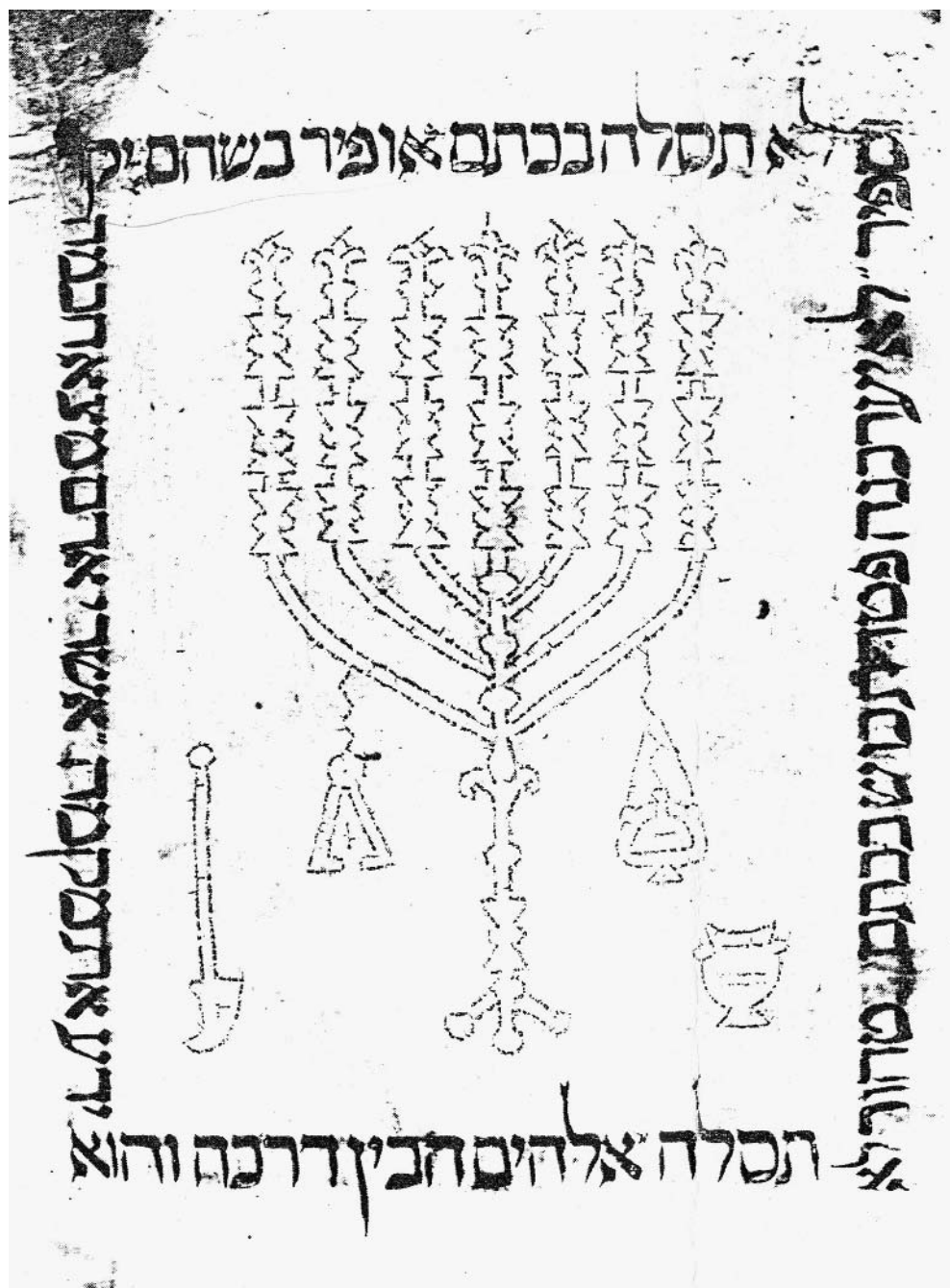
98. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS M. 8.4., Catalonia or Roussillon, first quarter of the 14th c., fol. 8v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Estense)



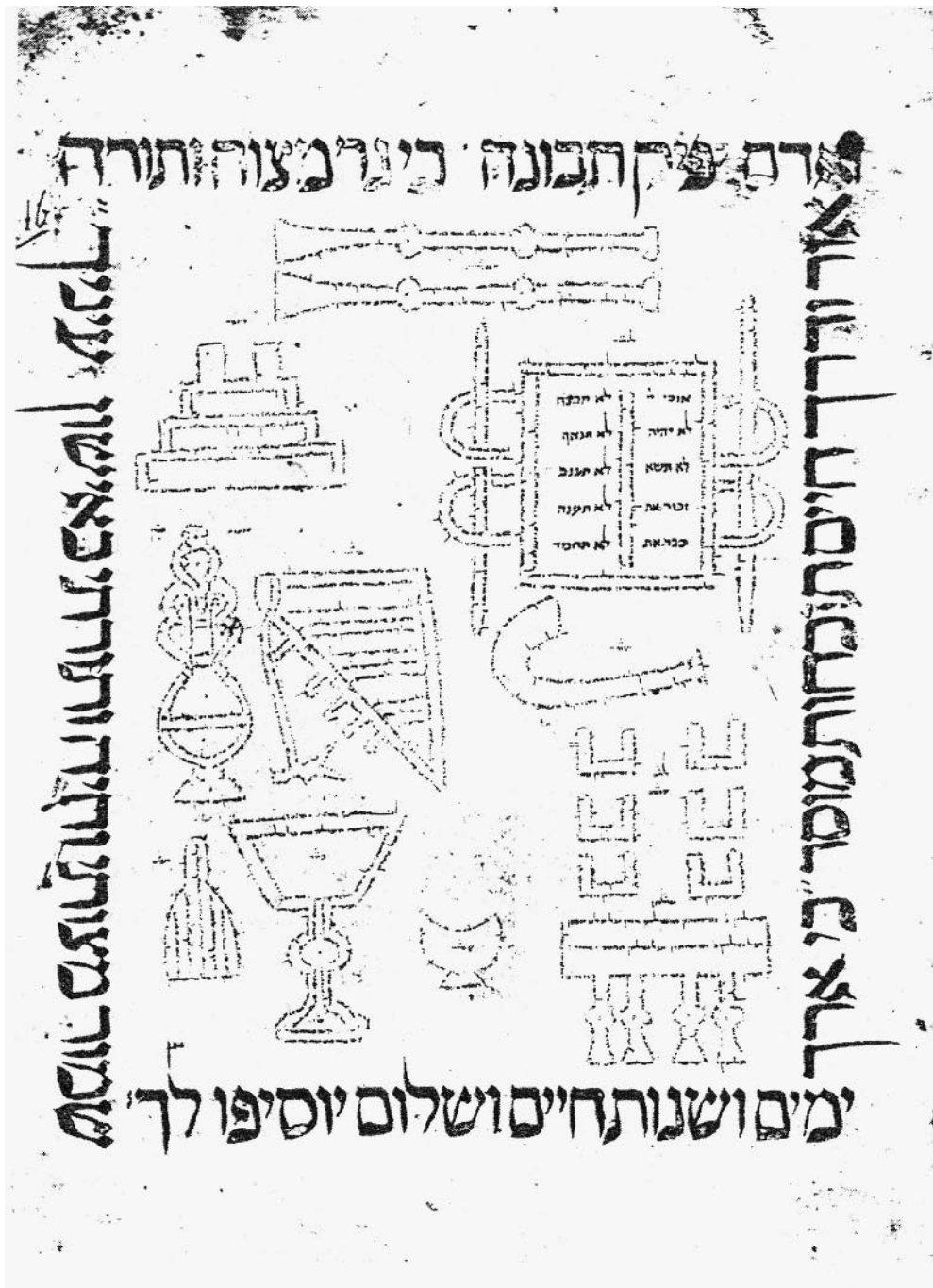
99. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS M. 8.4., Catalonia or Roussillon, first quarter of the 14th c., fol. 10v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Estense)



100. Modena, Biblioteca Estense, MS T. 3.8., Catalonia or Roussillon, first quarter of the 14th c., fol. 25v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Estense)



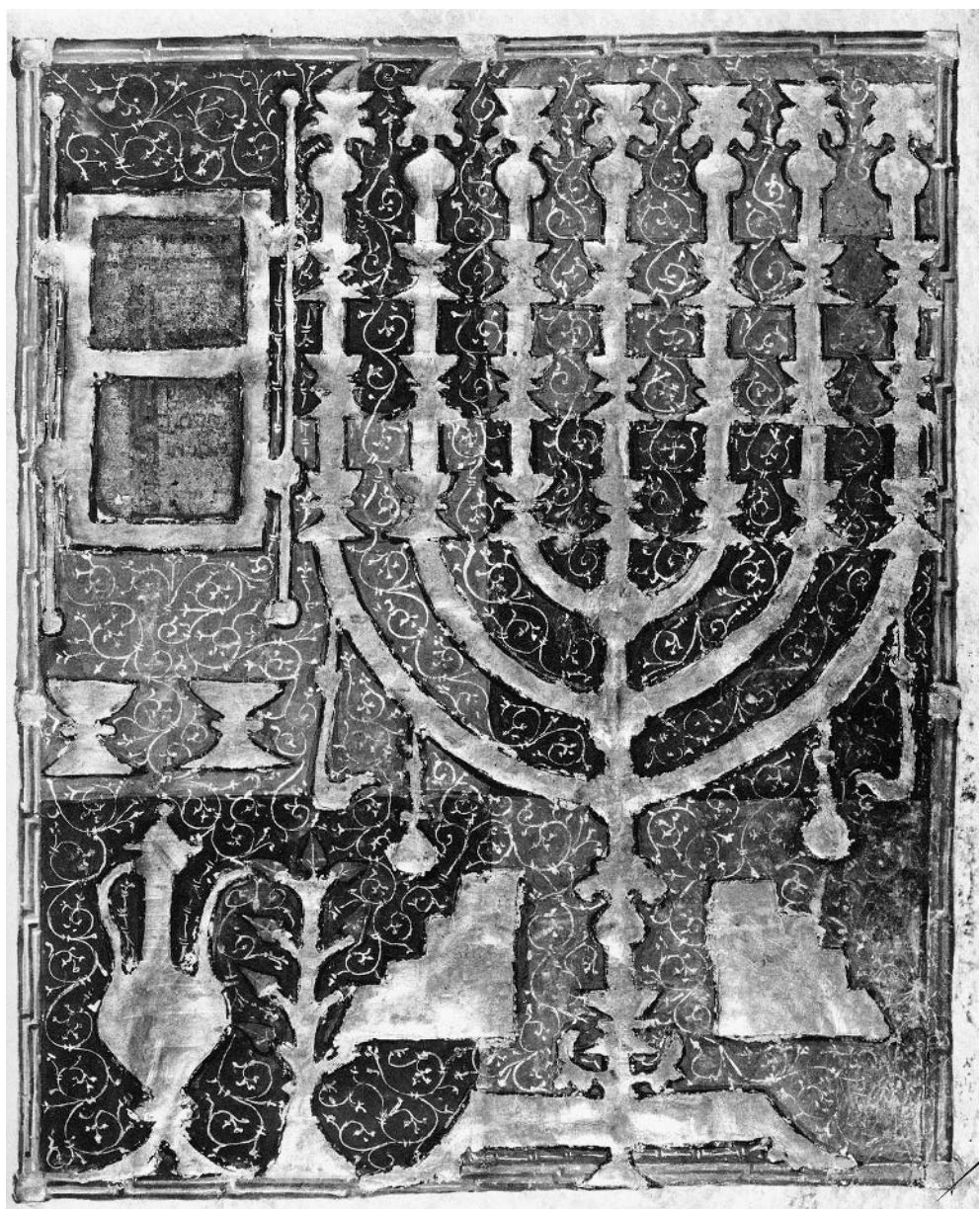
101. Rome, Comunità Ebraica, MS 19a, Barcelona, 1325, fol. 214r (after Gutmann, Mikdashya)



102. Rome, Comunità Ebraica, MS 19a, Barcelona, 1325, fol. 214v (after Gutmann, Mikdashya)



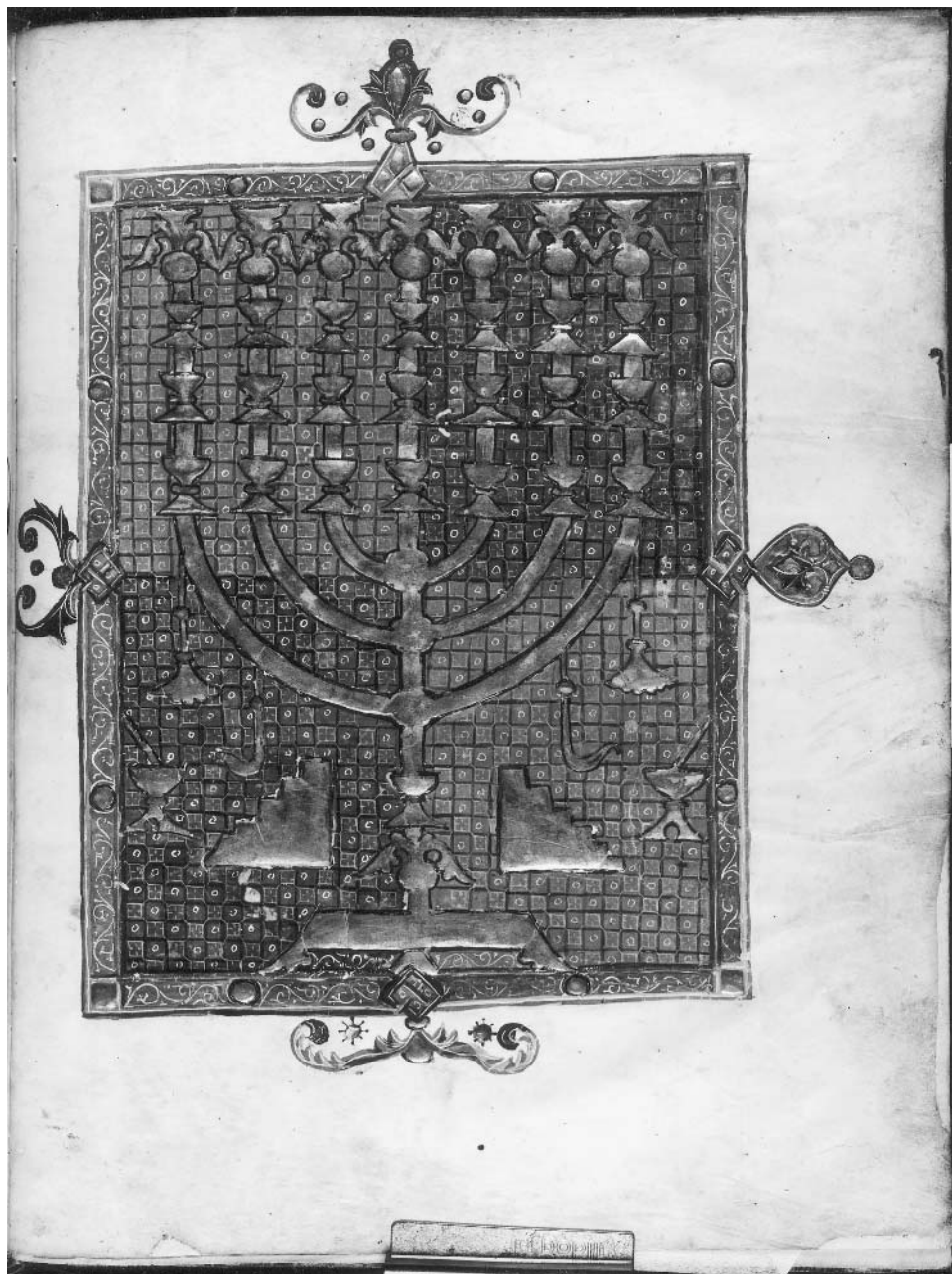
103. Rome, Comunità Ebraica, MS 19a, Barcelona, 1325, fol. 216r (after Gutmann, Mikdashya)



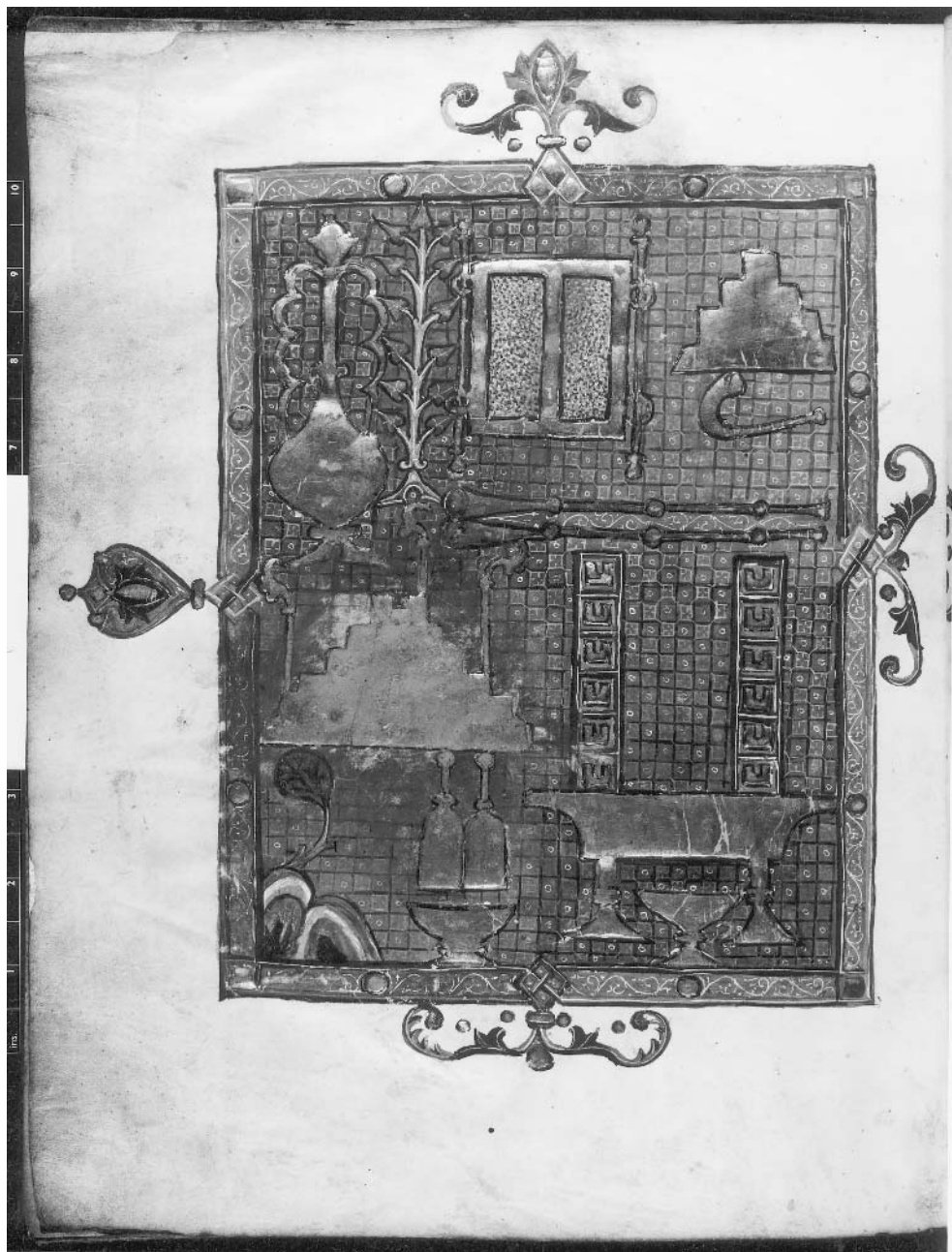
104. London, British Library, MS Harley 1528, Catalonia, first half of the 14th c., fol. 7v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)







106. London, British Library, MS Add. 15250, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 3v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



107. London, British Library, MS Add. 15250, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 4r  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)

אלהים יתברך שם כבודו לעולם ועד כבודו ויחיה וימשול לעולם ועד אמן



כארץ יהודה וביהושלם  
בער יאשיוהו מען הקים  
את דברי התורה הכתובים  
על הספר אשר מצא  
חלקיהו הכהן בת יוחי  
וכסוהו לאהו לפני מלך  
אשר שב אל יהוה בכל  
לבו ובכל נפשו ובכל  
מאדו בכל תורת משה  
ואמר לו לא קם ממדו  
אך לא שב יוה מחרון  
אפו הניח אשר חרה  
אפו ביהודה על כל  
המעשים אשר הכעיסו  
מעשהו ואמר יהוה גם  
את יהודה אסיל מעל  
פני כאשר חרתי את  
ישראל ומאסתי את  
העיר הזאת אשר  
בחרתי את ירושלים ואת  
הבית אשר אצתי יהוה  
שמי שם יחתי ודבר  
יאשיוהו וכל אשר עשה  
הוא הם כתובים על  
ספר דברי הימים לבי  
יהודה ובימי עליה פרעה  
בה מלך מצרים על  
מלך אשר עיר נחר פרע  
ולך המלך יאשורו  
לך אתו ומיתו ונמנו  
מאתו אתו וירכרו

עבדו מתמנו ויבאחו  
ירושלם ויקרהו נבדחו  
ויסח עם הארץ את  
יהאחו בראשיו ומשחו  
אתו ויבדלו אתו תחת  
אביו  
בן עשרים ושלוש שנה  
הוא חזו במלך ישראל  
חושבים מלך ביהושלם  
ושם אמו חמטל בת  
דמיהו מלבעה וישחרע  
בעני יהוה כל אשר  
עשו אבתו ויאסרוהו  
פרעה ובה דברי הכתובים  
חבת מלך ביהושלם  
וחתן עניט על הארץ מאה  
כפר כסף וכסף זהב  
וימלך פרעה ובה את  
אליקים בן אשיהו תחת  
יאשורו אביו וסב את  
שמו יהוקים ואת יהואחז  
לקחו ויבא מצרים ומת  
עם והכסף והזהב נתן  
יהוקים לפרעה אך  
העריך את הארץ ונתת  
את הכסף על פי פרעה  
איש כעורט נפש את  
הכסף ואת הזהב את עם  
הארץ ונתת לפרעה נה  
בן עשרים וחמש  
שנה יהוקים נמלכו

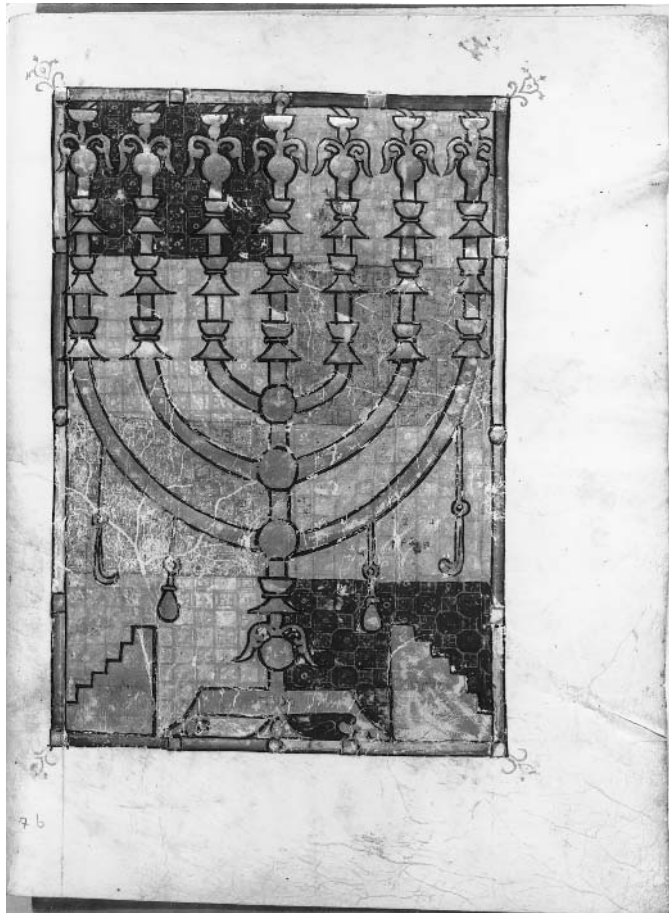
ואחת עשרה שנה מלך  
ביהושלם ושם אמו  
זכיה בת פריה מן חנה  
וישחרע בעני יהוה  
כל אשר עשו אבדו  
כמו עליה נכדו אצור  
מלך בבל והיה יהוקים  
עבד שלש שנים וישב  
ויכר דברו וישלח יהוה  
ט את גנדי כשרים  
ואת גנדי ארם ואת  
גנדי מצרים ואת גנדי  
כע עמון וישלחם כהונה  
להאכר כרם יהוה  
אשר דבר ביד עבדיו  
הנביאים אשר על פי יהוה  
היתה ביהודה לחסר  
מעל פניו כחטאת מנשה  
כל אשר עשה ונמנם  
הערי אשר שפך וימלא  
את ירושלים בם כחיל וירא  
אבה יהוה לסקל ויתר  
דבר יהוקים וכל אשר  
עשה הוא הם כתובים  
על ספר דברי הימים  
לבי יהודה וישב  
יהוקים ונמנו ומלך  
יהויןן בען תחתו ורא  
הסוף עיר מלך מצרים  
לצאת מארץ כל ירח  
מלך בבל מיתו מצרים

יהוה יתברך שם כבודו לעולם ועד כבודו ויחיה וימשול לעולם ועד אמן

108. London, British Library, MS Add. 15250, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 213v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



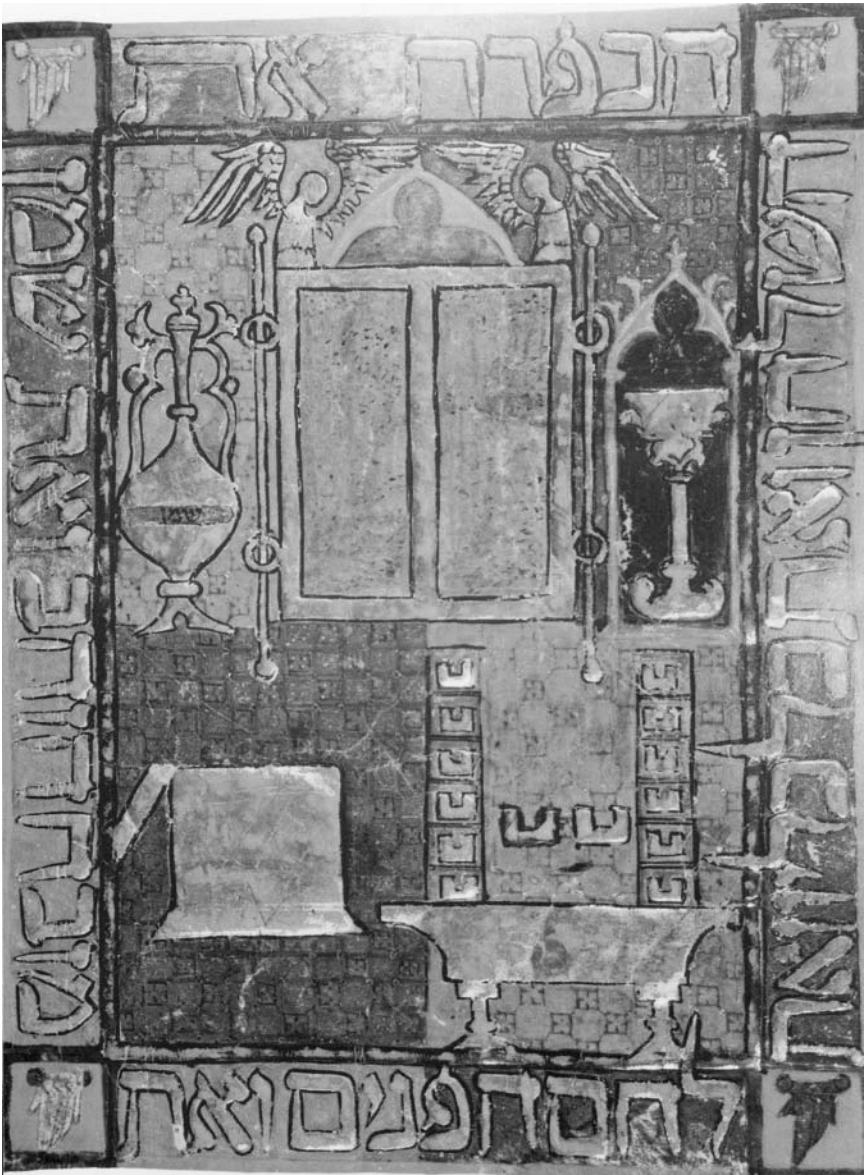
109. Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, cod. Hebr. XXXVII, Barcelona, 1348, fol. 4r (photograph: with permission of the Kongelige Bibliotek)



110. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2810, Catalonia, first half of the 14th c., fol. 7v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)



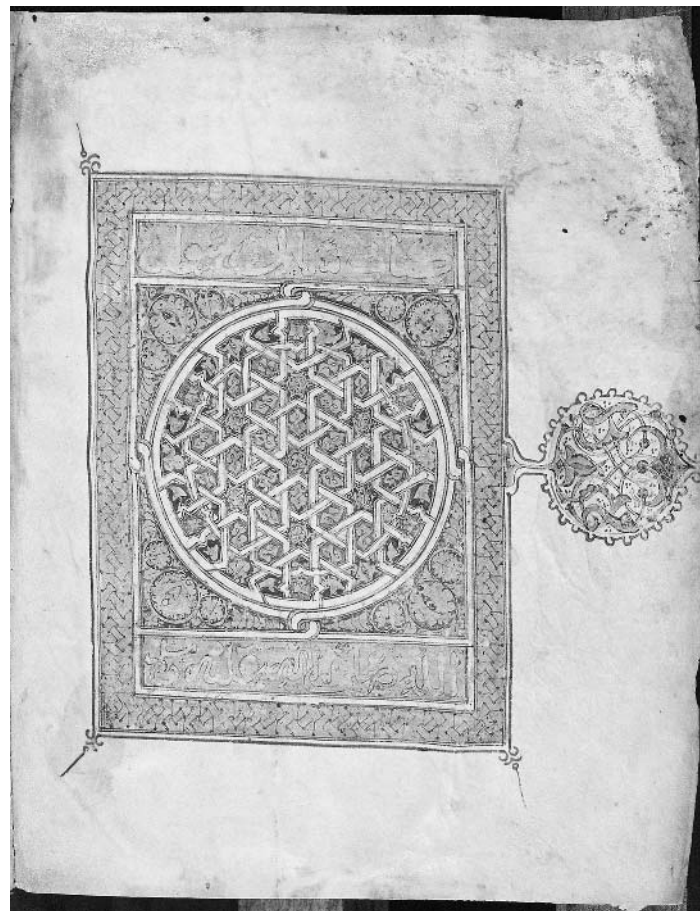
111. Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS C 105 sup., Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 3v (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Ambrosiana)



112. Paris, Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice, MS 1933, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 5v (photograph: with permission of the Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice)

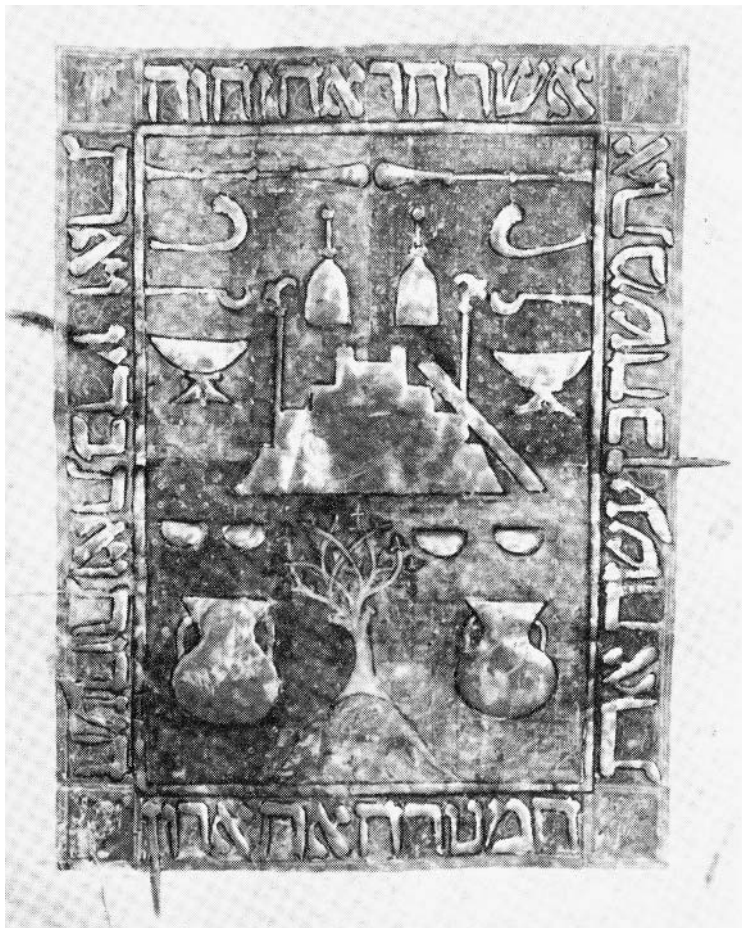


113. Paris, Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice, MS 1933, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 235v (photograph: with permission of the Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice)

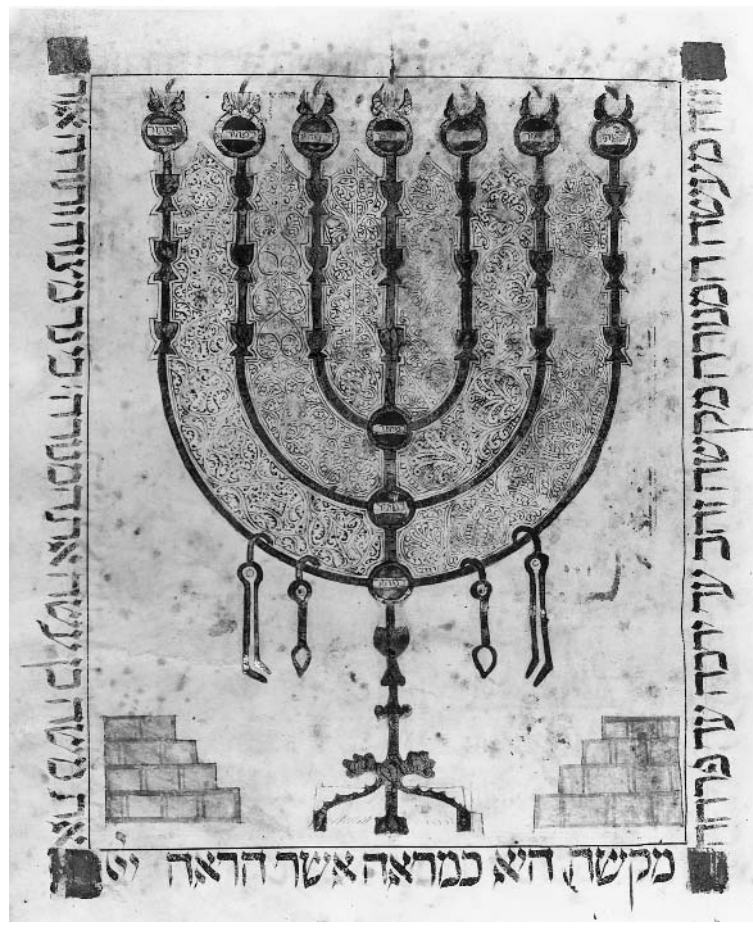


114. Madrid, Escorial Library, MS n 1740, northern Africa, 1326, fol. 1v (photograph: with permission of the Escorial Library)

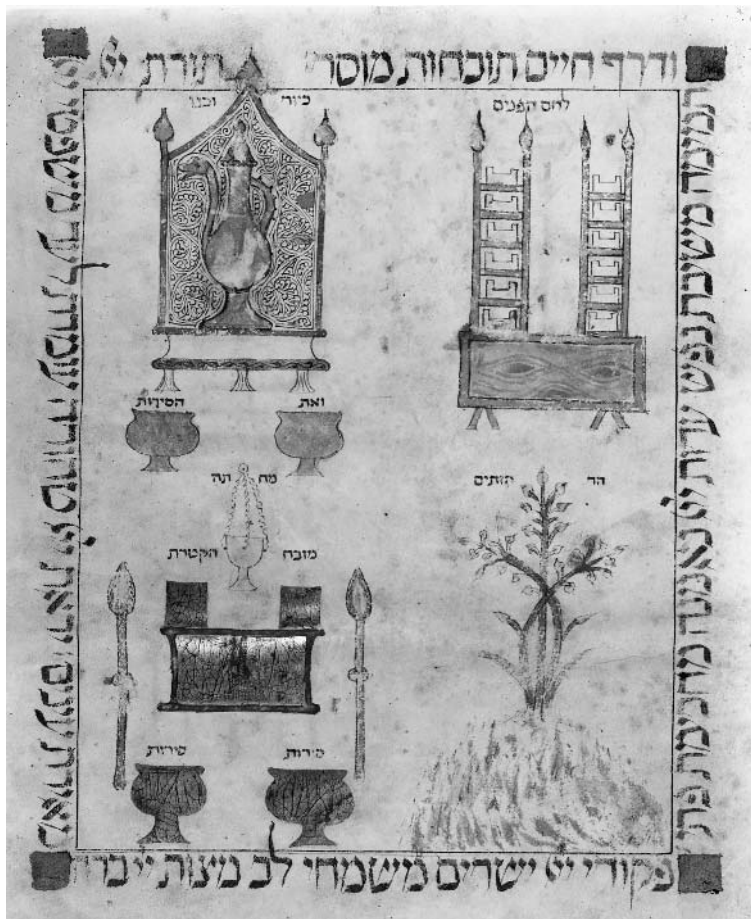




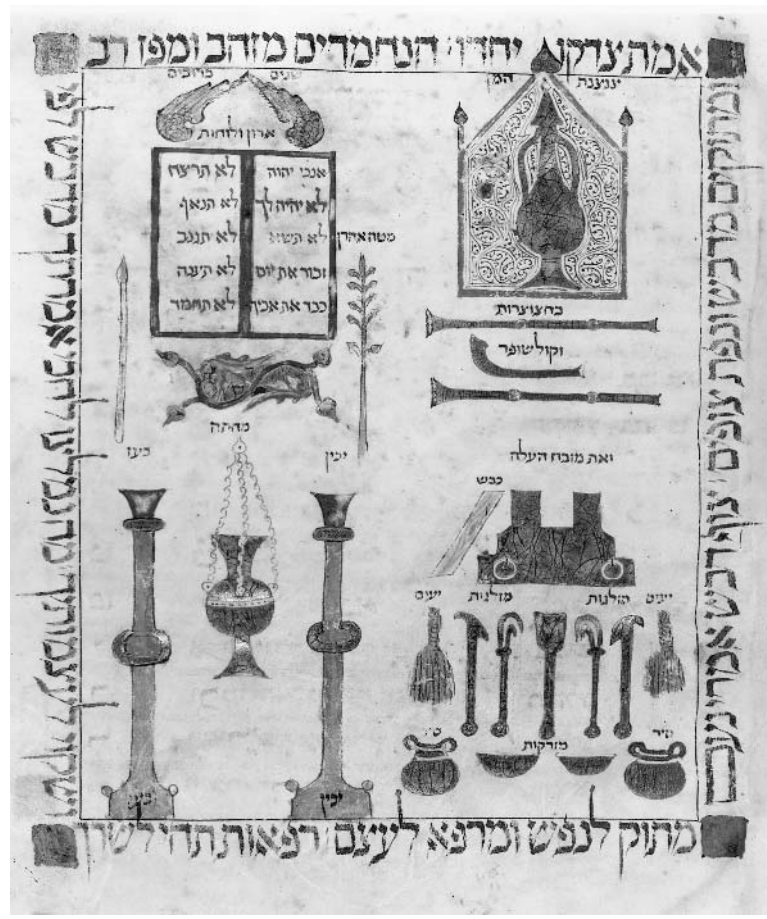
115. Paris, Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice, MS 1933, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 6v (photograph: with permission of the Compagnie des Prêtres Saint Sulpice)



116. London, British Library, MS King's 1, Solsona, 1384, fol. 3r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



117. London, British Library, MS King's 1, Solsona, 1384, fol. 3v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



118. London, British Library, MS King's 1, Solsona, 1384, fol. 4r  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)

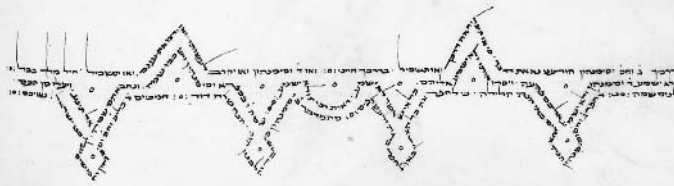
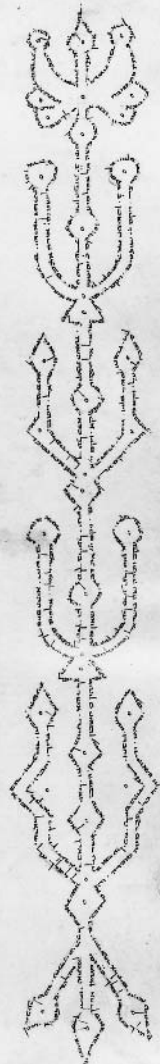


119. London, British Library, MS King's 1, Solsona, 1384, fol. 2v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)

אלהיכם נתן לכם לרשותה  
הראובני ודני ויהוה  
שכט המנושה אבר יהושע לאמר  
אתה רבך אשר צוה אתכם משה  
יהוה לאמר יהוה אלהיכם מניח לכם  
ועתה לכם את הארץ הזאת וישלכם  
טפכם ומקנכם ילכו בארץ אשר נתן  
לכם משה עבר הירדן ואתם פועלי  
חמישים לפני אחיכם כל גבורי החיל  
ועד החס אקים עד אשר צוה יהוה  
לאחיכם ככם וירשו את האמה את  
הארץ אשר צוה אלהיכם נתן לכם  
ושכם לארץ ידושתכם וירשתם  
אתה אשר נתן לכם משה עבר יהוה  
בעבר הירדן מן החי שמיט ויענאו  
יהושע לאמר כל אשר צויתע משה  
ואל כל אשר תשליט עך כל אשר  
שמיעו אל משה בן נון מע אלדוק  
יהוה יהוה אליך עפך באשר תה  
עם משה כל איש אשר ימה את  
פך ולא ישמע אתה רבך לכל אשר  
הצונו יומת רבך חוק ואמין  
וישלח יהושע בן נון מן  
השטים שנים אנשים מן מיס חרש  
לאמר לבנו או אתה ארץ ואת ירו  
ולכו וצאו בית אשה וצוה ושמח חג  
וישבבו שמה ויאמר לכלך ירו  
לאמר הנה אנשים באותה הליה  
מבני ישראל להפר את הארץ  
וישלח מלך ירוהו אל רחב לאמר

Joshua

ויהי אחר כמות משה עמד יהוה ואמר  
יהוה ואי יחושע בן נון משרת משה  
לאמר משה עברי מת ועתה קום עבר  
אתה וידן יהוה אתה וכל העם הזה אל  
הארץ אשר אנכי נתן לכם לבני ישראל  
כל מקום אשר תרדו בפרתכם כי  
לכם נתתי ובאשר רבתי אל משה  
מהמרד ותרלבו הנה ועד הנה הנה  
עור פתכל ארץ החתים ועד הים  
הגדול מצואה שמיט היה גבולכם  
לאיתיגע איש לפניך כל ימי חיך  
כאשר היתי וגם משה אהיה עמך  
לא ארדך ולא אעברך חוק ואמין  
אתה מעלי את העם הזה את הארץ  
אשר נשבעתי לאבותם לתת להם את  
חוק ואמין מאד לשמור לעשות ככל  
התורה אשר צוה משה עברי אל  
הסוד מבט מין וגמאל למען תשלי  
כל אשר תלך לאימיט ספר התורה  
הזה מפך והנתיבו יבסו ויהלמע  
תשקרו לעשות ככל הכתוב בזה  
מצלתי אתה רבך ואותשלי חלא  
צויתך חוק ואמין אל מערין ואל  
תחתי עפך יהוה אליך כל אשר  
וצי



120. London, British Library, MS Add. 15252, Catalonia, second half of the 14th c., fol. 116v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)

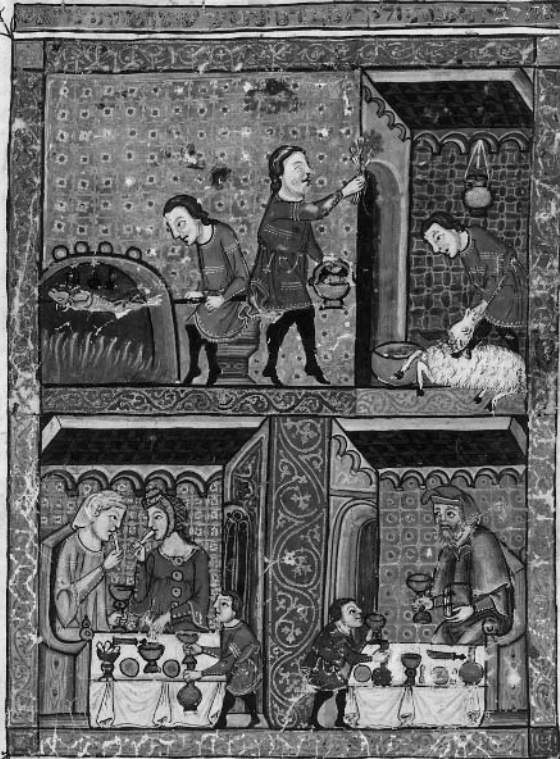


121. London, British Library, MS Or. 1404, Catalonia, c. 1330-40 (?), fol. 1v  
(photograph: with permission of the British Library)



122. Salerno, Cathedral Treasury, ivory antependium, Amalfi, c. 1180 (photograph: after Bergman (1980))

שה לבית אבותי  
לבית  
ול, חו מן הדם ונתנו  
על שתי המזוזות  
צלי אש



123. Manchester, John Rylands University Library, MS heb. 6, Catalonia, c. 1330-40 (?), fol. 19v (photograph: with permission of the John Rylands University Library)

Como moyses comanda al pouolo de israel da parte de dio che li debia avere primogeniti uno  
 agnelo per fare la pasqua e chi non aveva un agnelo che lo pigliasse una bianca e che pigliasse  
 b' debia mettere de questo sangue sopra le porte delle case che abitavano e quando mo  
 se dalla un tercio cum li primogeniti de egipto. Capitoli. xij. del Exodo.



Lxi.

Como el pouolo de israel meti el sangue de l'agnelo pasquale sopra le porte de le case cum una  
 bianca e chi non aveva un agnelo che lo pigliasse una bianca e che pigliasse  
 b' debia mettere de questo sangue sopra le porte delle case che abitavano e quando mo  
 se dalla un tercio cum li primogeniti de egipto. Capitoli. xij. del Exodo.

Como el pouolo de israel per comandamento de dio fero la pasqua quia provincia de egipto el qual  
 rodeamo di de la luna de marco se omenguro tan presto e quando un'ua ala noce d'agnando lo



Lxij.

agnando pasquale nostro e magnando l'agnolo pasquale cum pan aceto e chi non aveva un agnelo che lo pigliasse una  
 bianca e che pigliasse b' debia mettere de questo sangue sopra le porte delle case che abitavano e quando mo  
 se dalla un tercio cum li primogeniti de egipto. Capitoli. xij. del Exodo.

Como el pouolo de israel per comandamento de dio fero la pasqua quia provincia de egipto el qual  
 rodeamo di de la luna de marco se omenguro tan presto e quando un'ua ala noce d'agnando lo





125. Klosterneuburg, Augustinerstift, Nicholas of Verdun, ambo, c. 1180 (photograph: with permission of the Augustinerstift, Klosterneuburg)



126. London, British Library, MS Add. 27210, Catalonia, c. 1320-30, fol. 4v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)

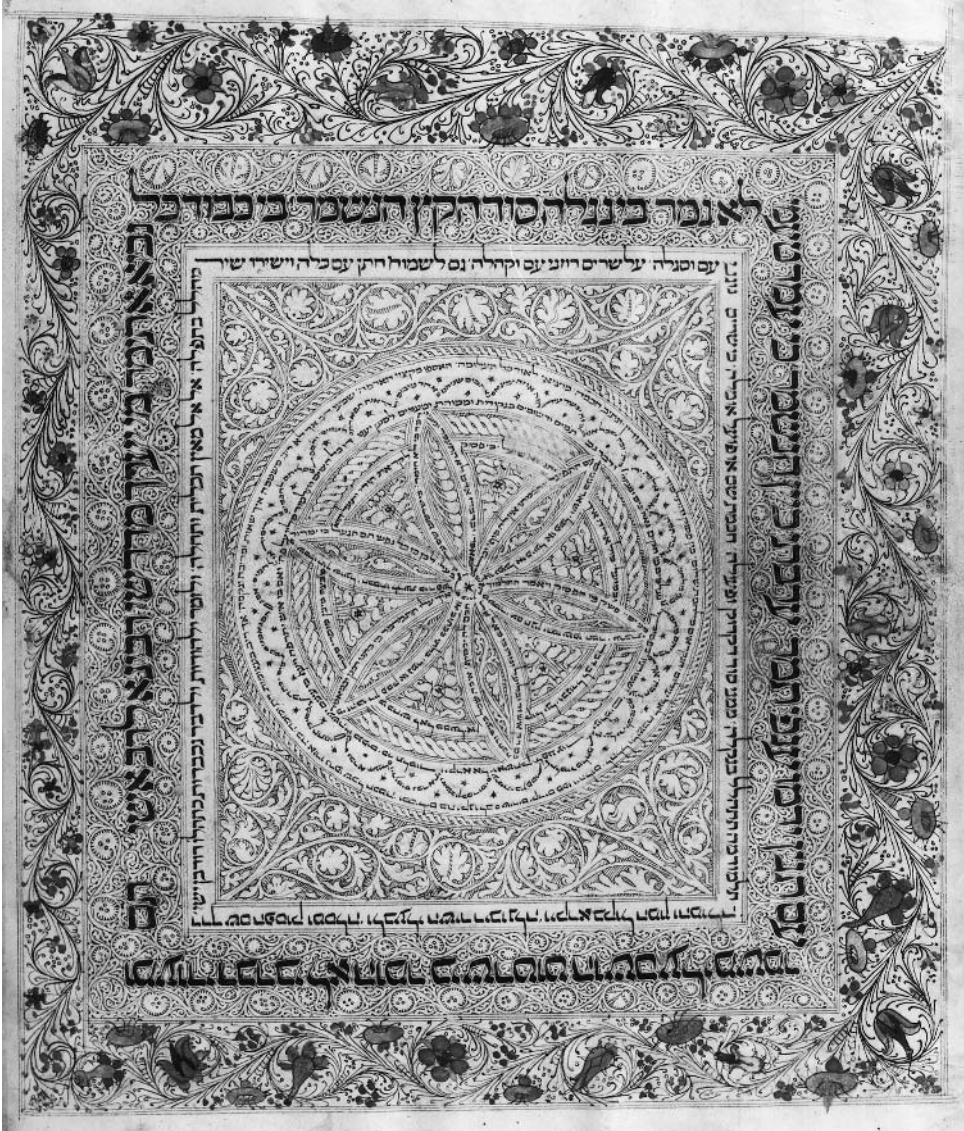
חיי יוסף שלשה חן עשן יוסף והוא חסדו ומוסקו  
אחי יוסף ששבו אחיו נפמן ליוסף והוא מחבקו והעשקו



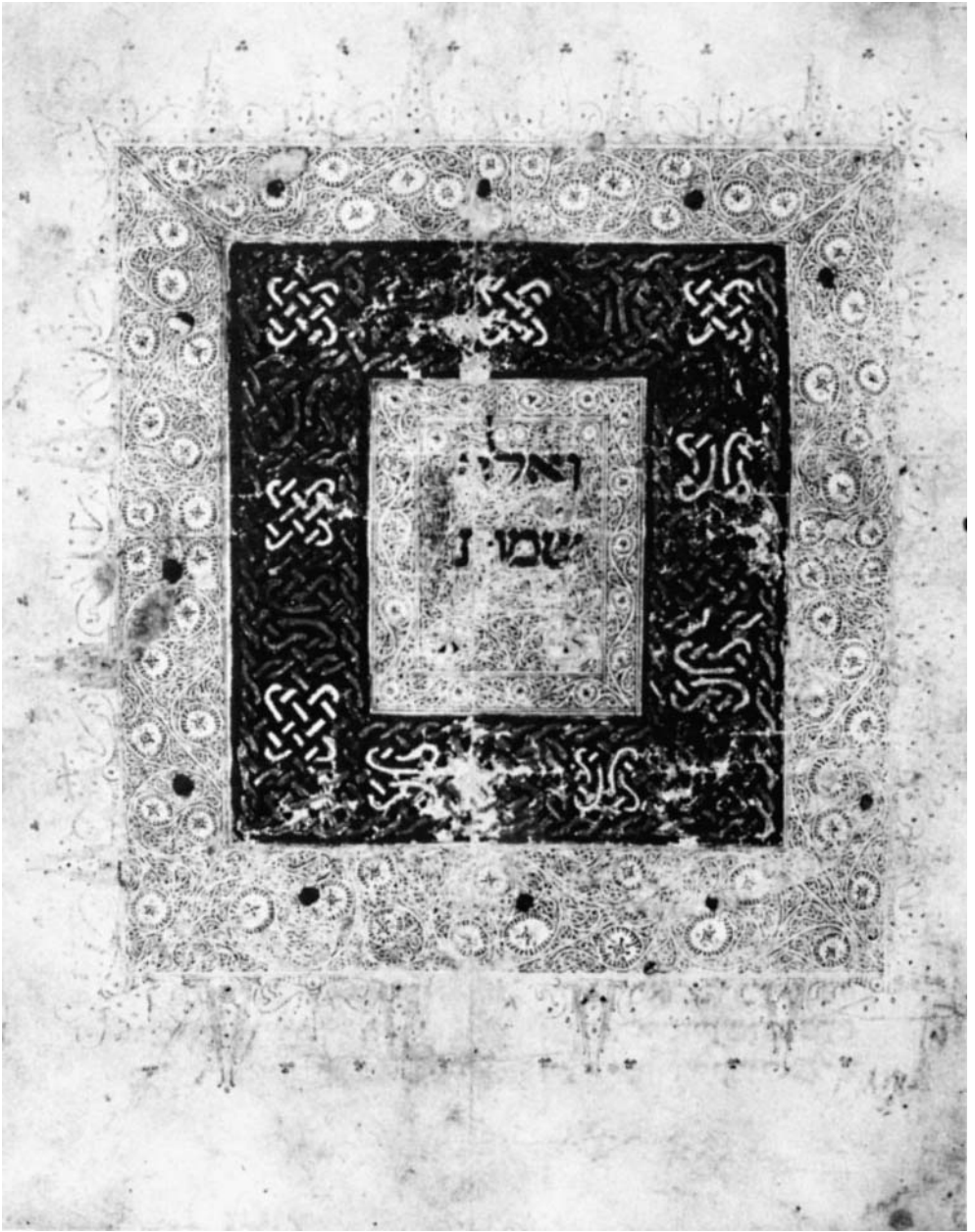
יוסף חסדו עם בניו ומוסקו  
קולטו  
יוסף מחבקו אחיו והעשקו  
במנו

השבו אחיו נפמן ליוסף  
הוא מחבקו והעשקו

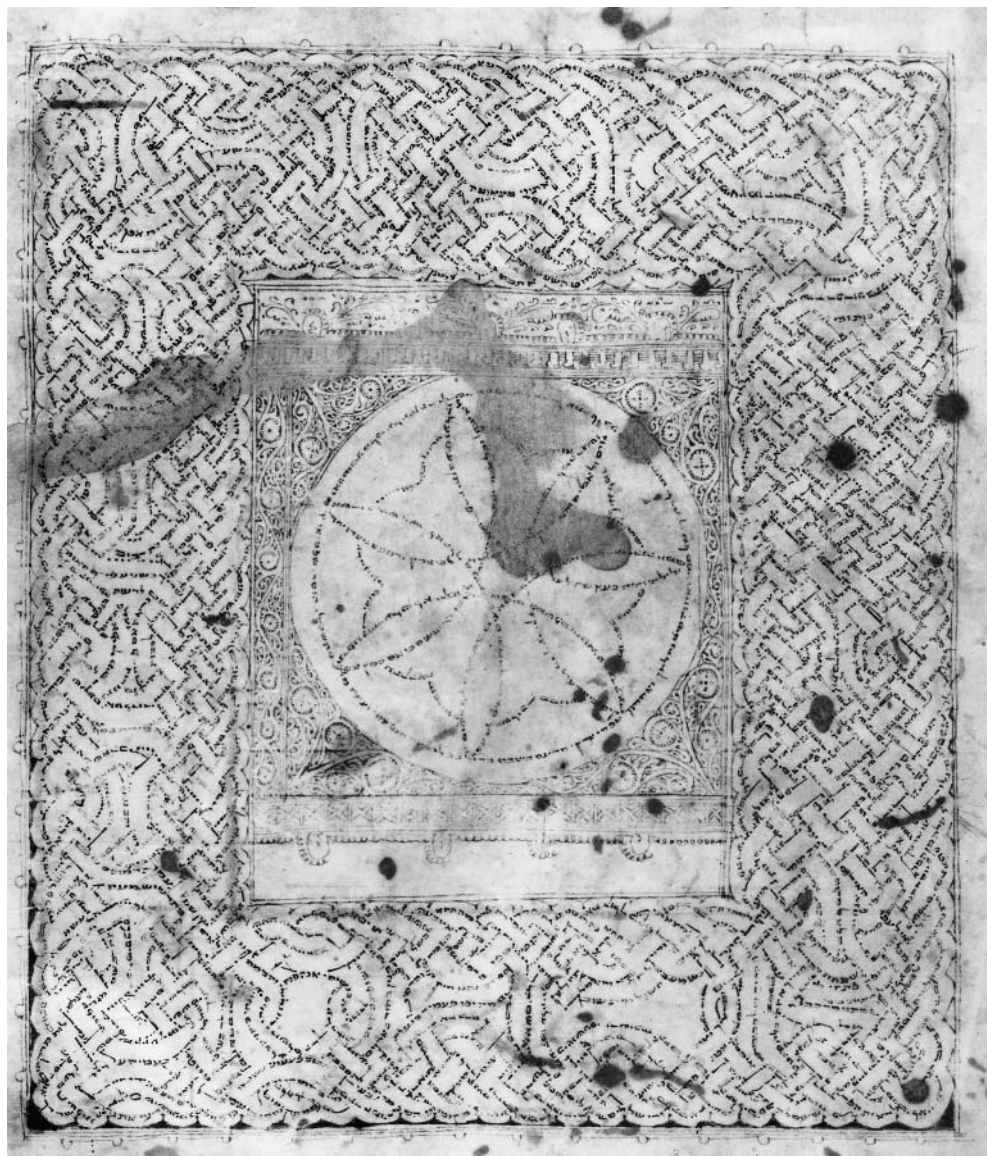
127. London, British Library, MS Or. 2884, Catalonia, c. 1325, fol. 9v (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



128. London, British Library, MS Or. 2626-28, Lisbon, 1482, fol. 185r (photograph: with permission of the British Library)



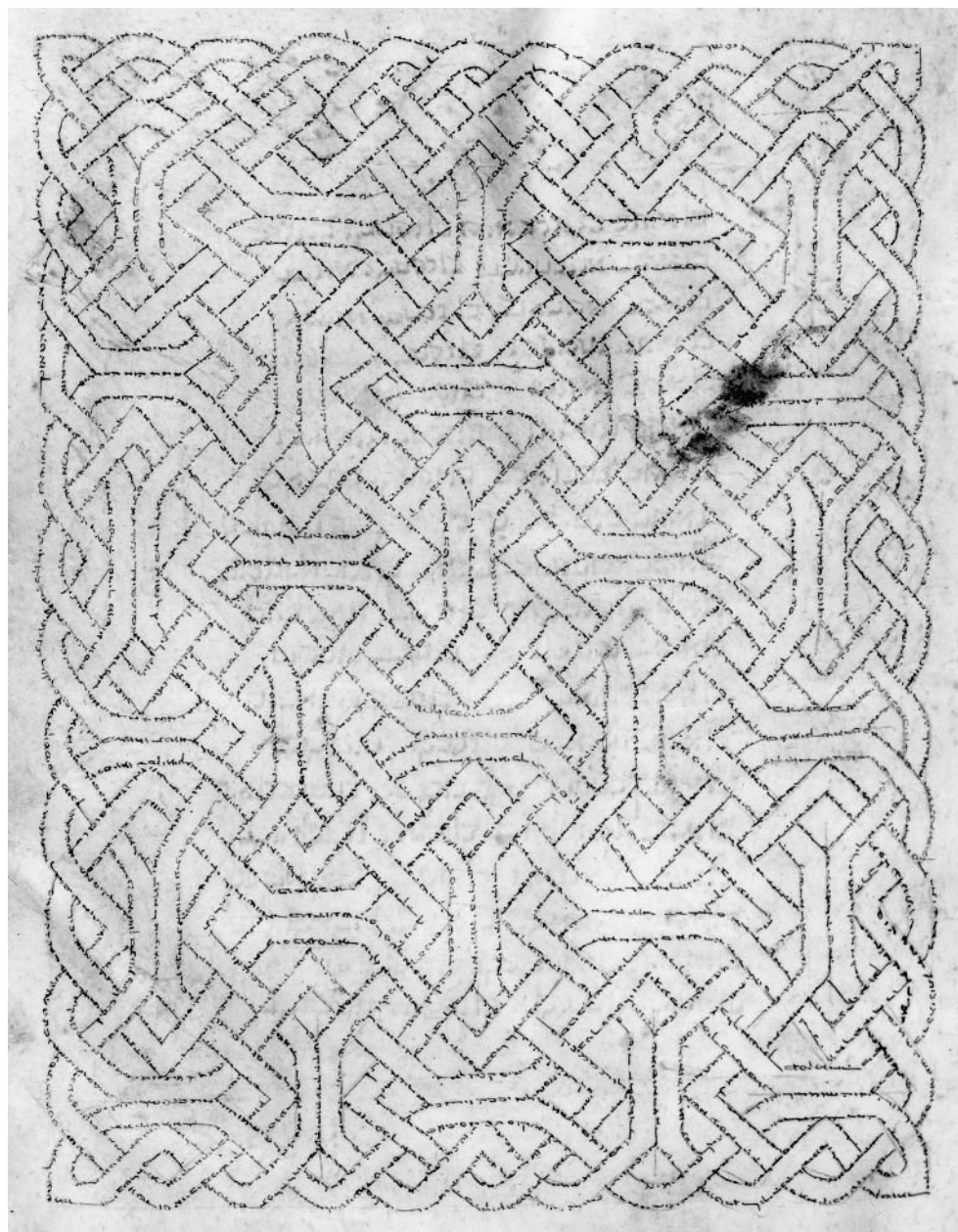
129. Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS 13, Toledo (?), 1478, fol. 51v (photograph: with permission of the board of Trinity College Library, Dublin)



130. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Poc. 347, Castile, 1470-90 (?), fol. 2r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

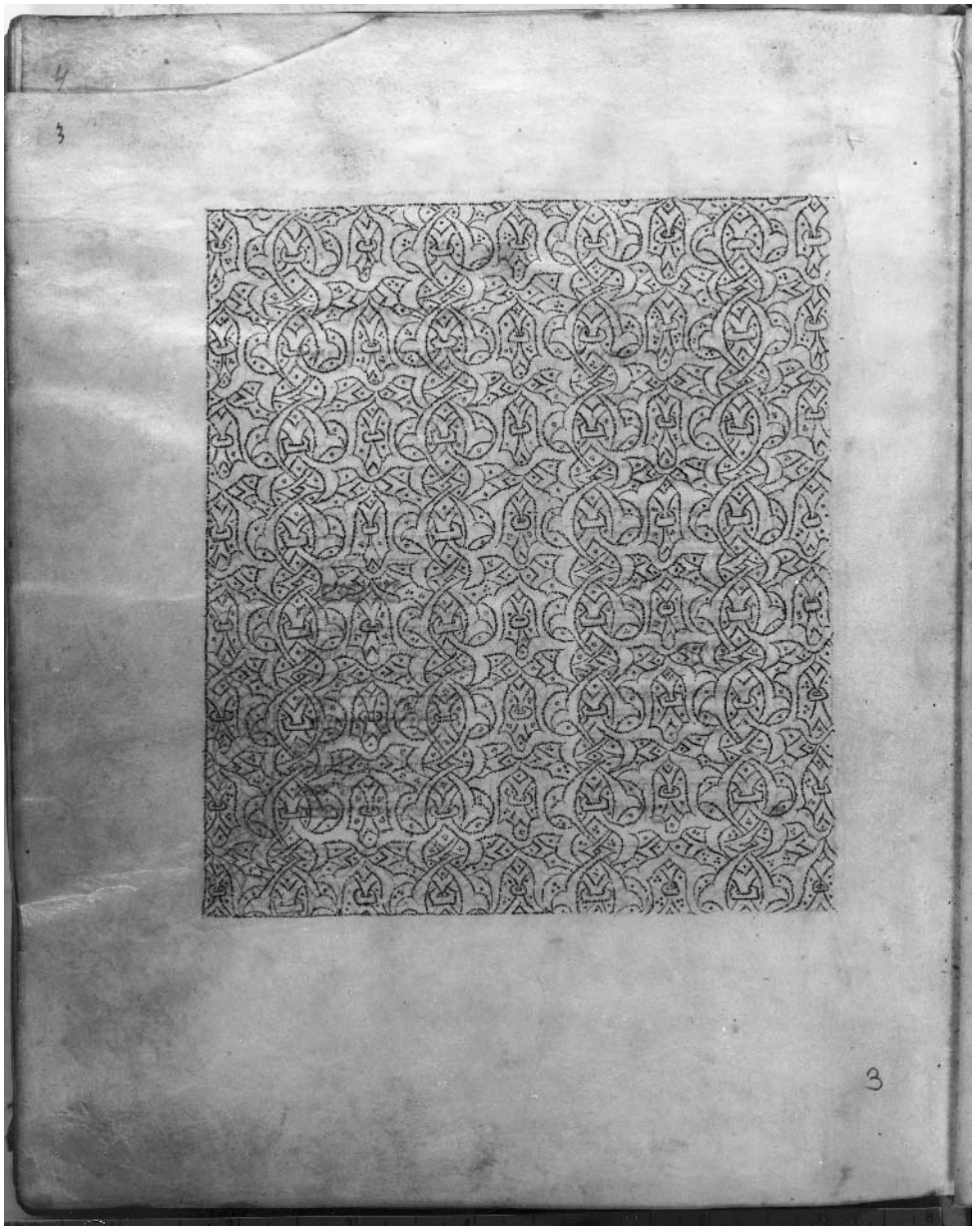
יגדו כאישי עשו	סבבנו יבגרו
פר שבפי ויקחהו שאר על אנתו	כשר יעדקנו על חליו זיהף
ואין עמו אל גבר	יהוה מרד יתנו
ויאכל תנובת שר	דיכבה על גמולו ארץ
ושמן חלמיש יצוד	ויקרו ודבש סלע
עסח לבגדו ואלים	המאת בקר והלב יאן
עסח לבגדיו והטוה	בגדיו ויעזרים
וישקו וישקו כעט	ודם עבה שהחמר
ויטש אלה ישחו	שמתה עבת בשית
יקנאהו בודים	ויגבר יעור ישן ערו
יזכרו לשרים לא אלה	כרע עבת וכעסו
הרשם מקרב באו	אלהים לא ידעום
יעור ילך רשו	לא ישועם אסרם
ויקראהו ונאיץ	והשם אל מולך
ויאמר אסתור פני מחס	מכעסנו וכערו
כי דוד והתנבך והמה	אראך כה אחרים
התקנאו על אל	בניס לא אמרם
ואניאקנאם אעם	מכסו נהבדים
ביאשקרהו כאפי	מויגב אביעם
והאמר אין ובלה	והקד עד שאול חרקה
אספה על כבוד עור	והנהט מוסר חרים

131. New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, MS L 5, Cordoba, 1479, fol. 85r (photograph: with permission of the Jewish Theological Seminary)



132. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Opp. Add. 4<sup>o</sup>26, Castile, 1480, fol. 238v  
(photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)





133. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2809, Castile, 1473, fol. 3r (photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)



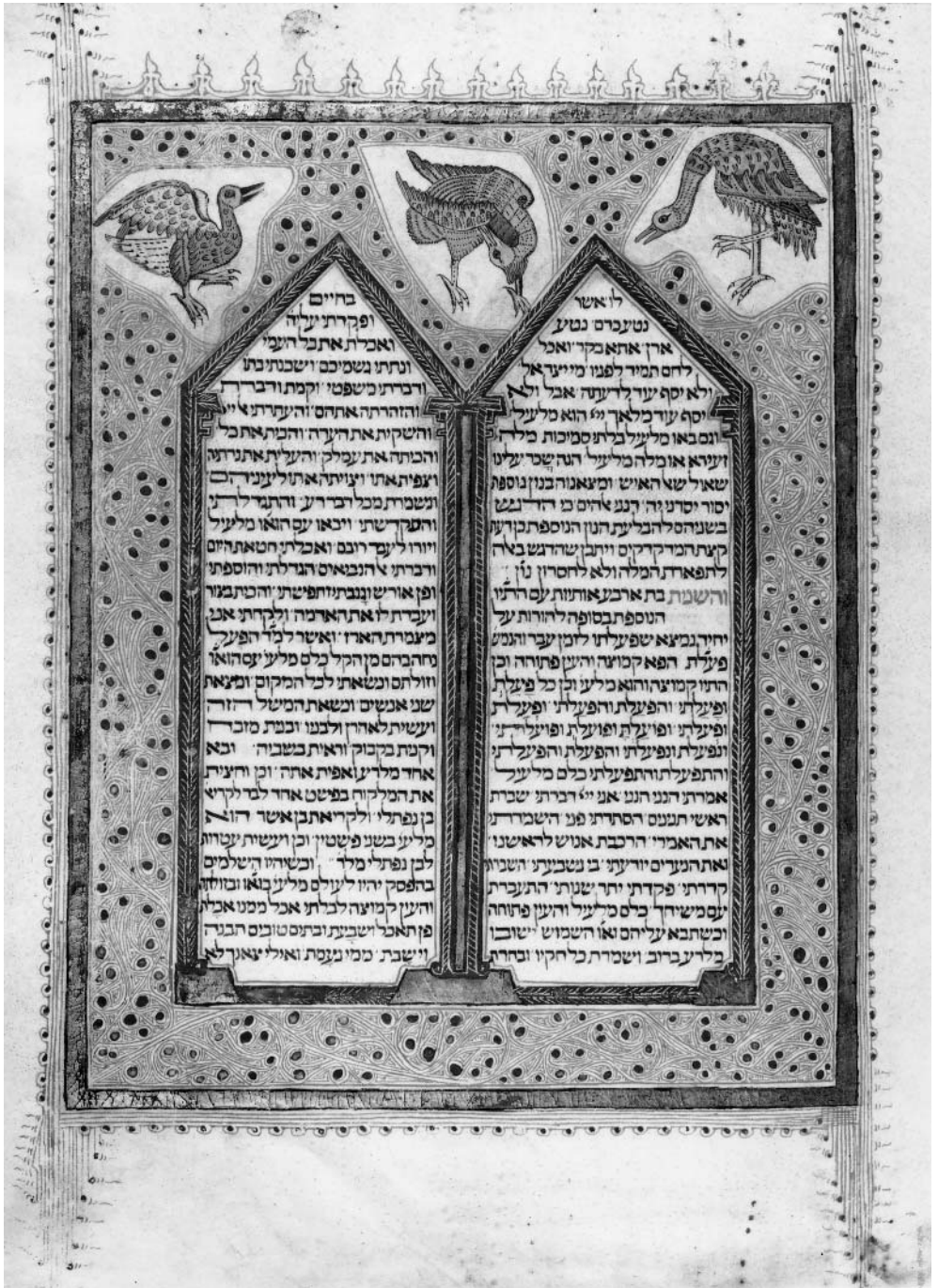
134. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1, La Coruña, 1476, fol. 6r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



135. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1, La Coruña, 1476, fol. 121r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)



136. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1, La Coruña, 1476, fol. 441r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

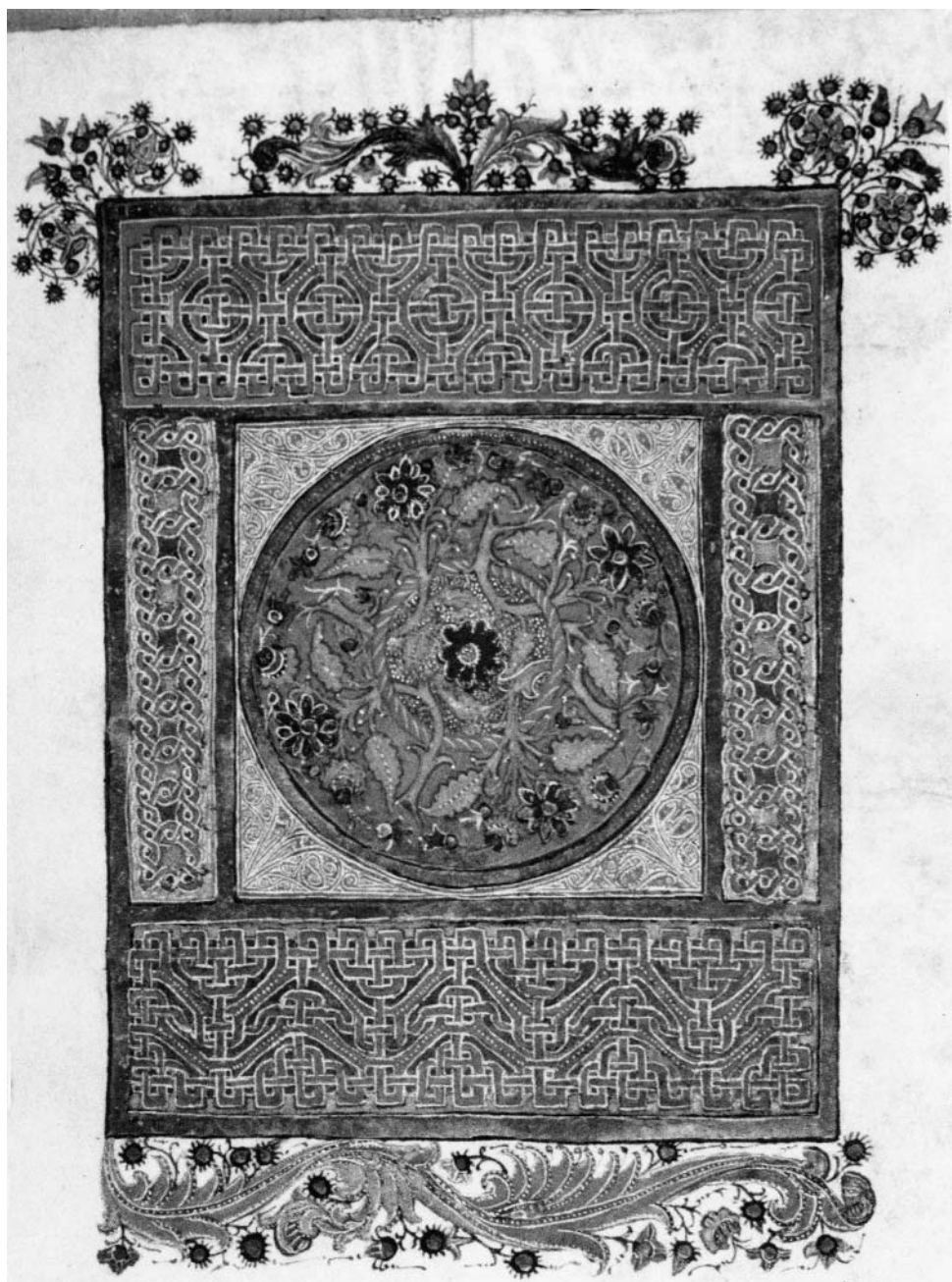


137. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1, La Coruña, 1476, fol. 3r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

יי דלל אה טעם יי דה טעם  
 יי מנודד מעתה ועד עולם  
 ממנה שמיט ועד מיום  
 מהלל טעם יי דם על כל אדם  
 יי על השמים כבודי מיי ה  
 יי אהני המנוביו לטובת  
 דמטפולי לראת בטקנים  
 יי מצודן מקומי מעמד דל  
 יי ממשלה דים אהני ל  
 דהשמי עם עינים עם  
 עני עני מוטי עקת  
 עני אה תגם שמודן  
 תגה יי



138. Jerusalem, Schocken Library, MS 24087, Franconia (?), 1460-65 (?), fol. 23v (photograph: after Narkiss (1976))



139. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1, La Coruña, 1476, fol. 438r (photograph: with permission of the Bodleian Library)

אעשה בך יעקב וזכרה הסופר סופר לט  
 כתבתו ונקדתי וספרתי והנחת אל  
 ארבעה ויגשם ספרים בקובץ אחר וסימתו  
 אותנו ביום רביעי אבימים לחדש אב ישנת  
 והבואותם אלך קרישו לפרט האלוהשי  
 כבאן במתא לה קרונא והחזקת אותן בלך  
 קונרסק וסימן להם לוא הקשבת למיעותו  
 והיו עהר שלומך לכהוד הנקבר יעקב בן  
 כבוד הקר דון שלמה הר בר אנה נעשה ית  
 ויכהו להותבו הוא וכו' ודיע ודיע יען יען  
 סוף כל הודות ככתוב לא ימיר ספר התורה  
 הזה מפך והנותבו ייכסו לילה למיע תשמר  
 ליגשות ככל דכותבו וזו ועינהו ליגשות  
 ספרים הרבה כילקים וותר מדבה בע הוד  
 יעשות ספרים הרבה איקין אמין ויעשה יי



140. Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 1994-95, Spain, 15th c., fol. 224r  
(photograph: with permission of the Biblioteca Palatina)

consider the possibility that it comes either from northern Castile or from Navarre. Painted portions signs are also found in the Damascus *Keter* for the *seder* marks (fig. 28). In this case, the markings belong, as I argued above, to the later phase of decoration, executed in Burgos toward the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>44</sup>

Paris 21 is notable for the particularly sumptuous design of the arches that decorate the text columns at the beginning of the book (figs. 64 and 65) and others—some of them incomplete (col. pl. II)—at the end. The execution is refined and rich and may constitute a yet more mature style than that of the other manuscripts in the group. Paris 21, as we now know, was indeed produced in 1301–1302 and is thus the last in the group—assuming that the dating of 1306 for the Second Kennicott Bible is incorrect.

Another type of decoration used frequently by Joshua was pen ornamentation. The text of the colophon on the reverse side of the Temple plan (fig. 54) in the Second Kennicott Bible is decorated with frames that include a spared ground interlace pattern. The frames were drawn with a pen in brown and colored ink. Filigree patterns are integrated with the decoration of the arches surrounding the columns in the Second Kennicott Bible. Both the interlace and filigree patterns appear in Oxford 75/76 (fig. 67) as well,<sup>45</sup> and their forms, design, and manner of execution are nearly identical to those in the Second Kennicott Bible. Joshua's hand can also be traced in the penwork in both Paris manuscripts (fig. 68), where the filigree designs share the same forms as those in the manuscripts in Oxford. A few of the *parashah* signs in Paris 20 are decorated with pen drawings and they also include stylized human faces.<sup>46</sup> Similar faces are included in the penwork in the corners outside the circles at the beginning of Paris 21.<sup>47</sup>

Several different techniques of coloring can be discerned in the four manuscripts. The first is uniformly coloring surfaces in various hues with no gradation, often with the addition of gold (col. pls. I, II). This technique often appears adjacent to penwork, usually in carpet pages, *parashah* signs, and—in Paris 20—decoration of arches. Another technique for the same types of decoration appears in Paris

<sup>44</sup> See above, chap. 3, 66–68.

<sup>45</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 44.

<sup>46</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971), fig. 14.

<sup>47</sup> Narkiss (1984), fig. 21.



21: delicate penwork in either black or white appears upon the layer of color (col. pl. I). The fact that this type of work is similar in character to the penwork in Paris 20, the Second Kennicott Bible, and Oxford 75/76 (figs. 67 and 68), and that this type of decoration blends well with the letters in Joshua's colophon in the frame of the carpet page, enables us to assume that this coloring was done by Joshua himself.

It cannot be decided with any certainty whether the difference in technique between the two Paris Bibles is due to an improvement of the original technique applied in Paris 20 or to the involvement of a different hand. In light of the general similarity and Joshua's allusions as to the decoration, it is reasonable to assume that the work in both books is his and that it reflects technical development. Toward the end of Paris 21, there are several pages whose coloring is incomplete (col. pl. II). The gold was already applied, as was the red and blue paint and the delicate lines above the layer of paint. Parts of the decoration of the arches have remained white and pen underdrawings can be seen in them. The coloring on some of the pages in Paris 21, however, reflect a substantial decline in the quality of the coloring—even though it imitates the above-mentioned technique (col. pl. III)—and it is likely that these pages were colored by a different, unskilled hand.

In the paintings of the animals in Paris 20, another technique can be discerned, involving color gradation. White highlights are added in an attempt to achieve a three-dimensional effect (col. pl. IV). This method imitates the coloring technique that was common in Gothic illuminated manuscripts of the time, but the hand that executed this work was not trained in this technique and the coloring is rather crude. It can probably be interpreted as an attempt made by Joshua to achieve an effect of plasticity although his strength was mainly in ornamentation, flat coloring, and graphic design and decoration. Another possibility is that this coloring was done by another, untrained colorist.

The above observations and conclusions reveal Joshua ibn Gaon as a person who was involved in several fields in the local book industry and had expertise in various types of work. The interpretation of the available information, together with an analysis of the artistic characteristics of the manuscripts, enables us to reconstruct his professional development. He was a scribe and his relatively soft,

broad-lettered handwriting appears in all of the books of the group apart from the Cervera Bible and Parma 2938. He also produced decorative micrography, used similar patterns and motifs in underdrawings, intended to be painted, and applied various types of penwork. He also may have colored many of the decorations he drew.

Several times, Joshua mentions that he is from Soria in Old Castile, but in 1300 at the latest, he was living in Tudela. From the colophon of the Temple plan that is bound together with the Second Kennicott Bible, it emerges that in 1306 he was again in Soria. In the colophon he calls himself "small and young" and mentions the name of his teacher indicating that he is still an apprentice. There is no way of knowing if in this period he was living in Tudela or Soria, though the fact that he emphasizes that he is *from* Soria may indicate that when he was writing the colophon he was living somewhere else. The development in the character of the micrography from geometric and vegetal patterns in a somewhat stiff style in the two manuscripts in Oxford, to a softer and more refined execution, with the repertoire of forms enriched by depictions of animals, dragons, and the candelabrum-shaped tree in the Cervera Bible and Paris 20, suggests that the books in Oxford were produced before those in Paris, which are dated between 1300 and 1302.

The Second Kennicott Bible indeed contains relatively simple micrographic patterns, but Joshua included in the design of the book a selection of painted decorations that he would later use in the decoration of the micrographic *masorah* of other books: drawings of animals and dragons, decorations of the columns at the beginning of the book and in other parts of it, and carpet pages. He used the first coloring technique discussed above, which makes no attempt to produce a three-dimensional effect. This manuscript also contains a great deal of penwork, mainly spared ground interlace patterns and flourishing. If we compare these filigree decorations in both Oxford Bibles (fig. 67) with those in the Cervera Bible (fig. 69), executed either by Samuel the scribe or Joseph the illuminator, we observe a very great similarity. This is true also for the flourishings in Paris 20 (fig. 68). If we carry this comparison further, we find that the painted decoration of the Cervera Bible, although executed by a more skilled artist, is similar in many respects in artistic language, techniques and repertoire of forms. This is particularly true in regard to the animals, dragons, and grotesques (fig. 79). Joshua's participation

in the Cervera project and his later attempt to apply the painting technique used by Joseph and to achieve a three-dimensional effect indicates an even closer affinity between the two men.

It would seem that Joshua was familiar with and influenced by the work of Joseph Hatsarfati, and perhaps it was in the course of his acquaintance with Joseph that he began to decorate his books with paintings, a practice that first appears in the Second Kennicott Bible. Since Oxford 75/76 is not complete, we do not know if the beginning of the book contained painted decorations of the same type. In the character of the micrography and penwork, the design of Oxford 75/76 is similar to that of the Second Kennicott Bible, but since the parts that survived have no painted decoration, the manuscript may even predate the Kennicott Bible.

In 1300, Joshua lived in Tudela, and in the summer of that year he worked on the micrographic decoration of the Cervera Bible. He now enriched the micrographic patterns with a repertoire of animal and dragon patterns, a repertoire that he had already used in drawings and paintings in the Second Kennicott Bible. By then he may have already made a name for himself for his unique micrographic work, and for this reason was entrusted with the writing and decoration of the *masorah* of the Cervera Bible. In the fall of 1300 he worked on Paris 20, in which he combined all of the types of work in which he had acquired expertise. At around that time, he probably also wrote Dublin 16—including the decorated *masorah*. Since Dublin 16 has not survived intact, we do not have any information about the design of the first pages—carpet pages, decoration of tables, and the like. The painted decoration in the parts that have remained is different in character from that of Paris 20, Paris 21, and the Second Kennicott Bible, and there is no doubt that at least some of this decoration was executed by a different person; I will discuss this decoration later on.

Paris 20 was followed by Paris 21, whose script is again identifiable as that of Ibn Gaon. The text layout of three columns, instead of two as in the other books, might indicate different codicological practices, a different staff in the workshop that prepared the parchment for writing, or specific preferences on the part of the patron. It should be noted in this connection that the codicological practices in the group as a whole are not particularly uniform. The books are similar in dimensions—their height ranges from 28 to 30 centimeters and their width from 22 to 23 centimeters—but the organization

and size of the quires varies from book to book. Therefore it is difficult to draw conclusions on the basis of the codicological features. The absence of any micrographic decoration in Paris 21 is even more surprising, since Joshua specialized in this type of work. However, since he signed as the masoretor, there can be no doubt of his involvement. This case, too, may have been a matter of the patron's personal preference; the fact that the *masorah* can be read easily compared to the other ones, which are ornate and difficult to decipher, may also have something to do with the patron's taste and preferences. But the book has a rich array of painted decoration and other patterns, which appear in micrography in the rest of the manuscripts. The use of a more sophisticated coloring technique and a refined style stems from the fact that Paris 21 is the latest of all of the books in the group and its painting is more mature than that of the others.

We do not know where Joseph Hatsarfati and Joshua ibn Gaon met. In none of the books does Joshua explicitly mention Soria as his place of work. All that is known is that he was born there and that in 1306 he sold the Temple plan there. All of the geographical references that appear in his other works indicate that his activity centered in Tudela. Apart from two decorated Bibles—one of them written in 1312 in Soria by Joshua's brother, Shem Tov ibn Gaon (Bermuda, Floersheim Trust),<sup>48</sup> and painted in a style similar to that of the Cervera Bible (figs. 76 and 82)—we have no information about Jewish art in that city. On the basis of the similarity between the Shem Tov Bible and the Cervera Bible, Thérèse Metzger assumes that Joseph Hatsarfati also painted the Shem Tov Bible and worked in Soria.<sup>49</sup> However, the fact that Joseph documented his name with such great pride in the Cervera Bible, makes it unlikely that he would not credit himself in another book. In general, the Shem Tov Bible and the books attributed to Joseph and Joshua are similar in style and choice of motifs. This, however, does not mean that Joseph decorated the Shem Tov Bible. In fact, we cannot even be certain that the Shem Tov Bible was illuminated in Soria, and we should not rule out the possibility that it was decorated in another city. In short, we do not have enough information to establish with

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<sup>48</sup> Formerly in the Sassoon Collection, MS 82; see Sed-Rajna, *Manuscripts* (1992), 139, fig. 49; Nechama and Sievernich (1991), 262, no. 12/6. For the second manuscript from Soria, see below, 127.

<sup>49</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), 9.

certainty where the Shem Tov and Cervera Bibles were decorated. The information that is known about Joshua's professional life supports the view that his work was mainly in Tudela and it was here that he was influenced by the works of others and developed his skills. It is thus also likely that the two men met in Tudela.

A closer look at the decorative motifs in the work of Joshua ibn Gaon and Joseph Hatsarfati can help to define their cultural environments and roots. Whereas in the manuscripts from Toledo that were discussed in the previous chapter the design is almost exclusively borrowed from Islamic culture, in Joshua's work the Islamic artistic tradition, although still dominant, is integrated with the western artistic tradition in a unique blend. In Joseph's work, the Islamic cultural heritage is much less dominant, and there is a balance between the styles, with the scales tipping in favor of the Gothic style.

First and foremost, it can be observed that Joshua's work contains hardly any trace of the Castilian tradition of decoration. The mere fact that he uses carpet pages and other Islamic formal elements does not make this art a descendant of the Castilian tradition. The same applies to the fact that in one detail there is a similarity between Joshua's plan of the Temple and that of Ibn Merwas. Joshua's specific designs of the carpet pages do not have earlier parallels in Castile. Moreover, despite his expertise in micrography, he did not often design micrographic carpet pages, which were very common in many of the manuscripts from Toledo, such as those attributed to Ibn Merwas (figs. 37 and 38).

Micrographic carpet pages appear only in the two Paris manuscripts. Comprising centered patterns, they are in no way similar in composition to parallels from Castile. They lack the great density of the continuous patterns that characterize the examples from Toledo, and instead are airy and tend to leave empty areas on the page (fig. 70). In Paris 21, the painted carpet pages (col. pl. I) are completely different from those that are known from Toledo, such as those of the Marseilles Bible and the Damascus Keter (figs. 23, 26, and 27). A trace of the medallion pattern exists only on a panel in the Second Kennicott Bible (fig. 62). The other carpet pages feature continuous or centered interlace patterns.

The incorporating of depictions of animals and dragons in the decoration of the *masorah magna* is not known in the earlier Castilian manuscripts. The candelabrum-like tree appears very rarely and there

is no certainty that it is of Castilian origin. The arches that decorate the tables and columns at the beginning of the books are rare in the manuscripts from Castile, and the calligraphic frames that appear regularly in the Castilian manuscripts take on a new form in Joshua's hands: they are painted in color or gold instead of drawn in black ink, and the lines of large letters are not accompanied by micrographic lines (fig. 64). The calligraphic frames from Toledo (fig. 37) were an integral part of the work of writing, and those of Joshua became part of the painted decoration. In short, in most of his decorative schemes and in his style, Joshua did not continue the tradition that was common in Toledo, but instead chose patterns from other sources and turned them into something new and unique.

The interlace motif, which until then was rare in carpet pages in Hebrew manuscripts from Spain, is known from Islamic manuscripts (for example, fig. 1 and 3), but in those manuscripts the pattern is usually centered, whereas it is mostly continuous in Joshua ibn Gaon's works. Joshua's pattern develops as recurring units, which usually emerge from a star pattern in the center of the composition. As we have noted, continuous patterns of this kind, which create an illusion of infinite continuity, are known from Islamic architectural sculpture and woodwork on mosque furniture. They are especially common in the design of *minbars* throughout the Islamic world, and there are many examples from the Maghreb and Spain.<sup>50</sup> This pattern is also common in painted ceilings in Mudéjar architecture.<sup>51</sup>

Arches for the decoration of text columns and tables are rare in Castilian Hebrew manuscripts, and we found them only in Oxford 94 (fig. 45). The use of arches to decorate columns is borrowed from canon tables which were common in Christian art since the early Middle Ages and flourished in Spain from the tenth century on (fig. 16). Joshua borrowed the basic idea and enriched the design of the arches and the spaces above them with numerous motifs. In the design of the arches, he combined Gothic, traditional Spanish, and Islamic architectural forms. We find in his works pointed or triangular arches that are common in Gothic architecture, reflecting the art of the environment in which he lived. The Second Kennicott

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<sup>50</sup> Dodds, *Al-Andalus* (1992), no. 115.

<sup>51</sup> The numerous examples include the ceiling of the Santa Clara Monastery in Tordesillas, or the ceiling in the cathedral in Teruel; see Borrás Gualis (1990), 57.

Bible and Oxford 75/76 (fig. 67) feature arches that are mainly of this type. Alongside them we see horseshoe arches (figs. 63 and 68), one of the most characteristic features of the architecture in Spain and the Maghreb. In particular in early medieval architecture, the horseshoe arch played a dominant role (fig. 16). In Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East, we saw arches of this kind only in one example of uncertain provenance, Gottheil 18.<sup>52</sup> Joshua's horseshoe arches are stylized and do not resemble real architectural design. Therefore, it is difficult to determine if they were borrowed from Islamic architecture or from early medieval Christian art. Their design conforms to a certain extent with the decorative tradition in Mozarabic and other early medieval Christian manuscripts, such as the *Biblia Hispalense* or the Bibles found in León (fig. 16), though most of the decorative patterns of the columns and in the spandrels draw from an Islamic repertoire of forms.

Paris 21, features a greater variety of arches, which were undoubtedly adopted from Islamic architecture. Some are polylobed (fig. 64, col. pl. II), others intersecting (fig. 65)—both types widely common in Islamic architecture in general and in Mudéjar architecture in particular. They can be found throughout Spain. The spandrels are decorated with a stylized vegetal pattern in gold and blue that does not recur in any of Ibn Gaon's other works. This pattern has many parallels in Islamic architectural decoration—for example in the Aljaferia in Saragossa.<sup>53</sup> It was especially common in Mudéjar decoration—for example in the palace of Alfonso XI in Tordesillas, later to become the Monastery of Santa Clara (fig. 18). Similar patterns appear in stucco ceilings in the convent of Las Huelgas in Burgos. In addition, such patterns are extremely popular in the decoration of Islamic manuscripts (fig. 2) from Iberia. Echoes of this pattern can also be found in Joshua's micrographic designs.<sup>54</sup> The Islamic heritage is also evident in the widespread use of interlace patterns, which appear on painted carpet pages, in penwork, and in micrography.

Depictions of animals and dragons appear both in the painted decoration and in micrography. These depictions are common to the Second Kennicott Bible, the two manuscripts in Paris, Dublin 16, and the *masorah* of the Cervera Bible. They are, however, absent

<sup>52</sup> See above, chap. 2, 49.

<sup>53</sup> Robinson (1992), 58–59, figs. 8, 9, and 10.

<sup>54</sup> Metzger, *Ibn Gaon* (1990), fig. 1.

from Oxford 75/76. As noted, the enrichment of Joshua's repertoire of forms results most likely from his acquaintance with Joseph Hatsarfati. Animals of all sorts, grotesques, and dragons are well known from Romanesque and Gothic art, and similar figures are commonly found throughout Europe in architectural decoration and in the margins of manuscripts. Figures very similar to those in Joshua's Bibles can be found, for example, in a manuscript from Navarre from the second half of the fourteenth century, which is kept in the General Archive of Navarre.<sup>55</sup>

Another source of inspiration is the Romanesque architectural sculpture on the portals of churches in Soria and Tudela, which belonged to the urban landscape in which Joshua spent his daily life and with which he was certainly well acquainted. The depiction of animals and dragons in this specific fashion was especially common in and around these two cities and such images appear on facades of churches and on column capitals. The dragons in the micro-graphic decoration (figs. 47, 48, 51, 60, 61, 62, and 63) can, for example, be compared with the sculpted dragons at the gate of the Church of Santa Magdalena in Tudela (fig. 71). Animals similar to those in Joshua's Bibles (figs. 59 and 60) can be found, for example, on the gate of the Church of Santo Domingo in Soria, his hometown. The lion and the bird in particular provide a basis for comparison (fig. 72).

In spite of the striking resemblance to examples from Romanesque art, it should be noted that depictions of similar animals are also common in various Islamic ornamental objects, such as ivory boxes, tiles, and textiles.<sup>56</sup> Such motifs were especially common in Islamic Spain. A particularly popular one was that of birds with outstretched wings.<sup>57</sup> It is interesting to note in this context that like the illuminators of thirteenth-century Toledo, Joshua has a clear preference for sources drawn from architecture rather than book art.

Joshua thus combines in his work the three artistic traditions that characterize the culture of medieval Spain. Patterns borrowed from Islamic culture are still dominant, but they are accompanied by

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<sup>55</sup> Martínez de Aguirre (1987), fig. 137.

<sup>56</sup> For an especially strong resemblance, see a box from the 12th or 13th century in the treasury of the cathedral in Tortosa, Dodds, *Al-Andalus* (1992), no. 15; with regard to ceramic work, see, for example, *ibid.*, nos. 28, 29, 30, and 32; for textiles, see, for example, *ibid.*, no. 91.

<sup>57</sup> See in this regard Baer (1998), 112–13, figs. 127–29.



designs borrowed from Romanesque and Gothic art in his nearby environment. Also playing a role in his work is the early medieval Spanish Christian tradition, which is in evidence, for example, in the shape of the horseshoe arches, or in Paris 20—in one of the marginal illustrations depicting Noah's Ark (fig. 73). The illustration is very similar to larger depictions of Noah's Ark in manuscripts of Beatus' commentary on the Apocalypse (fig. 74).<sup>58</sup> In short, unlike his Toledan predecessors, Joshua not only pays tribute to the Islamic heritage of Sephardic Jewry, but also integrates various facets of Christian Spanish visual culture.

As noted, Joshua was involved in the production of Dublin 16, which contains the Books of the Prophets and the Hagiograph. This book is written in a script similar to that in the Oxford and Paris manuscripts, and the micrographic patterns (fig. 51) in it are of the same type as those in Paris 20 and the Cervera Bible. However, the painted decoration in Dublin 16 differs widely from the other manuscripts in the group. In the Dublin Bible, the verse counts at the end of each biblical book are decorated with gilded frames. Ornamentation of verse counts is also found in some of the Castilian Bibles, where it often comprises decorative micrography in various geometric shapes.<sup>59</sup> In the additions to the Damascus *Keter*, applied together with the *seder* markings, the original micrographic verse counts were given painted embellishments (fig. 29). In Joshua's other books, the verse counts are ornamented with simple pen decorations. The elegant design of the gold frames in Dublin 16 is enriched in some of the frames with acanthus or interlace patterns, reminiscent of motifs found in Islamic art.<sup>60</sup> They recall the decorations borrowed from Mudéjar art in the spandrels of the arches in Paris 21. It is therefore conceivable that these frames and medallions were designed, at least in their preliminary planning and in the under-drawings, by Joshua himself, even though the patterns in Dublin 16 do not fully correspond with their counterparts in Paris 21.

<sup>58</sup> This fact has already been pointed out by Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971), 268.

<sup>59</sup> Sed-Rajna links this type of decoration with earlier Christian examples from Spain, supposedly based on Carolingian manuscripts made for Theodulf of Orléans around 800; she suggests that the latter are based on a hypothetical earlier Jewish tradition; Sed-Rajna (1978), 13–14. For a recent discussion of the Theodulf Bibles with references to earlier research, see Nees (1999), 125–31.

<sup>60</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), figs. 34 and 35.

In any event, the coloring was done by another illuminator, who added vegetal patterns, animals, and dragons of various kinds (col. pl. V and fig. 52). In its design and style, this decoration differs widely from that of the other manuscripts that are attributed to Joshua. Differences can be observed in the details of the animals' eyes, and the shape of their heads, the types of animals, and the proportions of their body parts. The character of the foliate designs is very different from that of the medallions and the lack of integration between the two types is sometimes grating. However, since the manner of coloring the frames, medallions, and scrolls is similar and the colors are identical, it can be assumed that the two types of decoration were colored in one process—as can be seen on fol. 68v, where the paint of the frame and that of the animals' feet meet (col. pl. V).

These scrolls have two functions: one is to mark the psalm numbers, with the scrolls meeting each other and creating a continuous pattern on the margins, and the other is to mark the beginning of the biblical books. In cases in which the book begins in the middle of a column, the frame for the verse count at the end of the previous book links up with the scroll decoration at the beginning of the next book. Only in these cases the two types of decoration meet, and, as mentioned, they lack integration. The fact that in certain cases, these scrolls are crammed somewhat awkwardly between text and frame at the end of the book strengthens the assumption that the decoration was divided between Joshua and another illuminator. The character of the frames and the medallions is borrowed from Islamic art; in the scrolls, the illuminator is faithful to Gothic style. There is no integration in the design of the patterns, but only in the coloring process.

The second manuscript in which Joshua was only partially involved is, as stated, the Cervera Bible. The painted decoration by Joseph Hatsarfati is extremely rich and intricate,<sup>61</sup> and its style is more refined than Joshua's. There are many common denominators, but

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<sup>61</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover compare the paintings in the Cervera Bible with those in Dublin 16, but the common basis for making this comparison is not especially broad. The Cervera Bible does not have scrolls of the type that we saw in Dublin 16, and the design of the animals and dragons in Joseph's colophon does not have a great deal in common with those that appear among the scrolls in Dublin 16. The design of the faces is different, as are the proportions between the body parts; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 32–33.

Joseph was undoubtedly a more skilled illuminator than Joshua. The book's decoration includes many figurative motifs, some with genuine narrative content. They depict Jonah cast into the sea (fig. 75), Joshua in his old age,<sup>62</sup> and Abimelech.<sup>63</sup> These motifs are revolutionary in the context of Sephardic Bible decoration, but they have no continuation.<sup>64</sup> Their significance for the history of the illuminated Sephardic Bible is thus limited. The types of decoration in the Cervera Bible are varied and they are different in several ways from the books that were illuminated in other schools. As opposed to the books that were written by Joshua, the Cervera Bible has *seder* markings. These are decorated—like the *parashah* signs—with ornamented frames, but only at the beginning of the book do we find the letter *samekh* within the frame; later on, it is absent in nearly all cases (fig. 77). The *parashot* are marked throughout the book. The decoration of the *parashah* signs is painted, and that of the *seder* markings is done in pen only.

The Cervera Bible has several features that are very similar to the decorations created by Joshua. The design of the bodies and faces of the animals in the painted colophon of the Cervera Bible somewhat reflects the artistic language that was used by Joshua and was known in the artistic environment of Navarre in general and Tudela in particular. Moreover, the use of zoomorphic letters is also known from Joshua's works—such letters appear in Paris 20 (fig. 78).<sup>65</sup> The interlace patterns so abundantly used by Joshua were also a favorite of Joseph's (fig. 69) and appear frequently in the Cervera Bible—though they are more refined and more elongated than in Joshua's books. A particular resemblance can be observed in the filigree penwork. The design, the patterns, and the style—mainly the density—are so similar that it is difficult to distinguish between the two hands (figs. 68 and 69).

The shapes of the arches that decorate the tables are also similar—the Cervera Bible contains pointed Gothic and horseshoe arches as in Joshua's books—but the arches with the prominently Islamic design that appear in Paris 21 are missing. The spandrels in the

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<sup>62</sup> Fol. 126r, Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985), fig. 36.

<sup>63</sup> Fol. 138v.

<sup>64</sup> Apart from one exemplar from 1476, based directly on the Cervera Bible—see below, chap. 7.

<sup>65</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1971), fig. 13.

Cervera Bible are filled with various motifs, most of which are borrowed from Gothic decoration, and include foliate designs, other vegetal patterns, animals, and grotesques (fig. 79). The painting technique is quite different from Joshua's, in that Joseph applies color gradation with a great deal of confidence and skill.

The Cervera Bible also features a depiction of the menorah, between two olive trees.<sup>66</sup> The iconography of this page is unique and has no parallels. Its connection to the iconography of the Temple depictions in other Sephardic Bibles, such as the Parma Bible and the later Catalan Bibles, is extremely tenuous. Its imagery is specifically based on the vision described in the Book of Zechariah (Chapter 3),<sup>67</sup> and so the page appears at the end of Prophets, instead of the beginning of the manuscript. Therefore it does not represent the idea of the Bible as a minor Temple. The decoration of the background of the menorah—the area between the branches, but particularly the diapered pattern in the area between the menorah and the trees—is in a distinct Gothic style.

A striking deviation from both earlier Castilian Bibles and those of Joshua ibn Gaon can be found in Joseph's treatment of the carpet pages (fig. 80). The book includes two carpet pages, containing a large, centered interlace pattern. However, only the first stage of the decoration of the two pages was completed—that is, they were drawn in ink, but not painted, even though the rest of the painting and coloring in the manuscript was completed. These pages are in the first section, not at the end of the book. David Kimhi's grammatical treatise *Sefer Mikhlol* is added to the end of the volume; sections of it are framed with rich ornamentation. The frames (fig. 81), like the carpet pages at the beginning of the book, echo the interlace patterns commonly found in late medieval carpet pages. But the areas between the interlace patterns as well as the corners of the pages, contain a wide variety of animal depictions and other motifs, including human figures.

These two features—the unfinished carpet pages, on the one hand, and the frames with human figures, on the other—mark an interesting transformation of the carpet page. The richly developed motifs

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<sup>66</sup> Narkiss (1984), pl. 6.

<sup>67</sup> For a description and detailed analysis, see Narkiss (1984), 79; Revel-Neher (1998), 93–95.

of the carpet pages are rooted in an aniconic approach of Islamic background. Joseph, however, largely ignores this particular background. The layout of the book's pages prior to writing included the drawing of the basic lines of the decoration—for example, the arches for the columns, with the organization of the text suited to the shape of the arches. These outlines probably included the design of the carpet pages and the main lines of the frames for Kimhi's text. These underdrawings may not have been done by Joseph himself, and apparently he did not have much interest in coloring the full carpet pages. On the other hand, he transformed the frames for Kimhi's text which were originally intended to echo the interlace design of the carpet pages, and decorated them in a Gothic style.

His disregard for the aniconic approach and his failure to paint the carpet pages attest that he was not the one who originally designed the decoration, and the person who did—probably the scribe—worked according to the conventions to which he was accustomed in other Bibles. The only echo of Islamic style that remained after Joseph worked on the decoration was the interlace pattern in the frames around Kimhi's text.

Joseph Hatsarfati's decoration indeed resembles Joshua's work in several aspects, but more intensively draws from a Gothic repertoire of forms, at the expense of the Islamic tradition. Both Joshua and Joseph used the same artistic language prevalent in their environment—southern Navarre and especially Tudela—but Joshua more strongly preserved the Islamic tradition, which was so central for the Toledan illuminators of the previous generations. Joseph, on the other hand, was more rooted in Gothic art. As such, he stands out among the illuminators of the Bibles of Spain. The surname “Hatsarfati” (the French) indicates that he or his family originally came from France. Expulsions of Jews from various areas in France took place before the great expulsion by the Capetians in 1306. In 1288, the Jews were expelled from Gascony, some of them seeking refuge in Navarre;<sup>68</sup> in 1294, the Jews of Nevers were expelled, as were those of Anjou and Maine.<sup>69</sup> Archival documents from Tudela mention a Juçef Francés in 1336–38, and list a Juçe Francés as taxpayer in 1351–53.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Leroy (1984).

<sup>69</sup> For details, see Jordan (1989), 179–99.

<sup>70</sup> Carrasco (1993), 71–73.

Joseph was not deeply rooted in the Sephardic artistic tradition. He hardly ever used the types of decoration that had been common among his Castilian predecessors, and in spite of the style he shared with Joshua he belonged to a different cultural world. From the standpoint of Temple imagery, he did not draw from the same tradition as the one that inspired the Temple images in the Parma Bible, the plan of Ibn Merwas, and the works of Ibn Gaon. And yet he emphasized the messianic aspect, which was not yet a strong element in his colleagues' depictions. He used figurative illumination with relative freedom, while his Sephardic colleagues avoided this practice as long as they worked in Bible illumination.

Although the scribe's colophon names a place, there is no certainty where the Cervera Bible was written and painted. Narkiss attributes it to the Castilian school he defines, and assumes that the book was written and decorated in Cervera, east of Toledo.<sup>71</sup> Gutmann, on the other hand, supposed that the book's provenance is Cervera in Catalonia, home of a well known medieval Jewish community. He found the manuscript to be typical of the Catalan school.<sup>72</sup> In fact, the artistic design of the Cervera Bible does not share anything with any of those schools.

Both scholars drew their conclusions before Thérèse Metzger published Joshua's signatures in the *masorah magna*<sup>73</sup> indicating that the *masorah* was written in Tudela. Assuming that three weeks elapsed between the date on which Samuel bar Abraham ibn Nathan finished his work and Joshua began his, Metzger maintains that this period of time was sufficient to send the book from Cervera in Catalonia to Tudela. Basing her thinking on comparison with the Shem Tov Bible, Metzger maintains that the painting reflects common practice in Soria. If Metzger's proposal is correct, the book must have traveled around a great deal during production: from Cervera, Catalonia, to Tudela and from there to Soria.

The fact that some of the *sedarim* are marked and decorated frames were inserted for all of them, even those that were not marked, indicates that the scribe or the patron, Rabbi Sasson of Cervera, was

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<sup>71</sup> Narkiss (1984), 79; see also Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 16–7.

<sup>72</sup> Gutmann (1978), 59.

<sup>73</sup> See above, n. 00.

used to this custom, which was common in various places in Castile. We find it in Bibles from Toledo, and later in the Shem Tov Bible from Soria. On the other hand, in the Bibles written in Tudela by Joshua, Shem Tov's brother and a native of Soria, there is no trace of *seder* markings. It seems, then—though strange—that this custom had clear limits, which corresponded with the political boundaries. In any event, the marking of the *sedarim* makes it very unlikely that the book was written in Cervera in Catalonia and that this was also the patron's city. No Bible from Catalonia contains *seder* markings.

Since there is abundant evidence of the existence of schools of illumination in Catalonia, it is also difficult to believe that a book meant for use in Cervera in Catalonia and written there was sent to Tudela for the writing of the *masorah* and perhaps even to Soria for painting, only to ultimately return to Catalonia. On the other hand, the book may have been written in Cervera del Rio Alhama, a small town situated between Tudela and Soria within the boundaries of Castile and is known to have had a Jewish community, which lived side by side with a Mudéjar community. The town's geographical proximity to Tudela could also explain Joshua's involvement in the project. Joshua states explicitly that he wrote the *masorah* for Rabbi Sasson of Cervera. This may also explain the *seder* markings. Joshua informs us that the best of his work was executed in Tudela; if this work is indeed indebted to Joseph, the French's influence, there is no reason to look for Joseph in another place other than Tudela, which offered a home to numerous Jews expelled from Capetian France in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.

On the other hand, apart from the Shem Tov Bible from 1312, the group of books under discussion does not include a manuscript whose illumination was definitely executed in Soria. All of Joshua's manuscripts that contain a geographical reference seem to have been produced in Tudela. In light of these facts, it can be assumed that Joshua and Joseph indeed met in Tudela. The combination of the Islamic and Gothic repertoires of forms and the similarity to French book art actually suit the cultural and social atmosphere of early-fourteenth-century Tudela. The two men may even have become acquainted prior to 1300, leading Joshua to combine Gothic motifs with the Islamic tradition that was common in earlier Bibles. In Joshua's work, as opposed to Joseph's work, the Islamic tradition still played the main part.

In short—these observations give rise to the assumption that Oxford 75/76 may be the earliest of Joshua's extant works. Its decoration is modest. Its micrographic patterns are only geometric and were executed in a simple and somewhat crude style; it is devoid of animal or dragon patterns, and of any painted decoration. The Second Kennicott Bible, whose micrographic *masorah* is decorated in the same style, is apparently the first book in which Joshua included painted decoration, such as depictions of animals and dragons. This may have been the result of his acquaintance with Joseph's work. Joshua's style matured in the course of his work on Paris 20 and Paris 21. Although not as skilled an illuminator as Joseph, he did make a name for himself as a masoreter, adept in decorative micrography and graphic design. Accordingly he was entrusted with the *masorah* of the Cervera Bible.

Before concluding this chapter, we should take a look at another few books that were produced in Joshua ibn Gaon's environment. One of them is Parma 2938, which was already mentioned. In 1304, a section of a Bible was signed in Soria by the scribe Samuel ben Jacob Serugiel (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Arch. Selden A 47).<sup>74</sup> In this book, too, the decoration is extremely modest and limited to the work of the scribe. The word *chazaq* at the end of the text is written in zoomorphic letters,<sup>75</sup> similar to what is found in Joseph Hatsarfati's colophon and Joshua's Paris 20.

It was in Soria, that Joshua's brother, Shem Tov ibn Gaon signed, the above-mentioned handsomely illuminated Bible in 1312. The book contains various decorations that are similar in design and style to the work of Joshua and Joseph, which led Metzger to conjecture that the illustrations are Joseph's work. This book, too, contains arches in various shapes, a few of which are similar to those in the Second Kennicott Bible, not only in shape but also in the spared ground depictions of the animals in the spandrels.<sup>76</sup> Other arches belong, judging from their shape, to Islamic or Mudéjar architecture and, judging from the decoration above them, to Gothic art (fig. 82), and the design is comparable to parallels in the Cervera Bible.

<sup>74</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 1; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 36–38.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 58.

<sup>76</sup> Sed-Rajna, *Manuscripts* (1992), fig. 49.



The manuscript does not contain figurative decoration, but there is a small marginal illustration in the Book of Jonah (fig. 76), displaying a little boat with oars emerging from both sides. The composition is clearly borrowed from the above-mentioned depiction of Jonah in the Cervera Bible. Its shape and the position of the flag are also similar to the parallel in the Cervera Bible. However, unlike the latter, the image in the Shem Tov Bible lacks any human figure.

There are many differences between the Shem Tov and the Cervera Bibles, primarily in the design of the details and the style of the painting. The greatest difference is the absence of human figures in the Shem Tov Bible. This casts great doubt on the conjecture that it was Joseph who painted the Shem Tov Bible, and yet it is clear from the Jonah image that the illuminator must have known Joseph's work. A few motifs in the book were decorated with pen flourishings. Their design is strongly reminiscent of the work in the Cervera Bible and was probably inspired by it.

Other books have characteristics similar to those of Joshua's manuscripts, but nothing is known about their dates or places of origin. In a few manuscripts we find micrographic patterns that resemble Joshua's. One such manuscript that was probably produced in Ibn Gaon's vicinity is in the Cambridge University Library (MS Add. 652); it contains the Pentateuch and the Hagiograph.<sup>77</sup> Its decoration is modest and includes a few micrographic text illustrations relating to animals:<sup>78</sup> the serpent of the Garden of Eden,<sup>79</sup> the ram of the binding of Isaac,<sup>80</sup> and a lion at the end of the Book of Daniel.<sup>81</sup> The *parashah* signs, on the other hand, are reminiscent of Islamic decoration.<sup>82</sup> Beside the *parashah* signs are *seder* markings, which might indicate that the book originated in Castile. The use of micrographic animal patterns and visual allusions to the text places the manuscript near the environment of Joshua ibn Gaon and Joseph Hatsarfati. Judging from all of this evidence, this book may thus have been produced in northern Castile.

<sup>77</sup> Schiller-Sziinessy (1876), no. 16; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 35–36, figs. 52–57; Reif (1997), 58.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, figs. 52, 53, and 57.

<sup>79</sup> Fol. 2v.

<sup>80</sup> Fol. 13v.

<sup>81</sup> Fol. 315v.

<sup>82</sup> See, for example, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 56.

Other micrographic animals can be found in a Bible in the former Sassoon Collection (Ms. 1049),<sup>83</sup> a manuscript in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (Ms. 8°2221, fig. 83),<sup>84</sup> and a Bible in Cincinnati written in southern French script (Hebrew Union College Library, MS 12, fig. 84).<sup>85</sup> The latter also includes two micrographic carpet pages. Sasson 1049 contains a painted arch-shaped decoration for the columns, but its specific design has no parallels in other Bibles. The place for the text, a kind of window with a round arch, remains empty against a background of uniform ornamentation, usually a continuous vegetal or geometric motif that covers all of the remaining area.

Neither of these books has distinct characteristics that belong to one of the known schools in Castile or Catalonia. Links to any group of known manuscripts can only be found in the depictions of the animals in the micrographic *masorah*. They lead to the area of Navarre, perhaps northern Castile, and—in the case of the Cincinnati Bible—to southern France. Jerusalem 2221 is characterized further by the fact that some of the *sedarim* are marked in it—a feature that links it with a Castilian custom. The *parashah* signs, on the other hand, are ornamented with painted decorations that are closely related to their parallels in Joshua's books: they represent a similar formal language and are painted in the same colors, including gold (fig. 85). The black outlines are also similar. This manuscript was probably produced in Joshua's surroundings and reflects a similar artistic tradition.

To conclude this discussion of the work of Joshua ibn Gaon and other illuminators in his cultural environment between Soria and Tudela, it can be said that the continuity between the manuscripts produced in Toledo in the thirteenth century and their work at the beginning of the fourteenth century is very slight. A connection to the Islamic cultural world is an important element shared by the Castilian schools and Joshua ibn Gaon, but in specific details, there is no similarity, and the patterns are different and borrowed from different sources. As in the Castilian manuscripts, the books of Joshua

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<sup>83</sup> The book is not included in the original catalogue of the Sassoon collection, Sassoon (1932). It was put up for sale by Sotheby in 1994, *Sotheby* (1994), no. 27, with reproductions.

<sup>84</sup> Weiser (1992), 28.

<sup>85</sup> Blank (1931–32).

and his colleagues, contain motifs borrowed from the sphere of architecture. The general method of working and choosing the models is similar, but in the repertoire of forms, the specific details, and the patterns there is nearly no parallel.

This conclusion casts a great deal of doubt on the continuity theory, which is based on the evolution of a Jewish artistic tradition from Hebrew manuscripts in the Middle East via hypothetical manuscripts from Islamic Spain, to the Castilian schools, and from there to the art of Joshua and his colleagues. A look at the patterns that were used in Joshua's work clearly reveals that they have no roots in Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle East or northern Africa. His work is highly original; while it establishes some degree of dialogue with the art of the Hebrew book in other places, it also incorporates the culture of his environment. The Islamic formal element—which is so significant in the majority of the Sephardic Bibles—is accompanied in the work of Joshua and his colleagues by a new element in the art of the Spanish Bible: we are witness for the first time to the influence of Gothic art and direct dialogue with the Christian artistic environment of the period. In some of the manuscripts, including most of Joshua's works, this influence is only slight; in others—as in the case of Joseph Hatsarfati and the anonymous artist who decorated the *Shem Tov Bible*, it becomes the dominant component.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CATALAN WORKSHOPS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

#### *The Perpignan Bible and its Relatives*

Until the end of the thirteenth century, the Jewish workshops of Catalonia and Roussillon did not develop a tradition of illuminating Bibles or other manuscripts. The first known painted Bible (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 7)<sup>1</sup> was produced in 1299 in Perpignan, Roussillon.<sup>2</sup> It contains a depiction of the Temple (figs. 86 and 87) that is very similar to its counterpart in the Parma Bible (figs. 30 and 31). Ironically, though, we cannot assess the role the Castilian tradition may have played as a source of inspiration: as I have noted, the originality of this depiction in the Parma Bible has not been established with certainty. Since the Temple theme of this particular rendering became characteristic in fourteenth-century Catalonia, Joseph Gutmann believes the Parma Temple image to be a later addition to the 1277 manuscript, inserted under the influence of later Catalan Bibles.<sup>3</sup> As I have already explained, however, the codicological evidence does not support this theory, which therefore relies only on iconographic considerations and the fact that in the Castilian context, the Parma Bible's Temple depiction is an isolated case.

The Perpignan Bible is considerably larger (237×320 mm) than the Parma Bible (204×230 mm). Its scribe is named in a colophon as Solomon ben Raphael,<sup>4</sup> and Gutmann does not rule out the possibility that he also executed the decorations.<sup>5</sup> The depictions of the Temple in the Parma and Perpignan Bibles are very similar, and

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<sup>1</sup> Zotenberg (1866), 1–2; Garel (1990), no. 50.

<sup>2</sup> In this period, Roussillon belonged to the kingdom of Mallorca, which was part of the federation of the Crown of Aragon.

<sup>3</sup> See above, 69.

<sup>4</sup> Fol. 512v.

<sup>5</sup> Gutmann (1978), 51.

they are undoubtedly interdependent. There are slight differences in the arrangement of the implements, and more prominent differences in the text within the calligraphic frames. As in the Parma Bible, the implements are presented as gold silhouettes against the parchment background, though the coloring technique here is more refined.

In addition to the Temple depiction, the Perpignan Bible contains three micrographic carpet pages. One of them features a large, centered star (fig. 88), reminiscent of the carpet page in the Parma Bible (fig. 32)—another indication that the Perpignan Bible was influenced by the latter and not *vice versa*. There is a certain similarity in the design of the star and its frame and both are composed of interlace patterns. In light of the resemblance between the pages, the possibility that the star pattern of the Parma Bible served as the inspiration for the design of a similar page in the Perpignan Bible is certainly conceivable. As to the micrographic decoration in the Parma Bible, there is no doubt that it is part of the original design. The other two carpet pages of the Perpignan Bible display simple geometric patterns (fig. 89); the pages are covered with rhombuses in a manner similar to what we encountered in various manuscripts from the Middle East and northern Africa (fig. 8). The simple pattern of circles in red and blue ink in the center of the rhombuses also has parallels in the latter manuscripts.

The Perpignan Bible also contains *parashah* signs and psalm number marks, all of them decorated in red ink (fig. 90). The columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali are ornamented with arches. The shapes of the arches are very simple, abstract, and stylized, but as opposed to those in the manuscripts decorated by Joshua ibn Gaon, they are confined to forms common in Gothic architecture. The arches are colored in red and blue, as is the simple ornamentation in their spandrels—recalling the colored decoration incorporated into the micrographic carpet pages. Ornamentation in red ink also decorates the verse counts at the end of each biblical book; this decoration is similar in character to the decoration of the *parashah* signs.

The work in colored ink was done by two different hands, the first skilled and secure, working in a very delicate linear technique and producing a refined design, and the second stiffer, creating thicker and cruder lines. The repertoire of forms applied by the first decorator is richer and includes stylized foliate designs, spared ground

interlace patterns, abstract facial features,<sup>6</sup> and stylized animal heads.<sup>7</sup> The two hands can be easily distinguished in the decoration of the arches. For example, fols. 2r and 2v (fig. 90), feature refined penwork and fols. 3r and 3v contain thin, delicate foliate design. These drawings are executed with a secure hand and at a steady pace. From fol. 4r on, the decoration becomes cruder, though it is evident that this decorator was trying to imitate the work of the first hand.

The work was divided according to quires; in some of the gatherings the more delicate hand—perhaps that of the scribe himself—apparently provided an example in the first folios, with the work being completed by a less-skilled assistant. The first quire includes the arches, two carpet pages, and the depiction of the Temple. The arches in fols. 2 and 3 were decorated by the first hand, and the rest by the assistant. The assistant continued with the decoration of the gathering that includes the carpet pages, on which he executed the simple ornamentation in colored ink. This distinction does not include the Temple depiction, which is painted most probably by a third hand.

The text begins on the first verso page of the second quire. The decoration of the *parashah* signs and verse counts throughout the second and third quire was done by the first hand. Further on, the two hands divided the work according to quires. The ornamentation in the fourth and fifth quires, for example, was executed by the assistant, and that of the sixth quire was the work of the more adept hand.

The book also includes decorations of the *masorah magna*, whose character and repertoire of forms bear little, if any, resemblance to parallels from Castile and Navarre. There is a small amount of geometric and other ornamentation in a Gothic style that includes mainly stylized foliate designs. None of the animals or dragons of Joshua ibn Gaon's repertoire can be found here, and the foliate patterns are different. This micrographic decoration, too, includes additions done in red ink, applied by the two hands as described above.

Two years later, in 1301, another Bible (Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Cod. Hebr. II) was produced, perhaps also in Perpignan.

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<sup>6</sup> Fol. 33r.

<sup>7</sup> Fol. 36r.

The place of production cited in the colophon is unreadable.<sup>8</sup> This Bible has characteristics similar to the Perpignan Bible: a depiction of the Temple implements (figs. 91 and 92), which resembles its 1299 predecessor in most of its details, and micrographic carpet pages with a pattern of rhombuses (figs. 93–94) that are almost identical to those of the Perpignan Bible and may have been copied from it. This resemblance includes not only the micrographic pattern itself, but also the circles inside the rhombuses and the wording of the texts in the calligraphic frames. The arches for the decoration of the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali have a distinctly Gothic character here, not only in their architectural shape, but also in design and painting technique of the ornamentation of the columns and the spandrels (fig. 95). Another difference from the Perpignan Bible appears in the background of the Temple image: it contains a diapered pattern in red and blue instead of the color of the parchment—a feature that is typical of the decoration of Gothic manuscripts and complements the Gothic decoration of the masoretic tables.

Despite these Gothic elements—the shape of the arches in both books and the diapered background in Copenhagen II—the artistic approach is utterly different from that common in Christian manuscripts of the period. As in the earlier depictions, the Temple implements are spread out flatly on the pages with no attempt whatsoever to create an three-dimensional effect, and the decorative element plays the main role in the design. The carpet pages, abundant abstract decoration, and absence of any figurative illustration are also typical of this approach.

In the course of the fourteenth century, these features and others that are similar to parallels in the Bibles from Castile and Navarre in their general approach—though not in their details—became characteristic of various schools in the Crown of Aragon, especially in Catalonia and Roussillon. In early-fourteenth-century Castile, meanwhile the tradition of decorated Bibles nearly ended.

The depiction of the Temple is a major element in the decoration programs of Bibles produced in Catalonia and Roussillon. A few of them also contain carpet pages and other decorative elements that belong to the Islamic artistic language. These features are com-

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<sup>8</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994); see also Nechama and Sievernich (1991), no. 20:1/11.

bined with various details borrowed from Gothic Christian book art. However, in this group, too, the Islamicizing element often remains central, and figurative motifs are not found. Micrographic decoration still plays an important role, even though its motifs and forms differ widely from those of the decorations common in the thirteenth century.

It is also interesting to note that the early medieval Spanish artistic tradition is not at all in evidence in the Catalan Bibles. This is barely surprising, as this tradition had not left an imprint on Catalan Christian art.<sup>9</sup> Due to its close ties with France, Catalonia was always culturally connected to Christian Europe, whereas the cultural developments of the rest of Iberia had little impact. Islamic art, too, was not a central component in northern Catalan culture.

The depictions of the Temple in the two Bibles from Roussillon (figs. 86, 87, 91, and 92) are iconographically similar in nearly all their details to the Temple image in the Parma Bible (figs. 30 and 31). The design of the menorah is very similar in all details, as are its wick tongs and ash scoops. The jar of manna and the dry and the flowering staffs are beneath the menorah in both Bibles from Roussillon, but in the Parma Bible—in which the details have the identical design but appear as a mirror image—these items appear beneath the golden altar. The arrangement and design of the Tablets of the Law, the cover of the Ark, the cherubs, the incense saucers, and the showbread table are alike in all detail in the Roussillon and the Parma Bibles, as are the altars, the basin, the trumpets, and the *shofar*. The only difference here is the fact that in the Parma Bible, the trumpets are under the golden altar and the jar of manna and the *shofar* are below the basin, while in the depictions from Roussillon, both the trumpets and the *shofar* are placed beneath the golden altar. The lower part of the page of the Perpignan Bible contains additional objects, whose insertion was possible due to the Perpignan Bible's larger format: forks, a firepan, shovels, pots, and tossing bowls. The illuminator of the Parma Bible confined the decoration to the most important implements.

The similarity is greater than the difference and can be seen mainly in the nearly identical design of the details of the implements, such

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<sup>9</sup> On a few remnants related to Mozarabic monks who migrated to Catalonia, see Schlunk (1965), 928. On the development of art in Catalonia in the Middle Ages, see Peter K. Klein's article in *Art in Medieval Spain* (1993), 185–97.



as the shape of the handles of the jar of manna; the animals' heads on the basin handles; the details of the showbread table and the rows of showbreads on them; the cherubs; the menorah; and other objects. This similarity certainly points to some iconographic interdependence between these depictions. On the other hand, if we compare the texts of the calligraphic frames around the Temple depictions, we find a very significant difference. In the Parma Bible, the text is taken from the Book of Proverbs (2:3–11) with a short addition from the Book of Job:

if you cry out for discernment and invoke understanding, if you seek for her as for silver and dig for her as for buried treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and attain to knowledge of God. It is the Lord who bestows wisdom and teaches knowledge and understanding. Out of his store he endows the upright with ability. For those whose conduct is blameless he is a shield, guarding the course of justice and keeping watch over the way of his loyal servants. You will then understand what is right and just and keep only to the good man's path, for wisdom will sink into your mind, and knowledge will be your heart's delight. Discretion will keep watch over you, understanding will guard you.

Inscriptions of this kind frequently appear in calligraphic frames around carpet pages and other elements in Bibles from Castile. They are meant to convey the idea that the text appearing in the volume—that is, the Bible—is a source of wisdom and insight. The framing of the Temple depiction with such an inscription in the Parma Bible is meant to equate the Bible with the Temple. This subject is discussed in detail, including a comparison of the triangular structure of the Temple and the triangular structure of the Bible, by Profiat Duran (1360–1412).<sup>10</sup> This concept of the Bible gave rise to its appellation *miqdashyah*, an abbreviation of “the Temple of the Lord,” among Spanish communities. The Parma Bible preceded Profiat Duran's writings by more than a century, and the idea was already well established among Spanish Jews. The equating of the Bible with the Temple also explains why depictions of the Temple in Sephardic Bibles appear at the beginning of the volume and are not related in any way to the description of the Tabernacle in Exodus or the account of the Temple in 1 Kings.<sup>11</sup> The role of these

<sup>10</sup> See Gutmann (1988), 71, based on Profiat Duran, *Ma'aseh Efod* 10.

<sup>11</sup> See Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 100–101.

depictions is not to illustrate the text but rather to represent the entire book.

The text in the calligraphic frames of the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II, on the other hand, specifically relates to the implements—especially to the menorah: “This is the work of the menorah carved of gold,” for example. There is also a distinct eschatological element: “May it (the Temple) be speedily rebuilt in our days . . .” The Bible not only represents the Temple, but also has as a central element the hope that the Temple will be rebuilt in the time of the Messiah. In his colophon of the Temple plan, Joshua ibn Gaon also expresses this hope,<sup>12</sup> but he does not make it an integral part of the plan’s decoration and iconography.

Most of the Bibles attributed to Catalan schools do not contain any clear indication of their date or provenance. One such book, with features similar to its two predecessors from Roussillon, is now in Modena (Biblioteca Estense, MS M. 8.4).<sup>13</sup> The depiction of the Temple (fig. 96) corresponds in its details, design, and formal language to those in the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II. The golden altar has steps and meshwork—elements that are usually confined to the sacrificial altar. The other implements—such as the jar of manna, basin, trumpets, ash scoops, flowering and dry staffs—are so similar to those in the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II, that it can be assumed that the illuminators of Modena 8.4 used the same models and worked probably in the same area.

The diapered background links Modena 8.4 to Copenhagen II in particular. Another common denominator with Copenhagen II can be found in the design of the arches that decorate the tables listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali. Like those in Copenhagen II—and in many later Catalan manuscripts—both the shapes of the arches and the abstract decoration in the spandrels are borrowed from Gothic art (fig. 97). Modena 8.4 also contains micrographic carpet pages typical of the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II. The rhombus motif (fig. 98) appears similarly in the three manuscripts. Other pages of Modena 8.4 contain various centered motifs and evidence a great deal of change in the formal language compared to the simple geometric patterns in the

<sup>12</sup> See above, 101.

<sup>13</sup> Antonioli Martelli and Mortara Ottolenghi (1966), no. 33.

Perpignan Bible (fig. 99): the design is richer and combines interlace motifs with distinctly Gothic formal elements. The calligraphic frames of the Temple image, contain no hint of eschatological expectation; instead they simply refer to the implements and are very close to the biblical text.

In another Bible in Modena (Biblioteca Estense, MS T.3.8), the Temple depiction also follows the same pattern as those of the Parma and Perpignan Bibles (fig. 100). In this book, too, the calligraphic frame contains no hint of eschatological hope or of the future construction of the Temple, but is confined to the description of the various implements. In composition, selection of implements, and iconographic details, the depiction corresponds largely to the parallels and belongs to the same family. This book also contains Gothic-style arch decorations, but no carpet pages. It offers no information as to provenance or date, but comparison with the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II enables us to attribute it to this group, which can be dated to the first quarter of the fourteenth century. There is another Bible with similar features in a private collection in New York.<sup>14</sup>

Numerous formal and thematic elements are common to all the manuscripts in this group.<sup>15</sup> If we look at the Temple depictions, for example, what stands out is the fact that the base of the menorah is always tall and narrow—much different from later depictions, as we shall see—and has a foliage pattern whose forms recur in all of the examples. Also recurring is the design of the wick tongs and ash scoops, which appear beside the menorah and below the branches. The rectangular showbread table with two high, narrow rows of showbreads and incense saucers above them is extremely similar in all of the depictions, as is the design of the basin with two handles decorated with animals' heads. The pedestal of the basin also recurs. Only the Gothic frame around the basin in Modena 3.8 and the New York Bible is unique to these two manuscripts, but the shape of the basin itself corresponds to the other examples.

<sup>14</sup> Formerly Frankfurt, Stadtbibliothek, Ausst. 4; see Metzger (1969–70), 426; Nordström (1968), figs. 13 and 14.

<sup>15</sup> For a description of the iconographic details of the Temple depictions and their definition as a group, see Metzger (1969–70); Revel-Neher (1998), 64–72. Extensive discussions of the details of the Catalan depictions of the Temple implements and their textual sources can be found in Nordström (1968); and Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 101–104.

The placement of the two altars one beside the other is similar, though in Modena 8.4 their shapes are confused with each other and the meshwork is inserted in the wrong one. The shape of the jar of manna and its position between the flowering and dry staffs are similar down to the smallest details, such as the shape of the handles with two small arches. The arrangement of the trumpets, *shofar*, ash scoop, fork, shovel, fire pans, and basin is nearly identical. The Tablets of the Law are abstract and the Ark is not treated as a physical object; its parts are symbols and not presented realistically. The cover of the Ark is a gilded rectangle, completely abstract. The cherubs appear above it and their appearance is identical in the Parma and Perpignan Bibles. In Copenhagen II and Modena 8.4, their shape is a bit more perceptible and resembles that of anthropomorphic depictions of angels. In the New York Bible, their depiction is once again abstract and comprises only the cherubs' wings. In Modena 3.8, the cherubs do not appear at all, and the depiction of the Ark is even more abstract than in the other manuscripts—a gilded rectangular frame without any details. The shape of the Ark is the same as that of the New York Bible, although the latter, like the other examples, contains the opening letters of the Ten Commandments.

The concretization of the cherubs and their transformation into an anthropomorphic shape does not have a continuation—the cherubs are missing not only from Modena 3.8, but from most of the later Catalan manuscripts. The technique and formal language of Modena 3.8 is more refined than those of the other manuscripts in the group: the pattern of the diapered background is particularly delicate, the outlines of the implements are thin and precise, and their shape has a certain elegance that is missing from the other manuscripts. But from an iconographic standpoint, there is no doubt that the illuminator of Modena 3.8 used a model from the same family.

Modena 3.8 is iconographically similar, in particular, to the New York Bible, as can be seen in the shape of the Ark and the Gothic frame of the basin. There is also a similarity in proportion between the parts of the sacrificial altar; the angle between the altar and the ramp is similar as well. The depiction of the ash scoop hovering above the ramp is unique to these two examples, and there may have been a direct dependence between these two manuscripts.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> In this regard, see also Revel-Neher (1998), 64–72.

Since the two Modena Bibles and the New York Bible do not provide any information as to their date or provenance, we cannot say for certain if this pattern of depiction of the Temple was specific to Perpignan or the Roussillon region or if it migrated to other places in Catalonia.

The micrographic carpet pages of Modena 8.4 bear a certain resemblance to those of a Pentateuch written in Barcelona in 1325 (Rome, *Comunità Ebraica*, MS 19a, fig. 103), to be discussed later in this chapter.<sup>17</sup> In most other details of the design, however, the difference between the Rome Pentateuch and the Roussillon group is considerable. The similarity between the carpet pages may probably indicate that Modena 8.4 was produced around that time. The refined technique, indebted to Gothic art, in which the Temple depiction is painted in Modena 3.8, also indicates a period later than the time of production of the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II.

The entire group of manuscripts is thus surprisingly homogeneous, especially with regard to the Temple depictions, and it is tempting to view it as a phenomenon typical of the Roussillon region, since its roots are in that area. The Temple depictions in these manuscripts is not executed in precisely the same way in a later period. Much later echoes of its iconography exist in the *Kings Bible*, written in 1384 in Solsona, which will be discussed further on in this chapter<sup>18</sup> but remains an isolated phenomenon. The richness of the micrographic patterns in Modena 8.4 and its connections to the Rome Pentateuch indicate an influence from Barcelona, or *vice versa*. However, the similarity is limited to the work of the masoretor and has nothing to do with the rest of the decoration program. As appropriate as it might seem to attribute all the books in this group to Roussillon, no such claim can be made with certainty. We cannot rule out the possibility that the decoration program made its way to other places. In any event, as we will see later, the iconography of the later Catalan Temple depictions underwent many changes compared to the Perpignan Bible and its relatives.

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<sup>17</sup> Gutmann (1988).

<sup>18</sup> See below, 154–55.

*Bibles from Barcelona and its Environs*

The Rome manuscript is quite unusual in many respects. The book contains only the Pentateuch, and it was written in 1325 by Solomon bar Reuben in Barcelona. All of the decoration is micrographic and includes numerous carpet pages with centered interlace patterns (fig. 103). In their design, these pages are similar, as noted, to the carpet pages of Modena 8.4. The micrographic decoration of the *masorah magna* is also notable and displays a variety of candelabrum-like trees. As we have seen, the roots of this motif apparently lie outside of Catalonia; it was adopted by Joshua ibn Gaon and was used quite often in other Catalan manuscripts later in the fourteenth century.

The micrographic decoration of the Rome Pentateuch also includes a depiction of the Temple (figs. 101 and 102), which resembles its predecessors only in general lines. As in the Parma Bible, the text of the frame does not express eschatological hope, but instead characterizes the Bible as a source of insight and wisdom, through a collection of verses from Proverbs and Job:

Gold of Ophir cannot be set in the scales against it, nor precious cornelian nor sapphire (Job 28:16). Chrysolite from Ethiopia is not to be matched with it (Job 28:19). God alone understands the way to it, he alone knows its source (Job 28:23). Happy is he who has found wisdom, he who has acquired understanding (Prov. 3:13). For a commandment is a lamp, and teaching a light, reproof and correction point the way to life (Prov. 6:23). Keep my commands if you would live, and treasure my teaching as the apple of your eye (Prov. 7:2). The days will be increased and years be added to your life (based on Prov. 9:11).

Though the text quotes different verses, in its character and messages it resembles the one in the Parma Bible. The fact that it frames a depiction of the Temple makes it clear that the Bible is considered a “minor Temple.” As in the case of the Parma Bible, these texts caused Joseph Gutmann to assume that the Temple image in the Rome Pentateuch is a later addition, inserted in preexisting frames. Arguing that Catalan Temple depictions typically feature captions with eschatological connotations, he maintained that the absence of such connotations does not jibe with the illustration.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Gutmann (1976), 138–39, n. 8.

However, it seems inconceivable that such a coincidence occurred twice and in such a similar way. The fact that the texts framing the Parma and Rome Temple depiction, though not identical, are essentially similar, indicated that they are a visual expression of this perception of the Bible, which was common among the Jews of Spain.

Gutmann explained, furthermore, that the fact that on fol. 241r of the Rome Pentateuch—another micrographic carpet page—, the micrographic decoration flows over the calligraphic frame indicates that it was added later.<sup>20</sup> The lines in the frame that contain the letter *lamed* indeed collide with the outermost micrographic line of the carpet page, but this collision is not visually disturbing. The calligraphic frame was created before the *masorah* and the decoration were inserted, but that does not mean the latter were not part of the original design of the book. Doing the work in this order was common practice in late medieval Sephardic book production. In Modena 8.4 there is a similar relationship between the calligraphic frames and the micrographic design of the carpet pages.<sup>21</sup> In short—there is thus no reason to assume that the decoration of the Rome Pentateuch was not executed in Barcelona in 1325 together with the rest of the book.

The design of the Temple implements in the Rome Pentateuch is different in many details from that of the Perpignan Bible and its relatives. For example, the menorah implements hang on the lower branch instead of being placed at its side. The design of the menorah and its legs have also significantly changed. The Ark of the Covenant is completely different and it is presented as two tablets within a rectangular frame with four rings and poles for carrying. The basin is now shaped like a goblet. There is no ramp beside the sacrificial altar. The jar of manna greatly resembles the earlier depictions, but is separate from the dry and flowering staffs. The basic shape of the showbread table matches that of the examples from Perpignan and their relatives, but the rows of showbreads hover above the table and are not attached to it. The depiction of the trumpets and *shofar* is similar, though instead of appearing as one group, they flank the Ark. In the arrangement of the implements on

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<sup>20</sup> Gutmann (1988), 7 and fig. 5.

<sup>21</sup> Fol. 10v, for example.

the page the Rome depiction also differs greatly from its parallels in the Roussillon group.<sup>22</sup>

A Bible dated to 1336 in the Karaite Synagogue in Istanbul contains a Temple depiction<sup>23</sup> that differs in even more details from those in the Perpignan Bible group. We do not have any information about the place of origin of the Istanbul Bible. The background is colored as in Copenhagen II and the Modena manuscripts but is ornamented in a linear and stylized scroll design, also rooted in Gothic manuscript decoration. A major innovation is the addition of a depiction of the Mount of Olives, which later became a convention in Catalan Bibles. Its inclusion is based on a passage in the Book of Zechariah (14:3–4):

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<sup>22</sup> The Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem possesses a Mahzor (MS 8°6527) following the Catalan rite. As in the Rome Pentateuch, all of the decoration in this book is in micrography. It includes carpet pages with vegetal and animal patterns, but also figurative motifs, mainly hunting scenes. Spread over two pages is a depiction of the Temple, probably borrowed from a Bible manuscript. In Weiser (1992), 60–61, the book is dated to ca. 1280. For reproductions, among them part of the Temple depiction, see *ibid.* However, there is a great deal of doubt regarding this date and it does not accord with the conclusions of Leila Avrin, who attributed the book to another group of manuscripts from Catalonia. She believed their micrographic decoration was executed by the same masoretor, apparently a person by the name of Jacob. The Mahzor is subject of a doctoral thesis in preparation by Daliah Ruth Halperin, Hebrew University. Avrin's group includes the Rylands Haggadah in the John Rylands University Library in Manchester, MS heb. 6, see Loewe (1988); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 86–93. It also includes the Mocatta Haggadah in London, University College Library, MS 1, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 52–55. Avrin (1989) dated Jacob's work to the first half of the fourteenth century. She added to this group the so-called Nahum Bible, in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (MS 4°5147), see Weiser (1992), 17. The Nahum Bible is unusual in many respects and in my opinion was not produced at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It includes only a depiction of the menorah (fol. 6v), whose design reflects some of the conventions common in the second half of the century, for example the painted calligraphic frame. At the end of Prophets there is a small panel with a carpet design using the formal language customary in the later Catalan manuscripts. The decoration of the *masorah magna* includes mainly geometric patterns customarily used in books from Castile. A few pages display illustrations of animals and dragons (fol. 63v, for example) that are reminiscent of the works of Joshua ibn Gaon. The decoration of the *parashah* signs also reflects this tradition. At the end of the Pentateuch, on the other hand, is a small micrographic panel strikingly similar to Jacob's work, which led Avrin to her conclusions. The decoration of the verse count at the end of each biblical book is unusual and is painted in a mixed style with Gothic and Islamic features alike. This Bible is not typical of any specific Sephardic school, but combines different decorative conventions. Any conclusion as to its place of origin would be speculative, and it was probably not produced before the middle of the century.

<sup>23</sup> Gutmann (1988), figs. 1 and 2.



Then the Lord will go out and fight against the nations, fighting as on a day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which lies to the east of Jerusalem.

This addition became a typical feature in the manuscripts produced in the subsequent decades in Catalonia and Aragon, and is a clear allusion to the eschatological expectations associated with Temple iconography. At the same time, however, the calligraphic frame relates to the implements only and to their appearance, but does not contain an additional allusion to messianic hope in the style that we encountered in the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II.

The design of the implements bears only a slight resemblance to that of its predecessors. The menorah implements hang on the lower branch, but they are shaped differently from those in the Rome Pentateuch. The Ark, on the other hand, is shaped similarly to the one that appears in the Rome Pentateuch. The trapezoidal shape of the showbread table from the side replaces the simpler rectangular shape customary in the Roussillon depictions. The base of the menorah has become broad and low and the stylized leaves are smaller than the base. A few elements in this depiction later became conventions in several other Bibles produced in Catalonia: the shape of the menorah's wick tongs and ash scoops, the base of the menorah, the shape of the Ark, the shape of the showbread table, and the Mount of Olives. The arrangement of the details bears no resemblance to that of the Perpignan Bible group. The only echo of this group is the shape of the basin decorated with animals' heads.

The design developed for the Istanbul Bible remained influential in Catalonia until the middle of the fourteenth century. Another example, now in London, is known as the Harley Bible (British Library, MS Harley 1528).<sup>24</sup> Its depiction of the Temple (col. pl. VI and fig. 104) is similar to that of the Istanbul Bible in most details and in the arrangement of the implements. These manuscripts may originate from the same workshop. Another indication of a common origin is the fact that in both depictions the background is decorated in a linear pattern of scroll design instead of the checkered pattern customary in most of the other Bibles from Catalonia and Roussillon. Unlike the Istanbul Bible, the image in the Harley Bible has no calligraphic frame at all.

<sup>24</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), 477–78; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 105–107, figs. 324–27.

The design of the Gothic arches for the decoration of the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali (col. pl. VII) corresponds to the earlier examples in Copenhagen II (fig. 95) and Modena 8.4 (fig. 97). The arches are shaped similarly to those customary in Gothic architecture, and the spandrels are decorated in the same technique as the background of the Temple depiction: delicate scroll design in white on an alternately blue and red background.

The Harley Bible does not contain carpet pages, giving it less of an Islamicizing tone. However, the flat composition of the Temple implements and the antfigurative visual language that prevails throughout the decoration program do not conform to the customary approach of Gothic art. Other elements, such as the background patterns for the Temple depiction and the design of the arches that decorate the columns, belong to the formal repertoire of Gothic art.

The micrographic *masorah* includes various patterns, among them the candelabrum-like trees (fig. 105), that first appeared in Catalonia in the Rome Pentateuch of 1325. The Harley Bible, too, might have been produced in Barcelona. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover date it to the third quarter of the fourteenth century on the basis of its stylistic features.<sup>25</sup> However, since it lacks numerous characteristics that appear in the later manuscripts, such as Gothic scroll designs at the beginning of each biblical book—and shares much with the Istanbul Bible, I would propose a date before or around the middle of the century.

The so-called Catalan Duke of Sussex Bible (London, British Library, MS Add. 15250)<sup>26</sup> is in a way similar to the Harley Bible. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover even attribute it to the same workshop.<sup>27</sup> Most likely, however, it was produced later. The two Bibles resemble each other in the general lines of the design and in the decoration program, but are quite different in technique and formal language. Neither of them has calligraphic frames, and the micrographic decoration that includes candelabrum-shaped trees is similar (fig. 108). No far-reaching conclusions can be drawn from this likeness of motifs. Micrographic candelabrum-trees were customary

<sup>25</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 107–108.

<sup>26</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 53, 23–24; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 105–107, figs. 310–23.

<sup>27</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 109–10.

throughout the century and already appear in the thirteenth century in other areas. They can still be found in an incomplete Bible from 1396 that was written in Castillon d'Ampurias (London, British Library, MS Harley 5774/5).<sup>28</sup>

The difference between the Harley and Duke of Sussex Bibles is greater than the similarity. It can be seen, for example, in the background of the Temple depiction: in the Harley Bible (col. pl. VI), as noted, the background comprises scroll design in white lines, while in the Duke of Sussex Bible (figs. 106 and 107) it is composed of a diapered pattern.<sup>29</sup> The convex lines that are common to the design of the showbread table in both books are used by Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover as evidence of common origin, but this design is, in fact, customary in most depictions of the showbread table in Catalan Bibles, except for the Perpignan Bible group.

The design of the arches in the Duke of Sussex Bible that decorate the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali is similar in its basic character to that of the Harley Bible and its predecessors, but its style and technique betrays an Italian influence typical of Catalan painting from around the 1340s on (col. pl. VIII). In the Harley Bible (col. pl. VII), the spandrels are uniform in color and the only decoration is the scroll design in white, silver, or gold in thin, delicate lines; in the Duke of Sussex Bible, the decoration above the arches also includes fleshy leaves colored in gradated shades. This type of decoration leaves only a little bit of space for the delicate lines that are typical of parallel decorations in the Harley Bible.

A more significant difference between the Harley and Duke of Sussex Bibles is that the Temple depiction in the latter also includes decoration in a distinctly Gothic foliate design, which enters the margins from the frame that surrounds the depiction. These foliate motifs are similar to ornamentation in other Spanish Christian and Hebrew manuscripts,<sup>30</sup> such as a manuscript of Maimonides' Guide of the Perplexed in Copenhagen (Royal Library, Cod. Hebr. XXXVII, fig.

<sup>28</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 121, 88–89; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 115–17, figs. 338–51.

<sup>29</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), pl. XXVIII.

<sup>30</sup> For example, a copy of the *Decretum Gratianum* in London, British Library, MS Add. 15274–75); see also the Catalan additions to the English Psalter in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. lat. 8446, Avril (1982), no. 108, 93–95.

109).<sup>31</sup> Consequently, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover dated the Duke of Sussex Bible to the third quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>32</sup> The illustrations of the Copenhagen volume, which was produced in Barcelona in 1348, is attributed to the workshop of Ferrer Bassa and his son Arnau, who worked in this city during the 1340s. Apparently they became victims of the Black Plague in 1348,<sup>33</sup> but the visual language they introduced continued to flourish in Catalonia during the second half of the fourteenth century. The figurative illustrations in the Copenhagen Maimonides are accompanied by rich foliate designs in the margins that reflect an Italian influence. Since such an influence is missing in the Harley Bible, which, in my opinion, was produced during the 1330s, it can be suggested that this type of design found its way to the Hebrew Bibles only around the middle of the century and became popular during its second half.

Another example of similar foliate design can also be found in Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2810),<sup>34</sup> though it is not close to the specific formal language of the Bassa school. No date is provided and we have no other information about the manuscript. It contains a depiction of the Temple (fig. 110),<sup>35</sup> which, like the Harley and Duke of Sussex Bibles, lacks a calligraphic frame. In most of its details it follows the designs that first appeared in the Rome Pentateuch and the Istanbul Bible and having turned into conventions in the Harley and Duke of Sussex Bibles: the menorah implements are hanging, the basin is goblet-shaped, and the showbread table has convex sides. Like the Istanbul Bible and the two books in London, it contains no carpet pages or other motifs borrowed from Islamic art, which makes the Islamicizing element in this group of books even less prominent, manifesting itself only in the preference for abstractness and the antfigurative approach.

The arches decorating the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali were drawn in

<sup>31</sup> Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994); Narkiss (1984), 102–103.

<sup>32</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 106–107.

<sup>33</sup> Meiss (1941); Wormald (1953); Bohigas (1965), 122–53; Sed-Rajna, *St. Mark* (1992). On the foliate design, see in particular Alcoi i Pedros (1992).

<sup>34</sup> Tamani, (1968), 51–52; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 5; for a detailed discussion of the Temple depiction, see Gutmann (1978), 54–55. This manuscript has another volume (MS Parm 2811), which lacks decoration.

<sup>35</sup> Gutmann (1978), pls. 8–9.

ink, and the spandrels feature images of animals and stylized vegetal patterns. The drawing was done by a skilled hand, but the coloring of the spared-ground designs was performed by an unskilled craftsman.<sup>36</sup> Only the coloring of the Temple depiction was executed by a professional. First the images were laid out as underdrawings, and then the gilding was done, as in the *parashah* signs and in the frames for the verse counts at the end of the books. Next the colors were applied in the Temple depiction and bordered with outlines in black ink. These two steps were not carried out the *parashah* signs or the decoration of the arches, where colored ink was applied rather carelessly and no black outlines were added. In the Duke of Sussex Bible, the painted foliate design is limited to frames of the depiction of the Temple, whereas in Parma 2810, the beginning of each book is decorated with a foliate design of a similar type, and colored with a technique similar to that used in the Temple depiction. This type of decoration suggests that the Parma manuscript was produced around the middle of the fourteenth century or its second half, though its formal language is not particularly close to that of the Bassas and the illuminators in his environment.

There are other manuscripts in this group—that is, books with depictions of the Temple, without carpet pages, and a variety of Gothic patterns. An example is the Sephardic Ambrosiana Bible in Milan (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS C 105 sup).<sup>37</sup> This book contains a Temple depiction<sup>38</sup> with a Gothic checkered pattern in the background, and painted foliate decoration for the opening of each biblical book (fig. 111). These scrolls were designed under French, rather than Italian, influence. Similar patterns appear in the ornamentation of the *parashah* signs together with line decoration in pen and ink.

Another example is preserved in the Karaite synagogue in Cairo (Gottheil 17).<sup>39</sup> This manuscript contains only the Pentateuch. It includes a variety of decoration types, such as painted Gothic arches for the text columns at the beginning of the volume, and a Temple depiction similar to those in the Harley, the Duke of Sussex Bibles,

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<sup>36</sup> According to Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 5, this quire was written by a different scribe.

<sup>37</sup> Antonioli Martelli and Mortara Ottolenghi (1966), no. 34.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.; Schubert (1984), figs. 44–45.

<sup>39</sup> Gottheil (1905), no. 17, 636.

and other manuscripts. The beginning of each biblical book is decorated with painted foliate motifs, and the *parashah* signs are ornamented in the same manner. They are not indebted to the art of the Bassas; instead, similarly to the Ambrosiana Bible, they suggest French influence.

Somewhat more information is available regarding another Bible from this group, formerly in the Sassoon Collection (MS 16), today in a private collection in London.<sup>40</sup> It was written in Cervera in 1383 by Vidal (Chaim) bar Saul Satorre for Astruk ben Isaac bar Solomon ibn Adret of Barcelona, known as Rashba, and so the manuscript is often misleadingly referred to the "Rashba Bible." Ibn Adret died in 1310 and the book was written seventy-three years after his death. The book is especially replete with foliate design typical for late Gothic manuscript illumination, and with a variety of other ornamentation. The spandrels of the arches at the beginning of the volume are decorated with vegetal and animal motifs and even feature depictions of human faces. The beginning of each biblical book is decorated with painted initial panels incorporating foliate motifs; the latter are especially profuse in the Book of Psalms, where they adorn psalm number signs and connect the signs with each other creating a continuous ornamentation of the margins.

The Sassoon Bible's depiction of the Temple is similar in its details<sup>41</sup> to the parallels discussed above. However, the design of the frame is new in that it is broader than those in the Harley, Duke of Sussex, and Parma Bibles, contains many ornamental patterns, and has heraldic emblems in its corners. There is no calligraphy in these frames.<sup>42</sup> As in its contemporaries, the basic design of the Temple depiction is characterized by greater iconographic freedom, adhering less to the conventions. The arrangement of the implements on the page is different in all of these manuscripts.

<sup>40</sup> Sassoon (1932), vol. 1, 14–5.

<sup>41</sup> Metzger (1969–70), fig. 10; Revel-Neher (1998), fig. 78.

<sup>42</sup> A similar design of the Temple depiction is found in the Nahum Bible, where only a depiction of the menorah survives; see n. 22.

*The Foa and Farhi Bibles, and the Renewal of Islamic Motifs*

A frame design similar to that of the Temple depiction in the Sassoon Bible is found also in the Foa Bible in Paris (St. Sulpice, Compagnie des Prêtres, MS 1933).<sup>43</sup> The depiction (fig. 112) is spread over three pages.<sup>44</sup> As opposed to its counterparts in the Sassoon, Harley, and Duke of Sussex Bibles, it is accompanied by calligraphic texts. Whereas in manuscripts of the Perpignan group these texts were written in brown ink on a parchment background and were thus part of the scribal layout, those in the Foa Bible have turned into an integral part of the painted design. The letters are written in gold on a colored background. The depiction of the Temple itself includes features of Gothic architecture—for example, the Ark is decorated with a typical Gothic triangular arch. Like the Sassoon, Ambrosiana, and Duke of Sussex Bibles, the Foa Bible is also rich in foliate design painted in a technique typically employed in Gothic manuscript painting (fig. 113).

Although he observes a distinct stylistic similarity to the Sassoon Bible, Michel Garel attributes the Foa Bible to the Barcelona area and dates it to the 1380s.<sup>45</sup> Sed-Rajna links the style of the foliate design to that found in manuscripts decorated by successors of the Bassa school, but maintains that they were not produced in the same workshop; she explains that the similarity in style stems from influences that postdate the heyday of Ferrer Bassa's workshop by several years.<sup>46</sup>

Also noteworthy in the Foa Bible is the addition of the highpriest's breastplate to the Temple depiction, with a design similar to that of a carpet page.<sup>47</sup> Instead of text, its frame is composed of a foliate pattern similar to those in the Sassoon Bible. The upper and lower margins of the running text of the Foa Bible contain the *masorah magna*, decorated with vegetal motifs<sup>48</sup> that include candelabrum-like trees.

The most notable feature of this manuscript in comparison to its contemporaries is the addition of carpet pages (fig. 114). These include, for example, an interlace pattern that grows into stylized

<sup>43</sup> Garel (1979); see also Garel (1990), no. 51.

<sup>44</sup> Fols. 5v, 6r, and 7v.

<sup>45</sup> Garel (1979), 85; Garel also deciphers the heraldic emblems of the Sanz family of Catalonia, *ibid.*, 83.

<sup>46</sup> Sed-Rajna, *St. Mark* (1992), 128.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, fig. 6.

<sup>48</sup> Garel (1979), fig. 8.

leaves. In the design of these leaves, there is genuine integration between Islamic and Gothic forms. In this manuscript we therefore observe a revival of the Islamicizing formal language that played such an important role in the Castilian schools in the thirteenth century, in the work of Joshua ibn Gaon, and, until about the 1330s, in Roussillon and Catalonia.

An especially interesting milestone in the history of decorated Bibles in Catalonia is the Farhi Bible (Sassoon Collection, MS 368).<sup>49</sup> As the Foa Bible, it reintroduces the carpet page into the repertoire of Catalan Bibles (col. pls. IX and X). From the colophon<sup>50</sup> we learn that it was produced between 1366 and 1383 by Elisha ben Abraham ben Benvenisti ben Elisha Crescas for his personal use, but the place of origin is not noted. From the term "I completed" that appears in the colophon, Narkiss concludes that Elisha himself painted the lavish decorations.<sup>51</sup> According to Gutmann, the book is of Catalan origin,<sup>52</sup> but Thérèse and Mendel Metzger suggest Aragon.<sup>53</sup> Since the manuscript also includes a Provençal-Hebrew dictionary, Narkiss suggests convincingly that it was produced in southern France.<sup>54</sup>

Sybil Mintz finds that the style of the foliate design resembles that of Bassa's successors in Barcelona and accordingly concludes that the book was produced there.<sup>55</sup> Gothic foliate decorations indeed appear in nearly all the carpet pages, but they are small and limited to the corners. In general, they belong to Gothic book art, but they are too small to be compared with the sumptuous foliate designs common in manuscripts associated with the workshops of Ferrer Bassa and his later followers. Although these Gothic motifs are combined with Islamicizing ones in the carpet pages, they remain a secondary element. A degree of integration comparable to that found in the Foa Bible (fig. 114) is not evident. Sometimes this decoration includes abstract and stylized facial features, though it cannot be categorized as figurative painting in the full sense of the word.

<sup>49</sup> Sassoon (1932), vol. 1, 6–14.

<sup>50</sup> Fol. 2r.

<sup>51</sup> Narkiss (1984), 99.

<sup>52</sup> Gutmann (1978), 17.

<sup>53</sup> Metzger (1982), 302. In the list of manuscripts in Thérèse and Mendel Metzger's book, there is no distinction between Aragon and the Crown of Aragon.

<sup>54</sup> Narkiss (1984), 99, see also Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 99; see also *ibid.*, 116.

<sup>55</sup> Mintz (1988), 53.



With regard to the use of Gothic painting techniques in the carpet pages, it should be recalled that in Islamic manuscripts from Spain dating from the mid-twelfth century onward, a Gothic influence can sometimes also be discerned, though to a lesser extent than in the Hebrew manuscripts. This influence is manifest mainly in the use of techniques customarily employed in Gothic painting. I have already mentioned<sup>56</sup> that in the Qur'an from 1143 in Istanbul (fig. 1), some of the interlace patterns were painted with the technique typical of Gothic painting: blue with a layer of white for highlighting. This technique is frequently used in the Farhi Bible.

Like the other Catalan Bibles that I mentioned, the Farhi Bible contains a Temple depiction.<sup>57</sup> Unlike others, however, it extends over four pages. The design of the details of the implements is very different from those in all of the other manuscripts I have discussed, and therefore it cannot be attributed to any of the groups.

The Farhi Bible is one of the most lavishly decorated Catalan Bibles. Its decoration program includes not only a depiction of the Temple, but also twenty-nine carpet pages, and a *masora* in decorative micrography. The background behind the Temple implements is decorated in a Gothic checkered pattern in red, violet, green, and pink. The frames, on the other hand, are composed of a guilloche interlace pattern in the same colors, plus gold. Foliate motifs with fleshy leaves in the same colors emerge from the corners of the panels containing the Temple implements. This foliate design is borrowed, as noted, from Gothic art. These depictions do not have calligraphic frames, but they do include numerous captions relating to the Temple, in small letters crowded into lines in and around the painting.

The carpet pages (col. pls. IX and X) are especially elaborate, with a great variety of designs; most of them are decorated with dense interlace patterns in centered compositions. Some are designed as continuous compositions. Calligraphy is an integral part of the carpet pattern and does not appear in the frames. As Gutmann noted,<sup>58</sup> these types of composition were common in Islamic book art in Spain from the twelfth century onward. Examples can be found in fourteenth-century Qur'an manuscripts from Valencia, Cordoba, and Granada. The carpet pages in the Farhi Bible bear

<sup>56</sup> See above, chap. 2, 36–37.

<sup>57</sup> Narkiss (1984), pl. 16; Revel-Neher (1998), fig. 77.

<sup>58</sup> Gutmann (1978), 17–18.

a distinct resemblance to those in a Qur'an from the Maghreb and dated to 1326 (Madrid, Escorial, MS n. 1740, fig. 115). The similarity can be seen in the interlace patterns, in the character of the calligraphic ornamentation and its integration into the decoration, and in the composition in general. In the Madrid Qur'an, the Gothic-style foliate motifs are absent. Similarly dense compositions of interlace patterns are especially typical of late medieval Mudéjar decoration and can be found on ceilings, carved wooden panels, tiles, furniture, and textiles (fig. 4).

This similarity of patterns and composition to those in Islamic manuscripts and objects of art—Almohad, Nasrid, and Mudéjar—rather than to earlier Hebrew manuscripts from Castile or Navarre again casts doubt on the claim that the decoration programs of the Sephardic Bibles form a continuous chain from hypothetical examples from the Islamic period to the Catalan Bibles of the fourteenth century. The design of the carpet pages in the Bibles from Castile or the manuscripts of Joshua ibn Gaon is different in all of its details, and it was the contemporary Islamic carpet pages that served as a major source of inspiration for the design of the Farhi Bible, rather than earlier Jewish models. The designs used in the Farhi carpet pages therefore reflect a direct and ongoing dialogue with Islamic culture. The fact that the inspiration for the design of this book came from Almohad and Mujédar communities in Valencia, the Nasrid culture in Granada, or the Maghreb, rather than from Gothic France or Catalonia, will be examined in the next chapter.

A combination of Gothic and Islamicizing elements appears in the decoration of the tables listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali. Instead of the arches common in other Hebrew Bibles we find an abstract decoration of Islamicizing pen flourishings and interlace patterns beside Gothic-style foliate designs in the corners. The micrographic *masorah* also combines Islamic patterns with those that were customary in Gothic decoration.

The design of the Farhi Bible, in which the Islamic formal language predominates, places the Foa Bible in a broader context. A revival of the repertoire of forms based on contemporary Islamic art can thus be observed, after this repertoire nearly vanished around the middle of the fourteenth century. This revival of the use of the Islamicizing formal language apparently occurred in the 1370s and 1380s.

Up until now, I have discussed centers of Bible illumination in the Roussillon region, especially Perpignan, and in Barcelona, although

it should be noted that most of the manuscripts attributed to this city on the basis of a stylistic similarity to the Bassas and their followers contain no indication of their exact place of origin. The Sassoon Bible was produced, according to the colophon, in Cervera (in Catalonia). The attribution to Barcelona is thus based on a stylistic analysis of the Gothic decoration. It should be noted, however, that the Gothic decoration is quite limited, which makes stylistic analysis extremely difficult. This problem is particularly acute in the earlier group of Parma 2810, the Istanbul, and Harley Bibles, but to a certain extent it is also the case with regard to the Ambrosiana Bible and the later manuscripts, such as the Foa, Sassoon, and Duke of Sussex Bibles.

### *The King's Bible*

In 1384, another Bible, was written in Solsona in Catalonia (London, British Library, MS King's 1).<sup>59</sup> Although this book, known as the King's Bible, shares several elements with other Catalan Bibles of the second half of the fourteenth century,<sup>60</sup> it is unique in its design. Its Temple depiction, which extends over three pages (figs. 116, 117, and 118) appears against the background of the parchment, without a checkered or otherwise decorated pattern. The design of the implements combines conventions of the Perpignan Bible group with those that appear in the later manuscripts. The design of the menorah, for example, matches its counterpart in the later manuscripts, though not precisely. The leg and base of the menorah are different, but the wick tongs and ash scoops hang on the lower branch. The Mount of Olives is included in the depiction, but in a different manner from the way it is presented in the other books.

The design of the other implements corresponds to the Perpignan group (figs. 86 and 87): the basin is not goblet-shaped but instead appears as a jar with an animal-headed spout, reminiscent of the handles on the basins in the Parma (2668), and Perpignan Bibles. The shape of the pans is similar to those in the earlier books, as

<sup>59</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 56, 26–28; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 110.

<sup>60</sup> In this regard, in the context of the Ark of the Covenant, see Revel-Neher (1998), 78–79.

are the rectangular showbread table, the arrangement of the trumpets and the *shofar*, the forks and firepan of the sacrificial altar, and the more abstract design of the Ark of the Covenant, without rings or poles. The fact that the pedestal of the basin is in the form of a Gothic frame places the iconography in specific proximity to that of Modena 3.8 and the New York Bible. The abstract rendering of the cherubs—wings only—strengthens the connection to the New York Bible (the cherubs are absent from Modena 3.8). The addition of the two columns, Yakhin and Boaz, is new and unknown in any earlier Sephardic Bible. All three pages of the Temple depiction have calligraphic frames, but their texts lack any allusion to eschatological hopes.

The King's Bible includes a dedicatory page (fig. 119): "A *miqdashya* from me, Isaac bar Judah of Toulouse . . ." against a background of pen decoration. The general composition is similar to that of the carpet pages in other Bibles, but the details of the page are different.<sup>61</sup> Apart from the Gothic-style background behind the word *miqdashya*, there are very few elements borrowed from Gothic art in the King's Bible; on the other hand, the manuscript is not clearly rooted in the Islamic formal language. It has no Gothic arches, no foliate designs, no decorative *masorah*, neither has it Islamicizing patterns such as interlaces. Accordingly this book is relatively isolated from the others, which may have something to do with the fact that it was not produced in any of the artistic centers in Roussillon or Catalonia.

### *The Saragossa Bible*

Toward the end of the fourteenth century, due to increasingly precarious situation of the Jews in the Crown of Aragon, the tradition of Catalan Bible decoration came to an end. The population of Catalonia had decreased significantly as a result of the Black Plague in 1348–49, and the Jewish communities were harmed further by the mass conversions that were forced upon them in this period. The situation worsened with the anti-Jewish riots of 1391 from which the Jews of Catalonia recovered only very slowly. Economically, times

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., fig. 332.

were hard for Catalonia in general and the Jews in particular. The fifteenth century did not bring any real renewal of book art in the regions of the Crown. Relatively few Bibles from that period have survived, they are small in size, and their decoration is modest.

In 1404, a Bible was written in Saragossa by Vidal Satorre, the scribe of the Sassoon Bible (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. héb. 31).<sup>62</sup> From the standpoint of decoration, the two Bibles do not have very much in common. Though the Saragossa Bible has some of the features of Catalan Bibles, what is most striking at first glance is its much smaller size: its height is only 230 mm, an average of about 10 cm less than that of the earlier painted Catalan Bibles. The book also includes a depiction of the Temple,<sup>63</sup> but its state of preservation prevents identification of all of the details. A particularly prominent element is a full-page depiction of the Mount of Olives, with two birds flanking it. Zofia Ameisenova linked this depiction with the iconography of the Tree of Life and identified the two birds as the birds of Paradise, which symbolize the angels guarding the tree.<sup>64</sup>

The Saragossa Bible does not belong to any school or defined group, but is an isolated case that drew its inspiration from earlier books. Its Temple imagery is innovative in various respects, and in general the illuminator did not adhere to a particular program.

### *A Closer Look at the Temple Depictions*

The meaning of the implements,<sup>65</sup> their functions, and their sources in the Bible and rabbinic texts have been discussed extensively by

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<sup>62</sup> Garel (1990), no. 49.

<sup>63</sup> Metzger (1969–70), figs. 11–12.

<sup>64</sup> Ameisenova (1938–39), 341–42.

<sup>65</sup> A comparative iconographic analysis of the Catalan Temple depictions was made by Thérèse Metzger (1969–70). Her conclusions—the division of the depictions into two groups—cannot be confirmed by other features of the decoration schemes found in these books. The question of whether any correlation exists between different iconographic versions of the Temple depiction and other types of decoration, is not dealt with at all. Revel-Neher (1998), 61–62, discusses the Sephardic depictions of the Temple, focusing on the question of continuity and the religious, national, and eschatological significance of the Ark of the Covenant in Judaism through the ages.

Carl Otto Nordström,<sup>66</sup> Gutmann,<sup>67</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover,<sup>68</sup> Elisabeth Revel-Neher,<sup>69</sup> and recently by Eva Frojmovic.<sup>70</sup> All of these studies highlight the messianic implications of the images, and there is no need to deal with them further here. Instead I will focus on the question of conventions, on the one hand, and issues of cultural background and cultural identity, on the other. As in the case of the 1277 Parma Bible (figs. 30 and 31), the textual background of the Catalan implement pages indicates a great deal of adherence to late antique rabbinic sources, and especially the writings of Maimonides. Many of the points that I raised with regard to the Parma Bible are relevant also for the depictions covered in this chapter, and therefore I will deal here only with those details that do not appear in the Parma Bible.

Like the Parma Bible, all of the Catalan depictions include the jar of manna and Aaron's staff, and in some of them these objects are shown adjacent to the Ark—for example, in Parma 2810, and in the Harley (col. pl. VI), Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), King's Bible (fig. 118), Sassoon, and Saragossa Bibles. In many of the later Catalan depictions, the cherubs are not included—they appear only in the Perpignan Bible (fig. 85) and in some of its relatives, in the King's Bible (fig. 118), and in the Foa Bible (fig. 112). It is interesting to note in this context that in Maimonides' discussion of the Ark of the Covenant and in the entire Book of Temple Service, the cherubs are not mentioned. Although this omission is merely coincidental, it suggests—as in the case of the jar of manna and the staff—that our images were envisioned with Maimonides' discussions in mind. Nachmanides, on the other hand, goes into great detail regarding the cherubs. In his description of the Ark and its cover, the cherubs are mentioned repeatedly:

Moreover, one can also ask why did Scripture repeat the phrase *from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the Testimony* (Ex. 25:22), when it is known already from the preceding verses that the cherubim are upon the ark of Testimony? And what need is there to explain this again, seeing that He has already stated, *from above the ark-cover*,

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<sup>66</sup> Nordström (1968).

<sup>67</sup> Gutmann (1967–68); Gutmann (1976); Gutmann (1988).

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 101–104.

<sup>69</sup> Revel-Neher (1998).

<sup>70</sup> Frojmovic (2002).

from between the two cherubim (Ex. 25:22)? But the explanation thereof is as follows: Because He had commanded that *the cherubim shall spread out their wings on high* (Ex. 25:20), but had not said why they should be made altogether, and what function they should serve in the Tabernacle, and why they should be in that form, therefore He now said, *and thou shalt put the ark-cover with the cherubim, for they are all one, above upon the ark, because in the ark thou shalt put the Testimony that I shall give thee, so that there be for Me a Throne of Glory, for there will I meet with thee and I will cause My Glory to dwell upon them, and I will speak with thee from above the ark-cover, from between the two cherubim* because it is upon the ark of the Testimony (Ex. 25:22). It is thus identical with the Divine Chariot which the prophet Ezekiel saw, of which he said, *This is the living creature that I saw under the G-d of Israel by the river Chabar; and I knew that they were cherubim* (Ez. 10:20). This is why He is called *He Who sitteth upon the cherubim* (I Sam. 4:4), for they spread out their wings on high in order to teach us that they are the Chariot who carry the Glory, just as it is said, *and gold for the pattern of the chariot, even the cherubim, that spread out their wings, and covered the ark of the covenant of the Eternal* (I Chr. 28:18), as I have mentioned.<sup>71</sup>

Any illuminator with Nachmanides' view of the Temple in mind would certainly have included the cherubs. The visual image that is evoked by Maimonides' discussion, on the other hand, could easily result in an omission of the cherubs from a Temple depiction as is the case in most later Catalan paintings.

The shape of the showbreads on the table as shown in the Parma Bible (fig. 30) is repeated in all of the depictions without exception. The stands for the showbreads in the Perpignan Bible (fig. 86) and its relatives resemble those of the Parma Bible—the shelf structures open upward. The later illustrations do not always adhere faithfully to this form: whereas Parma 2810, and the King's (fig. 117), and Saragossa Bibles, for example, follow the earlier depictions of the shelf structures with their staves based on Maimonides' description,<sup>72</sup> the Harley (fig. 104), Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), Ambrosiana, and Foa Bibles (fig. 112) show the shelf structures closed upward and the upper loaves covered.

A brief look at the First Kennicott Bible in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Kenn 1), written in 1476 in La Coruña, Galicia, can help to ascertain the original arrangement of the staves. It contains a depiction of the Temple (fig. 135) that is probably loosely based

<sup>71</sup> Nachmanides' commentary on the Pentateuch, Ex. 25:21.

<sup>72</sup> See above, chap. 3, 79–80.

on an earlier Catalan model, apparently from the fourteenth century. Although it departs in many details from the original Catalan version, in this particular detail the rendering is more faithful to the textual description than any parallel. The staves can be clearly discerned here: three staves four times, but only two between the fifth and sixth showbreads. There can be no doubt that this iconography reflects Maimonides' detailed description of the shelf structures, as quoted above in the discussion of the Parma Bible.<sup>73</sup> The fact that the depiction as a whole is not especially accurate—for example, the cherubs hover above the table, one of the altars resembles the stepped stone of the menorah, whereas the actual steps beside the menorah are missing—indicates that though it is based on a model, some of the details were distorted when it was copied. However, with regard to the staves, no major alteration occurred, and it should be assumed that this depiction preserves an earlier iconography accurately and reflects Maimonides' text in particular faithfully.

Unlike that of the Parma Bible, the Catalan Temple depictions also include the implements of the sacrificial altar. The implements are listed in detail in the Bible (Ex. 27:3):

Make for it pots to take away the fat and the ashes, with shovels, tossing bowls, forks, and firepans, all of bronze.

The orderly array of these implements in the Perpignan Bible (fig. 86, at the bottom), accompanied by explicit captions, is a literal interpretation of the biblical verse. These vessels appear similarly also in the other Temple depictions in the Perpignan group (figs. 92 and 96). In the later manuscripts, however, the depiction of the altar implements is less precise. Among all of the commentators, only Rashi elaborates on the subject of these implements, but the shapes that appear in the Perpignan Bible do not accord with the additional information provided by Rashi to clarify the biblical text. For example, the shovels in the Perpignan Bible are not rakes, and they do not resemble “a pot cover,” as Rashi describes them. The receptacles with which the ash scoops are equipped according to Rashi's commentary do not appear in the visual depiction.<sup>74</sup> The conclusion is that Rashi's commentary—although often proposed as textual source for the Catalan depictions—was probably not among the

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Rashi on Ex. 27:3.



sources for these illustrations. For these implements the illuminator relied on the biblical text alone. Maimonides does not discuss the form and appearance of the altar implements at all.

The illuminator's adherence to Maimonides' detailed descriptions of the Temple and its implements can be confirmed by the fact that many of the captions<sup>75</sup> that accompany the implements in the Farhi Bible quote the Book of Temple Service word for word. An example is the text inserted between the two shelf structures of the showbread table, referring to the measurements of the Table and the way the breads were arranged: "The table was twelve handbreaths long . . ." It is the same text I quoted above in the discussion of the Parma Bible.<sup>76</sup>

All of these observations—the analysis of the implements in relation to Maimonides' text, the connection of the sacrificial altar to the drawings in Maimonides' commentary of the Mishna, the absence of the cherubs, the quotations in the Farhi Bible—clearly indicate that it was Maimonides' discussion of the Temple that stood behind the iconographic concept and creative process that led to the development of the Temple imagery in both the Parma Bible and the fourteenth-century Bibles from the Crown of Aragon.

The Perpignan Bible and its relatives display a certain degree of iconographic uniformity,<sup>77</sup> which decreases significantly in the later group. The first group—the Perpignan Bible (figs. 86 and 87), Copenhagen II (fig. 91 and 92), the two Modena Bibles (figs. 96 and 100), and the New York Bible—is characterized by conventions that

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<sup>75</sup> Those items of the former Sassoon Collection that have not yet been sold—among them the Farhi Bible—are currently not accessible to scholars; therefore the captions could only be examined in the microfilm of the Farhi Bible, where not all of the texts are easily readable. I would like to thank R. David Sassoon of Jerusalem, for his willingness to share with me all his photographs and ektachroms of the Bible.

<sup>76</sup> See above, chap. 3, 80, n. 72.

<sup>77</sup> In the National Library in Madrid (Cod. Res. 199), there is a copy of Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, which includes a depiction of the Temple. The iconography is similar in many aspects to that of the Temple depictions in the Perpignan Bible group, especially in Copenhagen II and the New York Bible; see Nordström (1964). Nordström assumed that the illustrations in the manuscript of the *Historia Scholastica* were influenced by Jewish sources, while Leila Avrin (1974), 200, suggested that the Jewish illuminators used copies of the *Historia Scholastica* as a model. The latter assumption is unlikely, since the iconography of the Madrid codex is unique and does not recur in other copies of the *Historia Scholastica*, whereas it recurs frequently in Hebrew Bibles.

are rooted in the Temple depiction of the Parma Bible (figs. 30 and 31). For example, the menorah consistently has the same appearance: its base is relatively high and has three legs in the shape of stylized leaves. The menorah implements, which also retain the same form, are arrayed in the area beneath the branches. The Ark looks the same, and it is relatively abstract: the two Tablets of the Law are long, narrow rectangles, and the cover of the Ark and all of its components are arranged in an abstract frame without rings or poles. Only in the depiction of the cherubs are there differences and varying degrees of abstractness. The portrayals in the Parma, Perpignan, and New York Bibles are extremely abstract, whereas the illuminators of Copenhagen II and Modena 8.4 did not fear an anthropomorphic approach. The depiction of the Ark in Modena 3.8, is even more extreme in its abstract approach and comprises only a gold frame divided into two rectangles; the upper side is a bit wide, protrudes beyond the other sides, and is meant to allude to the cover of the Ark. The cherubs are not depicted at all in this Bible. The shape of the showbread table is repeated: the table is depicted from the side and has a rectangular shape. It has four legs and two long, high shelf structures, above which are leaf-shaped incense saucers.

The golden altar is usually depicted as a cube with horns. In Modena 8.4, there appears to have been some confusion: the golden altar is also stepped and it has meshwork, which is missing in the sacrificial altar. In all of the other books, the sacrificial altar is stepped, with meshwork and a ramp to its left. Apart from Modena 8.4, all of the books depict the sacrificial altar with horns.

The shape of the basin preserves the convention that appears first in the Parma Bible and subsequently in the Perpignan Bible group; however, it undergoes development in the Modena manuscripts. In the Perpignan Bible and Copenhagen II, the basin is depicted in the shape of a jug with a round belly and a lid, three strips of ornamentation in the form of stylized acanthus leaves, and two handles in the shape of animals' heads. The depiction in Modena 8.4 borrows this shape, retaining the round belly but featuring only one strip of ornamentation. In Modena 3.8 the jug resembles that of Modena 8.4, but its shape has changed and it is now tall and narrower than its predecessor. The jar of manna follows the same convention in all of the Bibles in the Perpignan group—jug-shaped with a round belly, a long neck, and two polylobed handles. It usually stands beside the flowering staff, and sometimes it is accompanied

by the dry staff as well. The shapes of the trumpets and *shofar* repeat themselves, as do the shapes of the shovels, forks, and ash scoops; only in Modena 3.8 are the ash scoops lacking.

In the later group of books only a few of these features are retained. Most of the components have changed and new formal conventions have been created, though in general, there is not as much adherence to conventions. The way in which the menorah branches are portrayed remains faithful to the earlier depictions, but a new convention has developed with regard to its base, which has become wider and shorter, with the stylized leaves smaller in relation to the base. This shape first appears in the Istanbul Bible, and afterward it recurs in Parma 2810 (fig. 110), and the Harley (col. pl. VI), Duke of Sussex (fig. 106), Sassoon, and Foa Bibles. In most of these examples, the shapes of the implements, which now hang on the lower branch, are still similar to those in the Perpignan group. Only in the Duke of Sussex Bible does the shape deviate somewhat.

A new convention has also developed in the depiction of the showbread table: as in the earlier depictions, the table is shown from the side, but it is now trapezoidal, with convex sides. The legs of the table in the Harley (fig. 104), Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), Ambrosiana, Sassoon, and Foa Bibles (fig. 112) are nearly identical. Only in Parma 2810 is the depiction of the legs slightly different.

The jug-shaped jar of manna that is customary in the Perpignan Bible group also appears in the later group—in the Rome Pentateuch (fig. 101), even though most of the details in this depiction do not conform to those of its counterparts, and again in Parma 2810, the Harley (fig. 104), Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), and Ambrosiana Bibles. In the Foa Bible, on the other hand, this convention is used for the jug of oil (fig. 112), whereas the jar of manna, shown to the left of the menorah, appears as a long-necked jug with a handle. To the right of the menorah, we find the flowering staff. A similar arrangement appears in the Harley Bible: a similar jug and the staff beside it, at the foot of the menorah (col. pl. VI). Here, though, the jug is not meant to represent the jar of manna, since the latter appears on another folio in its typical shape and accompanied by a caption.

We also find a new convention in the depiction of the basin. Whereas in the Perpignan Bible group, the basin is a jug with animal-headed handles (fig. 87), in the later group it appears as a goblet (fig. 104, on the top right). The Istanbul Bible is apparently the last to contain the jug with the animal-headed handles, and there it

represents the jar of manna. This particular type of jug disappears in the later depictions.

The depictions of the altars are far less governed by conventions. In all of the examples, the sacrificial altar is stepped, and in most of them it has horns; the horns are absent only from the Rome Pentateuch (fig. 102) and the Sassoon Bible. In most of the depictions, the altar is accompanied by a ramp (fig. 104, for example), which always appears on the right-hand side. The ramp is missing in the Rome Pentateuch, and the Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), Sassoon, and Farhi Bibles. Only the golden altar in the Sassoon Bible resembles its predecessors in the Perpignan Bible group: it is depicted in the shape of a cube with horns. In the Harley (fig. 104) and Foa Bibles (fig. 112), it has the same shape, but a broader base, and an additional ascent similar to the ramp of the sacrificial altar; the ascent appears on the right side in the Harley Bible, and on the left side in the Foa Bible. In a few of the depictions, the golden altar has a shape similar to that of the sacrificial altar, it is stepped (fig. 107) and usually shown without horns (apart from the Farhi Bible) and without an ascent.

As to the Ark, there are two recurring types. They all include rings and poles, but in a few of the depictions, the Tablets of the Law are in the form of two vertical rectangles, one beside the other; examples are the Rome Pentateuch (fig. 101), the Istanbul, Duke of Sussex (fig. 107), Sassoon, Foa (fig. 112), and Farhi Bibles. In the other depictions they comprise two squares, one atop of the other; this is the case in Parma 2810 and the Harley (col. pl. VI), and Ambrosiana Bibles. No cherubs appear in any of these depictions.

This comparison reveals a large degree of independence and changeability in the design of the depictions. There are several conventions that are shared by most of them, and yet there is great variety in the shape of the implements and in the way in which they are arrayed on the page. No two depictions indicate any iconographic interdependence.

Only between the Harley (col. pl. VI, fig. 104) and Foa Bibles (fig. 112) few direct links can be observed: each of them features a similar jug and staff beside the menorah and the golden altar is depicted in a very similar way in both of them. They also share the other conventions, such as the shape of the showbread table, and the sacrificial altar. On the other hand, the depiction of the Ark and the design of the background are different: the Foa Bible has a

diapered pattern and the Harley Bible a foliate design. In the latter the Ark has no frame and, unlike the Foa Bible, it lacks any Gothic foliate decoration in the margins of the biblical text.

In terms of formal language and painting technique, the Foa Bible is closer to the Duke of Sussex Bible than to the Harley Bible. For example, the ornamentation of the arches decorating the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali features not only the thin, linear foliate design of the Harley Bible, but also the fleshy leaves of the Duke of Sussex Bible (col. pl. VIII). The decoration within the text (fig. 113) is also closer to counterparts in the Duke of Sussex Bible (figs. 106 and 107). In short, there is no way of unambiguously defining the relationship between the Foa and Harley Bibles, and to some degree the similarities may be coincidental.

The conclusion is that in the fourteenth century and especially in its second half, Catalonia had a repertoire of iconographic elements that was based somewhat on the depictions in the Perpignan Bible group. These observations do not enable any division of iconographic types along clearly definable lines that would enable us to group the manuscripts according to places or periods. It clearly indicates, on the other hand, that the approach to conventions was quite free. None of the images is a full copy of another. It would seem, therefore, that the approach to the Temple theme in the Perpignan group was quite different from that of the later examples. The Perpignan group—together with or rather following the Parma Bible—adheres to a particular concept, which is closely linked to Maimonides' views on the Temple. They do so quite faithfully, an approach that strongly favors the development of conventions with regard to the imagery. The later manuscripts set out from the basic premise of the Perpignan group, but become less and less conventional, and the images apparently cease to be conceived with a particular text or exegetical approach in mind. The impression is that the later Catalan Temple images were reproduced from memory rather than based on direct pictorial sources or particular text versions. An exception is the Farhi Bible, with its literal quotations of Maimonides' descriptions.

Three of the Temple depictions do not even have a common ground in the basic conventions. The Rome Pentateuch (figs. 101 and 102), the King's Bible (figs. 116, 117, and 118), and the Farhi Bible are different from the others in the design of most of their details, and yet there is no iconographic connection between them.

The Rome Pentateuch diverges in many respects from the conventional approach of the Perpignan group. However, nothing indicates that it stands behind the design of any specific later manuscript. As noted above, several iconographic elements in the King's Bible were borrowed from the Perpignan Bible group, though the resemblance is not total. It has nothing to do with the Rome Pentateuch's relation to the Perpignan group. The implements are arrayed differently and include the Yakhin and Boaz columns. And yet, as in the Perpignan Bible, the implements appear against the parchment background without additional decoration. Finally, the design of the implements in the Farhi Bible is characterized by a highly individualistic approach. Apart from the Ark of the Covenant, the implements have no real parallels in the details, shape, and design. They may have been based on the illuminator's personal study of texts related to the Temple.

In conclusion, continuity, homogeneity, and iconographic connections are clearly in evidence only within the Perpignan Bible group. These manuscripts, most of which do not have a known place and date, may therefore have been produced near each other—perhaps all of them in the Roussillon region—and in a similar time framework, the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The approach to the Temple imagery was conventional, and direct copying from models was a normative procedure in the workshops that produced these Bibles. Between 1325 (the Rome Pentateuch) and 1336 (the Istanbul Bible) this conventional approach was discarded. New conventions developed, but only for a few implements. From this period on, a repertoire of the traditional iconographic conventions was used by the illuminators, but at their own discretion. The manuscripts were produced in various areas—we know of Barcelona, Cervera, and southern France—and at different times over the course of the century. The lack of iconographic similarity suggests that some of the implements, or entire depictions, were reproduced from memory. While real iconographic development cannot be detected, we can discern a development in terms of forms and motifs: from the Perpignan group, with its Temple depictions, Gothic arches, and micrographic carpet pages, to the absence of carpet pages, iconographic changes in depictions of the Temple, and the addition of Gothic-style foliate design toward the middle of the century and thereafter, to the revival of painted carpet pages, together with a renewed adherence to Maimonides' text, in the later part of the second half of the century, without relinquishing other features that

were customary in other books of that time, such as the Gothic-style foliate design.

In the middle of the fourteenth century or thereabouts, the decoration program of the Catalan Bibles influenced the design of another Bible, whose place of origin is unclear. The book is in the Karaite Synagogue in Cairo (to be referred to as Gottheil 16 in the following),<sup>78</sup> and—like the Cervera Bible—includes not only the biblical text but also David Kimhi's *Sefer Mikhlol*. Along with decorated *parashah* signs it features also *seder* markings decorated with simple penwork. Therefore, the book was probably produced in Castile, rather than in the Crown of Aragon. Indeed, in spite of some echoes of the Catalan iconographic tradition, there are no real parallels to this manuscript's decoration program.

The decoration is lavish and the Gothic tradition prevails in its formal language and painting technique. It includes initial panels at the beginning of biblical books, with a variety of vegetal patterns. Emerging from these panels are floral motifs typical of Gothic marginal decoration in the fourteenth century. These motifs lack any three-dimensional effect and recall those found in early fourteenth-century Passover Haggadot.<sup>79</sup> They have nothing in common with the fleshy leaves of the Bassa school. A similar approach was used in the decoration of the *parashah* signs. The manuscript includes one carpet page, which is covered with small squares and its dense design is similar to parallels in early medieval Spanish manuscripts (fig. 44). This artistic tradition is also manifest in the arches that frame the text columns at the beginning of the book. They are shaped like horseshoe arches, but the decoration around them is typically Gothic. Apart from the carpet page, there are smaller panels with different ornamentation, usually in a technique typical for Gothic manuscript decoration, but in some cases with interlace patterns. Some of these are reminiscent of depictions of the *matsah* in Passover Haggadot from the fourteenth century.<sup>80</sup> Most of these panels appear in Kimhi's text.

Gottheil 16 also contains a depiction of the Temple, which extends over three pages. A few of the details recall Catalan counterparts, but most of the elements are unique. Each of the three pages has

<sup>78</sup> Gottheil (1905), no. 16, 630–31.

<sup>79</sup> See examples in Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 57–101.

<sup>80</sup> For example, *ibid.*, fig. 153.

a checkered background. The shape of the Ark of the Covenant is a complete departure from all of the conventions in the Catalan depictions: in its center are two rectangular, narrow, and high tablets enclosed in a structure that is reminiscent of the above-mentioned depictions of the Ark from late Antiquity. Above the Ark is a decoration composed of Gothic-style arches that are similar to the conches common in the late antique depictions; they rest on two stylized columns. This depiction does not resemble any of its counterparts in other Bibles. In a certain sense, it renews an ancient tradition that is described by Revel-Neher,<sup>81</sup> and which appears in the Sephardic realm only in the Sarajevo Haggadah (fig. 36).

To the right of the Ark is a depiction of the Mount of Olives. A full page is devoted to the menorah and its image is more in line with the Catalan parallels of the second half of the fourteenth century than are all of the other elements in the Temple depiction. The third page is devoted to the altars and includes the sacrificial altar in a form known from many other examples. A second altar appears in the lower part of the folio; it has horns and is stepped, but only on one side, and is thus similar the stepped stone of the menorah in the Catalan depictions. This peculiarity might have been the result of a misunderstanding on the part of the illuminator. Arrayed on the page is another assemblage of implements, including two ash scoops in the shape of small brooms. This difference may also be due to a misunderstanding, though the ash scoops are depicted in this way in the King's Bible (fig. 118), the Farhi Bible, and a fourteenth-century copy of Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, now in Madrid.<sup>82</sup> This depiction is apparently based on the Jewish iconography that was customary in the Catalan Bibles.<sup>83</sup> Like the King's Bible, the manuscript of the *Historia Scholastica* is iconographically similar to counterparts in the Perpignan Bible group.

In conclusion, the manuscript in Cairo does not belong to the Catalan group of Bibles but its design was influenced by them. The *seder* markings indicate a Castilian origin and the style of the painting indicates that the manuscript was produced before the middle of the fourteenth century. The depiction of the Temple draws from a variety of sources—both from the Perpignan Bible group and from

<sup>81</sup> See chap. 3, 83–84.

<sup>82</sup> See above, n. 77; Revel-Neher (1998), fig. 76.

<sup>83</sup> Nordström (1964).



later Catalan examples. Apart from them, other, unknown sources were used by the illuminator.

### *Decoration of the Masorah Magna*

A relatively small group of Bibles features more modest, unpainted decoration. The *masorah* is written in decorated micrography, with some additional penwork. Common to all of these manuscripts are their relatively small dimensions in comparison with the other Catalan Bibles—their height varies between 21 and 26 cm. The more elegant, painted manuscripts are about 10 cm larger on the average. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover suggest that the larger, more sumptuous volumes were intended for synagogue services, whereas the smaller specimens were meant for private use. Another indication of this practice is the dedication in the King's Bible, which states that the patron is “giving the *miqdashya*”—which probably means that he is donating it to the community.<sup>84</sup> Apart from the King's Bible, however, none of the manuscripts contain any notation that they are the property of or given to a community; the names of patrons are mentioned without any hint as to whether the book was meant for private or public use. Only Elisha Benvenisti mentions that he produced the Farhi Bible for his own use. It is likely that the volumes containing the Pentateuch with the *haftarot* were indeed meant for use in a synagogue, but those books are in the minority.

The use of micrography is a longstanding tradition in the art of the Hebrew book. Geometric and interlace patterns were customarily used in the Middle East, northern Africa, and Castile. In Joshua ibn Gaon's environment in Navarre, the illuminators specialized in various animal patterns, and in Catalan manuscripts vegetal patterns predominate.<sup>85</sup> A common motif in Catalan micrographic dec-

<sup>84</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 101.

<sup>85</sup> Metzger (1974), 95, mentions two manuscripts that indicate the existence of such a tradition in Aragon as well. However, neither of them contains enough information to attribute them to any artistic tradition. One is in Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 3183), see Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 8. It is the more lavish of the two and includes a carpet page with a centered pattern and a *masorah* decorated with geometric patterns. The second manuscript is in the Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, MS Rossian, 601. A common denominator of the two manuscripts is

oration<sup>86</sup> is the candelabrum-like tree. As noted, this pattern is already known from the thirteenth century, from other regions; it can be found, for example, in Cambridge 465 and Madrid 1 (fig. 22). It also appears in a manuscript that was produced in Barcelona in 1278 (Parma, Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 3214).<sup>87</sup> In ca. 1300, it reappeared in the manuscripts of Joshua ibn Gaon, and in 1325, it was included in the Rome Pentateuch, from Barcelona. In the second half of the fourteenth century, the pattern became common in Catalonia and it is known from the Harley (fig. 105), Duke of Sussex (fig. 108), and Foa Bibles,<sup>88</sup> as well as other manuscripts.

This motif also appears in three smaller manuscripts, one of them written in Castillon d'Ampurias in 1396.<sup>89</sup> The latter includes only the Book of Prophets and the Hagiograph and there is no information as to whether the beginning of the book had any decorations reminiscent of the various Catalan decoration types, such as a Temple depiction, or carpet pages. In the extant parts, we find a large assortment of vegetal micrographic patterns, including the tree design.<sup>90</sup> This book is notable for its wealth of micrographic patterns, which may be related to its later date. As we will see, in the fifteenth century micrography played an increasing role in the design of Bibles from Castile. However, many of the patterns in the manuscript from Castillon d'Ampurias—apart from the candelabrum-like tree—have no parallels.

The fact that the extant parts of the manuscript contain no painted decoration, such as foliate design at the beginning of the books, may indicate that there was none, even at the beginning of the codex. The book was produced a short time after the anti-Jewish riots of 1391, at a time when Catalan Jewry was struggling to recover. Expensive painted decoration was no longer done in Catalonia, and the patron may have settled for micrographic decoration, which was a challenge for the masoretor. Though the micrographic decoration is very opulent, from the standpoint of material quality, such as size,

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the horseshoe arch decoration, but in the other aspects the two books are completely different. On the Parma manuscript, see also Tamani (1968), 47.

<sup>86</sup> On micrographic decoration in general, see Metzger (1974); Avrin (1981); Gutmann (1983).

<sup>87</sup> Tamani (1968), 46; Metzger (1974), 36; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 17.

<sup>88</sup> Garel (1979), fig. 8.

<sup>89</sup> See above, 146.

<sup>90</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), figs. 338–39.

use of gold, and a rich palette of colors, this book does not compare to those produced prior to 1391.

No indication of date or place of production is provided in two other books, one housed in London (British Library, MS Add. 15252, fig. 120),<sup>91</sup> and the other in Cambridge (University Library, MS Mm. 5.27).<sup>92</sup> Comparing their micrographic decoration with that of late-fourteenth-century manuscripts, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover date them to the last quarter of the century,<sup>93</sup> but we do not have enough information to establish this date with certainty. The Castillon Bible's rich and varied micrographic decoration has no parallels in London 15252 or Cambridge 5.27.<sup>94</sup> The Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem (MS 4<sup>o</sup>780) possesses a Bible with features similar to these three manuscripts, though it is considerably larger (27×34 cm). The micrography is decorated with similar patterns and also includes modest painted decoration at the beginning of Genesis.<sup>95</sup> An extensive study of micrographic techniques, patterns, and motifs has not yet been undertaken. As essentially a scribal type of decoration, micrography was clearly governed by norms different from those common among illuminators, who were entrusted with the painted decoration of Bibles and other manuscripts.

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<sup>91</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 60, 31–32; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 100–109, figs. 328–31.

<sup>92</sup> Schiller-Szinessy (1876), 12–15; Kahle (1931); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 113–55, fig. 337; Reif (1997), 54.

<sup>93</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 114.

<sup>94</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 118–21, attribute two more manuscripts to this group: London, British Library, MS Harley 5773, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hunt. 69. Their common denominators are their small dimensions and their micrographic decoration. In both of them, the micrographic decoration is confined to geometric patterns, and neither of them feature floral designs. Since this type of micrographic decoration, does not exist in any other context in Catalonia, not only the attribution of the two books to this group is doubtful, but also the possibility that they were produced in Catalonia. Nor is there any reason to date them to the end of the 14th c.; in fact, there is no basis at all for determining a date. Moreover, when the Oxford codex was originally written, only the *parashot* were marked; at some stage another, less professional hand, added *seder* markings, which may indicate that this book was in use in Castile and perhaps was produced there.

<sup>95</sup> Weiser (1992), 20–22.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CULTURAL TRANSITION AND THE ART OF THE HEBREW BOOK

Bibles are only one aspect of the art of the Hebrew book. The following chapter will discuss them in the context of other illuminated manuscripts produced in late medieval Iberia. Looking at Sephardic books of various types—such as Bibles, Haggadot, manuscripts of Maimonides' writings, and prayer books—we find two different visual idioms, reflecting different cultural identities, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ideological, cultural, and social conflicts. One—as observed in most Bibles—is the non-narrative, non-figurative, almost aniconic idiom marked by a clear preference for ornamental decoration that is influenced, often considerably, by Islamic ornamentation. Some of the decoration programs belong completely to the cultural world of the Middle East and others are open to various Gothic influences, but the non-figurative approach—the most dominant characteristic of the Islamic heritage—is common to all of them.

At first glance, this approach might seem to be an integral part of Jewish culture, in light of the Second Commandment (Ex. 20:4): “You must not make a carved image for yourself, nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth.” The avoidance of figurative motifs, however, seems to come from the Islamic aniconic approach rather than a narrow interpretation of the biblical precept.<sup>1</sup> Rabbinic authorities mostly allow representational art in two-dimensional media, while the restriction prevails for figurative sculpture.<sup>2</sup> The history of Jewish art has shown that the presence or absence of figurative painting is not entirely a matter of adherence to the law but owes more to

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<sup>1</sup> For the rabbinic attitude to the Second Commandment in late antiquity, see, for example, Urbach (1959); for the Middle Ages, see Schubert (1984), 69–79; for a selection of sources on this matter, see Mann (2000). For a recent discussion on the notion of Judaism as an antivisual culture, see Bland (2000).

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Maimonides, *Mishne Torah*, book 1, *Hilkhot Avodat Kokhavim wechuqot Ovdeha*, 3:10; for an English translation of this statement, see Mann (2000), 23–24.

acculturation. Within a Roman, Greek, or Christian environment, Jewish art was often figurative, whereas within Islamic culture, ornamental decoration was the norm.<sup>3</sup>

Alongside the non-figurative idiom, is another artistic language telling the story of the Jewish people in a rich narrative mode and fully employing figurative imagery; its style is strongly influenced by Christian Gothic art,<sup>4</sup> and almost totally ignores Islamic culture (figs. 121, 123, and 126). The use of this artistic idiom is typical of a group of illuminated Haggadot.

Neither dates nor provenances can convincingly explain the development of these distinct artistic languages within the Jewish art of the Iberian Peninsula. They largely overlap chronologically and geographically. The Islamicizing aniconic idiom appeared around the 1230s in Castile and c. 1300 in Roussillon, and then spread to Catalonia and Aragon, where it remained popular throughout the fourteenth century; the other idiom, more limited in time span and region, developed in Castile in the late thirteenth century and flourished in Catalonia between 1320 and ca. 1375. None of the examples of this latter group is dated or bears an indication of origin, but former research has placed them in these particular artistic environments and time frames.

Associating narrative-figurative language with Haggadot and the aniconic approach with Bibles seemed hitherto to have been a means of explaining the coexistence of two such different visual languages. That is how Bezalel Narkiss, Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, and Anat Tcherikover deal with this phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> Recently, Gabrielle Sed-Rajna presented the two visual languages in terms of artistic development and chronology. In her opinion, the Islamic influence characterizes the art of the earlier Hebrew book; this art gradually became open to influences from the surrounding culture and also included new themes, including narrative ones. These new themes are described by Sed-Rajna as a revolutionary innovation in the illustrative art of Hebrew manuscripts. From the few buds of text illustration in the Damascus *Keter* and manuscripts decorated by Joshua ibn Gaon in Tudela in 1300, Sed-Rajna maintains, the narrative tradition devel-

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<sup>3</sup> It is interesting to note in this connection that documents in Saragossa from 1383 and 1406 mention a Jewish artist, Abraham de Salinas, who painted at least four pictures for various churches in Saragossa—see Blasco Martínez (1989).

<sup>4</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover, 13–15.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

oped, coming into full bloom in the illustrations of the Catalan Haggadot of the fourteenth century.<sup>6</sup> This viewpoint ignores the continued existence of the Islamicizing visual language not only at the same time, but also in the same region.

Similarly, according to Gutmann, the Islamicizing decoration reflects the heritage of “the first Golden Age of Jewry in Islamic Spain,” whereas the narrative decoration inserted in the Haggadot reflects an interaction with the Christian environment.<sup>7</sup>

Kurt and Ursula Schubert also examined this phenomenon and concluded that since the Bible was a book of a public nature, used during synagogue services, its decoration was strongly influenced by Islam’s strict adherence to the Second Commandment; the Haggadah, which usually remained within the confines of the home, reflected a more liberal attitude.<sup>8</sup>

### *Islamic Culture, Aniconism, and the Sephardic Bibles*

The Spanish Hebrew Bible first flowered during the reigns of Fernando III (1217–52) and his successor, Alfonso X the Wise of Castile (1252–84). As noted,<sup>9</sup> this period has been characterized by some scholars as *convivencia*. However, this was not only a period of intense cultural exchange between the three religions, but also one of cultural transition and transformation: Spain, previously the westernmost outpost of the Islamic Empire, became a group of Christian kingdoms, and Spanish Christianity, previously a minority on the frontier, became part of Christian Europe. Thus, Spanish Jewry found itself shifted from an Islamic environment to a Christian one. No scholarly effort is necessary to observe that aniconic decorative patterns reflect an exchange with Islamic culture, whereas the iconographic program of the biblical picture cycles has its counterpart in the Christian world. Instead of being seen as a conclusion, this distinction could become a starting point in an investigation of how this cultural transition shaped Jewish art, what steps the transition took, and what the use of an Islamic idiom meant.

<sup>6</sup> Sed-Rajna (1992).

<sup>7</sup> Gutmann (1978), 20.

<sup>8</sup> Schubert (1984), 76–77.

<sup>9</sup> See above, chap. 1, 25–30.

As shown in the previous chapters, the Islamic component in Bible decoration in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Castile, Navarre, and the Crown of Aragon was extremely dominant, but even in those cases in which the Gothic formal language played a more prominent role, the ornamental character of Bibles, as opposed to the narrative character of the Haggadot, is self-evident. The illuminators were inspired by various models, but common to all is an abstract approach to depictions of the Temple, the flat representation of its implements (figs. 85 and 86), and the use of ornamental carpet pages (col. pls. I and IX) and other non-figurative patterns—many of them borrowed from a repertoire of forms that is customary in Islamic art. All of these features point to the Islamic culture as the soil from which this creative process sprung.

In the decoration program of Bibles from Toledo, a Middle Eastern visual language is dominant, even though these Bibles were produced nearly 200 years after the Christian conquest of Toledo. Whether the Damascus *Keter* (figs. 26–29) originated in Toledo or Burgos is not certain. The latter had been Christian ever since its founding in the ninth century. These two cities are salient examples of *convivencia*. With the conquest of Toledo in 1085, the Christian society dealt for the first time with a large Muslim population that chose to remain in the city instead of emigrating southward to the area under Muslim rule. In the centuries to come, the Muslim population constantly decreased due to migration to Muslim territories, but Mudéjar culture always remained a component of Toledo's cultural ambiance. Although Burgos had never been under Muslim rule, a relatively large Mudéjar community lived there as well. When the city was a political and economic center in Old Castile, it attracted many Mudéjars who were expert in a variety of crafts, such as ceramics and the building trades. Toledo and Burgos also had important Jewish communities. At the same time, it should be remembered that these two cities were first and foremost Christian cities. The prevailing culture was Christian and the churches that were built there in the thirteenth century were Gothic in every sense. The illuminated manuscripts produced in the court of Alfonso X contain echoes of an early medieval style of decoration (fig. 17),<sup>10</sup> but the Gothic style is dominant in them. Though Mudéjar craftsmanship played an important role and left many imprints—primarily in the sphere of archi-

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<sup>10</sup> See chap. 3, 53.

tectural decoration of secular buildings—there is no doubt that the Christian culture of Toledo and Burgos in the thirteenth century had caught up with that of Christian Europe.

The Bibles discussed in Chapter Three, then, were produced in an artistic environment that was first and foremost Gothic Christian. However, they do not simply display a few Islamic elements as a reminder of the Islamic cultural heritage or an echo of Mudéjar culture in the illuminators' surroundings. They, in fact, clearly favor the visual language borrowed from the Islamic culture. The distinct preference for Islamicizing motifs in the Toledan manuscripts harks back to the previous cultural symbiosis between Judaism and Islam, and Jewish scribes and artists were very comfortable with the Islamic artistic language, disregarding the repertoire of forms that was used in Christian art at the time.

This preference also characterized the architectural decoration of the synagogues in Toledo and elsewhere in Spain. Both of the synagogues that have survived in Toledo were built under Christian rule in a distinctly Mudéjar style.<sup>11</sup> One is associated with Joseph Ben Meir ibn Shoshan and was built in the thirteenth century. The other was built for Samuel Halevi Abulafia in 1356. All of the synagogue remains are in areas in which Islamic culture flourished for a long time and which were inhabited by large Mudéjar communities that left their imprint on architectural decoration. The work of the Mudéjares in various building trades was popular among Christians and Jews, but for the Jews it was a definite preference; they did not use any Romanesque or Gothic features.

Sometimes not only the architectural decoration but even the basic shape of a synagogue would be in the Islamic style. One example is the interior space in the Ibn Shoshan synagogue in Toledo, which is divided by four rows of columns placed close together; it is reminiscent of the hypostyle halls commonly found in mosques in Spain and throughout the Islamic world.<sup>12</sup> The influence of Christian

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<sup>11</sup> Detailed descriptions and discussions of these synagogues can be found in Cantera Burgos (1984); Ben Dov (1989). Recently, Jerrilyn Dodds discussed the question of the Mudéjar style in the synagogues in light of the cultural exchanges; see Dodds, *Mudéjar Tradition and Synagogues* (1992) 113–32; with regard to the Sephardic synagogues in light of the government laws and other documents, see Assis, *Synagogues* (1992).

<sup>12</sup> An outstanding example can be found in the Great Mosque of Cordoba; see Dodds (1990), 94–105.



architecture, on the other hand, is minimal. It is known only from the relatively late (ca. 1460) synagogue in Tomar, Portugal,<sup>13</sup> where the shape of the arches and the style of the columns and capitals are attributed to the Christian architectural tradition. However, as Jerrilyn Dodds notes, the floor plan of the same synagogue is similar to those that were common in small mosques throughout the Islamic world.<sup>14</sup>

The use of Islamic stylistic elements by Jews in Christian-ruled areas attests, as noted, to the centuries-old cultural symbiosis between Judaism and Islam, a symbiosis that has no parallel in the cultural encounter between Christianity and Judaism. Dodds defines the relationships of the Mudéjar-style synagogues with their Islamic models.<sup>15</sup> She also describes the links between the Ibn Shoshan synagogue in Toledo and the style of decoration that was common at that time in Almohad architecture in the Maghreb. She suggests very convincingly that the Jewish patrons and the architects they employed did not just choose an Islamic style from the remote past, but used patterns and motifs that were common in Islamic cultures in their time.

Her conclusion about Abulafia's synagogue, on the other hand, is, in my opinion, farfetched. The stucco decoration in this building is strongly reminiscent of the style that was used in the fourteenth century in the Nasrid court in Granada and dominates, for example, the decoration of the Alhambra.<sup>16</sup> Dodds argues that this choice reflects an ideological affinity for King Pedro I, who was known as Pedro the Cruel. Pedro was frequently criticized for his friendly relations with the Nasrids. The architecture of his time indeed shows a notable preference for the Mudéjar style. The Alcazar, Pedro's palace in Seville, echoes in most respects the style common in Nasrid art.<sup>17</sup> Abulafia, who served as Pedro's treasurer and adviser, was compelled to praise the king in one of the inscriptions inside the synagogue. His ultimate fate, however, clearly proves the fragility of his status. After having been arrested in 1360 for unknown reasons, he was tortured and died in prison. In short, the cultural and social atmos-

<sup>13</sup> Ben Dov (1989), 136.

<sup>14</sup> Dodds, *Mudéjar Tradition and Synagogues* (1992), 129.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 113–32.

<sup>16</sup> Stewart (1974); Grabar (1992); Dickie (1992); Fernandez Puertas (1997).

<sup>17</sup> With regard to the stylistic similarity between Pedro's palace and Abulafia's synagogue, see Goldman (1992).

phere of mid-fourteenth century Castile was not conducive to a cultural symbiosis of the type that prevailed in the Islamic period.

It seems, therefore, that Abulafia's affinity for Nasrid architecture simply coincided with Pedro's and did not necessarily stem from a need to identify with him, as Dodds maintains. It is likely that the architects and designers of the synagogue were directly influenced by Islamic patterns, rather than drawing their inspiration from secular Christian architecture in the Mudéjar style; Pedro's palace was, in fact, the work of builders from Granada and not domestic Mudéjar builders.<sup>18</sup>

The Mudéjares were, as noted, known for their expertise in various building trades: architecture, architectural decoration, ceramics, and tile-making. Their work had considerable influence on the development of Spanish architecture in the Middle Ages, and the building tradition they created spread as far as Latin America. All of the synagogues that are known to us in Spain drew from this stylistic tradition, and notwithstanding the modern scholar's deep interest in seeking ways to interpret this phenomenon by identifying it with one culture or another, we should not forget that this is simply an artistic language popular with certain sectors.

On the other hand, very little is known to us about the Mudéjar style in the sphere of illuminated manuscripts. To the best of my knowledge, Islamic illuminated manuscripts produced in Mudéjar communities under Christian rule have not survived. We do not even know very much about the decoration of manuscripts that were produced under Muslim rule.<sup>19</sup> Only a few publications have been devoted to the influence of Islamic art on Spanish Christian painting. Karl Werckmeister discussed the relatively few influences on the illumination of early medieval manuscripts.<sup>20</sup> In 1953, Francis Spalding published a small book about the Mudéjar ornamentation in a group of Christian manuscripts.<sup>21</sup> In his opinion, the filigree pen decorations that were common in western manuscripts in the late Middle Ages were rooted in Islamic art. This theory is not relevant to Hebrew manuscripts. When this type of decoration began to appear in Hebrew books, it was already an integral part of the art of the book

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<sup>18</sup> See above, chap. 2, 56, n. 99.

<sup>19</sup> Khemir (1992).

<sup>20</sup> Werckmeister (1965).

<sup>21</sup> Spalding (1953).

throughout Europe; therefore, its use in Hebrew manuscripts was simply a matter of adopting a popular type of decoration and not a case of direct Islamic influence. To sum up, a Mudéjar tradition in manuscripts is not known, and when we speak of Hebrew manuscripts, we are not speaking of an artistic fashion as in the case of architecture, but rather an isolated phenomenon in the overall context of illumination of manuscripts in Spain, a phenomenon that is unique to Jewish art and has no parallels in Christian art.

In light of these facts, no analogy can be drawn between the preference for the Islamic style in Hebrew manuscripts and its dominance in the architecture and decoration of the synagogues. In thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Castile, Mudéjar-style architecture and architectural decoration was found all over and could easily be adopted. Moreover, it was also likely that Mudéjar builders were hired for the construction of synagogues. On the other hand, it should not be assumed that Mudéjar illuminators were employed in the production of Hebrew manuscripts. Apparently, there was no tradition of manuscript illumination among the Mudéjares. The Islamicizing style was preferred by Jewish patrons, scribes, and illuminators because they were far more familiar with the Islamic cultural language than with the Christian cultural idiom. Decorators and scribes in the second half of the thirteenth century in Toledo still preferred this language even though the city had been ruled for nearly 200 years by Christians and the Christian culture was the dominant one in their immediate environment.

From 1300 on, similar principles of decoration guided illuminators and scribes in Roussillon and Catalonia. Depiction of the Temple became widespread, as did the carpet page. Despite the introduction of Gothic formal and stylistic elements, the Islamicizing tradition played a central role until the end of the fourteenth century. When the Perpignan Bible was signed, Roussillon was part of the kingdom of Mallorca, and thereby also part of the federation of the Crown of Aragon. Culturally, Roussillon had been closely linked to Catalonia for many generations. The entire area had been rooted in the Christian culture of France ever since Louis the Pious had conquered Barcelona in 801. The connection between Catalonia and southern France had always been much stronger than that of the other Spanish kingdoms. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Catalan art was completely Gothic, and this style constituted the artistic environment of the Jewish scribes and decorators. At a time

when Mudéjar culture had a prominent presence in other areas of the Crown, such as southern Aragon and Valencia, it was absent from northern Catalonia and Roussillon. Limited exposure to Islamic culture came only with the conquest of Saragossa and Huesca at the beginning of the twelfth century, and Valencia in the middle of the thirteenth century.

Catalan Jewry left very few architectural remains. Not one complete synagogue survived in the entire area. The only traces that have appeared are the remains of three bathhouses found recently in Besalù, Barcelona, and Gerona. The latter is called “the Arab bathhouse” by local residents. Since we do not know of a Mudéjar community in this city, scholars assume that this is a Jewish building that was referred to in that fashion because of its Islamic style.<sup>22</sup> The remains of the building in Besalù are dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century and fragments of a Romanesque vault can be discerned.<sup>23</sup> We should not reach sweeping conclusions on the basis of this solitary find, but it may be an indication that in a period when the Jews of Castile had a definite preference for Islamic types of construction and architectural decoration, the Jews of Catalonia included also Christian architectural elements from their surroundings among the components of their building style.

As shown in Chapter Five the Catalan Hebrew Bibles not only revive the decoration program rooted in an Islamic cultural environment, but also echo—in some cases slightly, in others more explicitly—the European Christian Gothic artistic environment of fourteenth-century Catalonia. Yet here, too, it is Islamic design and aniconism that are dominant. Viewed in the light of the cultural tradition of Catalonia, especially its northern parts, where Islamic culture never played the role it did in Castile, this preference for Islamic features is surprising, and its circumstances need to be explored further. In past research on Sephardic manuscript painting, the culture of the entire peninsula has been treated uniformly as a Christian culture nourished heavily by its Islamic heritage. This approach is misleading as the Islamic features in Catalan Jewish art cannot be judged by the same criteria as those of Castilian Jewish art.

Bezalel Narkiss’s recent publication on the Golden Haggadah includes a discussion of the flourishing Jewish community in “Moslem

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<sup>22</sup> Lacave (1992), 465.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

Barcelona” in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries. According to Narkiss, the wealth of the fourteenth-century Barcelona community and its roots in the Islamic past account for the splendor of the Golden Haggadah.<sup>24</sup> This notion is founded on a misconception: a Judeo-Islamic community never existed in Barcelona. The city was conquered by the Carolingians in 801.<sup>25</sup> “Old Catalonia” had only a small Islamic cultural presence. It was never large and strong enough to leave a cultural imprint on its environment and to be as influential as the Mudéjar community was in Burgos, for example. Few such communities existed in the towns of northern Catalonia. It was, in fact, the Jews who were the cultural conduits between the two worlds. Although the Jewish community of Barcelona had no Islamic history, it included among its members the descendants of immigrants from the south who had fled the Almohad persecutions of the twelfth century. According to Philip Daileader, Perpignan never housed a Muslim community.<sup>26</sup> This is true also of northern Catalonia.<sup>27</sup> In only a few towns is there evidence of a small Muslim population. Gerona, for example, can account for one Mudéjar household.<sup>28</sup> Only Barcelona, apparently because it was an economic center, had a slightly larger Mudéjar population.<sup>29</sup>

It is all the more puzzling, therefore, that within this western European Christian Gothic cultural environment, the Islamic artistic idiom enjoyed a strong revival in the decoration of Hebrew Bibles. Until now, scholars have offered the explanation that the earlier artistic tradition was transmitted from the Middle East to fourteenth-century Catalonia via Castile, or they have attributed the phenomenon to the presence of Islamic culture on the peninsula in general. Considering, however, the cultural past of the Catalan heartland, Languedoc, and Roussillon with their links to Christian France rather than to Muslim Spain, this latter conclusion is erroneous.

Conduits for the transmission of Islamic influence to fourteenth-century Catalonia did exist. They included the descendants of Jewish immigrants from the south, Mudéjar communities in the conquered

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<sup>24</sup> Narkiss (1997), 64.

<sup>25</sup> As described in detail, for example, by O’Callaghan (1975), 106.

<sup>26</sup> Daileader (2000), 131.

<sup>27</sup> Lourie (1990), VII, 17; Nirenberg (1996), 22.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Romano (1976), 49–88; Nirenberg (1996), 22.

areas of Saragossa and Valencia, and Jewish diplomats from Catalonia who were sent on missions to the Islamic world.<sup>30</sup> Although Catalan trade in general—and Jewish international trade in particular—was in decline in the fourteenth century, we do know of Catalan Jewish merchants who traded with the Maghreb, while other branches of commerce with other parts of the Muslim world became less and less available to Jews, due to an increase in Christian commercial activity in the high and late Middle Ages.<sup>31</sup>

And yet, the dominance of the Islamic idiom in the Hebrew Bibles is striking. Commerce is not a sufficient explanation here. Moreover, the fact that Christian merchants had trade connections with the Middle East did not mean that Islamic culture had the same (if any) impact on Christian Catalan art that it had on Jewish art, or to the degree that Italian mercantile exchange had on Christian Catalan culture.<sup>32</sup> Neither can the dominance of Islamicizing forms be explained simply in terms of the continuation of a Castilian tradition, since no clear evidence of Castilian influence is apparent in Catalan Hebrew Bibles. The Catalan Bibles develop the iconography of the Temple implements far beyond that seen on Castilian opening pages, and the carpet page designs, with their peculiar mixture of styles and their dependence on late medieval Islamic parallels, are different in most details. In specific patterns, none of the Catalan manuscripts follows any of the known Castilian predecessors. Thus, the Catalan Bibles are an interesting manifestation of merged styles, with Islamic features remaining prominent. Although the concept of *convivencia* cannot be applied to Catalan culture, the design of the Bibles produced in this area nevertheless reflects Jewish-Islamic cultural interaction and therefore has evoked associations with *convivencia*. These associations, however, have misled earlier scholarship.

*Christian Art, Pictorial Narrative, and the Sephardic Haggadot*

As mentioned, the aniconic idiom of the Sephardic Bibles, displaying various degrees of affinity with Islamic forms, contrasts strongly

<sup>30</sup> Assis (1985); see also Nirenberg (1996), 22, n. 14.

<sup>31</sup> Assis (1988); Assis, *Economy* (1997), 101–103.

<sup>32</sup> For Italian influences in Christian Catalan art, see Dodwell (1993), 256; Dominguez Bordona (1969), 48. For Italian stylistic features in figurative illustrations of Hebrew manuscripts, see Narkiss (1997), 50.

with the narrative character of the biblical picture cycles in some of the Haggadot. A further puzzle is the fact that the group of Haggadot under discussion exhibits an illustration program completely unrelated to the text. The text of the Haggadah, containing the narrative of the Exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, offers abundant opportunity for visualization. It includes a variety of biblical themes specifically related to the Passover feast, but these do not necessarily figure in the biblical cycles of our group. In Central Europe, the highly narrative character of this text gave rise to rich iconographic programs closely linked to the text portions they accompany, inserted in the margins of the relevant pages.<sup>33</sup> Some Sephardic examples likewise depict events specifically indicated in the Haggadah; they appear—as in Central Europe and in Italy—in the margins of the text.<sup>34</sup> Other decorated Haggadot adopt an aniconic approach, but in a Gothic style; they may reflect a cultural background similar to that of the Bible manuscripts under discussion.<sup>35</sup>

None of these approaches was used in the group I will discuss in the following paragraphs. The most prominent artistic component of these manuscripts is an elaborate biblical cycle, covering—with some variations in length, detail, and selection of scenes—the narrative in Genesis and Exodus. The miniatures appear at the beginning of the Haggadah, preceding the text, or at the end, but no attempt is made to link their imagery to the actual text. The main focus of the cycles is not the Haggadah or the departure from Egypt, but biblical history in general. Most of the surviving Haggadot were produced in the fourteenth century, and scholars believe them to be of Catalan

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<sup>33</sup> For example, the Birds' Head Haggadah in Jerusalem (Israel Museum, MS 180/57); the Joel ben Simeon's Haggadah in London (British Library, MS Add. 14762). The same is true for all of the Ashkenazic and Italian Haggadot with only two exceptions: the Second Nuremberg Haggadah, Jerusalem (Schocken Library, MS 24087), and its sister manuscript, the Yahudah Haggadah, Jerusalem (Israel Museum, MS 180/50), see Kogman-Appel (1999). These two manuscripts present entire biblical cycles placed on the margins. Numerous efforts were made to adjust the sequence of the biblical scenes to the contents of the Haggadah; the biblical scenes were juxtaposed with numerous scenes specifically related to the Haggadah text.

<sup>34</sup> London (British Library, MS Add. 14761), see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 78–84, figs. 209–45; and Jerusalem (Israel Museum, MS 180/41, formerly in the Sassoon collection, MS 514), see Fishof (1992).

<sup>35</sup> One such example is the so-called Mocatta Haggadah, London (University College Library, MS 1), see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 52–55, figs. 105–22, and Avrin (1989). Another example is preserved in the Monastery of Poblet, see Nom de Deu (1992).

provenance.<sup>36</sup> MS Or. 2737 in the British Library is an early example, probably produced in late-thirteenth-century Castile (fig. 46).<sup>37</sup> The largest cycle of the group is in the Sarajevo Haggadah (Sarajevo, National Museum of Bosnia and Herzegovina, fig. 36);<sup>38</sup> it opens with a series of Creation scenes and concludes with depictions of the Israelites in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land. The cycle in the Golden Haggadah in London (British Library, Ms Add 27210, fig. 126)<sup>39</sup> and a related cycle (British Library, Ms. Or. 2884)<sup>40</sup> also include events from Genesis and Exodus. Others, such as the Rylands Haggadah in Manchester (John Rylands University Library, MS heb. 6, fig. 123)<sup>41</sup> and a close relative (British Library, Ms Or. 1404, fig. 121),<sup>42</sup> limit themselves to Exodus. The iconography of these cycles raises many questions, especially concerning their pictorial sources, and has been the subject of numerous scholarly debates.<sup>43</sup>

As I have shown elsewhere, I assume the pictorial sources to be primarily of contemporary Christian origin.<sup>44</sup> The image of Moses's rod turning into a serpent in London Or. 1404, for example (fig. 121) can easily be compared to its parallel in a late twelfth-century southern Italian ivory relief in Salerno (fig. 122). However, the cycles underwent significant changes in the process of translating the Christian sources into a recognizably Jewish pictorial language. As part of this process, the imagery was augmented by extrabiblical interpolations,<sup>45</sup> which played a major role. This material is based on midrashic exegesis, which enriches the biblical account with explanatory legendary material, often comprising additional independent narratives. It can

<sup>36</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 57–100. The Catalan Haggadot were introduced by von Schlosser and Müller (1898); for later studies, see Roth (1968); Narkiss (1970); and Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 42–100. See also Gutmann (1965); Sed-Rajna (1987); Sed-Rajna (1995).

<sup>37</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 45–51, figs. 79–104.

<sup>38</sup> For a facsimile edition, see Werber (1999).

<sup>39</sup> For a facsimile edition, see Narkiss (1970); see also Narkiss (1997); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 58–66, figs. 123–54.

<sup>40</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 67–77, figs. 155–208.

<sup>41</sup> Loewe (1988); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 86–93, figs. 250–82.

<sup>42</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 93–98, figs. 283–305.

<sup>43</sup> Narkiss (1970); Narkiss (1997); Sed-Rajna (1987); Sed-Rajna (1995).

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, Kogman-Appel (1996); Kogman-Appel, *Rylands Haggadah* (1997). For some of the Christian sources, but strictly from the viewpoint of reception history, see Narkiss (1970); Narkiss (1997); Sed-Rajna (1987).

<sup>45</sup> Kogman-Appel, *Sephardic Picture Cycles* (1997).



also be shown that Jewish polemical writings of the high and late Middle Ages guided the creators of the programs in dealing with the christological and typological content of their Christian models.<sup>46</sup> For the depiction of the striking of the doorposts in the Rylands Haggadah (fig. 123), for example an Italian model was chosen, used later also in the Padua picture Bible (fig. 124). The latter was more suitable for a Jewish context than the more common Christian iconography (fig. 125) for this theme displaying the mark in the shape of a cross.

One example of many<sup>47</sup> will suffice to elucidate the use of midrashic exegesis: the Golden Haggadah includes a unique depiction of Jacob's dream of the heavenly ladder (Gen. 28:10–15), on a page with three other illustrations (fig. 126). In a style typical of Christian Gothic art, with close Christian counterparts in contemporary Catalan book art,<sup>48</sup> it shows the patriarch lying at the foot of the ladder, while two angels, who have stepped down from it, contemplate him. An angel on the ladder is stepping up to a windowlike hole in the sky, in which the face of another angel can be seen. According to the late antique Aramaic Targumim, which elaborate on the biblical narrative,<sup>49</sup> the two angels who went to Sodom were expelled from the heavenly realm for having revealed the secrets of the Lord of the World. They wandered the earth until Jacob left his father's house, and then they accompanied him to Bethel. On the night of the dream, they climbed the ladder and summoned their fellow angels to see the righteous patriarch. The other angels then came down and contemplated Jacob. The miniature seems to show the contemplating angels on the ground, with one of the exiled angels calling to the others in heaven. The "window" in the sky recalls Christian depictions of this scene from the high and late Middle Ages, where the bust of an anthropomorphic figure of God appears in a similar opening;<sup>50</sup> however, this common iconographic type is transformed to reflect a Jewish tradition. Thus, these cycles draw on contempo-

<sup>46</sup> Kogman-Appel (2000).

<sup>47</sup> For additional examples, see Kogman-Appel, *Sephardic Picture Cycles* (1997).

<sup>48</sup> For specific comparisons, see Narkiss (1997), 50–54.

<sup>49</sup> *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, on Gen. 28:11.

<sup>50</sup> An early example from Spain is found in the Rippoll Bible, tenth century, Vatican (Biblioteca Apostolica, cod. lat. 5729, fol. 3v), see Neuss (1922), fig. 11. For later examples, see London, British Library, MS Cotton Nero C IV, fol. 5r, and the Peterborough Psalter in Brussels (Bibliothèque Royale, MS 9961–62, fol. 92v; Sandler (1974), pl. 59. See also Kogman-Appel, *Sephardic Picture Cycles* (1997) 467–68.

rary Christian art but reflect a specifically Jewish understanding of the biblical narrative.<sup>51</sup>

*The Cultural Climate within Late Medieval Sephardic Jewry*

The phenomenon of two such different artistic idioms coexisting in Sephardic book art reveals very divergent patterns of acculturation, to Islam on the one hand and to Christianity on the other. Acculturation to Islam had been a continuous process ever since the Judeo-Islamic cultural symbiosis developed in the early Middle Ages; it survived the Almohad persecutions to some extent, somehow stabilized in the period of *convivencia*, and remained an important element in the cultural life of some circles in the fourteenth century. The borrowings from Christian art reflect some degree of acculturation to Christianity, as well as significant efforts to cope with the Christian content of these borrowings. In order to comprehend this coexistence of such strikingly different—and clearly separate—manifestations of acculturation, we need to familiarize ourselves with the climate of late medieval Spanish Jewry. The related discussion in this chapter will focus on the audience of the Islamicizing Bible; the audience of the biblical picture cycles will be discussed in detail elsewhere.<sup>52</sup> The audience of the Sephardic Bibles, as will be proposed here, should be sought among those Jews who represented the values of Judeo-Arabic culture, as opposed to others who broke with this tradition and instead were open to Ashkenazic influence.

Both Spanish Christian and Spanish Jewish culture of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries underwent a process of transition from Muslim to Christian domination, not only on a political but also on a cultural level. Whereas political rule could change within a few days on the battlefield, cultural transition was a century-long process. The Islamic-Jewish cultural symbiosis had given rise to generations of Jewish scholars whose cultural background differed in many respects from that of the Talmudic sages of the past; it differed

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<sup>51</sup> Or. 2737, although labeled by Narkiss “Hispano-moresque,” see above, chap. 3, 94–95, reflects, in fact, a similar artistic idiom, deriving as in the Catalan Haggadah from iconographic influences from Christian art and midrashic exegesis.

<sup>52</sup> Katrin Kogman-Appel, *Bible and Haggadah visualized: The Place of Pictorial Narrative in Late Medieval Sephardic Culture*, forthcoming University Park.

even more significantly from that of contemporary Ashkenazic scholars. A group of rational Jewish philosophers joined the stream of Muslim thinkers of the Middle Ages. They represented certain cultural values that were not in contradiction to the halakhic tradition of the talmudic period, but were very different from other religious values of the past. The biblical exegesis of late antiquity was dominated by the midrashic method; that of early medieval Spain was guided primarily by linguistic and philological thinking, a method used, for example, by Abraham ibn Ezra. Other scholars offered an allegorical or metaphorical interpretation of biblical narratives as well as midrashic narratives of the talmudic era.

The resulting cultural climate, associated with a certain set of social and intellectual values, reached a peak in the scholarship of Maimonides. The latter's cultural values, philosophical rationalism, and scientific thinking combined with Halakha, were closely linked to the Islamic-Jewish symbiosis. The educated Jew in this cultural atmosphere was fluent in Arabic, participated in Islamic culture, and was active in the transmission of ancient and Islamic knowledge to Christian Europe. The writings of Maimonides began to circulate in the later decades of the twelfth century. They spread quickly and were widely read among Spanish Jews, the majority of whom were living under Christian rule by the time of Maimonides' death. Besides philosophical treatises, Maimonides wrote a halakhic codex known as *Mishne Torah*, which organized the halakhic material according to themes, an innovation in halakhic teaching, foreshadowed by the earlier halakhist, Isaac ben Jacob Alfasi. Henceforth, the study of Halakha would not necessarily mean painstaking talmudic research but instead could be the study of a well-organized and structured legal codex. Maimonides' interpretation of Halakha was also strongly influenced by his rationalist worldview. One of many examples is his discussion of the *mezuzah*. His attack on the popular practice of turning the *mezuzah* into an amulet is particularly caustic.<sup>53</sup>

Maimonides' teachings and the cultural values associated with them were grounded in the Muslim-Jewish coexistence in Muslim Spain; the Islamic artistic idiom of the Hebrew Bibles appears to be an expression of this culture. By the end of Maimonides' life, this culture had begun to wane. Moreover, shortly after his death in

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<sup>53</sup> *Mishne Torah*, book 2, *Hilkhot Mezuzah*, chap. 5 and 6.

1204, his worldview became a subject of controversy.<sup>54</sup> Some scholars maintained that rationalism jeopardized traditional Jewish values, and that allegorical interpretation of the midrashim was a threat to the authority of the talmudic sages. Some opponents believed that even Maimonides' halakhic compilation would lead to the neglect of talmudic studies, although the majority of scholars accepted it as authoritative.

A cultural struggle arose between rationalists and their opponents, reaching a climax in 1232, when Maimonidean writings were burned by the Church. The precise circumstances of this event and the role Jewish opponents of rationalism may have played in it are not entirely clear.<sup>55</sup> The burning of the books was preceded by mutual rabbinic excommunication by Maimonidean and anti-Maimonidean scholars. The first significant objections to Maimonides' teaching had been raised by Solomon of Montpellier and his student, Jonah Gerundi. Moses ben Nachman of Gerona, known as Nachmanides, who ideologically supported the antirationalist side, strove for a compromise. Among the prominent rationalists were Judah Alharizi—no longer alive at the time of the excommunications of 1232—and Sheshet Benvenisti of Barcelona. The Maimonidean worldview had been adopted by the Jewish elite, many of whom belonged to the large, wealthy Jewish community of Toledo.

The controversy did not end in 1232, and its continuation in the 150 years that followed left a strong mark on Jewish culture in Iberia and southern France, with far-reaching consequences. The rationalist worldview remained dominant in Spanish Jewry for a few decades, but it was challenged by an antirationalist movement nurtured and supported by northern French Ashkenazic scholarship, whose representatives—known as Tosafists—stood for traditional talmudic study, an antirationalistic worldview, and an uncritical acceptance of the authority of the talmudic midrash. Allegorical and metaphorical interpretation of the midrash and especially of the Bible was vehemently refuted; the philosophical approach was not pursued. It should be noted, however, that the acceptance of talmudic Halakha was never an issue.

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<sup>54</sup> For details on the "Maimonidean controversy," see Silver (1965); Septimus, *Ramah* (1982); Kriegel (1979), 145–79; and Touati (1977).

<sup>55</sup> Silver (1965), 148–49.

The gap between rationalists and antirationalists survived the Maimonidean controversy of the 1230s. In the later thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, the split took the form of those who accepted non-Jewish, Greek philosophy and tended to preserve the Judeo-Islamic heritage, versus those who rejected non-Jewish thought and grew more and more detached from Judeo-Islamic culture. By the time these attitudes had crystallized in the early fourteenth century, the authority of Maimonides' writings was unquestioned. What remained in dispute were some of the issues the original controversy had brought to scholarly consciousness. In 1303, when Abba Mari of Lunel decided that philosophical study was being carried to extremes among other southern French scholars, he urged the supreme halakhic authority of his generation, Solomon ibn Adret of Barcelona (1235–1310), to ban the study of Greek philosophy for those under the age of twenty-five.<sup>56</sup> One of the most urgent concerns at this stage was the allegorical interpretation of the Bible, as practiced by some of the philosophers in southern France. A second ban was therefore proclaimed, on the same date, against scholars teaching extreme allegorical interpretation.<sup>57</sup>

Concern for the authority of the late antique midrash, put at risk by rationalist, allegorical, and metaphorical approaches, led to its revival and the proliferation of new midrashic writings and compilations. Another issue that began to dominate the cultural realm of Jewish thought was the kabbalistic worldview growing from the seeds of antirationalism.<sup>58</sup> The Book of Zohar, the central work of Kabbalah, was composed in the 1280s by Moses de León. Its wealth of midrashic material placed it directly within the scope of the revival of midrashic exegesis.<sup>59</sup>

The cultural atmosphere in which we thus should seek the patrons of Paris 25, the Parma and Marseilles Bibles, the Damascus *Keter*, and others, is the world of the Sephardic elite, who for hundreds of

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<sup>56</sup> On this phase of the controversy, see Silver (1965), 42; Touati (1990), 201–17; Assis, *Golden Age* (1997), 305–307; and Ben-Shalom (1996). For details and two different views on the political issues involved in the banning, see Saperstein (1986); Ben-Shalom (2000).

<sup>57</sup> Touati (1990), 205, 210–12; Ben-Shalom (1996).

<sup>58</sup> For a view that focuses on this particular aspect of the controversy and seeks its actual roots in the gap between rationalistic and kabbalistic worldviews, see Hames (2000), 31–82.

<sup>59</sup> For an English text, see *Zohar* (1934); on the Book of Zohar, see, for example, Scholem (1961); Liebes (1993).

years lived within the Islamic culture. It was in this cultural sphere that the fashion of ordering such Bibles must have developed. The decoration programs used in these Bibles underwent renewed development around 1300 in Perpignan (figs. 86–90), and perhaps the Parma Bible itself served as a model there (figs. 30–32). The spiritual leader of the Perpignan community in those years, Menachem ben Solomon Hameiri, was one of the key figures of rationalist scholarship in the second stage of the controversy. As noted, he especially admired the work of Israel ben Isaac of Toledo, scribe of Kennicott 7 and New York 44<sup>60</sup> and the relative of Isaac ben Israel, the scribe of the Marseilles Bible, and Chaim ben Israel, scribe of the Parma Bible. The affinity for the artistic language of the Perpignan Bible and others produced in Roussillon at the beginning of the fourteenth century is thus not surprising, even though from a cultural standpoint this city belongs to the Christian culture of France.

The adoption of an artistic language whose origins are in Islamic culture—perhaps under the influence of decoration programs that were used in Toledo—is a clear expression of the spiritual world of Menachem Hameiri, his pupils, and his community in Perpignan. Hameiri admired Maimonides and reacted to Abba Mari's claims that rational philosophy was not merely an issue of assimilating courtiers, by insisting that among the philosophers were many pious men.<sup>61</sup> He criticized Abba Mari for approaching Ibn Adret, in his view a kabbalist and enemy of wisdom, meaning an enemy of philosophical study. Hameiri was well aware that after Ibn Adret became involved, the issue ceased to be a mere philosophical controversy, but turned into a general cultural struggle.<sup>62</sup> It is reasonable to assume that intellectual circles in places such as Perpignan and Barcelona, which were rooted in a symbiosis with the Islamic culture, identified with Maimonides' worldview, and were involved in the struggle for the realization of this worldview, were open to influences from Islamic culture in general and that of the Mudéjar communities in Aragon or Valencia in particular. Cultural goods transmitted through the various contacts of Jewish travelers with the Islamic world, and perhaps through the works of art that they brought with them, fell on fertile ground in these circles.

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<sup>60</sup> Hameiri (1957), 48, and see chap. 3, 62.

<sup>61</sup> Halbertal (1994), 77.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 99–100.

Apart from the preference for Islamicizing style, the iconography of the Temple depictions also links the decoration schemes of these Bibles to this cultural sphere. As observed repeatedly in the preceding chapters, it is rooted deep in Maimonides' spiritual world, and drawings from his writings were among the sources of inspiration for the design of those pictures (fig. 33). Maimonides' discussions of the Temple service in the eighth book of the *Mishneh Torah* greatly influenced the design of the implements—mainly in the years in which this iconography developed, that is, at the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century. The later illustrations are different variations on the same theme. In the Farhi Bible quotations from the Book of Temple Service are incorporated in the images.

A brief comparison with Ashkenazic depictions of the Temple can further clarify this point: unlike the Sephardic Bibles, illuminated Ashkenazic manuscripts do not often deal with the theme of the Temple. Notable are depictions in the above-mentioned Regensburg Pentateuch in Jerusalem (Israel Museum, Ms 180/52, fig. 34) and the Poligny Bible in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale, cod. hébr. 36).<sup>63</sup> Most striking is the fact that the Ashkenazic depictions unhesitatingly combine human figures with the iconography of the Temple. On the other hand, none of the details based on Maimonides' teachings that I pointed out in Spanish manuscripts appear in Ashkenazic depictions, which were most likely based on Ashkenazic texts. This assumption supports my argument that it is in particular Maimonides' discussion of the Temple, rather than Rashi's, that inspired the Sephardic Temple imagery.

The decoration program typically used in the workshops of Toledo evolved in the decades following the first phase of the controversy. The earliest extant decorated Hebrew Bible was signed in 1232, apparently in Toledo, and the following decades saw the blossoming of this creative activity. The presence of Mudéjar culture in Toledo together with traces of earlier Islamic culture supplied a whole range of models.

Catalan Bible decoration developed under different circumstances. Its sources were apparently in Perpignan, a town dominated by Christian culture for centuries. When the Toledan decoration pro-

<sup>63</sup> Revel-Neher (1998), figs. 81–82.

gram was adopted in Perpignan in 1299, it might have been affected by the contemporary tensions in the cultural climate that led to Abba Mari's activity in 1303 and the resulting ban in 1305. The roots of this phase of the conflict over philosophical study lie in southern France, where the earliest decorated Bible of this group can be traced. In those years, the community of Perpignan was led by Menachem Hameiri, who was actively involved in the controversy. As the latter's remark about Israel ben Isaac shows, Toledan Bibles were available and treasured in early-fourteenth-century Perpignan. Within this environment—Christian for five centuries—those intellectual groups that had a strong interest in rational philosophy were also linked to the Judeo-Islamic heritage, and were therefore also open to influences from Islamic art. The earlier Castilian Bibles were just one of the sources upon which the Catalan ones relied. When it came to specific decorative patterns—of the later carpet pages, for example—contemporary Islamic art played the major role. Islamic influences could have been provided by Mudéjar communities in Huesca, Saragossa, or Valencia, or by trade connections between Catalan Jews and the Maghreb. However, such models were not found in the immediate neighborhood. The lack of nearby Islamic models underlies the mixture of Islamic and Gothic forms in the Catalan Bibles.

Very little is known about the people involved in the production of Hebrew Bibles and their patrons. Several names of scribes are known and, in several cases, the names of patrons, but no information is available as to their worldview or their personal backgrounds. In some cases we have information about relatives known from other sources. One of the manuscripts signed in Toledo by Joseph ibn Merwas, the Toronto Bible was commissioned by Meir Halevi ben Todros Abulafia, a member of a famous family of rabbis. He was a relative of an earlier scholar by that name, known as Ramah, who was a contemporary of Maimonides. A native of Burgos he became a leader of the Toledan community. He was one of the first to criticize Maimonides' writings, his objections coming from a perspective of eschatological belief, and some claim that his criticism planted the seeds of the controversy that broke out later. Notwithstanding his criticism, the Ramah<sup>64</sup> in fact arose from the same

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<sup>64</sup> Septimus, *Ramah* (1982).



Jewish-Islamic heritage as Maimonides and belonged to the upper class. More than 100 years later, one of his descendants commissioned the Toledo Bible from Joseph ibn Merwas.

Elisha ben Abraham Crescas, the scribe of the Farhi Bible, stated in the colophon that he had produced the book for himself; he apparently also decorated it. He was a descendant of the Benvenisti family, which identified with rationalist circles; Sheshet Benvenisti of Barcelona was actively involved in the first stage of the Maimonidean controversy. The Farhi Bible is a salient example of the renewal of the decoration program that is rooted in Islamic art. It features, as we have noted, a flat depiction of the Temple incorporating quotations from Maimonides, and no fewer than twenty-nine extremely elaborate carpet pages.

Sasson 16 was written for a descendant of Solomon ibn Adret. Even though it was ibn Adret who, as *the* rabbinic authority of Barcelona, imposed the ban on engaging in philosophical doctrine in 1305, his association with antirationalistic scholarship is not entirely clear cut. Like Nachmanides, his teacher, he advocated moderation and compromise while representing the antirationalistic point of view. On the other hand, he was a member of an "aristocratic" family from Barcelona. Like other scholars, he occasionally criticized the way of life of the elite, in spite of his connections with it and his financial dealings. His main importance as a sage was in the sphere of halakha, ethics, and community leadership. Although his contribution was also considerable in social reform, he remained faithful to the conventional social norms represented by the old Sephardic elite. The social criticism of the Kabbalists and other antirationalists was entirely alien to him. Maimonides' influence on his halakhic work was substantial and he was also known to have taken an interest in philosophy, though he never wrote any philosophical work. Ibn Adret did not unequivocally reject the teachings of Maimonides, nor did he take a clear stand in the Maimonidean controversy. In 1280, he was even prepared to defend Maimonides' teachings. However, in another context, he expressed his reservations with regard to allegorical interpretation of the Bible. It should also be noted that he sharply criticized various kabbalists, among them Abraham Abulafia. He was involved in the second stage of the controversy by virtue of his rabbinical authority and took a stand similar to that taken by Nachmanides in the first stage—a call for compromise. In

short, despite the fact that he imposed the ban, Ibn Adret did not unequivocally represent extreme antirationalism and his roots were in Spanish Jewish-Islamic culture. We do not know anything about the spiritual or cultural world of the patron who ordered Sasson 16. The Islamic visual language is not a prominent element of this book. Though the illuminator took a non-figurative approach, the book belongs to the group of manuscripts that are profusely decorated in a distinctly Gothic style, and clear expressions of Judeo-Islamic culture seem somewhat blurred.

The narrative picture cycles of the Haggadot tell quite a different story. Their midrashic elements were noted above. As demonstrated exhaustively in previous research, this material belongs to the world of traditional Judaism<sup>65</sup> and its values. It faithfully mirrors traditional midrashic exegesis, authoritative and untouched, that flourished among the leading opponents of rationalist thought. The main sources of influence for these antirationalist scholars were the Tosafists of northern France, who strictly followed the conservative scholarly methods associated with Rashi. Their methods and teaching played a major role in the Maimonidean controversy and the cultural conflict that it generated. Anxious that the authority of the talmudic sages might be endangered, and alarmed by the damage a rationalist worldview could cause to the values of traditional teaching, the Sephardic proponents of the Tosafists safeguarded traditional study and the midrashic method. The cultural struggle was not merely waged around a rationalist-versus-antirationalist dispute, but ended up pitting Sephardic Jewry against Ashkenazic, the former preserving the heritage of the Islamic-Jewish symbiosis and the latter having developed its thinking in a European Christian environment.

If we now approach the picture cycles in the Haggadot from the point of view of the midrashic revival, things become clearer. Among the scholars associated with anti-Maimonidean ideology and practicing the midrashic method was Nachmanides, who, though he called

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<sup>65</sup> Von Schlosser and Müller (1898); Narkiss (1970); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 57–101; Schubert and Schubert (1984), 98–122; and Narkiss (1997). Earlier research, especially by Narkiss and Kurt and Ursula Schubert, referred to these interpolations as traces of the late antique tradition of Jewish narrative art and interpreted them in terms of recensional history. On the recension method in the context of the Haggadah cycles and my own view on this matter, see Kogman-Appel (1996), 111–14.

for moderation during the actual events arising from the controversy, admired Rashi and in matters of scholarship stood clearly on the side of the antirationalists.<sup>66</sup> Another important figure in this context was the late-thirteenth-century scholar Bahye ben Asher of Saragossa, who combined all of the methods common in Sephardic scholarship but, in showing a clear preference for the kabbalistic direction, largely opposed the rationalist worldview.<sup>67</sup> A preacher in Saragossa and a disciple of Ibn Adret, Bahye ben Asher had a thorough knowledge of, and a broad interest in, the midrashic narratives relating to the Bible. In short, it is the spirit of the talmudic sages and of Rashi, the Tosafists, and their Sephardic followers that dominates the imagery of the pictorial cycles of the Sephardic Passover Haggadot.

Another example from the Haggadot picture cycles further supports this argument. A picture from London Or. 2884 shows Joseph hosting his brothers after their arrival in Egypt (fig. 127). According to the account in Genesis (43:31–34), Joseph had not yet revealed his identity to his brothers. At the banquet, he arranged that the brothers be seated according to the identity of their mothers and their ages, leaving the brothers wondering how he knew all these details. Late antique midrashim explain that Joseph pretended to read their identity with the aid of a goblet, which figures prominently in the depiction.<sup>68</sup> The same interpretation recurs frequently in all of the sources that must have played a role in the revival of the midrash in Spain. Rashi himself, the supreme authority for anti-rationalist scholars, refers to it.<sup>69</sup> Later it is found in Ashkenazic midrashim collections, such as the thirteenth-century *Yalqut Shim'oni*,<sup>70</sup> a book known to have circulated in Spain and to have been used in the fifteenth century by Isaac Abravanel for his Bible commentary.<sup>71</sup> The story is also told by Bahye ben Asher.<sup>72</sup> A reexamination of all the Haggadah cycles reveals that the *Yalqut Shim'oni* and Bahye ben Asher's commentary are the most dominant sources for

<sup>66</sup> For background and sources, see Grossmann (1992), 138.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 142–43.

<sup>68</sup> *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan*, on Gen. 43:33; *Genesis Rabbah* 92:5, Neusner (1985), 288.

<sup>69</sup> Rashi on Gen. 43:33.

<sup>70</sup> *Yalqut Shim'oni* (1973–77), no. 150.

<sup>71</sup> Stemberger and Strack (1982), 315.

<sup>72</sup> Bahya ben Asher (1967), 346.

the midrashic interpolations. All of the midrashic elements occurring in the cycles can be found in either of them and usually in both. Many were also mentioned earlier by Rashi.

The preference for Islamic art over borrowings from Gothic art can also be considered in terms of the attitudes of Spanish Jews toward Islam. Spanish Jews related to Islam as a political power—ranging from tolerant to hostile—, a host society, a competing minority under Christian rule, and a religion. Clear statements from the early days of Al-Andalus are rare, but the degree of acculturation, the cultural symbiosis of the two religions, and the familiarity of Jews with Islamic culture, its lifestyle, and the Arabic language perhaps speak for themselves. Scholars have warned us away from the romantic notion of a golden age,<sup>73</sup> yet Islam was generally tolerant enough to stimulate a comparatively high degree of acculturation.

The Almohad persecution in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries shook Jewish-Islamic relationships severely. In this situation, Maimonides made a strong anti-Islamic statement, suggesting that Christian rule might be preferable.<sup>74</sup> This statement has often been quoted by scholars who claim that Jews always suffered under Islam. Mark Cohen, however, has made it clear that Maimonides' statement must be viewed in its specific context, the Almohad persecution, and does not refer to all aspects of Islamic-Jewish interaction.<sup>75</sup> When the shock of the Almohad persecution had ebbed, and the Jewish and Islamic communities became minorities under Christian rule, the two sometimes competed and sometimes cooperated. In the late thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries, Jewish attitudes toward Islam—as culture, society, or religion—could vary widely. Many Jewish statements compared Islamic and Christian rule, and the comparison was often between bad and worse rather than between good and bad.<sup>76</sup> Jewish comments on Islam ranged from positive to ambivalent and indecisive, to negative, and highly critical.<sup>77</sup>

Negative attitudes toward Islam usually arose from an antirationalist or kabbalistic viewpoint, dominated by the fear of the potential damage of acculturation to Islam. (Acculturation to Christianity never

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<sup>73</sup> See Cohen (1994), xv–xvii.

<sup>74</sup> For details, see *ibid.*, xvi.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> Septimius, *Edom* (1982), 107.

<sup>77</sup> They are discussed by Septimius, *Edom* (1982), 103–11, and Gutwirth (1989).

played a comparable role in Jewish society and did not cause similar anxieties.) Among these negative pronouncements is one by Bahye ben Asher,<sup>78</sup> mentioned above in the context of the midrashic revival and its impact on the narrative cycles. A particularly defamatory statement was made by the fourteenth-century Kabbalist Joseph ben Shalom Ashkenazi.<sup>79</sup> Such attitudes were due to a lack of familiarity with Islamic culture and to anxieties that Islamic cultural influence would weaken the bulwarks of traditional Judaism.

The more positive statements were made by people with a strong interest in maintaining the social status and cultural values of the old Sephardic elite,<sup>80</sup> a social group that felt closer to the heritage of the Judeo-Islamic symbiosis than to Kabbalah or other facets of antirationalism. This social differentiation merits more attention. Much has been said about the Jewish elite in Islamic Spain.<sup>81</sup> Culturally, this elite was one of the most remarkable expressions of the Judeo-Islamic symbiosis and acculturation to Islam. In thirteenth-century Christian Spain, when the controversy over philosophy erupted, this class was still powerful in many respects. While the controversy primarily affected scholars, the majority of the members of the social elite (some of them engaged in scholarship themselves) had a rationalist worldview. Moreover, the philosophers themselves created an aura of intellectual elitism,<sup>82</sup> giving the Kabbalists a basis for attacking them on social issues.<sup>83</sup>

Subsequently, economic decline, competition from Christian courtiers, and social tensions prevalent since the late thirteenth century caused far-reaching shifts in the stratification of Jewish society.<sup>84</sup> While the old Sephardic elite, with its Judeo-Islamic cultural values, waned, a new strong, educated middle class evolved, and the two coexisted, competing with each other. It is not yet possible to determine if the decoration program of the Haggadot had its roots in the intellectual background of this rising new middle class, which was not as well defined as the old elite; this question should be the subject of a separate study. For our purposes, it is significant that positive attitudes

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<sup>78</sup> Bahye ben Asher (1966), 439–40, and Septimus, *Edom* (1982), 104.

<sup>79</sup> Vajda (1956).

<sup>80</sup> Gutwirth (1989).

<sup>81</sup> Baer (1961) vol. 1, 30–38.

<sup>82</sup> Kriegel (1979), 152–55; on kabbalistic elites, on the other hand, see Idel (1994).

<sup>83</sup> Described in detail in Baer (1961), vol. 1, 243–305.

<sup>84</sup> Assis, *Golden Age* (1997), 237–40.

toward Islamic culture are associated with a social class that represented the cultural and social values of Judeo-Islamic culture. For these circles, the choice of an Islamic artistic language as a source of inspiration is not surprising.

Notwithstanding the assumption that the two artistic idioms represent different cultural backgrounds, I would be wary of interpreting them as ideological statements. They may be viewed as manifestations of specific cultural and social identities, growing from different cultural soils. The Islamicizing ornamental decoration of the Bibles was associated with the Sephardic elite and Judeo-Islamic scholarship. Not that a Judeo-Islamic background was always entirely congruent with a rational worldview: some of the critics of Maimonidean philosophy can be found among members of the Sephardic elite, a prominent example being Meir Halevi Abulafia in the early thirteenth century.<sup>85</sup> Later scholars of the same Judeo-Islamic background, notably, Abraham Abulafia of Saragossa (1240–91), engaged in Kabbalah, a clear manifestation of an antirationalist worldview.<sup>86</sup> In this period, Sephardic Jewry underwent a transition from the Islamic culture and its norms to a European one. This transition also opened a channel for Ashkenazic influence on Sephardic culture, in particular that of the Tosafists. It should be emphasized that the rationalists, and even more so their opponents, were not always clearly defined by a complete set of cultural, social, or ideological parameters, and the transition was a long and complex process. What is of importance in the context of the Spanish Hebrew Bibles is the fact that there were varying degrees of affinity with Islamic culture.

Rationalist scholarship, the cultural identity of many members of the old Sephardic elite, and the decoration program of the Bibles under discussion are among the manifestations of a high degree of affinity, and they may as well be linked together. The patrons who ordered Bibles with an entirely antfigurative decoration program executed mostly in a typically Islamic artistic language tended to come from the Sephardic elite, which for hundreds of years was nurtured by the Judeo-Islamic symbiosis.

The patrons of the Haggadot with biblical cycles were most likely to be associated with different cultural values, in which the Judeo-Islamic heritage did not play the role it did among the patrons of

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<sup>85</sup> Septimus, *Ramah* (1982).

<sup>86</sup> Idel (1989).

the aniconic Bibles. The pictorial cycles provide a visual interpretation of biblical narrative and biblical exegesis as understood in anti-rationalist circles. Their evolution as part of the decoration program of the Haggadah—a new type of book that developed after 1300—may have come in reaction to the extreme allegorical interpretation practiced in some circles, an issue especially pertinent in the years after 1300. The well-known argument that the aniconic decoration of the Bible was due to reservations concerning figurative art for official books<sup>87</sup> probably also played a role in the choice of the Haggadah, rather than the Bible, for the picture cycles. Such concerns may have led people seeking a suitable medium for the visual manifestation of this kind of understanding of the biblical narrative to prefer a small, mostly privately used book. This may explain why the two artistic idioms appear in two different types of book. Another reason for choosing the Haggadah instead of the Bible might have been the latter's length. Bibles are large and heavy, Haggadot small, thin, and light, and therefore more conducive to the addition of two quires of images. In Christian art, biblical cycles were also rarely attached to volumes containing the entire biblical text. They appear instead as separate picture Bibles or adorn the opening pages of Psalters.<sup>88</sup>

These arguments might be sufficient to explain the two artistic types. However, were it not for the different cultural backgrounds, we might expect the two idioms to merge at some point; a few figurative scenes in the Gothic style might have been inserted in the decoration program of some Bibles, and Islamicizing forms might have entered the decoration of the Haggadot.<sup>89</sup> Yet apart from the

<sup>87</sup> See, for example, Schubert (1984), 76–77.

<sup>88</sup> Prominent examples are the Pamplona Bibles, ca. 1200, Navarre, see Bucher (1970), and the Padua Bible, ca. 1400, northern Italy, see Folena and Mellini (1962).

<sup>89</sup> The only echo of Islamicizing forms in the Catalan Haggadot are interlace patterns in some of the depictions of the *matsah*, for example, in the Mocatta Haggadah, fol. 43r, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 118, and the Golden Haggadah, fol. 44v, see Narkiss (1997), 64, and Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 153. Their composition indicates that carpet pages were used as models. Only a few indeed contain interlace patterns. Others are entirely Gothic in style, as for example, London, British Library, MS Add. 14761, fol. 61r, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 240. For a complete listing of representatives of the two stylistic trends, see Batterman (2000), chap. 4. For an interpretation of the *matsah* panels as a visualization of the Divine Presence in terms of Kabbalah, see *ibid.*, and recently also Batterman (2002). Such strong links to Kabbalah are not easily reconcilable with Batterman's own view of

aniconic Gothic elements in the Catalan Bibles, the two idioms in fact never meet. It should be noted, too, that however "Gothic" these Bibles become, they always remain aniconic.

*Joshua ibn Gaon and Joseph Hatsarfati*

The work of Joshua ibn Gaon<sup>90</sup> reflects a slightly different cultural ambiance. Like his Castilian contemporaries, Joshua favored a repertoire of forms borrowed from Islamic art. Foreshadowing the later Catalan school, his decorations combine Gothic and Islamic features: dragons, grotesque animals, as well as naturalistic ones (figs. 59, 60, and 61), geometric interlace designs, architectural elements designed in the Mudéjar style (figs. 64 and 65), carpet pages (col. pl. I), and features typical of early medieval Spanish art (figs. 63 and 68).

According to my suggested reconstruction of Joshua's career, he began to work as a masoretor in his hometown of Soria and developed the tradition of Castilian micrography using a variety of geometric and floral motifs. At a later stage, after he moved to Tudela and made the acquaintance of Joseph Hatsarfati, he began to add painted decorations, inserting various animal motifs. Joshua ibn Gaon's art, rather than drawing on one particular cultural environment, arises from the climate of cultural exchange that was typical of late medieval Navarre in general and Tudela in particular. In Navarre, both Jews and Mudéjares suffered persecution less frequently than elsewhere in Spain, so their living conditions were better than in other areas of the peninsula. At the same time, the political atmosphere of Navarre, which apparently did not play a dominant role in the debate over Maimonides' writings, provided a suitable climate for cultural exchange and mutual influence, with a consequent mixture of styles such as that found in the Ibn Gaon books. Mudéjar craftsmanship performed an important function in Tudela, the home of a large Mudéjar community and the economic situation of the Muslim population was better than in other regions of Christian Spain, where the Mudéjares usually belonged to the lower classes.

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the declining class of court Jews and their claims, which he believes to be manifest in the decoration program of the Haggadot.

<sup>90</sup> As described above, chap. 4.



The tendency observed in the work of Joshua ibn Gaon is yet more distinct in the art of Joseph Hatsarfati (fig. 79). Joseph's art was only partially influenced by the tradition of the Spanish Hebrew Bible. Christian sources, on the other hand, played a major role in his work, and the most striking feature is his break with the aniconic tradition of Hebrew Bible decoration (fig. 75). Although it combines Gothic and Islamic motifs, the rich, ornamental decoration shows a certain preference for Gothic design.

It is not clear what the name *Hatsarfati*, "the French" implied, culturally speaking, in early-fourteenth-century Tudela. Joseph may simply have been a French immigrant; Navarre took in Jews after each of the repeated expulsions from France in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. However, in the context of the controversy over philosophy, and for the rationalists, *tsarfati* had a negative connotation: it meant "Tosafist," alluding to the fact that the Tosafists were Ashkenazic Jews from northern France. Jews from Provence, the Comtat Venaissin, and the Languedoc, educated in the Judeo-Islamic tradition, were not included in this stereotype.<sup>91</sup> Whether he was just an immigrant indicating his origin or proudly hinting that his cultural identity was associated specifically with northern France, Joseph Hatsarfati created an art that did not come from the world in which the rest of the Sephardic Bibles evolved. Joseph's approach was that of a well-trained, experienced miniaturist, and it apparently had a strong influence on Joshua, but Joshua's scribal decoration nonetheless retained a more graphic character and remained faithful to the Sephardic tradition of aniconic Bible decoration and Islamic form.

### *Maimonides' Texts Decorated*

A last small group of manuscripts should be mentioned. Early manuscripts of Maimonides' texts—The Guide of the Perplexed, the *Mishne Torah*, and the Mishna commentary—were not decorated. From the time they were first compiled, manuscripts of the *Mishne Torah* and the Mishna commentary contained instructive plans of the Temple (fig. 35). Neither the philosophical content of The Guide of

<sup>91</sup> Septimus, *Ramah* (1982), 64.

the Perplexed nor the halakhic content of the law codex inspired decoration. It was not more than a century after Maimonides' scholarship had sparked the controversy that his texts began to be embellished. When they were first decorated, the original quarrel had long been forgotten; Maimonides' authority was unchallenged and was no longer impeded by social tensions and cultural transition.

Decorations for manuscripts of his writings appear from the middle of the fourteenth century on, in Catalonia. With one exception, in the Copenhagen copy of *The Guide of the Perplexed* (fig. 109), these are all of aniconic character, but in a pure Gothic style. They are either painted or drawn with a pen and limited to the sphere of ornamental decoration.<sup>92</sup> The Copenhagen manuscript includes four figurative depictions, executed, scholars believe, by Christian artists, namely, Ferrer Bassa and his workshop.<sup>93</sup> The manuscript is also rich in ornamental decoration stylistically related to the other manuscripts. When this kind of book was first decorated in mid-fourteenth-century Catalonia, there was no pictorial tradition that illuminators, whether Christian or Jewish, could draw upon. In creating a new one, they relied exclusively on the style common to their immediate artistic environment. This practice might explain why this group of manuscripts does not reflect the Islamicizing style with which the Judeo-Islamic tradition of decorating Hebrew Bibles is associated, although most of them preserve the tradition of aniconic decoration.

After the mid-fourteenth century, Spanish Jewish culture widely adopted the characteristics of Ashkenazic scholarship on the one hand and Maimonidean teaching on the other—as happened among Ashkenazic Jewry as well. The two worlds were no longer in opposition to each other, or at least not to the extent that they had been a few decades earlier.

Viewing the two distinct types of Hebrew illuminated manuscripts from Spain in context of the cultural-historical circumstances in which they were produced, certain phenomena, underscored in this chapter, become evident. The first is the existence of the aniconic and narrative modes side by side, but never merging, as a noteworthy

<sup>92</sup> For an exception—depicting a philosophical concept—see Garel (1991), 41–42.

<sup>93</sup> Meiss (1941); Sed-Rajna, *St. Mark* (1992); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 124.

Sephardic phenomenon. The second is the preference for design borrowed from an Islamic repertoire of forms even though all of the known Sephardic Bibles were produced in Christian Spain. Whereas the Islamic heritage and Mudéjar culture contributed to this phenomenon in the Castilian context (although it cannot serve as the sole explanation), these factors do not apply to the Catalan Bibles. Third is the fact that the preference for Islamic forms in Sephardic Bibles cannot be explained in terms of avoiding cultural exchange with Christianity, since the Haggadot depended on biblical cycles from Christian pictorial sources.

Viewing these phenomena from the cultural-historical perspective I suggest that the explanation for these phenomena should be sought within the fabric of Jewish polemics and cultural change within Jewish society. The aniconic and Islamicizing decoration of the Bibles may thus be linked to the cultural values of circles associated with the Judeo-Islamic heritage and its scholarship, whereas the narrative biblical cycles of the Haggadot seem to be embedded in Ashkenazic scholarship and the revival of midrashic exegesis arising from an antirationalist worldview. In other words the use of Islamic decoration patterns and the adherence to aniconic ornamentation cannot be explained simply in terms of the centuries-long presence of Islam in most parts of the peninsula. Rather, the preference for Islamic styles mirrors a continuous dialogue with Islamic culture in an effort to keep alive those cultural values upheld by traditional Sephardic Jewry at a moment in history when those values were being challenged by other cultural trends.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CASTILIAN SCHOOLS OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Hebrew book art flourished in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in various parts of Castile, Navarre, and the Crown of Aragon. As the observations in the previous chapter show, this art reflects the cultural processes taking place in Spain at the time and the cultural struggle within the Sephardic community. The decoration programs in many of these Bibles mirror cultural values rooted in the symbiosis of Jewish and Islamic culture. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, Jewish book art began to decline, apparently due to the Jews' deteriorating political and economic situation, the persecutions following the Black Plague of 1348–49, and the anti-Jewish riots of 1391. Daily life changed, and the social status and economic strength of the elite, whose members were the patrons of the sumptuous manuscripts.

Apart from a few manuscripts, Sephardic books of the fifteenth century contain only modest and simple decorations. Biblical manuscripts were no exception. Depictions of the Temple almost disappeared from the repertoire, and painted carpet pages from that period are very rare. Micrographic decoration as a distinct and exclusive feature of the Hebrew book not only continued to play an important role, but became a dominant factor in many manuscripts. Other books are embellished by a variety of painted Gothic foliate designs. As in the previous centuries, Sephardic Bibles of the fifteenth century contain very little figurative or narrative illustration.<sup>1</sup>

An important school in which these two elements—micrography and Gothic foliate decoration—developed into a unique style existed in Portugal. In the last quarter of the fifteenth century, artists of this school decorated a number of Bibles (fig. 128) and used patterns

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<sup>1</sup> The treasury of the cathedral in Pamplona contains a Bible that is dated to the beginning of the fifteenth century. It is rich in micrographic decoration that is very similar to that of Joshua ibn Gaon about 100 years earlier. This decoration includes human faces. See De Silva y Verástegui (1988), 169–88.

that were borrowed from late medieval and early modern Italian art. This school is clearly defined and other scholars have discussed it at length.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, I do not intend to elaborate on this subject here.

*Micrographic Decoration in New Castile*

A large group of Bibles with ornate micrographic decoration, which continued to develop the Islamicizing tradition, was produced in southern Castile from the late 1460s onward. An examination of these manuscripts reveals that the centers of production were Toledo, Cordoba, and Seville. However, most of the books' characteristics are shared by the entire group and are not limited to one area or another.

Thérèse Metzger, who studied the micrographic designs of this group, maintains that the dates and locations of the books reflect the waves of persecution in the second half of the fifteenth century. The earlier ones were produced in Seville in the 1460s and early 1470s, before the arrival of the Dominicans in 1480. Then, as she puts it, the decoration program "moved" to Cordoba at the end of the 1470s. The latest manuscripts, from the 1480s, come from Toledo.<sup>3</sup> This reconstruction of the travels of the decoration program of fifteenth-century Bibles is tempting, but since many of the books do not note their place of origin, such a claim is problematical. There is no doubt that the anti-Jewish persecution and the Dominicans' activity brought a halt, at least temporarily, to the Jews' artistic activity. But we cannot go so far as to conclude that a certain decoration program migrated—together with the illustrators and scribes—from city to city and that the route of its wanderings can be reconstructed. The last dated book from Seville was produced in 1472, eight years before the arrival of the Dominicans. But the Dominicans' activity in Toledo began in 1485, and a decorated Bible was produced there in 1487.<sup>4</sup> As we will see later in this chapter, it is possible to attribute

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<sup>2</sup> Sed-Rajna (1970); Metzger (1977); Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 137–51; for a critique on Sed-Rajna's book on manuscripts from Lisbon, see Beit-Arié (1971) noting that Sed-Rajna's definition of this particular scribal school is based exclusively on an analysis of the decoration.

<sup>3</sup> Metzger (1996), 171.

<sup>4</sup> Madrid, Palacio Real, MS II, 3231–46. See below, 216.

a group of books to Toledo, but these books were produced before the 1480s, concurrently with those from Seville. There is no known scribe whose travels can be traced to the route that Metzger suggests. Some scribes signed books in Seville in earlier years and reappeared several years afterward, but no city is indicated on the later manuscripts.

In a few manuscripts it is possible to discern a slight connection to the Portuguese school. These books do not contain any painted embellishments. The decoration is confined to the micrographic *masorah magna*, micrographic carpet pages, and other scribal ornamentation, such as *parashah* signs and *seder* markings. As a result, they evidence a relatively large degree of continuity and homogeneity. This continuity is manifested by use of types of decoration known from Toledo already in the thirteenth century. The homogeneity is within the group itself with the main decoration patterns recurring in most of the books. They have very few features that connect them to the Catalan schools or to Joshua ibn Gaon.

Links to the earlier Castilian tradition of decoration can be found in *seder* markings and calligraphic frames. An example of unknown provenance, dated to 1478, can be found in Dublin (Trinity College Library, MS 13).<sup>5</sup> It is very small (195×234 mm) and much wider than other Sephardic Bibles. Due to its format, size, and *seder* markings, Bezalel Narkiss, Aliza Cohen-Mushlin, and Anat Tcherikover suggest that it was produced in Toledo.<sup>6</sup> Another, slightly larger book (217 x 266 mm) is kept in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Poc 347).<sup>7</sup> Additional manuscripts with similar characteristics, all of unknown origin, are in Modena (Estense Library, MS 0.5.9, dated to 1470), Philadelphia (Free Library, MS Lewis Or. 140, dated to 1496), Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Opp. Add. 8),<sup>8</sup> and Cambridge (Trinity College Library, MS F.12.106).<sup>9</sup>

Only a few differences can be discerned in the decoration programs of these books. In Dublin 13 and Oxford 347, the *masorah* is decorated with simple geometric designs—a feature also typical of the earlier Toledan Bibles. On the other hand, in Modena 5.9,

<sup>5</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 167–68, figs. 512–19.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 8; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 169–70, fig. 520.

<sup>8</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 10; Metzger (1974), 108.

<sup>9</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 174–75, figs. 534–40.

Oxford 8, and Cambridge 12.106, the *masorah* is decorated with more lavish micrographic ornamentation and with interlace and vegetal patterns. Modena 5.9 and Cambridge 12.106 also contain frames for the Songs of Moses in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

All these manuscripts—apart from Cambridge 12.106—also have micrographic carpet pages featuring two different types of composition. In Dublin 13 (fig. 129) and Oxford 347 (fig. 130), the carpet pages are composed of a broad outer frame, a narrower inner frame, and a rectangle or rosetta in the center. These pages usually contain a combination of micrography and pen flourishings. Since this composition is somewhat reminiscent of works of the Portuguese school, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover refer to the group as the “Hispano-Portuguese” school.<sup>10</sup> The Castilian manuscripts, however, contain no trace whatsoever of the Italian stylistic influence so typical of the Portuguese workshops. If we compare them, for example, with the Lisbon Bible of 1482 (fig. 128) now in London (British Library, MS Or. 2626–28),<sup>11</sup> we see that instead of the ornate foliate design that characterizes the Portuguese school, the manuscripts from Castile are ornamented with interlace patterns that rely on the thirteenth-century tradition, where they are often used in the decoration of the *masorah magna*, micrographic frames, and more.<sup>12</sup> These characteristics, which indicate a continuation of the thirteenth-century Toledan tradition, suggest that these manuscripts may have originated in the same city.

A manuscript with similar features can be found in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 1314).<sup>13</sup> It contains two folios with a Temple depiction,<sup>14</sup> either an imitation of the earlier Catalan tradition or an earlier Catalan double sheet bound together with it. The style and composition of the image, and the layout of the calligraphic frames—the latter of the type integrated into the painted work—, point at a Catalan background of the late fourteenth century.

Paris 1314 has several features in common with Dublin 13 and Oxford 347. Like them, it is relatively small (230×285 mm); each of

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 169–70.

<sup>11</sup> Margoliouth (1909–15), vol. 1, no. 62, 33–35; Sed-Rajna (1988); Sed-Rajna (1970), 24–29; Metzger (1977), 33–48; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 141–44, figs. 404–19.

<sup>12</sup> For example, in Paris 25; see above, in chap. 3.

<sup>13</sup> Schwab (1898); Garel (1990), no. 36.

<sup>14</sup> See Revel-Neher (1998), 80, fig. 73.

these three books is under 30 cm high and they are all wide relative to their height. It also contains carpet pages of a composition similar to theirs. In two of them, the outer frame comprises micrography in continuous interlaces, and the inner part is designed as a centered interlace pattern. The spandrels between the central circle and the outer frame are decorated with a stylized vegetal pattern typical of Islamic art; it appears frequently in medallions in Qur'an manuscripts (figs. 1–3) and in Mudéjar and Nasrid architectural decoration (fig. 18). Joshua ibn Gaon also used this pattern a great deal (figs. 64 and 65). The same design recurs on a third carpet page, filling a rectangle in the center of the page.<sup>15</sup> Another five carpet pages use a similar decorative language.

Like Dublin 13 and Oxford 347, Paris 1314 contains *seder* markings, but it does not have calligraphic frames (except in the inserted Temple image). The text columns at the beginning of the book are decorated with micrography in the shape of horseshoe arches—thereby reviving Joshua ibn Gaon's characteristic design, albeit in micrography rather than painted. As opposed to the simple *masorah* decoration that characterizes Dublin 13 and Oxford 347, Paris 1314 has richer ornamentation, in the form of interlace patterns and frames for the Song of Moses. A manuscript in the Municipal Library in Coimbra (MS 1) contains carpet pages with similar compositions, as well as micrography, interlace patterns, and horseshoe arches, but lacks *seder* markings and calligraphic frames.<sup>16</sup>

The micrographic carpet pages of the Philadelphia Bible, Modena 5.9, and Oxford 8 feature another type of composition: instead of being divided into frames and an inner section, they are covered with continuous interlace patterns or vegetal motifs. Their most prominent feature is their great density and *horror vacui*.

In general, these decoration programs revive many aspects of the thirteenth-century tradition: they include *seder* markings, calligraphic frames, and micrographic frames in interlace patterns. In both types

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<sup>15</sup> Narkiss (1984), 30, fig. 19.

<sup>16</sup> The carpet pages in Cambridge 12.106 contain calligraphic frames, which are very similar to those in Dublin 13 and many thirteenth-century Castilian manuscripts. However, the decoration within the frames consists of very poor penwork. This decoration was clearly not part of the original design, which may have called for micrographic carpet pages. The micrographic decoration in the body of the text, on the other hand, is adept and is executed in the style used in the other manuscripts.



of carpet page composition—centered and continuous—the same patterns are used. The pattern that appears in the frames of the carpet page of Oxford 347 (fig. 130) and Paris 1314, for example, recurs in many of the continuous compositions; the same applies to the above-mentioned Mudéjar-style vegetal pattern found in Paris 1314. All of these carpet pages draw from the same repertoire of forms, and the differences are manifested only in the compositional type—continuous versus centered.

The three manuscripts—the Philadelphia Bible, Modena 5.9, and Oxford 8, also feature rich decoration of the *masorah*, micrographic ornamentation of the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali, and various micrographic frames.

Carpet pages of the continuous compositional type appear in numerous Bibles of that period, which also contain a wide variety of other micrographic decoration, such as frames, panels, and the like. On the other hand, traditional features, such as *seder* markings, calligraphic frames, and a *masorah* written in simple geometric shapes, are less common; the only traditional decoration type found frequently in them is micrographic interlace frames. One manuscript contains a colophon attesting that it was written by Isaac Shoshan in Cordoba in 1479 (New York, Jewish Theological Seminary, MS L5). The carpet pattern appears in this manuscript only on small panels at the end of each book. Apart from these features, there is opulent decoration of the *masorah magna* and micrographic frames for the Song of Moses (fig. 131).

The available data does not enable us to attribute the various decoration types in this group to specific locations. None of the attempts to take a regional approach when discussing this group are convincing. The Portuguese connection that is suggested by Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover with regard to Oxford 347 or Dublin 13 is a very tenuous one. The New York Bible's origins in Cordoba do not help us to attribute the rest of the group. Some books have features that point at Toledo: small size, wide format, *seder* markings, and calligraphic frames, but the evidence is not clear-cut. The other decoration types in the manuscripts of this group can be observed in other books as well. This is a very homogeneous group, which draws from a tradition and a familiar repertoire of forms but is also innovative and original, mainly in the composition of the carpet pages.

The notion of linking the group with the Portuguese school is appealing, but problematical. Most of the Castilian manuscripts are not dated, and the majority of those whose date is known are from the 1470s. The Portuguese school was flourishing in the early 1470s and 1480s—the Lisbon Bible (fig. 128), for example, was produced in 1482. As noted, a distinct Italian influence can be seen in the Portuguese manuscripts, whereas Italian-style features are completely absent from the Castilian group. If the Portuguese decoration had influenced the Castilian group directly, the Italian style would surely have been evident in the latter. The total absence of any feature that recalls an Italian style suggests an influence in the opposite direction: the Portuguese school was inspired by carpet page compositions used earlier in various centers in Castile, and translated them into another formal language combining the Islamicizing design with Italianate foliate patterns.<sup>17</sup>

Modena 5.9 was written in 1470 by Moses bar Joseph of Terutieli; no place of production is noted in the colophon (fol. 342r). Moses bar Joseph is also known from another Bible, which was produced in Seville in 1468; it is now in the Van Kampen Collection in Orlando, Florida.<sup>18</sup> Modena 5.9 has sumptuous micrographic decoration of various kinds, such as centered carpet pages reminiscent of Dublin 13 and Oxford 347. As in New York 5, the compositions with continuous patterns in this manuscript appear only in small panels at the end of each biblical book, and not on large carpet pages. The decoration of the *masorah* is also rich, as is the ornamentation of the Song of Moses; however, unlike most of its counterparts in the other manuscripts, the frame for the Song of Moses is not closed but instead has an open composition, using a variety of motifs. The connection with traditional conventions is not especially strong in this manuscript. There are no *seder* markings or calligraphic frames, and the micrographic frames are not of the usual kind. As in the Philadelphia Bible or Paris 1314, the text columns

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<sup>17</sup> An unusual Castilian Bible in Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Cod. Hebr. III–IV, shows clear traces of the Portuguese school. The book was produced in San Felices de los Gallegos, a place very close to the border with Portugal, which might explain this stylistic connection. For discussions of this Bible, see Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994); Metzger (1996), 168.

<sup>18</sup> Former Sassoon Collection, MS 487; Sassoon (1932), vol. 1, 15–16. For some time it was part of the Collection of William Gross, Tel Aviv, but was recently acquired by the Van Kampen Foundation.

at the beginning of the book are decorated with micrographic horse-shoe arches. Though Modena 5.9 and the manuscript in the Van Kampen Collection were the work of the same scribe, their micrographic decorations share very little and presumably were executed by different masoreters.

Another scribe known from several manuscripts is Moses ben Jacob ben Moses Khalef, who also worked in Seville. In 1472, he signed a Bible in Seville, now in New York (Hispanic Society of America, HC: 371/169),<sup>19</sup> followed in 1473 by another Bible, now in Parma (Palatina Library, MS Parm 2809).<sup>20</sup> In 1480, he signed the so-called Abravanel Bible, which is now in the Bodleian Library (MS Opp. Add. 4<sup>o</sup>26).<sup>21</sup> Most of these books contain carpet pages with continuous compositions featuring various interlace and vegetal designs (figs. 132 and 133); these designs are of a type similar to that within the centered compositions of Oxford 347, Paris 1314, and others. The Bible in the Hispanic Society is particularly rich in decoration and contains both centered and continuous carpet pages. On the basis of this group's similarities to Dublin 13 and similar books, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover went so far as to add by extension the Ben Khalef manuscripts to the area of influence of the Portuguese school,<sup>22</sup> although they have nothing in common with works produced in Portugal.<sup>23</sup>

Similar carpet page patterns and other features return in several other books. One of them is a small Psalter in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Opp. Add. 8<sup>o</sup>10),<sup>24</sup> whose design reflects the same decorative tradition: carpet pages with a dense, continuous composition, and a micrographic *masorah* decorated with similar patterns. Combined with these types of decoration is penwork similar to that of the span-

<sup>19</sup> Metzger (1974), 108, where the book is called "the Hirsemann Bible;" Metzger (1996), n. 34.

<sup>20</sup> Antonioli Martelli and Mortara Ottolenghi (1966), 43, 90–91; Tamani (1968), 54; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 23.

<sup>21</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 30; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 171–72, figs. 521–27. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover pointed out a discrepancy between the day in the week and the date in the Abravanel Bible, and so there may have been an error in the year, although it is more likely that the error occurred in the day and not the year.

<sup>22</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 171–72.

<sup>23</sup> An undated Bible with similar features, in Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Cod. Hebr. I, can be added to this group; Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994).

<sup>24</sup> Neubauer (1886–1906), no. 109; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 173–74, figs. 528–33.

drels in the carpet pages in Dublin 13 and Oxford 347; the resemblance is in the design, the patterns, and the thickness of the lines in relation to the white background. Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover present the character of the pen flourishings as additional evidence of a connection with Portugal. However, the penwork in the Portuguese manuscripts is characterized by heavier lines, different shapes, and greater density than that of the Castilian manuscripts. In general, the formal and stylistic language of the pen flourishings in the Oxford Psalter is similar to parallels all over Iberia.<sup>25</sup> Just as they resemble penwork produced in Portugal, they also bear a resemblance to that of the First Kennicott Bible (fig. 137), from La Coruña in Galicia. The similarity between the manuscripts under discussion and the Portuguese manuscripts is not specific enough for us to conclude that they were produced in Portugal or under the influence of the Portuguese school. The common denominator between them is simply the formal language that was generally used throughout the entire Iberian Peninsula.<sup>26</sup>

To conclude, this group of Bibles from Southern Castile is surprisingly homogeneous. They were not produced in the same workshop, not even in the same city. The homogeneity stems from the fact that the ornamentation is exclusively micrographic, and there is no painted decoration. This confirms my conclusion that in the realm of scribal decoration a high degree of continuity, preservation of artistic tradition, and duplication was the norm. Such a great resemblance in composition, specific patterns, and details does not exist in any other group of manuscripts. Accordingly, it can again be observed that scribes and masoretors, whose main duty was to copy texts, also copied decoration patterns down to the last detail. As a result, their decoration is much more conventional than any painted ornamentation.

Another striking observation is that in the second half of the fifteenth century the decoration schemes of the Castilian Bibles are still entirely and exclusively embedded in Islamic culture. In this respect the Castilian manuscripts are different from the Portuguese ones whose decorators and patrons were open also to influences from western, particularly Italian art.

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<sup>25</sup> See Spalding (1953).

<sup>26</sup> Another manuscript that is similar to the group under discussion is now in the Library of Trinity College in Cambridge (MS F. 12.101), Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 176, figs. 541–43.

*The First Kennicott Bible*

The most lavishly illuminated fifteenth-century Sephardic manuscript is the First Kennicott Bible, now in Oxford (Bodleian Library, MS Kenn. 1). With its opulent decoration, it clearly stands out among other Hebrew books of that period. According to the colophon (fig. 139), it was written in La Coruña in 1476, by Moses ibn Zabarah for Isaac ben Don Solomon di Braga. A second colophon notes that the illuminator was Joseph ibn Chaim.<sup>27</sup> The decoration relies on a variety of models from the past, among them the Cervera Bible, itself a strikingly unique work. The Cervera Bible contains an inscription from 1375 informing us that its owner at the time, Don David Mordechai, lived in La Coruña. Like the Cervera Bible, the First Kennicott codex contains David Kimhi's *Sefer Mikhlol*.

Galicia had no earlier tradition of illuminated Hebrew manuscripts and there is no school to which this Bible can be attributed; in fact, it is an isolated phenomenon. It is replete with painted decorations combining Gothic style and Islamic elements. The manuscript was described and analyzed repeatedly since the 1920s.<sup>28</sup> It is described in detail in the 1982 catalogue compiled by Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover,<sup>29</sup> and in the 1985 facsimile edition,<sup>30</sup> and so there is no need to discuss it in detail here.

In addition to the Cervera Bible, Joseph ibn Chaim probably used also a Catalan Bible and other pictorial sources from Central Europe. The main common denominator of the Cervera Bible and the First Kennicott Bible—apart from formal, iconographic, and codicological elements<sup>31</sup>—is the inclusion of narrative and even figurative illustrations. Both illuminators—Joseph Hatsarfati and Joseph ibn Chaim—break with the antifigurative tradition characteristic of other Sephardic Bibles. The Cervera Bible provided the model for the illustration of the Book of Jonah (fig. 75),<sup>32</sup> for the design of the zoomorphic colophon, and for many of the frames of David Kimhi's *Sefer Mikhlol* (figs. 69 and 134). Even the design of the incomplete carpet pages

<sup>27</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 464.

<sup>28</sup> Wischnitzer (1921); Roth (1952); Roth (1957).

<sup>29</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 153–59, figs. 441–86.

<sup>30</sup> Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985).

<sup>31</sup> All of these elements are detailed in *ibid.*, 18, 66–68.

<sup>32</sup> For the Kennicott image, see Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 469.

in the Cervera Bible is echoed in the composition of the carpet pages in the First Kennicott Bible.<sup>33</sup> On the other hand, Joshua ibn Gaon's decoration of the Cervera Bible's *masorah magna* had no influence whatsoever on the *masorah* in the First Kennicott Bible. The latter comprises only geometric patterns.

The Temple depiction in the First Kennicott Bible (fig. 135),<sup>34</sup> which includes an image of the Mount of Olives, draws from Catalan predecessors, and is probably based on a model from the middle or second half of the fourteenth century. The depiction of the menorah in the First Kennicott Bible bears no resemblance to its parallel in the Cervera Bible, other than the fact that a full page is devoted to it. In its details the depiction is closer to its Catalan predecessors than to the rendering of Joseph Hatsarfati, which is based on the vision of Zechariah.

Not only the Sephardic tradition left its imprint on the design of the First Kennicott Bible. As previous research has demonstrated, various features link it to models from Central Europe. Sheila Edmunds showed that Joseph ibn Chaim used a repertoire of animal motifs that is borrowed from ornamentation on engraved playing cards.<sup>35</sup> Such cards were produced throughout the fifteenth century in Germany and the Netherlands, where they were very popular and also had a considerable influence on manuscript illumination.<sup>36</sup> They hark back to earlier painted cards from the 1430s. In the First Kennicott Bible, these motifs are used to decorate Kimhi's text (for example, figs. 136 and 137), and also appear in the elaborate *parashah* signs in the body of the Bible.<sup>37</sup> Playing cards were also produced in Spain; their design and motival repertoire, however, differed widely from those from Central Europe. Edmunds therefore concludes that Joseph had access to German models due to commercial ties between Germany and the Jewish community in La Coruña or the patron himself.<sup>38</sup>

The appearance of motifs borrowed from the same repertoire in the Second Nuremberg Haggadah (Jerusalem, Schocken Library, MS 24087) and in the Yehuda Haggadah (Jerusalem, Israel Museum,

<sup>33</sup> For example, *ibid.*, figs. 456 and 462.

<sup>34</sup> For a discussion in connection with the Catalan depictions of the Temple, see Revel-Neher (1998), 80–81; and above, chap. 5, 00.

<sup>35</sup> Edmunds (1975–76); Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985).

<sup>36</sup> Edmunds and Van Buren (1974).

<sup>37</sup> See Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 479.

<sup>38</sup> Edmunds (1975–76), 35.

MS 180/50), both decorated in the 1460s in Franconia, proves that Ashkenazic illuminators, too, were familiar with these motifs and used them (fig. 138).<sup>39</sup> Accordingly, we should not rule out the possibility that the model used by Joseph ibn Chaim was a Jewish manuscript, but there is no certainty that this was the case. The fact that the birds in figs. 137 and 138 and other motifs, appear as mirror images, indicates that the Ashkenazic Haggadot and Joseph ibn Chaim drew the motifs from different sources. The use of the copper engraving technique by which the cards were usually produced often led to the reversal of the motifs which originally were painted. In the Ashkenazic manuscripts, the motifs follow those of the engraved cards, whereas those in the First Kennicott Bible appear inverted and must therefore rely on another version with its roots probably in painted renderings which predate the engravings.<sup>40</sup>

Ursula Schubert pointed out another source used by Joseph ibn Chaim in the decoration of the manuscript. The ornamentation of the *Sefer Mikhlol* includes a motif that may also have been borrowed from southern German models: mice and cats at war with each other, and hares attacking a wolf. This motif represents the inversion of the human world,<sup>41</sup> and is not known in Spanish art.

The First Kennicott Bible is truly a unique phenomenon and is not an expression of a wider school.<sup>42</sup> It stands alone in the context of fifteenth-century Bible decoration, which is usually characterized by modesty, few innovations, and in most cases a return to an earlier decorative tradition, while preserving the Islamic heritage. Joseph ibn Chaim, a skilled artist from a technical and compositional standpoint, often relied on a wide variety of sources. In this sense, his art is more eclectic than most of the illuminated Bibles from Spain. At the same time, he used a slightly “archaic” style, which was very linear and flat. Unlike other examples of fifteenth-century book art, the many figures, animals, and plants in the scroll design lack any illusion of volume or other impressions of three-dimensionality.

<sup>39</sup> Kogman-Appel (1999), 156–65.

<sup>40</sup> On fol. 185r of the First Kennicott Bible, the depiction of King David echoes a composition also common in card games. But as Edmunds demonstrated, such compositions did not appear in the early engraved cards from Central Europe, but rather in other decks of cards, which circulated in Spain; Edmunds (1975–76), 26–27; Narkiss and Cohen-Mushlin (1985), 55.

<sup>41</sup> Fols. 442v and 443r; Schubert (1986–87); see also Schubert (1984), 84–85.

<sup>42</sup> For a discussion of the “First Kennicott Bible group” as described by Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover, see below, 216–19.

Moses ibn Zabarah, the scribe of the First Kennicott Bible, is known from other manuscripts.<sup>43</sup> One of them is illuminated (former Sassoon Collection, MS 1209),<sup>44</sup> and Moses's name is credited with checking and correcting the text. The book is dated to 1477 and includes the Books of the Prophets and the Hagiograph. Its decorations are modest and were clearly not executed by Joseph ibn Chaim.<sup>45</sup> This book contains a small painted carpet panel that is somewhat similar in its structure to the centered carpet pages with thick frames from southern Castile, such as Dublin 13, and includes Gothic motifs in the center and Islamic motifs in the frames. In the other decorations, the Gothic style is dominant and is characterized by a variety of foliate designs at the beginning of each book.

Solomon ben Isaac ibn Zabarah, perhaps related to Moses, wrote a small Bible (former Sassoon Collection, MS 1210);<sup>46</sup> it probably dates to 1466, since it contains calendars from that year on. The decorations include micrographic carpet pages, which are similar in character to those in southern Castile but simpler in design. A few of them are enclosed in gold frames, while others are surrounded by filigree penwork. These frames are somewhat similar to parallels in the First Kennicott Bible, but in general there is not a very broad basis for comparison.

### *French and Italian Influences*

Besides the manuscripts that continue the earlier Castilian tradition and are faithful to the Islamic formal language, there are others<sup>47</sup> that reflect a different cultural background, and draw exclusively from Gothic art. The most typical decoration type found in these manuscripts is ornamentation of initial panels from which foliate designs emerge.

Only few of these books bear an indication of date or origin.<sup>48</sup> A

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<sup>43</sup> On the life of Moses ibn Zabarah, who moved to Morocco after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, see Richler (1992).

<sup>44</sup> Sotheby (1994), 45.

<sup>45</sup> The claim in Sotheby (1994), no. 41, that this is the same artist is not convincing.

<sup>46</sup> Sotheby (1994), no. 41.

<sup>47</sup> Metzger (1996) surveys many of these manuscripts and provides brief descriptions of their decoration.

<sup>48</sup> Examples of this type predating the fifteenth century are few in number. Two examples can be found in the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem:



example is now in Madrid (University Library, MSS 2),<sup>49</sup> and was written in 1482 in Tarazona, in northern Aragon, not far from Navarre. Another Bible in Cambridge (Trinity College, MS F 18.32–18.33), written in 1474, may be from the same area; the colophon indicates a place of provenance, that may be identified as Tauste in Aragon. Another book, in Hamburg (Staats-und Universitätsbibliothek, cod. heb. 45), was written in 1484 in Alba de Tormes in the Salamanca region. It is tempting to conclude from a survey of those books whose place of origin is noted, that this approach was especially favored in the northern part of Spain. However, since the located manuscripts comprise a small minority within this group, no clear-cut conclusions as to the origin of the group as a whole can be reached.

Moreover, one manuscript in this group was written in Toledo in 1487 (Madrid, Palacio Real, MS II 3231–3246), indicating that this approach was also customary in New Castile alongside the one that favored the development of the traditional micrographic decoration. The book is unique in character, consists of sixteen volumes, and contains very few features that are customary in other books from Toledo. Its decoration comprises polylobed arches ornamenting text columns, typical fifteenth-century penwork, calligraphic frames—the only feature that is clearly typical of Toledan tradition—, and painted foliate designs in late Gothic style.

With regard to books in libraries in England, Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover lump the character of their decoration together with that of the First Kennicott Bible and refer to these manuscripts as “the First Kennicott Bible group.”<sup>50</sup> This classification is based on the most general features, which were customary in various regions and periods. Moreover, the First Kennicott Bible is, as stated, unique in its overall character, mainly due to the lavishness of the decoration and the inclusion of figurative illustrations, which have no parallels; it is also unique in its flat, linear style.

The foliate designs in these manuscripts are too different from each other and from the First Kennicott Bible to enable us to attribute them to one group or school. The books were most likely produced

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MS 4°780, from 1322, contains micrographic decoration including the candelabra-shaped tree, and painted foliate designs. MS 4°1401, from 1341, features some decorated Gothic arches and initial panels. Both books share only very little with the common Catalan decoration schemes described in chap. 5.

<sup>49</sup> Formerly shelf-marked as MS 118 Z 21; Metzger (1996), figs. 3, and 8. The date given by Metzger (1487) is erroneous.

<sup>50</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 152. See Metzger (1986).

in different periods in the fifteenth century, and in many regions throughout Spain. Among these examples is a small Bible (138×193 mm) in the John Rylands University Library in Manchester (MS heb. 36), which features painted initial panels.<sup>51</sup> Outside the frames of the panels, foliate patterns were added. However, these resemble only in the basic shape of the foliate design, not in style. Those of the First Kennicott Bible are much flatter and the execution is quite linear, with heavy outlines.

The same is true for another relatively small manuscript (125×178 mm) in Cambridge (University Library, MS Add. 468).<sup>52</sup> In addition to ornamented initial panels with painted foliate designs emerging from them, it also contains small text illustrations that include figures. As in the case of Rylands 36, the comparison between the fleshy scroll motifs and the flat, linear ones of the First Kennicott Bible is not convincing. Most of the text illustration have no parallels. It is interesting to note, however, that the depiction of Noah's Ark (fol. 4v) reflects the traditional, early medieval iconography of the manuscripts of Beatus of Liébana's commentary on the Apocalypse (fig. 74). As we have seen, this iconography is also used by Joshua ibn Gaon in Paris 20 (fig. 73).<sup>53</sup> It recurs also in the First Kennicott Bible.<sup>54</sup>

The decoration schemes in the books discussed in this section<sup>55</sup> are quite varied in style, and therefore should not be classified as belonging to one particular school. The only element they have in common is a clear preference for French and Italian Gothic style

<sup>51</sup> Rylands Catalogue (1958), no. 4; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 160–61, figs. 487–88.

<sup>52</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 161–62, figs. 489–98; Reif (1997), 55. Another volume of this book is in Cincinnati (Hebrew Union College Library, MS 13).

<sup>53</sup> See above, chap. 4, 120.

<sup>54</sup> Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), fig. 490.

<sup>55</sup> Another example is Cambridge, University Library, MS Add. 469; Schiller-Szinessy (1876), no. 18, 27–29; Narkiss, Cohen-Mushlin, and Tcherikover (1982), 163–64, fig. 499. It was written probably in 1415, see *ibid.*; see also Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, cod. Va 26/6; Madrid, Escorial Library, MS G. II.8; Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, Cod. Hebr. V, Narkiss and Sed-Rajna (1994); Edelmann (1969), no. 3; *Jews in Denmark* (1983), vol. 2, no. 8; Mann (1992), no. 12. In the Copenhagen manuscript, the penwork is similar to that of the fifteenth-century Bibles from Castile mentioned above, 210–11. But the character of the micrographic decoration differs widely from that of the Castilian manuscripts, includes vegetal patterns only, and is devoid of carpet pages. The character of the delicate scroll design in the micrography has no parallels in southern Castile.

without any Islamic influence. Only the absence of figurative images in most of these manuscripts connects this group to the tradition of other Sephardic Bibles.

Only one book in this entire group has a genuine formal connection to the First Kennicott Bible; its style appears to be linear and flat like that of Joseph ibn Chaim. This manuscript, containing the Pentateuch and the *haftarot*, is now in Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, Ms Parm 2948); it was written in 1474 in Calatayud.<sup>56</sup> Its decoration includes arches ornamenting the columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali. These arches are relatively abstract and densely ornamented with interlace patterns. The colophon (fol. 266r) is integrated into a carpet page with a centered composition reminiscent of those in Dublin 13 and Oxford 347, although not micrographic but painted. The inner frame contains a stylized and abstract spared ground vegetal pattern; the floral motifs are similarly flat as those of Joseph ibn Chaim (see, for example, fig. 139). The middle frame features typical fifteenth-century filigree work. The outer frame displays a spared ground interlace pattern, also similar to parallels in the First Kennicott Bible. This is, then, the only book that has any, though only a remote, connection to Joseph ibn Chaim's art.

Other manuscripts do not confine themselves to one particular approach but instead combine various traditions from the past with characteristics of the late Gothic style, as well as those that are associated with Islamic culture. Examples can be found in Berlin (Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 81),<sup>57</sup> and Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 2018).<sup>58</sup> The latter, dated 1484, contains micrographic vegetal patterns, painted foliate designs, decorated initial panels, and decorations of columns listing the differences between the masoretic versions of Ben Asher and Ben Naftali. The latter borrow Islamic formal elements, mainly interlace patterns.

Still other manuscripts revive the painted carpet page—for example, a Bible in Paris (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, cod. hébr. 29)<sup>59</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Metzger (1996), fig. 9; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), 147.

<sup>57</sup> Apparently some of the decorations in this book were executed by a later, French hand, see Nechama and Sievernich (1991), 424, with a reproduction of one of the “French” examples (20:1/12).

<sup>58</sup> Tamani (1968), 62; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 151.

<sup>59</sup> Zotenberg (1866), 4; Nechama and Sievernich (1991), 263, fig. 12/7. There is no way of verifying the claim in the catalogue from Berlin that the book is from Barcelona and that it was produced at the end of the fourteenth century.

and another in Parma (Biblioteca Palatina, MS Parm 1994–95).<sup>60</sup> They share several features, mainly in the manner in which they combine the two different formal languages—Islamic and late Gothic. Paris 29 was written for Abraham ben Moses Hakohen, who purchased it, according to the colophon, in 1490. Its decoration includes micrographic carpet pages and horseshoe arch ornamentation for columns listing the 613 precepts at the beginning of the volume. This type of decoration is distinctly reminiscent of the group of Castilian Bibles from Toledo, Cordoba, and Seville that was discussed at the beginning of this chapter. At the beginning and end of the book are several pages made of a thinner and softer parchment. These additions contain painted carpet pages with Islamicizing motifs integrated with Gothic floral motifs. The decoration program of Parma 1994–95 includes similar carpet pages (fig. 140), a depiction of the menorah, imitating those in earlier Catalan manuscripts, and opulent foliate design. At least two artists were involved in its decoration.

The carpet pages of both these manuscripts share a unique combination of elements borrowed from the late Gothic style and Islamic motifs. Emerging from the carpets are foliate motifs that evidence an Italian influence. Hints of this influence can also be found in the body of the carpet itself. This group, the last to return to the tradition of Bible decoration in Spain, and once again highlights the Islamic tradition that played such a central role in the cultural life of the Jews of Spain and in the artistic design of the illuminated Bibles.

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<sup>60</sup> Tamani (1968), 54–55; Antonioli Martelli and Mortara Ottolenghi (1966), nos. 45 and 46; Richler and Beit-Arié (2001), no. 11.

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the Middle Ages, the Jews of Spain played an important role in cultural exchange in the Iberian Peninsula. Jewish culture as a whole reflects this exchange in various ways and the Bibles decorated by Jewish illuminators in Spain between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries reflect one aspect of this phenomenon. In these Bibles, we can see a variety of influences from the two cultures in whose midst the Jews of Spain lived in the Middle Ages—Islam and Christianity.

The study of the history of the Sephardic Bibles leads from workshops in thirteenth-century Toledo to Joshua ibn Gaon and Joseph Hatsarfati in Soria and Tudela around 1300, and to the blossoming of the schools of Roussillon and Catalonia in the fourteenth century. More modest manuscripts attest to the Sephardic Jews' economic decline in the fifteenth century. The unique development of micro-graphic decoration in this period is a by-product of this decline. Unable to afford the more prestigious painted decoration, patrons settled for this type of ornamentation, which then became a trend. In this general atmosphere, the lavishly decorated First Kennicott Bible, is a striking exception. It was written and illuminated only sixteen years before the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, an event that brought a halt to Jewish life in the Sephardic communities where Bibles and other books had been produced for centuries. The Jews of Spain took their cultural heritage with them to new centers that arose throughout the world since the sixteenth century. Evidence of the cultural flowering of the Jewish communities of medieval Spain is preserved in various libraries in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States.

I have kept two main questions in mind throughout the discussion. The first concerns the degree of continuity and tradition that governed the design of the books. Bibles had been decorated in the Middle East since the tenth century and it is only natural to ask how much of an imprint their design left on the illumination of Sephardic manuscripts.

In the past, most scholars argued that Sephardic Bible decoration relied a great deal on Middle Eastern predecessors, and that there

were hypothetical illuminated manuscripts from Islamic Spain, now lost, that served as a connecting link. It occurs, however, as the preceding chapters show, that striking degrees of continuity can be observed only in scribal decoration, such as penwork, calligraphy, and micrography. Since the work of scribes requires maximum fidelity to the original—whether the text is copied directly from the original or written from memory and checked and corrected afterward—the scribes and masoretors would also be more faithful to the models in the decoration they executed. The late-fifteenth-century micrography school of southern Castile, for example, produced extremely homogeneous decoration schemes, executed in a uniform manner.

But the painted works of artists reveal only minimal reliance on earlier Jewish models. We can observe continuous traditions only in general iconographic ideas, such as the Temple, and in certain types of design, such as the carpet page, but the details do not have a great deal in common with those of the earlier works. The formal repertoire of the Bibles from the various schools reflects innovation and iconographic freedom on the part of the illuminators, who also found original ways to use the artistic languages that were prevalent in their environment.

A great deal of homogeneity, however, can be observed within each school, not only in the types of decoration and iconographic concepts, but also in the repertoire of forms. When a particular pattern, iconographic theme, group of patterns, or type of decoration was favored by patrons, it was used again and again in the same area and period. An outstanding example for this is the Perpignan Bible group.

Between the schools, however, continuity exists only in the most general terms. The connection between the Toledo group of the thirteenth century and the later Tudela group, for example, is quite tenuous. It seems that only several general decorative elements, such as the carpet page, or the Temple depiction, were common in all of the various areas and periods. We should not rule out the possibility that the use of certain types of decoration developed through verbal communication between one illuminator and another or between an illuminator and his patrons. The creation of decoration patterns may have been based on something a patron saw in another manuscript and described to the illuminator. Or it may have been the illuminator who remembered seeing an interesting decoration pattern in another context, perhaps even another medium, and decided to

apply it in his own work. Use of concrete visual models and their duplication are less common than what scholars previously assumed, and the relative similarity in the choice of certain types of decoration stems not from the copying of models but rather from knowledge, from verbal communication, and from memorized guidelines—all in accordance with the dominant artistic trends.

The similarity in patterns and formal repertoire between the Toledo group and the manuscripts associated with Joshua ibn Gaon is minimal and the differences between them cannot be explained only by the existence of different local styles. The analyses presented here reveal the planning and the process of decorating manuscripts as a succession of different choices made in accordance to a specific cultural background and pattern of cultural identification. Even when we can connect a manuscript to a particular model, as in the case of Parma 2668 and the Perpignan Bible in Paris, we cannot ignore the fact that this connection exists only with regard to part of the decoration—namely, the Temple depiction or one of the micro-graphic carpet pages.

As for the other types of decoration, it can be discerned that the schools of Catalonia and southern France produced a distinct decoration program developed in the course of an ongoing dialogue both with the late medieval Spanish-Islamic (Mudéjar and Nasrid) culture and with Gothic art. This dialogue played a more crucial role than any earlier Jewish artistic tradition. Even if earlier decoration patterns or iconographic themes were copied faithfully—and there are such cases—this duplication is not significant enough to generalize about continuity in all types of decoration and in the production of illuminated manuscripts as a whole.

These conclusions lead to the second question, which relates to the nature of this artistic environment, and the manner in which influences were absorbed as a result of cultural exchange. The Jews in the various cities of Spain in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries lived in a Christian cultural environment, in which the Gothic style was commonly used. In this climate, the Islamic culture still played a substantial role due to the strong imprint left by Mudéjar artists on the urban landscape in many places throughout Castile and parts of the Crown of Aragon. But this Islamic tradition is not part of the cultural history of northern Catalonia and southern France, and Mudéjar communities did not live there. The

only link to Islamic culture in those areas was provided by Jewish immigrants from the south.

Even though all the surviving Bibles were produced in a Gothic-Christian cultural environment, their artistic language is closely connected to the Islamic culture. The Gothic artistic tradition gradually made its way into this language, but only to a small degree. The most striking feature of the visual language of these Bibles is the absence of human figures and narrative depictions, in spite of the vividly narrative character of the biblical text.

A figurative narrative approach can be found in another type of manuscript, under the strong influence of the Christian art in the environment. The Passover Haggadot that were produced mainly in Catalonia in the fourteenth century speak a language that is completely different from the idiom used in the Bibles. Their illustrations derive from Gothic art, and at the same time their iconography is strongly influenced by rabbinic exegesis. Their illumination is in sharp contrast to the aniconic approach in the Bibles. This fact makes the Bibles' connection to Islamic art even more remarkable. The existence of two such different idioms side by side can be explained within the context of the cultural transition that occurred in Spain, together with the dissension that followed the first publication of the writings of Maimonides in the thirteenth century and the resulting cultural and social processes. The illuminated Bibles reflect the cultural world of upper-class Jews, who strove to preserve the symbiosis between Judaism and Islam and, for the most part, embraced a rationalistic approach. The illustrations in the Passover Haggadot, on the other hand, reflect the cultural world of Jews of Ashkenaz and those who identified with them in Spain, that is, the opponents of the rationalistic approach. The affinity for Islamic culture as an expression of cultural identity of the patrons of the Bible manuscripts beyond sheer nostalgia for the Judeo-Islamic past, is underscored by the fact that it was contemporary Islamic art—not that of the past—that provided much of the inspiration for the decoration of the Bibles.



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