EARLY MODERN WORKSHOP: Jewish History Resources

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Broadsheet of Koheles Shlomo
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ABSTRACT: ---
This presentation is for the following text(s):
• Merciful and benevolent children of Israel

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Merciful and benevolent children of Israel—hear my words, incline your ears to my utterance and heed my request. In return you will be blessed by my holy God [Hab. 1:12]:

First I will praise awesome God [Ps. 66:5], the defender of the chosen people, He who awakens those who sleep and arouses those who slumber – to perform great miracles for the lowly and downcast, who are likened to dust. Therefore old and young, you have seen that I had the merit in the days of my youth of printing a prayer book with laws that I collected from earlier and later posekim. I omitted nothing and placed all the laws and customs in order with the approval of the sage, our rabbi and teacher, the great Gaon, the Head of the Diaspora, our pious teacher and rabbi, Tsvi of blessed memory, who presided over the court and headed the yeshiva here יְזִי שֶׁנֶּא [in an hour of favor (Isa. 49:8: 1712)] in the holy and exalted city, joy of the earth [Ps 48:3], Amsterdam, may God protect her forever. These prayer books have been scattered and dispersed [Esther 3:8] throughout most of the communities, and have been reprinted in the thousands and tens of thousands. And here in Amsterdam they have also been reprinted three times. And I humbly praise God for having performed a service for the public so that many, who are unacquainted with me personally, mention me in their prayers.

Since the above-mentioned time Heaven decreed that I remove from here, and I established my home near the holy community of Frankfurt on the Main, and there I received divine help in the holy task of printing holy books, new and old books that I had printed. Some were in the Holy Tongue and others I wrote in Yiddish, for the benefit of both women and men. And my work was for the sake of Heaven so that the Torah will not be forgotten by the people of Israel, may God preserve them until the Redeemer arrives.

And the times betrayed me and the hand of God struck me [paraphrase of Job 19:21]
and many of my books were burned in the fire in the above-mentioned holy community, and they were worth more than six hundred reichstaler, alongside other misfortunes I experienced, and I remained bereft. Therefore I had to observe the words of our sages and move—like the Israelites journeyed—to another place. That is, back to my first place of residence, the holy community of Amsterdam, may she be blessed. I said to myself that this will comfort me from my sadness and my deeds [paraphrase of Gen. 5:29]—here I lived for one year and observed the 613 commandments—rendering for the people from the Holy Tongue into Yiddish. And my wisdom served me that I was able to print the great Tse’ene u-re’ene for the benefit of many. And my wisdom served me that I was able to print the above-mentioned prayer books a second time, in the year of 1732, with the help of pious people from the above-mentioned holy community, who purchased from me one boign (quire) each week. May God bless those who are good and honest in their hearts. And I also translated other books from the Holy Tongue to Yiddish, such as Orkhes tsadikim and additional ethical works. I hope that my handiwork in which I glory [Isa. 60:21] will be worthy and please both God and man.

And now I have had bad luck. For these things do I weep and my eyes tear [paraphrase of Lam. 1:16], because of the fire that was sent from above, and burnt twenty-five hundred of my prayer books and three hundred Korbn Minkhe prayer books, and other holy books that were at the establishment of the printer—the katsin Rabbi Hertz Segal Rofe—and I was left naked and destitute, and to this day have nothing with which to feed my family, in these times that are as difficult as the splitting of the Red Sea. And so many losses did I suffer from then until now that my hands are too feeble and the page too short to describe them. And I had neither rest nor repose nor quiet [paraphrase of Job 3:26] until now when God roused my spirit [paraphrase of Ezra 1:5, among others] and my thoughts at night [paraphrase of Dan. 2:29]. As Scripture states, "Man, why do you sleep? Arise and call to your God [Jonah 1:6], because you have fallen because of your sin" [Hosea 14:2]. As you did not toil sufficiently in the Torah in the time of your wealth, now in your old age you must do so in poverty. So I decided to fulfill the words of our Sages "just as one blesses over the good one must bless over the bad" [m. Berakhot 9:5]. Now, I praise You, O Lord, for You have answered me, and have become my deliverance [Ps. 118:21] to write a book whose name in Israel shall be Koheles Shlomo, a most useful book from which he and his sons and the members of his household will learn useful things in the Holy Tongue and in Yiddish. I give praise and thanks to God.

According to the calendar for the entire year:

1. The laws of childrearing will show, according to the teachings of our Sages, how to raise young children to serve God and direct their study, and also how to act from the time they wake up in the morning including all the good hanhagot [proper conduct] and all the benedictions; all the laws and hanhagot at mealtime; all the laws for Grace after Meals, with and without a mezuman; Grace after Meals with additions for Sabbath and festivals and with good translations and with mizmorim.
2. The order of *birkhot ha-nehenin* [the Benedictions of Enjoyment], with all the laws, with the blessings before and after, especially for wine; the laws for making kosher wine according to the rulings of the rabbis in Frankland in the year 1711.

3. The laws of porging meat, to teach how to porg the front quarter and for cows and fowl, so that each wife and maidservant will know what is forbidden from the fat or the blood, especially people who live in distant, isolated settlements.

4. Laws of salting, to teach how to salt, soak, and rinse all kinds of meat. This was composed by the great rabbi and teacher R. Lipman, author of *Tosfot Yom Tov*. And because these pages were not available, the great rabbi and teacher R. Aryeh Leyb, head of the Krakow court, allowed them to be reprinted and also ordered that every householder must have a *Brit Melakh* in his home, and every week he should read it to his wife or maidservant if they cannot read by themselves, so that they will be proficient in all the laws.

5. The laws of *challah*, ritual impurity and its practices; the laws of candle-lighting for Sabbath and festivals, together with all the blessings and supplications and requests, so that the good wives will know how to pray for easy childbirth and for good children who will learn the Holy Tongue and serve God.

6. All the laws and *hanhagot* for the Sabbath eve until the end of the Sabbath, with all the *zemirot* and *hanhagot* for Saturday night with all the verses and supplications in both the Holy tongue and in Yiddish.

7. The customs for all the New Moons and festivals; for each festival the reason and custom, together with *Kiddush*, also the laws of the blessings for the cooking *eruv* and the *eruv* of limits; the laws and customs for Rosh Hashana together with prayers and supplications; the custom in various communities of making a circuit of the cemetery and in the middle of the year when one has *yortsayt*; and additional prayers in the Holy Tongue and in Yiddish; for Yom Kippur the order of "Release from Vows" and *kapparot*; all the laws and *hanhagot* for Hanukkah, together with the blessings and *zemirot* and including the story of Antiochus [Hanukkah], so that everyone will know to praise God for the miracles that he performed for us in those days; laws and rules for Purim with all the good customs.

8. All the customary blessings for the wedding ceremony.

9. Laws and customs for circumcision, and Grace after Meals according to the custom in Ashkenaz and Poland; laws and customs for the redemption of the firstborn.

10. All the customs and supplications and prayers in the Holy Tongue and in Yiddish that one says at the deathbed of a man or woman, and also how to act during purification and burial, and laws of mourning.

11. The order of the recitation of *Shema* before retiring, with all the verses and *mizmorim* in the Holy Tongue and in Yiddish.

12. Laws and customs from the first of the month of Nisan, including the laws of Pesach and the Haggada, together with all the *hanhagot* with a commentary in the Holy Tongue and in Yiddish.
13. The laws of the blessings and *hanhagot* during the days of the counting of the *Omer*.

Although small, these thirteen principles will be of great use to the public. I will print them in beautiful letters using good black ink and on nice white paper, so that the public will like them. And the main thing is that, with divine providence, the proofreading will be carried out with great precision and nothing good will be missing. [It will be printed] in the printing press of Master Abraham Athias.

And my arm is outstretched still [paraphrase of Isa. 5:25, among others] to write and to publish a small book entitled *Derekh hatshuwe* in Yiddish. The Path of Repentance is a useful thing when someone has sinned and is ashamed to go to a rabbi or another learned man to ask him to set repentance, and the evil inclination provokes him not to go because of his shame. Also, one can find independently what kind of penance to perform for the sin, so that he will come to his place in peace [Exod. 18:23]. But I have yet to come to the main point, which is that I cannot be in debt in the city; the cost of printing is high and I cannot cover it from my own pocket. I have suffered great losses, as I stated truthfully above. Also this winter I was forced to sell the books and belongings that remained from the fire, in order to supply food and provisions for my family and I was left with nothing. I heard many people say that they would help. Therefore I bow before everyone in this exalted community, that they may have mercy on me and donate from their pure hearts, so that I shall not fall from a great height to a deep pit [*b. Hagigah* 5b]. This year am I a resident alien among you [Gen. 23:4] and hope that I will not be regarded like other beggars. I therefore beg you to have mercy on me in my old age and promise to purchase from me two or three *boign* [quires] each week, for the price of one bank shilling. I promise that it will be on very fine paper and beautifully printed in quartos. It will contain approximately thirty booklets. I myself will deliver the booklets to each person at his home, so that no one will have bother. And if someone should say, after the printing, that he can get it for less, he should know that it is not on as good paper, in line with what the subscribers invest. He should also think to himself that he is benefitting a scholar who has become impoverished and is fulfilling the verse "that your brother may live with you" [Lev. 25:36]. In addition he is assisting with the good deed of making this useful book available to the public. And if claims are made that many such books have been printed, this is true. But not everyone possesses them, especially in other places, where there are no printing presses. They will benefit to find the regular daily offerings and the additional offerings, according to rule [Shabbat and festival *musaf Amidah*].

See, in my poverty, I have laid aside [*1 Chron. 22:14*] my heart and my hands are stretched out [paraphrase of Ps. 88:10] in prayer to the living God, especially on behalf of all who assist me in this good deed. Do not despise, O Lord, their requests; grant them long lives with wealth and honor in this world, may they behold visions of the Almighty [*Num. 24:4, 16*] and dwell in safety [*Prov. 1:33*] until the arrival of the Messiah. And may Jerusalem be built and may the Temple be set in its place.
As it is said: "The dust under the feet of the rabbis": Shlomo Zalman London

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Beny Israel rahmanim vegomley hasadim

[1738]

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עַל פִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל, [לְשׁוֹנַת הַמ֥וֹסָרָּה לְרָאָשָׁהּ הַבִּבְרֵי] עַל הָכֹּל עַל הָאָרֶץ הָיָהוּ חַיָּהּ שֶׁיָּדוּ הָכֹּל [עַל פִּי אֶרֶךְ אַשת] עַל שֵׁרַפּוּת.

וְכָה הָאָרֶץ מִצְוָה לְרָאָשָׁהּ הַבִּבְרֵי, עַל הָכֹּל עַל הָאָרֶץ הָיָהוּ חַיָּהּ שֶׁיָּדוּ הָכֹּל [עַל פִּי אֶרֶךְ אַשת] עַל שֵׁרַפּוּת.
בייא ובירושלים מיט צו.]

בי (דינר והנהותון נז"ע נון) מיט עלי (דינר פלטס פסח וודדות) מיט עלי (הנהותון נז"ע פיריס)

בְּלָשׁוֹן חֲדָשָׁוׁ שׁאֵלֶנָה:

ירם (סוכות) א"ע נון ועיין: [דלפקים]

א"ע נון [פֿון] צו (דּוֹנֶק) ועיין: [דלפקים]

א"ע נון [פֿון] צו (דּוֹנֶק) ועיין: [דלפקים]

א"ע נון [פֿון] צו (דּוֹנֶק) ועיין: [دلפקים]