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What Is a Jewish Book?

by

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Moritz Steinschneider opened the greatest monument in the study of Hebrew bibliography, his *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, with the following statement:

> Our catalog, which we have designated "The Catalog of Hebrew Books in the Bodleian Library" because it is best, contains a concise and detailed overview of the majority of Hebrew books, as well as some that pertain in a way to Jewish literature.[1]

For the next sixty-eight pages, Steinschneider continued to delineate the contours of his work, to list prior bibliographic efforts to catalog Hebrew books, and to explain his methods of organization. If one turns from the introduction to the actual catalog, one can find entries for Elijah Levita's *Bove buch*, a romance printed in the sixteenth century at an uncertain location; Benedict Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico politicus*, printed anonymously in 1670; and Menachem Azariah da Fano's manuscripts from the late sixteenth century.[2] And in an entry that seems straight out of Borges, Steinschneider included a listing of his own writings.[3] Neither Levita's Yiddish romance, nor Spinoza's Latin philosophical treatise, nor Da Fano's discussions of Kabbalah in manuscript, nor Steinschneider's own largely German writings strictly fall under the category of a printed Hebrew book. A fundamental gap exists between the title of the catalog—Hebrew books in the Bodleian Library—and its actual contents, which are works that pertain to Jewish literature. In composing his catalog, one of the greatest bibliographic

1. Moritz Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana* (Berlin: Ad. Friedlander, 1852–1860); photographic reprint (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), i: "Catalogus noster, quem a potiori, 'Catalogum librorum hebraeorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana' denominavimus, recesnionem exhibet maxima ex parte concisam et pressam librorum stricte hebraicorum atque nonnullorum, qui ad literaturam Judaicam quodammodo pertinent."

2. For Levita, entry 4960, p. 934; for Spinoza entry 7262, p. 2650; for Da Fano entry 6342, p. 1719.

3. Entry 7271, p. 2653.

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minds faced a series of overlapping but distinct questions: What is a Hebrew book? What is a Jewish book?

These are variations on a fundamental question that was asked in the late eighteenth century by none other than Immanuel Kant: "What is a book?" Kant asked in the midst of a discussion on piracy in *The Metaphysics of Morals*. He proceeded to answer as follows: "A book is a writing, which represents a discourse that someone delivers to the public by visible linguistic signs."[4] I want to examine how Kant's definition applies to one Jewish book from the early modern period—a book many will agree was of some consequence for the history of the Jews—Joseph Karo's *Shulḥan ʿarukh*. In doing so, I outline some areas of possible inquiry into the histories of Jewish books between the invention of printing and the onset of political emancipation.

No other book composed in the early modern period had as profound and lasting an impact on Jewish life as Karo's. The *Shulḥan ʿarukh* ("The Prepared Table" or "The Ordered Table") eventually became the standard code of Jewish law throughout Europe and the Mediterranean world. With few exceptions, nearly every Jewish community had accepted it as authoritative within generations of its initial publication. The *Shulḥan ʿarukh* as a "writing" delivered to the Jewish public by Joseph Karo had a truly transformative impact upon Jewish life. In this way one can speak of Karo's work as a discourse, as an idea. The book served scholars as a reference work and literate lay people as a manual of Jewish law. It stimulated commentary and controversy, resistance and cooptation. One is hard pressed to find another book written in the early modern period that endured as long as the *Shulḥan ʿarukh*.[5]

And yet, the *Shulḥan ʿarukh* was not a single book. In answering his question, Kant pointed to the dual nature of the book: Not only is a book an idea or a discourse, but it is also "a corporeal artifact, *opus mechanicum*, that can be reproduced."[6] As a material object, or rather as a set of material objects, the early modern editions of the *Shulḥan ʿarukh* point to several crucial aspects of its history. The work was composed by Karo in Safed, a center, if not the center, of Jewish culture for much of the sixteenth century.[7] But the *Shulḥan ʿarukh* did not take the material form of a printed book in Safed; it first appeared in print in Venice at the Bragadin press in 1564–1565.[8]

4. Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. and ed. Mary Gregor, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 71. On Kant and piracy see Adrian Johns, *Piracy: The Intellectual Property Wars from Gutenberg to Gates* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 54–55.

5. R. J. Zwi Werblowsky, *Joseph Karo: Lawyer and Mystic* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962); *Rabbi Yosef Karo*, ed. Isaac Raphael (Jerusalem: Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1969); Meir Benayahu, *Yosef Behiri* (Jerusalem: Yad ha-Rav Nissim, 1990); Isadore Twersky, "The *Shulhan ʿAruk*: Enduring Code of Jewish Law," *Judaism* 16 (1967): 141–58; David B. Ruderman, *Early Modern Jewry: A New Cultural History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010), 99–103.

6. Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals*, 72.

7. Solomon Schechter, "Safed in the Sixteenth Century—A City of Legists and Mystics," in *Studies in Judaism: Second Series* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1908), 202–306.

8. Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "From Safed to Venice: The *Shulhan ʿArukh* and the Censor," in *Tradition, Heterodoxy, and Religious Culture*, ed. Chanita Goodblatt and Howard Kreisel (Beer Sheva: Ben Gurion University of the Negev Press, 2006), 91–115.

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The location and date are both of enormous significance, as was the material form the book actually took. Venice was the capital of Hebrew printing for much of the sixteenth century. So much of early modern Jewish culture took material form there: The cultural renaissance in Safed appeared in print at presses in Venice and elsewhere in northern Italy; these same printing houses were meeting places for Jews, converts, Catholics, and Protestants; Hebrew printing in Venice and its environs had a dramatic impact upon the publication of Yiddish texts; and the Bible and the Talmud became printed books in Venice in the first half of the sixteenth century.[9] It is not an accident that Karo's work, intended to serve as a standard law code for all Jews, appeared there. The date is also of considerable consequence. After the burning of the Talmud in 1553 and a bitter feud between the two most important printers of Hebrew, the production of Hebrew books in Venice had ceased.[10] With its resumption in 1564, a new regime of censorship was imposed upon it, and the Talmud could not appear in print.[11] Karo's *Shulḥan 'arukh* was one of the first texts to appear under this new regime.

The complications posed by the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* as a set of material objects do not stop there. The earlier editions were addressed to young men. They were issued in various sizes, some of which could be carried around with ease, and were designed to be used anywhere, not only in the synagogue or in the study hall. Like the editions of the Greek and Latin classics that had appeared at Aldus Manutius' press in Venice earlier in the century, the work contained a preface but offered little commentary.[12] Furthermore, in some printings Karo's *Shulḥan* '*arukh* was not one book, but four, as each volume of Jacob ben Asher's *Tur* to which it served as a précis was packaged as its own volume. The early editions hardly looked or felt like the weighty law code it would eventually become.

9. For a general survey, see David Werner Amram, *The Makers of Hebrew Books in Italy* (Philadelphia: J. H. Greenstone, 1909). For Safed, see Raz-Krakotzkin, "From Safed to Venice." For Yiddish, see Chava Turniansky and Erika Timm, *Yiddish in Italia: Yiddish Manuscripts and Printed Books from the 15th to the 17th Century* (Milan: Association of the Italian Friends of the Hebrew University, 2003). For the Bible, see Jordan S. Penkower, "Jacob Ben Ḥayyim and the Rise of the Biblia Rabbinica" (Doctoral dissertation, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1982). For the Talmud, see Marvin J. Heller, *Printing the Talmud: A History of the Earliest Printed Editions of the Talmud* (Brooklyn: Im Hasefer, 1992).

10. On the burning of the Talmud, see Kenneth Stow, "The Burning of the Talmud in 1553 in Light of sixteenth-century Catholic Attitudes toward the Talmud," in *Jewish Life in Early Modern Rome* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 1–25. On Hebrew printing in Italy prior to the burning of the Talmud see Isaiah Sonne, "Tiyulim be-historiyah u-bibliografiyah" [Journeys through History and Bibliography] *Alexander Marx Jubilee Volume* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), 209–35; Robert Bonfil, *Rabbis and Jewish Communities in Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Littman Library, 1990).

11. On the censorship of Hebrew books, see Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

12. Martin Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius: Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979).

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If one progresses only slightly forward in time, the story of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* becomes even more difficult to sum up as the story of a single book. Between its first printing in 1564 and the end of the sixteenth century, no fewer than seventeen editions appeared in print, the majority of them in Venice, as well as one in Salonika, and six in Kraków.[13] A number of these editions appeared before Karo's death in 1575, and the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* was one of the first Hebrew books to be reprinted in the lifetime of its author.

Yet it is safe to say that the *Shulḥan 'arukh* would not have had its staying power as a work of enormous cultural authority had it not become an entirely different text when it appeared in Kraków in 1578–1580 with the glosses of Moses Isserles.[14] Isserles, one of the towering figures of early modern Polish Jewish life, had been at work on his own law code for some time when he learned of Karo's project. Rather than compete, he decided to append his own glosses with what he claimed were the Ashkenazic customs and practices.[15] In this edition of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh*, one finds a central dynamic of early modern Jewish history on the pages of a printed book: the coexistence, competition, and tension between Ashkenazim and Sephardim. Indeed, the very categories of Ashkenazic and Sephardic are thrown into relief by the reactions to Isserles's glosses. Thus Ḥayim ben Bezalel, brother of the famed Maharal, had little patience for Isserles' attempt to summarize all of Ashkenazic tradition in his glosses and took it as a form of cultural imperialism and an erasure of difference among Ashkenazic and Polish practices from different regions.[16]

But Isserles' glosses signaled far more than simply the "Ashkenization" of a Sephardic text;[17] they also heralded the beginning of an extensive commentary tradition that would grow up around Karo's code, radically transforming its purpose and its material form. In the ensuing centuries, Joshua Falk, Shabbateai (or Sabbatai) ha-Kohen, Abraham Gombiner, Israel Meir ha-Kohen, and many others would eventually add their commentaries to all or part of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh*. In so doing, they transformed the text from a short compendium accessible to anyone with a basic knowledge of Hebrew into one that required instruction and supervision. The book was also transformed in its material form. Already in the sixteenth century, the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* had changed from a being a book that

13. Naftali Ben Menahem, "*Ha-defusim ha-rishonim shel 'ha-Shulḥan 'arukh'*" [The First Editions of the *Shulhan 'arukh*], in *Rabbi Yosef Karo*, ed. Raphael, 101.

14. Elchanan Reiner, "The Ashkenazi Elite at the Beginning of the Modern Era: Manuscript versus Printed Book," *Polin* 10 (1997), 85–98; Joseph Davis, "The Reception of the *Shulḥan 'Arukh* and the Formation of Ashkenazic Jewish Identity," *AJS Review* 26 (2002), 251–76.

15. Twersky, 'The *Shulhan 'Aruk*: Enduring Code of Jewish Law," 146.

16. Ḥayim ben Bezalel leveled a range of criticisms against Isserles, including his opposition to the principle of codification. However, he clearly articulated his opposition to the category of "Ashkenaz" as one that had obliterated any variation in custom among Jews who hailed from distinct geographic areas. See principle 9, Ḥayim ben Bezalel, *Vikuaḥ mayim ḥayim* (Amsterdam, 1711), 6a. On this figure, see Reiner, "The Ashkenazi Elite at the Beginning of the Modern Era," 86 n. 2.

17. Michael Stanislawski, "The Yiddish *Shevet Yehudah*: A Study in the 'Ashkenization' of a Spanish Jewish Classic," in *Jewish History and Jewish Memory*, ed. Elisheva Carlebach, John M. Efron, and David N. Myers (Hanover, NH: Brandeis University Press, 1998), 134–49.

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could be carried with ease into a folio volume that required care, attention, and two hands. The commentary tradition that surrounded its text would soon come to dwarf Karo's own work.

This extensive commentary tradition had a further effect of considerable import: By and large, the commentaries to Karo's *Shulḥan* '*arukh* that appeared on the printed page were written by Ashkenazic rabbis; the Sephardic commentaries did not usually appear alongside the text. In this intensified Ashkenization of a Sephardic text, one can find a larger trace of one of the central shifts from the early modern to the modern in Jewish history, a shift that has parallels in the transformation of Lurianic Kabbalah by the founders of Hasidism in the eighteenth century and one that is undergirded by a massive demographic transformation of Jewish populations in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. When Karo wrote the *Shulḥan* '*arukh*, the Jews of the Ottoman Empire were among the largest Jewish communities in the early modern world. When Gombiner wrote his commentary a century later, this demographic profile was beginning to change; and when Israel Meir ha-Kohen composed his in the nineteenth century, the Jews of the Levant were but a small minority of the world's Jewish population.

This brief sketch of the history of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* indicates how complicated the history of one early modern Jewish book can be. A developing subfield within the study of the early modern world, the history of the book as a set of methods has the potential to open up several lines of inquiry into the study of the early modern Jewish past. Below is a rapid survey of a few areas.

Manuscript and Print

In his *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order*, David McKitterick characterizes the relationship between print and manuscript in the early modern period as a long divorce.[18] For Jews, one might posit that the divorce was never finalized: The composition of texts in manuscript never disappeared from Jewish culture. The writing of a Torah scroll, the composition of a mezuzah, and other such sacred objects continues uninterrupted. Even beyond these basic ritual functions, manuscript writing continued to play a crucial role in Jewish societies for centuries after the invention of printing, and manuscripts continue to exist in persistent tension with printed books. One could write an entire work on manuscript culture among early modern Jewry along the lines of Brian Richardson's recent study.[19] Such a book would unearth a range of intellectual activities that have either been studied in isolation from one another or not studied at all. Here too the history of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* proves particularly instructive. In his discussion of the Ashkenazic tradition of glossing the *Shulḥan* '*arukh*, Elchanan Reiner concluded: "The Ashkenazi halakhic book at

18. David McKitterick, *Print, Manuscript, and the Search for Order, 1450–1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 13–16.

19. Brian Richardson, *Manuscript Culture in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

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the beginning of the modern era retained certain features inherited from the medieval scribal tradition of knowledge transmission. In certain respects it was a kind of printed manuscript, that is, a text which, in the way it took shape, rejected the new communicative values of print culture and created a text with esoteric components, thus protecting its elitist position."[20] Reiner's concept of a "printed manuscript" neatly dissolves the distinction between print and manuscript so beloved by historians fixated on rupture. It should also serve as the point of departure for the study of several aspects of early modern Jewish culture: the spread of kabbalistic books, the development of Jewish reference works, the study of marginal annotations, and the history of collections to name only a few.

Editing

There has been a flurry of studies on early modern editing. Paolo Trovato and Brian Richardson have explored the range of roles played by editors and bookmen in the formation of Italian literary culture in the Renaissance.[21] Anne Goldgar has examined the editorial entrepreneurs who worked in the Netherlands more than a century later.[22] Scholarship on Jewish editors or the editing of Jewish texts in the early modern period has lagged behind.[23] The very terms for an editor have yet to be studied with any systematic rigor, much less examined in a social context. A study of these known but largely obscure figures might reveal powerful continuities and disruptions between these and later Jewish publicists in the modern period. The editing of the multiple early modern editions of the *Shulḥan* '*arukh* might potentially serve as a case study for how to examine a single text in multiple contexts: editing the same book in Venice, Kraków, and Salonika was a different editorial task.

Censorship

Recent work on early modern censorship by Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin and others has used the methods employed by historians of the book to reframe one of the central sites of interactions between Jews and Catholics in early modern Italy.[24] Their work, and Raz-Krakotzkin's study in particular, has demonstrated

20. Reiner, "The Ashkenazi Elite at the Beginning of the Modern Era," 98.

21. Paolo Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza correto: la stampa e le revisioni editoriali dei testi letterari italiani (1470–1570)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991); Brian Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470–1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

22. Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning: Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1750* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994).

23. For a study of a later period that might potentially serve as a model for the sixteenth and seventeenth century, see Zeev Gries, "The Hasidic Managing Editor as an Agent of Culture," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, ed. Ada Rapoport-Albert (Portland, OR: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1996).

24. Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text*; Gila Prebor, "*Sefer ha-Ziquq* by Domenico Gerosolimitano," (Hebrew) *Italia* 18 (2008): 7–93; Shifra Baruchson-Arbib and Gila Prebor, "*Sefer ha-Ziquq*: The Book's Use and Its Influence on Hebrew Printing," *La Bibliofilia* 109 (2007): 3–31.

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that historians ignore the dynamics of censorship at their peril, that those who have described it as a repressive regime have relied on cultural values similar to the censor—that is, on the definition of Judaism as an autonomous entity, a religion or ethnicity tolerated within a Christian world on the condition that its anti-Christian polemic be suppressed. Yet there is much that historians still do not know about the history of censorship in the early modern world. Basic bibliographic tools such as a census of all the printed books that contain censor marks by even the most prominent of censors, Domenico Gerosolimitano, have yet to be created. In this instance, the question has at least been posed when it comes to the *Shulḥan ʿarukh*.

Reception History

Historians of the Jews have begun to study the reception of classical and medieval texts in the early modern and modern period. Adam Shear's recent book on the *Kuzari*, Boaz Huss's on the *Zohar*, and work on Spinoza by Allan Nadler and Daniel Schwartz have explored three prominent texts or figures and their afterlives.[25] Elchanan Reiner and Joseph Davis have charted the way toward a reception history of the *Shulḥan ʿarukh*; their studies should serve as a model for the unwritten history of Karo's code among the early modern and modern Sephardic rabbinate. Yet no scholar has taken on the Herculean task of writing a history of the early modern Hebrew Bible along the lines of Debora Shuger's study of the Bible in the Renaissance or Jonathan Sheehan's study of the Bible in the Enlightenment.[26] The same can be said of the Mishnah, the Talmud, and Midrash. Or *Sefer Yetzirah*, the *Mishneh Torah*, and the *Guide of the Perplexed*.[27]

25. Adam Shear, *The Kuzari and the Shaping of Jewish Identity, 1167–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Boaz Huss, *Ke-Zohar ha-Rakia* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute and Mossad Bialik, 2008); Allan Nadler, "The Besht as Spinozist: Abraham Krochmal's Preface to Ha-Ketav ve-ha-Mikhtav," in *Rabbinic Culture and Its Critics: Jewish Authority, Dissent, and Heresy in Medieval and Early Modern Times*, ed. Daniel Frank and Matt Goldish (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2008); Daniel B. Schwartz, "The Spinoza Image in Jewish Culture, 1656–1956" (Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 2007).

26. Debora K. Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Jonathan Sheehan, *The Enlightenment Bible: Translation, Scholarship, Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005). For Moses Mendelssohn's Bible, see Edward Breuer, *The Limits of Enlightenment: Jews, Germans, and the Eighteenth-Century Study of Scripture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996).

27. See the remark of Richard Popkin about the *Guide of the Perplexed* in Buxtorf's Latin translation: "Although one finds it cited all over the place, and although one finds edition of it in many, many private libraries of Christian scholars, there is as yet no study of the impact of Maimonides on 17th-century European thought." In "Some Further Comments on Newton and Maimonides," in *Essays on the Context, Nature, and Influence of Isaac Newton's Theology*, ed. James E. Force and Richard Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1990), 2.

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Libraries

In contrast to the study of the non-Jewish world in early modern Europe, the study of Jewish libraries prior to the modern period has languished until very recently.[28] Yael Okun's study of Abraham Graziano, a handful of booklists published over the years, Shifra Baruchson's study of the private libraries of the Jews of Mantua, and Joseph Hacker's analysis of Sephardic libraries in late medieval Iberia and early modern Salonika constitute some of the more significant contributions.[29] The early modern Jewish equivalents for the term *library*, a word that was thrown into sharp relief with such dazzling results by Roger Chartier some twenty years ago, have yet to be surveyed, much less analyzed.[30] The libraries and book collecting activities of David Oppenheim, Ḥayim Yosef David Azulai, and Giovanni Bernardo de Rossi, to name a few of the most prominent early modern collectors of Hebrew and Jewish books, require careful study. Such work has the potential to challenge a range of historiographic commonplaces about the origins of Jewish scholarship in the nineteenth century. In this instance we lack a history of the consumption of the *Shulḥan ʿarukh.* Who owned the book or books? Which editions did they possess? How many people had access to a given copy of the work? Answers to such questions might complement and complicate the reception histories provided by Reiner and Davis.

Censorship, reception history, libraries, editing, and manuscript and print—these are only a few of the numerous areas where the methods employed by historians of the book have the potential to open fields inquiry for scholars of the early modern Jewish past. But there are many others: the relationship between reading and writing, the history of correspondence and letters, the development of periodicals and reference works, and the relationships between Hebrew and vernacular literatures. To return to Kant: In the midst of his discussion of piracy, Kant posited an opposition between the book as a discourse or idea and the book as a material object. Of course, books were also many other things. They were

28. See *Sifriyot ve-osfei sefarim*, ed. Yosef Kaplan and Moshe Sluhovsky (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 2006). For the period under consideration here see the articles by Yosef Kaplan, Claude B. Stuczynski, and Avriel Bar-Levav.

29. Yael Okun, "Ha-yahas she-ben kitve yad le-defusim be-sifriyato shel I"SH G"R" [The Relationship between Manuscript and Prints in the Library of Ish Ger], *Asufot* 10 (1997): 267–86; Isaiah Sonne, "Book Lists through Three Centuries," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 1 (1953): 55–72; 2, 3–19; Robert Bonfil, *Ha-Rabanut be-Italyah be-Tekufat ha-Renesans* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1979), 295–98 lists forty-one published and unpublished book lists from Italy until 1540. The references to Sonne and Bonfil are as cited in Menachem Schmelzer, "A Fifteenth-Century Book List," in *Studies in Jewish Bibliography and Medieval Hebrew Poetry* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 2006), 83, n. 4; Shifra Baruchson, *Sefarim ve-kor'im* (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1993); Joseph R. Hacker, "Ha-Midrash ha-Sefardi: Sifriyah Ziburit Yehudit" ["Public Libraries of Hispanic Jewry in the Late Medieval and Early-Modern Periods"], *Rishonim ve-Aharonim: meḥkarim be-toldot Yisrael mugashim le-Avraham Grossman*, ed. Joseph R. Hacker, Yosef Kaplan, and B. Z. Kedar (Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center, 2010).

30. Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), chap. 3. However, see the discussion of the term *midrash* in Hacker, "Public Libraries of Hispanic Jewry in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Periods," 277–81.

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commodities, keepsakes, and sacred objects. In these senses too, the history of the early modern Jewish book has yet to be written.

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