Aviva, the proofreader are aware that designers would not tidy up line breaks until the final text is approved, but it is part of a due – diligence check to make suggestions.

M rules, not spaced N rules, below

Aviva, further to my comment in 'OPEN_F', the proofreader has highlighted the US em-dash rule, but it is up to you whether you retain this usage or convert there

COMMUNITY

Human beings crave belonging; they have a unique capacity to form bonds with others both near and far. These bonds serve the practical needs of safety, shelter, and hunger, but they also fulfill the equally necessary need for attachment to a larger collective. We have an extraordinary capacity to feel connected to others: those who live among us and even those we have never met and whom we may never see.

How do such collectives or communities come about, and how do they survive, especially under duress and changing circumstances? What stories do communities tell to explain their origins – to themselves and to outsiders – and to forge a sense of connection across borders and generations? Can a traditional community thrive under conditions of constant change, particularly in the modern era? Documents from the past, such as legal records, community registers, liturgical texts, or local publications, help us answer these questions, testifying to the power, resilience, and dynamism of Jewish and non-Jewish communities alike.

Communities are the aggregate of relationships between the individual and the collective, the organs and the body. In communities, individuals express – often in writing – their own sense of belonging through shared values, rituals, and traditions. Even conflict is, at essence, an expression of communal belonging; debates over religious ceremonies, an individual's legal status, or the proper language to use for a community newspaper all seek to clarify collective narratives.

Conflict arises not only within communities but also between them, over the necessary boundaries that divide one group from another. Communities have always distinguished between those who belong and those who do not. The community's contours might be thin and light, almost an open gate, indicating a group or organization of softer commitments. They may also be thick and bold, embracing the community's core val-

bad word break above

ues and guarding its boundaries firmly. An individual can even belong to several communities, a multiplicity of identities that is sometimes harmonious and sometimes tumultuous. Each affiliation reflects his or her different beliefs and alliances. How these different ties relate to each other and as a whole shows the nature of the different communities to which one belongs. Textual evidence from the past reveals the ongoing negotiation over the metaphoric and literal understanding of a community's borders and boundaries.

Over time, when challenged by political upheaval, cultural change, and economic shifts, communities reorganize themselves. Over the last two centuries, the modern period has been particularly challenging in this respect. Increased mobility, new forms of communication, and secular and universalist ideologies have served to blur old boundaries. Individuals and groups interested in maintaining their old identities have responded by forming new kinds of communal structures and new ways of telling their stories.

YAEL LEVI

bad word break above

Majesty, Sanctity, Reverence

The Damascus Crowns, 10th–15th Centuries

YOEL FINKELMAN

The Mossad is more famous for its efforts in espionage than in manuscript preservation. Still, in the course of the 1990s, as part of a larger operation to help Syrian Jews escape from increasingly hostile conditions, the Mossad assisted in the smuggling of nine exquisite handwritten medieval Bibles, referred to as Crowns. As over 2000 years of active Syrian Jewish life were coming to a sad and tragic end, Damascus Jews, such as Chief Rabbi Avraham Hamra (1943–2021), supported by Jewish activists such as Judy Feld-Carr (b. 1938), risked their lives to ensure that these manuscripts – the community's spiritual heritage – would escape along with the refugees.

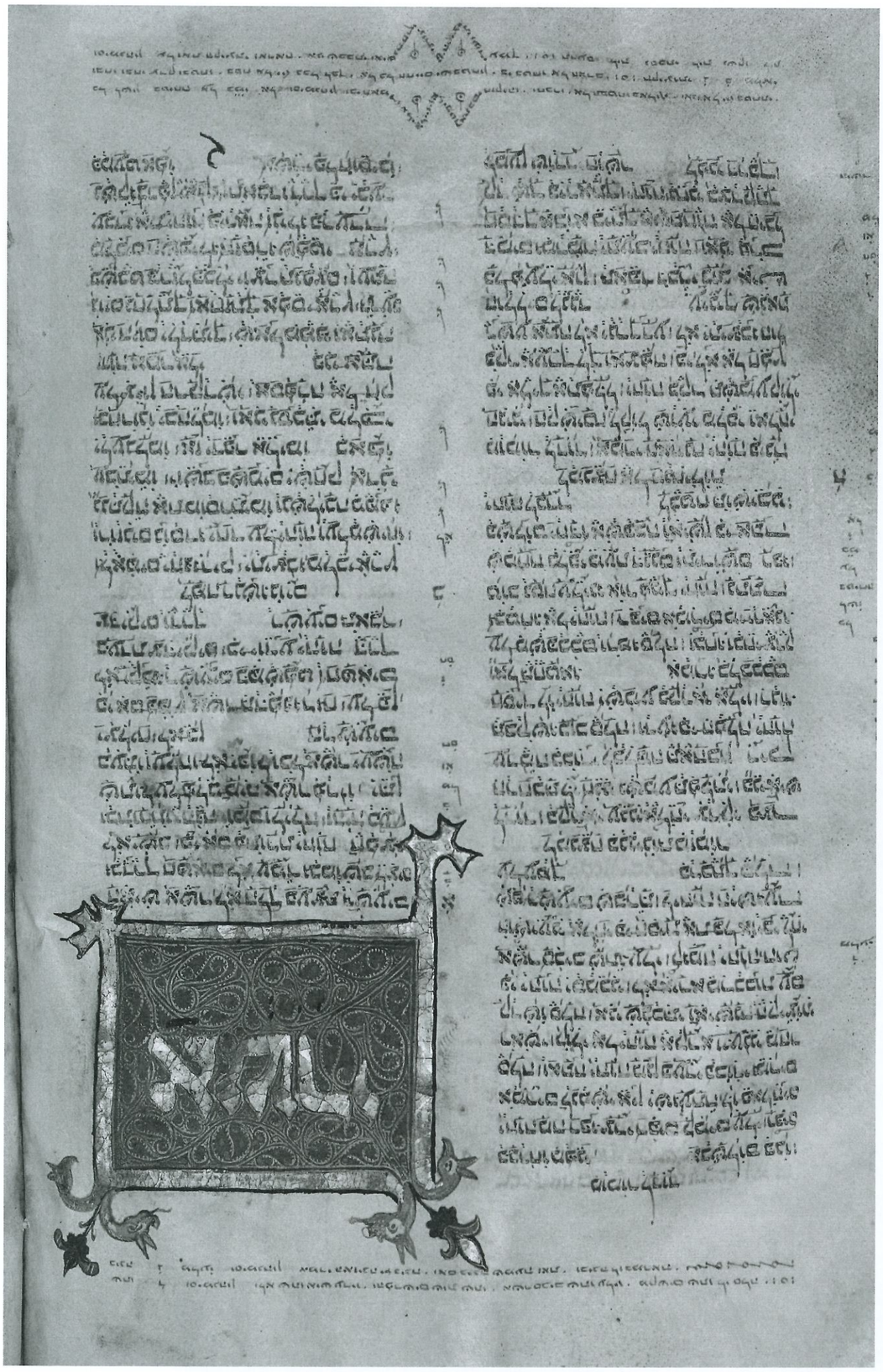
Damascus synagogues collected majestic manuscripts of the Bible not primarily to read or study but to symbolize the stature of the community. The books were kept in special locked arks to be removed only on the most special of occasions. Community members attributed to these manuscripts the sanctity associated with any holy book as well as symbolic and even talismanic qualities. Their very presence, they believed, protected the synagogue, its members, and the broader Jewish community.

None of the manuscripts however, were written in Syria. One of the Crowns, which had come to the National Library decades prior to the Mossad operation and represents a particularly important witness to an exact text of the Masoretic Bible, was written in the Land of Israel as early as the tenth century. Others, originating in the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, came from Spain, Italy, and even Ashkenazi lands. The Crowns symbolize not only Damascus Jewry but also the intimate connection between world Jewry, the handwritten word, and sacred scripture.

Each of the manuscripts contains biblical texts as well as beautiful micrographic designs drawn in the margins using the letters of the ancient Masoretic notes – shorthand notes written in the early Middle Ages fixing the most precise text of the Bible. Some contain other commentaries, such as that of the great medieval commentators Rashi or Radak. Most contain elaborate decorations, such as colorful geometric designs or even images of dragons surrounding the text.

In the summer of 2020, an Israeli court designated nine Crowns as a trust, held at the National Library under the custodianship of representatives of the Syrian Jewish community, the Sephardi Chief Rabbi, and the National Library.

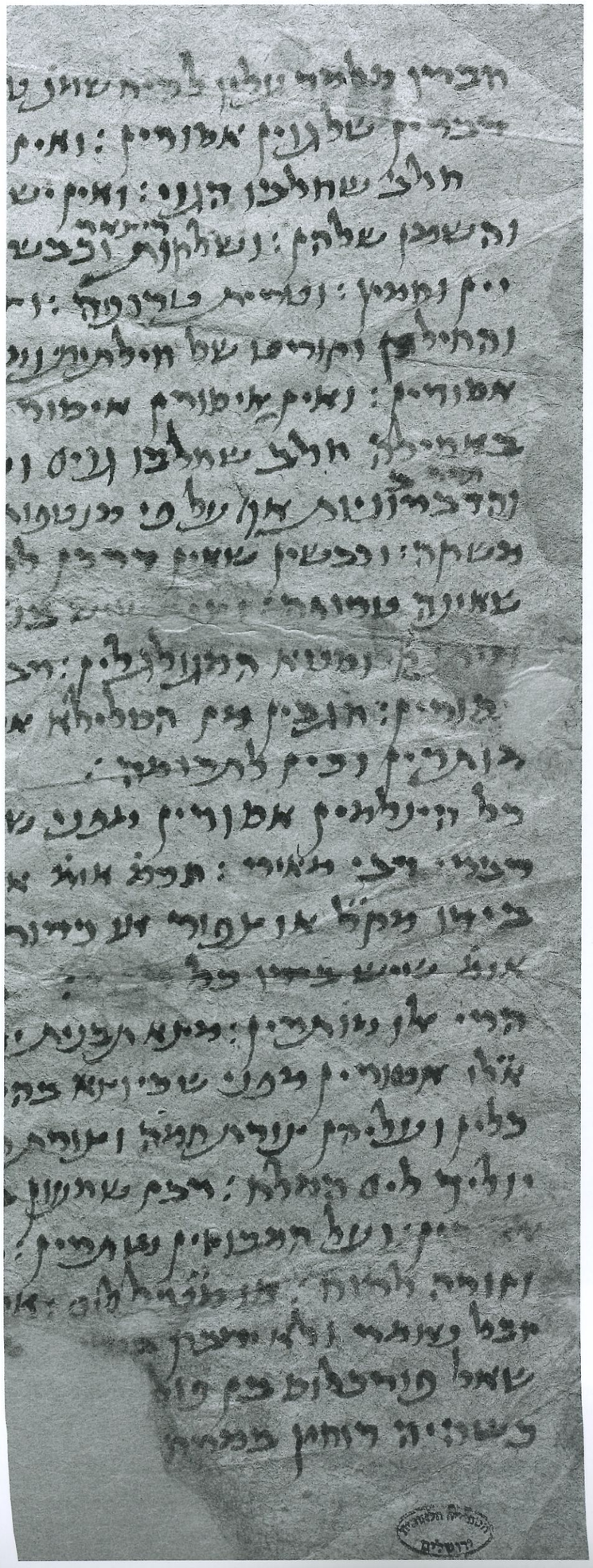
Hebrew Bible with Masoretic notes and Targum Onkelos, Burgos, Spain, 1260. A decorative carpet page separates the Pentateuch from the Prophets. It features multicolor illuminations, gold leaf, micrography, and biblical verses, folio 114r. Ms. Heb. 24° 790.



Left: Hebrew Bible with Masoretic notes and Targum Onkelos, France or Germany, thirteenth century. In this large manuscript, the initial word of the Book of Numbers is enclosed in a red floral design. The Bible was held by the Hushbasha al-Anabi synagogue in Damascus, folio 178r. MS. Heb. 4° 7024.

Right: Hebrew Bible with Masoretic notes, likely Spain, fourteenth century. The opening of the Book of Psalms features gold leaf and a multicolor design, folio 176r. Ms. Heb. 8° 7153.

Following page: Torah with Masoretic notes, Land of Israel, tenth century. The text of Leviticus, describing the holidays of the Jewish year, is written in three columns, accompanied by Masoretic notes, folios 254r–255v. Early Bible manuscripts from the Land of Israel are particularly important for determining the accurate text of the Masoretic Bible. Unlike the other codices, this manuscript was acquired by local and international donors for the National Library from the Sassoon Collection in 1975. Ms. Heb. 24° 5702.



A Jewish Family on the Silk Road

The "Afghan Geniza," 11th–13th centuries

SAMUEL THROPE AND OFIR HAIM

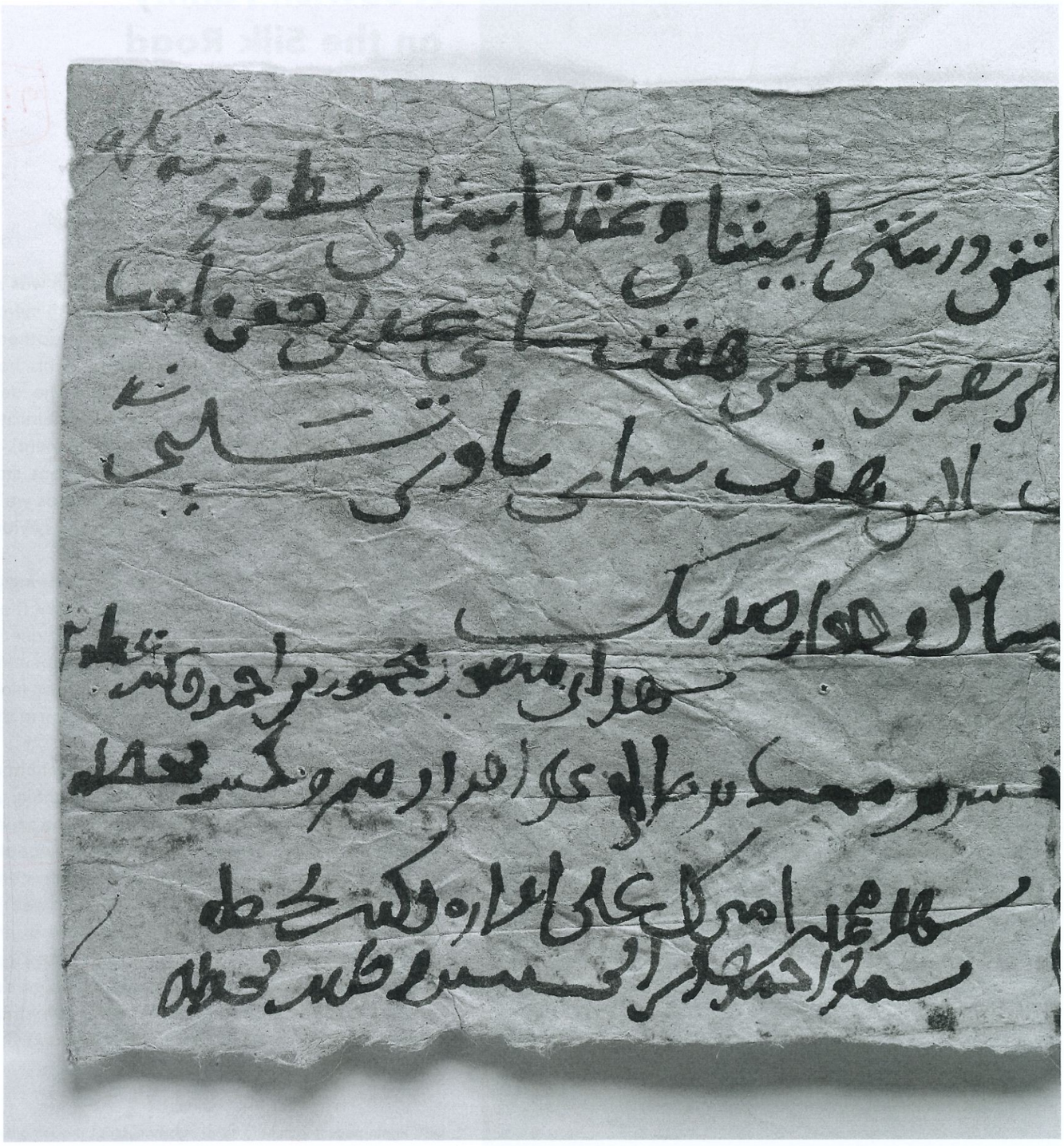
Abu Nasr b. Daniyal (11th century) was not too shy to collect the money he was owed. A Jewish merchant, landowner, and moneylender, in May of 1011 he gathered two of his debtors and a handful of witnesses in his home city of Bamiyan, located in today's central Afghanistan. The debtors, Ahmad b. Abi Talha and Abi Nasr b. Mahdi, signed a declaration, known in Islamic jurisprudence as an *iqrar* (acknowledgement), affirming their debt of seven silver coins. The Persian document states: "It is a binding obligation. We cannot revoke this as long as we do not deliver to him these seven shiyani. This document serves as evidence for him."

This exceedingly rare text, shown on the following page, opens a window onto the law, language, and everyday lives of those who lived just over a millennium ago. This and similar legal documents from the collection constitute the earliest extant Islamic legal documents written in Persian script. Yet, we can read much more about Abu Nasr thanks to his family archive, which was discovered in Afghanistan in the early 2000s.

This archive includes dozens of letters, account books, legal papers, and literary and religious works in Hebrew, Aramaic, Judeo-Arabic, Arabic, Persian, and Judeo-Persian. For example, one sheet of a Shabbat siddur is perfectly legible, as is a passage of the Avodah Zarah tractate from the Mishnah. In addition to these eleventh-century texts, there are also Islamic manuscripts dating to the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, just before Chinggis Khan's destructive conquest of the region. The collection's popular name – the Afghan Geniza – alluding to the more famous and much larger Cairene cache of Jewish papers, signifies its importance: these documents revolutionized the study of the eastern stretches of the medieval Islamic world.

Left: Single-page fragment of a Mishnah manuscript, including the end of Tractate "Testimonies (*Eduyot*)" and the first few chapters of Tractate "Idolatry (*Avodah Zarah*)." In this manuscript, the divisions between sentences are indicated by colons, perhaps indicating that this copy was meant to be read aloud in public. Copied in Bamiyan, Afghanistan, twelfth century. Ms. Heb. 4° 8333.30.

Following page: Legal acknowledgement (*iqrar*) of the debt owed by Ahmad b. Abi Talha and Abi Nasr b. Mahdi to Abu Nasr b. Daniyal, witnessed May 1011 in Bamiyan, Afghanistan. Ms. Heb 4° 8333.216.



Berthier;;Letter from general [Alexandre] Berthier, Paris, 20 Ventôse, an 9 [11.3.1801], to Vence, Prefet Maritime in Toulon, concerning three different 'boëtes' (packages) sent to him, and containing material to be dispatched to the 'Armée d'Orient' in Egypt.

Record for Posterity

The Community Ledger of Frankfurt am Main, 1552–1802

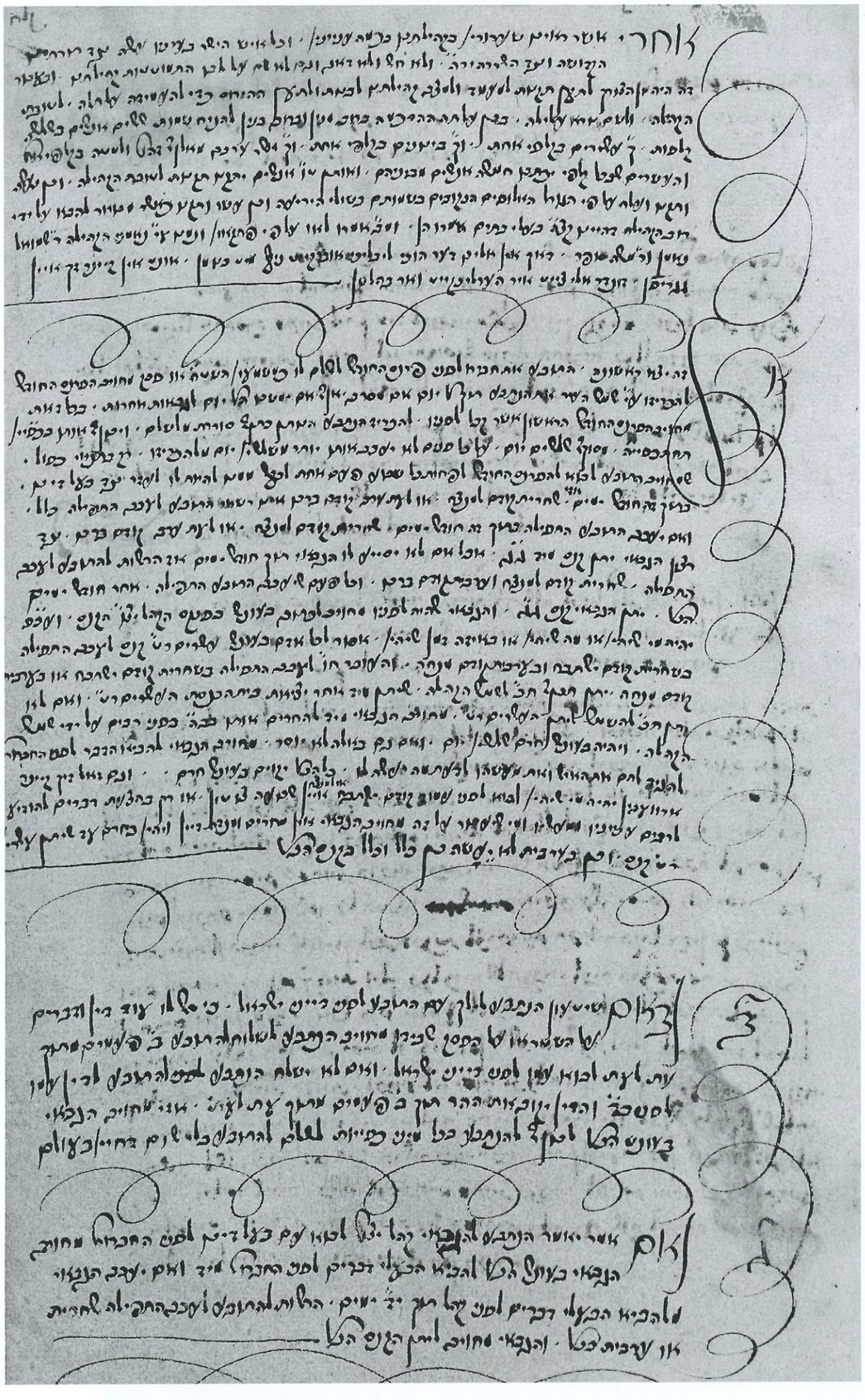
STEFAN LITT

In October 1614, shortly after the return of Frankfurt's Jewish community to the ghetto from which it had been expelled for a short period, one of the elders brought back a thick, old volume that he had bought from a Christian, filled with handwritten records in Yiddish and Hebrew. The volume, once belonging to the community, had been stolen during the anti-Jewish riots the previous August. The Christian looter clearly had no idea what he was selling to the Jews, which was nothing less than the main ledger (*pinkas kahal*) of the community, containing records of its leaders' crucial decisions since 1546.

For many centuries, the Jewish community of Frankfurt am Main played a leading role for all Jews living in the Holy Roman Empire. Its leaders often functioned as speakers for Jewish interests before the imperial court in Vienna, where the community even had a permanent representative. Many of the elders' activities were recorded in this ledger, including leadership elections, community statutes, contacts with the non-Jewish authorities, financial transactions, and poverty relief. These records depict a rich community life over a period of more than 250 years. Due to the community's exceptional position, this volume became regarded as an outstanding document of the early modern Jewish history of Frankfurt and Europe in general.

The ledger's theft in 1614 was not the direst event it experienced. It also endured two big fires in the city's Jewish quarter, several expulsions, and its share of devastating wars, none of which caused it much harm, and the ledger has miraculously survived until today. However, the exact circumstances of its survival until the community's brutal end during the Holocaust remain an unsolved mystery.

Community Ledger (Pinkas kahal) of Frankfurt am Main, 1552–1802. Cover of the *pinkas* with remnants of the label. Ms. Heb. 24° 662.



Community Ledger (Pinkas kahal) of Frankfurt am Main, Germany, 1552–1802. Left: First page of the communal statutes of 1674–1675. The statutes comprise 97 paragraphs and are the most comprehensive known regulations of the community in the early modern period, folio 132r. Right: Record testifying to the appointment of Moses Koblenz as permanent representative of the community to the imperial court in Vienna, 1772, folio 412r. Ms. Heb. 24°

A Window onto Ottoman Jerusalem

The Alami Family Collection

SAMUEL THROPE

On February 6, 1626, Chief Judge of Jerusalem 'Abdullah ibn Mahmoud al-Husayni, who had been appointed by the Ottoman Sultan Murad IV, instituted a special religious endowment (*waqf*) to pay eight men to recite a poem he had composed in praise of the Prophet Muhammad every Wednesday and Saturday night at the Dome of the Rock. Other funds were designated for the poor who attended the Sufi gatherings of Shaykh Muhammad Alami on the Mount of Olives.

The *waqf* was later recorded in the official court record, as indicated by the Arabic letter *mim* that appears at the bottom right of the original document. The complete poem was not recorded in either the original waqf or the later copy, and we only know its dramatic opening line: "My heart throbs on the ruins of the beloved."

The record of this poetic endowment is one of the hundreds of legal documents issued in Istanbul and Jerusalem in the archival collection of the Alami family. Dating from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, this collection encompasses the history of one of Palestine's leading Muslim families. The Alamis trace their family tree back to Musa ibn Sulayman ibn al-'Alam, who was sent from Damascus to be the governor of Jerusalem and was buried in the city's Sharaf Cemetery in 1402. Over the centuries, the Alamis continued to play leading roles in public affairs, serving as Sufi sheikhs, scholars, judges, members of the Ottoman parliament, and leaders of the Palestinian national movement.

When it was discovered that the documents comprising the Alami family archive were in urgent need of repair, the National Library offered to restore the collection in return for digital copies. The originals were subsequently restored and returned to their owners, and the digital archive was opened to researchers worldwide.

The Alami collection is more than just a window onto a single family. The documents show the day-in,-day-out function of the judicial system, which served and protected the interests of Muslims, Jews, and Christians. In many cases, these documents provide the only available source of information on particular cases or events as well as clear examples of the seals and signatures of judges, as can be seen here.

Document detailing an endowment by the Chief Muslim Judge of Jerusalem 'Abdullah ibn Mahmoud al-Husayni on February 6, 1626. The document includes the judge's seal as well as the signatures of the witnesses. Digital image from the Alami Collection, Jerusalem, 2015. Ms. 194.

Affirming the Diaspora

The Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People

YOCHAI BEN-GHEDALIA

Glikl of Hameln (1645–1724) is best known as the author of a highly personal, Yiddish-language diary that offers a rare and intimate look into the life of an early modern European Jewish woman. Only one example of her handwriting survives: her declaration and signature in a ledger listing donations to the Jewish communities in the Land of Israel. The ledger documents the activity of a charity fund based in Altona, near Hamburg, for the benefit of the poor of the Holy Land. It testifies to the administrative and economic aspects of Jewish self-government in the late seventeenth century as well as to the community's strong relations with the Land of Israel.

The ledger, along with millions of other documents relating to Jewish communal life from around the world, is preserved at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (CAHJP), a subsidiary of the National Library. While national archives usually belong to a state or polity, the CAHJP is unique in serving as a national archive of the Jewish people scattered around the world. Established in 1939, it contains approximately sixty million original pages of archival materials and another twenty-five million pages of copies of originals held elsewhere.

The CAHJP was founded by Zionist leaders who emphasized continuity and the relationship between the nascent Jewish nation in the Land of Israel and Jewish history in the Diaspora. They believed that a proper understanding of Jewish history, including the new Zionist project, depended on gathering information about world Jewry in one place. It is "a time to gather," declared Alex Bein, one of the prominent figures in the early Israeli archival scene, by "bringing together the exiles of the past."

While CAHJP was established as a national endeavor, it also challenged a central theme of Israeli nationalism, namely, the marginalization of important Jewish communities outside of the Land of Israel. By preserving their histories, the CAHJP has facilitated greater understanding and appreciation of these communities. Establishing a Jewish national archive of the Diaspora in Jerusalem meant continuing in the footsteps of Glikl, who herself donated to the Holy Land, and maintaining close connections between the Diaspora and the Land of Israel.

Ledger (*Pinkas*) of the fund for the Land of Israel, Altona, 1687–1805. Glickl of Hameln, an early modern Jewish diarist, signs that she has paid a debt to the charity for the Jews of the Land of Israel. This is the only known example of her handwriting, folio 5r. AHM-31.1a-ovs.

The Original Frisco Kid

The Ledger of Emissaries From Jerusalem to America, 1848–1869

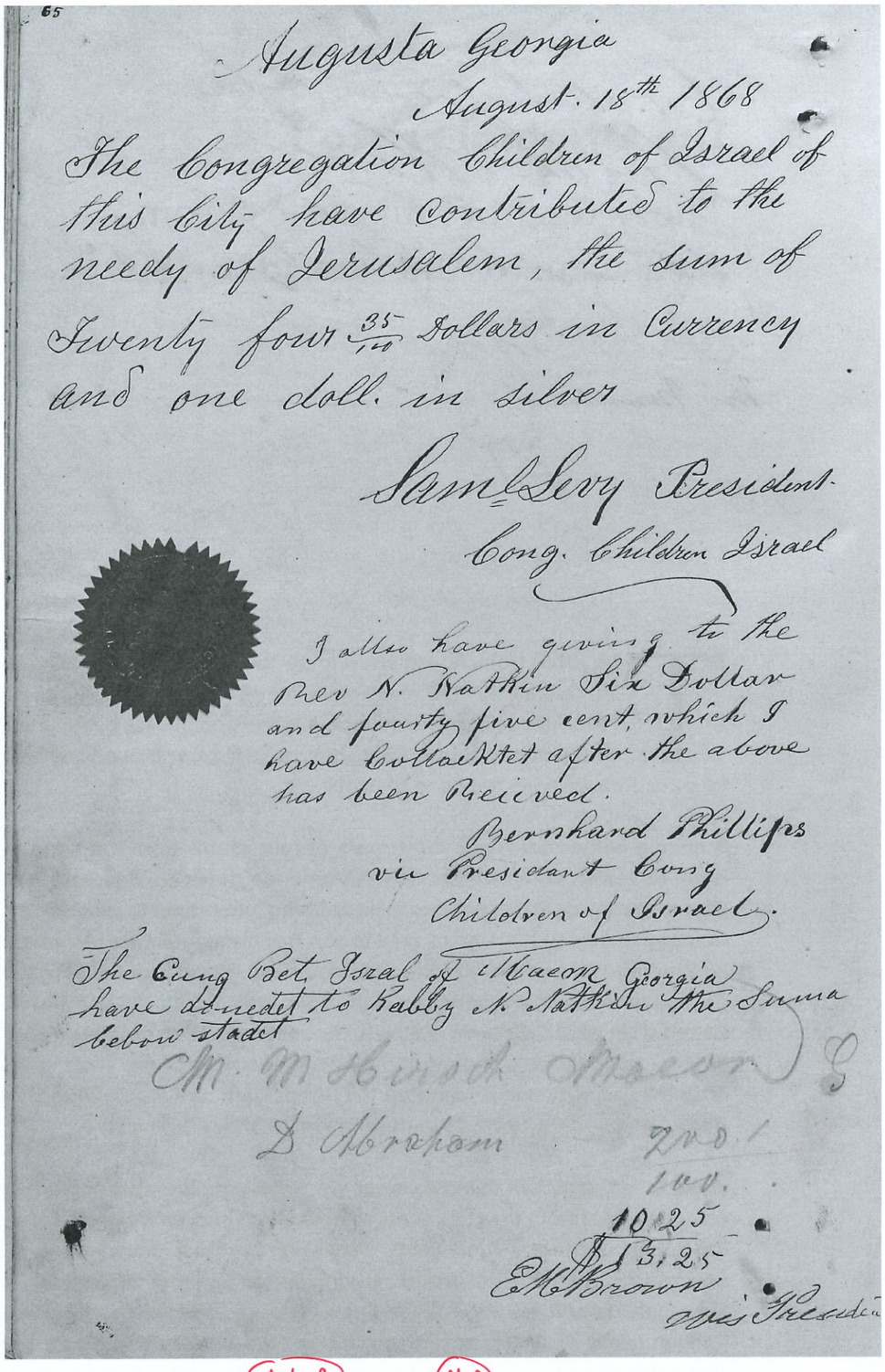
EZRA CHWAT

The rabbi from Jerusalem who got off the train in Shelbyville, Tennessee in 1868 must have made a surprising sight. He introduced himself to members of the local Jewish community, who, without even knowing him, gave him generous donations for poor Jews living in the Land of Israel.

A unique ledger describes the travels of four rabbis from the Land of Israel to Jewish communities in North America between 1848 and 1869. One of these was Rabbi Abraham Nissim, who, according to records, left Chicago in August 1861 and arrived in San Francisco in December, where he promised to say the Kaddish (the Mourners' Prayer) annually for the deceased relative of a generous donor. Similarly, Rabbi Nathan Natkin visited a series of California gold-rush boom towns, such as Grass Valley or Stockton and its "Cong[regation] Rehim Ahoovim." A few short years after the Civil War had decimated the Deep South, the Jews of Augusta, Georgia lacked money but donated any silver they could afford.

While the locations in this document are surprising, the phenomenon is not. Emissaries from the Holy Land, referred to as *shadarim*, would travel the globe collecting funds and dispensing spiritual encouragement and global solidarity to Jewish communities. Despite differences in language, culture, religious observance, ideology, and beliefs, there was enough sense of Jewish solidarity between those collecting funds and those donating to see themselves as part of the same global people. Donors would register their donations in a logbook referred to as a pinkas, creating a verifiable record of how much had been collected. The emissaries would then return home to the Land of Israel and distribute the funds. Hundreds of *shadarim* were active between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Fundraising ledger of emissaries from the Land of Israel (*Pinkas shadarim*), England, United States, and the Land of Israel, 1849–1869. Jewish charities of the four holy cities – Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed, and Tiberias – appoint Nathan Notkin as their emissary to "America and California," folio 74r. Ms. Heb. 4° 90.



65

Augusta Georgia
August. 18th 1868

The Congregation Children of Israel of this City have contributed to the needy of Jerusalem, the sum of Twenty four 35/100 Dollars in Currency and one doll. in silver

Saml Levy President
Cong. Children Israel

I also have giving to the Rev N. Nathan Six Dollar and fourty five cent, which I have Collected after the above has been Recived.

Bernhard Phillips
via President Cong
Children of Israel.

The Cong Bet Isral of Macon Georgia have donedet to Rabby N. Nathan the Summa beboi stadet

M. M Hirsh Macon Ga
D Abraham
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3.25
E M Brown
Pres

Fundraising ledger of emissaries from the Land of Israel (*Pinkas shadarim*), England, United States, and the Land of Israel, 1849–1850. Left: Sam Levy, President of Congregation Children of Israel in Augusta, Georgia, computes a donation to the Jewish communities of the Holy Land on August 18th, 1868, folio 65r. Right: Between the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society, Mrs. Elias Marks, and others, the Jewish community of Nashville, Tennessee, donated $45.10 to the Jews of the Land of Israel, folio 82r. Ms. Heb. 4° 90.

The Jewish Hall of Fame

The Abraham Schwadron Autograph Collection

RACHEL MISRATI

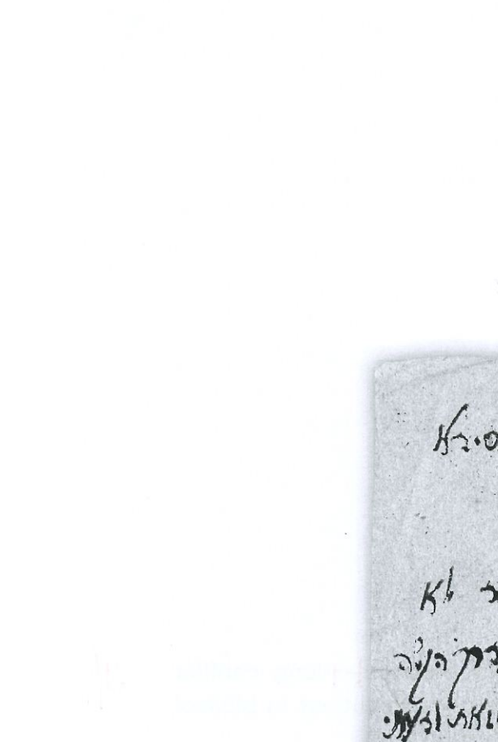
Left: A portrait of Abraham Schwadron, 1906; Arc. 4° 1215. Right: Lionel de Rothschild's thank you letter to the members of the Consistoire Israélite de Bayonne. Members of the Consistoire supported Rothschild in his struggle to take his seat as a Member of Parliament despite his refusal to take a Christian oath of office. Schwad 01 20 187.

Eighteen fifty-eight was a watershed year for British Jewry. For the first time in history, a practicing Jew took his seat as a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons.

First elected as an MP in 1847, Lionel de Rothschild could not take his seat because of the requisite Christian oath before being sworn in. Having been re-elected five times before the law was changed, he was sworn in on July 26, 1858, with a modified oath. In a letter written on August 4, 1858, Rothschild thanked the men of the Consistoire Israélite de Bayonne for their congratulatory letter "upon the successful issue of our long struggle for the emancipation of British Jews," while sharing their hope that "this triumph may have a beneficial effect throughout Europe."

This letter is one of the autographs of over 5500 leading Jewish personalities that constitute the Abraham Schwadron Autograph Collection. The first-ever systematic and comprehensive Jewish autograph collection, it is a unique record of Jewish history as it unfolded. Schwadron's desire to establish a national collection portraying Jewish achievements and excellence led him to seek out the autographs of Jews whom he considered contributors to Jewish history and society. His complementary portrait collection provided the visual resources.

Abraham Schwadron (1878–1957) devoted sixty years to this enterprise: the first thirty years in Galicia, where the collection survived a fire and was then saved from the Russian invasion, and then, from 1926, in Jerusalem, at the National Library, where it survived equally turbulent times. Not merely an accumulation of signatures, the collection's annotated visiting cards, handwritten letters, literary manuscripts, and musical scores are all pieces in a mosaic of Jewish life and cultural enterprise stretching from the sixteenth century to the present day. Spiritual giants such as Yosef Caro, Shneur Zalman of Liadi, and Rav Kook take their place next to eminent and distinguished Jews such as S. Y. Agnon, Sigmund Freud, Walther Rathenau, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Marx, Haim Nahman Bialik, Emma Lazarus, Theodor Herzl, Moses Mendelssohn, Eliezer Ben-Yehuda,



Top left: Emma Lazarus, poem in her own handwriting, written in 1884 and signed by her. The poem, "The Supreme Sacrifice," addresses the 2000-year fate of the Jewish people. Lazarus, celebrated poet and humanitarian, is most famous for her poem "The New Colossus" that appears on the Statue of Liberty. Donated by Philip Cowen Schwad 01 012 211. Top middle: The signature of Eliezer ben-Yehuda, the individual most responsible for the modern revival of Hebrew as a vernacular language, in a letter to Schwadron Schwad 01 02 226. Top right: A letter written in 1780 and signed by Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, founder of Habad (Lubavitch) Hasidism. The letter deals with collecting funds to support the Jewish community in the Land of Israel. Schwad 01 21 282. Bottom: The signature of Rabbi Josef Karo, author of the influential code of law, *Shulhan Arukh*, found at the end of a responsum he authored, c. 1574. The responsum was later published in his collection of responsa, *Avkat Rokhel*. Schwad 01 19 298.

Modernizing Karaites

Karaite Newspapers in Egypt, 20th century

HAGGAI BEN-SHAMMAI


عدد ممتاز

السنة الثالثة — القاهرة فى ٢٤ شباط سنة ٥٧٠٧ — ١٦ فبراير ١٩٤٧ — العدد التاسع والاربعون

3me Année — No 49

الاشتراكات — الادارة

הכרם

(AL-KALIM Revue Israelite Caraime)

15, Rue Torsina — Le Caire - Egypte

عيد الميلاد الملكى السعيد

توقيع « الكليم » إلى مقام جلالة مولانا الملك المعظم اسمى آيات الولاء والإخلاص بمناسبة عيد الميلاد الملكى السعيد

Al-Kalim, Cairo.

Left: Issue 3:49, 16 February, 1947, 4 Shvat, 5707. Cover of the newspaper, juxtaposing a traditional Karaite image of the Ten Commandments in Hebrew with Egyptian patriotism and birthday wishes for King Faruq.

Right: Issues 2:39 and 40, Oct. 1, 1946, 5 Tishrei, 5707. This double issue honors the first Rosh Hashanah following World War II, with a colorful banner celebrating "a new year and a new era." PB 994.

Karaites are famous not only for their eleven-centuries-long conflict with rabbinic Jews but also for their medieval contributions to biblical grammar, biblical interpretation, and Jewish philosophy.

Founded in approximately 900 CE, Karaite Judaism is an alternative religious movement that does not regard rabbinic tradition as authoritative. For a period of a thousand years, from the tenth to the twentieth centuries, Egypt served as a center of Karaite life. The Karaites in Egypt, like all the Jews in Egypt at the time, expressed themselves in Judeo-Arabic, an ethnic dialect written in Hebrew letters and incorporating Hebrew words and phrases.

The Karaite community in Egypt continued thriving in the modern era. In the early twentieth century, they published three newspapers in Cairo alone, each calling for greater modernization. The newspapers reflected a vast cultural change, which was also manifested in a linguistic change. All three newspapers were written in modern standard Arabic in Arabic characters – a linguistic choice that demonstrated a desire for integration into general Egyptian society.

The earliest newspaper, *al-Tahdhib* (*The Reform*), was founded by Murad Faraj (1866–1956), a jurist, poet, and community and cultural activist who published the paper from 1901 to 1904. Following World War I, a community of young Karaite intellectuals founded *al-Ittihad al-Israili* (*The Israelite Union*), which published a newspaper by the same name. It appeared twice a month from 1924 to 1930. Described as an "illustrated literary and scientific journal," it contained reports on community, Zionism, general news, and improved relations with rabbinic Jews, whom they called Rabbanites.

The third newspaper was *al-Kalim* (*The Spokesperson*), which appeared between 1945 and 1957. The newspaper initially supported immigration and settlement in the Land of Israel. However, following the War of Independence and the Egyptian invasion of the nascent State of Israel, it published a call for coexistence between Egypt and the Karaite community and no longer weighed in politically on the Arab-Israeli conflict. In 1957, following the Sinai War, the Egyptian authorities shut down the paper.

The Karaites in Egypt left in two waves: the first in 1956 and the second in 1962. The young people of the community, most of whom settled in Israel, were able to securely transport over 1000 years of cultural heritage to Israel, including ancient manuscripts, books, and newspapers.

A Prophecy Fulfilled

Ingathering of Exiles Day Poster, 1948

ZACK ROTHBART

In the early years of the State of Israel, many things were in short supply: peace, prosperity, food, economic stability, and housing, to name a few. National holidays, on the other hand, were plentiful. At the behest of David Ben-Gurion, new holidays were designed, declared, and commemorated in order to create a shared narrative and identity for the nascent Jewish state and its people. These were all intentionally imbued with deep symbolism – both timeless and timely.

The holidays largely centered around the army, which was then responsible not only for defense but also for immigrant absorption, educating the masses, and instilling Zionist values. A month after establishing the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), the first such holiday, "Swearing-in Day," was celebrated. Then came "State Day," commemorated on the anniversary of Theodor Herzl's death, followed by "Settlement Day" during the festival of Sukkot, and then, during Hanukkah, "Ingathering of the Exiles Day," for which the poster appearing here was created.

Designed by artist Yohanan Simon (1905–1976), the poster depicts the new army and the state as centers of gravity for Jews dispersed around the globe, featuring the words: "And they will be brought to us from East to West, a great army to help the nation." Reverberating with biblical connotations, the line comes from Hebrew poet laureate Haim Nahman Bialik's poem "For the Volunteers of the Nation," a famous poem known for its allegorical references to the Maccabees. All of these elements shaped a message aimed at Israel's citizens, imploring them to accept and honor the hundreds of thousands of new immigrants, many of them already soldiers, who had arrived within just a few short months.

While these early holidays may now be largely forgotten, they helped develop a national ethos upon which the young State of Israel could build despite all that was lacking.

IDF poster printed for "Ingathering of the Exiles Day (*Yom kibbuts galuyot*)," which was celebrated during the State of Israel's first Hanukkah, Tel Aviv, January 1949. Artist: Yohanan Simon. V 1980 29.

In a Forest Grove

The Natan Sharansky Archive, 20th century

ALINA SOKOLETSKYA

Photos by Alexander Luntz, from the Natan Sharansky Archive, 1970s.

Left: Jewish activists gather in the Ovrazhki forest grove outside of Moscow.

Right: Natan Sharansky leans against a birch tree while picnicking with fellow Jewish activists. ARC. 4° 2030.

In the Soviet Union in the 1970s, it was almost impossible to publicly express interest in Judaism and Jewish culture or study Hebrew. While not all synagogues were formally closed, Jewish activists looked for other places to gather where, far from the eyes of the authorities, they could learn Hebrew and share information about Jewish culture.

One of these places was a large forest clearing near the Ovrazhki train station, thirty kilometers out of Moscow, where, during warmer months, Jewish activists, including Natan Sharansky (b. 1948), gathered to celebrate Jewish religious holidays and Israeli Independence Day. They organized picnics, held underground photo exhibitions and music festivals, and studied Hebrew together. The Ovrazhki birch grove became the unofficial symbol of the 1970s Jewish revival in the Soviet Union. It was here that, without publicity, Jewish activists carried out much of their cultural and social work, even as they were struggling to emigrate. The need for mutual support manifested in these spontaneous forms of Jewish life and education helped unite these groups of refuseniks into a close-knit and supportive community of like-minded people under the most difficult circumstances. The photographs seen here show people in the Ovrazhki grove sharing their time and their passion for singing, dancing, holding lectures, or playing football.

In 2018, Natan Sharansky donated his personal archive to the National Library. The archive contains photographs, personal belongings, and documents covering the events leading to his release from prison and the struggle of the Prisoners of Zion.

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