

AN UNKNOWN PARCHMENT COPY OF A XVI CENTURY *SEDER TEFILLÔT*

Alessandro Catastini, Università di Roma «La Sapienza»

Books printed on parchment used to represent a sumptuous publishing version to be set aside for wealthy customers.¹ Also in Hebrew printing, copies of editions usually published on paper were at times printed on parchment. These exquisite outputs, which chiefly concerned Bibles and liturgical books,² were passed down in religious milieus or the libraries of private homes.³ In 1911, A. Freimann compiled a list of Hebrew books printed on parchment known to that date.⁴ To this list should be added the specific mention by A. Yaari concerning editions of the *haggadah* of *Pesah*,⁵ by A.K. Offenberg and C. Moed-Van Walraven regarding incunabula,⁶ and by B.S. Hill concerning Hebrew books in the British Library.⁷ The catalogue of Hebrew incunables on parchment kept in the Valmadonna Library (Alessandria, Italy) was published just on this year.⁸

It is my intention here to report a further parchment copy amongst the XVI century Hebrew editions in the University of Pisa Library (Biblioteca Universitaria di Pisa). I refer to a *Seder tefillôt* described as # 27 in the catalogue I recently published.⁹ I reproduce below the description, where the statement of signing includes errors in catchwords and in page numbering and foldings; these errors are grouped in lists which are respectively preceded by the symbols  (the further symbol  precedes the real first word in the text of the page that follows), # (the symbol  means “instead of”),  (the symbol  means “instead of”); the fingerprint is also recorded.¹⁰

סדר תפלות כל השנה כמנהג ק"ק איטליאני \\ מנטובה ש"ם

[*Seder tefillôt kol ha-šanah ke-minhag q'q 'itali'anî* (Order of prayers for all the year according to Italian rite), Mantova, [name of publisher lacking] 1580¹¹ → Ritual prayers]

¹ “Books printed upon Vellum form the most sumptuous class of typographical productions, the limited number of copies printed, their consequent extreme rarity, combined with their beauty, rendering them objects of special value and interest. All which desirable characteristics are much enhanced when, as frequently is found the case in works produced shortly after the invention of printing or in special and presentation copies, the exquisite art of the illuminator supplements the richness and brilliancy imparted by this durable material to the printer’s work, and accordingly such volumes are greatly prized and are ranked in libraries next to the most precious manuscripts”: S. Sandars, *An Annotated List of Books Printed on Vellum To Be Found in the University and College Libraries at Cambridge*, Cambridge 1878, p. 1.

² B.S. Hill, “Catalogue of Hebrew Books Printed on Vellum in the British Library”, in R.C. Alston, *Books Printed on Vellum in the Collections of the British Library*, pp. 179-212: 188.

³ *Ibidem*.

⁴ A. Freimann, “Die hebräischen Pergamentdrucke”, *Zeitschrift für hebraeische Bibliographie* 15 (1911), pp. 46-57, 82-92, 186-187. This list was not free from gaps: for example, it is not mentioned the parchment copy of the polyglot Psalter published at Genua in 1516 (*Psalterium, Hebraeum, Graecum, Arabicum, & Chaldeum, cum tribus latinis interpretationibus & glossis* . . . , Genova, Pietro Paolo Porro presso Niccolò Giustiniani 1516), formerly reported in *Catalogue of Manuscripts, Books Printed upon Vellum, Editiones Principes et Aldinae, and of Books in Foreign Languages*, now on sale at the affixe prices, by Payne and Foss, 81 Pall-Mall, February, 1830, # 51.

⁵ A. Yaari, *ביבליוגרפיה של הגדות פסח*, Jerusalem 1960, p. 204: “Index of Editions of which there are Copies on Vellum, Arranged Chronologically” (cfr. p. [205]).

⁶ *Hebrew Incunabula in Public Collections: a First International Census*, Nieuwkoop 1990, pp. 199-206: “List of Copies Printed on Parchment”.

⁷ B.S. Hill, “Catalogue of Hebrew Books Printed on Vellum in The British Library”, in R.C. Alston, *Books Printed on Vellum in the Collections of The British Library Books Printed on Vellum in the Collections of The British Library*, London 1996, pp. 179-212.

⁸ D. Sclar, B. S. Hill, A. K. Offenberg, I. Yudlov (eds.), *Treasures of the Valmadonna Trust Library : a Catalogue of 15th-Century Books and Five Centuries of Deluxe Hebrew Printing*, New York 2011.

⁹ A. Catastini, *I libri ebraici della Biblioteca Universitaria di Pisa. 1. Incunaboli e cinquecentesime*, Roma 2011; Library classification: N.m.9.31.

¹⁰ With regard to choices of bibliographical description, cfr. Catastini, *I libri ebraici*, pp. 27-34; on criteria for recording fingerprints of Hebrew books: p. 204.

¹¹ For the title page I made use of the catalogue by Luzzatto, # 56: see following note.

Notes. Not well preserved. The first fold – inclusive of title page – and some leaves are missing. Leaves are in parchment. Rigid leather binding. On l. 32_v, stamp of the “Biblioteca dell’Università di Pisa”.

📖 Catchwords are set at the end of each fold. L. 19_v: Ø ➔ יוצר.

L. 24_{2r}: “קפה” ☞ “קפו”. L. 24_{4r}: “קפו” ☞ “קפח”. L. 24_{6r}: “קפט” ☞ “קצ”. L. 24_{8r}: “קצא” ☞ “קצב”. L. 29_{2r}: “רכה” ☞ “רכו”. L. 29_{4r}: “רכז” ☞ “רכח”. L. 29_{6r}: “רכט” ☞ “רל”. L. 29_{8r}: “דלא” ☞ “דלב”.

Handwritten notes. On the flyleaf facing the front cover: “Mahazor // Rito italiano // Preghiera di tutto // l'anno”. Hebrew annotations on l. 4_{3v}, 9_{6r}.

08° 1-32⁸ (1⁸, 2₃, 2₆, 32₈ are lacking) 256 l.

++++ +++++ לימנִי יִרְחֵ (3) 1580 (H)

This *Seder* was previously registered in bibliographies: by S.D. Luzzatto,¹² Y. Vinograd¹³, both referring to a copy kept in the Ben Zvi Institute of Jerusalem; by E. Abate and S. De Gese, regarding incunabula and XVI century Hebrew books of the Biblioteca Angelica of Rome.¹⁴ As far as possible, apart from the missing leaves, the comparison between the Pisa copy and the paper copy of Rome¹⁵ has shown consistency in the persistence of errors as well as in the fingerprint recording, so that is possible to ascribe both copies to the same issue. As for the copy in the Ben Zvi Institute of Jerusalem, it is printed on paper as well; it is likewise missing the frontispiece as well as the first 16 leaves; in the past it belonged to Isaiah Sonne (1887-1960). Because it is missing the frontispiece, the library cataloguer did not know the correct printing date. In the library catalogue it is listed as a) 1571ש"ל"א but someone wrote in pencil on the inner flyleaf that it should be b) 1580ש"ם.¹⁶

On the basis of these inspections, the University Library of Pisa holds the only known parchment copy of this book.

¹² מבוא למחזור בני רומא בצירוף ביאורים וסקירה על המנהג מאת דניאל גולדשמידט וביבליוגראפיה של מחזורים כהן (Introduzione al formulario delle orazioni di rito italiano pubblicata in ebraico, a Livorno 1856, con annotazioni e un saggio sul rito italiano di E.D. Goldschmidt e una bibliografia di J.J. Cohen del Machazor e Siddur Tefilà italiani), Tel Aviv 1966, # 56.

¹³ *Thesaurus of the Hebrew Book. Listing of Books Printed in Hebrew Letters since the Beginning of Hebrew Printing, circa 1469 through 1863*, 2 vols., Jerusalem 1993-1995, vol. II, p. 464, # 154.

¹⁴ *I libri ebraici della Biblioteca Angelica: I. Incunaboli e cinquecentine* (with the scientific collaboration of A. Catastini e F. Terlizzi), Roma 2005, # 89.

¹⁵ Cfr. Abate – De Gese, *I libri ebraici*, ib.

¹⁶ I am grateful to Professor Mauro Perani (University of Bologna –Ravenna Branch) and to Pinchas Roth (Doctoral student at Hebrew University) for their good offices in furnishing these details.