

AN ANALYSIS AND A DISCUSSION OF THE CONTENTS OF  
SOLOMON IBN VERGA'S SCHEBET YEHUDA

by

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DEDICATED

to my

Teacher and Friend

JACOB Z. LAUTERBACH

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FOREWORD

In the long, tortuous and crimson corridor of Jewry's history many destructive storms had vented their full force upon Israel's unprotected body. None, however, was so intense, and so far-reaching in its consequences as the catastrophe that so cruelly broke over the Jews of Spain. Time has dulled its memory and healed its gaping wounds; modern history has coldly allocated it to a chronological position. But in "Schevet Yehuda" there is to be found not "a medley without plan or order" but an organized, sympathetic, analytic, and contemporaneous presentation of the causes leading up to that frightful event, and the subsequent sufferings of the terrorized refugees.

# I. THE VERGAS

In the course of the narratives that form the contents of "Schevet Yehuda" there are mentioned three individuals who possess the surname Verga. They are Judah ibn Verga, Solomon ibn Verga, and Joseph ibn Verga. As an instructive phase of our investigations, and also because of their relationship to the composition of the book, we present biographical sketches of each. The presentation of their lives follow in chronological sequence.

## A. JUDAH IBN VERGA

The task of reconstructing his biography is a difficult one because information that would shed light upon his career is extremely rare and vague. Nevertheless, it is possible to determine certain facts and infer others on the bases of secondary sources, contemporary conditions, and references to Judah in the book. <sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly of Spanish-Jewish origin, he lived in the second half of the 15th century. As to the date of his birth and the location of his birthplace, there are no available records. For the most satisfactory and fruitful facts about his life we turn to the various references to Judah in our book. In narratives XXXVIII and LXII we discover that Judah dwelt in Seville, that he was a Cabbalist, and that he was held in high esteem both by Jew and Gentile. Narrative XXXVIII particularly informs us about his efforts in behalf of the Xerez de la Frontera Jews, and indicates his prominence in both Jewish and non-Jewish circles. Judah's vindication of the accused Jews by a cabbalistic trick permits us to assume that he was a Cabbalist. Furthermore, Narrative

LXII indicates that Judah played a role of some consequence in the life of the Marranos of Seville, for it was he who anticipated the coming of the inquisitors and displayed a cabbalistic warning to the Anussim. Still more conclusive is the fact that the agents of the Inquisition are referred to him for information concerning the Marranos.

This narrative also informs us about his movements and his death. Placed in the dreaded position of an informer, Judah preferred to seek safety in slight. He fled to Lisbon, but, according to the account, his flight was in vain. In Lisbon he was imprisoned and put to the torture. However, he refused to expose the Anussim and "died in prison because of the severity of the torture."

Judah's flight from Seville may have occurred in 1478 simultaneous with the advent of the Inquisition, which began its activities in Spain originally in Seville. More than likely though, Judah left in 1483 when Thomas de Torquemada as Grand Inquisitor made the Inquisition a terribly effective machine.<sup>2</sup> If the latter supposition is correct--which is our belief--then Judah fled to Portugal during the reign of Joao or John II (1481-1495). Just how long Judah lived in Lisbon unmolested is a matter of conjecture. If, as according to the report on page 94, he was imprisoned and tortured because of his refusal to betray the Marranos--a phase of the investigations conducted by the Inquisition--it is possible to say that Judah lived until 1531. For it was in the year 1531 that the Inquisition was officially introduced into Portugal, and, furthermore, it is doubtful whether the Spanish Inquisition had any jurisdiction over an individual in Portugal, particularly if he were a Jew.<sup>3</sup> Though it is possible that Judah lived until 1531, it is highly improbable, and it is more reasonable to suppose that Judah was not a victim of the Inquisition but rather a victim of the turbulent year 1497. After signing the decree

How could  
lived in  
Lisbon after  
expulsion  
1492-8?

that called for the expulsion of all Jews from Portugal (December 1496), King Manoel I or Emanuel (1495-1521) prevented their leaving by forcible conversion. The unfortunate Jews who had gathered in Lisbon for the purpose of embarking were given the terrible alternative of baptism or death. Some who were forcibly converted refused to remain Christians, and were imprisoned and tortured. And it is quite possible to suppose that Judah was among these victims. The likelihood that he was a victim of the Inquisition is extremely remote, for Manoel had decreed that for a period of<sup>4</sup> twenty years the new converts should not be subjected to the Inquisition. If Judah met his death at that time, it was at the hands of the government officials, and his imprisonment and subsequent torture were caused by his refusal to remain a convert.

As we shall see later, Solomon ibn Verga freely amplified existing reports, and it is our opinion that Solomon preferred to ascribe Judah's martyrdom to his refusal to betray the Anussim, rather than to his refusal to convert. This preference developed out of an inner struggle, occasioned by the attempt on Solomon's part to conceal any related reference to his own temporary conversion which enabled him to finally leave the shores of Portugal.

Graetz arbitrarily assumes that Judah ibn Verga is the father<sup>5</sup> of Solomon, but this assumption is gratuitous. A careful perusal of the "Schevet Yehuda" does not reveal any statement that could substantiate Graetz's claim. In no place does Solomon or even Joseph indicate any relationship to Judah, and all references that a son may make of his father which would identify Judah as Solomon's father are absolutely lacking. Furthermore, in this connection it is significant that Solomon does not hesitate to acknowledge his kinship to Don Samuel ha Nasi (Narrative L), yet he is strangely mute about his kinship--if any--to Judah. Even the

inscription preceding the narratives proper does not contain any information of a relationship existing between Judah and Solomon. Considering the absence of filial mention, the indefinite character of the remarks concerning Judah, and the general paucity of reference, it is unlikely that intimate bonds of relationship existed between them. It is quite possible that Solomon may have had personal contacts with Judah, for both were in Seville and Lisbon. The assumption that Judah may have been an ancestor of Solomon is conjectural and cannot be verified.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to being a well-known cabbalist, it has been thought that Judah was of some prominence as a mathematician and an astronomer.<sup>7</sup> However, these reported talents of Judah have been subjected to doubt.<sup>8</sup> As to his writings, there is no reliable information, and his connection, if any, with the composition of "Schevet Yehuda" is that it is quite possible that some notes found at the end of an unnamed book of Judah's were utilized by Solomon.<sup>9</sup>

#### B. SOLOMON IBN VERGA

Here again we are forced to reconstruct a career, for we have little reliable information about Solomon. All the vital statistics concerning him are lacking: the dates of his birth and death, and also the precise locations of the places where he was born and where he died. As in Judah's case, so here we are aided considerably by references in "Schevet Yehuda".<sup>10</sup> Of these references the most illuminating is the one found on page 108. There we find this interesting statement: "I, poor Solomon ibn Verga, was sent by the communities of Spain to collect ransom money for the captives of Malaga." It is a record of history that Malaga, situated in Granda, fell to the Catholic sovereigns of Spain in August 1487. Those in the defeated city were enslaved by the victors, and among those enslaved were 450 Jews. However, these captive Jews were subsequently



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ransomed by their Spanish brethren and transported to Africa. We are unable to find any substantiation for the date 1481 which Baer cites for

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this occurrence. We take it that Solomon in his statement is referring to the above incident, and consequently we feel justified in deriving certain inferences from the date and the position of ransom-money collector. First, the position of a collector of monies would hardly be entrusted to a youth, for such a task requires a man of some importance and tested abilities. Consequently, we assume that Solomon's age was at least in the late twenties, and this would place his birth approximately around 1460. We also assume that Solomon was held in high esteem, and was a well-known figure among the Spanish-Jewish communities. The character of his position lends support to this assumption. And second, he was of Spanish origin, and in all probability belonged to the community of Seville. The likelihood that it was Seville is strengthened by the geographical fact that it was the largest and most influential Jewish community situated nearest to Malaga.

Since he lived in Spain and was active in Jewish affairs as early as 1487, it is certain that he was a victim of the 1492 expulsion edict. Like so many other unfortunates, he was among those refugees who fled to Portugal. Our reconstruction of the Portuguese phase of Solomon's experiences has been considerably aided by the discoveries resultant from

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Baer's investigations. His findings have enabled us to utilize Narrative XI and pages 125-126, in addition to Narratives LIX and LX, as biographical material. Narrative LIX is Solomon's report of the terrible edict decreed by King Joao II (1481-1495) concerning the transportation of those Jewish children, whose parents had been enslaved, to San Thomas or the Lost Islands.

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This outrageous legislation was enforced either in 1493 or 1494. Since Solomon was obviously an eye-witness, as indicated in the Narrative, we

are certain then that Solomon was in Portugal by the year 1494. Pages 125-126 reveal that Solomon was still in Portugal in 1497, for our author inserts into the mouth of the pope the identical measures issued by Manoel of Portugal. (On pages 125-126 we read that the pope, in addition to decreeing expulsion, decides that the Jewish children should be baptized, and the parents be given the alternative of conversion or death.) Manoel, after signing the edict of expulsion in 1496, endeavored to prevent the Jews from leaving by forcibly baptizing the children, and by giving the adults and hateful and cruel alternative of conversion or death. <sup>15</sup> These forcible baptisms occurred in 1497 and it was then that Solomon temporarily converted. His refusal to openly report the harrowing experiences of 1497, we believe, is based upon his unwillingness to mention directly the fact of his conversion. Solomon remained in Portugal until after the massacre of the Marranos in Lisbon (1506). This conclusion is warranted after an investigation of Narratives IX and XI. Narrative LX in its essentials <sup>16</sup> treats of this massacre. Furthermore, narrative XI, after Solomon's embellishments have been removed, agrees in details with the actual conditions as they existed in Portugal in 1506. Particularly illuminating is the narrative's indirect reference to the decrees of Manoel. In March 1507 Manoel proclaimed that converts were to be treated as Christians, that converts had permission to migrate, and that they were freed from religious investigators for a period of sixteen years. <sup>17</sup> It is most likely that directly after Manoel's proclamation concerning the privilege of migrating, Solomon succeeded in escaping from Portugal. As to his immediate destination, we have no information, but it is quite possible that Solomon sojourned for some time in Naples. For this city had proved itself a haven for many of the Spanish refugees. However, because of the general hostile attitude in Christian Europe especially directed towards Anussim, we

But these  
pages  
deal with  
expulsion  
from  
Spain  
& Portugal

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believe that if Solomon did come to Naples it was only temporarily. And he, like so many others, eventually migrated to Turkey, for this country and its dependencies provided a greater amount of security. Under the rules of Bayesid II (1487-1512) and his son Selim I (1512-1520), Turkey had been opened to the refugee Jews. During the critical years for Spanish Jewry, Bayesid had given orders to receive the Jews and not to molest them. And Selim his son had opened up large areas for the immigrants by his conquests. <sup>18</sup> It is most likely that of the leading Jewish-Turkish communities--Constantinople, Adrianople, Salonica, and Smyrna--Solomon settled in Adrianople. For it was in this city that his son Joseph flourished. <sup>19</sup> Incidentally, Joseph is the only known relative of Solomon, for we possess no information--not even the slightest--about Solomon's <sup>20</sup> parents or other members of his intimate family.

We have no details concerning Solomon's education, but since he is reported to have been a physician obviously he must have had some scientific training. <sup>21</sup> A perusal of his book reflects the education of a cultured Spanish Jew, both in secular and religious matters. "Schevet Yehuda" is not the only book Solomon wrote, for he mentions another work, <sup>22</sup> "Schevet Eyratho" (Narrative L, last line) which has been lost. We possess several hints as to the contents of this lost work, for Solomon mentions in "Schevet Yehuda" page 108 that he had incorporated into the lost work ritualistic matters pertaining to Passover. Another reference on page 89 indicates that "Schevet Eyratho" contained an account of a persecution in Toledo.

#### C. JOSEPH IBN VERGA

Unfortunately, we possess but little information that could shed light upon the life of Joseph. Unlike our two previous subjects,

*This work  
evidently  
contained  
an account  
of the persec-  
utions of  
his time.*

the references to Joseph in "Schevet Yehuda" prove almost barren as biographical material, and as a consequence we are forced to depend upon secondary sources.<sup>23</sup> Vainly do we read through the narratives in the hope of discovering some direct or indirect remark of Solomon that would aid us in our reconstruction of Joseph's life, for his father is absolutely silent concerning his immediate family. Therefore we are unable to determine whether Joseph was born in Spain or Portugal, or that he had witnessed the expulsion from Spain and the subsequent sufferings of the refugees in Portugal.

Some facts, however, may be gleaned from the narratives. On page 111 we discover that Joseph is the son of Solomon. Pages 33 and 53 inform us that Joseph was a contemporary of the physician Moses Hamon who was born in Spain about 1490 and died about 1567 in Turkey.<sup>24</sup> Hamon was an influential figure among the Jews and aided them considerably by his contacts as physician to Sultan Sulaimon I.<sup>25</sup> The fact that Joseph and the physician were contemporaries clearly indicates that Joseph lived in the first half of the 16th century, and undoubtedly was a subject of Turkey. Furthermore, the comments and the accounts, which have been inserted by Joseph in "Schevet Yehuda" (pages 33, 53, narrative LI, pages 111 through the upper half of 115, and page 127), convincingly identify Joseph as the editor of his father's book.

From our secondary sources we learn that Joseph was a pupil of Joseph Fasi under whose direction he apparently studied in Adrianople,<sup>26</sup> the community to which Fasi had migrated from Salonica. In Adrianople, where Joseph dwelt, he evidently was a prominent figure among his co-religionists, for he was a member of the College of Rabbis at Adrianople.<sup>27</sup> We also learn that he was contemporaneous with R. Tam ibn Yachya.<sup>28</sup>

In addition to appending selections and editing "Schevet

Yehuda", Joseph wrote a book called "She'erith Yosef". This work was written in an attempt to forget his grief over the loss of his only son.<sup>29</sup> However, there is some doubt as to his authorship of the book,<sup>30</sup> for the book has been attributed to a Joseph ibn Verga of Avlona.

## II. AN UNCRTICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE "SCHEVET YEHUDA"

"Schevet Yehuda", since its first printed appearance in Adrianople 1554, has undergone many subsequent reprintings.<sup>1</sup> The edition which has served as the text for our investigations is that which has been edited by Doctor M. Wiener, and published in Hanover, Germany, 1855-1856.<sup>2</sup> This edition of "Schevet Yehuda" proper consists of 127 pages, containing a short preface by Solomon ibn Verga, 64 numbered Narratives, 19 pages of unnumbered material (pages 108-126), and a concluding prayer by Joseph ibn Verga on page 127. Of the selections numerically arranged, II and the sequels on pages 33 and 53 have been inserted by Joseph. Among the unnumbered selections, pages 111-115 (upper half) and page 127 are also products of Joseph.

Arranged structurally in a chronological sequence and intending to be historical in character, the numbered portions purport to be a comprehensive picture of Jewry's destiny and experiences in the Diaspora, beginning with the Fall of Jerusalem and concluding with the fate of the 1492 Spanish refugees. As such, the numbered dialogues present accounts of persecutions, massacres, expulsions, accusations against the Jews, theoretical discussions and disputations, pseudo-messiahs, and a variety of similar material. The unnumbered dialogues, including those of Joseph, are of the same character.

The material does not permit of definite classification because of overlapping, but for the sake of clarification the Narratives have been subsumed under the following divisions:

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 1. Historical | - Narratives I, VI, X, and pages 112 ff.        |
| 2. Expulsions | - Narratives XVIII, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, |

- XXV, and pages 124 ff.
3. Conversions - Narratives LII, IV, IX, XXVI, XXVIII, XXXIV, XXXVI, XXXIX, XLIV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, and LI.
  4. Disputations - Narratives VII, XIII, XIV, XXXII, XL, XLI, pages 108 ff., 115 ff., and 123.
  5. Accusations - Narratives V, VIII, XII, XVI, XVII, XXIX, XLIII, LXI, and page 111.
  6. Massacres - Narratives XV, XXXV, XXXVII, XLV, XLII, and LX.
  7. Persecutions - Narratives II, XI, XIX, XXVII, XXX, XXXIII, and XLIX.
  8. Fate of Refugees - Narratives L, LII, LIII, LIV, LV, LVI, LVII, LVIII, LIX, and page 110.
  9. Pseudo-messiahs - Narratives XXXI, and XXXII.
  10. Miscellaneous - Narratives XXXVIII and LXI (Miracles); LXII (Judah's death); LXIII (Solomon's dissertation); LXIV (Temple and service); and page 127 (Joseph's prayer).

Frequently, sources are mentioned for the material, but more often no sources are quoted, or the incidents are attributed to unknown observers. Following is a list of the majority of stated sources:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| Narrative I     | - from "The Chronicles of the Kings of Aragon".          |
| Narrative III   | - from "The Chronicles of the Kings of Persia".          |
| Narrative VI    | - from "The Chronicles of the Kings of Spain".           |
| Narrative XVII  | - from "The Chronicles of the <u>Wisemen</u> of France". |
| Narrative XX    | - from "The Chronicles of the Germans".                  |
| Narrative XXXIV | - from an unnamed highly esteemed German scholar.        |
| Narrative XXXV  | - from an unnamed French Cabbalist.                      |
| Narrative XL    | - from the letter of Abu Astruc                          |

*Sholem*

- Narrative XLII - from the responsa of the early Gaonim.
- Narratives XLVIII and XLIX - from Shemtob ben Shemtob.
- Narrative LI - from Isaac Abravanel's Commentary on Kings.
- Narrative LXIV - from the letters of the king, Versorius, and Consul Marcus.
- Page 110 - from a letter from Fez.
- Page 112 - from writings of R. Shemtob Sanzola; also an unnamed Latin book.
- Page 124 - from Meshullam of Rome's letter.

To indicate the scope of the book, the general locale of the narratives, whenever ascertainable, is listed below. The geographical divisions are as of the present day.

1. England - Narrative XVIII.
2. France - Narratives VI, XVII, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, and XXXV.
3. Germany - Narratives XXVI, XXXIV and XXXVI.
4. Iraq - Narrative XLII.
5. Italy - Narratives IX, XI, XIV, XIX, XXXIX, XLI, LVI, LVII, and page 124.
6. Northern Africa - Narratives XXX, XXXIII, LIII, LIV, LV, and page 110.
7. Palestine - Narrative I.
8. Portugal - Narratives XXXII (sequel), L, LIX, LX, and pages 108 ff.
9. Persia - Narratives III, XXXI, and XXXII.
10. Spain - Narratives V, VII, VIII, X, XII, XV, XVI, XXVI, XXVII, XXIX, XXXVII, XXXVIII, XL, XLIV, XLV, XLVI, XLVII, XLVIII, XLIX, L, LI, LXI, LXII, and pages 115 ff.



11. Turkey - Narrative XXVIII and page 111.
12. These narratives do not permit of location - Narratives XII, XLIII,  
LII, LVIII, LXIII.

### III. SOURCES OF THE 'SCHEVET YEHUDA'

Subjecting 'Shevet Yehuda' to an intensive critical study, Fritz Baer in his work has removed all doubt as to the veracity and reliability of Solomon ibn Verga's source citation. The thoroughness with which Baer has performed his investigations is reflected in the statement, "dass V (Solomon ibn Verga) es vermutlich erst von Abr. (Isaac Abravanel) abgesehen hat, fremdsprachliche (von ihm freilich fingierte) Chroniken zu zitieren."<sup>1</sup> As a result of his findings, we are in a position to present information bearing upon Solomon ibn Verga's actual source material.

The relationship of Solomon to the source material is not that of a copyist but as one who utilizes the material as a background--a framework for his own contributions. With this point clearly understood we shall proceed with our analysis.

In the formation of Narratives I, II, VII (pages 7, 22, 23, 24), XII (page 35), XXXII (page 55 ff.), and LXIV, Jossipon has been frequently utilized by our author.<sup>2</sup> It is most clearly reflected in Narratives I, II and XXXII. Jossipon is the origin of the observations in Narrative VII concerning King Latino, Janus, the worship of Saturn, and Lucifer (page 7); the names of the nations (page 7); the founding of the Samaritan Temple (page 22); the destruction of the battering rams (page 23); and the killing of the elephants (page 24). With reference to the supposed Latin letter in Narrative XII (page 35) Baer surmises that Verga derived it from a speech in a version of Jossipon that is not extant at present.<sup>3</sup> The description of the Temple in Narrative LXIV is based in part on Jossipon's description of the Herodian Temple. The sources which Solomon cites

in Narratives I and LXIV deserve no credence.

Reflections of Solomon's familiarity with the writings of Isaac Abravanel and subsequent utilization of excerpts is evident in certain selections. Reminiscences are found in Narrative VII (pages 10, 13, 14, 192, 20) and in Narrative XLIX. Narrative LI inserted by Joseph was<sup>4</sup> taken from Isaac Abravanel's introduction to his commentary on Kings.

From the result of Baer's comparisons of various narratives in "Schevet Yehudah" with like accounts in Samuel Usque's "Consolacem as tribulacoens de Israel" he has arrived at the conclusion that the authors derived their materials from a common source. In doing so Baer had carefully considered Graetz's assumption that this common source was Prophiat Duran's מכתב שם, and had found the assumption untenable. The name of this common source or sources is unknown, and the probability that<sup>5</sup> both authors possessed the same literal version is unlikely.

The following narratives are derived from the common source: Narratives V, VI, XIV, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII, XXX, XXXI, XLIII, XLVI. In all probability Narratives XXII, XXIII, and XXXIX have their roots in the common source. Baer also assumes that Narratives XLVIII and XLIX attributed to Shemtob ben Shemtob were taken by that individual from the same literary source utilized by Usque.<sup>6</sup>

The character of this common source, particularly with reference to Narrative VI, is that of a secondary version, written in Hebrew, and based on an original contemporaneous account reflecting the Jewish point of view of a southern French or Spanish Jew. This original document<sup>7</sup> was also composed in Hebrew. With the exception of various identifications, conjectural computations and minor disputations, Narrative VI is based entirely upon a possibly corrupt secondary version of the original account.

Narratives XXX and XXXI (notably XXXI) are taken from a common source which is in the final analysis a secondary version of Benjamin of Tudela's report.<sup>8</sup> Solomon has added freely to the source, as evidenced by the insertion of a disputation and the invented conclusion of Narrative XXXI. The source used by Verga contained citations from Maimonide's "Iggereth Teman" concerning a false Messiah which, however, did not refer to David Elroy.<sup>9</sup> This Maimonidian excerpt is the origin of Narrative XXXIII.<sup>10</sup> Narrative V is based on a secondary version of Abraham ben Daud's report.

Narratives XVIII and XX are the result of Verga's division of the sources utilized by him. Baer reasons that Solomon possessed two versions of the incidents--both dealing with the same material--one a version which gives the conversion of the priest and the reduction of the gold as the motives for expulsion, and the other, a smaller version which lists only the reduction of the gold as the motive.<sup>11</sup>

Narratives XIX, XXI, XXIV, XXV, and probably XXII and XXIII, reflect a similarity in their essential points with like accounts in Usque's work, and consequently indicate a common source.<sup>12</sup> Characteristically, Solomon embellishes the materials found therein.

A secondary version, legendary in character, though based on a contemporaneous report, is the source for Narratives XIV and probably XXXIX. The legendary form of the version used by Solomon is attributed to the confusion revolving around the name Sancha. This name had become confused with a similar sounding name of a Jewish enemy.<sup>13</sup>

The common source again provides the material for Narratives XLIII and XXVI. Narratives XXVII and XLVI result from a division Solomon made of a single version. This single version was corrupt in character and confused two episodes.<sup>14</sup> Narratives XLVIII and XLIX which Verga

*No. 20 doesn't mention all*

*Coin clipping*

attributes to Shemtob ben Shemtob were derived by Shemtob (either the Kabbalist or his grandson) from the same literary source that was at the disposal of Usque. <sup>15</sup> Because of similarity in content, locale and dating, we add Narratives XLV and XLVII as derivatives from the common source.

Baer's examination of the incomplete account of the disputation found in Narrative XL was aided by a comparison with two additional reports. One is an anonymous Hebrew account termed J and the other is a Latin protocol. Solomon, however, had no literary connection with either. Fundamental to Solomon's account is a letter to Bonastruc Desmaestre of Gerona inviting him to the disputation. Naturally Bonastruc's report is characteristically Jewish, and was a product of his memory. As a consequence, misunderstandings, confusion of names and other errors ensued. In addition to reporting the course of the disputation, Bonastruc includes outside conditions and occurrences within the circle of Jewish deputies. Any improbabilities or legendary strains that may seem to exist are the result of Verga's editing. <sup>16</sup>

According to the computation of Loeb, there are ten sittings recorded in Narrative XL. Bonastruc has seven for the same length of time, which is one more than the number recorded in the J account and in the Latin protocol. This additional day results from Bonastruc's inclusion of the reception day tendered by the pope for the deputies. With reference to the ten sittings in Narrative XI Baer reasons that the three superfluous sessions are errors of Verga, arising out of misunderstanding. Baer removes these three extra sessions by (1) placing the sentence on page 73, line 21 between the words of the sentence on page 74 line 15ff.; (2) connecting the sentence on page 75, line 25 with the sentence on page 76, line 2; and (3) by claiming that the careless remarks of R. Astruc

provoked Verga to insert that which is found on page 76, lines 13-18.<sup>17</sup> However, Porges who reviewed Baer's study presents a more plausible arrangement of the sessions spent in disputation. This critic finds that Verga mentions seven sessions. Page 70, line 7 begins the first session held on a Tuesday, February 7th. Page 72, line 25 begins the second session held on Wednesday, February 8th. Page 74, line 15 begins the third session held on Thursday, February 9th. Page 75, line 25 begins the fourth session held on Friday, February 10th. Page 76, line 2 begins the fifth session held on Saturday, February 11th. Page 76, line 18 begins the sixth session held on Monday, February 13th. And page 77, line 4 begins the seventh session held on Wednesday, February 15th. This last session is concluded by line 14 on page 78.<sup>18</sup> In computing the number of sessions, Porges utilized Baer's emendation of the sentence on page 73, line 21. The special opening session narrated by Verga is pure invention, though it is quite possible that the pope received the deputies in a special audience on Sunday, February 5th.<sup>19</sup>

Porges bases his dates upon various evidences in the text, several omissions, and the letter of invitation. The date on page 68, line 16 is not to be taken literally (the first of the month)--as Baer has so understood it--but it means the first day of the week--Sunday. Furthermore, the date of this Monday, the fifteenth, which has dropped out of the text, is to be restored. Another date which is to be restored is Sunday, February 5th, which precedes the last word in line 30, page 68. The letter of invitation to Bonastruc dispatched November 26, 1412 specified his appearance in Tortosa on Sunday, January 15, 1413; consequently, Porges' dating with reference to the assembling of the deputies is soundly based. Page 70, line 7 testifies to the fact that the first session began on

Tuesday, February 7, 1413. Since no mention is made of a session held on Sunday, February 12th, the day Monday should be inserted in line 18,  
<sup>20</sup>  
 page 76. The date for the last session is mentioned in the text, page 77, line 4.

Baer's examination identifies the unnamed speaker mentioned in line 13, page 75 as Magister Solomon Isaac or Solomon Maimon. He was not an invited deputy nor was he well-known, but he was an inhabitant of Tortosa. Verga's erroneous identification of him as an "inhabitant of Rome" is in part due to Maimon's relative unimportance, and partly due to  
<sup>21</sup>  
 Verga's remoteness in time from the event.

Verga freely amplified throughout the narrative as is evidenced by the ironical statements contained in line 27, page 69, lines 16ff. page 70, lines 12ff. page 71, and lines 33ff. page 72; and various passages, such as found on pages 71, 72, 74, 75, and particularly the in-  
<sup>22</sup>  
 vented disputation found on page 74, lines 20-34. Furthermore, the figure Don Vidal ben Benveniste of whom Verga makes the selected chief speaker of the Jewish deputies is an invention of Solomon. Despite the role which Verga gave him and the frequent mention of his name throughout the narrative (pages 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 77, and 78), Don Vidal is not mentioned once in the two other reports. The Latin protocol reports on the entire 69 sessions and frequently mentions R. Ferrer who is identical, however, with R. Serachia Halevi, the chief rabbi of the Jews of Aragon. The corruption apparent in the listing of the names and communities of the Jewish deputies (page 68) is, perhaps, due entirely to Verga's  
<sup>23</sup>  
 interpolation of Don Vidal's name. It is conjectural as to whom Verga wished to honor by erecting this literary monument for the Benveniste  
<sup>24</sup>  
 family was, besides being influential, large in number. Baer suggests, though not heartily, the contemporary Vidal ben Benveniste de la Caballeria

who in 1492 negotiated with the King of Portugal concerning the reception  
 25  
 of the Spanish exiles.

Due to a lack of parallel reports, Baer was prevented from making any investigations concerning the sources for Narratives III, IV, IX, X, XXXIV, XXXV, and XXXVI. However, Narratives III and IV reflect a relationship with the historical works of Abraham ben David, though by no means a direct one. It may be assumed that both Narratives have been  
 26  
 based upon an amplified secondary version of Abraham ben David's reports.

The information concerning the fate of the Spanish refugees found in Narratives LII, LIII, LIV, LV, LVI, LVII, LVIII, and page 110 are based upon contemporary reports. A letter is mentioned by Solomon as the source for the fragment found on page 110. We are quite certain that Solomon was not an observer or participant in any of these incidents, because he was among those Spanish Jews who took refuge in Portugal. The character of the reports indicates a free amplification by our author.

Narratives XI, LIX and LX are products of Solomon's own experiences. Despite the false dating, the misleading names of places, and the insertion of Jewish practices, Narrative XI is strongly reminiscent of Verga's experiences in Portugal. Abravanel's commentary to Ezekiel  
 27  
 provided Verga with the list of geographical names. We cannot be in doubt about Narratives LIX and LX, since we know that Solomon was a refugee in Portugal.

Contemporary reports also provided the material for Narratives XXXVIII, LXI and LXII. Solomon cites a R. Abraham ben Arama as the oral source for Narrative XXXVIII; however, we cannot find any information concerning the cited individual. Any information which Solomon possessed concerning Judah ibn Verga must have been of a secondary nature since the likelihood of direct contact with Judah is conjectural.



The account recorded on page 124 which has been richly re-worked by Solomon has for its nucleus the letter of R. Meschullam of Rome.

Just where Verga garnered the material for Narrative XLII cannot be ascertained, although our author cites the gaonic responsa as its source.

Unquestionably Narratives L and LXIII are the products of Solomon. Narrative XXVIII by its position and, remotely, by its content, suggests that it may be based on the source which was utilized in Narrative XXVII. However, it is more plausible to suppose that it had its origin in a report concerning the capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II in 1453. Fugitives were permitted to return to Constantinople three days after its fall. <sup>28</sup>

Throughout the majority of the narratives listed previously, Solomon permitted his imagination free rein, amplifying and embellishing the material to emphasize various themes which motivated the author. These themes (to be discussed later) are brought to us most concretely in those narratives which are the unique creations of Verga. Rising out of the typical experiences of the 15th century Spanish Jewry, freely interspersed with real and fictional characters, and interwoven with historical bits, Narratives VII, VIII, XIII, XV, XVI, XVII, XXIX, XXXVII, XLI, XLIV, and pages 108-110, 115-125 represent Verga's versions and interpretations of these experiences. We shall leave for a later discussion the contents of the narratives.

But the parallel account is found in that

of Nathan the Babylonian

(10th century).

See Neub.,

Med. Jew.

Chron.

II, 83-

85.

Narrative III refers to Jew. position  
in Babylon at end of Sassanian  
rule. For 4004 read 4400 = 600 when  
Arabs overthrew Sassanians! (for 1122)

#### IV. HISTORICAL ELEMENTS OF THE "SCHEVET YEHUDA"

Thus far we have attempted to indicate the sources instrumental in the development of the narratives of "Schevet Yehudah". Our next task is to extract, whenever possible, the historical elements imbedded in the Narratives.

Narrative I refers to the destruction of Jerusalem 70 C. E.

Jossipon's version, which served Solomon as source material, has been freely reworked by our author. This amplification is expressed in remarks accusing the Jews of having cemented the marital union of Cleopatra and Anthony, as a means of ridding themselves of Anthony, which causes Augustus to war against them; and also in the remarks concerning the bravery of the defenders which makes Augustus despair of victory, but Rome's honor is involved and Jerusalem falls.<sup>1</sup>

Narrative IV may refer to the disciple of Muhammed ibn Tumert, Abd-al-Mumin, who, after conquering all of Northern Africa, crossed over to southern Spain and conquered it in 1148. The Almohads of whom Abd-al-Mumin was the leader adopted a fanatical attitude towards all other religions.<sup>2</sup>

Narrative V refers to a riot against the Jews in Granada in 1066. The Vizier Joseph son of Samuel ben Joseph Halevi and 4,000 Jews were killed. Enmity against Joseph was responsible for the massacre.<sup>3</sup>

Narrative VI has been based on a contemporaneous account of the "Shepherds' Uprising" in 1320.<sup>4</sup> Philip V of France had been dissuaded from engaging in a crusade. However, the idea spread among the people, and a young shepherd pretended he had a vision which designated him as

No so  
sure  
since Jossipon  
has not  
these facts  
Why not  
believe his  
statement  
that he copied  
from fragments  
chronicles?

The date

is 4072

Read 4092

5300

1132!

leader of the crusade. Thousands rallied to him, and the mob began to attack the Jews. Unhampered, the crusaders massacred Jews in southern France and northern Spain. After some time the uprising was quelled by the authorities. The eagerness of the government to suppress the revolt lies in the fact that it was a revolt of the oppressed classes against  
5  
the feudal lords.

Narrative X is in its essentials an accurate report, and

probably based upon a contemporaneous account. During the reign of Alfonso XI (1313-1350) of Castille, two Jews were in high favor at the court. One was Joseph de Ecija who occupied the position of Treasurer, and the other was Samuel ibn Wakar the court physician. A poor Spanish knight, Gonzalo Martinez, who had been befriended and advanced by Joseph, rewarded his benefactor by accusing Joseph before the king of embezzling the crown's money. Martinez also accused Samuel, who had been granted the privilege of minting coins, of deteriorating the coinage. With the king's permission these two with eight other Jews were arrested by Martinez, who attempted to extort money from them for the king. Both Joseph and Samuel died under torture, but only Joseph was given an honorable burial. Martinez became the king's favorite and devoted his energies toward a general expulsion of the Jews. At the time when the king needed money for a continuance of the war against the Moors, Martinez suggested seizure of the Jews' wealth and expulsion. However, his suggestion was not accepted. Martinez was victorious over the forces led by Abumelek, and consequently increased his power. Finally, at the instigation of his enemies, the king ordered Martinez' arrest. He defied the king's command, but was finally  
6  
captured and executed.

Narrative XI is, as we have said previously, reminiscent of conditions in Portugal. Continued drought had ruined the harvest, and

*Narrative X refers to the persecution in Spain and the Visigothic king Isidore (for 1200) for 500 C. E. 7. 612 (for 500)*

*Not so sure*

famine ensued which brought in its wake a severe plague. Incited by the Dominicans, a mob attacked the Marranos and many were slaughtered. This terrible tragedy occurred in Lison in 1506. The fanatical attitude of the people forced King Manoel to decide in 1507 to permit the Marranos freedom to migrate. Further, the king through another edict provided protection for the Marranos by freeing them for a period of sixteen years from the plots of the Inquisition. Verga deals more fully with the massacre and the incidents involved in Narrative LX. This latter account agrees with the modern accounts.

Narrative XIV refers to some unknown danger to the Jews, probably expulsion was considered by Pope John XXII. This danger was directed against the Jews of Rome in 1321. The identification of Sancha as the sister of the Pope is questionable for Sancha was the wife of King Robert of Naples and Jerusalem. Robert intervened on behalf of the Jews, as did R. Kalonymos ben Kalonymos.

Narrative XVIII refers to the charge of coin-clipping preferred against the English Jews. Because of this accusation, the Jews were imprisoned on Friday, November 17, 1278. An investigation was conducted and 293 Jews were convicted, some being penalized with death. This accusation became a common one, and Edward I (1272-1307) issued a law in May, 1279 that tended to lessen the number of accusations.

Narrative XX, despite the misleading location, is likewise connected with England. It refers to the conversion of the Dominican Robert de Reddinge to Judaism in the summer of 1275. His love for a Jewess was responsible for his conversion. The Dominicans, anxious to wreak vengeance upon the Jews, enlisted the aid of the queen-mother Eleanor, who gave them her support. It was she who drove the Jews out of the city of Cambridge which belonged to her.

Narrative XXI refers to the expulsion of the Jews from France by King Philip IV in September, 1306. One hundred thousand Jews were affected by the decree. Two reasons were responsible for the expulsion: the first, greed for their wealth; second, it was Philip's answer to Albrecht of Hapsburg who claimed the overlordship of the Jews. The extreme hardship resulting from the decree may be realized in the fact that the Jews were permitted to take away only one day's provision and the clothes upon their backs. No wonder, then, that the entire community of Toulouse converted.<sup>11</sup>

Narrative XXII refers to a partial expulsion in the year 1254 by Louis IX of France. In 1250, Louis IX had been captured by the Moham- medans while on the fifth crusade. His captors jibed him about sheltering the Jews who had killed <sup>his</sup> their god, and as a consequence Louis IX from his prison sent orders driving out all Jews except artisans from the kingdom of Paris. His mother Blanche, the queen-regent, paid no heed to the command, and it was only upon her death and the subsequent return of Louis<sup>12</sup> in December 1254 that the edict was carried out.

Narrative XXIII likewise refers to the expulsion of 1306, as discussed above. Verga freely invented her in order to magnify the calamity.

Narrative XXIV in all probability refers to the recall of the Jews by Louis X of France in the year 1315. He provided them with clothes and food for a year, and acceded to a number of their demands. Louis X did insist upon the wearing of the Jew-badge. The limit of their stay was to be twelve years, and they could be expelled only upon a year's<sup>13</sup> notice.

Narrative XXV refers to the sudden and unexpected expulsion<sup>14</sup> of the Jews from France by King Charles IV (1322-1328) on June 24, 1322.

Many  
really  
refer to  
expulsion  
in 1306  
(about  
50 years  
after 1306)  
during  
Black  
Death.

*Hence for  
not read*

*6/1  
= 1349!*

Narrative XXVI refers to the devastating plague, known as the "Black Death", which swept over Europe from 1348 to 1350. Its enormous death tolls and its persistence became the bases for charges against the Jews. The masses claimed that the Jews poisoned the wells, and terrible massacres ensued, particularly in central Europe. Some 2,000 Jews were burnt to death in the city of Strassburg.<sup>15</sup>

Narrative XXVII refers to the massacres of 1391 in Spain. The agitation sponsored by the fanatical priest Ferrand Martinez began in Seville and continued for some time. Upon the death of King Juan, who had restrained Martinez, a regency was established because the new king, Henry III, was only eleven years old. Some members of this council were in sympathy with Ferrand and as a consequence he was not restrained in his activities. The populace, stimulated by his agitation, first rose against the Jews of Seville on March 15, 1391. The government succeeded in subduing this attack, but was powerless against the real attack which began on June 26, 1391. The mob of Seville destroyed the Jewish quarter, killing many and converting the majority. All Christian Spain, excluding Portugal and Moorish Granada, rose against the Jews. The slaughter continued throughout the summer, and the results were appalling. The slain number<sup>ed</sup> about 50,000 and the converts about 200,000. These converts gave rise to the Marranos.<sup>16</sup>

*Hence for  
from 8-  
Spain  
1147*

Narrative XXX refers to the conquest of Northern Africa by Abd-al-Mumin, which was finally accomplished in 1147. The subsequent invasion of southern Spain was responsible for the flight of Maimonides' family from Cordova, from whence they eventually came to Fez in 1158 or 1159. Maimonides left Fez suddenly about 1164 or 1167.<sup>17</sup>

*really  
1146/7  
during 2nd Crusade. But Targum says it was in 1140!*

Narrative XXXI refers to David Alroy, a pseudo-messiah, who appeared some time during the years 1151-1155. This ambitious and well-educated Jew issued a call to arms to the Jews of Asia, claiming that he

*In some  
diggs  
Kurdish  
Tas.*

*Narrative XXXII probably refers to Messianic movement of Abu Isa al-Jahani (and 7th century)*

was appointed by God as the deliverer of the Jews. Nothing further of tested historical value is known of him, though Benjamin of Tudela does present an account which formed the basis for the secondary version employed by Verga.

Narrative XXXIII probably refers to the persecutions in Fez which began about 1164.

Narrative XXXIV may have reference to the Jews of Worms who on the 1st of March, 1349 set fire to their houses and more than 400 were burnt to death. This calamity occurred during the "Black Death" period.

Narrative XXXVI may refer to the persecution and self-destruction of the Jews of Vienna during the calamitous period of the "Black Death", or it may refer to the decree issued by Duke Albert in 1421. This decree prohibited Jews from living in Austria. It is impossible to make any definite identification.

Narrative XL refers to the disputation at Tortosa convened by Benedict XIII, Pope of Avignon, which lasted from February 7, 1413 to November 13, 1414. Pope Benedict XIII, who was deposed by the Council of Constance in 1415, (1394-1417) went in 1408 to Spain where he was recognized as pope. He resided in Aragon and, incited by Joshua Lorqui (Geronimo), an apostate Jew who had become his court physician, Benedict brought about the disputation in Tortosa. Summons were sent to twenty-two leaders of the Jewish communities in Aragon, and on February 7, 1413 the disputation held its first session. The purpose of the debate was to give Lorqui the opportunity of proving on the basis of the Talmud that the Messiah had already come, which, if convincing, would be highly instrumental in converting the Jews. However, no tangible results developed out of the debate.

In Verga's report there are mentioned seven sessions beginning

*See my account in vol. 24.*

*For a full treatment of this disputation you might have consulted Ad. W. N. in (R. 6) vol. 74, 75 & 76 (1922-23)*

with the first session held on Tuesday, February 7th, followed by sessions on the subsequent Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, the Monday of the following week (the 13th), and concluding on Wednesday, February 15th. Throughout these sittings, and particularly at the pope's reception of the deputies, Verga places Don Vidal Benveniste in the role of chief speaker, a role which has been considered authentic by Graetz and Mann. It is historically true that a R. David Benveniste of Huesca and a poet Don Vidal Benveniste ibn Labi were delegates to the disputation. However, we are of the same opinion as Baer, and we believe that the role in which Verga placed Don Vidal Benveniste is purely imaginary. The doubtful character of the "Arenga", the suspicious interpolations, and the fact that Don Vidal is not mentioned at least once in the Latin protocol convinces us that Verga was inventive when he placed Don Vidal in the role of chief speaker.

The disputation cited by Verga on page 74, lines 20-34 refers to a disputation between Nachmanides and Pablo Christiani, held at Barcelona in 1263. This disputation lasted for four days, and was convened by King James I (1213-1276) of Aragon. Pablo who was an apostate Jew also tried to prove from talmudical passages that the Messiah had come.

Narrative XII refers very remotely to the Pope Martin V who was elected by the Council of Constance as the recognized Pope. This occurred about 1415. Before his establishment in Rome (1417) Martin was in Florence, and it is quite probable that in addition to receiving representatives of Italian and Germany Jewry he also received deputies from Spain. It was Martin V who issued a papal bull on January 31, 1419 which nullified the restrictive bull of Benedict XIII. The contents of Martin's bull in all likelihood served as points of departure for Verga's freely invented report.

*note*  
Narrative XII see above p 21.



Narrative XLIII refers to the persecutions which developed out of the accusation that the Jews, in league with the lepers, poisoned the wells (1321). Lepers were social outcasts and in the district of Guenne, France, they avenged themselves upon the population by poisoning the wells. The immediate cause for the deed was that sufficient food had not been provided for the lepers by the townsmen. Some lepers were arrested and tortured, and falsely implicated the Jews. Philip V of France believed the accusation and many Jews suffered imprisonment, others being expelled.<sup>28</sup>

Hence for  
28 1337  
Narrative XLV refers to the general massacre in Spain in 1391. We have already discussed the incidents in Narrative XXVII.

Narrative XLVI refers to the edict of the twenty-four articles published at Valladolid, January 10, 1412. Due to the influence of Vincent Ferrer, the regency headed by the queen-mother Catalina issued these ordinances in the name of the youthful king Juan II. These decrees were extremely severe and the Jews suffered considerably. One of the members of the regency council was the apostate Paul of Burgos.<sup>29</sup>

Narrative XLVII refers to the tragic period in Spain in 1391.

Narrative XLVIII also refers to the massacres in 1391. The king mentioned is Henry III (1390-1406). He ascended the throne at the early age of eleven.<sup>30</sup>

Narrative XLIX is a confused reference to the edicts issued in 1412 by the queen-mother in the name of the infant king Juan II.

You have  
skipped  
Narrative  
L-LVIII!  
Narrative LIX refers to the deportation of the children of Spanish refugees to the Lost Islands or Thomas Islands for the purpose of colonization. Thousands were taken and many died en-route or upon the islands. This occurred in Lisbon in the year 1493 or 1494.<sup>31</sup> Verga embellished the account by weaving into the report incidents based upon

the Hannah story and a talmudic legend (Gittin 58).

Narratives LX and LXII with reference to their historical elements have been discussed previously.

Though almost obscured by their transformation into material for Verga the report on page 124ff. does reveal some allusions to authentic events. It does refer to the demand of the Spanish ambassador upon Pope Alexander VI (1492-1503) to expel refugee Spanish Marranos from Rome. Further, we believe with Baer that reminiscences of Manoel's expulsion<sup>32</sup> and forcible conversion decrees are expressed in the narrative. These<sup>33</sup> edicts were issued by King Manoel of Portugal in the years 1496 and 1497.

*Mr. J. J. S. J.*  
*Quel*

V. CHARACTER OF THE INVENTED NARRATIVES

We have frequently mentioned the inventive phase of Verga's narratives, and to make this essential characteristic of his writing more definite we have indicated the historical elements which have served as points of departure. However, the nature of this re-editing by Verga was not without purpose. It was not merely an exercise in fantasy, aimless and pointless, but it was directed towards definite ends. To understand more clearly the character of this pragmatic use of imagination we will discuss those narratives which have been freely invented by our author, indicating their themes which have their roots in the typical experiences of 15th century Spanish Jewry.

Narrative VII is the record of a debate between King Alfonso of Spain and the learned Thomas. Two problems are under discussion: (1) the justification of the ritual murder accusation, and (2) the causes which were responsible for the downfall of the Jews. The ritual murder charge is investigated first, and is found to be based only upon the hatred which the masses bear towards the Jews. This hatred is traced to the wealth of the Jews, their haughtiness, their vanity, and to their exclusiveness. Ironically, Thomas is made to suggest disabilities as protective measures. At this juncture a ritual murder court procedure is introduced to illuminate the discussion. The mob, mollified and edified, admit that the preferred charge was false and that they invented the accusation because of hatred and economic depression. Then follow brief discussions about Jewish racial superiority and their steadfastness to their faith, which lead to a discussion concerning the downfall of the Jews. This is attributed to their faithlessness, and because of their intimacy with God their punishment

is extremely severe. Divisiveness, pride, schism, and idolatry are among the causes instrumental in prolonging their exile.

We can easily discern that this narrative has its roots in the everyday experiences of a Spanish Jew of the 15th century. Harassed continually by false accusations, constantly subject to expulsion, often engaged in disputations, terrorized by the masses, and hated even by their defenders, the Jew had much occasion to ponder upon his lot. In a hostile world of kings and clerics, obnoxious disabilities, a tyrannical church, vengeful neighbors, and a demoralized Jewry, Solomon probed the situation and interpreted it in his light. It is in this narrative that we find the ideas which permeate <sup>and</sup> the unify the book. Above all, we discover that two reasons are responsible, according to Solomon, for the plight of Jewry especially in Spain: (1) divine punishment because of the sins of the fathers, and (2) the hatred of the masses which has developed out of the haughtiness, wealth, vanity, and the exclusiveness of Jews.

Narrative VIII is another report concerning the blood libel.

A corpse is thrown into the home of a Jew by Christians. As a consequence, Jews suffer. Delegations of both accused and accusers appear before the king. The king engages with the Jewish delegation upon the questions of usury, conduct, luxury, exclusiveness, and the like. After this discussion the murder charge is investigation<sup>ed</sup>, in which we find that the king disapproves of torture as an instrument of justice. This leads the king to reminisce about a previous false accusation which was traced to the desire for money. The narrative closes with an illustration of the evils of money--for money, a servant has betrayed a master who plotted against a Jew. The king investigates, the real criminals are executed, and the Jew is vindicated.

Here again we meet with a typical accusation, in which the

*You could have illustrated the point of Jewry's ostentatiousness by account of Solomon (1415).*

accuser is the actual criminal, motivated by envy of wealth. We are made familiar with the methods of determining guilt through the introduction of false witnesses and the use of torture. We see in abbreviated form the causes which lead to popular hatred of the Jews. And we discover the truism that if one Jew commits an evil the entire race is blamed.

*Vaguely stated*

Narrative XIII tells of the priest who sermonizes against the Jews. The king, who has come to hear him at the behest of the indignant Jews, departs in a rage. The priest follows him and a discussion ensues in which the priest argues that God has abandoned the Jews. But the king is not convinced and believes that God has not abandoned them but is still their Taskmaster, who places upon them many burdens.

This report introduces us to a common enemy of the Jews, the priest who stirs up religious hatred. In addition we meet again with the familiar theme of divine punishment, as well as with the familiar type of the benevolent king.

*Why is this inserted?*

Narrative XV relates of a persecution that was brought about through an innocent game. All the Jews were killed with the exception of a boy, and all the babes were baptized. Other Jews saved themselves through heavy bribes.

Here we have a typical picture of a persecution which emphasizes the precariousness of the life of the Jews.

Narrative XVI again takes up the ritual murder theme. The king, because of his sleeplessness, is instrumental in clearing the accused Jew.

Narrative XVII is devoted in the main to false witnesses. The French king becomes weary of false accusations, and warns the informers that the next one will be decapitated. Enraged, the informers procure

witnesses who by their testimony cause a Jew to be subjected to the rack. Through torture the Jew implicates others. The Jews protest against the idea that the crime of one should incriminate all. The king then releases all except the first Jew. At this point an Arabian visitor engages the king and his courtiers in a discussion concerning ritual murder charges. He dismisses the charges. He also dismisses the testimony of witnesses introduced later. The people are impressed by the words of the Arab, but the king, swayed by the new testimony, orders all the Jews to be placed in nail-studded barrels, and rolled to the market-place. The courtiers tell him that the king is required by law to initiate the sentence. (This is strongly reminiscent of Deuteronomic laws--Deut. 17:7.)<sup>2</sup> The king undertakes to roll a barrel, but faints immediately. The narrative concludes with the discovery of the actual criminals and their subsequent punishment.

Inherent in this account is the point that confessions derived by torture are valueless. Likewise we are familiarized with the ingenuity involved in summoning false witnesses and the ease with which they may be obtained. Again we have a picture of the court procedure of a ritual murder. Loeb has already indicated that the possibility of an Arabian ambassador at the court of France could not have been until the 16th century.<sup>3</sup>

Narrative XXIX revolves around the disappearance of a Pedro Gussman. Some Christians accuse a Jew of murdering him. The first investigation exonerates the Jew, but the matter is referred to the king. False witnesses are brought and under torture the Jew "confesses". However, the Jew is saved by the appearance of a bishop who had seen the missing person. The king then realizes the ineffectiveness of torture as an instrument of justice.

This is another phase of false accusations, and a recurrence of the method of adjudging guilt.

Narrative XXXII consists of three segments: (1) a report of a false messiah which has been appended to the account of David Alroy; (2) a debate between King Pedro the elder and Nicholas of Valencia; and (3) a discussion between a Jew and a Christian before King Alfonse. The first report tells of the harm brought upon Jews by the claims of a pseudo-messiah. It is quite natural that Verga should re-emphasize the dangers that follow in the trail of an impostor. In times of extreme distress, especially in a critical period such as the one during the life of Solomon, the harrassed Jews were easily deluded. Their sufferings and privations made them eagerly accept the claims of adventurers.

The second segment brings us the remarkable parable of the precious stones. Ephraim ben Sancha is asked which is the better religion, and he answers with the parable. Then follows the supposed speech of Josephus, which is to illustrate the Jews' refusal to take advice. In the course of the Narrative the king makes the point that Christians should seek their own salvation and not concern themselves with the Jews. This segment concludes with a long discussion based on fourteen questions concerning Nature.

Here we see a plea for tolerance in religion and the pious hope that Christians would desist in their efforts to save the souls of the Jews. No wonder that Solomon should wish for a time when monks would not march up and down the nations offering the cross or death, and when Inquisitions would cease saving souls by burning "heretics". Our attention is also held by the hybrid name of Ephraim ben Sancha, which indicates that Jews despite their religious affiliation can also be Spaniards. We also note that Solomon is aware of Jewish stubbornness.

but  
see  
note  
above  
p. 27,  
top

13

Chase

0

The third section is directed towards those Christians who base their arguments about Christ upon scriptural passages. It is merely a matter of interpretation and is illustrated by the humorous utilization of verses from Lamentations concerning the fate of a rooster. After involving himself in a seemingly endless discussion, Verga concludes by stating that the manuscript becomes illegible.

In this segment we have a reference to the many disputations that played prominent roles in the life of the Jew in the Middle Ages. It is particularly directed against those clerics, especially the apostate Jews, who were wont to prove their contentions by citing biblical and talmudic passages.

Narrative XXXVII has been considered authentic by Graetz and Loeb; however, this is conjectural.<sup>4</sup> Verga frequently inserts well-known figures to give credence to the report, and we believe that he utilized the character and the position as structural elements in his account. The king's physician, Isaac Hamon, through his high position, is the cause of a riot in Granada. After the massacre Jewish physicians decide to abstain from riding on horses, dressing in silk, and showing any appearance of power or aristocracy.

The author touches again upon the causes which lead to hatred of the Jews. We also note some of the familiar disabilities imposed upon Jews, particularly in Moslem lands.

Narrative XXXVIII is another illustration of the vindictiveness of the monks. Judah ibn Verga clears accused Jews of the false charge of burying an apostate Jew in the Jewish cemetery. By a cabbalistic trick he exposes the monks who had perpetrated the crime.

In addition to illustrating the attitude of the monks, this Narrative acquaints us with another typical charge against the Jews.



Narrative XLI is a discussion between Pope Martin and Fra Pedro an apostate Jew. Pedro is unable to understand the tolerance of the pope towards the Jews, and in the ensuing debate two Jewish emissaries, Samuel Abrabilia and Shaloma Halevi, are included. They interpret the statement of Simon ben Jochai ("The best among the goyim deserve to be slain"--Yerushalmi Kiddushin IV,66c), and also Jeremiah 50:12. Pedro demands that books which contain the verses should be burnt. The pope does not consent and pleads with the Jews that they should seek the goodwill of the nations, not to appear superior. Another statement of Simon ben Jochai is interpreted ("You are called Adom, but the other nations are not called Adom"--Baba Metzia 114b). One of the reasons why Jews weep is that their own kind (Pedro) betray them, and Jews prefer hell to paradise with him (page 82). In an ensuing discussion about Jewish practices, the pope accuses Pedro of being at heart a Jew and tells him that his cloth saves him from the pyre. Then the pope questions the delegates about their mission. They tell him they have come to request an adjustment of the judges' ruling concerning usury and the forstalling of the impending destruction of a synagogue next to which a church had been built. Both requests are denied by the pope. At the end of the narrative Verga bemoans the lack of wise leadership among the Jews, and advises delegates to be careful of their words and actions in the presence of non-Jewish officials. Their manner and their speech--which are reflections of their home life--do considerable harm.

Here we see the familiar picture of the apostate Jew who betrays his people. Even a tolerant pope is attacked by this traitor. Mention is made of the Jews' steadfast adherence to their religion, and also the superior attitude which has brought them sorrow. We note, moreover, the hardships which evolve out of the practice of usury, and

Verga's statement  
N. surely he could not have meant that Jer. he burned being a part of Bible as accepted by Christianity. He meant the passage in Salmond that applies this verse to non-Jews.

See Bec. 589 top. 589 top. 589 top.

more significant the enmity between sister religions. Solomon's words of advice again reflect his knowledge of his people.

Narrative XLIV serves as an introduction to the subsequent reports of the catastrophes which befell the Jews of Spain beginning with the year 1391, and the fate of the 1492 refugees. Somewhat as in Narrative XIV, the author reports that the queen's confessor influences her to beseech the king to forcibly convert the Jews. The king decrees conversion or expulsion. Through bribes to the queen the decree was not enforced. Subsequently, the confessor is accused of courting the queen and is hanged.

In this report we see again the unfriendly priest, also the characteristic alternatives of baptism or death offered to the Jews. We are given, too, a frequently used method of circumventing the enforcement of decrees. The picture of an avaricious queen is not imagination, but a real feature of medieval life.

Pages 108-110 is an account of a disputation between Alfonso of Portugal and Joseph ibn Jachya. The king reprimands Joseph for not warning his people about stealing. That they steal is evidenced by their clothes and the finery of their women. After this opening the king proceeds to question Joseph about the powers of Jesus, the eternality of the Torah, the efficacy of non-Jewish prayers (particularly about the supposed powers of Jews to cause rainfall), the number of angels, and the cause for the severe punishment of sorcerers.

Again we meet with the recurrent theme that luxuries are responsible for popular hatred. Luxuries which the masses regard as begotten by theft; an allusion to the wealth derived through usury.

Pages 115-122 begins with a dream of the king. Alfonse would like to have it interpreted, but no satisfactory version is presented.

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Jew

The elder Benveniste is summoned to interpret the dream, but he explains that the power of the Jews in this respect has been destroyed by their exile. The exile dulls wisdom and diminishes the size of the heart. A mob rushes into the garden and accuses the Jews of defiling a chalice carried in a procession. Expulsion threatens the Jews, but the king's son intercedes and cites other false accusations. An investigation proves that the chalice was accidentally defiled by a Christian lad. After this the question "Why Jews are hated?" is discussed, and the hatred is attributed to their exclusiveness and their persistent attachment to Judaism. When messengers report that repercussions of the chalice accusation are echoing in the land, the final link in the chain of incidents, now recognized as foretold in the dream, appeared. After being inscribed in the chronicles, which had a preface of eighteen striking incidents, a discussion concerning the stubbornness and the wisdom of the Jews follows. To illustrate the native intelligence of the Jews, a tailor, weaver, and shoe-maker are questioned. Their answers cause the king to marvel at the knowledge of ordinary Jews.

This time in the form of an interpreted dream we meet with familiar themes. False accusations, causes for hatred, and the wisdom and stubbornness of Jews are discussed once more. Noteworthy, too, is the fact that we again meet with the characters found in Narrative VII.

## VI. EVALUATION

From our discussion of the narratives in the previous chapter we can no longer doubt the purposive character of the accounts. They illuminate the fate of the Diaspora Jews. Disputations, persecutions, false accusations, the terrors of torture, vindictive priests, traitorous apostates, the venality of rulers, and forcible conversion--all vital factors in the life of medieval Jewry, particularly in Spain--have served the author as material for his investigations and conclusions. As an intimate part of this environment, Verga suffered with the rest of his co-religionists and sought for an explanation of Jewry's plight. Two specific causes are advanced by him as the responsible factors: (1) Divine punishment; and (2) Hatred on the part of the non-Jews. The sins of the fathers brought about Divine punishment, a punishment which is all the more severe because of the peculiar relationship existing between God and Israel. For her sins Israel was exiled from Palestine. Hatred, generated out of religious differences, envy of Jewish wealth, steadfastness to their faith, Jewish arrogance and pretensions, and their ostentatious display of finery, are the more immediate causes for the miserable condition of Jewry. Like powerful, hidden currents, these two causes flow throughout the Narratives, giving rise to the troubled experiences of Diaspora Jewry. Indexed in their course are the catastrophes that have rendered Israel, a bleeding, suffering and helpless remnant among the hostile nations of the world.

Supported by the above discoveries, it is not a difficult or artificial task to present an outline of the contents of the book, an outline which will demonstrate conclusively the unity, the coherence, the

purposiveness, and the single authorship of the book, especially the numbered narratives which undoubtedly constituted the original draft.

Beginning, in the first narrative, with a dramatic account of the fall of Jerusalem--which sealed Israel's exile--our author then proceeds to illuminate the destiny of exiled Jewry. Narrative II reports an ancient persecution which is followed by accounts of compulsory conversion. In V we are introduced to the blood-libel, after which we plunge into the stories of the Shepherds' massacres. Then follows the highly important and instructive seventh Narrative which supplies the keys to the entire work. Here are discussed the causes responsible for Israel's exile and the subsequent fate of Spanish Jewry. The ritual murder charge is investigated and traced to popular hatred, which is illustrated by the insertion of a ritual murder court procedure. Amplified considerably by discussions, the account closes with an enumeration of the factors responsible for the dispersion.

Narrative VIII is a continuation of the ritual murder theme, and its causes, which is followed by a report concerning forcible conversion. An historical report in Narrative X is presented next, because it illumines the attitude of non-Jews towards Jews. After the presentation of typical experiences in XI and XII we are introduced to the fanatical priest, and in XIV we meet with Sancho--the prototype of venal and hateful feminine authorities. Following the insertion of a typical persecution and a fanciful rendition of the ritual murder theme, we find in Narrative XVII a more detailed discussion of the ritual murder theme and also comments on the unreliability of confessions derived through torture. With the exception of XIX, which brings us the familiar picture of the vindictive priest, narratives XVIII, XX-XXV have as their subject the expulsion of the Jews from France and England. Then follow XXVI which treats of the poisoned

water accusation, XXVII and XXVIII--accounts of persecutions--and XXIX, which is another angle of the ritual murder theme. After the report of the Almohadan persecution there are appended the accounts of the pseudo-messiahs, types that are injurious to Jewish welfare. Narrative XXXII also contains a discussion that pleads for religious tolerance. The next accounts report about persecutions in various localities, interrupted by the insertion of a story about Judah ibn Verga. Incidentally, this account in XXXVIII acquaints us with another typical false accusation lodged against the Jews. In Narrative XL the more or less authentic report of the Tortosa disputation is presented to familiarize us with the character and the importance of this frequent phase of Jewish experience. Narrative XLI acquaints us with the treacherous apostate Jew who, though still a Jew at heart, berates a pope because of his tolerance. Further, this traitor advises the destruction of scriptural and talmudical works. The fruitless efforts of a Jewish embassy move the author to add some words of censure and caution.

Then, as a relief from the morbid and tragic tone of the previous accounts, and also as a vivid contrast to the sorrowful plight of Israel, Narrative XLII depicts a colorful picture of the glory and power of the exilarchate. This, too, has ceased to flourish, for it excited the envy of the non-Jews, and as a consequence the blood of a Nasi had been spilled. After a short report concerning the accusation that the Jews aided the lepers in poisoning wells, we are introduced to the subject which is the general topic of the remaining accounts. Narrative XLIV is the first of the reports that deal with the destiny of Spanish Jewry. In Narratives XLV-XLIX we read of the genesis of the calamity, accounts concerning the episodes of 1391. Narrative L serves as an introduction to

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the sufferings endured by those exiled from Spain in 1492, which are illustrated by the reports of LII-LX. (Narrative LI is an insertion by Joseph ibn Verga and has evidently replaced a report that was in substance similar to LII, namely, an account of an experience suffered by refugees from Spain. Consequently, we are of the opinion that the report found on page 110, line 25 through page 111, line 2 is, if not the entire replaced account, at least, a fragment of it. This fragment by its contents and its present awkward position substantiates our opinion. We also believe that the disputation found on page 108, line 13 through page 110, line 24 is not in its proper position and should belong between Narratives LIX and LX. Our reasons for this change of position are as follows: (1) It is characteristic of our author to insert a disputation whose points are illuminated by subsequent reports (see VII and VIII). (2) The setting for the debate is the court of Portugal, and both LIX and LX have Lisbon for their locale. (3) Narrative LX has two unmistakable references to the contents of the debate. The discussion opens with a reprimand to Joseph for not warning his people against theft, and in Narrative LX Maserinias the Jewish tax-farmer is a contributive factor in the causes responsible for the massacre. Further, in the debate, the rain-making power of the Jews is discussed, and in LX one of the things attributed to the Marranos is the prevalent drought. And (4) Narrative LXI has a definite relationship to the first question discussed in the debate. The topic discussed in the first question is the resurrective powers of Jesus, and in Narrative LXI we have a report of the resurrective power of the cabbalist Solomon Halevi. We might add that the reference to the cabbalist in LXI in all probability suggested the report narrated in LXII.)

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Continuing with our outline, our author presents in Narrative LXIII reasons which he believes are responsible for the catastrophes that have overwhelmed Jewry. They are due to (1) the sins of our ancestor; (2) religious hatred and the tendency to unify all people under one religion; (3) the crucifixion of Christ; (4) the three causes for extreme jealousy: religion, women and money; (5) the tendency towards false swearing among Jews; and (6) the arrogance and querulousness of Jews. After the listing of the above causes a description of the Temple and its ritual forms the contents of LXIV. This narrative was the original conclusion of the book and its position reflects the skill of the author. An ending more effective than this picture of Israel's former glory could not have been found for a book beginning with the fall of Jerusalem and treating of Israel's subsequent unhappy experiences. Appended to this original conclusion are pages 108-110 which we have placed in the original composition, pages 111-115 (upper half) which have been added by Joseph ibn Verga, and pages 115-126 which were added by Solomon ibn Verga.

Unquestionably, "Schevet Yehuda" reflects a decided coherence, a deliberate plan of construction, the definite treatment of one large subject under which is subsumed a subject more intimate with the author. All these indications point to one conclusion--the single authorship of the book. A writer who was not concerned with merely inventing legends or permitting his imagination to run riot, but a writer who was vitally interested in the manifold problems, and who suffered from the oppressive conditions of his age. Together with the hosts of his co-religionists, Solomon witnessed the terrors of his day, experienced the awful fate of the Spanish refugees, and suffered the countless miseries endured by the once flourishing Castillian Jewry. Buffeted by these cruel storms,

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agonized and tortured by the stricken plight of his people, Solomon refused to be overwhelmed. Beaten and bruised, but not crushed, our author rose above the ruins and sought for the meaning and the answers to this great tragedy. It was then that he turned to Israel's past and traced its destiny up and through his own time, interpreting and embellishing it in the light of his own experiences and investigations.

Gifted with a penetrating insight, a rare understanding, and a healthy sense of evaluation--qualities so unusual in one who had suffered so much--Solomon organized and enriched old and current reports, recorded typical experiences, examined contemporaneous conditions, and invented detailed discussions in which fictitious characters express his discoveries, his criticisms, his reactions, and his conclusions concerning the pressing questions of his day. Living in a world where two sister religions could not dwell peaceably together (page 83), Solomon discovered that Jewry was like a bird bitten, crushed underfoot, and torn to pieces by an odious vulture (page 82), a vulture that personified the persecutions which rendered Israel so terrified that even a small Christian child could make adult Jews flee in panic (page 9). Persecutions that were the bloody expressions of popular hatred, whose fires were kept glowing by bigoted, venal and corrupt queens (XLIV), by fanatical monks (XIII, LX), and by despicable apostates whom even the Christians scorn and suspect (page 53), and because of whom the Jew prefers hell, rather than dwell with them in paradise (page 82). And were the masses not goaded on by these enemies, their hatred would be kept smoldering, by the Jews themselves, for they love to display their silk clothes and affect the airs of aristocracy (page 11). These characteristics of Jewish behavior spring from their wealth acquired by usury and interest (page 11),

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a wealth so vast that the entire fortune of Spain is in their coffers, and consequently the masses, suffering under economic restraint, blame their plight upon the Jews, who even prevent the peasants from plowing by taking their oxen for interest (page 13). In their idleness the masses plot vengeance and accuse the Jews of poisoning wells (XXVI, XLIII), of defiling a chalice (page 118), of extracting a child's heart (LXI), and of committing numerous ritual murders (VII, VIII, XVII, XII). But these calumnies are all false; even the accusers do not believe them; they prefer these libels merely to despoil the Jews (page 25). And when an unfortunate Jew is accused, his co-religionists hasten to save him (page 11), but often a "Confession" has been forced from his lips by the bone-crushing instruments of torture (XVII). A charge preferred against one Jew is a signal to declare all Jews guilty (VIII, XVII). On no occasion could a Jew consider himself secure from harm, for an innocent game serves as an opportunity for a massacre (XV). Such venomous hatred could only be expressed by the boorish and ignorant masses, for intelligent and cultured peoples hold the Jews in high regard (page 11, XLIV). But despite the efforts of the people, monks, apostates, and even rulers to destroy Jewry, it is not God's will that Israel should be destroyed but that she should be humbled by her misfortunes (XLI). Those who conspire to destroy Israel completely are punished by God who causes them to meet defeat in battle (III), to lose consciousness when they enforce sentence upon an innocent Jew (XVII), to meet an ignominious end by execution (X), to die suddenly (page 126), and it is God who brings drought, famine, and pestilence upon the nations (XXVI, XLIII, IX).

Under the frightful pressure of persecutions, expulsions and compulsory baptism many Jews were brought into the bosom of the church,

but change of faith does not allay hate and suspicion; it makes them despise the Christian, frees them from taxes, and gives them greater latitude (page 97). And it is foolish to believe that the outer cloak of the Church can effectively conceal the Judaism that unperishingly lives in their souls (page 17). Even the apostate is at heart a Jew(XLI). Moreover, an imposed religion, despite the supposition that it prepares the Jew for admission to paradise (IX), is never embraced whole-heartedly, it makes the "Converts" resort to trickery so that they can be faithful to the religion of their souls (pages 96-97). When will the Christians realize the mockery and the hollowness of it all? Would that they would seek their own salvation and cease to molest the unhappy Jew (page 57)!

However, Solomon is aware of his people's faults, their love of ostentatiousness and luxury (page 27), their querulousness and their pride, for even on the Eve of Atonement they quarrel about seating arrangements in the synagogue (page 95). This characteristic of divisiveness will eventually annihilate them (page 21). Their manners and their actions leave much to be desired (page 95), and their business methods are not always strictly honest (pages 24, 108). But many good qualities offset their faults, and Solomon enumerates their weaknesses only to save them from further harm (page 108). Yet, whatever the Jews do, they are suspected of ulterior motives. When they practice fencing, it is believed that they are preparing for murder (VIII). Their refusal to eat pork is based upon the thought that pork stimulates their already inordinate sex appetite (page 16). When they would indicate love for their adopted country by appending a Spanish name, they are rebuked (page 54), and despite the fact that Jews are human and subject to all the torments and ills of flesh and blood, they are treated like dogs (page 10).

Poignantly, dramatically and powerfully Solomon discussed the

gripping problems of his day, analyzed the plight of his fellow-suffers, and incorporated his discoveries in "Schevet Yehuda". Its tremendous value is demonstrated not only because it sheds warm and clear light upon one of the greatest catastrophes of Israel's history, but also because it presents many of the questions that persist even unto our day. Richly deserving a lofty position among the literary products of Israel, "Schevet Yehuda" is a remarkable book composed by an unusual man.

And all along you ignore the heading of Solomon that the structure of the book was a chronicle of persecutions found at the end of a work composed by Judah ibn Verga.

VII. DIGESTS OF THE NARRATIVES

## NARRATIVE I

The author claims to have taken this narrative from the "Chronicles of the Kings of Aragon". Rome has prepared an army to advance upon Jerusalem. On the way, one of the Roman leaders, Antonius, hears of the bewidowing of beautiful Queen Cleopatra of Egypt. He goes to her and succeeds in marrying her. To do so he was forced to divorce his first wife, a sister of the Roman Emperor. Rome is incensed because of his perfidy. Another Roman army is sent to destroy Antonius and Cleopatra, who was a friend of the Jews. The second army wreaks its vengeance upon the two and then advances against Jerusalem. But the Jews fight so desperately and courageously that only after a vicious struggle are they temporarily quelled. Within a year, however, the Jews rebel, and they are finally annihilated by a tremendous Roman army. The casualties are enormous, and the royalty are captured; but they succumb in a short while.

## NARRATIVE II

An account of a persecution that occurred during the time of Ben Sira or, as known among the Christians, Josephus ben Sirach. He is the author of Ecclesiasticus.

## NARRATIVE III

Taken from the "Chronicles of the Kings of Persia". The Persians begin to dislike the formerly highly esteemed Jews. The king, intimidated by his subjects, forces the Jews to convert through the instruments of imprisonment and torture. Immediately following this tragedy, Persia is conquered by the Moslems. The Moslem ruler permits the Jews to practice their religion.

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## NARRATIVE IV

*See above*  
*N. 22*  
 In the year 1111 the king decrees conversion under penalty of death and confiscation of property. He is adamant and refuses to listen to the arguments of the Jews. Even the influence of non-Jews is of no avail. As a consequence, many Jews are forced to forsake Judaism. However, after a month the king dies and his son succeeds him. The new king assures the Jews that they may safely return to their religion. Many do so, but some few remain converts because they fear treachery.

## NARRATIVE V

*Moond*  
*Thir*  
*in Muhammadan Granada*  
 Joseph Halevi is accused of blood libel. He and 1,500 prominent Jewish families of Granada are slain. The tragedy occurred on the 9th of Tebet. Abraham Halevi is hanged because he would not forsake Judaism.

## NARRATIVE VI

The narrator mentions that there are many conflicting accounts with reference to the "Shepherds' Uprising". The narrative, as he presents it, is taken and translated by him into the Hebrew from the "Chronicles of the Spanish Kings". A dove that changed into a young virgin appeared to a youth and charged him to arouse the shepherds to wage war against the Moslems. As a sign of his selection, a cross and the words of his mission were inscribed upon his arm. Despite conflicting testimonies, people acknowledged him as a holy person. All the shepherds rallied around him. Thirty thousand strong, they advanced to Granada. On the way it was suggested that the Jews be despoiled, that the proper war equipment could be obtained. This suggestion was adopted when their anger was aroused by a Jewish tailor. He scoffed at their plans, thereby forfeiting his life. Because "one man sinned, wrath was visited upon all the Jewish

people." Others say that the incentive for the shepherds' fury was due to a dispute between a shepherd and a Jew. The latter was killed because his arguments were irrefutable. Massacres ensued, but in their distress the Jews appealed to the French king and the Pope who are helpless. There was continued slaughter. The priests encouraged the atrocities by claiming that a miracle was performed when some captive shepherds were freed; the priests were the liberators. No one was able to help the Jews, although the Seneschal of Toulouse attempted to do so. The Jews were betrayed by a treacherous guard. The King of Aragon opposed the shepherds. His son Alfonso defeated them and had their leader killed. The shepherd's morale was broken; many were killed by the sword, the remainder perishing through a plague. All Jewry united in providing for their destitute brethren.

#### NARRATIVE VII

A disputation between the excellent Spanish King Alfonso and the learned Thomas. The king is perturbed--a certain bishop is exciting the people by claiming that the Jews cannot celebrate Passover without the blood of a Christian. Although the accusation seems ridiculous, the king wishes to be informed about that matter. Further, he wished to learn the causes responsible for the decline of the Jews. The king is puzzled--he does not believe it is due to divine punishment since other idolatrous and blasphemous nations have prospered. Nor does he consider it due to natural causes, which he lists as four: (1) ignorance of warfare, (2) lack of strength and courage, (3) poverty, and (4) lack of large armies.

Thomas begins his answers by stating that God does not desire the loss of any living species--even that of a fly. Continuing, he clears the Jews of the blood accusation by stating that such a deed is foreign to their cowardly natures.

The king is angered because of Thomas' implication of ignorance, and impresses upon Thomas that the discussion is for the edification of the public. He asks Thomas if the Jews consider a Christian killed by a Jew as belonging to the category of Man. He bases his question on the statement that an Israelite is not liable when his ox kills the ox of a non-Israelite.

Thomas, quoting the argument of a certain Abravanel, refutes the king's implication that a Jew is guiltless when he kills a Christian. The king is pleased with Thomas' answer, but more so with the words of the quoted Abravanel. The question arises: Why are the Jews hated?

Thomas replies that only the masses hate the Jews. The intelligent man does not hate them. The masses hate them out of envy, a feeling for which the Jews are responsible because they now dress richly and aspire to nobility. Though they had entered as poor exiles, they had now become wealthy through their practice of usury. Another reason for hatred against the Jews, so says the king, is due to the anti-social attitude of the Jews reflected in their refusal to eat and drink with non-Jews. Thomas asserts that this dietetic rigorousness is due to the Talmudists. Story of the Jewish physician who refuted the accusation that Jews regard non-Jews as unclean by drinking the water in which the king had bathed his feet.

The king asks Thomas what measures he should use to protect the Jews. He answers that the Jews should be forced to restore estates gained through usury; Jews should be forbidden to wear silk clothes; and they should be distinguished by the wearing of a red badge. These measures are considered commendable by the king, who further asks if usury is sanctioned by the Bible. Thomas replies that because of their greed the Jews have interpreted the Bible to meet with their desires.



At this point informers appear and declare that Jews had killed a Christian for his blood. The king to restrain his anger refers them to Thomas who repeats to them his discussion with the king. After scolding the informers, Thomas tells of the measures promulgated for the Jews. (Thomas takes it for granted that the king will issue them.) The people are grateful, though they want the Jews expelled. The king rejoices when he hears that the accusation is false. He assures Thomas of a large heavenly reward, but Thomas prefers a reward in this world. The king agrees to reward him on the condition that Abravanel be presented at court. In the ensuing discussion Thomas asserts that Abravanel is of royal extraction, and qualifies his statements by a survey of the history of the Jewish dispersion. Marveling at Thomas' Jewish erudition, the king opines that perhaps Thomas is a Jew. Thomas is offended. The king discusses the purity of Jewish genealogy. Thomas is helplessly exasperated.

The king wishes to know why the later statutes and commandments were not given to Christians. Thomas is vengeful and insults the king who dubs Thomas a fool. Thomas quotes a discussion wherein Abravanel said: Jews were given laws because of their superior station in the scale of creation. To which Thomas replied: Christian were not given commandments because of their excellence and perfection. The king likes Thomas' arguments.

The debate is resumed the next day. Thomas compares Jews to the erring soldier whom the king punishes with banishment. The king observes that Jews remain Jews despite seeming conversion. Due to the firmness of their minds' grasp of the giving of their religion, this image cannot be supplanted. Arguments by analogy: Jews received their religion in fire, so they must be converted in fire. In respect to that statement Joseph Beneviste and Solomon b. Jaisch are quoted. Thomas mentions some

improbable things that the Jews believe, such as the story about Habbakuk. The king adds a few more, but justifies adherence to these by saying that they strengthen conviction.

The debate reverts to the original question: Causes that were responsible for the downfall of the Jews. The king is puzzled by two things: Where did Solomon get all his wealth; and how did the great Jewish population become decimated? To the first, Thomas answers: from Ophir and also by the inheritance attained through robbery. The king is angered at the accusation that David was a thief. Thomas answers the second question by saying that the Jews were decimated by wars and pestilence. The Jews were the individuals responsible for bringing pestilence to the world. The king angrily disputes the latter libel and exposes Thomas as a hater of the Jews.

Thomas ascribes as the natural causes for the downfall of the Jews their greatness and their haughtiness. These two characteristics are responsible for their internal disruption. Nicholas de Lyra is quoted with reference to the Jews quarreling on the Sabbath. The king is pleased with the explanation, though Nicholas is compared to an ordinary thief.

The king asks why the Jews observe Saturday, the Christians Sunday, and the Moslems Friday. Because Moses believed it was fitting to honor the day upon which God rested from His labor; Jesus believed it was fitting to observe the day upon which Creation was instituted; and the Prophet believed it was fitting to observe the day upon which the Creation was finished.

Thomas continues his dissertation on the downfall of the Jews. He cites the conduct of Solomon's son towards his subjects. Story of the king who was angered at the Jews, and who was advised to settle all the Jews in one city--which was devoid of non-Jews--and that in a short while the Jews would kill each other because of their disagreements. Thomas

lists ten incidents seemingly historical to support his contentions that by internal troubles, wars, famines, and desecration the Jews were decimated, impoverished and humbled. The rise of the sect of Samaritans is presented as another cause for internal trouble and much slaughter. Story of the younger brother who disgraced his older brother the high priest. Detected, the younger brother flees to Alexandria where he builds a temple and officiated there as high priest. Again the king marvels at Thomas' knowledge of Jewish data. Thomas explains that the Jews were not successful in battle because God used to fight for them, and consequently when He was displeased with them the Jews were unable to defend themselves because they were unfamiliar with military tactics. Furthermore, the Jews knew nothing of military machines. The king disagrees with the latter statement and relates some stories to prove that Jews were familiar with war machines. Josephus is quoted. The king wishes to know why God drove out the Jews from the Temple. Thomas replies that exile was their punishment for bringing strange gods into the Temple. The Jews were sent into strange lands to worship strange gods, or strange stars. The number 70 is based on the 7 stars whose circuit takes 70 years. Why is their punishment prolonged since the Jews no longer worship strange gods?--the king asks. Because the Jews perform those things which God hates and despises, even though they do not omit one prayer. They are also denied a Messiah. Thomas compares the destruction of the Temple to the death of Christ--destroyed by those for whose salvation it was intended. The king considers Thomas' argument as peculiar. He believes that the Temple was destroyed so that no strangers should worship therein. The king concludes the debate with a prayer, thanking God because the Jews are guiltless.

*You should have translated the history of this account*

## NARRATIVE VIII

In the fourth year of Alfonso of Spain a blood accusation was raised against the Jews. A corpse was thrown into the home of a Jew by Christians. A massacre of Jews took place on the first night of Passover. Fugitives fasted throughout the festival. This occurred in Ecija and was repeated in Palma. The Jews of Palma sent messengers to the larger cities, who in turn sent ambassadors, Abraham Beneviste, Joseph the Prince, and Rabbi Samuel b. Schoschan, to the king's court. The accusers also appeared before the king. The king greets the accusers coldly and tells them to return the next day. The Jewish messengers appear on the following morning, and the king is pleased with their spokesman, Joseph the Prince. The king asks Joseph six questions with reference to usury which the Jews practice, to their wearing of silken clothing, to their public appearances on festive occasions, to their belief in the uncleanness of Christians, to the teaching of songs to their young, and to the teaching of the sword and spear.

The messengers answer that they were forced to practice usury (analogy of mice); they deny the charge of dressing in silk. In answer to the charge that women are dressing in silk and finery, the messengers state that the royal decree did not prohibit finery to women. With reference to assemblies they answer that it is in accordance with divine decree. They do not refer to the uncleanness question, and justify the teaching of song and the like because their young are affected by their environment. The king is pleased and tells them to return the following morning. The next morning the ritual murder charge is investigated. The king disapproves of torture as a method of verification. Tells of the incident of the stolen cups. The king proves that money is the mightiest incentive

in life. Story of the lad who informed against his master because of money. His master Juan de la Vera plots against the Jew because of money. When called to court his accomplices and he are found guilty and are given capital punishment; the Jew is vindicated. The people are silenced.

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#### NARRATIVE IX

In the year 800 King ~~Speshibuk~~ of Rome issued a decree commanding the Jews of Spain to accept baptism instead of circumcision. Christians advise the Jews to do so in order that the king should not deprive them of all their religious practices, since the king was an extremely stubborn man. Jews explain to the Christians that circumcision is the root of their faith. If that is prohibited then everything is nil. The Jews plead before the king, who is unyielding. He gives them a month to accept complete conversion or be put to death. The Jews distribute money among influential nobles; Roberto and an unnamed Jewish scholar debate with the king, who remains adamant. The leaders are imprisoned, most of Spanish Jewry is converted, and upon the king's death they flee to distant lands to practice their religion.

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#### NARRATIVE X

In the days of Don Juan who was the royal regent--since King Alfonso was too young--Joseph b. Ephraim was the most powerful official in Spain. Joseph was a man of excellent qualities and was highly respected by all. A servant of his, Gonzales Martin, became his arch-enemy through envy. Gonzales conceives of a plan to fill the treasury so that the king may go to war. He receives the king's approval, and Gonzales seizes Joseph, the physician Samuel Wakar and eight prominent Jews,

together with their families and properties. Joseph dies in prison, and the king is outraged. He frees Joseph's family. Samuel also dies a miserable death in prison. He was an extremely capable man, and his statements are preserved in the "Chronicles of the Castilian Kings". Gonzales is elevated to a high position by the king and wants to kill all the Jews. He plans to begin with the court-Jews first. His plot against the court-scribe Moses Abadriel and Samuel b. Jaisch fails. The king recognizes Gonzales as an enemy of the Jews. The Moslems invade Castille and Gonzales suggests that the wealth of the Jews be seized and that they be driven out. He substantiates his suggestions with arguments. The king is silent, but others rebuke and reject Gonzales' suggestions. Bishop Don Gil exposes Gonzales as one who wishes to destroy the Jews, and this indicates hatred for the king. The custom in Castille was to honor Jews who are worthy people. Moses the scribe informs the Jews of Gonzales' plans, and they are terrified. Meanwhile, to prevent the Moslems from landing, the king appoints Gonzales over the army. A heavy defeat is inflicted on the invaders; their leader Abumelech is killed. Gonzales rejoices and believes the king will now heed his advice. But God is zealous for his people and turns the heart of the king against Gonzales. The king attempts to seize him, but Gonzales escapes to a fortress. His brothers and his wealth are seized. Finally Gonzales is brought to justice, and executed by burning. A prayer follows expressing gratitude to God--a song of triumph. The chronicles are read to the king, recalling the deeds of Gonzales. His property, his brothers and their property are sold to the Jews of the court. The king's seal ring which he had given to Gonzales is now given to Moses the scribe.

## NARRATIVE XI

In the year 5250 (1489) decrees were issued against the Jews in the now Italian provinces. The narrator cannot find sources or causes. Also in Florence many forsook Judaism. Even when they were driven out, they were despoiled. Many were killed in Sardinia. In Provence they remained secret Jews. Jewish women when questioned about the Sabbath lights explained that this custom was one they had observed their mothers perform. (Statement of Joseph b. Verga: He heard from the physician Moses Hamon that in Egypt Moslems closed their stores on Sabbath because their fathers had done so.) In the same year and in those provinces where the Jews were persecuted a great pestilence attacked the Christians; but the Marranos were untouched. The Christians then permitted the Anussim to leave. Many did go, others remaining because they feared a trap. These later suffered at the hands of the Inquisitors, until a king finally abolished the Inquisition.

## NARRATIVE XII

During the reign of King Manuel the son of Alfonso there occurred the following incident in Ocnia. A Christian kills the son of a woman he hates and casts the body into the window of his Jewish neighbor. The Jew had gone away and his wife discovered the body. Terrified she resorts to a plan which will shield her from guilt. The officers enter and search her house, while she pretends to be pregnant and is awaiting delivery. She had hidden the dead child under her skirt. After their fruitless search the woman wails and claims that she has given birth to a still-born and at night the body is buried. The wife of the killer informs upon him and the matter is cleared up. The Jewess is praised for her ingenuity, and the cleverness of Jews is discussed at court. A translation of the

"Chronicles of the Roman Kings" is read upon that point. This partial translation purports to be the words of a Jewish ambassador at the court of Rome. Rome is the emissary of God, the instrument of His punishment. The Judeans want peace, but the tribunals are corrupting and oppressing the people. Rome should give them a just governor so that peaceful relations may be maintained. Manuel is struck by the cleverness of the Jew.

### NARRATIVE XIII

The bulk of this narrative consists of a disputation between a priest and King Don Manuel. The priest had prepared a sermon about Jews, and had invited the Jews to come and hear it. Fearing that it would be directed against them, the Jews had sought out the king and prevailed upon him to hear the priest. The priest opened his sermon with the words, "What are we going to do about these good-for-nothing people, the Jews?", and immediately the king arose and walked away, enraged. But the priest followed him, overtook him, and pleaded with him to hear him out to the end. The king was somewhat softened and engaged the priest in the following disputation:

The priest said that the Jews were evil, that this fact pleased him. If the Jews had not sinned in the eyes of God, they would now be rulers of the world. For their sins God had abandoned them; he had allowed Nature to have its way with them.

The king answered that this could not be true. If God had indeed abandoned the Jews to the laws of Nature, they would have to pass through a certain cycle ordained for things in Nature; they would have to fall and rise. But the Jews had fallen without always rising. And why have they not always risen? Because God has not abandoned them; He



is still their taskmaster, and in accordance with Scriptures (Deut. 31,17-18) still burdens them, and will continue to burden them in many ways.

The king's argument silences the priest.

#### NARRATIVE XIV

This narrative begins with a disputation between a Pope and his sister Sancha, wife of Robert of Naples, who demands that he banish the Jews. She says that all Jews except those who have embraced Christianity are unclean, and have been unclean ever since the Crucifixion. She maintains that by banishing them the Pope will be performing a Christ-like duty, for Christ would wish it, and he will be rewarded by being admitted into Paradise.

The Pope derides what Sancha says as merely woman's prattle, then adds that those who attack the Jews attack the apple of God's eye. They are not unclean, he argues; it is wrong to consider them unclean because they have been denied the baptism of the Church: the truth is that they have a baptism peculiar to themselves--circumcision. And he points out that this form of baptism is superior to the other in that it requires the shedding of blood.

This argument nonplusses Sancha, but she is still determined to have the Jews banished. So after a time she brings some bishops before the king who testify that Jews have been scoffing at the holy procession around the cross. Thereupon the Pope orders the Jews out of the country.

The Jews now seek out a friendly ruler, King Robert of Naples, to intercede for them. Various gifts and amounts of money are sent to Sancha and the bishops, but to no avail. Finally King Robert sends messengers to Sancha with a promise of 100,000 gulden, if she will

*Floris*

have the Pope revoke the decree of banishment. Sancha goes to the Pope and asks for the revocation. He grants it after pointing out that her feelings about the Jews have been softened by the 100,000 gulden.

#### NARRATIVE XV

Here we read how in the town of Monzon, during the Feast of Passover, some Gentiles saw a group of Jews playing blindman's buff. They went to the town officials and told them that they had heard the Jews hailing the "blindman" as Jesus Christ, in order to mock Him. Fearing a pogrom, the officials cautioned the informers to carry their tale to the king before seeking revenge. But this warning was not heeded. All the Jews were butchered except one small boy, and the babes in arms were baptized. The surviving boy told some Jews visiting Monzon what had happened, and they took him to their village with the Gentiles in pursuit. The Jews escaped with the boy, but when they got to their village they found that news of the Monzon pogrom had preceded them. They saved themselves by paying heavy bribes.

#### NARRATIVE XVI

Aided by the Spanish king's advisor, some Christians bring a murder charge against a Jew. The king summons Jews and discusses a passage in Psalms 121:4. The charge is cleared up because the king had witnessed the act. The Christians had cast the body upon the Jew's premises. The king is also "one who does not sleep nor slumber."

#### NARRATIVE XVII

The situation in this narrative reveals itself with two men telling the French king that on the eve of the Feast of Passover they had seen a Jew seize a Christian and drag him into his house. The king is

skeptical of this story of human sacrifice. He knows how often such stories against the Jews have been proved false, and he dismisses the informers with the warning that the next tale-bearer will be decapitated. This enrages the informers, who procure a large number of people to swear that they had seen the Christian go into the Jew's house but not emerge. They also procure two citizens who testify that during a visit to the Jew's house they saw him holding a bloody knife. The Jew, summoned before the king, explains that he had used the knife to slaughter fowl for the Feast. The king's courtiers object that one does not kill fowl inside one's house, and at their suggestion the king orders the Jew to be put on the rack. Now fifty other Jews are named as having been involved in the human sacrifice and the king has them all arrested. The Jews plead that they would not be so foolish as to put themselves and their families and their property in peril with such an act. And even if this one Jew is guilty does it follow that all the members of his race are? Is it right to condemn a race for the action of one of its members? At this the king asks his courtiers what the Chronicles have to say on this point, and when the courtiers answer that the Chronicles say what the Jews have said he has them all released. He does not, however, release the first Jew. But he is still uneasy, and so he asks a foreign visitor at his court, an Arabian prince, which is done in his country in such a case. The Arab answers that his king pays no attention to charges of human sacrifice against the Jews, that they have no basis either in religion or in reason. The king's courtiers retort that while the Jews may have no grievance against the Mohammedans they certainly have one against Christians and Christ, that by sacrificing a Christian they feel they are revenging themselves upon Jesus. To this the Arab answers, in effect, "Why should they kill one man in order to revenge themselves on another?" It is more reasonable

that Christ should revenge Himself on the Jews than that they should revenge themselves on Him. (He mentions in passing that according to his own religion the Jews did not kill Christ, but that He went to heaven living.) Now the courtiers try to turn the Arab's own words against him. He says that Jesus should revenge Himself on the Jews. Well, hasn't He done so? Why do they live in exile now, if Christ has not been avenging Himself? The Arab replies, in effect, "Well, knowing that their exile is Christ's or God's revenge, would the Jews dare to retaliate? Folly! And if God is revenging Himself, why should you presume to wreak further revenge?" He adds that he is not a lover of Jews, that he holds it against them that they have mistreated certain prophets, but the king has asked him for his views in this case, and he is determined to tell the truth.

Several days after this disputation two new informers appeared and said that they had eavesdropped on a gathering of Jews at the house where the Christian's body had been found. They testified that they had heard the incarcerated Jew say that if he were caught he would take care not to incriminate the others. They testified further that the other Jews had said that they were rich and would soon buy his release.

Now the king turns to the Arab and asks him what he makes of the testimony of the new informers. The Arab dismisses it. If the Jews were guilty, they would have guarded against speaking loudly enough to be overheard.

The next turn in the case is that the people are impressed by the Arab's analysis and there is a demand by them that he be allowed to show the way to a just settlement of the case. But the king is unmoved by this: his heart hardens; he orders all the Jews to be placed in barrels which are to be closed with nails and rolled to the market-place. Now one of the king's courtiers points out that if this action is to be

legal the king himself must initiate it; he must be the first to roll a barrel to the market-place. The king agrees. A barrel with a Jew in it is brought before him and he starts it on its way; but then he faints. Upon reviving, he orders all the Jews removed from the barrels--God has made him faint in order to make him see the injustice of the punishment meted out to the Jews. The king has himself conveyed back to the palace in a wagon and there he asks the Jews to pray for him, which they do.

The narrative ends with the production of witnesses who testify to having seen certain Christians throw the body into the Jew's house. The king decrees that the guilty ones shall have their hands and feet cut off.

#### NARRATIVE XVIII

The locale of this narrative is London, England, and this time the charge against the Jews is not that they have been using human sacrifices but that they are guilty of clipping coins. Upon investigating the charge, the king finds it is the Jews' accusers who are the real coin-clippers. But though he puts no faith in the witnesses produced to testify that they have seen Jews clipping coins, he orders the Jews banished anyway, so that they may not all be slaughtered in the threatened pogrom. The year of this occurrence is 5020. *AM. = 1270 CE*

#### NARRATIVE XIX

This narrative is dated like XVIII and deals with the vindictiveness of an Italian priest in the town of Trani. In order to incite hatred against the Jews, of whom it was steadily being demanded that they embrace Christianity, this priest stuck a cross in some excrement at a Jew's house, and then announced that he had dreamed of seeing a cross buried in Jewish excrement. Soon afterwards the cross was found where the priest had buried it, and the town rose against the Jews. The

town officials undertook to rescue them but seeing that it was impossible, urged them to permit themselves to be baptized. A majority of the Jews complied; the rest went to Naples, where they encountered further persecution. Some of them embraced Christianity; some fled to another land.

#### NARRATIVE XX

The narrator finds the cause of the expulsion of the Jews from France in the "Chronicles of the Germans". A monk belonging to the "predicadores" and who was the confessor of the queen wooed a Jewish maid and even accepted circumcision and Judaism in order to marry her. His cleric brothers and the queen were incensed, and wanted vengeance against the Jews. The queen pleads with the king, but to no avail. She enlists the support of the courtiers who are not enthusiastic. After intensive arguments the king is finally persuaded, and the Jews are cruelly driven out. Those who were responsible for the circumcision of the monk were burnt.

#### NARRATIVE XXI

In 5046 (1286) Philip came to the throne--presumably France. With great cruelty he drove out the Jews. Levi b. Gershom is mentioned. He wrote a commentary fifteen years after the expulsion. The entire community of Toulouse was converted.

#### NARRATIVE XXII

In 5014 (1254) there was an expulsion, probably in France.

#### NARRATIVE XXIII

Fifty years later--after the Jews had bought the privilege of returning--the new French king decreed conversion or death within three months. Abugardan Delcadin pleads in vain for the Jews. The king is

*This  
expulsion  
in 1306*

*See above  
p. 25*

determined.

#### NARRATIVE XXIV

In 1295 King Philip the Expeller was killed while hunting as a punishment for his deeds against the Jews. His son, benefitting by the punishment of his father, invited the Jews to return, assuring them of protection. There was divided opinion among the exiled Jews who realized that their greatest enemy were the common folk. But their love for their homeland triumphed and they returned. Those who were despoiled on the way were provided for by the king.

#### NARRATIVE XXV

Seven years later expulsion once again, though not as severe as the former ones. Despite protection many were robbed.

#### NARRATIVE XXVI

*See above p. 26* <sup>1349</sup> In 1400 a severe plague swept Germany, France, Provence, and Castille. Christians complain about Jews poisoning the waters of the river. The king is skeptical of their charge and dismisses them. But the scoffing of a Jew reintensifies the Christians' purpose, and through false witnesses the king is convinced. He decrees expulsion, but the people want conversion or death. The nobles abet the people, and the decree is passed--there is much suffering, but many German Jews remained faithful.

#### NARRATIVE XXVII

In 1390 in most of Spain Jews were persecuted. Many were killed because of their adherence to Judaism, and some were converted. But these Marranos were ever attempting to leave the lands, so that they return and practice their faith. Those who went to Arabian lands fared miserably, yet those who remained fared miserably also. Their sufferings

seem to be a fulfillment of the verse in Lev. 26:28.

*Completed by hand*  
NARRATIVE XXVIII

*booths near the shore (of Constantinople)*  
The narrator retells what he has heard from the older people. The king of Greece punishes the Jews for not converting, by making them dwell in the open field without food or water for three days. Moved to pity he redecrees that the Jews cannot live in Constantinople but in Pera. Also they can work in only one trade--skins--for which they must make boats. Some chroniclers say the latter decree refers to another time.

*some of them*  
NARRATIVE XXIX

In the time of Alfonse the Elder some Christians bring an accusation against a Jew. A judge investigates, finds nothing and berates the accusers. The matter is referred to the king. He listens coldly to the accusers. On the second day false witnesses are introduced concerning the disappearance of Pedro Gussman. The Jew is tortured and confesses to his murder. Just as he was sentenced to be burnt a bishop arrives who exonerates the Jew. The king realizes the ineffectiveness of torture and utters a prayer of thanks.

*See above 1147*  
NARRATIVE XXX

*W. 26*  
Persecutions in 1146 in the land of the Berbers and in the East. The king wanted to convert Jews to Mohammedanism. At this time Maimonides fled to Zoan (Cairo) Egypt, where he became physician to the Sultan and was the greatest scholar. While there he wrote his "Iggeres Teman".

*read West*  
NARRATIVE XXXI

*See above W. 26-27*  
In 1139 great suffering was brought upon the Jews in Persia by a false messiah, David Eldavid of Amadia. His pretensions were viewed



by the king as threatening the kingdom. (A poll-tax was exacted yearly from the Jews.) David studied under the Exilarch Chasdai and in the college at Bagdad. He was well versed, especially in sorcery. David assembles the Jews at Mount Chafthan and is acclaimed Messiah. In fear the Persian king invites David to his court to prove his claims. Fearlessly David accepts the invitation and announces himself as the Messiah sent by God to free Israel. The king puts David to the test of escaping from prison, which he does. The king sends after him, but the pursuers return baffled. Near the river he was heard but not seen. The king then hastens after David who performs a miracle and passes over the river. The pursuers cross over but cannot overtake him because he journeys in one day the distance of ten days. The king sends messengers to the Exilarch demanding David on penalty of severe punishment. A messenger is sent to Emir Almuadin also. The exilarchs gathers and send messengers to David to desist because of the grave danger that he puts upon the Jews. If not, he was to be solemnly excommunicated. The prince Zakai of Ashur and the astronomer Joseph Borhun Alphulach also send letters to David. But David sneers and scoffs. The Turkish king, Said Aldin, a vassal of the Persian king, was a friend of the Jews and knew the father-in-law of David. The father-in-law is persuaded to kill David because of a love for money and a desire to save his people. David is killed by him and his head is sent to the Persian king. The king's answer against David's followers is appeased with gold.

Maimonides wrote that the Sultan asked David if he were the Messiah and he answered, "Yes." The proof of a Messiah is to have his head cut off, and then return to life. The Sultan experimented--David died, a death much more preferable than one by torture. Some fools believe he will return.

Solomon b. Verga found presumably in the works of Maimonides

2 It is in his speech

mention of other false messiahs. One rose on the other side of the river, became cured from leprosy; another in Fez, in Cordova, and in France. All brought trouble upon Israel. Another in the days of R. Solomon b. Adret.

#### NARRATIVE XXXII

In Persia a Jew proclaims himself the Messiah. The king warns the Jews to do away with him. The false messiah is adamant to their pleas--he claims he has come to aid the Jews. The testimonial for his messianic claims is his success. The messiah wants the Persian king to defray expenses incurred in war. The Jews tell the king that this false messiah is insane. The king, however, agrees to pay the expenses. The messiah gets the money and departs. The king retrieves the money by demanding the sum from the Jews--which proved an immense hardship upon them--many had to sell their children. To recompense himself for his humiliation, the king decrees that Jews must go barefoot and wear half-length trousers.

Joseph b. Verga quotes Moses Hamn. The king decreed in addition that Jews should individually bear a piece of wood suspended from their necks. Naturally Jews refrained from public appearance, since they were subject to annoyance.

Conversation between King Don Pedro the Elder and Nicholas of Valencia. Nicholas asks the king why not war against the Jews, since he is planning a war on infidels. Jews hate Christians and are not allowed to greet them. The king is skeptical, calls in a Jew, Ephraim b. Sancha; the king remarks upon Jew's name. He is asked which is the better religion. The Jew asks for three days' grace. His reply: My neighbor left two precious stones for his two children. Now the two children want to know the difference and the value of the stones. Answer: only the father--an expert in stones--can tell. The king is impressed with his

wisdom. Nicholas is scolded; he insists that all religions should be subversive to Christianity as in the past. The king replies that it was of no benefit. Nicholas attempts to show that Jews refuse to take advice, by quoting a report sent by a general of Titus containing a speech of Josephus the Great. Josephus pleads with the Jews to seek peace with the Romans and save the Temple. (Josephus recalls that the greatest victory is that over the evil impulses--it is useless to wage war if peace is guaranteed. Story of Alexander.) But Jews reply to Josephus with stones and arrows.

The king replies: Let us seek our own salvation instead of concerning ourselves with Jews. He is pleased with the eloquence of the Jews. Nicholas says they learn it from the Bible. Discussion about meter, at which the Levites are especially adept. Speaks about a book brought from Jerusalem to Rome written by Lazzaro Ha Levi dealing with the phenomena of Nature. Long discussion now ensues to satisfy the king's questions about Nature. There are fourteen questions, reflecting medieval notions and concepts of the universe.

Debate between a Christian and a Jew before King Alfonso of Portugal. The Christian tries to prove that on the basis of the Psalms details were foretold concerning the Christ stories. The Jew answers that verses may have various interpretations, but the true interpretation of a verse depends upon its context. Gives the example by a Jew used before the King of Spain--his attitude towards a rooster was foretold by passages in Lamentations. The king commends the Jew for his cleverness. A word in the Psalms is discussed. The Christian says the Jews should believe in Jesus because the Jewish belief in creatio ex nihilo is weird, despite Aristotle's proofs. The Jew refers to identical discussion before King Juan of Aragon--creatio ex nihilo reflects God's omnipotence.

Corporeality impairs His infinitude. The king scolds the Jew and calls him a liar. The king illustrates with fantastic tales from the Talmud. The Jew replies that these tales were effective in directing attention upon more important problems. He explains an allegory. The king is not convinced. Everyone stands upon his own beliefs. The king is tolerant. Christian says Jews are intolerant. Manuscript becomes unreadable.

NARRATIVE XXXIII

Great persecution in Fez--conflicting accounts.

NARRATIVE XXXIV

*Probably during Ahmad  
olipo*

Narrative received this story from a German scholar. In a German city Jews were given three days to convert. Young Jews plot revenge against the Christians, because they had decided to remain within the fold. The Christians are slain and the city is destroyed by fire. The Jews also perish rather than convert.

NARRATIVE XXXV

Narrator received this tale from a French Cabbalist. In Beaudin Jews were burnt to death because they did not convert--time of grace determined by a brand. A Jew beloved by the ruler of the city is offered great advantages if he converts. He refuses but says he may change his mind when he sees the fire. But he does not. Instead he thrusts the ruler into the flames and they both perish.

NARRATIVE XXXVI

In a German city Jews were given three days to convert. They prefer death, and they kill themselves in the synagogue. The king commands that their bodies be cast upon the fields for the dogs. There is a tradition that a mountain builded itself upon them, and thus they were

buried. Narrator prays that such courageous Jews be found always in Israel.

#### NARRATIVE XXVII

A massacre occurred in Granada because the Jewish physician to the king, Isaac Hamon, was the indirect cause. His name proved more effective than that of the Prophet in stopping a fight between two Moslems. An observer noted this apparent degradation and the massacre ensued. From that time on Jewish physicians abstained from riding on horses, dressing in silk, and showing any appearance of royalty or power.

#### NARRATIVE XXXVIII

Narrator writes of a miracle performed by Judah b. Verga of Seville, told to narrator by Abraham b. Amra. In a small town near Seville some monks were refused charity by a Jew. A quarrel ensued and a monk was struck by the Jew. The monks seek vengeance and, hearing that an apostate has been buried in a Christian cemetery, they disinter him and bury him in the Jewish cemetery. The monks accuse the Jews and complain to the Duke. The Jews are in danger and appeal to Judah. The matter is referred to the king. Judah comes and appears before the duke. By a cabbalistic trick he exposes the monks. Most of them are saved from punishment of a severe nature by the people.

#### NARRATIVE XXXIX

In Rome the Jews were given three days to decide upon death or conversion. About 15,000 are converted; some fled to Naples where in a little while they too suffered.

#### NARRATIVE XL

Copy of a letter sent by Abunstruc to the community in Gerona in 1413. Joshua Lorqui, an apostate--Geronimo de Dante Fe--had requested

the Pope to call in the Jews so that Geronimo could prove that the Messiah had already come in the person of Jesus. Proof to be based on the Talmud. Letter follows: Lorqui wishes to prove self a true Christian so he made this arrangement with the Pope. Assures Pope his arguments will convert Jews. Delegates from various communities arrive on the 1st of January--especially from Aragon. Jews elect a spokesman, Don Vidal Benveniste, who knew Latin. They agree that they will not interrupt each other, be polite and not become excited. Delegates are welcomed by the Pope. Jews are afraid to disclose their names because of danger to their communities. Pope assures them of justice. "Some were sad and some were happy as is customary among Jews." Before the ecclesiastical court the debate begins. Pope gives consent to their type of argument, which is the proof from tradition and not syllogistic. Meeting adjourned until the next day. Jews pray that their comparative good fortune will persist. An esoteric sermon is delivered by Zerachya Ha Levi.

Upon resumption of the debate Geronimo quotes the Talmud: <sup>to exist</sup> "World existed for 6,000 years---2,000 chaotic, 2,000 under jurisdiction of the Torah, and 2,000 for the days of the Messiah (San. 97a). Indicates that Jesus has come--harangues for a considerable time until the Pope becomes annoyed. Benveniste replies by asking a question: What are the Messianic conditions--have they been realized in Jesus? Pope remarks upon the Jewish tendency to parry questions with questions. Jews remark that Geronimo's talmudic quotation was incomplete, since it ends thusly: "because of our many sins", proving that the Messiah has not yet come. Geronimo claims that the last part is a rabbinical gloss, because the original statement was made by Elijah who was a true prophet. Zerachya objects to this arbitrary claim about the gloss being inserted. Pope agrees with statements of Zerachya. Geronimo says that he has other proofs

concerning the Messiah from the Talmud. Pope accuses him of arguing in the Jewish manner--evasive, etc. So Geronimo persists in arguing about the gloss. Benveniste attempts to pin down Geronimo to exact time of Messiah's coming--beginning, middle, or end of last 2,000 years. Inference is that it is yet possible for the Messiah to appear. Geronimo claims that the Messiah will be for the entire period; world to be destroyed at end of last 2,000 years. Joseph Albo claims that the 2,000 year period represents the time in which the Messiah may come--and the exact time depends upon the fitness of the Jews. Pope objects to exclusiveness--why does it not depend also on Christians? Unnamed Jew states that Messiah is necessary for those who are in exile--only. Impasse reached and upon appeal to bishops, Geronimo is requested to prove his argument. Impartiality of bishops emphasized.

Fourth day: Geronimo quotes a statement which is near to the first one: Elijah says to Rav Judah: The world will exist for no less than 85 jubilees, and at the last jubilee He will come. Judah asks Elijah: Will it come at the beginning or at the end? To which Elijah replies: I do not know. (San. 97b). Mattathias said this does not prove that Jesus was the Messiah because the number of jubilees does not permit it. So Geronimo says: All I said was that the Messiah had come--not that Jesus was the Messiah. Who then is the Messiah? queries the Jews. Pope warns Jews of the ruse employed by Geronimo to trap the Jews into a dilemma. Mattathias tells Geronimo that the opposite can be proved from the Talmud, quoting "Cursed be those who calculate the end" (San. 97b). Pope wants statement explained. Means what it says: Great harm is to the people who believe in messianic calculations. God has intentionally concealed the date, and it is sinful to try to reveal God's purpose. Pope is angered and reviles Jews for implying that Daniel is to be cursed. Don Todros

incites Pope still more. Asks Pope why he desires that the proof of the Messiah's coming should be derived from the Talmud. Don Vidal tries to smooth the matter over but the Pope insists upon explanation of the verse mentioned previously concerning the curse upon the m'chashve kitzin. Don Vidal tries to explain the word m'chashve as meaning "to calculate", but prophets are not calculators, since the prophet speaks by inspiration. The Pope is satisfied. After adjournment an argument arises among the Jews because they had not observed quiet.

Next day: Jews argue that Geronimo should quote the last of the Amoraim, Rav Ashi, who said: Until that time do not hope for him, after that hope for him (San. 97b). Which proves that at that time the Messiah had not yet come. Geronimo replies that it is the opinion of Ashi who did not believe that the Messiah had already come that Elijah who was a prophet knew the truth. After making Geronimo admit that Ashi was an excellent character, the Jews ask him how could Ashi deny then the statements of Elijah. Either the statement of Elijah is erroneously reported or Ashi interpreted it correctly. Geronimo grants this point but raises the question of the jubilees and insists that he is correct. Albo refutes by saying that the number of jubilees mentioned was the minimum number. Bishops say that if such is the case then there is no set time for the Messiah. Mattathias says even according to your 2,000 years there is no set time. (Jews note that their comments are being recorded and, fearful lest their statements be changed by the scribes and used as evidence against them, they decide to be silent as much as possible and only one should speak, so that if the Pope does not like his answer they can claim that they differ.)

Next day: Geronimo starts with legend that on the day the Temple was destroyed the Messiah was born--based on Isaiah 10:34, 11:1.

*Agenda (why not give the source?)*



Through this Geronimo proves that the Messiah was born on that day. Astruc answers that this has already been discussed between Nachmanides and Pablo Christiani. Pablo tries to prove that the Jews should be termed the Canaanites and the Christians should be called Jews, because the Jews has taken over the Canaanitish customs. Nachmanides argues that the Christians had not taken over the real Jewish truths which only temporarily have been withheld from the Jews by God. Disputation held before King Don Pedro the Elder. Pablo silenced by Nachmanides' answer. Pope says this should have been the answer: Our Savior has promised us salvation of our souls. We do not need those Jewish truths. Question of the Messiah's birth resumed. Don Vidal said legend does not mean that Messiah was actually born, though it is possible that he is born but living in the Garden of Eden. Maimonides is quoted as saying that the Messiah was not born on that day but that in every generation there is a man born who may be the Messiah if the Jews would repent. Pope is angered--does not care for words of expounders, commentators, and particularly for the point that the coming of the Messiah depends upon the regeneration of the Jews. Messiah should only be born at the time when Jews deserve him. Jews reply that Messiah has to be mature--a one-year old child cannot lead--Moses was 80, and even he needed helpers. Pope replies that there were more than 600,000 Jews at that time. Jews say that in their present status they need more leadership. Pope agrees with the point that Jews need leadership in a slurring fashion. Disputation now takes the form of grammatical quibblings about the tenses of yolad.

Next day grammatical discussion continues and Geronimo, having made a blunder is nonplussed and attempts to correct his error. Jew now have the advantage and bribe influential people to speak to dignitaries who in turn should make Geronimo desist. But Pope insists Geronimo prove

what he started out to prove. Pope asks Jews how it is possible for the Messiah to be living 1400 years (in Eden). Jews counter with the ages of Adam, Enoch, Methusaleh, and others. Pope says analogues are not answers. Astruc says that just as certain miraculous things about your Messiah are believed in, permit us to believe in ours. Pope is enraged. Jews say that Astruc's statement is not theirs and plead with Pope for mercy. Astruc is excoriated by fellows for losing their advantage--occurred on Sabbath before Purim.

Next morning Pope agreeably surprises Jews by being pleasant. Geronimo sets out to prove that the Messiah has been revealed--if the Jews admit he was born. Jews deny admitting Messiah was born, but say that the author of the statement possibly believed so. Geronimo proves on the basis of Targum translation of Isaiah 66:7 that Messiah has appeared, but the delegates say that the Targum is not properly interpreted by the author who bases his belief upon the Targumic statement. (Samuel is supposed to be the author.) The Jews state belief: When someone will collect the Jews, build the Temple, and all the nations will come up to the mountain of the Lord and call unto the Lord, that one will be called the Messiah. Jews refer to Targum statement quoted by Geronimo which says that Temple will be built in time of Messiah. So they ask where is the Temple that was supposed to be built in Jesus' time. Geronimo is stumped, and the disputation is adjourned until 15th of February.

Upon resumption Pope insists that Jews have deceived the audience by saying that nolad has a double tense (future and past); Jesus was born 3671 and Temple was destroyed 3828--id est--Jesus born 150 years previous. (Nolad has only one tense--was born--past.) Don Vidal said that a Talmudist cannot change the simple--pashat--meaning of the text; and the verses mentioned have nothing to do with the Saviour. Geronimo now tries

to prove his point from Scriptures--Genesis 49:10--the sceptre will not depart from Judah--and the Jews do not have rulers now so that implies that the Messiah has already come. Targum translates last part of verse, until the Messiah will come. Jews quote Ibn Ezra with reference to the Genesis verse: word "depart" means a ruler will not be absent permanently. And when the Messiah comes the sceptre will return permanently--this the Jews prove by reference to the punctuation marks. Geronimo says Torah not given with punctuation marks. Don Vidal accuses him of accepting things that are suitable only for his argument and proceeds to strengthen his own argument by interpreting Gen. 28:15--I will not leave you until I accomplish--meaning that God will not leave the Jews permanently. Geronimo answers with a statement of Moses the Preacher quoted by Rashi that the staff of Judah refers to the Sanhedrin. The Jews reject the statement because Moses was a Sermonist and not a Talmudist.

End of written report. Narrator heard that the Jews were dismissed with great honor.

#### NARRATIVE XLI

In the time of Pope Marco Florentine Fra Pedro an apostate Jew asks him if a sensible and holy man should love one who hates and is hated by God. In the ensuing discussion it develops that Pedro implies that the Pope loves the Jews, because he allows them to live and prosper in the land. The Pope indicates that Jews should be lauded because, despite suffering of exile, they persist in their faith to God; furthermore, they are in turn loved by God because their enemies' plots are frustrated. Pedro say that enemies were not successful because they heeded the words of the Saviour who forbade harm to the Jews. Pope asks about time before the birth of Christ and places where he is unknown; where Jews have been

dispersed. And in these places the Jews persisted despite plots--he mentions the Haman story. Pedro says that Haman was frustrated because of his amour. Pope scolds Pedro. Pedro admits that the Jews cannot be annihilated because of God's promise. Yet God will trouble them because He hates them. Pope says that these visitations are no proof of divine hatred. Nature is composed of the four simple elements and there is constant struggle for supremacy and assimilation among them--similarly with nations--thus the Pope indicates a natural basis for the difficulties of the Jews. Pedro queries; difficulties due to sin. Pope admits that both are causes--but suffering is expiated for sin which promises future peace. Pedro does not understand why Pope tolerates Jews who curse and revile Christian in their adages and sayings--Jer. 50:12, "Your mother shall be sore ashamed, she that bore you shall be confounded...." Also "The best among the Goyim deserves to be slain." Pope invites two Jewish emissaries who had just arrived to interpret the Jeremiah passage, since he had never heard it interpreted. Jews were Don Samuel Abrabalia and Sholoma Ha Levi. Don Shaloma says with reference to "the best among Goyim...." that it is not a command but a statement of the principle current among Gentiles to execute justice upon the murderer while according to some Jewish authorities murderers should not be punished, because the slayer is merely an instrument. Pope says that murderer as an instrument is a fallacious argument which could never save a murderer at a trial. Sholoma says that being freed by an earthly court is merely a postponement of divine justice. Pope says that earthly courts are necessary because they instil fear into the people. Pedro quotes the next part of the saying which is "the best of the butchers is a partner of Amalek". The parallelism would point to the fact that the first part of the verse has a deprecating implication with reference to Christians. Ha Levi refutes by interpreting it as meaning

that a butcher must be as cruel as Amalek was to the Jews in order to slay animals. Referring to the next part, "The best of the doctors to Gehinnom", Ha Levi interprets it as meaning to caution physicians in their prescriptions. Pope wishes interpretation of the Jeremiah passage. Sholoma says it means that even the righteous among the Goyim have a share in the next world--as stated by Maimonides. Also quotes the scholar who presented arguments before the King of the Khazars--no one is denied reward for their good deeds. (Pedro continues attack on Jews, but Pope says the fact of Jews being persecuted is no proof of divine hatred, because God chose for sacrifices only such animals that are pursued, doves, pigeons, etc. and not eagles or hawks.) Pedro demands that books in which quoted verses are printed be burnt. Pope does not consent--dramatically shows its impossibility. Pedro leaves. Pope pleads with Jews that they should seek the good will of the nations--uses illustration of the bending reed which survives the storm (used in another narrative). Pope says he will grant their superiority, if it can be evidenced. Sholoma says Jews are not superior--but are in exile from Palestine just as Adam was from Eden. Pope quotes Arabs and say that Talmudists flattered Jews by calling them Adom. Accuses Jews of being stubborn, tricky, killed Zechariah in the Temple, which is a haven, and pleads with them to be humble, for he is powerless to protect them from the mob. He shows by illustration that Jews are enfeebled. Pope asks Jews why they weep--because it is a relief. Jews say that their own kind--Pedro--betrays them. Pedro reappears and warns them to accept Christianity. Jews prefer Hell to companionship of Pedro in Heaven. Pedro is angered and Pope tells him such is his reward for unsolicited advice. Pope questions Pedro as to meaning of the Jewish statement: Only Jews are Adom. Pedro says that it is but one of the many irrational things

characteristic of the Talmudists. Examples: The lighting of a candle by the dead so that the soul if it wishes may find its way to return; tearing grass and throwing ashes on the head so that the angel of death will be driven away; dead can hear until buried; and the story about Jonathan who by his intensive studies created such a hot atmosphere that flying birds were burnt. Refutations of Jewish interpretations follow: An early custom based on magic--it was believe that corpse's enemy could torture him by putting a candle on the floor of his house, so candles were not lit. The second custom was performed to comfort the mourners, because the grass is the symbol of the resurrection and also a symbol of man's frailty and ephemerality. As to the third, the soul does ascend to heaven until the body is buried--hence the soul is still living until the body is buried. For the fourth, burnt birds symbolize wrong ideas which are crushed by his scholarship. Pope commends the Jews. Accuses Pedro of being at heart a Jew, and would burn him if he were not protected by his priesthood. Dismissed by Pope forever. (Now Pope questions messengers as to their mission.) They tell him that the judges have ruled that interest be returned--to do this Jews would be forced to sell their children. Pope compromises--approximately half is to be paid; but Pope is doubtful about the truthfulness of their oaths with respect to time. Messengers ask second request: synagogue and church next to each other, the synagogue was the older building. The queen was amused at their proximity and was informed that they had remained peaceful neighbors for years. But now the judge wants the synagogue to be razed. Pope concurs with judge because Jews slander Jesus. Jews say that if queen so wishes it they will raze it. Pope angered and orders that synagogue be torn down and interest be repaid. (Both requests denied).

Solomon advises that messengers should be cautious in speech

and recognize that they are speaking to non-Jewish officials. Verga be-  
 means the lack of wise Jewish leadership, since the true leader has for-  
 saken the Jews. If Jews treated their own judges and scholars in a bet-  
 ter fashion, they would be much better prepared to meet with officials  
 in the outside world. One acts according to his home habits. It is worth-  
 while to daily practice righteousness and care in speech so that one is  
 prepared for times of necessity. This is the meaning of the saying: Act  
 as a man where there are no men. Jews should pray for God's guidance--  
 especially with messengers. Refers to prayer in Rosh Hashanah and Yom  
 Kippur liturgy, "Be with the mouths of the messengers of Your people".

#### NARRATIVE XLIII

*See  
 internal  
 p. 21*

Narrative deals with Exilarchate and causes for its discontin-  
 uance. (To indicate past glory of Israel.) Found in responsa of the early  
 Gaonim. When an exilarch was to be ordained all the officials of the Jew-  
 ish communities and the heads of the Academies would gather at Babylon.  
 The two Gaonim of Pumbedetha and Sura would sit on the left and right of  
 the exilarch. Advice would be proffered by the Gaon of Sura to the exi-  
 larch with respect to haughtiness--a servant and not a ruler of the people.  
 On Thursday they would assemble at the synagogue, where Semicha was given  
 by the heads of the academies. The shofar was blown, and he was blessed  
 and greeted with expressions for long life. Then he was escorted home,  
 exhorted to deal righteously, and gifts were sent to him. On Saturday the  
 exilarch prepared a feast for officials; a special place was built for him  
 in the synagogue. On Saturday he was escorted to the Synagogue in the  
 morning, he preceding. The service was read responsively by the chazan  
 and the gaonim. The ceremony was performed before the reading of the  
 Torah around the platform of the exilarch. He delivered the sermon. At

the Kaddish a special insertion was recited concerning the life of the exilarch. He prays for all the different groups, for the government, and for the salvation of Israel. The last is said silently so as not to indicate that salvation depends on the overthrow of the government. After the services a feast is held at the home of the exilarch, and there is a special insertion in the grace after meals. The exilarch does not leave his home except to appear before the king, whom he would visit with great pomp. After an elaborate ceremony he is seated in the presence of the king, and after a period of silence the business is attended to.

Due to the envy of the Babylonians and princes, who plotted and killed an exilarch, the Jews decided to abolish the exilarchate which was of the house of David. Certificates were given to descendants to signify their descent from the House of David; but they had no official authority.

#### NARRATIVE XLIII

In June 1321 a great plague swept the land. The Christians accused the Jews of conniving with lepers who cast poison they received from the Jews into the water. The king without any investigation imprisoned the Jews for nine months. He realized his foolishness, and claimed that he imprisoned them so that they would convert. Despite the rack and death by fire, they refused. Fifteen thousand innocents perished.

#### NARRATIVE XLIV

In Spain the confessor to the queen influences her to beseech the king to force the Jews to conversion penalty of death. The king decrees conversion or expulsion. The Jews appeal to their friend a noble at the court. This prince plays upon the queen's love for money. Martin de Lucena the apostate also aids. The confessor is accused of courting the



queen and is hanged. The custom in Spain was to nullify a decree when the instigator is killed. There is more than one version of this incident.

#### NARRATIVE XLV

In 1393 there took place the destruction of the community in Barcelona, most of Gerona, and Catalonia. The cause is unknown.

#### NARRATIVE XLVI

*This refers to Pope Benedict living in Avignon*  
In 1412 there was great sorrow in Israel. A fanatical pope was in Rome to whom the queen of Spain was devoted. 16,000 were converted and many died rather than convert.

#### NARRATIVE XLVII

*Catalina the queen mother*  
In 1391 in Spain Jews were converted and some were burnt. All Jews in Spain lived in constant fear. The remnant of Israel was in danger of complete destruction.

#### NARRATIVE XLVIII

*really in 1391*  
Shem Tob b. Shem Tob's letter 37 is the source of the account. In the days of King Enrico--1390--Jews suffered intensely. Great communities like Seville were completely converted. The account is so horrible that the narrator is forced to omit the greater portion of it.

#### NARRATIVE XLIX

*Letter 1412*  
King Juan son of Enrico issued edicts against those Jews who remained after the persecutions. The disabilities were: (1) no public business, (2) no merchandising of food to Christians--they feared poison, (3) not permitted to be blood-letters or doctors except to the king, (4) not allowed to purchase land, (5) must wear Jewish badge on penalty of death. Many other decrees were issued, all with the intent of crushing

Judaism. Taken from above source. Narrator asserts that the numerous hardships of Israel are impossible of enumeration and repetition. Jews of Germany have written a volume of their woes. God is just. We have rebelled, and when our sins are expiated then we shall be released from our burdens.

#### NARRATIVE L

Solomon b. Verga said he had intended to write about the expulsions from Castille and Portugal and of the decrees of Fra Vincent, but Judah Abravanel had already written them in his commentary. He will tell of a few incidents that were omitted. The exiles from Castille were robbed, sold by shipmasters into slavery, many on the pretence that they were ill were cast into the sea--so that the shipmaster could take their valuables; those who travelled by land were oppressed by plagues and blows....Toledo's plight was palliated by Samuel the Prince, a relative of the Vergas, and of the house of David--discussed in Solomon's "Rod of His Wrath". In Toledo there was Samuel b. Shushan who yearly supplied the oil for the academies in Egypt and Jerusalem.

#### NARRATIVE LI

Joseph inserts an excerpt from Isaac Abravanel's commentary on Kings pertaining to the expulsion from Castille. The year is 1492. After the King of Spain had captured Granada, baptism or expulsion was decreed within a period of three months. Abravanel was at the court at the time and pleaded three times with the king, and had courtiers intercede, but the king was adamant and was abetted by the queen. The decree was pronounced and great suffering ensued, 300,000 being exiled. Every type of misfortune was visited upon the fugitives.

## NARRATIVE LII

This tale is attributed to some old folks who came from Spain. A pestilent-laden ship bearing fugitive Jews when nearing an uninhabited spot cast the Jews ashore. Much misery arose and the survivors decided to walk to a place where the people dwelt. Among the survivors was a Jewish family. The mother, two sons died, but the father would not permit these overwhelming calamities to destroy his faith, even though all heaven conspired against him. After covering his dead with earth and grass, he caught up with the others.

## NARRATIVE LIII

Calamities befell those who fled to Fez, especially hunger. They were not allowed to enter the city since they would cause an advance in the price of foods. They made tents in the fields, and even grass failed them as food because there was a drought--many died in the fields--there was no strength in the survivors to bury them. On the Sabbath they would graze with their mouths so as not to violate the Sabbath. An Arab raped a Jewess in her parents' presence. He returned later and killed her because she might bear a child who would become a Jew. A mother killed her starving son and then herself.

## NARRATIVE LIV

After the famine was over in Fez the king order all Jewish children returned to their parents who had sold them to procure food.

## NARRATIVE LV

Anchored near Fez was a ship whose captain enticed 150 Jewish lads who were hungry upon his ship. Then he set sail and either sold them or gave them away as presents. Their distressed mothers hurled themselves

into the sea.

#### NARRATIVE LVI

Refugees from Spain emaciated by hunger and pestilence came to Italy, where a famine raged. They came to Genoa where many Jewish lads converted themselves to get bread. The Christians walked the streets with bread in one hand and the cross of Jesus in the other. Thus many were converted.

#### NARRATIVE LVII

Driven by famine many Jews left Genoa for Rome. The selfish Jews of Rome bribed the Pope to refuse them admittance. The Pope was astonished at their cruelty and proceeded to expel them. A further bribe stayed the decree and the poor refugees were admitted.

#### NARRATIVE LVIII

The captain of a ship bearing Spanish refugees decided to kill them to obtain their possessions. Disputation--a merchant and the captain discuss the reason--the captain claims he is doing it to avenge the blood of Jesus. The merchant replies Jesus has already forgiven the shedding of his blood in order to save humankind, and advises the captain to place the refugees upon a deserted island. Naked and hungry they were cast upon the island. They moved about only at night because of their shame. After three days some climb a cliff in order to find a habitation and meet with lions who devour one--the rest jump off the cliff. Those who remained below ran into the sea to protect themselves. After five days of this horrible life a boat spied them. The captain rescued them, gave them food, clothing, and passage to a Jewish community. The Jews expected to be held for ransom but the captain merely wanted the expenses incurred. The Jews

were grateful and prayed for him throughout their lives.

#### NARRATIVE LIX

The worst phase of the Lisbon episode was the deportation of Jewish boys to the Lost Islands. One woman threw herself in front of the king hoping that the youngest of her seven sons would be spared; but to no avail. Cf. Hannah and her 7 sons in the Maccabean tales. Possible cause for these horrors was the fact that Spanish refugees failed to pay the promised sum to the king for permission to enter. Many of the boys died because of change in diet and climate; one boy unknowingly married his sister; another returned to the mainland and married his mother.

#### NARRATIVE LX

Narrator away from Lisbon at the time of the massacres. He met with several versions on his return--all agreed as to its gruesomeness. He retells the account of an old man: On Passover eve some Marranos were discovered at Seder and imprisoned. Hunger and drought was in the land--the people blamed it upon the Jews. The priests--predicadores--preach against Jews and make a device, a hollow cross with a glass front and within it a candle--to tell people that fire would come forth from it. The people regard it as a miracle. Innocently a Marrano suggests that a miracle of water would be more appropriate--this is regarded as scoffing and the mob kills him. His brother is also killed and the priests incite the mob to kill Jews, promising the murderers a reward in the next world. 3,000 are killed and their corpses burnt. Pregnant women are hurled out of windows upon spears. Others say the Christians were infuriated because of Mascrinias, a Jewish tax farmer, who was haughty and severe. As soon as the mob found him the massacre ceased--proof. The judges and leaders

of Lisbon were helpless against the mob--they had to save themselves. The king was absent during the massacre and was angry on his return. He investigated the matter and wanted to raze the church of the priests who incited the mob. He also wished to punished the people, but he was restrained by his advisers who quoted an old law--a mob of 50 cannot be killed except those who were the actual criminals. Nevertheless he had the priests burnt. Libson, the faithful city, was called for three years the rebellious city.

#### NARRATIVE LXI

Heard in Spain that Jews were accused of the death of a Christian lad found in a Jewish home with his heart torn out. They were accused of taking it for ritual purposes. Don Solomon Ha Levi--a Cabbalist--put's God's name under the tongue of the boy, who revives and names the Christian murderer who had taken out his heart. This is not a written story but hearsay.

#### NARRATIVE LXII

In Seville where Judah ibn Verga lived the inhabitants told the Inquisitors that he could inform them about the Marranos who still practiced Judaism. However he had anticipated the Inquisitors and through the symbolism of doves warned the Marranoes. His warning was unheeded and many were burnt. He fled to Lisbon, was captured and tortured until he died; yet he did not inform.

#### NARRATIVE LXIII

Solomon ibn Verga speaks: Why are not other nations punished who are worse than the Jews? Answer is in one verse (Amos 3:2), "Only you have I known..." Seven additional reasons: (1) the sins of our

ancestors; (2) hatred of religion and desire of ruler to make all subjects practice one religion--brings in the exclusiveness of Jews as reflected in their abstaining from eating and drinking with Christians; (3) killing of Jesus; (4) three powerful jealousies: religion, women, money. All can be applied to the relationship existing between Jews and non-Jews--quotes Meyer of Cosey; (5) false swearing; (6) arrogance and haughtiness--pretensions to power--illustrated by fight in synagogue with fire-brands over priority of seating; (7) missing. Solomon explains that he will present in LXIV a more pleasant picture--that of the Temple.

#### NARRATIVE LXIV

Letter of king to Versorius: Pleads for his return. King wants to know about certain practices of the Jews; whether they pray for the downfall of the kingdom; is the blowing of the Shofar symbolic of the kingdom's downfall? King has heard that Versorius has a letter of Titus' describing the Jerusalem Temple. King would like to build a temple of similar nature to Jesus. Versorius answers that he left the court because the younger people tried to rule and the king did not stop them. With reference to the question about the prayers of the Jews, the Jews are commanded to destroy Amalek and never to forget Amalek's arrogance in attacking refugee Jews from Egypt. With reference to his kingdom, the Jews pray for its welfare three times weekly, and especially on the Eve of Atonement. Is it possible that they have contradictory prayers? With reference to the blowing of the Shofar, it is a symbol of the day of Judgment and commemorates the Exodus. Warns king that he who attempts to destroy the Jew is himself destroyed. He lauds king's proposed idea of conversion, but states that the converted ones are more faithful to their original religion after they are converted. Tells of a Marrano who in church would bemoan

and berate himself for those who believed in the wafer (body of Jesus). Another illustration of the adherence of Marranos to Judaism: no smoke comes forth from their chimneys on Saturdays, even on coldest days. Story of Marrano who used to eat matzoth all year so he could eat them on Passover. Go out into the fields to blow the Shofar. Have a secret Shochet and Mohel. Some even do own circumcising because they cannot trust others. They carry the Torah concealed in a bag of peppers. Baptism cannot change their faith--Judaism is a disease which has no cure. Versorius advises against imitating Solomon in building Temple, because Solomon, wise as he was, could not build it without the help of God. However Versorius sends on the translation of Marcus the Consul describing the Temple buildings. (It was composed because the Romans wished to build a similar one.) Contents of letter: Marcus being a non-Jew was not permitted to enter the Temple beyond the outer court; so his descriptions are based on the descriptions of the priests. Ten sections in the description of the Temple: (1) materials, (2) location, (3) builders, (4) expenses--costs, (5) dimensions, 6) various divisions of the Temple, (7) entrances of the Temple, (8) vessels of the Temple, (9) the personnel, 10) the service--eve of Passover, the paschal lamb; and the service of the high priest in the Holy of Holies on Atonement day.

The paschal sacrifice: On the 1st of Nisan the king sends messengers to all in the environs of Jerusalem that they must all bring their cattle into Jerusalem so that all the pilgrims (who come three times yearly: Pesach, Shavuous, Succoth) will have sufficient cattle for their sacrifices and for food. Those who did not arrive at a specified time would have his possessions confiscated. On the 10th day the pilgrims would buy their animals which were to be sacrificed on the 14th. No laws of



priority are in effect during the day of sacrifice. People would be in festive attire. Levites warn the crowd to prevent crushing. Gates were closed when sufficient numbers had entered. Rows of priests would perform the slaughtering and pass on the blood towards the altar with great speed, accelerated by thirty days' practice. All this would be accompanied by psalms and music rendered by the priests. Priests would be garbed in red so that blood stains would not be noticed.

Temple service on Day of Atonement: 7 days previous seats were prepared at the home of the high priest for the Nasi, the Ab Beth Din, the High Priest, the assistant priest, the king, and 70 chairs for the Sanhedrin. The oldest priest would impress upon the officiating priest the seriousness of his task because all Israel depended upon him. King also admonishes him. Priest conducted to his special chamber by a large procession of priests, royalty and laymen. Prayers at various stages of the procession. (The volume of sound when "Amen" was uttered was sufficient to fell birds.) A greater procession after the service. Great crowd would prevent priest from reaching home; insisted upon kissing his hand, until midnight. Day after atonement, feast given by him celebrating his successful emergence from the Holy of Holies. He would order the following document to be inscribed: I.....the high priest, son of.....the high priest, have served in the Temple in.....year. May God grant that my children serve Him after me.

After reading translation king says Jews deserve to be punished for their sins; and also they deserve glory because these things existed among them.

Solomon Verga says that communities of Spain had sent him to collect ransom for the captives of Malaga; and there in the court of the

king the gentiles wanted to offer up a paschal sacrifice and actually made an altar and went through the service with priests, silverware and singers. King said that the Jews who have seen these things and have lost them, their death is better than their lives. With reference to the service of Atonement and the paschal sacrifice R. Don Manuel has written about them in his book "Reasons for the Commandments", and Solomon quotes him in his book, "Shebet Eyratho".

# PAGE 108

Disputation between Alfonse of Portugal and Joseph ibn Jachya.

King asks him concerning minor questions--he will ask him more difficult questions after the holidays. Reprimands Joseph for not warning his people from stealing from the nations as evidenced by their clothes and the women's finery. Jews have been warned by the Torah not to steal, illustrated by the disposal of the insides of sacrifices--birds' insides must be entirely dispensed with. In answer to the king's query relative to the disposal of the entire bird, he was told that stolen food consumed by the bird has already been converted in the body. King cites laws of Augustus Caesar--no married man is to wear silk and no woman two years after marriage is to wear ornaments--otherwise, implication of theft. Any man who it appears has stolen from someone else shall be exiled for 3 years. King warns Joseph that murder and plunder will be the undoing of the Jews.

Proceeds to questions: (1) Characteristics which Jesus holds in common with God are resurrection and the maintenance of life; therefore he must be God or part of Him. An apostate Jew had told the king that the second blessing of the Amida, Gavuros, in which God is referred to as giving life and resurrecting life has a reference to Jesus. Jesus has restored a person to life, caused rain to fall for the thirsty and bread from

the heavens for the hungry; therefore Jews must believe in him. Answer: But Elijah and Elisha also revived the dead. Would the Christians add a 4th and 5th to the Trinity? In Talmud there are many stories of Jews who caused rain to fall--and even Christian inhabitants of Toledo have often asked Jews to pray for rain. Employer feeds his help by the produce of the fig tree to which he prayed. King says if not a God, then you must believe that Jesus is a prophet because of his miracles. Jachya said Moses was not accepted as a prophet until he split the Red Sea. Jesus will be accepted also if he splits the sea and liberates the Jews. King says according to what Jews did to Jesus he would split the sea to cast them into it. With reference to the prayer it is about God, and the apostate explained it erroneously. Prayer was first recited by Isaac when saved from the altar. (2) Have you logical proof that Torah is eternal, and that as a consequence no new religion could arise afterwards? Reply: If old testament is complete, it would be unfair of God to deprive the later generations; and if the new testament is more complete then why did God be unjust to the earlier generations? But if both are equal, then the last one is superfluous. King says that conditions have changed; therefore the details of the Law had to be changed; not responsible for laws that originated among the Egyptian refugees such as phylacteries and observance of Succoth. Joseph counters by saying that Christians should observe all laws that originated afterwards, independent of the Egyptian refugees; also they should have substitute laws for the original ones. Cures of the body never change--so cures of the soul never change. King does not admit latter argument because physical cures have natural bases but religion depends upon the will. (3) Are prayers by Christians heard by God? To Joseph's affirmative king says the Talmud contradicts your answer: In

times of drought one should pray for rain at the cemetery--but not at the graves of non-Jews, because if they have not saved themselves, how can they help others? Reply: Because of Christian hatred they do not pray for us. (However in Rashi to the Talmud the king's words were substantiated, and he was angered.) (4) Contradiction in Job 25:3 and Daniel 7:10. Job says God's legions are unlimited, and Daniel says they are numbered. Rabbis say that after the exile the number of angels was diminished. If angels are eternal, how can the numbers be lessened? Reply: It is a limitation in our concepts due to the exile. (5) If magic and sorcery have no substance, why are its devotees punished? Reply: Because it results in forsaking God.

*Letter*

PAGE 110 - A MANUSCRIPT FROM FEZ

Tells that the exiles from Spain unable to bear up under the trials of the journey returned to Spain; some stopped where they were. In a group of exiles which had reached Fez there were 200 women, some were agunos (whose husbands' whereabouts were unknown or deserted without divorce), and some were qualified for Levirate marriage. These women built a house in Saleh and worked, eating only bread and water and donating the rest of their income for students.

Joseph cautiously narrates the events that occurred in Messer and Masia. A libel similar to those of which father Solomon wrote occurred. Through torture Jews admit guilt and were hanged. Dr. Jacob Abiob was burnt. After execution the missing Christian appears and the accusation is exposed. Sultan Solomon orders investigation and punishment of accusers. Dr. Moses Hamon risks his life to plead with king that blood-accusations should be tried by king alone. Similarly in Tokat a libel was exposed.

1331 = 1331  
Cairo  
and  
Masia  
Haim Haim

*historical*

*Sulaiman*

Continues with a digested report of a miracle that happened in Egypt. Occurred in the days of Sultan Solomon who had a vast empire. In his first year he returned to merchants money taken by his father. In the third year of his reign he appointed Achmat as governor of Egypt. After a while Achmat rebels and declares himself king. Demands a great sum from the Jews--Purim the day of the demand became a day of mourning. Plot against Achmat's life by his supposed followers. He was killed and the Jewish hostages released. 27th day of Adar called day of miracles.

*Christianity*

So speaks the "poor and pursued" Joseph. Several days after the publication of this little work I found in the possession of R. Shem Tob Sanzolo a manuscript of the events during the kings of Edom. I have digested these incidents considered *proper* to the history of the Jews--pertaining to the Jews. Also translated a Latin story because it contained customs worthy of mention. 4647 Moslems conquer Palestine--counter attack by Christians but Saladin drives them out. 748 Almatzor son of Saladin conquered Jerusalem. 128 Sultan killed and people capture. 130 Instigators killed; Meshullam and Jacob of Parpiganan died. 132 Elziar captured R. Abraham ben David. 133 Elziar exiled to Carcassone. 139 Pope has conclave of the bishops of France and Spain. Jews in trepidation. However Jews were not endangered. 146 Zerachya died. 152 ship sank--on board were several scholars. 135 Ruler of Rimon (Granada) dies. In Beaucaire many Jews slaughtered. 127 Almamtunir, the Moslem, pillaged Castille, Toledo... The Jews of Toledo fight against him. Eli's son dies. 158 ruler of the city plunders Jewish community. 159 King of England returns from siege

*You have done nothing to critically analyze it this!*

of Acco. Almamtunir dies. Abraham bar David dies on a Friday. 165 Ekronites rebel and kill 80 Jews. On a Sabbath, Christmas eve, King of Aragon returns from Rome and Jews meet him with Torah. Maimonides dies in Egypt, buried on the 25th. Egyptians and Jews mourned for 3 days. Special mourning services in Alexandria. Several years later his corpse was taken to Palestine. Legend: on the way robbers wanted to throw casket overboard but it was immovable. Awed, the robbers accompany casket to burial place. Supposed to be buried close to Cave of Machpelah. 169 some villains left France and massacred 20,000 Christians and 200 Jews. 170 Aaron b. Meshulam dies. 171 rabbis of France and England migrate to Jerusalem, about 300. Were well received by Emperor. Build synagogues and schools. Jonathan Ha Cohen among the group. Miracle: rain came in response to their prayers. 172 during Tishri Moslems capture Salvatierra. Jews leave for Toledo on eve of Atonement. Moslem invasions overcome by Christians but Jews are in trouble. 175 Assembly of bishops, priests and nobles in Montpellier before the cardinal. Isaac Benveniste and two representatives of each community present. Louis of France came to Bardisch--walls were razed; Jews endangered--given protection by Montfrat. Assembly of Jews from all the area from Narbonne to Marseilles at St. Giles. Convoked by Isaac Benveniste before Nasi R. Levi to decide representatives to be sent to Rome where Pope is considering Jewish measures at a pontifical gathering. 176 law of Jewish badge promulgated--and a special tax to be paid by each family head. Pope who spoke against Jews died suddenly. 177 the wife of Montfrat decrees conversion and baptism for all. Those 6 and under were to be given to priests to be baptised. But the children would not eat Christian food.

*Belhies*

## PAGE 114

Only 157 however were converted. The rest preferred death. First of Ab decree to release them arrived (due to husband). That year Cardinal decreed that Jews must wear a circle on their outer garment. Annulled later. 179. Some despicable individuals (Franciscans) of Anjou, Poitu and Bretagne conspire to convert Jews. But Jews adhere to their faith--over 3,000 killed. 500 converted. An apostate from Montpellier failing to convert Jews receives from Pope order that Jews should wear badge on penalty of death. Mordecai bar Joseph of Avignon and R. Solomon of Sheile from Tarracon are sent to plead with king concerning the badge and are successful in repealing order. Inquisitors successfully accuse Jews of Provence and extort money from them. Badge had to be worn in Marseilles, Agen and Avignon. Mordecai bar Joseph and R. Israel were imprisoned. Badge described: yellow felt, 1 span in width, and 4 fingers' circumference, black crescent in center. In Louirios a Christian woman was bemired and died. Jews accused, arrested and tortured. In the year that the king of France was captured and released by the Moslems he exiled all the Jews from his kingdom. In the year 5,000 Shepherds led by Roviedo attempt to cross sea without a rudder. By leading the nations astray through deception they killed many Jews. Many decrees against Jews in Bonola. That year an attack against community of Lasmadas--Jews killed and despoiled on the feast day of Anjou.

## PAGE 115

The king's dream and the test of the Jews' wisdom. In the 3rd year of Alfonso of Spain he had a dream. Tells it to court: He was tending his sheep when wolves appear and accuse sheep of sinning against them. The wolves demand that shepherd punish the sheep else they will do

so. Shepherd decides to abide by demands of the wolves. Meanwhile a young lion pleads for sheep. Sometime later shepherd notes how wolves carry off sheep. Court gives no satisfactory interpretation. Thomas volunteers. Refers to a class war in which king will side with nobles but king's son will side with commoners. King not quite satisfied and they continue discussion in garden. Thomas explains that interpretations of dreams indigenous to Jews. King summons the elder Beneviste--who explains that exile has deprived Jews of their peculiar insight. King counters with Talmud which is a product of the exile, but Beneviste explains it was due to closer proximity with reference to time and space. Exile with its burdens prevents intensive thinking. Thomas agrees with Jews and gives as illustration the analogy that their former wisdom is similar to taking a light from the Torch (prophecy), and their present wisdom is like the feeble and aimless sparks that arise from the striking of flint. Jews are like the burning torch which is consumed while giving light to others--exile will ultimately destroy. Thomas quotes an Arab tale of an experiment which proved that the exile makes the heart smaller. (Imprisoned one lion and freed the other, operated on both and compared hearts, the imprisoned lion had smaller heart.) King surprised at the courage of Jews at the stake. Thomas explains it as an inherited trait dating back to Abraham's display of courage. King wonders why exile has not humbled Jews--they still persist in wearing free man's clothing. Beneviste replies that it is an attempt to overcome a sense of inferiority indulged in by women and youths, but not by mature individuals.

Mob rushes into king's garden and accuses Jews of throwing the contents of a pot upon a chalice borne in a procession. If true, king will exile Jews. Thomas calls attention of king to the fact that this incident is characteristic of the dream. King's son intercedes for



Jews, citing previous false accusations. Investigation proves that it was an accident performed by a Christian lad who kicked over a vessel of pure water. After this incident king asks court why Jews are hated by Christians. If because of Christ why do Moslems likewise hate Jews? Thomas explains that Jews are hated because of their exclusiveness and persistence to Judaism; and troubles make them all the more adamant--just like the smith pours water upon the flames to make a hotter fire. Messengers report to court that repercussions of the Chalice incident were being expressed. Jews outwit Christian pursuers and 10 pursuers were hanged, others imprisoned. Dream completely fulfilled and inscribed in the Chronicles. Which had a preface of 18 striking incidents. Discussion follows concerning the stubbornness of Jews, and with reference to their wisdom which is claimed to be cunning, three Jews--a tailor, weaver, and shoemaker--are questioned. Questions: (1) nature of God (Joseph Ha Nasi); (2) 500 year journey between earth and heaven; (3) Where does the sun get its heat? (4) Why don't Jews eat fat and blood? (5) Why does one sleep sounder at night? (6) Is the soul immortal? King marvels at knowledge of ordinary Jews.

## PAGE 122

Instructions relative to education of the king's son, as reported in a conversation between king and Jewish tutor. Honesty, seriousness, abstention from drink, proper diet, early rising for prayer. King permits correction of prince. Discussion concerning habits and traits.

## PAGE 123

King Don Enrico has a discussion with Don Enrico Mendoza whom king's father had exiled, because he had advised expulsion for Jews. Discuss (1) unanimous

opinion among three faiths concerning creation; (2) Providence; (3) Does Providence extend over Jews after they have sinned? King invites this hermit and ascetic to stay with him; Insultingly he refuses and meets the same fate that he had meted out to two Jews.

## PAGE 124

Letter of Meshullam of Rome to the communities in Papal dominions and Naples. Two Spanish messengers importune Pope to lead in general expulsion of Jews. Pope demurs. The official next suggests to the Pope that the cause for expulsion is that Jews lead other astray. Discuss the idols of Christianity and the idols of Egypt. After vain arguing bishops and nobles resort to a false accusation against Jews--cross of silver stolen. Pope convinced--decrees are held in readiness--but the second official suddenly dies--and a clerical gathering meets with disaster. These deaths are interpreted by the Pope as omens of disapproval. He investigates--gives death verdict to false accusers and decrees against Jews are not proclaimed. Pope doubts that Jews killed Christ.

## PAGE 127

Prayer found in first edition. By Joseph b. Verga. A recitation of the dire afflictions that beset the Jews--their terrible lot--and the fervent hope for immediate salvation.

NOTESCHAPTER I

1. Ibn Verga, Solomon, Schevet Jehuda (ed. Wiener), Hanover 1855-6, pp. 1, 66, 67, 94; Steinschneider, M., Die Geschichtsliteratur der Juden, Frankfurt a/M 1905, p. 77; Jewish Encyclopedia, New York 1906, vol. VI, art. "Judah Ibn Verga", p. 550; Graetz, H., History of the Jews, Philadelphia 1894, vol. 4, pp. 335-336, 556.
2. Mann, J., Hebrew Union College Class Lectures.
3. Ibid.
4. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 375-9.
5. Ibid., p. 556.
6. Schevet Jehuda, German preface by Wiener, page V.
7. Steinschneider, op. cit., p. 77; Schevet Jehuda, German preface, p. VI.
8. J. E., vol. VI, art. "Judah Ibn Verga", p. 550.
9. Schevet Jehuda, Solomon's preface, p. 1.
10. Solomon's name is mentioned in Schevet Jehuda on pp. 1, 52, 84, 89, 95, 108, 111.
11. Margolis and Marx, History of the Jewish People, Philadelphia 1927, p. 470.
12. Baer, F., Untersuchungen über Quellen und Komposition des Schebet Jehuda, Berlin 1923, p. 78.
13. Ibid., p. 72 ff.
14. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 371.
15. Mann, op. cit.
16. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 486-7.
17. Ibid., p. 488.
18. Mann, op. cit.
19. J. E., art. "Joseph Ibn Verga", vol. VI, p. 550.
20. Schevet Jehuda, p. 111.
21. J. E., art. "Solomon Ibn Verga", vol. VI, p. 550.
22. Schevet Jehuda, German preface, p. VII.

23. Graetz, op. cit., vol. IV, p. 557; Schevet Jehuda, German preface, pp. VI, VII; J. E., art. "Joseph Ibn Verga", op. cit.
24. J. E., art. "Moses Hamon", vol. VI, p. 202.
25. Ibid.
26. Schevet Jehuda, German preface, p. VII.
27. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 557.
28. Schevet Jehuda, German preface, p. VII.
29. Ibid.
30. J. E., art. "Joseph Ibn Verga", vol. VI, p. 550.

## CHAPTER II

1. Schevet Jehuda, German preface, pp. VIII ff. list the various editions.
2. Ibid., p. VII informs us that Solomon wished to allude to his family name Verga when he entitled his work Schevet Yehuda. Verga is the Spanish term for schevet, and both possess the same meaning, rod. For the corrections in the text, see Loeb's article in the Revue des Etudes Juives, vol. 17, pp. 87-93.

## CHAPTER III

1. Baer, op. cit., p. 60.
2. Ibid., pp. 51-56.
3. Ibid., p. 56.
4. Ibid., pp. 58-61.
5. Ibid., p. 37.
6. Ibid., p. 35.
7. Ibid., pp. 12-14.
8. The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, translated and edited by A. Asher (London 1840), vol. 2, pp. 162-165, vol. 1, p. 122 ff.
9. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 162-3.
10. Baer, op. cit., p. 67.
11. Ibid., p. 21.
12. Ibid., pp. 21, 22.

13. Ibid., p. 24,25.
14. Ibid., pp. 26-34.
15. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
16. Ibid., pp. 38-40.
17. Ibid., pp. 40-41.
18. Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums, vol. 68 (1924), pp. 249-251, review by Forges.
19. Ibid., p. 250.
20. Ibid., pp. 249-251.
21. Baer, op. cit., p. 41.
22. Ibid., pp. 42-44.
23. Ibid., pp. 45-46.
24. Monatsschrift, op. cit., p. 252
25. Baer, op. cit., p. 46.
26. Ibid., pp. 47-51.
27. Ibid., p. 72.
28. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 268; Revue des Etudes Juives, vol. 17 (1888), p. 89; Schebet Jehuda d'Ibn Verga, by Isidore Loeb.

#### CHAPTER IV

1. Baer, op. cit., p. 53.
2. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 358-359.
3. Mann; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 277-279.
4. Baer, op. cit., p. 14.
5. Mann, op. cit., Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 55-57.
6. Mann, op. cit., Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 83-86.
7. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 486-488.
8. Baer, op. cit., p. 24; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 61.
9. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 642-643.

10. Ibid., p. 641.
11. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 46-48.
12. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 3, pp. 585-586.
13. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 53-54.
14. Margolis and Marx, op. cit., p. 399.
15. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 100ff.
16. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 166ff.
17. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 358ff.
18. Mann, op. cit.; Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, vol. 2, p. 163.
19. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 3, p. 430ff.; Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, vol. 1, p. 122ff., vol. 2, pp. 63-65; Greenstone, J. H., The Messiah Idea in Jewish History, Philadelphia 1906, pp. 141-3.
20. Mann, op. cit.
21. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 108-9.
22. Ibid., p. 110.
23. J. E., art. "Vienna", vol. 12, p. 428.
24. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 206ff.; J. E., art. "Benedict XIII (Pedro de Luna)", vol. III, p. 6.
25. Monatsschrift, op. cit., p. 252; Baer, op. cit., pp. 45-47.
26. Mann, op. cit.
27. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 219-220; Baer, op. cit., p. 62.
28. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 57-58.
29. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, pp. 57-58.
30. Mann, op. cit.
31. Mann, op. cit.; Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 371.
32. Baer, op. cit., pp. 75-77. For further historical allusions, see p. 77.
33. Mann, op. cit.

CHAPTER V

1. J. E., art. "Monzon", Vol. VIII, pp. 677-8. In this article the report is considered authentic, but it is conjectural. See Baer, op. cit., p. 66.
2. See also Deuteronomy 13:10.
3. Revue des Etudes Juifs, vol. 17, p. 89; vol. 24, p. 27.
4. Graetz, op. cit., vol. 4, p. 344; Revue des Etudes Juifs, vol. 24, p. 2.

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- Preface - Isaiah 3:8.
- Narrative VII - Psalm 2:7, 110:2,3; Leviticus 26:36; Proverbs 30:21,22;  
Deuteronomy 32:38; 23:21; Malachi 1:2; Numbers 20:14;  
Zephaniah 1:11; Numbers 23:9,10; Leviticus 20:26;  
Exodus 19:5; Ezekiel 16:35; Jeremiah 50:12; Ezekiel  
1:26,10; Deuteronomy 31:18; 29:27; Amos 3:2; Deuteronomy  
28:21; Lamentations 1:2; 4:12; Isaiah 53:6; Exodus 35:3;  
20:10; Deuteronomy 5:15; Judges 5:8; Deuteronomy 28:64.
- Narrative IX - Numbers 14:23.
- Narrative X - Isaiah 14:4,5,11.
- Narrative XI - Deuteronomy 28:65.
- Narrative XIII - Leviticus 26:36; Deuteronomy 28:1; 31:17,18.
- Narrative XVI - Psalm 121:4.
- Narrative XXI - Numbers 23:10.
- Narrative XXIX - Isaiah 66:2.
- Narrative XXXII - Psalm 58:5; Job 26:7; Psalm 139:15,14; Ecclesiastes 7:9;  
Psalm 22:2,15,13,14,17,30,31; Lamentations 3:1-8;  
Psalm 22:2,3,5,23,24,32,17; 4:3; 49:5; Canticles 6:8;  
5:11; Psalm 18:12; Proverbs 3:18.
- Narrative XL - Isaiah 1:18,20; I Samuel 9:18; Isaiah 10:34; 11:1;  
Psalm 90:2; Proverbs 25:1; Job 15:35; I Kings 13:2;  
Isaiah 66:7,8,10,13; Genesis 49:10; 28:15.
- Narrative XLI - Leviticus 26:44; Psalm 37:37; Jeremiah 50:12; Amos  
3:2; Isaiah 1:4; Ezekiel 34:31; Isaiah 26:19; Psalm  
72:16; Ecclesiastes 12:7; Lamentations 3:2,3,4;  
Isaiah 44:22.



- Narrative XLII - I Kings 12:7.
- Narrative XLIX - Isaiah 59:21; Leviticus 26:38.
- Narrative L - Deuteronomy 28:61.
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- Narrative LXIII - Amos 3:2; Exodus 32:34; Lamentations 5:7; 1:21;  
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- Narrative LXIV - I Kings 5:11; Deuteronomy 25:19; Exodus 9:27; 17:16;  
Psalm 110:2,1; Numbers 1:51; Canticles 4:2.
- Page 108 - Leviticus 1:16; 5:23; Isaiah 63:1.
- Page 109 - Isaiah 29:23.
- Page 110 - I Kings 8:41; Leviticus 26:4; Job 25:3; Daniel 7:10.
- Page 116 - Jeremiah 48:11.
- Page 118 - Numbers 24:9.
- Page 120 - Genesis 25:27; Jeremiah 31:34; Psalm 139:2; 97:2.
- Page 121 - Isaiah 66:1; Deuteronomy 3:24; Jeremiah 10:7; Psalm  
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