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EXEGESIS AND ENVIRONMENT
A STUDY OF RASHI'S APOLOGETICS

by

Richard J. Israel

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SUMMARY

It has been the intention of this thesis to show some of the intellectual forces which played upon Rashi and the way in which his reaction to them is expressed in his commentary.

The attempt was made to show how after a long period of relative inactivity in the field of Biblical exegesis, the Eleventh century gave rise to great productivity both among the Christians and the Jews of Western Europe. We may explain this activity amongst the Christians as seems a result of the Cluniac reforms, the investiture conflicts and the sudden interest in the Holy Land which brought about the First Crusade. These issues produced debates and discussion which required a Scriptural grounding and great quantities of polemic and exegetical material were produced. In the wake of this religious enthusiasm came a rise in anti-Semitism and the Jew lost the relatively secure role which he had held.

Upon the decay of the Gaonate the communities of Europe had now become religiously self-sufficient and solve their own spiritual problems.

Rashi emerged upon the scene and attempted to strengthen the faith of his people. The tradition of exegesis which preceded him is one which has two strands, the Pshat, which has no particularly spiritual implications and the Drash which though of great charm was a bit dangerous in view of exaggerated allegorizing of the Christian exegetes. Once one in principle admitted to the technique of unrestrained allegorizing the Christian allegory and the Jewish allegory have equal weight

and Judaism is threatened. Rashi attempts judiciously to combine the two methods.

Insofar as Christian polemics of the time could have misled Jews and distorted their understanding of the Biblical text Rashi took direct issue with them and attempted to refute them.

Through an analysis of some of the passages most commonly used by the Christian polemicists the attempt has been made to show how Rashi rejects their points of view. He sometimes does this by re-interpreting the text for the express purpose of refuting the "Minim" whether this new interpretation is consistent with the traditional understanding of the verse or not. He more often merely implies this refutation by adopting a formula which says in effect that the Pshat of the text is contrary to the Christian interpretation, but if a Midrash is to be used, it must be used in accordance with the Jewish tradition.

Occasionally he could not content himself with a defense of the text but would attack both the Church and its missionaries.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
BACKGROUND	4
RASHI THE MAN AND THE NATURE OF HIS EXEGESIS	14
METHOD	17
EXPLICIT REFUTATION OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES	20
IMPLICIT REFUTATION OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES	30
RASHI PREDICTS DOWNFALL OF THE CHURCH	35
REACTION TO MISSIONARIES	37
IN CONCLUSION	39
FOOTNOTES	42
BIBLIOGRAPHY	47

INTRODUCTION

Creation ex-nihilio is generally thought to be the prerogative of God, yet when investigating the attitudes of scholarly opinion with regard to the school of Rashi one gains the impression that the exegesis which he produced grew out of a total vacuum. It is often held that the spiritual creations of the Medieval Jews were independent of the happenings of the outside world. The only direction in which they turned was inward. Heschel is by no means atypical when he asserts that in the Ashkenasic communities the "spiritual life of the Jews was lived in isolation,"¹ that their ideas were not taken from others nor did others take from them, nor were they affected by the intellectual environment around them. In this interpretation it is understandable that Rashi would be thought of primarily as a sort of folksy teacher, pointing out to his people the moral lessons which were to be learned from the Bible. One would indeed wonder if the situation is really as simple as that.

In the Biblical introduction to the giving of the Decalogue we find the verse "In the third month after the departure of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt on this day..." (Ex. 19:1). Rashi comments on the phrase "this day" saying, "It was only necessary to write 'that day,' what is the meaning of 'this day?'...that the words of Torah should be new unto you as if it were today that He had given them." This short statement describes very well the function of the commentator, making the words of the Torah as new and meaningful to the people of his

age as if they had been given on that very day.

The ultimate authority for almost the entire body of Jewish law and lore and even the very structure of society was the Biblical text. It is true enough that the oral law often required observances which seemed to be at variance with the simple meaning of the text, but the fact remains that the codifiers always found it necessary to return to find a grounding and an authorization for the law in a Biblical passage. If God was not the guarantor, the law was meaningless and the only way His wishes could be known was through a study of the pages of the Bible. But life went on. Knowledge was gained and knowledge was forgotten. Verses that had once been understood became obscure and meaningless when the language of the text became so much more removed from the readers' lives. The commentator came and explained. When the total configuration of the world about them changed, the people found it impossible to believe that the text really meant what it seemed to say. Again, the commentators came to their aid and showed them that there was no reason for their faith to be shaken.

Rashi was surely one of the greatest of these commentators. It is more than a truism to state that the good teacher will teach his students that which is meaningful to them. He must of necessity be quite selective in presenting his material. Certainly, a teacher who achieved as much popularity as Rashi did must have had something particularly relevant to say. We must assume that his teaching was in a sense a response to the problems of his own age and that he was answering those questions which were of significance to his own particular type of world.

It is the intention of this paper to show the manner in which this response took place.

Let us begin by discussing the background of the Christian attitude towards the Biblical text.

BACKGROUND

The exegesis of Origen (185?-254?) was one of the most significant factors in the development of Christian Bible study. Rubashov and Solovetchick wrote "Origen's book did not lean upon the Hebrew source of the Scripture but upon the Greek translation. Not only did it fail to shed light upon the difficult passages but it even increased the confusion. The strength and value of the exegesis of Origen to the Church was that he revealed hidden meanings which taught morals in the books of the Torah. Thus, his book became the guiding light for the Church and most particularly for the Eastern Church for two hundred years and thereby the Church moved even further away from the reality of the Biblical text."² Occasionally, the exegetes from Antioch, Augustine and Jerome utilized the Pshat of the text but they were much more the exception than the rule. Aside from these men, all of the Christian exegetes who came after Jerome studied the Bible through his translation and did their researches not on the Hebrew, but on the Vulgate text. Even the Greek text ceased to be accessible to them. The body of the Church insisted upon orthodox exegesis and the researcher had very rigid limitations placed upon what he might discover. The obvious result was a stifling of a creative Biblical scholarship for the next thousand years. The Christian mystics made the situation still worse and merely used the text as a "peg" upon which to hang their speculations which had no relation to the content of the material.

Blumenfield in discussing the abominable state of scholarship

amongst the Christian clergy cites a letter of Charlemagne which bemoans the fact that the correspondence of the clergy is becoming so dreadful that he fears that the art of writing itself will be lost and that the knowledge of Scripture be neglected. He says:

"...we all know that though verbal errors are dangerous, errors in interpretation are far more dangerous. Wherefore we exhort you not only not to neglect the study of letters, but even with the most humble God-approved earnestness to vie in learning, so that you may prevail more easily and rightly in penetrating the mysteries of sacred literature."³

In the second half of the ninth century, Alfred the Great was anxious to translate the literary sources into Anglo-Saxon to enable the clergy to read the sacred writing which they could not read in Latin.⁴

As late as 1227 when the situation had improved considerably it was ordered at the Council of Trier that

"...uninformed clergy should not enter into disputations with Jews in the presence of lay people."⁵

so bad was the state of education amongst the clergy.

Neither, however, had the Jewish community of Western Europe shown any extraordinary interest in Biblical researches. They, along with the rest of the scattered communities of Europe, had looked to the Exilarch and later to the Gaonate as the source of religious authority. Questions of law were addressed to the leaders of the Babylonian community who were considered to be the final arbiters of such matters, ultimately

deriving their authority from a chain of tradition which reached back to Sinai. Their religious and civil questions were solved by others who were obviously more competent to deal with them than were they. There had, of course, been a continuing tradition of local scholarship which found its expression in the Biblical field in such men as Moses Hadarshan and Menahem ben Helbo. Moses Hadarshan whose very name testifies to his technique, made extensive use of the Haggadah and apparently leaned towards the same allegoristic type of interpretation which was utilized by the Christians⁶ while Menahem ben Helbo was much more of a grammarian with a greater concern for the Pshat.⁷ In the Talmudic field there were such men as Leontin, Joseph Bonfils, Judah ben Meir Hacohen, Simon the Elder and others. We could in no way account for the sudden appearance of the vast erudition which we find in such men as Rashi, Rashbam and Rabbenu Tam had there not been schools such as those in Metz, Mayence, Worms, or Frankfurt am Main which offered opportunities to master the vast apparatus of rabbinica. Nevertheless, one may say that the function of these scholars was closer to that of the museum guard than the painter. They were holding onto the tradition, not creating it. In truth, there was no very great stimulus which might urge them to create. They were living rather prosperous lives in a stable world and although there were persecutions from time to time, it can be said that they lived on very good terms with their Christian neighbors.⁸

Charlemagne (768-814) was particularly solicitous about the welfare of the Jewish communities which were very important to him and

indeed, throughout the Carolingian period (768-987) the situation of the Jews was quite satisfactory.⁹ Even idologically they appeared to be quite secure and in no way threatened by Christian theology. Indeed, it would appear that they were rather frank in their criticism of it. "In addition to caricaturing the life of Christ, the Jews treated with contempt the stories of the founding of the Church and the miraculous delivery of Peter from prison. The apostles they called 'apostates' and the Gospels a 'revelation of iniquity,' the Sacraments they dismissed as idolatry. They were no less frank in criticising their Christian contemporaries...Jews even told converts that there is no harm in their believing in Jesus, provided that they do not believe in him as a God."¹⁰ Parkes suggests that many groups of Christians were likely to be particularly susceptible to the arguments of the Jews and might well have been influenced by them. One of the very early eleventh century polemics cited by Williams¹¹ is the response of Peter Damiani to one "Beloved Brother Honestus" a busy layman of no great intellectual power who appears to have been beset by Jews, whom he perhaps met in the world of business. They seem to have demanded from him answers to their objections to Christianity and Brother Honestus felt that he could profit by the advice of one more learned than himself. If this letter is at all typical it would seem to confirm the view of Parkes.

It does not seem surprising that we should see so few signs of defensive reactions in the literary productions of the European Jewish communities through the tenth century. If anyone was on the defensive, it was the Christians. Moses Hadarshan could afford to use the very

technique of allegorization which was so thoroughly exploited by the Church without any fear that his techniques might boomerang. Rashi did not have that luxury a generation or two later.

In the eleventh century a number of very important changes took place in the Jewish community. Political security disappeared and its religious roots in the East were severed.

With the growth of the cities and the emerging Christian merchant class the Jew became expendable. His resources and abilities which had previously been welcome now as a result of competition became the object of resentment.

The chaos and confusion which followed the reign of Charlemagne resulted in a rather thorough corruption of the clergy. "The whole Church was infected by simony, the open sale of its spiritual functions."¹² The situation began to be corrected by the Cluniac Reforms (begun in 910) and was immensely improved under the leadership of Leo IX (1049-1054). The lines were being drawn for the struggle between the Empire and the papacy for the church was trying to rid itself of control by the secular monarch. The impetus for the First Crusade began to grow greater and greater. These forces combined to produce in the Church a much greater degree of spiritual aggressiveness than had previously been present. As the tide of reform began to run more strongly, the result was a kind of religious enthusiasm which brought no good to the Jews.

The new "purified" Christianity fanned by the encouragement of the merchants resulted in a marked increase in both the intensity and frequency of anti-Jewish persecution which reached its peak in

the time of the Crusades. Parkes mentions a number of incidents which took place in this newly changed environment.

Archbishop Frederick of Mayence was rather concerned about the status of Jewish residents within his jurisdiction; he wrote to Pope Leo VII (936) asking his advice. The reply of the Pope was that they should be baptised or expelled, but on no account baptised against their will.

Robert the Pious ordered the Jews of France to choose between Baptism and death (though apparently very little was done about his order).¹³

In the year 1010 William Godell, a Norman chronicler, tells us that many Jews were baptised under duress. In the same year, a Burgundian monk, Rudolf Glaber, rendered an account of the massacres which took place everywhere in indignation at the Jews of Orleans allegedly procuring the destruction of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.¹⁴ Also in that year the Bishop of Limoges told Jews of that city to convert or leave. Most of them fled.¹⁵

In 1012 Henry II expelled the Jews from Mainz.

A particularly interesting incident is one in which Rabbanu Gershom replies to many of the communities concerning the attitude that ought to be taken towards returning apostates. He recommends leniency and gentleness, a fact which would be difficult to explain were the conversions voluntary¹⁶ ones. In addition, it is to be noted that he observed a full mourning period on the death of his son who had converted,¹⁷ a practice which he would not have been likely to follow had the conversion been one of belief.

Another aspect of this religious revival was a renewed interest in study, and most particularly a study of the Bible. Much propaganda was produced by the clergy to solidify their not insecure position and further their newly won gains. This material constantly utilized Biblical proof texts. But the opponents of the proposals could and did quote Scripture as well and thus evoked further rebuttals from the Church.

The clergy turned back to the old commentaries as resources and when these were not adequate they produced their own new ones. At the same time this new religious fervor brought about a marked increase in polemic literature which was directed not only against the Jews, but the Moslems as well.¹⁸

The Benedictine, Sigebert of Gembloux, teaching at Metz about 1070, "was very dear to the Jews of the city because he was skillful in distinguishing the Hebrew truth from the other editions; and he agreed with what they told him if it were in accordance with the Hebrew Truth."¹⁹

St. Stephen Harding, abbot of Citreaux, completed his correction of the text of the Old Testament in 1109 with the help of Jews, whom he consulted in French, as he tells us.²⁰

That colorful personality, Abelard, (1079-1142) who is in many respects one of the leading and representative personalities of the age recommends to Heloise and the sisters of the Paraclite that they should study Hebrew and Greek that they might understand the Scripture in the original. It is strange that so very technical an undertaking should be suggested as a fitting project for nuns. It should be noted that both

Heloise and Abelard were Benedictines and the study of Scripture was one of the requirements of their Order. When the teaching of Scripture in the secular schools came under the influence of the liberal arts, monks in reaction began to withdraw into themselves and clung to the conception of Scriptural study more as a devotional than an intellectual exercise. It now served as a springboard for prayer and meditation. The concentration on the spiritual exposition, which tended to be de-emphasized in the secular schools. Abelard was proposing that Heloise and her sisters should return to the scholarly idea of Scriptural study for its own sake.²¹

Auerbach notes the contact between Jews and Christians with some surprise saying that they met "...not only in economic life but also in the spiritual fields, chiefly in the area of Scriptural exegesis."²²

Smalley sums this up very well.

"...a Christian wishing to learn Hebrew, which he revered, not only as the language of Scripture, but also as the language he expected would be the current speech in heaven, was obliged to take a Jew as his teacher. The Old Testament was common ground between them. However, much they differed on its interpretation, they could discuss questions of fact. Some sort of scholarly collaboration was possible."²³

It is altogether clear that there was a cultural interchange between the Christians and Jews in the field of Biblical exegesis. It would be impossible to state that the Jews were not aware of the Christian views of the Old Testament. An additional factor which would have made these views all too clear to them were the polemical tracts which began

to multiply in great numbers in the French community during the time of Rashi. Every priest considered himself charged with the duty of saving Jewish souls.²⁴ In such surroundings an expositor of the text had not only to teach his people the proper understanding of his own faith, but also to refute that of their seducers.

Thus we see that the formerly relaxed attitude towards Christians and the Christian religion over a period of relatively few years becomes fraught with tension. But as was suggested before, the security of the community was simultaneously cut away in yet another area.

The Goanate had begun to show serious signs of decay in the tenth century when Saadia succeeded in shoring up its ruins temporarily; but, in the eleventh century with the Babylonian community in a state of chaos and the Gaonate steadily losing power, the death of Hai Gaon in 1040 brought the institution down in complete collapse. The European schools which had been growing stronger as the Gaonate became weaker now moved to a position of dominance. It becomes quite significant the Rabbenu Gershom had studied with Hai Gaon.²⁵ He thus becomes a kind of successor to the Gaon. Although there is no longer a definite central authority to which the various communities can turn, the bearer of the legitimate tradition becomes that authority and to him the people turn for advice. The Talmud could no longer be studied \sqrt{c} . There was now the very practical problem of developing a body of law which would be used to govern the Jewish community which suddenly found its environment changed very considerably. In the words of Lowenthal, "they found themselves swept into, the tide of the practical world. Problems of

partnership, loans, credit, and collateral, and the difficulties and conflicts and doing business in an age when the currency varied at a monarch's wink; when each Jewish community claimed the right to make its own commercial laws and usages; when travelers were exposed to frequent shipwreck and robbery; when confiscation, extortion, or imprisonment was likely to put an end to a customer, a partner, a debtor, a bill-of-goods, or oneself..... all these complexities were grappled with and ruled upon by the talmudic schoolmen."²⁶ In such a world abstract considerations of the law were no longer helpful. The Pshat of the text had to be established so that new law might be soundly based upon the tradition. Thus a new tradition of "practical" scholarship based upon Pshat began in the tenth century; its foremost exponent, Rabbenu Gershom.

It is upon such a scene that the figure of Rashi emerges.

RASHI THE MAN AND THE NATURE OF HIS EXEGESIS

Of Rashi's own history we have little but a confusion of legends. We know that he was born in Troyes in Northern France in about the year 1040²⁷ and spent his early years studying in this city. He appears to have supported himself as a vintner though his first love was obviously the Torah. After a time he went to the Academies of Worms and Mayence possibly to study. Upon his return from these schools he established his own academy in Troyes and even in his own life achieved great fame there. He died in the year 1105.

We know a few details about his daughters and a few more about his famous grandsons, Meir ben Shmuel (Rashbam) and Rabenu Tam, but more than this we cannot say with certainty. Around Rashi are woven many of the popular legends that are common to almost every ancient figure endeared by tradition but nothing upon which we can rely.

His manner of thought, however, is more than adequately described in his magnificent commentaries to the Bible and Talmud as well as in his less significant works, his responsa and his piyutim.

We see first of all, that Rashi was not a scholar who lived only in his books. As a business man he was intimately concerned with the bustling activities of his native city Troyes which was a mercantile and industrial center of great importance. He is aware of the customs of the people around him and their occupations. He refers to French as "Our language."²⁸ We gain the impression that he feels himself very much a part of the life of the times.²⁹

But as we have suggested before, the "times" were beginning to change. Rashi gives clear indications of the persecutions of his day³⁰ the more we continue to study him, the more we begin to suspect that he is reacting to the attacks of his neighbors in more areas than are immediately evident. His very technique of interpretation itself perhaps reflects such a reaction.

Christians had misinterpreted the role of the Midrash for the Jew. They thought that they were always accepted literally and thus went out of their way to point out foolish exaggerations of the Jews.³¹ Some of the time they even used Jewish Haggadah to their own purposes. In any case, they attempted to show how much more reasonable were the allegories which they used than those of traditional Judaism. Thus Rashi was forced to be quite conservative in his use of the Midrash. It was unthinkable that he should leave it altogether. It was too much a part of the world around him.

He hints at some of his fears in his introduction to the Song of Songs. He tells us:

"I have seen a number of Haggadic Midrashim to this book.

There are those who arrange the entire book into one Midrash and there are those who distribute a number of Midrashim amongst individual scriptural passages and do not deal properly with the language of the scripture and the order of the verses. And it has been my intention to grasp the intended meaning of the scripture and to properly settle the problems of their order. And I shall affix the Midrashim of our rabbis one at a time as called for in their proper places." That is to say, Rashi by

no means abandons the Midrashim but only cites them insofar as he finds them to be the "real" meaning of the verse. He applies them with greater caution than the Christians about him. This is perhaps the key to Rashi, the cautious application of the Midrash.

It was necessary for Rashi to find some course which would succeed in uniting both the Pshat and the Drash type interpretations. He attempted to find the Midrash which best explained the Pshat of the text. He comments on his techniques in his exposition of Gen 1:8 "There are many Haggadic Midrashim, and our rabbis already arranged them in order (according to Biblical verses) in Bereshit Raba and in the rest of the Midrash collections, but it is my intention only to explain the simple meaning (Pshat) of the verse or to bring that Agadah which will solve the difficulties of the text according to its proper understanding.

Or, as he states in Gen 49:22, "There are Haggadic Midrashim which solves the difficulty without distorting the meaning of the words." For him the Haggadic explanation can be the simple one. Rashi was reluctant to be too inventive, that is, create too many of his own explanations as Saadia or Moses Hadarshan had one, or let his explanations run too far afield. This might have left the door open too wide to the Christian commentators. It was best to cling to the simplest traditional interpretation.

When the attacks of the Christian polemicists became more severe, the rabbinic commentaries of Rashi's school insisted that the Midrashic method was unnecessary. The Drash could be added as an additional dimension of the text but it was to be understood that this was the Drash, and its only function was to cast additional light upon the Pshat.³²

METHOD

In attempting to show that Rashi was very conscious of the Christian interpretations of the Bible which were current in his day I have adopted the following procedure: I have taken those Biblical verses found in the Sefer Hanitzahon which were used by Christian polemicists to show evidences of Christian doctrine in the Old Testament. Almost without exception, every verse cited by the Christians is explained by Rashi in an altogether different fashion. Such an observation of course proves absolutely nothing since most of these verses have very obvious textual problems and it could easily be asserted that Rashi resolved these difficulties in the light of his understanding of Jewish tradition while the Christian commentators did the same thing in their tradition, each group working totally independently of the other. Thus, I have attempted to lay most of my emphasis upon those verses in which Rashi specifically states that he brings his comment in order to "refute the 'Minim'" which term clearly refers to the Christians.

The number of cases in which he uses this phrase "Minim" is exceedingly small when it is compared to the totality of Rashi's extensive commentary. In most cases he utilizes the term as if it were not his own. To do otherwise would have been too dangerous. Instead he brings phrases from traditional literature which were directed against the "Minim" of earlier centuries but which are still of help to him in combatting contemporary heresies. In this fashion he is always defended against the accusation of anti-Christian sentiment and at the same time

succeeds in expressing his own point of view quite forcefully. All of the Jews of his own day would have understood his intention. Rashi does not, insofar as I have been able to discover, cite any of the polemics against the ancient "Sectaries" which would not have been directly relevant to attempts to refute Christian claims in his own day and there is much of such material available to him.

Similarly the term "Edom" which in past days had been a covert reference to the Roman Empire, now, by extension comes to apply to the Roman Church.

A further indication for me that these references were directed against Christianity and not the ancient "Minim" was the very fact of censorship. If the references to "Minim" and "Edom" were totally innocent, one could not account for the fact that they were removed from the text almost without exception. This procedure sometimes left the text only partially intelligible. Sometimes other words more acceptable were substituted. The texts were often censored by Christians, but no less frequently by the Jews themselves³⁴ who had no desire to see their precious books burned. If the verses in question would not have given offense to anyone but long dead Gnostics one would think that they would have been left untouched. Thus I have paid particular attention to these changes in the text.

Some of my attempts to show anti-Christian polemics in Rashi have been of a more indirect nature. Rashi is generally quite consistent about the kind of verses which evoke a comment from him. He resolves

apparent contradictions in the text, justify apparently unnecessary words and explain odd forms or rare words. It is rather unusual for him to comment in any other situation. When he does so, we may with justification ask why? If Rashi comments on a verse which does not seem to have any textual difficulties, but which is utilized by the Christian polemicists I have assumed that he does so in order to answer their arguments. I have only utilized such verses when Rashi's super-commentaries³⁵ find it necessary to resort to "pilpul" to explain his difficulties.

In addition, if for no apparent reason, he interprets a "Christological" verse in a way which is not consistent with his own tradition, I have assumed that this is a strong indication that the verse has polemic implications.

EXPLICIT REFUTATION OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

We can begin with an examination of Rashi's comment to the first verse of the Bible:

(Gen 1:1) "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". In his interpretation of this passage, we can see very clearly how thoroughly aware Rashi was of the pre-Crusade debates that were taking place with regard to who had the right to take possession of the Holy Land. Christian thought considered the Church to be the natural inheritor of the title "Chosen People" and with that title came the rights to the "Promised Land." To the Jew, the denial of his ultimate right to the Holy Land was the destruction of his ultimate hope for redemption. The only salvation of which he could conceive involved a return to the Holy Land. In the light of such discussions, Rashi's famous commentary to the first verse of Genesis becomes much more understandable for it is this right to this salvation which he asserts:

"Rabbi Isaac said: 'The Torah should have begun with the verse, "This month shall be unto you" the first of the commandments. What is the reason that the Torah began with 'In the Beginning'? In order to express the idea found in the verse "He declared to His people the strength of his works, in order that He might give them the heritage of the nations." (Ps. 121,6) For should the people of the world say to Israel, 'You are thieves since you took by force the lands of the seven Canaanite nations,' Israel may reply to

them, "All the world belongs to the Holy One blessed be He, He created it and gave it to whom he pleased. It was his will that he gave it to them and it was His will that He took it from them and give it to us."

It would seem almost symbolic that he sees fit to open his commentary with such a discussion. He seems to say in effect, "Take heed O reader...it is we Jews who have the proper understanding of the Bible and make no mistake about it." Do not be misled by others."

(Gen 1:26) "Let us make man in our image"

To such a verse, the obvious question which would be posed for Rashi is, who is the "we"? The Christians use this text as evidence for the plural nature of God in the Trinity, an attitude which is obviously not going to be very acceptable to Rashi. He begins a long and involved discussion in which he tries to show that the significance of the "we" is to be found in the relationship of God to his angels. Even God, he says, does not take all of the glory for himself, but shares it with his angels and takes them into consultation on important matters even though their help is not particularly vital to him. He then continues; this plural verb is used

"Even though they (the angels) did not help Him in creating man and in spite of the fact that it may give the 'Minim' an opportunity to win arguments, nevertheless the Scripture does not refrain from teaching good

manners and the virtue of humility, that the greater should consult with and take permission from the smaller....and as a refutation to the 'Minim' it is written immediately afterwards, 'And He created man, not they created.'"

It is not three gods, or three aspects of one God which created man, but a unified God.

In spite of the fact that this citation of Rashi is initially from either the Talmud³⁶ or Midrash³⁷ and thus most probably not referring to Christians in its original intentions, it is clear that the censors who removed all references to the "Minim" from most of the standard Rashi texts³⁸ knew precisely who it was that Rashi intended. In addition, it ought to be noted that in the original source of these references are very brief and perfunctory. Rashi develops and elaborates upon them extensively.

Neither have we to feel that the tradition compelled Rashi to interpret the text in this fashion. Saadia, of whom Rashi was aware,³⁹ explained in an altogether different way. He feels that the Pshat of this plural usage is a sort of an editorial "we." He cites a number of parallel Biblical passages where the meaning of the text demands the singular first person, but in which the plural is used nevertheless. This, Saadia tells us, is an analogous case. In this fashion he dispenses with the Pshat.⁴⁰

However, to Rashi, such an interpretation would have been

dangerously similar to the Christian one and thus become unuseable.

(Gen. 6:6) "And it pained his heart: He mourned at the failure of his handiwork."

(Rashi) 'This is similar to I Sam. 22:14, "The king grieved for his son."

The point that Rashi is attempting to make here is that the Pshat of the verse is that just as the king grieved at his son's failure, so did God grieve at the failure of His son, man. Christian thinkers found difficulty with this verse inasmuch as it seemed to indicate that God had no foreknowledge of what was to take place, that he did not realize that man would go astray. This problem is resolved by indicating that this is but one of a number of anthropopathisms which can only be understood if one allegorizes the text in the light of the New Testament. The Bible does not really mean what it seems to say on all occasions.⁴¹ Such a point of view would clearly disturb Rashi and thus he continues:

"This I write as an answer to the 'Minim': A gentile once asked Rabbi Joshua, the son of Korcha, saying to him, "Do you not admit that the Holy One, blessed be He, knows what is going to happen in 'the future?' He said to him 'Yes.' The gentile replied, 'But is it not written' and it pained his heart? He said to him: 'have you had a son born to you?' (The gentile) replied 'Yes.' "And what did you do?' He (the gentile) answered, 'I rejoiced and I caused others to rejoice as well.' The Rabbi asked him: 'But did you not know that he must die? The (gentile) replied: 'At the time

of joy, let there be joy, at the time of mourning let there be mourning.' The Rabbi then said: 'Such, too, is the way of the Holy One, blessed be He: although it was clear to Him that in the end men would sin, and would be destroyed, He did not refrain from creating them for the sake of the righteous man who were to issue from them.'"

Thus we see that Rashi solves the dilemma by stating, yes, God does experience sorrow at man's failure but this is not out of a lack of wisdom or foresight. In this way he once again defends the integrity of the text.

(Ia. 9:5) "For a child is born unto us, and a son is given unto us; and the government is upon his shoulder; and his name is called 'Wonderful in counsel is God the Mighty, the Everlasting Father.'"

(Rashi) "Even though Ahaz is evil, the son who is to be born to him in a few years will be our king and will be righteous and will serve the Holy One, blessed be He."

Thus he asserts that the child is to be Hezekiah and not Jesus.

The second part of his answer is more noteworthy.

(Rashi) "Wonderful in counsel...this is the Holy One, blessed be He...as an answer to the apostates."⁴²

Here he divides up the verse and says that the second part refers not to Hezekiah but to God. In so doing he directly controverts good sense

and the traditional interpretation of the verse (San. 942) which applies it to Hezikiah.

Rashi must have felt the influence of Christian polemics rather strongly to disregard the tradition so completely.

Psalm 2 describes the opposition of the leaders of the earth to the "chosen one of the Lord." The Church has always taken this Psalm to refer to the figure of Jesus. This is an attitude of which Rashi is most specifically aware. He writes:

"Our rabbis interpreted this matter as referring to the *אֶת־נֹחַ* which is the simple meaning of the verse but as an answer to the 'Minim' it is proper to solve this problem as referring to David himself."

Rashi then continues and cites texts which show that the very incidents described in the Psalm actually occurred to David. He follows along in this manner with each line of the Psalm including verse 8 which has always been so important to Christian exegesis:

"I will tell of the decree: The Lord said unto me:

'Thou are my son, this day have I begotten thee...'"

He feels that it is necessary to be quite clear about this verse and his explanation is longer than that of any other in the Psalm. In this interpretation he has David state:

"It is a fixed and determined matter for me to declare this and to proclaim that the Lord said unto me by means of Nathan, Gad and Samuel, 'You are My son, a leader of

of Israel who are called my sons, my first fruits and they (Israel) will be sustained by you as it is said..."

To the phrase, "begotten thee" he continues...

"We have found concerning kings of Israel who are beloved of the Lord that they are called sons as it is said concerning Solomon. 'He will be to Me as a son and I will be to him as a father.'" (I Chron. 17:12)

He wishes to be certain that no one is mistaken as to whom the son is. As, is usual, the term "Minim" is censored out of the standard texts.

Psalm 21 is taken by the Church to refer to the joy of the father of Jesus who had the opportunity to guide such an illustrious son through the world. Rashi once again meets the problem head on.

"Our rabbis interpreted this passage as referring to the Messiah but it is correct to interpret it as referring to King David as an answer to the 'Minim' who have distorted its meaning for their own heresies." (" ")

Once again, all references to the "Minim" have been removed from the standard texts in attempt to make them more acceptable.

In these two cases we note that Rashi is willing to depart from the interpretations which he feels are most acceptable in order to refute the Christological implications.

In Rashi's interpretation of Psalm 114 we see how deeply the

thinking of the Church affected his exegesis. In this particular case he finds it necessary to adapt his terminology to that of the Church to make his point quite clear.

He says that this Psalm is speaking of the scholars and thereby attempts to deny the position of the Christian exegetes who held that the Psalm referred to Christ and his Church. At the end of the Psalm he first brings a Midrash.

(Verse 11) "Hearken, O daughter and consider, and incline thine ear."

(Rashi) "This refers to the congregation of Israel (*ה'י-
ישראל*)".....

Then he continues with his own material.

(Verse 12) So shall the king desire thy beauty:

(Rashi) "This means, if you do well the Holy One, blessed be He, will desire the beauty of your deeds..."

(Verse 13) "And the daughter of Tyre, the riches of the people shall entreat thy favor with a gift."

(Rashi) "And with this reward you will merit 'Evil Esau's' (censored out of most texts) bringing you present..."

(Verse 14) All glorious is the king's daughter within the palace; Her raiment is of chequer work in wrought with gold:

(Rashi) This is as it is said 'And all of your brethren of all of the nations shall bring a gift,' that is to say, those upon whom glory rests and they are the *ה'י-ישראל* who previously were humble and now their clothing is of significance like the chequer work of the high priests."

The most noteworthy matter in this passage is his use of the term " *עדה* " a phrase which becomes totally intelligible only if we translate it into the terminology of the Church, "ecclesia regis."

We find the same concept mentioned in Psalm 68, a Psalm which is interpreted by Christian exegetes as a prophecy of Christ's exaltation and the establishment of his kingdom among men. Rashi holds it to be a contrast between Israel and Esau (another allusion to the Roman church which has been removed from most texts.

(Verse 7) "God makes the solitary to dwell in a house"

(Rashi) This is Israel which had been scattered. He bring each man from his banishment and settles him in a completed commonwealth (*עדה*) and a completed " *עדה* "

and again in the same Psalm

(Verse 14) "When ye lie among the sheepfolds, the wings of the dove are covered with silver"

(Rashi) "That is to say, when you will dwell within your borders then you shall enjoy great pleasures, this refers to My dove, My " *עדה* "

The point which is to be made here is that the term *עדה* is quite usual in referring to the "Congregation of Israel" but the one here used, " *עדה* " is unique to Rashi, never utilized in the abstract sense of a Jewish congregation as he does here. When one recognizes how perfectly this translates itself into the concept of the Church as mystical body of the Christ one suspects that Rashi has here absorbed a

concept which does not come from his own tradition. It is rather a notion which was readily understandable both to him and those whom he was addressing, if not with all of its theological overtone, at least with the implication of a very close relationship between God and the people Israel.⁴³

IMPLICIT REFUTATION OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES

(Gen. 1:2) "And the spirit of God hovered over the waters."

Rashi interprets the word spirit (רוח) as the Throne of Glory of God and does not see fit to translate this verse as either spirit of God or as some sort of a wind. At the same time, in all of the other Pentateuchal passages having reference either to the רוח אלהים or the רוח אלהים. ⁴⁴ Rashi seems to understand the meaning of the text so well as to find no reason even to make comment. Yet this is a rather far-fetched explanation and we are very hard pressed to answer the question, what is Rashi trying to show us?

⁴⁵ Though the interpretation of Rashi does have a basis in tradition,, it certainly is not very characteristic of the type of Midrash he usually selects and not consistent with his avowed policy of only utilizing those Midrashim which are in agreement with the simple meaning of the text. The traditional explanation which seems to be given the greatest consideration, and is most often used, holds that the רוח אלהים is the רוח אלהים. ⁴⁶

When we see that this passage is usually interpreted by the Christian exegetes as referring to the Holy Spirit, we have reason to suspect that Rashi quite consciously ignored the other interpretations in attempt to reject such an assertion. To have said that the רוח אלהים was the רוח אלהים would have allowed his opponents to leap to too many conclusions.

A further note might be added. Contemporary Christian polemics (and conceivably ancient polemics as well, though I was not able to

discover any such references) have made use of this Midrashic comment in precisely the fashion that Rashi was afraid they might.⁴⁷

(Gen. 2:2) "And on the seventh day God completed all of his work which he had made."

(Rashi) "R. Shimon says, flesh and blood which cannot make exact calculations of time must add from the week-day onto the Holy day (the sabbath). The Holy One, blessed be He, who is able to calculate the time exactly, began the Sabbath day at the precise moment it started and thus it seemed as if he had completed his on that day. (i.e. the Sabbath)

"Another explanation: What did the world lack? Rest. The Sabbath came and rest came and the world was completed."

Here in Rashi's treatment of this text we have an example of what often seems to be his formula for refuting a foreign idea. First, he cites the Pshat of the matter and then he says, even if you want the Midrash, it cannot be interpreted in any fashion other than the traditional one. The simple explanation is that it only appeared that God finished his work on the seventh day. He really completed it on the sixth. If, on the other hand, you insist upon a more Midrashic interpretation of the text, then God did work on the seventh day, he made rest.

Christian commentary contemporary with Rashi proclaimed that

it was unnecessary to abstain from work on the Sabbath. If God Himself was willing to work on the Sabbath why should simple men be concerned about the matter.⁴⁸ Might we suggest that Rashi was sensitive to this criticism and was attempting to refute it?

In Gen. 14:18 he discusses the gift of bread and wine which Melchizedek offers to Abraham. Once again we have here one of the rather rare cases where it is difficult to ask what it is that is troubling Rashi. He first gives us a rather obvious Pshat, that this bread and wine is what one normally gives to those who are weary from battle, as Abraham was. We are rather hard pressed to find why such an explanation is necessary. There is no textual difficulty. Then he offers to us an Haggadic interpretation, that bread and wine refer to the meal offerings which Melchizedek's sons would offer up there in Jerusalem in the future. The Medieval Christian commentators took these passages to be hints about the flesh and blood of Christ which would be eaten by Christians in this form in years to come.

Thus, we might suggest that Rashi is commenting here to tell us that the Pshat is only that which obviously appears to be so, but if you insist upon seeing here a sacrifice, realize that many years ago our rabbis taught that this would be within the Jewish sacrificial system.

(Gen. 37:35) " *כי ירדו בני ישראל למצרים ויהיה שם יוסף ויגיד להם ויאמרו אליו ומה נאמר לך ומה נאמר לך*

"For I will go down to Sheol to my son Mourning."

One might think that the English translation here is the Pshat of the text. Rashi, however, interprets this passage:

"Because of my son I shall go down unto the grave mourning."

This is his version of the simple meaning of the text. In all of the other Pentateuchal passages where the word Sheol occurs ⁴⁹ Rashi either interprets it as "grave" or does not bother to comment. This is not to say however that he is not aware of the possibilities of considering it as Gehenom.

His second and alternative suggestion is most interesting. He cites the Tanhuma which explains why Jacob is so upset at the death of Joseph. It states that he received an indication from the Almighty that if none of his sons died in his lifetime he would not go down to Gehenom. Now that one of the sons has died, he is condemned. But we know that none of the sons did die and thus he will not go to Gehenom.

Rashi's intention in this passage perhaps becomes a bit more clear in view of the Christian assertion that indicates that Jacob will go to Hell as a consequence of man's original sin. Rashi here does exactly the same thing that he did in the Melchizedek passage we previously considered. He says that the Pshat of the text completely eliminates the possibility of a contrary explanation, but even the Midrash, the "additional meaning", would not sustain the Christological interpretation.

(ia. 43:3) "He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of pains and acquainted with disease..."

(Rashi) "It is the idiom of the prophet to refer to the entire people Israel as one man as in the phrase, 'Do not fear Jacob my servant'....."

It is essentially a simple text but this passage which is used so frequently as a description of the suffering Jesus disturbs Rashi. It must have been obvious to him that there was a distinction between the use of the term Jacob to refer to the entire people and the use of the term "man." He has no other analogies in the Scriptures for the use of "man" as a collective and thus must bring to bear this rather weak proof. He does not, however, allow the text to pass by unmentioned or refer the "man" to some individual. He does this in spite of the fact that the traditional interpretation of this text does refer it specifically to the Messiah.⁵⁰ Thus, the best way to explain his comment is to see it as a reaction to the Christian notion.

The term "נַזְרֵי" is "guards is obviously susceptible of the interpretation "Nazarenes." Thus, in every Biblical passage where the word is used⁵¹ Rashi makes a very specific and detailed comment indicating the exact usage of the word even though there is absolutely no textual difficulty involved in the passage. Neither could one say that he comments because this verb is a difficult one. In all other passages where the verb נָצַר is used in less suggestive forms he makes no comment at all unless there is a textual difficulty.

The Book of Daniel, which is so obviously eschatological in nature is explained by Rashi as referring to the events which occurred during the time of the Second Temple and not to any Messianic predictions as the Christians insisted.

RASHI PREDICTS DOWNFALL OF THE CHURCH

Rashi is not always content to defend his own tradition against its attackers. He takes the offensive as well. He has a rather special interest in passages which he can interpret as referring to the predicted downfall of Rome or the "City of Esau" whether or not the sense of the passage requires such an interpretation.

Isaiah 24 speaks of the redemption of Israel after a great destruction. What then is this destruction from which they are to be saved?

(Ia. 24:15) "Therefore glorify ye the Lord in the regions of light."

(Rashi) "What are the regions of light? They are the redemptions from Babylon and from Edom."

A further indication of the intention of this passage is to be seen in the fact that in most standard texts "Ismael" which refers to the Moslems has been substituted for "Edom".

(Ia. 27:1) "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword will punish leviathan the fleeing serpent; and leviathan the twisting serpent; and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea..."

(Rashi) "...and I say that these are the three important nations, Egypt, Ashur and Edom (censored out of most texts) and thus it is stated at the end of the section '...and they shall come that were lost in the land of Assyria and they that were dispersed in the land of Egypt' inasmuch as these nations will rule like snakes which bite.

'Levithan the fleeing serpent is Egypt. Leviathan the twisting serpent' is Ashur. And 'He shall kill the dragon which is in the sea' is Tyre which is in reality the leader of the sons of Esau for it is in the heart of the sea and thus it is that the Kittim are called the Islanders of the sea and they are the Romans (needless to say, this phrase is censored out of most texts).

And again we see the same thing:

(Ia. 27:10) "For the fortified city is solitary, a habitation abandoned and forsaken like the wilderness."

(Rashi) "Because of their doing this (sinning) the fortified city of Esau shall be solitary and forsaken like the wilderness."

Still further,

(Ia. 33:23) "Thy tackings are loosed. Which draw the ship..."

(Rashi) "This is Rome which is culpable."

Rashi is within the tradition in suggesting that these later three references to the destruction of Tyre actually refer to Rome. He was undoubtedly aware of the principle suggested in Bereshit Rabah 61 (end of section). "Whenever Tyre is found written in the Scripture with the Mater lectionia it refers to the country of Tyre, when it is written without the Mater lectionis, it refers to Rome." In each of these cases Tyre is written without the Mater lectionis. We may still assume, however, that the Rome to which he is referring is the Rome of his own day, not the past.

REACTION TO MISSIONARIES

Engaging in debates with missionaries was not an occupation which Rashi felt to be particularly praiseworthy or commendable.

Prov. 17:12 Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly: It is better for a man to meet a bear robbed of her whelps than one of those fools who try to lead one astray, to Avodah Zarah.

This passage is either censored or softened considerably in most of the text. He is even stronger in this judgment in Prov. 9:7.

"He that correcteth a scorner getteth to himself shame, and he that reproveth a wicked man, it becometh unto him a blot: The blot is in reproving one who reviles him and does not listen to him and who tries to lead him ~~astray~~ and this is a warning that it is forbidden to speak to the perverters even if it is to reprove them or to try to win them over."

This message is softened considerably in most of the texts.

(Ps. 69:5) They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head:

(Rashi) They hate me without cause since I do not pursue after their falsehood or cleave to their errors.

In this passage also we might suspect that Rashi feels the pressure of



the Christian missionaries since there is nothing in the passage itself which would impel him to make such a comment.



IN CONCLUSION

It has been the intention of this thesis to show some of the intellectual forces which played upon Rashi and the way in which his reaction to them is expressed in his commentary.

The attempt was made to show how after a long period of relative inactivity in the field of Biblical exegesis, the Eleventh century gave rise to great productivity both among the Christians and the Jews of Western Europe. We may explain this activity amongst the Christians as seems a result of the Cluniac reforms, the investiture conflicts and the sudden interest in the Holy Land which brought about the First Crusade. These issues produced debates and discussion which required a Scriptural grounding and great quantities of polemic and exegetical material were produced. In the wake of this religious enthusiasm came a rise in anti-Semitism and the Jew lost relatively the secure role which he had held.

Upon the decay of the Gaonate the communities of Europe had now become religiously self-sufficient and solve their own spiritual problems.

Rashi emerged upon the scene and attempted to strengthen the faith of his people. The tradition of exegesis which preceded him is one which has two strands, the Pshat, which has no particularly spiritual implications and the Drash which though of great charm was a bit dangerous in view of exaggerated allegorizing of the Christian exegetes. Once one in principle admitted to the technique of unrestrained allegorizing the Christian allegory and the Jewish allegory have equal weight



and Judaism is threatened. Rashi attempts judiciously to combine the two methods.

Insofar as Christian polemics of the time could have misled Jews and distorted their understanding of the Biblical text Rashi took direct issue with them and attempted to refute them.

Through an analysis of some of the passages most commonly used by the Christian polemicists the attempt has been made to show how Rashi rejects their points of view. He sometimes does this by re-interpreting the text for the express purpose of refuting the "Minim" whether this new interpretation is consistent with the traditional understanding of the verse or not. He more often merely implies this refutation by adopting a formula which says in effect that the Pshat of the text is contrary to the Christian interpretation, but if a Midrash is to be used, it must be used in accordance with the Jewish tradition.

Occasionally he could not content himself with a defense of the text but would attack both the Church and its missionaries.

It would be inaccurate to think of Rashi chiefly as a polemicist. His main concern is only to make the Biblical text meaningful to the Jews of his generation. He picks up the cudgel when he has to and this is perhaps more often than we generally recognize, but most of the time he wishes only to patiently teach his people "Torah" in the broadest and finest sense of the word. He tries to instill human values, and an understanding of God. Lieber is more than accurate when he says,



"Doubtless Rashi is but a commentator, yet a commentator without peer by reason of his value and his influence...

Rashi has a claim, universally recognized, upon a high place of honor in our history and in our literature."⁵²

He aids in making his own exegesis a reality, making the Torah life as if it had been given "this day."



FOOTNOTES

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15. Ibid., p. 35.
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17. Dr. Alexander Guttman suggests that the personality here involved might be Rabbenu Tam.
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30. Y. Baer. Rashi V'ham'tziut Hahistorit shel Z'mano (Sefer Rashi, Mosad Harav Kook), Jerusalem, 1956, pp. 492-493. Cites references to the Responsa of Rashi in which he discusses questions concerning those who have been converted against their will. For additional allusions, see Psalm 38:18 in which Rashi states how well Israel has been trained to receive blows and how they must be ever prepared to receive them again. Also Psalm 90:14 in which he mentions the "sufferings which come upon us during these days."
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Utilized as a source for an understanding of the period in which Rashi and his school lived. Book not sufficiently concerned with the problems with which this thesis deals to be overly helpful.

W. Durant. The Age of Faith. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1950.

Rather popular study of the Middle Ages. Succeeds rather well however in conveying more than dry facts. Gives an excellent picture of what life of the time was like. Utilized as a general work for this very reason.

J. D. Eisenstein. Otzar Vikuim. New York, Eisenstein, 1928.

One of the most important tools utilized in the development of this thesis. (See section on "Method.")

A. Heschel. The Earth is the Lord's. New York, Schuman, 1950.

A very lovely romanticising of the spiritual life of the Jews of Europe but without much historical perspective.

Jewish Encyclopedia. New York, Funk and Wagnall, 1905.

Served as a very helpful secondary source in any number of areas for which specific, though not overly detailed information was required.

M. Lieber. Rashi. Jewish Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1906.

As complete a biography of Rashi as we could expect given the limited information at our disposal. Popular and readable yet seems to be based on solid scholarship. It is much weaker in its evaluation and interpretation of the commentaries. Lack of references limits the book's value for research purposes still further.

M. Lowenthal. Jews of Germany. Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 1936.

One of the few authors with real preception into the dramatic changes which were taking place in the Jewish community of Europe at the beginning of the twelfth century.

A. Marx. "The Life and Work of Rashi" (Rashi Anniversary Volume, Vol. I)

Attempts to deal with the difficult task of writing a biography of Rashi without any facts and concludes as do most of the other authors by discussing mainly his period and his work. Not exceptionally illuminating.

Mizrachi, Gur Aryeh, L'vush Haora, Siftay Hachamim. Perush al Rashi. Warsaw, Baumburg, 1862.

Utilized as a checking device to determine the



question with which Rashi was attempting to deal if this was not clear from the text. (See section "Method.")

James Parkes. The Jew in the Medieval Community. London, Sencino, 1938.

Source for historical background of the Medieval Jewish community. Contains much interesting material, but one occasionally wonders if he does not derive too much information about the nature of the Jewish community from the negative statements their enemies make about them.

S. Poznanski. Mavo, Parush Al Y'Hezkal 'Tray Asar l'Eleazer Mibulgenty. Warsaw, Miketze Mirdamim, 1913.

An exceptionally fine study of Rashi and his contemporaries. Clear to the point, with numerous references to the text.

Deals very well with problem of the relationship of Pshat to Drash.

C.W. Previte-Orton. Shorter Cambridge Medieval History. Cambridge at the University Press, 1952.

Major general source of information about the Medieval period.

W. Rosenau. Jewish Biblical Commentators. Baltimore, Lord Baltimore Press, 1906.

A popular and rather superficial book. Lack of adequate text references which might make it possible to check his various assertions. This book seems to be more about the lives of the commentators than their comments and as such was of very little help in the writing of this thesis.

Rubaschov and Solovetchick. Toldot Bikorot Hamikra. Berlin, D'vir 1928.

Utilized as a source for establishing the particular contribution of Rashi's school of exegesis. Adequate, but not particularly detailed or extensive.



M. Segal. Parshanut Hamikra. Jerusalem, Kiriya Sefer, 1952.

A good general introduction to a study of Jewish exegesis. I used it as a guide for an understanding of the sweep of Jewish exegesis and the problems with which it attempts to deal. The book, as all surveys must be, is a trifle superficial. Occasionally, it is a bit naive., e.g., the author makes a very poor case for the piety of Ibn Ezra and dispenses with the contribution of modern criticism and its importance in a startlingly offhand manner.

B. Smalley. A Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages. Oxford, 1941.

A very fine and comprehensive study of Medieval Christian exegesis. Author has a thorough control of his material as well as a general understanding of its implications. Particularly helpful is his awareness of what is going on in the world of Arab and Jewish exegesis.

M. Waxman. A History of Jewish Literature. New York City, Bloch, 1938, Vol. I, Book II, Medieval Period.

A good survey of the intellectual activity of the Jewish community of the Middle Ages. Insofar as he deals with each type of literature separately rather than the total literature of the separate communities, it is difficult to understand the relationships of the different types of literature, e.g., the relationships between grammar, exegesis and philosophy in Saadia, the effect of the work of the Spanish grammarians upon the exegetes, etc.

B. Weinrby. "Rashi Against the Background of His Epoch" (Rashi Anniversary Volume, Vol. I).

Excellent, though short essay. Contains much information which is of direct relevance to the subject of this thesis. Guided me to a number of passages in which I would not have seen polemic intentions but for its aid.

S. Zeitlin. "Rashi" (American Jewish Yearbook, Vol. 41) Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society.

Semi-popular study of the life and times of Rashi. He here alludes to the theory which he later develops in Religious and Secular Leadership.

S. Zeitlin. Religious and Secular Leadership. Philadelphia, Dropsie, 1953.

A very ingenious discussion of Rashi's attempt to establish the primacy of rabbinic leadership in the Medieval community over lay leadership. Hypotheses sometimes seem to be based on flimsy evidence but they are by no means to be casually rejected. Further research in this area would probably prove quite fruitful.

