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A HISTORY OF THE FIRST MUSICAL HAGGADOT

ELLA L. GLADSTONE MARTIN

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Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music
New York, New York

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Written Project Advisor: Rabbi Joseph Skloot

Abstract

The Passover seder is an inherently musical experience, filled with beloved prayers and songs. This thesis is a historical examination of musical Haggadot (Passover Seder compendia) surveying two representative Haggadot including musical notation. Through the textual, musicological, and musical analysis of printed and archival sources, as well as historiography, I have set out to answer the following questions: (1) What about their historical milieus led these editors to publish a musical Haggadah? And (2) why did the editors of these Haggadot choose to transcribe the particular songs that they did? Chapter one outlines the history of the Haggadah and Jewish musical notation. In what follows, I explore the first musical Haggadah, *Liber Rituum Paschalium*, composed by a Christian (chapter 2), and the first musical Haggadah composed by a Jews, *Haggadah uber Erzahlung Israel Auszug aus Egypten,* by Isaac Offenbach (chapter 3). In my conclusion, I discuss how my research relates to today's cantorate.

Keywords: Haggadah, musical Haggadot, Passover, seder, home ritual, Jewish music.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my grandfather, Alex Gladstone (Z"L), for whom the only thing more important than tradition and education was family.

The Passover Haggadah

At its core, the Haggadah is the text of a home-based Passover (Hebrew *Pesach*, plural *Pesachim*) ritual. Meaning 'telling,' the Haggadah lends context and content to the Passover observance. When printing presses were established across Europe during the 1400s, Haggadot became among the most widely distributed Jewish books.[1]

Countless communities, organizations, and individuals have published Haggadot, each with its own unique features. For example, while Haggadot are normally printed in Hebrew, and sometimes with accompanying translations in the vernacular, some Haggadot exist solely in the vernacular, such as those produced by Renaissance-era crypto Jews in Amsterdam and Venice entirely in Spanish. Because these Jews were forced to convert to Christianity, they did not know any Hebrew.[2] Many social and political movements have coopted the Haggadah to disseminate campaign propaganda during an election. The Reform movement adapted its Haggadot to reflect a universalistic approach, as did American Reconstructionists in the 1900s.[3] At the end of the 20th

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[1] Ochs, "Publicizing the Miracle," 192.

[2] Israel Shenker, "For Passover, The Haggadah Comes Out—in 3,500 Varieties," *New York Times,* March 23, 1975, 50, https://www.nytimes.com/1975/03/23/archives/for-passover-the-haggadah-comes-outin-3500-varieties.html.

[3] Arnold Eisen, *Rethinking Modern Judaism,* (Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press, 1999), 249; Florian Albrod, "Beyond the Door: Proposing a New Interpretation of Eschatological Expectations During the Passover-*Seder*," *Zeramim: An Online*

century, the British Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues published its own Haggadah emphasizing a message of peace and accountability.[4] This is merely a taste of the immense thematic variation among Haggadot, and this thesis considers two very different specimens, the first two to include musical notation.

Pesach in the Bible

In the Book of Exodus, God sends ten plagues upon the Egyptians to convince them to free the Israelites. The final plague was the death of each firstborn son. The Israelites killed a lamb and painted their doorposts with its blood so the angel of death would know to 'pass over' their houses. Exodus 12:14 consecrates this date as a "day of remembrance" that must be celebrated throughout the generations. Verse 15 commands: "You must eat matzos for seven days, but before the first day you must remove [all] leaven from your homes; for anyone who eats *chametz*, that soul will be cut off from Yisrael. [*Chametz* is forbidden] from the first day [of *Pesach*] until [after] the seventh day."

Four different verses in the Book of Exodus command parents to explain salvation from slavery to their children.[5] Jewish literature understands the *seder* ritual as an attempt to fulfill those commands through symbolism and storytelling, teaching young people about the hardships their ancestors faced and the strength and benevolence of God. Later

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Journal of Applied Jewish Thought V, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 2020), 30; Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 20.

[4] Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 30.

[5] See Exodus 12; Ex., 13:8; and Ex., 13:14.

Books of the Bible record that the Israelites commemorated Passover annually. The Books of Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Kings, Ezekiel, Ezra, and Chronicles mention the holiday.[6] Israelites, and later Jews, continued to perform the lamb sacrifice offering at the Jerusalem Temple.

When the Romans destroyed the Second Temple in 70 CE and exiled the Jewish people from Jerusalem, they could no longer offer sacrifices and had to find a new way to celebrate this festival. The *seder* and Haggadah were created to guide the celebration of Passover in the home.

Rabbis composed the *Mishnah*, a compendium of Jewish laws from c. 200 CE, to ensure that Jewish ritual would survive in exile.[7] They wanted to prove that God's presence can exist and be felt beyond the temple walls, and they wanted to justify their own authority. [8] The conventions of Passover included in the *Mishnah* demonstrate their desire to institutionalize Passover rituals which, up until then, were akin to folk customs.

The Passover *seder* is first mentioned in *Mishnah Pesachim* 10. The rabbis continued the framework of education commanded in the Torah, similarly invested in parents teaching their children about the events of the Exodus.[9] *Mishnah Pesachim* tells parents what questions their children should ask them to engage in meaningful familial conversations about the story of Passover. *Mishnah Pesachim* also discusses the

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[6] Deut. 16:1-6; Lev. 23:5-11; Numbers 9:2-14, 28:16, 33:3; II Kings 23:21-23; II Chron. 30:1-19, 35:1-18; Ezra 6:19-21; Ezekiel 45:21.

[7] Lawrence Schiffman, "Sectarianism in the Second Commonwealth," in *Texts and Traditions,* (Ktav Publishing House, 1998), 326.

[8] Baruch Bokser, *The Origins of The Seder: The Passover Rite and Early Rabbinic Judaism,* (Berkley: Univ of California Press, 1984), 1.

[9] Bokser, *Origins of the Seder,* 67.

ceremonial foods eaten on Passover: matzah (unleavened bread), bitter herbs, specific vegetables, and the paschal lamb.

Overview of the Passover Seder

Passover commemorates Jewish escape from the bonds of slavery in Egypt. It is the oldest, continuously celebrated Jewish holiday.[10] It is one of three pilgrimage festivals when ancient Jews journeyed to the Temple in Jerusalem. While notable additions and amendments are made to the prayers usually offered in the synagogue, the holiday's central ritual is a familial gathering on the eve of the 15th in the Hebrew month of *Nisan*.

The ritual follows a specific sequence called a *seder*, derived from the Hebrew word "order." The *seder* includes the following steps, outlined in the Haggadah:

(1) The first step of the *seder* is called "sanctification" (*Kadesh).* Like many Jewish holiday celebrations, the *seder* begins with a blessing over the wine. Participants consume four cups of wine during the *seder*, each cup is sanctified with a blessing, and this first cup receives a special blessing that includes a prayer of gratitude for reaching this special day. The Passover rite includes blessings for all ceremonial acts. In Judaism, blessings are prayers that follow a particular formula and are recited before the performance of a commandment. Blessings took on a new meaning post-70. Rabbis required

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[10] Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 2.

Jews to recite a myriad of blessings to remind them of God's existence beyond the walls of the temple.[11]

(2) The next step in the Passover *seder* is *urchatz* -- ritual handwashing, a practice that precedes the consumption of food, followed by,

(3) The consumption of a green vegetable called *karpas*. A green vegetable, such as parsley, symbolizing the Spring harvest, is dipped into salt water, symbolizing the tears shed by the enslaved Israelites.

(4) *Matzah* is a critical component of the *seder*. Jews rid their houses of *chametz* (leavened bread) in solidarity with the Israelite slaves who did not have time to wait for their bread to rise before escaping Egypt. For the entire seven days of Passover, Jews cannot eat *chametz* and eat *matzah* instead. At this point of the *seder,* participants stack three pieces of *matzah* on top of each other and break the middle piece in a ritual titled *yachatz.* Akin to the glass that is broken at the end of a Jewish wedding ceremony, *yachatz* represents the brokenness of the world. One half of the middle *matzah* is called the *afikomen,* which comes from the Greek word for dessert. An individual will hide the *afikomen* for children to find at the end of the *seder*. This is meant to keep young people engaged throughout.

(5) The Passover story is read aloud from the Haggadah in a practice called *maggid.* The story of Exodus and several rabbinic interpretations of the holiday are described. The *Mishnah*'s four questions are traditionally recited

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[11] Bokser, *Origins of the Seder,* 74.

in the *maggid* section by the youngest family member in attendance. These questions, referred to in Hebrew as *Mah Nishtanah* ("What is different?"), provoke a conversation about what distinguishes the *seder* night from all others.[12]

(6) Another ritual handwashing follows this retelling before the *seder* meal, referred to as *rachtzah.*

(7) The *seder* commences with a blessing recited over the *matzah.* Then, participants consume several symbolic foods:

(8) A bitter herb called *maror* symbolizing the bitterness of slavery;

(9) A sandwich made from *matzah* and *maror* called *korech;* and a sandwich of *matzah, maror,* and *charoset* (a sweet paste of fruits and nuts).

(10) *Korech* acts as an appetizer for the celebratory meal -- *shulchan orech*.

(11) The search for the *afikomen* begins in a process called *tzafun.*

(12) Then, as is customary after a meal, Jews recite a blessing of thanksgiving called *Birkat Hamazon.*

(13) Linked to the thanksgiving blessing, participants recite Psalms 113-118, a series of psalms of praise labeled *Hallel*.

(14) The conclusion of the *seder* is labeled *nirtzah,* a recitation of texts describing the Jewish people's messianic hopes. It has also become customary

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[12] Ruth Newhouse, "The Music of The Passover Seder from Notated Sources" (M.A. diss., University of Maryland, 1980).

at this point in the ritual to recite metrical poetry.[13] *The Prague Haggadah* of 1590 was the first to contain two poems that have become the most common: *Echad Mi Yodeah* ("Who Knows One?") and *Chad Gadya* ("One Goat").

The Haggadah

Seders are, in essence, a piece of theatre in which the story of Exodus is re-enacted.[14] The Passover table is set with a prop, a "*seder* plate" containing foods that symbolize different aspects of slavery that the ancient Israelites experienced in Egypt. The script is the Haggadah equipped with a set description, narration, and direction. It is "an anthology of Jewish literature … composed in many ages and under many skies and molded by long centuries of usage into a harmonious whole."[15] The text was compiled over centuries and stems from a variety of biblical and rabbinic sources.[16]

The Haggadah text was originally included alongside other religious texts, prayer books such as those compiled by Amram Gaon (810-875) and Saadia Gaon (882-942) and discovered in the Cairo Genizah, as well as in *Mishneh Torah* by Maimonides (1138-1204).

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[13] Eric Werner, "Tunes of the Haggadah," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore 7,* no. 1 (1965).

[14] For more on the connection between Jewish spirituality and the theatre see Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way,* (USA: Tarcher Perigee Publishers, 1992), 1-3.; David Katz, "The Dramaturgy of Reform Worship," *CCAR Journal*, (Summer 1992).; Sally Morgenthaler, "Worship vs. Performance," *Worship Leader Magazine*; and Robert Freedman, "More Techniques and Tools," in *Lens, Mirror, Spark and Lamp,* (USA: Createspace Independent Publishing Platform, 2011), 57-91.

[15] Cecil Roth, *The Haggadah*, (Massadah and Alumoth: 1962), 5.

[16] Simcha Gross, "Whoever Is Hungry, Come and Eat," *Aramaic Studies* 18, no. 2, (Nov 2020): 172, *https://doi.org/10.1163/17455227-bja10014*.

The oldest free-standing Haggadah was written in Germany, called *The Birds' Head Haggadah*, written in the year 1300 and includes multicolored illustrations. The first Sephardic Haggadah, known as *The Golden Haggadah*, was created in Catalonia twenty years later. The first printed Haggadah comes from Spain. Though it does not include a date of publication, historians suppose it comes from the year 1482.[17]

From the sixteenth century to the nineteenth, the Haggadah remained relatively unchanged. Nonetheless, it became the most reprinted Jewish text of all time. The Haggadah is relatively short when compared to other Jewish books, making it a rather simple venture for printers. Moreover, "it is a notoriously perishable item, readily vulnerable to the stains of spilled wine, the hands of inquisitive children, and other normal hazards of the festive meal, and this factor alone creates a constant need for new copies."[18]

Development of the Haggadah from Mishnaic times until Modernity

In the ancient Jerusalem Temple, the Levite priests sang *Hallel* psalms while the Israelites slaughtered, prepared, and ate their Paschal offerings. After the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis moved this practice into the home and the seder. This is just some of the festive singing at the heart of the seder ritual.[19]

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[17] Martin Bodek, "A Brief History of the Haggadah," *Jewish Book Counsil,* April 3, 2020, https://www.jewishbookcouncil.org/pb-daily/a-brief-history-of-the-haggadah.

[18] Yosef Yerushalmi*, Haggadah and History: A Panorama in Facsimile of Five Centuries of the Printed Haggadah from the Collections of Harvard University and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America* (USA: Jewish Publication Society, 2005), 13-14.

[19] Leonhard, *The Jewish Pesach and the Origins of the Christian Easter*, 249.

Musicologist Edwin Seroussi has shown how different settings of the Four Questions represent two distinct phases of the development of the *seder*. In pre-modern times, Jews in various communities recited the seder's Four Questions according to their distinct chant modes used for study. These modes were distinctly unmetrical. During modern times, Jewish music, inspired by non-Jewish sources, became far more rhythmic, and so composers set *Mah Nishtanah* to joyful, easily singable melodies.[20]

It has become customary to engage in a sing-along at the end of the Passover seder. These folk songs have been included in European Haggadot since the Late Middle Ages, and they include the metrical poems discussed above. [21] Jews have adopted the melodies of their Christian neighbors and popular culture. Many Haggadah melodies are, in fact, contrafacts of non-Jewish songs. In fact, musicologists struggle to distinguish between Passover melodies of religious and secular origin. The focus of this thesis is the first Haggadot where these songs appear in musical notation. As such, it is important to reflect on when and why Jews began to notate their music.

Development of Musical Notation

Written music took centuries to develop into the format we recognize today. The first attempt at notating music was discovered on a Babylonian tablet from 1400 BC.[22] Early instances of musical notation were called *Neumes,* simple "memory aids" for

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[20] See Edwin Seroussi, referencing *Sefer Maharil,* Jerusalem 1978, *Hilkhot seder Pessah,* fol. 15a; Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 143-144.
[21] Stuart Binder, "Avadim Hayinu: The Relationship of Seder Melodies to Their Texts" (Investiture diss., Hebrew Union College, 1990).
[22] Binder, "Avadim Hayinu".

singers, mapping out the contours of a melody.[23] Staff notation was introduced to the West by the Latin Church in the ninth century.[24] Church leaders were eager to unify the Christian world by standardizing a musical language that could preserve and disseminate their liturgy.[25] They used a stave consisting of a red line on F and a yellow line on C. Guido of Arezzo, an Italian music theorist and Catholic bishop, amended this stave to include a black line in the middle of F and C, as well as one above the C. *Neumes* were placed on the relevant lines or spaces, allowing musicians to comprehend the pitch relationships between musical phrases. As Christian music evolved, so did the technology used to circulate it. The spread of printing during the late 1400s led to the popularization of musical notation.[26]

Jews and Musical Notation

Jewish Synagogue music has always been heavily improvised. Jewish songs that were pre-composed were passed on from one person to another orally. As a result, their composers, places of origin, and exact melodies were often forgotten until Jewish music began to be notated en masse during the nineteenth century.[27]

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[23] "Neume," Encyclopedia Britannica, last modified December 19, 2007, https://www.britannica.com/art/neume.
[24] Werner, "Tunes of the Haggadah".
[25] Joseph Swain, *Historical Dictionary of Sacred Music* (USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2016), 107.
[26] Edwin Seroussi, "The Jewish Liturgical Music Printing Revolution: A Preliminary Assessment," *Textual Transmission in Contemporary Jewish Cultures* online edn, (2020), https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780197516485.003.0007.
[27] Seroussi, "The Jewish Liturgical Music Printing Revolution," 100.

One written form of Jewish music did flourish long before the year 1800: Torah cantillation. Since Talmudic times, the Torah was vocalized melodically when read aloud. We know from the Talmud itself that a series of hand motions was developed to help chanters distinguish between the beginnings, mid-way pauses, and endings of verses. This approach continued until the ninth century when chanters felt the need for more guidance. Jewish scribes and scholars called Masoretes designed a glossary of written markings developed for the chanting of the Torah. Their approach, still used today, mirrored musical *neumes* and was similar in form to ninth-century Byzantine and Armenian musical notation.[28]

In the early modern period, German and Italian Jews began to utilize the musical notation of their Christian neighbors.[29] In the year 1600, Abraham Segre, the cantor of Casale, published transcriptions of eight Psalms.[30] In 1623, Salamone Rossi became the first Jew to compose polyphonic synagogue music for a mixed choir. Inspired by the musical ideals of the Italian Renaissance, Rossi broke boundaries with his choral settings of sacred Hebrew texts. But his endeavor to bring classical music into the synagogue failed to catch on until the nineteenth century when Rossi's music received a second hearing by Jews under the influence of Jewish enlightenment and Reform movements.

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[28] Abraham Idelsohn, *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* (UK: Dover Publications, 1992), 67-69.

[29] Edwin Seroussi, "Music: The 'Jew' of Jewish Studies," *Jewish Studies* 46, (2009): 3-84, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23383514.

[30] Eliyahu Schliefer, "Idelsohn: An Annotated Bibliography," *Yuval Studies of The Jewish Music Research Centre- The Abraham Zvi Idelsohn Memorial* 5, (1986).

In 1727, Rabbi Elchonon Henle Kirchhain published the first anthology of Jewish sheet music was released: *Simchat Hanefesh* ("The Joy of the Soul.")[31] Kirchhain wrote these pieces in Yiddish for Jewish holidays, including Passover, to curb the singing of secular, German music.[32] Nonetheless, the transcription of music remained a rarity within the Jewish community until the nineteenth century.

As I discuss at length in Chapter 2, the first Haggadah to include musical notation was published in 1644 by Christian Hebraist Johann Rittangel. Fascination with Jews and their rituals led Christian scholars to collect and transcribe a myriad of Jewish melodies and traditions, including those of Passover. However, their interest in notating Jewish music mostly predates that of the Jewish community itself. As a result, musical Haggadot written by and for Jews, did not exist until the nineteenth century.[33] In what follows, I explore the first musical Haggadah, *Liber Rituum Paschalium*, composed by a Christian (chapter 2), and the first musical Haggadah composed by a Jews, *Haggadah uber Erzahlung Israel Auszug aus Egypten,* by Isaac Offenbach (chapter 3).

Rittangel Haggadah

The first Haggadah to include musical notation was *Liber Rituum Paschalium* ("The Book of Passover Rituals"), a Latin translation of the Haggadah written by Johann Stephan Rittangel. Released in 1644, *Liber Rittum Paschalium* is part of a longstanding,

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[31] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music,* 383. A copy of this rare print is preserved in the HUC Library. A photostatic copy with an introduction was published by J. Schatzky, New York, 1926.
[32] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music,* 384.
[33] Newhouse, "The Music of The Passover Seder from Notated Sources."

and enduring, Christian interest in Passover which they perceive as Jesus's last supper.[34] It was one of a spate of books produced by non-Jewish scholars of Hebrew, known as Christian Hebraists, to satisfy German-gentile curiosity in Judaism during the seventeenth century.

Johann Stephan Rittangel: Biography

Johann Stephan Rittangel was born in 1606 in Forscheim, near Bamberg, Germany.[35] As was common for the time, Rittangel went by several names. In Latin, he

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[34] In the New Testament, the books of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, characterize Jesus' Last Supper as a Passover Seder, while John 18 describes it as taking place a day prior. Afterall, the Passover meal was similar to many feasts enjoyed by Jews in biblical times (see Jonathan Klawans, "Was Jesus' Last Supper a Seder?," Biblical Archeological Review, October 2001, https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/people-cultures-in-the-bible/jesus-historical-jesus/was-jesus-last-supper-a-seder/.). W.D. Davies puts forward that Christians manufactured a connection between Passover and the Last Supper to associate relate Jesus' death and resurrection with the salvation of the Israelites from Egypt (see William David Davies, The Sermon on the Mount, (UK: Cambridge Univ Press, 1966), 100.) What is almost certain is that Jesus' last meal was a symposium, as were all rabbinic seders. Both Jews and Christians followed the Greco-Roman custom of celebrating festivities through structured meals called symposia. Christian symposia gave way to their ritual of eucharist, so some believe that their eating of the wafer came from the unleavened bread of Passover. The symbolism of drinking Jesus's blood stems from the 'bloody' theme of the Passover story. For more on the connection between Christians and the Seder, see Lawrence Hoffman, "This Bread: Christianity and the Seder," in My People's Passover Haggadah, Lawrence Hoffman and David Arnow, ed., (USA: Jewish Lights Pub., 2008), 21-36; and Eric Werner, "Tunes of the Haggadah," Studies in Bibliography and Booklore 7, no. 1 (1965): 66-71.

[35] John Young, "Servant of God," *Faith, Medical Alchemy and Natural Philosophy: Johann Moriaen, Reformed Intelligencer, and the Hartlib Circle*, (Hampshire: Ashgate, 1998), 35-73.

was called Joannes Stephanus, and in German, he was known as Johann Stefan. English writers spell his given name as I do -- Johann Stephan.

Rittangel was a controversial figure. Rumors circulated around him, and his religion at birth, whether Roman Catholic or Jewish, has yet to be confirmed. What historians agreed upon is that Rittangel died as a member of the Church.[36] His contemporaries judged him for looking like "an Eastern European rabbi" and he was so well versed in the Hebrew language and matters of the Jewish faith that many believed he was born a Jew.[37] Those who were curious about his religious background were known to have approached his wife to inquire whether he had been circumcised and since she refused to respond, they continued to speculate amongst themselves.[38] Rittangel was well respected as a thinker but not as a person. He was approached about esteemed professorships, only to lose out due to his ornery, eccentric, and boastful personality.[39] With his religious allegiance in question, no faith group, whether Jewish, Catholic or Protestant, was certain if he represented their interests.[40]

German scholar Johann Christoph Adelung was one of Rittangel's supporters. Adelung believed that the narrative of Rittangel's Jewish origins to be entirely false.[41] Modern scholar of Jewish thought, Daniel Lasker, similarly discredits the notion that

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[36] James Parkes, "Early Christian Hebraists," *Studies in Bibliography and Booklore* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1962): 11, https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/27943347.pdf.
[37] Daniel Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism: A New Document", *Renaissance Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (Winter 2006): 1090.
[38] Richard Popkin and Martin Mulsow, ed., Secret Conversions to Judaism in Early Modern Europe, (Netherlands: Brill, 2004), 34.
[39] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1093.
[40] Popkin and Mulsow, Secret Conversions, 34.
[41] Young, "Servant of God".

Rittangel converted out of Judaism, citing the praise Rittangel received from members of the Jewish community, which would have been highly unlikely if he had renounced Judaism altogether.[42] Others continue to doubt that a man born a Christian during this time would have been as familiar with Jewish literature as he was.

Jewish or not, Rittangel expressed a strong kinship toward the Jews, especially the Karaite community. He spent approximately two decades studying Hebrew and Jewish literature, living among the Jews of Poland and Turkey. [43] Rittangel connected most strongly with Karaite Jews. Karaites rejected Rabbinic authority and sources of oral tradition, choosing to adhere solely to the laws of the written Torah, which they believed had emanated directly from the Divine. Rittangel corresponded with Karaites throughout his life and extolled their customs in his work.[44] I discuss his ulterior motives for doing so later in this chapter.

In 1640, Rittangel was appointed professor of Semitic Languages, with expertise in Karaism, at the University of Konigsberg. It was the Konigsberg Consistory—the governing body of Konigsberg's Protestant Churches--that first publicly challenged Rittangel's religious ancestry, and a year later he left Prussia, as well as his wife and child, for the Netherlands, to teach Hebrew in Amsterdam. [45] According to Rittangel, his houseboat was attacked by pirates en route, and he was brought to London against his

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[42] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1090.
[43] Paul Fenton, "The European Discover of Karaism in the Sixteenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Karaite Judaism: A Guide to Its History and Literary Sources, ed. Meira Polliack (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 48; Popkin and Mulsow, Secret Conversions, 34.
[44] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1097.
[45] Young, "Servant of God".

will.[46] In England, Rittangel built a reputation as an eminent scholar of Karaism amongst Christian Hebraists.[47]

Rittangel departed England in November of 1641, in pursuit of his original destination of Amsterdam. Once there, he became a close colleague of German mystic Johannes Moriaen. Rittangel came to Amsterdam to procure a copy of *Sefer Yezirah* (The Book of Creation), a Kabbalistic text Rittangel planned to transcribe, translate into Latin, and comment upon. With this goal met, Rittangel returned to Konigsberg, where he died in 1652. [48]

Christian Hebraism

Christian Hebraism is the study of Hebrew Judaic texts, most commonly the Torah, by Christian scholars. Christian Hebraists exhibit both a fascination with Jews as the creed of Jesus and contempt for Rabbinic Judaism. The study of Hebrew was a gateway to a better understanding of their Messiah, as well as their Jewish enemies. Christian scholars studied Hebrew scripture for polemic ends, translating Jewish texts to attack their merit, often with the hope of converting Jews to Christianity.[49]

Few Christians studied Hebrew in the late fourteenth century, but this changed drastically at the beginning of the sixteenth century. By the time Rittangel came of age, the Hebrew language was a popular subject of study amongst Christian academics.

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[46] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1089.
[47] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1091.
[48] *Sefer Yezirah,* trans. Joannes Stephan Rittangel, (Amsterdam, 1642); Young, "Servant of God".
[49] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony*, 16.

Hebrew was taught in most European universities, especially those in Germany.[50] Knowledge of Hebrew advanced rapidly during the seventeenth century, aided by governmental support for the pursuit, the invention of printing, and never-before-seen levels of Christian-Jewish scholarly conversation.[51]

The Christian Hebraist movement in Europe grew during the period of Reformation, from 1500-1660. The sixteenth century was wrought with religious tension, not only between Jews and gentiles, but amongst Christians themselves. The condemnation of Judaism aided Catholics and Protestants in their rivalry with one another. Roman Catholics painted Protestantism as Judaism in disguise, while Protestant theologians such as Martin Bucer made the similar claim that apart from a belief in Christ "the faith and religious practices of papists and Jews are really identical." [52] One thing Protestants and Catholics could agree on was their distaste for the Jews.[53]

Many Hebraists converted to Lutheranism, including Rittangel. Upon Martin Luther's passing, his student Philip Melanchthon used Hebrew to further establish the Lutheran movement within the theological framework of Reformation.[54] Lutheran Orthodoxy promoted the study of the Bible in a desire to understand the word of God.[55]

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[50] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony*, 203.
[51] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony*, 48.
[52] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony,* 203; Martin Bucer, "Cassel Advice," *Von den Juden* (Strasbourg: 1538), 102. For more on this see Alfred Glaser, *Geschichte der Juden in Strasbourg* (Germany: J Kauffman Verlag, 1894).
[53] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony,* 201
[54] Katherine Puzzanghera, "Humanism and Hebraism: Christian Scholars and Hebrew Sources in the Renaissance," (PhD diss., Wellesley College, 2016), 56.
[55] Stephen Burnett, "Lutheran Christian Hebraism in the Time of Solomon Glassius (1593-1656)," *Faculty Publications, Classics and Religious Studies Department* (2011): 462,

Hebraism became an imperative element of sixteenth-century Lutheranism, and Lutherans grew to be an important fraction of the Christian Hebraist movement in Europe.

Liber Rituum Paschalium

In 1644, Rittangel published a Latin translation of the Haggadah which he titled *Liber Rituum Paschalium* (The Book of Passover Rituals), including his own commentary on the Passover rites of the Jews. The copy of *Liber Rituum Paschalium* that I analyzed was published by Jacobi Horrei, otherwise known as Jacobus Horreus, as part of a posthumous collection of Rittangel's work entitled *Libra Veritatis et de Paschate Tractatus* (The Weight of Truth and the Passover Treatise). It is unclear who was responsible for printing Rittangel's original Haggadah. All that is known is that it was released in 1644 in Koenigsberg.

Rittangel's Haggadah abounds with contradictions. *Liber Rituum Paschalium* features a fascinating combination of nuanced insight on Passover and incorrect assumptions about the holiday, admiration for the Jews and prejudice against them. Unlike his predecessors, Rittangel was highly Jewishly literate. He spent years studying Hebrew and Jewish literature and living amongst the Jewish people. His motives, however, remained the same as his peers: to co-opt the Haggadah for the sake of polemic

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https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1122&context=classicsfacpub; Aidan Cottrell-Boyce, "Judaizing and Singularity in England, 1618-1667," (PhD diss., Gonville and Caius College, 2018), 76, https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1810/287471/Corrected%20Thesis.pdf?sequence=1.

Christian interests. While Rittangel was eager to share his knowledge of the Haggadah with his fellow Christian Hebraists, his ultimate goal was to negate the validity of Judaism.

Motivation

Rittangel is considered by historians to be a Jewish-Christian millenarian – a devout Christian who looks to Judaism to bolster their messianic beliefs. Messianism – a strong belief that God will bring a messiah to save humanity -- is highly prevalent in Jewish liturgy and the Passover *seder*.[56] Much of traditional Jewish prayer expresses a deep hope for the arrival of the *Meshiach* (Hebrew for "Messiah").[57] Members of the Jewish community, especially in the Netherlands, often welcomed Christian millenarians into their sanctuaries and homes.[58] However, Christian Millenarians did not study Judaism for their own personal edification. They had a much larger mission in mind— to convert Jews to Christianity. Rittangel felt a particular affinity for Karaite Judaism and was highly complementary of the Jewish sect in his writing. Karaite rejection of Rabbinic Judaism mirrored Rittangel's own. In 1641, Rittangel penned a letter in Hebrew to fellow Christian Hebraist John Selden, asking for his help in publishing a series of Karaite

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[56] Joshua Andrew Johnson, "When Brethren Walk Together: Immanuel Tremellius (C. 1510-1580), Jewish-Christian Conversion, Christian Hebraism, and Reformed Christianity," (MA diss., Washington State University, 2019), 240.

[57] Richard H. Popkin, "Jewish Messianism and Christian Millenarianism," in *Culture and Politics*, 67-90. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 67.

[58] Ernestine G.E. Van der Wall, "Petrus Serrarius and Menasseh Ben Israel: Christian Millenarianism and Jewish Messianism in Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam," in *Menasseh ben Israel and his World*, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 1989), 235.

manuscripts. In it, Rittangel praised the Karaites for avoiding the "mistakes" of the Rabbinate and Jewish mystics when interpreting the Old Testament. Rittangel compliments the Karaites' fastidious approach to the study of Torah by stating: "Their delight was solely for the Torah of the Lord, and their efforts were by means of lively and correct rhetoric, in order to show the correct intention of scriptures, pursuing truthful examination...There is also a very honorable composition, which they wrote against the entire Talmud."[59] By widely distributing the religious work of the Karaites, including their degradation of the Talmud, Rittangel could expose vulnerabilities within the Rabbinic order.

Rittangel's circle of Christian Hebraists were engaged in polemic critiques of Judaism, but rarely took issue with the tenants of the Jewish faith, seeing as Jesus, their messiah, was a proponent of them. Neither did they disavow themselves from studying the Torah, reading it as a prequel to the Christian bible. Instead, Rittangel and his peers took aim at the hegemony of Rabbinic Judaism which they saw as the murderers of Christ who were keeping Jews from accepting the truth of Christianity. They heavily criticized the Talmud — the fundamental Rabbinic document — and Jews who recognized the text's authority.[60] Publicizing the existence of Jews whom themselves rejected the Talmud lent weight to the claims of Protestant Hebraists. Furthermore, many Christian Hebraists felt it would be easy to convert Karaite Jews to Christianity.[61] In a letter sent to

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[59] Daniel Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism: A New Document," *Renaissance Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (2006): 1109-1110, https://doi.org/10.1353/ren.2008.0518.
[60] Lasker, "Karaism and Christian Hebraism," 1097.
[61] Young, "Servants of God".

English Reformer and Christian Millerian Samuel Hartlib, Rittangel noted the appreciation Karaites displayed for Christianity and the contempt they harbored for the Rabbinate.[62]

Christian interest in Passover

First-Century Christians and Jews shared an appreciation for home ritual. Members of both faith traditions prayed as a community, within their respective houses of worship, and as family units within the home. Greco-Roman Jews and Christians celebrated religious festivals through structured meals called symposia. Jesus's last supper was a symposium, as were all rabbinic *seders*.[63] The Passover *seder* was highly influenced by the banquet customs of Roman Palestine, with its Haggadah deeply rooted in the symposia literature of Hellenistic times.[64]

Christian symposia gave way to the ritual of the Eucharist, so some believe that the eating of the communion wafer was derived from the unleavened bread of Passover.[65] By Jesus's wine glass coming to symbolize his blood, the Christian Messiah was taking on the properties of the Paschal lamb.[66] Due to Passover's role in the life and death of Jesus, many Christians are fascinated by the holiday. Johann Rittangel was no different.

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[62] "Letter, Kinner to Hartlib, with Copy Extracts, In Latin & German," *The Hartlib Papers*, https://www.dhi.ac.uk/hartlib/view?shelf=1%2F33%2F62.
[63] Lawrence Hoffman, *My People's Passover Haggadah* (Jewish Lights, 2008), 25-26.
[64] Bokser, *Origins of the Seder*, 50–66.
[65] Hoffman, *My People's Passover Haggadah.*
[66] Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 21.

He was not only translating the Haggadah from Hebrew into Latin, but he was also transforming the Jewish text into a polemic against Judaism.

Rittangel ransacked Jewish sources for depictions of the ritual world that birthed Jesus and his apostles.[67] He translated the Passover Haggadah to promote the word of God as he understood it, through the lens of the Trinity. If Christianity was born out of Judaism, Rittangel believed Jewish works would prove the veracity of the offshoot religion.[68] Christian Hebraists coined the term *Hebraica veritas,* meaning Hebrew truth, to describe the unique capability of Hebrew texts to accurately capture the word of God.[69] In the forward to his Haggadah, Rittangel acknowledges that "the Latin language did not always show itself as I wanted, next to the splendor, eloquence, and elegance" of the Hebrew.

In the dedication of *Liber Rituum Paschalium,* Rittangel expressed that the goal of this undertaking was to serve God, writing: "And with all my toils and troubles, because my life and my good name are all for Him, after everything, the sired of [His] glory is heard…"

In his Preface, Rittangel describes how this undertaking will benefit its Christian readers: "When this book [meaning the Haggadah] came to me, I saw the beauty of its description and the beauty of its appearance, and I said in my heart to copy it from beginning to end in order to benefit us and our hearts and those after us in Euphrates in matters concerning the roots of our religion but especially in matters regarding the

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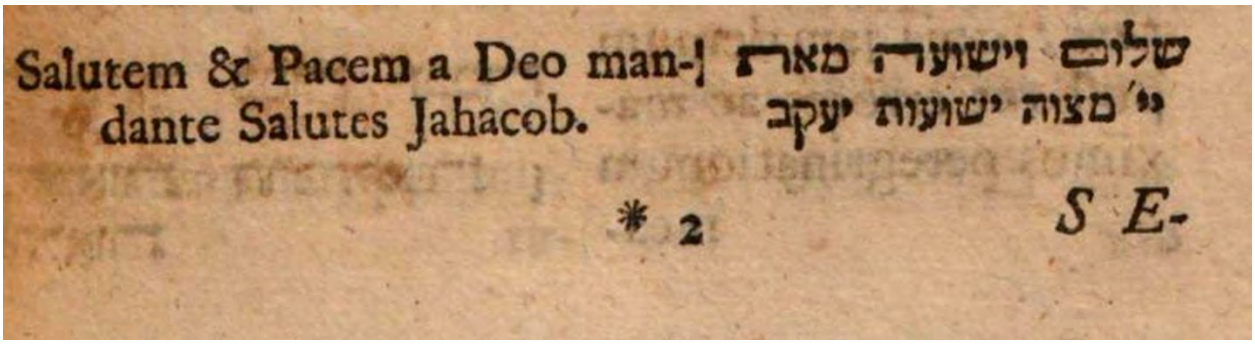
[67] Friedman, "Most Ancient Testimony," 100.
[68] Young, "Servant of God".
[69] Friedman, "Most Ancient Testimony," 13.

foundations of [our] faith." Rittangel differentiates between faith and organized religion. For him, the truth of Jesus's words transcends religious divides. It is the pursuit of truth which has motivated Rittangel to learn more about the origins of his faith.

The author quickly reveals an additional objective behind this project: the hope it will lead to more like it by increasing his status and desirability as a translator. "As for you, prudent reader, accept this my present, which is offered to you with a good heart and benevolent affection; for though it is little in quantity, it will be excellent in quality, in the eyes of the wise at heart. And soon you will encourage me to transfer more and more famous books with my own hand and the books stored in my library in Thefauris."

Content of Liber Rituum Paschalium

Liber Rituum Paschalium is written in Latin and Hebrew. Not every Hebrew word is translated into Latin, some additional comments are made in Latin, and there are occasional typeface discrepancies between the two languages. Written at the top of the title page are the Hebrew words "*Seder Haggadah Shel Pesach.*" In bigger letters below it is the Latin title "*Liber Rituum Paschalium*" meaning The Book of Passover Rituals. Rittangel's acknowledgements are made solely in Latin, apart from two lines at the bottom written in both languages.



These translate as: “Salutations and Peace by God to command the salvation of Jacob”. The line “צַוֵּה יְשׁוּעוֹת יַעֲקֹב” meaning “command the salvation of Jacob” comes from Jewish liturgy. However, Rittangel mistakenly added the letter *mem* before the word command, making it “commandment” instead.

This is not the only error in *Liber Rituum Paschalium.* Several Hebrew words are printed backwards, as the Haggadah’s gentile publishers would have been unfamiliar with the Hebrew language. As was common in the work of Christian Hebraists, Rittangel appends a list of corrections at the conclusion of his Haggadah. The mistake in his Hebrew salutation however is not a misprint. Rittangel is attempting to quote a Jewish psalm but has done so incorrectly. Only two pages in, Rittangel has displayed gaps in his Jewish expertise.

As previously stated, the dedication of Rittangel’s Haggadah is written in both Hebrew and Latin. The brunt of the Haggadah is pulled from Jewish sources and translated into Latin. The original Hebrew text of the Haggadah is found on the right hand of the page. Its Latin translation is printed on the opposite side. Rittangel’s intended readership is Latin speakers. He must have composed his dedication in both Latin and Hebrew to prove his mastery of the Hebrew language, in line with his goal of increasing the public’s demand for his translations. The dedication begins in Latin, addressing itself to the elector of Brandenburg for the Roman Empire, Frederick William and bestowing several compliments upon him. It continues in both Hebrew and Latin, and the first letter of each is heavily ornamented and surrounded by a large rectangular frame. This ornamentation technique was common in German Haggadot, and German literature at

large during the fifteen and sixteen hundreds.[70] The Preface is also written in both languages, and while the first letter of the Latin in it is ornamented, its Hebrew equivalent is enlarged but left undecorated.

The next section of Rittangel's Haggadah is a description of *Bedikat Hametz* — the ritual of removing bread from the home to prepare for Passover. No leavened yeast is allowed on Passover in honor of the Israelite slaves who are said to have fled Egypt before their loaves had time to rise.

Following this is an explanation, written only in Latin, of how Jews and their "domestics" prepare for the Passover *seder*. Several noteworthy statements are made in this section. Rittangel uses the Latin word "Paschatos" to mean Passover. This is a highly irregular form and usage of the word.[71] Rittangel describes Jewish women and their servants setting the table "agitated by a quasi-sacred joy." As is evident throughout his Haggadah, Rittangel witnessed many Passover celebrations. He was moved by the proceeding but cannot acknowledge the sacred nature of the festivities, lest he appear un-Christian. He proceeds to describe the *seder* plate, giving several examples of bitter herbs that can be used for the occasion. He also explains the symbolism behind the *charoset*, a sweet paste made of apples, nuts, and spices, to resemble the mortar the Israelites would have used to build the pyramids. Rittangel includes different recipes for *charoset* in his Haggadah, one used by Eastern Jews and another from the Italian region. His detailed

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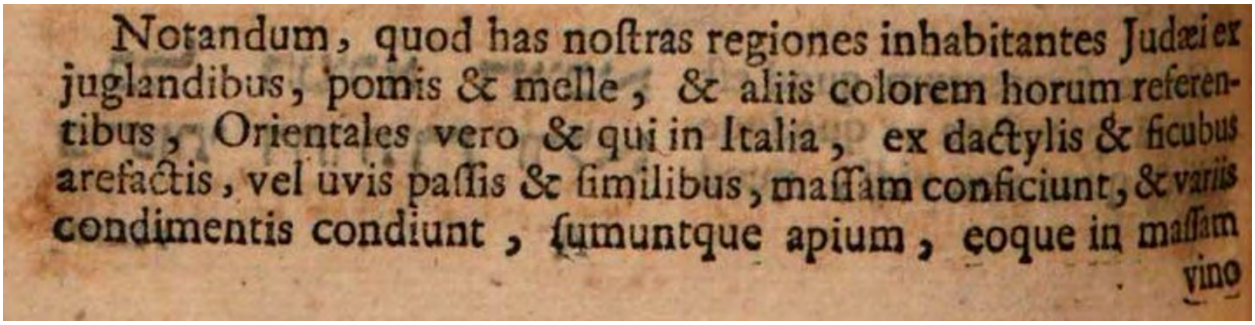
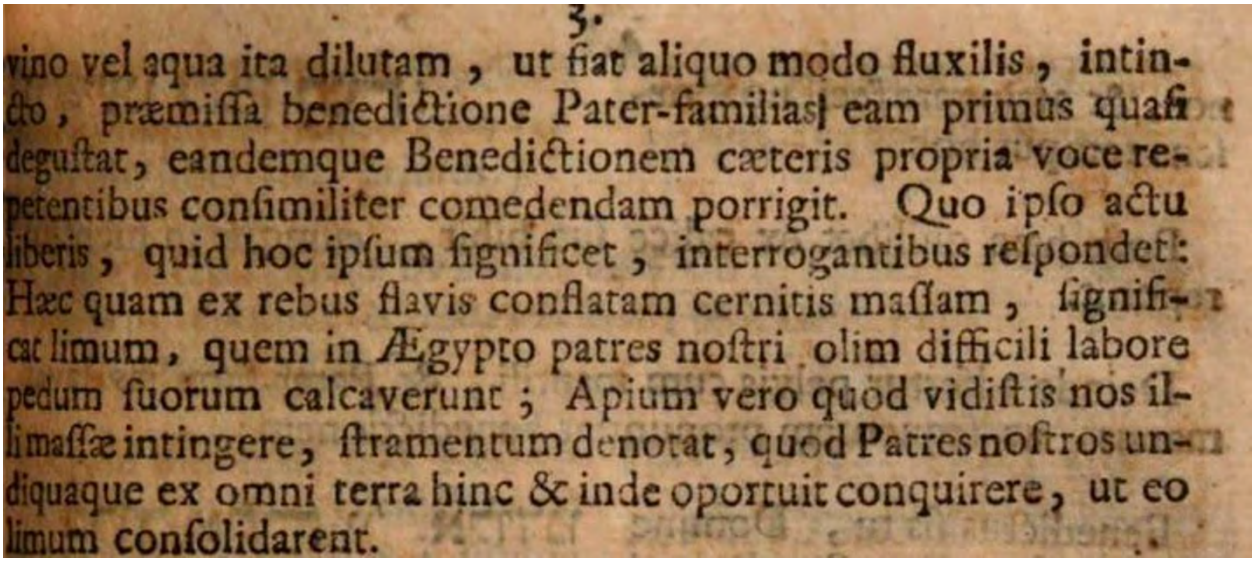
[70]Alexander Marx, "Illustrated Haggadahs," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 13, no. 4 (April 1923): 513.

[71] Ramban, Chametz UMatzah 7: 7-8 (Pesachim 108a) https://www.sefaria.org/Mishneh_Torah%2C_Leavened_and_Unleavened_Bread.7.8?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en.

description of the *Seder* Plate indicates a nuanced understanding of the diverse Jewish customs surrounding the holiday.


Notandum, quod has noſtras regiones inhabitantes Judæi ex juglandibus, pomis & melle, & aliis colorem horum referentibus, Orientales vero & qui in Italia, ex dactylis & ficubus arefactis, vel uvis paſſis & ſimilibus, maſſam conficiunt, & variis condimentis condiunt, ſumuntque apium, eoque in maſſam vino


3.
vino vel aqua ita dilutam, ut fiat aliquo modo fluxilis, intincto, præmiſſa benedictione Pater-familias eam primus quaſi deguſtat, eandemque Benedictionem cæteris propria voce repetentibus conſimiliter comedendam porrigit. Quo ipſo actu liberis, quid hoc ipſum ſignificet, interrogantibus reſpondet: Hæc quam ex rebus flavis conflatam cernitis maſſam, ſignificat limum, quem in Ægypto patres noſtri olim difficili labore pedum ſuorum calcaverunt; Apium vero quod vidiſtis nos illi maſſæ intingere, ſtramentum denotat, quod Patres noſtros undiquaque ex omni terra hinc & inde oportuit conquirere, ut eo limum conſolidarent.

Rittangel goes on to write, at times in poor Latin, that "even the youngest children pour four cups [of wine], [and] everyone has to drink at least a half a cup, leaning on his left arm when he drinks. This custom is held in such honor and value among them, that whoever reclines in this way during the whole of that sacred meal, he is generally believed to be the most holy, and is, therefore, most revered." This statement demonstrates an in-depth knowledge of the theology surrounding reclining. The highly esteemed Jewish philosopher Maimonides outlined the importance of reclining on Passover in the *Mishnah* when writing about the laws of the holiday.

Liber Rituum Paschalium mirrors the traditional sequence of the Haggadah and much of its content is left unaltered, apart from the insertion of Latin. The sections on ritual handwashing, the dipping of a green vegetable in salt water, and the breaking of the middle *matzah* are all very precise accounts of the *seder* proceedings. A lot of detail is included surrounding the customs of the *seder*, but Rittangel does not offer much of his own editorialization. One section that has a distinct lack of detail is the Four Questions — a prominent question and answer section of the Haggadah that explains how the *seder* night is different from any other. Rittangel includes the Four Questions themselves but does not expound upon them. One of the Four Questions revolves around the special custom of reclining on Passover, meant as a celebration of Jewish freedom, which Rittangel does describe in his introduction.

While Rittangel fails to analyze *Mah Nishtanah,* he is very concerned with explaining the Jewish concept of *Baruch Hamakom. Makom* is the Hebrew word for place, and in Jewish liturgy often refers to God. For Jews, God does not inhabit any one place, instead, all this mortal coil is found within the Divine. Following *Mah Nishtanah* (The Four Questions) is a benediction thanking God for the Torah, Blessing "HaMakom" (The Place). To explain this concept to his non-Jewish readers, Rittangel writes: "by 'place' in Hebrew is meant, God." Rittangel offers a Christian framework for this concept, referencing Acts 17:28 of the New Testament which states: "In him, we live, move and have our being." Rittangel's assertion that this verse means that God is a place, is a rather Neoplatonic reading of Paul's words in the Book of Acts.[72] Neoplatonism was

[72] Professor Adam Becker, personal communication with the author, November 15, 2022.

a religious philosophy dating back to Hellenistic times, upon which Jewish scripture had a major influence.[73] Neoplatonism was a monotheistic theology, appealing to members of all three Abrahamic religions, offering a framework for the universe and the people within it. The Neoplatonist conception of the Divine closely mirrors the concept of *Baruch Hamakom*, understanding God as an infinite sphere whose "center is everywhere, circumference nowhere."[74] The allure of Neoplatonism for Rittangel is understandable, as it pulls religious formulas from Hellenistic Judaism and Christianity. While Rittangel was a devout Christian, he recognized the beauty of ancient Jewish thought.

Rittangel clearly feels the need to explain the concept of *Makom,* as he does it again in his section on the Four Sons, four fictional children that prompt the reader to educate their own offspring about the message of Passover. At this point of the Haggadah, God is once again referred to as "HaMakom." Rittangel includes a footnote here, writing: "Place, as stated above, means God, if written in capital letters."[75] Rittangel delineates the biblical quotations in this passage, making biblical references explicit, which the original Hebrew does not. The intended readership of early Haggadot were learned,

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[73] Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy: Vol 1, Greek and Rome* (New York: Doubleday, 1946), 462.

[74] While Nietzsche is the first person on record to characterize God in this manner, in her work on Nietzsche and Platonist tradition, Robin Small explains how his formula of the sphere is rooted in Platonist tradition and espoused by modern Platonist thinkers. See Robin Small, "Nietzsche and a Platonist Tradition of the Cosmos: Center Everywhere and Circumference Nowhere," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 44, no. 1 (January-March, 1983).

[75] Johann Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," in *Libra Veritatis et de Paschate Tractatus,* ed. Jacobus Horreus (1698), 8.

Jewish men. Rittangel is writing his Latin translation for Christian Hebraists who would not have the Jewish bible committed to memory.

In the traditional Haggadah is an acronym for the ten plagues (ten punishments that befell the Egyptians when Pharaoh would not free the Israelite slaves) composed by Rabbi Judah ben Ilai which appears as follows: "דצ׳ך עד׳ש בא׳חב." Rittangel explains that the phrase is a mnemonic device for remembering the order of the plagues. Therefore, he translates its pronunciation into Greek letters in the following manner: "Dezach, Hadasch, Beachabh."[76] To show the soft inflection of the Hebrew letter *Bet*, Rittangel has put an "H" at the end.

Deviating from the style of most of his Haggadah, Rittangel spreads the text of *Dayeinu* across the page, in keeping with the prose style of the original Hebrew. *Dayeinu* is an ancient hymn, thanking God for all the miracles the ancient Jews experienced leading up to their arrival in the Land of Israel. *Dayeinu* expresses that each miracle on its own would have been enough to satisfy them, and yet, the wonders never cease. Each phrase is composed in two parts, followed by the word *Dayeinu,* meaning it would have been enough. The second section of each phrase foreshadows the following statement. For example:

Had God given us the Sabbath, and not brought us to Mount Sinai,

Dayeinu.

Had God brought us to Mount Sinai, and not given us the Torah,

Dayeinu.

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[76] Rittangel, *Liber Rituum Paschalium,* 16.

The phrasing pattern of *Dayeinu* was appropriated by the Roman Church when composing the *Impropria,* a prayer recited on Good Friday to this day, in which Jesus lectures the Jews about the countless good deeds he performed for them. In lieu of the word "*Dayeinu*," the hymn admonishes: "and what did you give me in return?".[77] Rittangel highlights the poetic phrasing of *Dayienu*, in the manner pictured below. Rather than placing the Latin and Hebrew words on the same page, facing each other, the Hebrew text remains in its entirety, and its Latin translation appears afterwards.[78] Again, when God is referred to as "HaMakom" in *Dayeinu,* Rittangel is sure to explain that "The Place" in fact means God.

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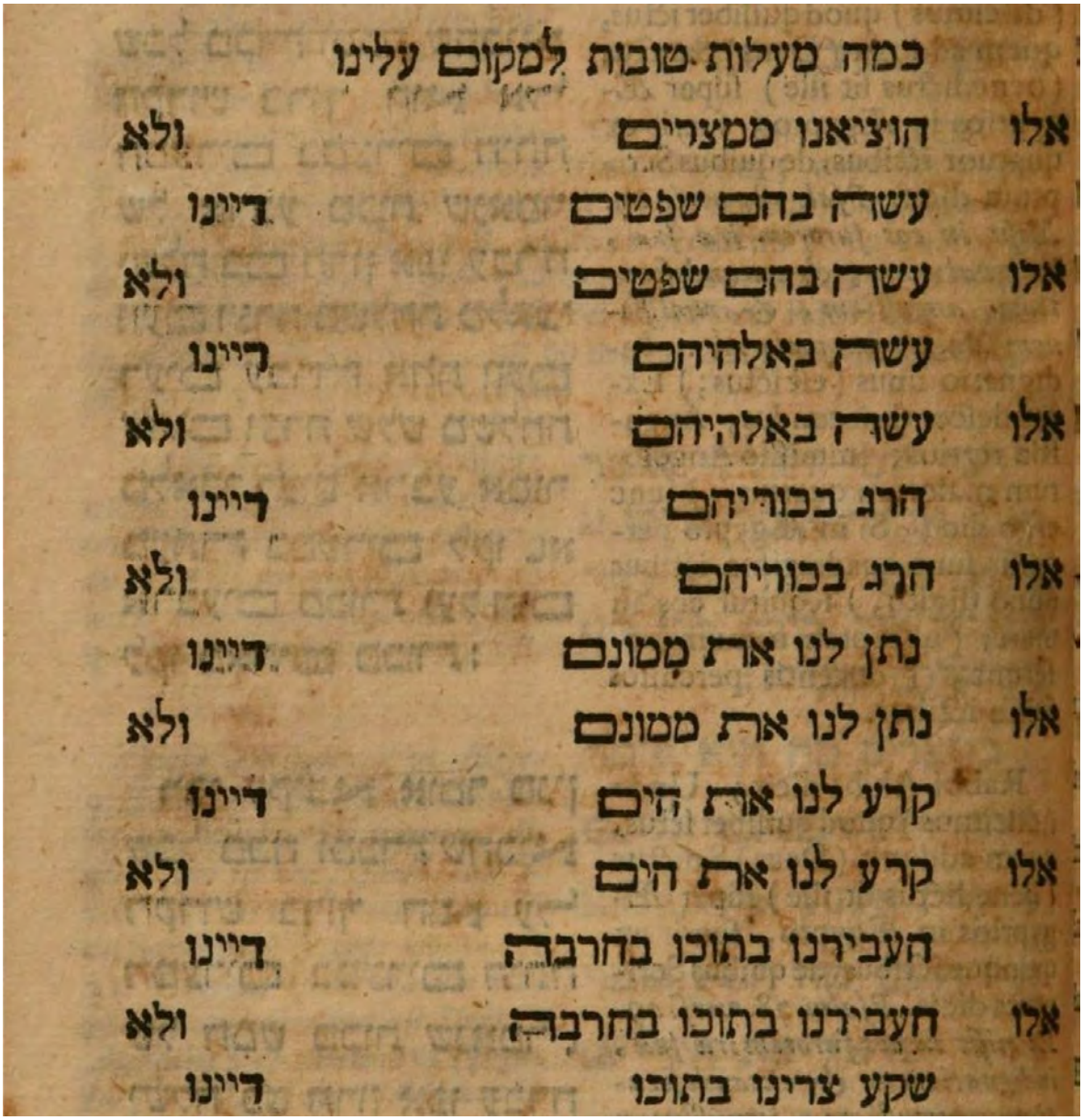
[77] Eric Werner, "A Voice Still Heard," 153.
[78] Rittangel, 18.


כמה מעלות טובות למקום עלינו

אלו הוציאנו ממצרים ולא

עשה בהם שפטים דיינו

אלו עשה בהם שפטים ולא

עשה באלהיהם דיינו

אלו עשה באלהיהם ולא

הרג בכוריהם דיינו

אלו הרג בכוריהם ולא

נתן לנו את ממונם דיינו

אלו נתן לנו את ממונם ולא

קרע לנו את הים דיינו

אלו קרע לנו את הים ולא

העבירנו בתוכו בחרבה דיינו

אלו העבירנו בתוכו בחרבה ולא

שקע צרינו בתוכו דיינו

In the Haggadah, Rabban Gamliel instructs Jews that the most important obligation of the holiday is to utter the words "*Pesach, Matzah, u'Marror,*" meaning "Passover, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs." To explain this ordinance Rittangel writes the following, displaying a highly nuanced understanding of this teaching: "The one who shall not have these words in his mouth, he also will not have it in his mind, and by consequence, not according to the correct rite not in a holy way will he celebrate."

When he reaches the Blessing after the Meal, Rittangel first translates what was initially written in the Hebrew imperfect into the future tense, translating "*Adonai Yimloch"* as "He [God] **shall** reign." Christian thinkers often translate "*Yimloch"* as "shall reign" assured of God's undying sovereignty. While it might seem counterintuitive, out of respect for God's ultimate authority and the fact that humans do not control God's decisions, Jews conceive the phrase as a hope that God **may** reign if God so chooses. This Jewish approach to prayer is accurately captured in Rittangel's translation of the sentence "*Hu Yishbor Ol Galut Meal Tzareinu,"* where he uses the subjunctive for the word *Yishbor*, meaning to break, writing: "**may** he break the yolk of exile from our necks."

Vayehi Bachatzi Haleilah (And So It Was in the Middle of the Night) is a liturgical poem written as a Hebrew alphabetical acrostic. The poem makes many references to events from the Torah. Rabbinic interpretation tells us that each biblical event mentioned in the *piyyut* took place on the first night of Passover.[79] As he did with *Dayeinu,* Rittangel formated the text in such a way that highlights the rhythmic prose, and he embeds its biblical references within his Latin translation.[80]

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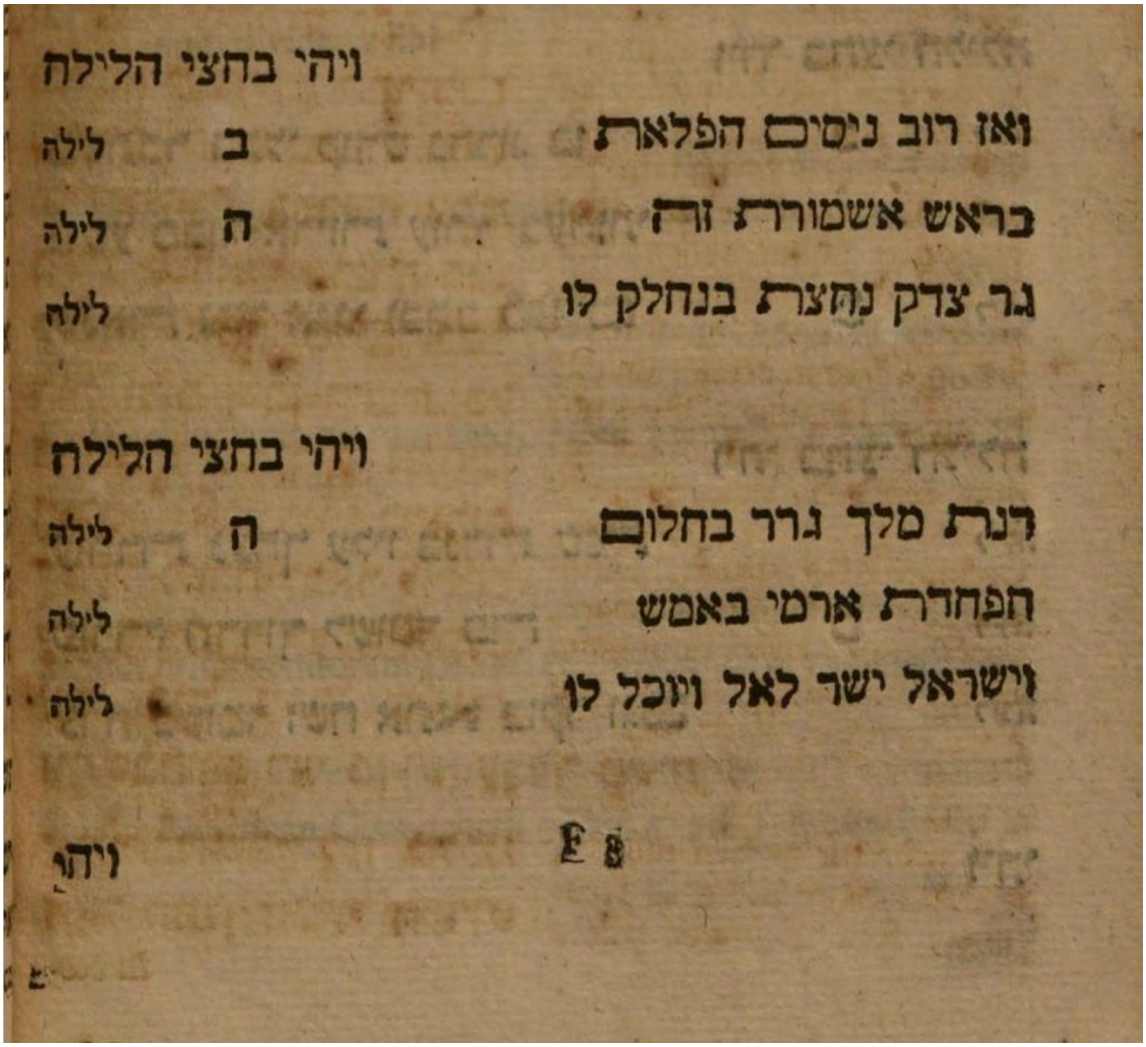
[79] Newhouse, *Music of the Passover Seder,* 119.
[80] Rittangel, 45.



The only illustration in *Liber Rituum Paschalium* is a rendering of the Messiah on his donkey, inserted on page 33, below Rittangel's description of Elijah's cup. It was common for German publishers of the fifteenth century to include an artistic rendering of the Messiah during this section of the Haggadah.[81] In Rabbinic literature, the prophet Elijah assumes the role of a guardian angel-type figure responsible for spreading faith in

[81] Joseph Gutmann, "The Messiah at the Seder: A Fifteenth-Century Motif in Jewish Art," (Tel Aviv: 1974).

the Divine amongst the Jews.[82] Including an additional cup for the Prophet Elijah on the Passover table is traditional. After reciting the Grace after the Meal, *seder* participants will open their doors to allow the spirit of Elijah to enter the home. Then they offer a prayer in his honor. The basis for this ritual is debated amongst historians, and the specifics of its performance differ across time and place.

Multiple explanations have been suggested for why the door is opened for Elijah on Passover. According to Rabbi Michael Shire, the ritual symbolizes hope for the 'Messianic Age,' believed to follow the resurrection of Elijah. *Seder* participants pray for Elijah's arrival shortly before opening the door for him as part of the Grace after the Meal. North African Jews of the tenth century are a proven example of those who opened their doors to indicate their faith that God would soon redeem them.[83] Since the home was intended to replace the ancient temple on Passover, the opening of the door can be seen as a surrogate for the temple gates of Jerusalem that were opened on the eve of the holiday in ancient times. Others interpret opening the door to welcome guests as a way to make good on the promise from the beginning of the Haggadah that "whoever is hungry" should "come and eat."[84] Another interpretation of this custom is far more ominous. Due to Passover's association with Easter and the torture and subsequent murder of Jesus in the minds of many medieval Christians, anti-Semitic persecution in Europe often increased during the holiday season. In the Middle Ages, anti-Jewish hate often took the form of blood libels, accusing Jews of using the blood of gentile children for baking their

[82] Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 34.
[83] Gross, 193.
[84] Albrod, 6-7.

Matzah. Some accusers even resorted to laying the corpses of children outside Jewish homes to plant evidence for their false claims. The historian Schalom Ben-Chorin asserts that Jews who opened their doors during the *seder* were trying to ensure that an infant's body was not left on their doorway.[85] The philosopher Adi Ophir agrees that there is a more somber reason for opening the door on Passover and that Elijah is used as a welcome distraction from persecution for the children seated at the Passover table. He does not, however paint Jews as the victims in this narrative. Instead, Ophir interprets the door opening as a demonstration of perseverance, where Jews of history would prove to themselves and their adversaries that they were not afraid.[86]

In the minds of many, the two existent rationales behind opening the door — generations of persecution at the hands of non-Jews, and the promise of a world redeemed — are cosmically entwined. According to early Rabbinic authority, each of the four cups of wine drunk during the *seder* represents four phases of redemption. As expressed in the Jerusalem Talmud, the Jewish conception of God's salvation stems from Exodus 6:6-7, when God pledges to redeem the Israelites, saying: "I will take you out from under the burdens of Egypt, and I will rescue you from their service, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great judgments. And I will take you to me as a nation, and I will be to you as God; and you will know that I am Adonai, your God, who takes you out from under the burdens of Egypt." Each element of God's plan constitutes a

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[85] Albrod, 8-9.

[86] Adi Ophir, "From Pharaoh to Suddam Hussein: Deconstruction of the Passover Haggadah," *The Other in Jewish Thought and History,* (New York: New York University Press, 1994) 679.

phase of redemption: freeing Jews of their burdens, rescuing them from servitude, redeeming them, and making them a people of God.[87] During the eleventh century, French Jews began to recite *Shefoch Ruchachah* (Pour Out Your Wrath) before drinking the fourth cup of wine, asking God to destroy their enemies quickly.[88] This prayer was eventually timed with the one for Elijah, and Jews started to open their doors at the same time as they drank their fourth cup of wine. In the middle of the fifteenth century, Rabbis began to explain to their congregations that the recitation of *Shefoch Hamatchah* and the opening of the door is a reminder that Passover is a "Night of Preservation" and that the *Meshiach* will come as a reward for all who do so. [89]

The Jewish conception of salvation eluded and intrigued Christian Hebraist scholars. Sebastian Munster, for example, studied differing opinions amongst rabbis regarding the whereabouts of the Jewish messiah while the figure awaits anointing from God.[90] Rittangel describes the ritual of Elijah's cup in the following manner:

"And the individuals finally drink a fourth, so finally is poured a cup. And a certain someone is designated [to go] outdoors and unexpectedly and fast and with great impetus opens [the door] so that the people present and unaware are totally terrified. That thing which I myself have experienced several times, and even still, I still experience the fear. Especially the children are rendered awestruck. They ask questions as to what it means. The parents respond that the messiah is going to come on the festival of Pesach, and he will come to Jerusalem when carried on an ass. Wherefore the Elders have set down a figure where the doors are to be opened so that the children ask what is this for them? And what does this mean? The depicted gate of the city represents Jerusalem; the Messiah is seated on an ass, as the scripture says (Zecharia 9:9; Malachi, 3:5-6).

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[87] Y. Pesachim 10:1:7.
[88] Israel Yuval, *Two Nations in Your Womb: Perceptions of Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Berkeley: University of California, 2006) 124.
[89] Ex. 12:42; Orah Hayyim #480.
[90] Friedman, *Most Ancient Testimony*, 222.

Unlike other portions of his commentary, Rittangel's description of the Elijah ritual from the seventeenth century rings true. The belief that redemption would occur on Passover dates to the first millennium, alluded to in Midrash Exodus Rabbah, when the Rabbis expanded upon the Book of Exodus. It has been customary in many communities at this point of the *seder* for someone to enter the home quickly, pretending to be Elijah coming to announce the arrival of the *Meshiach.* Christian Hebraist Antonius Margaritha, born Jewish, recounted this custom in his 1530 book *Der Gantz Judisch Glaub.* Less than a century later, Rav Yosef Yuzpah Hahn of Germany lauded this practice for strengthening families' faith in the promise of salvation. Another German Rabbi of the seventeenth century, Yair Bachrach, mentioned the fearsome nature of the practice in the Jewish book of ethics *Mekor Hayyim.*[91] Rittangel references two biblical passages as proof texts for his descriptions of the Jewish Messiah. The first is Zecharia 9:9 which reads as follows:

גִּילִי מְאֹד בַּת־צִיּוֹן הָרִיעִי בַּת יְרוּשָׁלִָם הִנֵּה מַלְכֵּךְ יָבוֹא לָךְ צַדִּיק וְנוֹשָׁע הוּא עָנִי וְרֹכֵב עַל־חֲמוֹר וְעַל־עַיִר בֶּן־אֲתֹנוֹת

Rejoice greatly, Fair Zion;
Raise a shout, Fair Jerusalem!
Lo, your king is coming to you.
He is victorious, triumphant,
Yet humble, riding on an ass,
On a donkey foaled by a she-ass.

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[91] "Mekor Hayyim Vol 2," (Jerusalem: 1984), 464.

The second passage Rittangel mentions is Malachi 3:5-6. Chapter 3 of Malachi (the final book of Prophets) is the revelation from God that Elijah will act as a messenger for the Messiah's arrival. The two verses Rittangel chooses to highlight are the following quotes from God:

וְקָרַבְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם֙ לַמִּשְׁפָּ֔ט וְהָיִ֣יתִי ׀ עֵ֣ד מְמַהֵ֗ר בַּמְכַשְּׁפִים֙ וּבַמְנָאֲפִ֔ים וּבַנִּשְׁבָּעִ֖ים לַשָּׁ֑קֶר וּבְעֹשְׁקֵ֤י שְׂכַר־שָׂכִיר֙ אַלְמָנָ֣ה וְיָת֔וֹם וּמַטֵּי־גֵ֖ר וְלֹ֣א יְרֵא֑וּנִי אָמַ֖ר יְהוָ֥ה צְבָאֽוֹת׃

But [first] I will step forward to contend against you, and I will act as a relentless accuser against those who have no fear of Me: Who practice sorcery, who commit adultery, who swear falsely, who cheat laborers of their hire, and who subvert [the cause of] the widow, orphan, and stranger, said the LORD of Hosts.

כִּ֣י אֲנִ֣י יְהוָ֔ה לֹ֥א שָׁנֵ֖יתִי וְאַתֶּ֥ם בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹ֖ב לֹ֥א כְלִיתֶֽם׃

For I am the LORD—I have not changed; and you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be.

There are two possible explanations for why Rittangel chose to focus on these two verses from the entire Book of Malachi. Rittangel is intent on characterizing the Jewish God as one of retribution. Or he meant to write another set of verses such as 23-24 found below. It would not be the first error in the Hebraist's Haggadah.

הִנֵּ֨ה אָנֹכִ֜י שֹׁלֵ֣חַ

לָכֶ֗ם אֵ֚ת אֵ֣לִיָּ֔ה הַנָּבִ֖יא לִפְנֵ֣י בּ֑וֹא י֖וֹם יְהוָ֥ה הַגָּד֖וֹל וְהַנּוֹרָֽא׃

Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD.

וְהֵשִׁ֣יב לֵב־אָבוֹת֮ עַל־בָּנִים֒ וְלֵ֣ב בָּנִ֗ים עַל־אֲבוֹתָם֙ פֶּן־אָבֹ֣וא וְהִכֵּ֔יתִי אֶת־הָאָ֖רֶץ חֵֽרֶם׃

הנה אנכי שולח לכם את אליה הנביא לפני בוא יום יהוה הגדול והנורא

He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction.

Below Rittangel's description of the Messiah's arrival to Jerusalem on a donkey, he included an illustration of the scene, with Elijah as his messenger, blowing a ram's horn to announce his arrival. The pair are pictured outside the gates of the temple in Jerusalem with an armed guard by their side. Above all three figures are Hebrew words meaning the "humble and the redeemed," a reference to Zecharia 9:9.

Rittangel affords a surprising amount of respect to the Jews in his Haggadah, relative to the potent levels of antisemitic rhetoric of the era. He rarely editorializes on the text he is translating or the customs he is describing. This is not the case for his section on the Jewish Messiah. Rittangel shares his surprise that the Jews are still waiting for the Messiah when it is obvious to him that God's messianic prophecy was already fulfilled by the resurrection of Christ. He writes: "and so, it is a wonder that the Jews still say that the Messiah is going to come on the festival of Passover, and sitting on an ass will enter, which we know was done by our Jesus of Nazareth."[92]

To conclude his description of the Passover *seder*, Rittangel states the following: "And so, the meal, solemnly before the end of the night as by requirement, and with the previously stated songs, is finished. The gathering of eating is thus finished, and… no more of the food shall be left. They cannot eat or drink any of what they had later, or [during] the rest of the festival."[93] Rittangel displays an astute understanding of the prohibition on Passover leftovers stemming from Exodus 12:10. He goes on to describe the relationship Jews have with food and drink, as he sees it: "They do not have

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[92] Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," 33.
[93] Johann Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," 67.

a habit to indulge in eating or drinking, rather not in the least do they enjoy it. In other solemn festivals, on the contrary, rather even the sabbath, it is prohibited to be drunk for them."[94] Rittangel does explain that the one exception to Jewish restraint occurs on the festival of Purim when Jews are told to drink until they can no longer distinguish between Mordechai (the hero of the holiday) and Haman (its villain.)[95]

Rittangel is seemingly inspired by the priorities that the Jews demonstrate on Passover, proclaiming: "It ought to be sad that our Christians in their own meals so imitate the Jews in their eating together and their drinking together and so they do not spare the sacrosanct day of the meal which nevertheless the Jews do. When nevertheless that meal of the Jews was a shadow in all event of the sacrosanct meal of the Christians."[96] At first glance, Rittangel is complementing the Jews for prioritizing the message of the holiday over its celebration. He is not doing so out of respect for the Jewish people, but rather to showcase an approach that Christians should adopt in their commemoration of Easter. Rittangel is disheartened by Christian attempts at mimicking Jewish symposia, doing so under the misguided impression that the four cups of wine mandated at Passover *seders* are intended to get the participant inebriated. Instead, he would like Christians to learn from the chasteness of the Jews, to commemorate the true festival of Easter. The term "shadow" is a typological concept — a Christian theology that understands the Torah to be a mere foreshadowing of the New Testament. As a typologist, Rittangel believed that there was no truth in Judaism without the insight

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[94] Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," 67.
[95] B. Megillah 7b.
[96] Johann Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," 68.

gleaned from the New Testament. He espouses that Passover is a pre-figuring of the ultimate truth — Christianity.

Once Rittangel concludes his translation of the rituals and rites of Passover, he lays out the Jewish custom of *Pidyon HaBen* (Redemption of the First Born). Families are commanded to perform this ritual, not on Passover, but thirty days after a mother has given birth to her first son. A commemoration of a first-born son that does take place at the conclusion of Passover is the Fast of the First Born. Rittangel goes to great lengths to describe The Redemption of the Firstborn, seemingly confusing it with the fast day held in the first-born's honor. Rittangel mistakenly believed that *Pidyon Haben* was part of the Passover ritual, as it comes before the following concluding sentence, which is written only in Hebrew: "Here ends the Haggadah of the Passover *seder*. May every rank from above give praise to the Most High." For the first half of the statement above, Rittangel used a phrase that was common in Haggadot of this period, though he adds the Hebrew word *shel* meaning "of the" unnecessarily. I have not located the second half of this phrase in any Hebrew scripture.

Music

Liber Rituum Paschalium is the first Haggadah to include musical notation. Rittangel's musical Haggadah was a way to satisfy German-gentile curiosity. Jewish holidays and their melodies could be used to paint an in-depth picture of a peculiar, ancient community that Hebraists were eager to understand. Music also spoke to Christian Hebraists who wanted to study the Jewish world to better understand their own

religion.[97] Several Christians attempted to notate and amass the music of the synagogue. But the gaps in their understanding of Jewish customs prevented them from determining what melodies were representative and authentic.

From start to finish, the Passover *seder* is filled with singing. Rittangel understood the vital role that music plays in the celebration of Passover. He describes the chanting of various prayers in his Haggadah. When introducing Psalm 136 (*Hodu L'Adonai Ki Tov)*, Rittangel writes: "The subsequent four verses the patriarch of the family recites in a singular and most swaying melody, to which the reclining ones respond in the same way to each line in order." This description is in keeping with the lilting tune of this prayer of thanks, and the tradition of reciting it responsively.

Rittangel introduces Psalm 118 (*Ana Adonai*) in a similar fashion, writing: "These four verses are also recited by the patriarch of the family with a very sweet melody; to which also the reclining ones respond."

Rittangel recounts a tradition that continues until today, in which, towards the end of the *seder*, Jews recite the words "*L'shanah Habaah B'Yirushalayim,"* to express their collective hopes to celebrate Passover "next year in Jerusalem." As Rittangel describes it, "in one large voice they cry out: L'shanah Habaah B'Yirushalayim."[98] Jerusalem represents different things for different Jews. For some, it is the capital of the land of Israel and embodies their dreams of Zion fulfilled. For others, *Yerushalyim*, literally meaning "they will see peace," symbolizes hope for a better world to come.

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[97] Don Harran, "Stories from the Hebrew Bible in the Music of Renaissance," *American Institute of Musicology* 37, (1983): 287-288.
[98] Rittangel, "Liber Rituum Paschalium," 54.

In Rittangel's description of the blessings over the wine (*Kiddush*), he states that the patriarch of the family holds the wine glass in his hand and shakes it while reciting the blessing in a higher key. It is unclear where this notion comes from. No mention of shaking the wine glass nor modulating to a higher key for the blessing is made in Jewish sources. Perhaps this is a unique custom observed by the family (most likely of the Karaite community) who hosted Rittangel for Passover. The Hebraist also describes the "fancy tune" used for the *Kiddush.* This is in line with Jewish practice. The Kiddush for Passover is elongated and features a particularly elaborate melody.

Rittangel includes transcriptions of two Passover songs in his Haggadah: *Ki Lo Naeh* and *Adir Hu.* Interestingly, both are Hebrew acrostic hymns of praise. *Ki Lo Naeh* was popular amongst Western European Jewry during the period in which Rittangel was translating the liturgy of Passover.[99] At this time, Jews only sang *Ki Lo Naeh* on the first night of Passover. *Addir Hu* was the hymn's second-night counterpart.[100] The hymn expresses a desire for God to rebuild the temple and usher in a messianic age. While these two Passover melodies are the first to ever be transcribed in a Haggadah, their lyrics were some of the last to be included in Jewish *seders*, inserted into the Haggadah towards the end of the Middle Ages.[101] Ruth Newhouse collected and tabulated notated Passover music that had been published in various sources between 1644 and the end of World War II. According to Newhouse, *Addir Hu* was first written in the sixteenth century and popularized in the seventeenth, when Rittangel published his Haggadah. Today, the hymn

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[99] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 34.
[100] Newhouse, 123.
[101] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 118.

is heard in the synagogue during Passover and is also recited as part of the *seder*. The most common tune is a simple Germanic melody that is very similar to the one Rittangel includes in his Haggadah.[102]

Just as Rittangel coopted Jewish Passover rites for polemic gain; Jews have absorbed melodies from Jewish and secular German folksong for use during the *seder*. Passover is the site of much Jewish-Christian interchange. The prayer *Sh'foch Hamatchah* accompanies the ritual surrounding Elijah's cup and asks the Divine to pour out God's wrath upon enemies of the Jews. Many Christians and Jews interpret *Sh'foch Hamatchah* as a curse against gentiles. While his opinion is crafted subtly, Rittangel expresses a distaste for the custom, stating: "And so, opening their mouths, they exclaim with one voice in a very loud voice, these following two verses: 'Pour out Your Wrath.' At this, shouting with a loud voice, as if answering, they say: 'sh'foch aleihem' (pour out against them)." This characterization is in clear contrast to Rittangel's interpretation of the rest of the evening's festivities, as he continues by writing: "Following these prayers, they recite more soothing prayers and finish in the usual manner."

The sheet music for Ki Lo Naeh is written using diamond-headed notes, characteristic of the more primitive notation system of the time. The music is written using the G2 and F4 variations of treble and bass clefs, meaning that the G-note of the treble clef has been placed on the second line from the bottom of the staff, and the F-note of the bass clef is found on the fourth line from the bottom. Rather than attributing each lyric to its corresponding note, the Hebrew text is spelled out with Greek letters at

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[102] Newhouse, 220-223.

the bottom of each entire musical system. This means that the singer must interpret for themselves how to syllabify each word. On the following page is the text on its own, in both Hebrew and Latin. Rittangel expands upon the words of his Latin translation in brackets. He uses the phrase "ornamented in the line of camps" to explain the Hebrew word "Dagul." He is referencing the one time this conjugation of the Hebrew word for flag appears in the Bible, which takes place in Song of Songs 5:10, where it is written: My beloved is clear-skinned and ruddy, Preeminent among the myriads (*דּוֹדִי צַח וְאָדֹם דָּגוּל מִרְבָבָה:*). The commentary of Ibn Ezra on this verse is in line with Rittangel's definition of the word Dagul. Ibn Ezra teaches: "Our sages say in the Midrash to Canticles: 'My beloved is clear-skinned and ruddy: His appearance is ruddy, black, green, and white.' Thus, the appearance of the Holy One is like 'the appearance of the rainbow which is within the cloud' (Ezek. 1:28)." Ibn Ezra goes on to interpret the words "preeminent among ten thousand" to mean: "Surrounding Him is the divine camp; myriad holy ones are about Him. He is distinguished among His hosts, is recognized among His camps."[103]

Rittangel displays a similarly astute knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish scripture when he defines the word "*Zakai"* as meritorious. The word does not appear in the Torah, only in Rabbinic literature. So, the fact that the scholar translates it correctly signals his in-depth knowledge of Jewish texts.

The genesis of *Ki Lo Naeh* is uncertain. Musicologists struggle to distinguish between Passover melodies of religious and secular origin and those composed by Jews or Christians. The Christian Church of the West often adopted melodies of the

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[103] Ezra ben Solomon on Song of Songs 5:10:1-2 (Michigan: Seth Brody, 1999).

Synagogue.[104] It is not as if the Jews have not looked outward for inspiration. Many Passover melodies are contrafacts. Jews have borrowed several Christian and secular German folk melodies for use during the *seder*. Eric Werner attests those melodies for *Birkat Hamazon* (Grace after the Meal) and *Hallel* often borrowed from non-Jewish sources, the result of active and passive assimilation. For centuries, Jews passed down the music of Passover orally. When two texts exist with the same melody, and one is from our Passover liturgy and one was from the hit parade of its time, there is no written historical record to clarify which came first and inspired the other. To compound the issue, sometimes the melody is taken from a Jewish source that originally was a contrafact of a secular melody.[105]

The transcription found in *Liber Rituum Paschalium* is the first sheet music in existence for *Ki Lo Naeh.* The tempo is in 3/4 time, giving it a lilting quality. The melody is reminiscent of German-Jewish hymns of the time. Traditionally, Jewish music is unmetered, but metrical hymns were highly popular in Germany. German-Jewish liturgy began to adopt the metrical musical style of the surrounding culture during the second half of the sixteenth century. The piece is written in the mode of G Dorian, meaning it has the key signature of F-major, but the tonal center is G (the second note of the F-major scale). The melody features Ukrainian Dorian hexachords, a common feature in Jewish music. The key harmonic feature of Ukrainian Dorian that differentiates it from the Greek Dorian mode, are the alterations that are found on the six and seventh notes of the scale.

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[104] Israel Adler, "Problems in the Study of Jewish Music," *Proceedings of the World Congress on Jewish Music* (Tel Aviv: Naidat Press, 1982) 15-27.
[105] Werner, "The Tunes of the Haggadah," 77.

This lends an otherwise purely Germanic rendition of *Ki Lo Naeh* a modal flavor more reminiscent of Eastern European Jewry.

Rittangel does not clarify where he heard the melodies he includes for *Ki Lo Naeh* and *Addir Hu,* nor does he credit the person who notated them. Rittangel was not a musician so one can assume he did not notate these melodies himself and outsourced the task to someone else. By not giving credit to anyone but himself, we are reminded of what may be the primary purpose of Rittangel's musical Haggadah: to heighten the scholar's own status in the world of Christian Hebraism.

Music spoke to Hebraists who wanted to analyze the Old Testament to gain insight into their own religion.[106] Neoplatonists such as Rittangel looked to Jewish sources to broaden their understanding of the world they believed to have birthed their Messiah. Hebrew literature was newly available, given the widespread use of the printing press. By notating Passover melodies, Rittangel strengthens the detailed picture of the Jews that his Haggadah can paint. He has selected two messianic Jewish hymns to depict the Jews as a misguided community who have failed to recognize that the "true messiah" has already arrived.

Offenbach Haggadah

Orthodox and Reform Judaism were born in Germany at the onset of the nineteenth century. *Siddurim* of this period captured the unique philosophies of these

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[106] Don Harran, "Stories from the Hebrew Bible in Music of the Renaissance," *Musica Disciplina* 37 (1983): 287.

movements and others.[107] Cantor Isaac Offenbach approached the Haggadah in a similar fashion. Isaac Offenbach published his own Haggadah in Cologne in 1838, the first in history meant for Jewish use at the *seder* table that includes musical notation. The purpose of the book matched Offenbach's larger goals throughout his career: to preserve the Jewish literacy of young people in an increasingly acculturated community, to promote musical education among Jews, and to render the Passover ritual more dignified. As a result, the Offenbach Haggadah is a time capsule, a record of Jewish home rituals in nineteenth-century Cologne.

Isaac Offenbach

Isaac Offenbach was born Isaac ben Judah Erbst in 1779 in Offenbach am Main, a city that borders Frankfurt along the bank of the Main River. Both of Isaac's parents died when he was young. His father was a bookbinder and *Schutzjude,* a protected class of Jew. The Renaissance period of eighteenth-century Germany had failed to make any profound changes to the treatment of Jews. The most a Jew could hope for was *Schutzjuden* status. This ranking alone allowed them to purchase property and participate in commerce. However, *Schutzjuden* had to be sponsored by non-Jewish patrons who could cancel the privilege whenever they saw fit. For the most part, each territory had specific quotas limiting the number of protected Jews in each geographic region.[108] Isaac

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[107] David Ellenson*, After Emancipation: Jewish Religious Responses to Modernity,* (2004), 193.

[108] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Vol. 1, Tradition and Enlightenment: 1600-1780,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 135-137.

Offenbach was well-educated and studied bookbinding while working as a travelling musician, following in the footsteps of his late father.

Isaac began his musical career as a travelling musician. In 1802 he arrived in Deutz, situated on the east bank of the Rhine, across the river from Cologne. Deutz had become a veritable Jewish hub after the expulsion of Jews from Cologne in 1424. It was around this time that Isaac met his wife, Marianne Rindskopf.[109]

In 1806 Napoleon defeated the Prussian army for control of the Confederated States of the Rhine, including the town of Deutz.[110] Napoleon issued minority reforms across his conquered territories. The French commander forced Jews without a legal surname to adopt one and those with names stemming from the Old Testament to change them. This ordinance was put in place to distance Jews from their heritage and to keep them under governmental surveillance. As a result, many Jews adopted the titles of geographical locations. For example, in 1808 Isaac adopted the name "Der Offenbacher." He chose the family name Offenbach because it was the city of his birth.

Under Napoleonic occupation, Jews were permitted to move to new areas, including Cologne. Napoleon afforded Jews exceptionally high freedoms regarding their movement. After working as a tavern musician in Deutz for fourteen years, Offenbach and his wife became two of the first Jews to resettle in Cologne, indicating immense

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[109] A.W. Binder, "Isaac Offenbach, his Life, Work, and Manuscript Collection," in *Studies in Jewish Music: Collected Writings of A.W. Binder,* ed. Irene Heskes (New York: Block Publishing Company, 1971), 290.

[110] Hans Schmitt, "Germany without Prussia: A Closer Look at the Confederation of the Rhine," *German Studies Review* 6, no. 1 (1983): 9–39.

progress for German Jews in the area. Yet, the Napoleonic code forbade Offenbach from pursuing a career in printing. Instead, around the year 1826, Offenbach became the city's *hazzan,* which was not a high-paying occupation.[111] While bookbinding was not a highly lucrative industry, it would have been more remunerative than the cantorate at this time. With ten children to support, Offenbach became a music teacher to earn a supplemental income. Among their children, their son Jacob became an opera composer known today as Jacques Offenbach. The vibrant Jewish community of Cologne was reemerging.[112]

According to the musicologist A.W. Binder, Isaac Offenbach was beloved by his community, and well regarded for his sense of humor and charming nature, great emotional depth, and extensive knowledge of the Torah, garnering him the nickname 'The Offenbacher.'[113] He wrote pieces of music as well as poetry and theatre. Offenbach served Cologne Jewry for thirty years before his death in 1850 at 71 years of age.[114]

Cologne Jewry

The story of Jews in Cologne is an ancient one. The first Jews to settle in Germany did so in Cologne. In the eleventh century, Cologne's city hall was situated *inter judaeos* (among the Jews).[115] A Jewish neighborhood or *Judengasse* emerged there

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[111] Jacobo Kaufmann, "Offenbach, Isaac (1779-1850)," Institut Europeen Des Musiques Juives, https://www.iemj.org/en/offenbach-isaac-1779-1850/.
[112] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Vol II, Emancipation and Acculturation: 1780-1871,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 9.
[113] Binder, 290.
[114] Jacobo Kaufmann, "Offenbach, Isaac".
[115] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Vol II, Emancipation and Acculturation: 1780-1871,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 9.

in the twelfth century. It was not a Jewish quarter designed by the government to isolate the Jews, but a hub of Jews who freely chose to live in a community.

Periods of peace and economic prosperity in Cologne made it the site of intensive rabbinic creativity. Rabbis received high levels of authority. [116] The rabbi of Cologne until 1751, Yehudah Mehler, spearheaded a well-respected yeshiva and was arguably the most influential German rabbi of the century.[117]

At the same time, the Jews of Cologne were subjugated by several generations of antisemitic monarchs and religious leaders. After a series of pogroms, all Jews were expelled from Cologne in 1424.

In a particularly glaring example of the city's role in the persecution of Jews, from 1507 to 1509, the Jewish apostate Johannes Pfefferkorn chose to publish a series of pamphlets in Cologne, calling for the banning of Jewish books, seeking the support of the city's Dominican monks. Sure enough, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian confiscated all Hebrew literature shortly thereafter.[118]

In 1794 France annexed Cologne and allowed Jews to reenter the city. Under French occupation, the Jews of Cologne were afforded civil, judicial, and religious freedom but were also subjected to new legal disabilities.[119] In 1808, Napoleon announced his Infamous Decree, which, in addition to forcing Jews to change their

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[116] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* 203-4
[117] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* 213
[118] Elisheva Carlebach, *Divided Souls: Converts from Judaism in Germany, 1500-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).
[119] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* 87-89.

names, severely worsened the economic position of Jews as well.[120] Napoleon had received word that Jews in Alsace were charging exorbitant interest rates for real estate. Rather than punishing those at fault, Napoleon held all Jews living in French jurisdictions responsible by preventing most Jews from procuring business permits. The injunction was only meant to last a decade, at which point the Jews were expected to have sufficiently learned their lesson and changed their business practices.[121] During the Napoleonic Wars, the Prussian army took control of the area. While the Prussians had granted full equality to their own Jewish population, the Infamous Decree of 1808 was not set to conclude until 1818.

The Napoleonic conquest catalyzed the transformation of Jewish religious life in much of Germany. Napoleon's brother, Jerome Bonaparte, permitted the financier Israel Jacobson to build a school for Jews and Christians in Seesen (a municipality in Lower Saxony) that included a chapel for vastly modified Jewish worship services. Jacobson installed an organ and rearranged prayer practices and melodies.[122] As was common in Churches, a bell announced services. Congregants recited hymns in German to the tune of Christian chorales as well as Hebrew psalms. Jacobson did not want to hire a cantor. Rather than having the Torah recited using cantillation by a trained service leader, Jacobson would read the weekly portion aloud and offer a sermon in the vernacular. In keeping with Christian practice, male and female children received confirmation.

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[120] Paula Hyman, *The Jews of Modern France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 44-45.
[121] Michael Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times,* 20-21.
[122] Abraham Idelsohn, "Influence of Reform Movement," in *Jewish Music: Its Historical Development* (United Kingdom: Dover Publications, 1992), 235-236.

Jacobson went on the build the country's first freestanding Reform synagogue in Hamburg seven years later.[123] In 1810, Jacobson published a children's service with hymns, giving rise to numerous Reform hymnals.[124] It is this shift that would prime non-Orthodox Jews for musical Haggadot. Reform was not appealing to many Jews in this period and only a few Germans followed in Jacobson's footsteps, namely a faction of Jews in Frankfort am Main beginning in 1807, a community in Leipzig which formed in 1820, and a congregation in Berlin established in 1842.[125] Most German Jews rejected these reforms and remained steeped in Jewish tradition. Thus, a division between reform and advocates of the status quo – who eventually called themselves "orthodox" – emerged. The question of the permissibility of the organ during worship became a defining debate in the period. Communities were choosing sides, labeling themselves as either Reform ("organ") congregations or Orthodox ones. No progressive Jews became as radicalized as those in Frankfurt nor did they institute as many changes as the more moderate reformers of Hamburg. Other Reform communities did embrace a German-Protestant approach to arranging music, utilizing chorales, mixed-gender choirs and organs, but their melodies remained traditional, and, unlike Jacobson's Hamburg Temple, they relied heavily upon a cantor.[126] Jews in Cologne refrained from radical liberalization.

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[123] Abraham Idelsohn, "Influence of Reform Movement," 238.
[124] 'Hymnal' is not a Jewish term, adopted instead from Christian vocabulary as this was an unprecedented approach to music making in Jewish society.
[125] Mordechai Breuer, "Frankfurt on the Main, Germany," copyright 2008, https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/frankfurt-on-the-main.
[126] Abraham Idelsohn, "Influence of Reform Movement," 242-243.

As cantor, Offenbach was the only permanent clergy presence in Cologne until 1857, offering sermons and performing other rabbinic duties. Following the Napoleonic conquest, Cologne fell under the jurisdiction of the Bonn Consistory. Akin to a diocese, Napoleon established "consistories" across the lands he conquered, serving as religious institutions for every region. As part of the Bonn Consistory, the Head Rabbi of Bonn occasionally preached in Cologne as he toured the region. Cologne Jewry favored Orthodoxy, but, without a rabbi of their own during Offenbach's lifetime, they were unaligned with any specific movement.[127]

Prayerbook Reform

Reform Judaism was a movement of liturgical innovation.[128] The *Hamburg Temple Prayer Book* of 1819 was the first exhaustive example of Reform liturgy. It was written almost entirely in Hebrew and the sequence of the service remained in its traditional form. Its progressive elements including the fact that it opened from left to right, offered transliteration according to the Sephardic pronunciation of the Hebrew, and included some liturgy in the vernacular. [129] The Hebrew remained in its traditional form, while its German translation was edited to conform to the authors' liberal views, often obscuring references to angelology and the sacrificial cult.[130] The first Hamburg *siddur* delicately

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[127] Michael Meyer, email to author, December 26, 2022.
[128] David Ellenson, "After Emancipation," 193.
[129] David Ellenson, 195-6.
[130] David Ellenson, "After Emancipation," 199.

toed the line between old and new, its creators eager to showcase their commitment to Jewish customs and prove they were not out to sow disharmony in the community.

Attitude towards Reform

There is confusion over Isaac Offenbach's religious identity. In Offenbach am Main, where Cantor Offenbach was born and raised, the city's synagogue split from its orthodox roots. The small number of families who remained tethered to Orthodox Judaism formed their own congregation in 1821, while remaining involved in the larger Jewish community.[131] Offenbach himself has been described by the historian Jurgen Wilhelm as a Jewish reformer, but not a member of capital "R" Reform Judaism. The cantor promoted modifications to synagogue music and wore modern clothing, while continuing to observe *halacha* and often criticizing the Reform movement.[132] For example, two years before his death, Offenbach wrote the satirical poem *Polish Mocher Seforim* denouncing the Reform worship that was gaining popularity in Germany. He released a sequel on Purim of 1849 entitled *The Humorous Poem of an Antiques Salesman.*[133]

Offenbach also adopted a unique custom from the community of his birth. Starting in 1795, the community of Offenbach am Main developed a custom of crafting

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[131] Fred Gottlieb, "Offenbach am Main," *Destroyed German Synagogues and Communities*, http://germansynagogues.com/index.php/synagogues-and-communities?pid=66&sid=1024:offenbach-am-main.

[132] Peter Bornheim, review of *Isaac Offenbach: Reformorientierter Kantor*, by Jurgen Wilhelm, May 19, 2019.

[133] Kaufmann, "Offenbach, Isaac."

their own Haggadot. The city was known for its printing presses, and a rabbi from Bratislava founded a Hebrew printing press in 1767, where one of his first endeavors was to publish a Haggadah.[134] Among the many book-binding workshops there, was the one owned by Offenbach's family.[135]

In keeping with the attitudes of his congregation in Cologne, Isaac Offenbach led mostly Orthodox services. But the influence of modern music can be heard in his compositions. His music for choir often mimics the sounds of Haydn and Mozart. And on several occasions, Offenbach utilized contemporary rhythms like the minuet, waltz, gavotte, and polka.[136] While Orthodox Jews were committed to reliving the past and Hamburg reformers directed their gaze towards the future, Offenbach dedicated himself to the present, willing to take inspiration from either side of the religious spectrum to ensure the vitality of his community. The cantor utilized state-of-the-art methodologies to increase Jewish literacy and engagement in his Cologne. In the Forward to his Haggadah, e articulates this mindset: "The people are not praying properly. That is why I must work hard, not to reform religion, but to reform the aesthetics of it."[137] This unique outlook on Judaism positioned Offenbach in the middle ground between Orthodox and Reform.

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[134] Yosef Yerushalmi, *Haggadah and History*.
[135] Alexander Faris, *Jacques Offenbach* (USA: University of California, 1981), 17.
[136] Binder, "Isaac Offenbach," 296.
[137] Offenbach, "Forward," in *Haggadah* (Cologne: Reynard & Dubyen, 1838), 2.

The Music of Isaac Offenbach

Offenbach was a prolific composer who published three hundred pieces of liturgy, a Hebrew-German prayerbook for children, a series of guitar sonatas, and several transcriptions of traditional melodies. Most of Offenbach's work can be found today in the library of the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion.

It was not only his excellent tenor voice but his intellect and command of the Hebrew language that earned him his position as city cantor.[138] Offenbach's manuscripts were skillfully bound and neatly titled demonstrating the longstanding effects of his time as a bookbinder. In addition, he was well respected as a writer, editor, and translator, having penned countless sermons as well as his own Hebrew-German prayerbook.

Offenbach's music was diverse. Some were religious in content and others not; some struck a serious mood while others were playful. Much of his religious work utilized the *nusach* (traditional musical motifs) of Ashkenazi Jewry, as was the case with his renditions of *Kol Nidre, Yitgadal, Mechalkel Chaim, Barchu,* and *Kaddish Le'Musaf.*[139] Some of Offenbach's music for the synagogue denote secular influences, as evidenced by his compositions of *Melech Elyon, Ki Anu Amecha,* and *L'cha Dodi.* From 1830-1840 Offenbach kept a notebook filled with the songs he and his family would play at home for personal enjoyment or to celebrate special occasions. In it are pieces of Jewish liturgy alongside French folk melodies and Schubert lieder, documenting the

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[138] Binder, "Isaac Offenbach," 290.
[139] Kauffman, "Offenbach, Isaac."

musical interchange taking place between Jews and non-Jews at the beginning of the eighteen hundreds.[140]

Offenbach's melodies, especially the spritelier ones, strongly resembled those of his son, Jacques, having had a profound impact on him. The elegant sound of their contemporaries, Haydn and Mozart, can be heard in the compositions of both Offenbach men.[141] The strong influence that the surrounding culture had on Isaac Offenbach is evident in *Jules' Composition,* a setting of the German poem *Wiegenlied* (Lullaby), he wrote in a German lieder style with soothing piano accompaniment that mimics the rhythm of a cradle rocking a child to sleep.[142] The cantor had a son named Jules, and most likely wrote the lullaby for him.

Offenbach's early work for the synagogue features the standard musical combinations of the time, scored for a cantor, descant, bass, and, sometimes, the violin, which was characteristic of Friday-night services during this period.[143] In traditional communities playing instruments on the Jewish Sabbath is not permissible, but the *Kabbalat Shabbat* service which ushers in this day of rest often features instrumentation. Offenbach composed several renditions of a prayer recited on Friday nights titled *L'cha Dodi* for violin. He envisioned one as a minuet, another as a pastoral dance, and a third in a Polynesian style, each energetic and exuberant. When Austrian and German

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[140] "An 'Offenbach Family Album' and 'Esther, Queen of Persia': Interview with Ralf-Olivier Schwarz," *Operetta Research Center,* December 18, 2018, http://operetta-research-center.org/offenbach-family-album-esther-queen-persia-interview-ralf-olivier-schwarz-grand-2019-projects/.
[141] Binder, "Isaac Offenbach," 293, 299.
[142] Binder, 301.
[143] Binder, 299.

congregations began to employ choirs, Offenbach took note. In 1846 Offenbach wrote an entire *Kabbalat Shabbat* service in four-part harmony, placing him at the forefront of the Jewish choral movement.[144]

Offenbach's *Cantor's Manual* was a private notebook filled with original melodies for various circumstances during the Jewish calendar which he amassed from 1828-1834.[145] It contains seventy pieces of liturgy, most of which Offenbach composed during his time in Cologne. He wrote most of the melodies for himself to sing on his own, with a few pieces for two or three singers which included passages of melodic interplay between the cantor and *Meshorerim* (a congregational choir). Alternating singing between the cantor and *Meshorerim* was standard in Ashkenazi synagogal music between the sixteenth and nineteenth century.[146] Many of the pieces found in Offenbach's *Manual* include a harmony part for Soprano voice, most likely intended for a boy soprano or male capable singing in a high falsetto, and not for a female voice.

Offenbach took note of the arranging style employed by reform cantor Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890). Solomon Sulzer was a popular composer in Vienna whose arrangements for the synagogue feature prominently in today's Reform congregations. He shortened the melodies of many prayers and mirrored the dignified sound of Christian

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[144] Binder, "Isaac Offenbach," 296-8.
[145] Isaac Offenbach, "S. 6337 Cantor's Manual," HUC Library Catalog (Germany: 1828-1834), http://mss.huc.edu/ajaxzoom/single.php?zoomDir=/pic/zoom/music/SENDERY_6337.
[146] Wendy Heller, "Cantors," The Yivo Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe, accessed February 10, 2023, https://yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Cantors.

choral music in his writing. Sulzer inspired Offenbach to revisit some of his own compositions. In 1842 Offenbach released a second edition of *Nigunim Leyamim Noraim* (Melodies for The High Holidays,) originally published in 1829. Each setting was restyled to match the pastoral and restrained musical tastes of the time.[147] Sulzer wrote it was his duty to "reconstruct [traditional tunes] in accordance with the text and the rules of harmony."[148] Sulzer encapsulated the modern cantorate, *chazzanim* -- educated in matters of western harmony and musical theory and trained in Sephardic Hebrew grammar. Offenbach learned from Sulzer and adapted his music accordingly, but only in moderation. The approach to reharmonization Offenbach displayed in his second edition of *Nigunim Leyamim Noraim* was not as modern as Sulzer's, as the latter's Protestant-like style would have been far too foreign to his congregation. Offenbach's music maintained a more eastern modal flavor and utilized Ashkenazi pronunciation of Hebrew. Offenbach did, however, follow in Sulzer's footsteps by introducing more music in a major key to his community, as was the case in his setting of *Unetaneh Tokef* in major, which was usually recited in a minor key. The two cantors had their differences, but both blended their love of Judaism with their passion for music. They desired to elevate the aesthetics of Jewish worship often finding inspiration in non-Jewish sources.

Some of Offenbach's work blended his interest in religious and secular music. For example, for Purim in 1834, the cantor set a piece entitled *Trinklieder* (Drinking Song) for the holiday to the melody of *Im Herbst da Muss Man Trinkin* from the German

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[147] Binder, "Studies in Jewish Music," 299-300.
[148] Salomon Sulzer, *Schir Zion* (Wien: Artaria & Company, 1838).

Romantic opera *Der Vampyr* by Heinrich Marschner.[149] This example of Offenbach's creativity is in line with the enduring tradition of celebrating Purim through farcical and profane means.

As he described in the Forward to his Haggadah, Offenbach desired a Jewish musical renaissance and the preservation of Jewish literacy through the formation of a Jewish community knowledgeable in their own culture.[150] Offenbach's Hebrew-German *siddur* for children, *General Prayer Book for Israelite Youth*, was born out of his worry that young people were becoming less and less knowledgeable about Hebrew and Jewish culture. Offenbach had cause for concern. Cologne's Jews were becoming heavily acculturated, and in the early 1780s, community leaders called for families to register for their local Christian school – rather than support a Jewish school of their own.[151]

Offenbach's Haggadah is not the cantor's only foray into the world of Passover music. In 1829, he published four pieces of Passover liturgy in a volume titled *Nigunim Le-Pesach* (Melodies for Passover). He wrote some melodies for a soloist and others for two voices and included a setting of *Tefilat Tal,* a prayer for dew offered at synagogue on the first night of Passover, in the publication.[152]

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[149] Isaac Offenbach, "[S. 2757c] 'Trinklieder'," HUC Library Catalog (Germany: manuscript, 1834), http://music.huc.edu/s-2757c/.

[150] Peter Bornheim, review of *Isaac Offenbach. Reformorientierter Kantor*, by Jurgen Wilhelm, May 19, 2019.

[151] Meyer, *German-Jewish History in Modern Times, Vol II,* 116-7.

[152] To see the manuscript, go tohttp://mss.huc.edu/ajaxzoom/single.php?zoomDir=/pic/zoom/music/SENDERY_6352e.

Offenbach Haggadah

Isaac Offenbach published his Haggadah in 1838. It is the first in history for Jewish use at the *seder* table to include musical notation. The cantor had noticed a decline in Jewish education in his community and could no longer assume that his congregants could open a Haggadah and follow along accurately. In line with his entire career, the goals behind Offenbach's Haggadah were three-fold: to preserve religious literacy in an increasingly changing community, to promote Jewish musical education and the aesthetic improvement of Passover home ritual.

The cover page is framed by architectural floral ornamentation. Following this are two title pages. The first is not illustrated at all. Offenbach uses a straightforward title: *Haggadah* (written in Hebrew) *or Narrative of Israel's Exodus from Egypt* (which he writes in German). The subtitle reads: "Celebrations that are held by Families on the First Two Evenings of the Matzah-Festival. Newly Reworked along with an Appendix to the Old Music which has come down to us through Tradition, and some newly Composed Melodies."

The second title page includes illustrations completed by David Levy Elkan. Elkan was a stone potter, engraver, lithographer, and painter known for his detailed drawings, including an Esther Scroll he decorated, published in Cologne in 1843.[153] In each corner of the title page, Elkan has drawn biblical figures, Moses, Aaron, Solomon,

[153] Center for Jewish Art, https://cja.huji.ac.il/gross/browser.php?mode=treefriend&id=2748&f=maker_name.

and David. In the middle are two angels soaring above Moses with the Israelites in toe as they approach the Red Sea. The entire illustration is housed within a pseudo-Gothic heraldic frame, in the style of a coat of arms.[154] Many biblical commentators relay that God sent two angels to guide Moses and the Israelites through the wilderness during Exodus.[155] Offenbach's affinity for angelology displays a difference between him and the Reform movement which was making a consorted effort to remove angelic references from their liturgy.

Offenbach wrote that *Renard & Dubyen* commissioned his Haggadah. The pair sold German and foreign books out of their own book and art store and operated a lithography and publishing house close to the Jewish quarter in Cologne.[156] Dubyen's first name has been lost to history. However, his business partner Renard had the initials J.E., thought to have stood for Joseph Engelbert.[157] The bibliographer Bernhard Friedberg supposes that only the cover of Offenbach's Haggadah was printed in Cologne and that the rest was published in Hamburg.[158] While Hamburg was more well-known for printing dense Jewish texts, the printing press of Cologne was fully capable of printing in Hebrew. Offenbach's Epigraph features the following quote from Exodus in Hebrew and German:

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[154] William Gross, "Hagadah, oder Erzählung von Israels Auszug aus Egypten, Cologne, 1838," Center for Jewish Art, https://cja.huji.ac.il/gross/browser.php?mode=set&id=35826.

[155] Rashbam on Genesis 18:1:1, https://www.sefaria.org/Rashbam_on_Genesis.18.1.1?lang=bi.

[156] "All Entries of Rheinland-Westphalen 1834," Historic Address Books, https://adressbuecher.genealogy.net/addressbook/54747d851e6272f5d1c40d24?sort=lastName&offset=8150&max=25&order=asc.

[157] "J E Renard," The British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG215208.

[158] Bernhard Friedberg, *The History of Hebrew Typography* (Antwerp: 1935), 33.

"Remember this day, upon which you were freed from Egypt."[159] Below this are the words "printed by Clouth & Co." Wilhelm Clouth was a printer in Cologne who Friedberg himself refers to as a "master." [160] Because of the printing credit Offenbach supplies, as well as the multiple times he names Cologne as the place of publication, I would like to suggest that Friedberg was incorrect in his supposition that the Haggadah was primarily printed in Hamburg.

In the Forward to his Haggadah, Offenbach writes that its "publishing was [paid for] by the honorable members of the congregation [who] wanted to use the proceeds for charitable purposes." He explains that friends of his in the congregation wanted him to make the "intimate festivities of the *seder* night more accessible to a large part of our fellow believers."[161] He continues to share his intentions to make the Haggadah look as appealing as possible to earn the reader's respect for these holy traditions which he felt had been lacking. Offenbach makes his objective to produce an aesthetically pleasing Haggadah explicit from the onset of the Forward, writing: "I want to make it look good because a lot of people do not pay respect to these holy traditions, and I need to make it look good to get respect from the people."[162]

Offenbach's desire for artistry in his Haggadah goes beyond the superficial, intending to showcase the importance of the text. Offenbach asserts that "written language" is the

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[159] Exodus, 13:3.
[160] James Brophy, "Epilogue the Hand Press and Political Dissent: Forbidden Print in Central Europe, 1800-1848," in *Print Culture at the Crossroads,* ed. Elizabeth Dillenburg, Howard Louthan, and Drew Thomas (Netherlands: Brill, 2021), 513-531; Friedberg*, History of Hebrew Typography*, 33.
[161] Offenbach, "Forward," *Haggadah* (Cologne: Reynard & Dubyen, 1838), 2.
[162] Offenbach, *Haggadah,* 1.

most important part of making his project successful. The entire Haggadah was written in Hebrew and German, each on opposite pages. Offenbach explains his reasoning for doing so in the Forward.

> The fact that the Israelites needed a translation of Hebrew prayers and customs into the German language has already proven itself through experience. The German-Jewish language was always only understood by a relatively small number of our brothers, so they cannot pray properly. The excellent prayers written in this language had the purpose of great elevation of spirit to God, unfulfilled. As a result, prayer, like all other religious rites, hymns and so on have become a dead formality.[163]

Offenbach relied on a preexisting German translation of the Haggadah written by Wolf ben Samson Heidenheim in Hebrew characters. Heidenheim was biblical commentator and a German linguist who lived in the Frankfort area from 1757-1832. Offenbach altered Heidenheim's translation to serve his needs, arguing that the Yiddish-inflected translation would not connect with his German-speaking worshippers. Offenbach writes: "They already have a good German translation of the Haggadah from a man known for it, whose professional services in this subject are generally recognized, and which I therefore also largely use. But his translation does not use German letters, but the forewarned Judeo-German. So, I made a few changes with the intent of making it more relevant to its meaning."

While it had become common for Haggadot to include translations in the vernacular, most *seder* participants were accustomed to reciting the music of Passover in Hebrew. [164] Praying in the vernacular was not unprecedented. The Reform prayerbook

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[163] Offenbach, *Haggadah*, 1.
[164] Ochs, "Publicizing the Miracle," 192.

of Hamburg included German liturgy. During the 1800s, several *siddurim* were published in Judeo-German (sometimes referred to as Prayer-German). Offenbach felt that the dialect was failing to grip the hearts of his community members. Instead, he included Hebrew and German melodies in his Haggadah. The cantor acknowledges that the way in which he approached his Haggadah might seem radical to his congregants. He concludes his Forward by stating: "At the request of many known, and hopefully unknown friends, I am still hoping for indulgence in terms of how I went about it."[165]

Perhaps Offenbach's Haggadah was published out of order, for after the Forward is a list of endnotes. Throughout the Haggadah itself, citation numerals correlate to the notes in this section. Some notes elaborate on the terms the writer has used, and others correct the publisher's printing mistakes.

The majority of Offenbach's Haggadah follows the standard *seder* procedure. One section of the Haggadah that shows Offenbach's creativity is *Hallel*. At the Passover *seder,* Psalms 113 and 114, which reference the story of Exodus, are recited before dinner, and the subsequent three psalms, which focus on Jewish salvation, are sung after the meal.[166] Offenbach includes exclamation marks throughout his German translation of *Hallel* to indicate the celebratory nature of the psalms. Unlike the original Hebrew, in the German text of his Haggadah Offenbach includes the number of each Psalm and gives instructions for who should chant which sections, using the terms "prayer leader" or "the

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[165] Offenbach, *Haggadah,* 3.
[166] Newhouse, 103.

fellowship." Offenbach uses the masculine definite article "*der*" for each, presupposing that everyone praying aloud at the *seder* would be male.[167]

Pſalm 117. Lobt den Herrn, ihr Völker alle! rühmt Ihn alle Nationen! Seine Güte waltet über uns, Seine Treue in Ewigkeit. Hallelujah!

Pſalm 118. Der Vorbeter. Dankt dem Herrn, denn Er iſt freundlich, ewig währet Seine Güte. Die Geſellſchaft wiederholt den Vers.

Der Vorbeter. So ſinge Iſrael: ewig währet Seine Güte. Die Geſellſchaft. Dankt dem Herrn ꝛc.

Der Vorbeter. So ſinge Aarons Haus: ewig währet Seine Güte. Die Geſellſchaft. Dankt ꝛc.

Der Vorbeter. So ſingen, die den Herrn verehren: ewig währet Seine Güte. Die Geſellſchaft. Dankt ꝛc.

In Angſt rief ich die Gottheit an; der Gottheit Antwort ſchuf mir Raum. Der Herr iſt mein, ich fürchte nichts. — Was kann der Menſch mir thun?

Music

Offenbach includes six musical appendixes in his Haggadah:

(1) An original composition of Psalm 136:1 (*Hodu*) with two tenor parts and two bass parts

(2) the transcription of a traditional melody for *Ki Lo Naeh*

(3) the transcription of a traditional melody for *Adir Hu*

(4) a setting of *Chasal Sidur Pesach* for mixed choir

(5) a traditional melody for *Echad Mi Yodeah*

(6) and *Ein Laemmschen*, his own German adaptation of *Chad Gadya* for voice and organ.

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[167] Offenbach, 59.

Offenbach highlights the poetic nature of the texts he has set to music in the main section of his Haggadah. Unlike all other psalms in his Haggadah, Offenbach printed the ones corresponding to scores in his appendix in prose style. What follows is a sheet from Offenbach's Haggadah that showcases this approach. The top of the page is a standard piece of text printed densely. Below the text embellishment is an example of the author's format for the hymns he set to music.

Es sei Dein Wille Ewiger, unser und unsrer Väter Gott, bald in unsern Tagen den heiligen Tempel zu erbauen, damit jeder seinen Theil an Deinem Gesetze nehme.

Eins, wollt ihr es kennen?
Eins, ich will es nennen:
Eins ist Gott der Herr allein,
Die ganze Schöpfung sein.

Zwei, wollt ihr sie kennen?
Zwei, ich will sie nennen:
Zwei Tafeln, heil'ge Zeugen
Des Bundes der Getreuen. Eins ist Gott ꝛc.

Drei, wollt ihr ꝛc.
Drei sind die gläub'gen Väter,
Vor Gott für uns Vertreter. Eins ist Gott ꝛc.

Vier, wollt ihr ꝛc.
Vier fromme Mütter waren,
Die Israel gebaren. Eins ist Gott ꝛc.

Fünf, wollt ihr ꝛc.
Fünf Bücher, heil'ge Schätze,
Schrieb Moses voll Gesetze. Eins ist Gott ꝛc.

Sechs, wollt ihr ꝛc.
Sechs sind die Mischna Bände[44]),
Gehaltvoll bis ans Ende. Eins ist Gott ꝛc.

Offenbach discussed his musical approach in the Forward to his Haggadah. He wanted his Haggadah to make the home ritual of Passover more accessible to German-speaking Jews. To translate prayers into German while still making them effective when set to music he edited the text. He promises that he always tried to stay true to the meaning of each text: "Since I had to adapt both the old and the newly composed melodies for Hebrew, and German texts, all the songs could not be translated into German without editing the songs. But I always tried to stay true to the meaning of the Psalms."[168]

Offenbach composed *Hodu* (Psalm 136:1) for a tenor soloist with a choir comprised of another tenor line and two bass parts. It is unclear how he foresaw these arrangements sung in the home. He might have been envisioning his own highly musical family when composing choir arrangements for the Passover *seder*.[169] Offenbach's setting of *Hodu* includes a full-text underlay in syllabified Hebrew. Each Hebrew lyric is divided by dashes. Each syllable was printed from right to left in accordance with the direction of the Hebrew language, while the syllables themselves go from left to right to match up with their corresponding melody note. Below the sheet music is a German translation of the text. Offenbach included an optional melody line, indicated by smaller music notes, for those who wanted to sing the psalm in German, displaying the cantor's acknowledgement of German as an acceptable language of prayer.

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[168] Offenbach, 2.
[169] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 32.

Ki Lo Naeh (also known as *Adir Bimlucha*) is a counting song that lists the wonderous qualities that God possesses. Cumulative Passover hymns are often sung in the folk style. It appears with a traditional melody in Offenbach's Haggadah. In the Forward, the cantor writes: "The second song (Adir Bimlucha) presented, because of the frequent repetitions of the word 'lach', particular challenges, which is why I use Arbarbanel's commentary here."[170]

Don Yitzchak Abarbanel, the renowned Portuguese scholar, authored one of the most celebrated commentaries on the Haggadah, entitled *Zevach Pesach* (Passover Sacrifice). In it, Abarbanel regularly questioned the Haggadah's word choices.[171] With regard to *Ki Lo Naeh,* Abarbanel sought to understand why the text repeats the word "*l'cha*" ("to you") often. He concludes that "*l'cha*" is written seven times, in accordance with the days of creation, and the seven biblical verses in which the Holy One is described using the word "*l'cha.*" He cites the following verses: "Yours, Lord, is greatness" (Chronicles I, 29:11:1); "to You, Lord belong kingship and preeminence above all" (Chronicles I 29:11:2); "for that is Your due" (Jeremiah 10:7); "Yours is an arm endowed with might" (Psalm 89:14); "Day is Yours" (Psalms 74:16:1); "even night is Yours" (Psalms 74:16:2); "The heaven is Yours" (Psalms 89:12:1); and "the earth is Yours too" (Psalms 89:12:2).[172]

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[170] Offenbach, 2.
[171] Vanessa Ochs, "The Printed Haggadah and Its Enduring Conventions: A Text of One's Own," in *The Passover Haggadah: A Biography*, 67–89 (USA: Princeton University Press, 2020), 82.
[172] Arbarbanel Maharal miPrague, *Hagadah shel Pesach Gevuros Hashem* (Vilna, 1873), 62-63.

Offenbach wrote the text underlay for the first verse of *Ki Lo Naeh* in both German and Hebrew. The words for the remaining verses are printed below the score. The melody fits better with the German translation Offenbach supplies, than the original Hebrew. Offenbach identifies the music as a "traditional melody," but it is difficult to deduce its derivation.

Another famous counting folksong sung on Passover is *Echad Mi Yodeah* (Who Knows One?) which lists thirteen articles of the Jewish faith. Offenbach provides a traditional melody for *Echad Mi Yodeah* with lyrics printed in the same fashion as *Ki Lo Naeh. Echad Mi Yodeah* does not have a clear connection to the *seder*. Some suggest that the text is meant to explain to Jews still struggling in exile the abiding importance of having been delivered from Egypt, naming the things we were granted in between Exodus and their expulsion from the land of Israel, such as the Torah, the Sabbath, and so on. Others believe the song was added to the *seder* for a simpler reason -- to keep young people engaged, a goal that Offenbach was committed to.

Offenbach's composition *Chasal Siddur Pesach* for a mixed-gender choir is indicative of Offenbach's incorporation of choral singing into their prayer services, inspired by the reformers.[173] When introducing his mixed choir setting of *Chasal Siddur Pesach*, Offenbach writes that he hopes "people like it, even though they are not used it."[174] He acknowledged that it is not the norm, but he believes it is an important change for his community because they are comprised of highly musical

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[173] Joshua Jacobson, *Musing about Jewish Music,* (2001), 36.
[174] Offenbach, *Haggadah,* 2.

individuals. Offenbach not only intended to preserve the rituals of Passover, but to educate his community about the holiday's musical possibilities. Given the cantor's desire for renewal and reinvention, he was eager to protect preexisting Passover melodies and to compose new ones for texts that, to his knowledge, did not have any. He writes that there was no melody for *Chasal Siddur Pesach* and so he decided to write one: "We also do not have a melody for Psalm 118. I tried to prepare Psalm 118 for four male voices. And for Chasal, the last prayer, I wanted four singing voices in a mixed choir. I hope that the people like it, even though they are not used to it because it is not the norm, because they are a musically educated society."

The fourth melody in Offenbach's Haggadah is a short, traditional setting of *Addir Hu.* The text of *Addir Hu* first appeared in Western European Haggadot during the sixteenth century. The tune that today's Ashkenazi Jews are accustomed to was often recited in German and rose in popularity at the dawn of the seventeenth century. Ruth Newhouse compared scores for *Addir Hu* from a variety of sources and found that two main melodies developed over time. One was a melody from Germany that was sung throughout Europe and which Rittangel published in his Haggadah. The other was also European in origin but gained its popularity in America, brought over by Reform Jews. The first transcription of it is the notation Offenbach wrote out for his Haggadah.[175]

The final composition in Offenbach's Haggadah is the cantor's German rendition of *Chad Gadya* (One Goat), *Ein Leimmchen.* In the Forward, Offenbach expresses his concerns about how the Jews of Cologne will react to this composition. In

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[175] Newhouse, 224.

the eyes of many, *Chad Gadya* is a childish nursery rhyme. Offenbach describes his desire to honor the deeper meaning of the text with his music and piano accompaniment: "For Chad Gadya, Heidenheim saw it just as a defense of the eternal justice of providence and I wanted to make more meaning of it, so I put music to it and to top it all off, an accompaniment for the piano was added, although this will make it more eligible for defamation, this is what I had in mind when I wrote this composition."[176]

Wolf Heidenheim (1757-1832) was a German exegete who edited five editions of the Jewish bible, each known for their attention to detail.[177] Commentators such as Heidenheim believed that *Chad Gadya* demonstrated that even though the Jewish people were persecuted for centuries they survived, and their rulers were all annihilated. According to this interpretation, the goat which, in the poem, is bought by a father for two coins, represents the Jews who are redeemed by God by way of the prophets Moses and Aaron. The cat, dog, stick, water, ox, slaughterer, and angel of death all represent various conquerors of Israel, and the Most Holy symbolises the eternal justice of redemption for the Jewish people. Living happily in the diaspora, Offenbach wanted the Aramaic folksong to strike a different chord for his community in Cologne. He achieved this by writing his own Germanic interpretation with piano accompaniment. Rather than striking a middle eastern tone to express a longing for Zion, Offenbach's arrangement

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[176] Offenbach, *Haggadah,* 3.

[177] Fred Skolnik and Michael Berenbaum, ed., "Wolf Benjamin Ze'ev ben Samson Heidenheim," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 13, (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing House), 653.

identified itself with German society through its reliance on western harmony and the German language.

Isaac Offenbach might not have aligned himself with the Reform movement, but he was a Jewish reformer. The Reform movement was modernizing Jewish liturgy. Traditional melodies were abandoned and Germanized arrangements replaced them.[178] Reformers used the printing press to disseminate their modern take on Jewish music, in a bid to keep German Jews from abandoning their faith. Similarly, the presswork and Germanic music styles of Offenbach were intended to enrich the Passover experience for the Jews of Cologne. Both Offenbach and the Reform movement were committed to music education. Reform Jews were inspired by the high levels of music literacy found in Christian circles, elevating the pleasing, musical nature of their prayer services. The number of songs in Haggadot skyrocketed from 1644 to 1976. Ruth Newhouse attributes this to the use of the Haggadah as a tool for music education in the Reform movement. Offenbach was a lifelong teacher of music. He was entirely self-taught as a musician and taught violin, guitar, and flute, to countless others. He wrote his own textbook for music theory to teach the choir boys in his synagogue how to sight sing. Offenbach included musical notation in his Haggadah, in the hopes that his readers would know, or would learn, how to make sense of it. He even included choir arrangements, encouraging his congregants to sing in harmony at home to celebrate Passover. Whether it was the writer's intent or not, Offenbach inspired hundreds of Reform Haggadot. The musical Haggadot created in Germany before the Second World and for years later in the United

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[178] Eliyahu Schliefer, "Idelsohn: An Annotated Bibliography".

States, were meant to direct Reform *seders in* accordance with the movement's ever-developing doctrines. The *New Union Haggadah* of 1974 particularly mirrors Offenbach's Haggadah as it includes new melodies as well as several traditional ones; not only modelling a progressive *seder* but preserving the historic legacy of music for Passover.[179]

Offenbach was the religious leader of a community in transition. The people of Cologne were accustomed to their longstanding traditions while starting to feel the influence of Reform Judaism and the trends of gentile society. Like many cantors, Offenbach was eager to meet the desires of his congregation and was a talented musician with his own musical tastes. He did not want to ignore his personal compositional voice, artistic muses, or the interests of his congregants, especially since they bankrolled his Haggadah. Like a good politician, Offenbach had to do what he felt was best while staying within the comfort levels of his constituents.

Conclusion

Jewish music notation was a novelty prior to modern times. Some scholars have noted that moments of upheaval motivate Jews to codify their rituals, including music. I refer to this as the upheaval hypothesis. Continuous threats against the Jews have called into question the religious and cultural continuity of our people.[180] Notation can be a way

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[179] Ruth Newhouse, "The Music of The Passover Seder from Notated Sources".

[180] Elianna Yolkut, "The Problem with Worrying About 'Jewish Continuity'," *Haaretz,* Nov 13, 2011, https://www.haaretz.com/jewish/2011-11-13/ty-article/the-problem-with-worrying-about-jewish-continuity/0000017f-e598-dc7e-adff-f5bdbb250000.

for Jews to safeguard musical tradition from unwanted outside influence and to ensure its survival during times of uncertainty. Scholars Yosef Yerushalmi and Ruth Newhouse note that transcription of Passover melodies increases during times of change, movement, and persecution for the Jewish people.[181] As evidence for this hypothesis, Yerushalmi discusses the Haggadot produced in 1840's Syria during the Damascus blood libel crisis, Nazi Germany, and German Displaced Persons camps for survivors denied entry to British Mandate Palestine. Yerushalmi also cites the antisemitism leveled against Soviet Jews and the constant upheaval in war-torn Israel as catalysts for innovative Haggadot.[182]

German Reform Jews no longer dreamed of a messianic return to Zion, nor did they wish to mimic the Eastern musical styles of the past in their liturgy.[183] Instead, they were looking towards a modern European future, finally feeling secure in their socio-political position in the West. The Reform movement wanted to adapt Jewish liturgy in accordance with the values of the time.[184] Reform Judaism normalized the transcription of Ashkenazi liturgy, using Western musical notation to transmit what had been, until then an oral tradition, either heavily improvised or passed down from cantors to their apprentices directly. [185]

As the upheaval hypothesis proclaims, times of disruption have encouraged Jews to codify their traditions and notate their music. The destruction of the second temple in

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[181] Newhouse, "The Music of the Passover Seder," 55.
[182] Yosef Yerushalmi*, Haggadah and History*.
[183] Idelsohn, *Jewish Music*, 232.
[184] Schliefer, "Idelsohn," 112.
[185] Newhouse, "The Music of the Passover Seder."

70 CE forced rabbis to rethink the observation of Passover. Instead of highly trained priests performing the rituals of *Pesach* at the ancient altar on behalf of the collective, Passover was brought inside the home. Haggadot were created to guide everyday Jews in their celebration of the holiday. When cantor Isaac Offenbach noticed a decline in Jewish literacy and engagement in his community, he notated memorable Passover melodies for his community to enjoy, taking inspiration from Christians such as Johann Rittangel and early Jewish reformers who saw musical notation as a valuable tool for education and enlightenment. Today, hundreds of musical Haggadot are in circulation. Since World War One, the tradition of passing down Passover music orally has been irreparably shaken.[186] The mass migration of Jews to the United States between 1880 and 1920 prompted a massive influx of musical Haggadot, used to standardize the *seder* experience for children of immigrants.[187] The production of musical Haggadot continued to increase in the nineteen sixties and seventies as intermarriage became normalized in liberal American movements.[188] We can no longer assume that everyone who opens a Haggadah will know what texts can be sung nor how to sing them. Today's Jews strive to welcome people of all backgrounds at our *seders*. To inspire the inclusion of diverse Passover traditions, many modern musical Haggadot from Israel and the United States include melodies from around the world, often providing multiple settings for the same text.[189]

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[186] Eric Werner, "The Tunes of the Haggadah".
[187] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 33.
[188] Sylvia Barach Fishman, *Double or Nothing? Jewish Families and Mixed Marriage* (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press, 2004).
[189] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 30.

Musical notation can allow us to join together in song regardless of which tunes, if any, we grew up singing.

Musical Haggadot have the added value of documenting the development of Passover repertoire and our everchanging approach to the holiday. Musical Haggadot serve as important records for future scholars, avoiding the challenges musicologists have faced in the past when attempting to chronicle Jewish music.

Musical Haggadot model how to communicate information and transmit music to people in separate times and spaces. They reflect how Jews communicate music for home rituals and can inform the work of today's cantorate. The development of musical Haggadot is closely linked to advancements in technology – from the invention of the printing press to the advent of the internet. The music in Rittangel's Haggadah was printed in the standard fashion of the time, using movable type technology.[190] The editors of musical Haggadot who followed continued to transcribe music using state-of-the-art techniques of musical notation and publication, employing hot metal typesetting at the turn of the twentieth century, sharing recorded liturgy on compact discs at the turn of the twenty-first and later through iTunes and electronic music distribution platforms. Jews might have been late to notate their music, but we have taken the ball and run with it. I

[190] Newhouse, "Music of the Passover Seder," 31.

hope that this thesis will guide the creation of future Haggadot that are in keeping with modern methods and mores.[191]

Haggadot were a democratizing invention. They guide individuals in the execution of their *seders,* for which rabbis are rendered unnecessary.[192] This begs the question: how do we affect home rituals as clergy, and should we? When Abraham Idelsohn was collecting unpublished melodies for his now iconic *Thesaurus of Oriental Hebrew Melodies,* it was for an objective, musicological study. Still, he ended up unduly influencing his subjects. Idelsohn transcribed the Babylonian melody for *Kaddesh Ur'chatz* rather than any others, and it soared in popularity as a result. When the tune was disseminated into the homes of countless Ashkenazi and Sephardi Jews, it supplanted many of their renditions. Passover is meant to remain open to individual and familial interpretation.[193] We may be negating the purity of Passover when we inscribe its melodies into our Haggadot. In recent years, Reform synagogues have been offering their own seders, blurring the lines between home ritual and synagogue life. The magic of Passover lies in its rituals. The seder's texts, foods, and songs allow us to act out the epic drama of Exodus from the comfort of our homes. I would argue that temple *seders* educate congregants about these rituals and offer a sense of belonging to those without

[191] The website Haggadot.com has revolutionized how today's Jews design and share their interpretations of Seder rituals.
[192] Ochs, "Publicizing the Miracle," 195.
[193] Albrod, "Beyond the Door," 30.

relatives to celebrate with. I hope that other Jewish leaders will publish their thoughts on this topic.

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