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Elisheva Baumgarten and Judah D. Galinsky, eds. *Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century France*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. xxv + 282 pp. Figures, tables, notes, appendix, index. \$90.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-1-137-28719-9. \$90.00 U.S. (pb). ISBN 978-1-349-44960-6. \$69.00 U.S. (eb). ISBN 978-1-137-31758-2.

Review by Irit Ruth Kleiman, Boston University.

*Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century France* represents a notable and versatile addition to the rapidly growing body of scholarship on cross-cultural cohabitation in medieval Europe. These sixteen essays set out to analyze areas of specificity and commonality that frame the arc of Jewish life in thirteenth-century France, in distinction from Germany, for instance, or from the epochs that bounded the pivotal thirteenth century, whether the renascent twelfth or the already-fractured and impoverished fourteenth. The editors' introduction announces their aim to "highlight the intellectual, social, and cultural changes" that characterized thirteenth-century France for both Jews and Christians, and "the ways these changes related (or did not relate) to each other" (p. 4). To this end, their collection is organized along three broad axes: first, "learning and law"; next, "religious polemics and aspects of persecutory policy"; and finally "literature and art" (p. 4).

Using the Decalogue as a test case, Lesley Smith's "Continuity and Change in the Study of the Bible: The Ten Commandments in Christian Exegesis" inaugurates *Part I: Learning, Law, and Society* with a study of how the rise of the university and the increased emphasis on pastoral teaching to the laity influenced the production and study of biblical texts and commentaries. Despite the generally additive nature of textual transmission, Smith finds that broader shifts in genre such as the rise in confessors' manuals made possible new contexts and different perspectives. The single greatest force for continuity and homogenization came from the Parisian university's increasing emphasis on the formalization and measurement of knowledge in combination with its growing sociological self-codification. Smith points out that the theoretical concerns of the university teacher are not the practical ones of the pastoral confessor. To understand how change existed within continuity, we must revise our perspectives in ways that allow us to grasp side-by-side coexistence of such differences.

In "Psalms for Men, Books of Hours for Women: Arras as a Case Study," Margo Stroumsa-Uzan furnishes descriptions of the illumination programs and provenance histories of a series of Books of Hours identifiable with the city of Arras. This reader was most engaged by the author's analysis of the self-reinforcing relation between Marian devotion and its practices, and the shifting social and familial roles of women within the urban landscape of thirteenth-century Northern France. Given the opportunity for strengthening the book's larger thematic purpose, richer comparisons between Marian devotion and the Jewish *shekhina* might have been developed, along with fuller consideration of the similarities and differences in the development of illuminated prayer books within each of the two communities.

In the next chapter, Ari Geiger asks “What Happened to Christian Hebraism in the Thirteenth Century?” Despite the decrease in direct contact between Hebraizing Christians and Jews, the thirteenth century saw a generally increased knowledge of the Hebrew language. Geiger points out how the Northern French activity of the twelfth century shifts to England, in particular in connection to the figure of Robert Grosseteste. Once more, the thirteenth-century emphasis on preaching becomes a determining force. Allegorical rather than literal exegesis came to dominate in Christian circles; polemical Hebraism emphasized the didactic possibilities in the study and rejection of rabbinic teachings. During this time, texts were prepared that made post-rabbinic Hebrew materials available to Christian readers; these became material for Christian polemicists. Drawing repeatedly on the work of Deena Copeland Klepper, Geiger shows how such thirteenth-century transformations led to the fourteenth-century work of Nicholas of Lyra.

The title of chapter four, “I Have Asked For Nothing Except The *Ius Commune*: Legal Change in Thirteenth-Century France” comes from a widely circulated courtroom narrative that pits Mary against the Devil. Karl Shoemaker provides a salient and highly readable overview of the problems attached to trial by ordeal from the perspective of ecclesiastical administration, cogently explaining how the rising bureaucracy of the thirteenth century favored *ius commune*. Shoemaker’s reading attaches to oversight, checks and balances, and evidentiary procedures; here as in several other chapters, greater attention to the interactions between Christian and Jewish laws and communities might have been welcome.

Judah Galinsky’s “Between *Ashkenaz* (Germany) and *Tsarfat* (France): Two Approaches Toward Popularizing Jewish Law” evaluates the divergence between two traditions often lumped together. Over the course of the thirteenth century, a series of texts were produced in France for the readership of a non-elite, non-specialist public. These works were conceived of as self-sufficient references for use in the practical daily application of Halakhah. In contrast, in Germany, emphasis on preservation of the unadulterated primary text and its study remained central. Works that might popularize Halakhah were to be avoided, since they were bound to introduce numerous errors, both textual and of understanding. With the exception of the non-mainstream pietist movement, what might today be called ‘outreach’ was simply not valued in Germany, and indeed, could be viewed with suspicion. Galinsky’s comparison of these tendencies within Rabbinic cultures with the shifts in textual and pastoral practices taking place simultaneously within the Christian community offers an opportunity for meaningful reflection on the influence and interactions between the two.

In the final contribution to this first panel, “Authority, Control, and Conflict in Thirteenth-Century Paris: Contextualizing the Talmud Trial,” author Yossef Schwartz highlights the similarities and differences between the notorious trial of 1240 and others, either in Paris or at the courts of Frederic II and James I of Aragon, concerning either the Jewish community or accusations of Christian heresy. Surveying a larger context of evolving relations between University, Papacy, and Crown, Schwartz brings to light latent procedural and structural patterns. His central hypothesis is that the Talmud trial of 1240 demonstrates a level of collaboration between monarchic, papal, and academic authorities that anticipates developments more recognizable later in the century. A table presenting twenty well-known “Inquisitorial and Censorial Acts in Thirteenth-Century Paris” is especially useful.

The chapters in part II, “Polemics, Persecutions, and Mutual Perceptions,” tend to give fuller consideration to interactions between Jews and Christians than those in the first panel, although this focus brings with it a reinforced awareness of what some might react to as the most discouraging facets of those encounters.

In chapter seven, “Joseph Ben Nathan’s *Sefer Yosef Ha-Mekanné* and the Medieval Jewish Critique of Christianity,” Daniel J. Lasker returns to the question of why polemic as a genre flourished in the South, but failed to take hold in the North. Lasker has addressed this question in two previous articles, suggesting that French and German (that is, Northern), authors were familiar with polemical texts from

the Mediterranean South, but chose not to deploy them because their Northern readership would have found them foreign and been unreceptive. Here Lasker rebuts prior critiques through study of one specific author, Joseph ben Nathan. In Lasker's view, an isolated, sudden Northern polemic emerges as a reaction to the post-1240 vulnerability felt by the French Jewish community, but the genre *qua* genre never finds a deep foothold in the intellectual and cultural ethos of the North.

David Berger's "How, When and to What Degree Was the Jewish-Christian Debate Transformed in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries?" continues scholarly debate about the strategies deployed in Jewish polemic, questions of geography and periodization related to Jewish attitudes towards the trinity, Christian attacks on or uses of the Talmud, and the place of reason [*ratio*] in polemical argument. Although Berger adds further reply to his long-running debate with Lasker, his first concern is to review arguments once made by Amos Funkenstein in the absence of sources now edited and available.

In "Of Milk and Blood: Innocent III and the Jews, Revisited," John Tolan examines the influence of Pope Innocent III's rhetoric on the increasingly violent and aggressive intolerance directed against Jews and Jewish communities from the end of the twelfth century and over the course of the thirteenth. Tolan highlights discourses about Jews and Christians coming into contact through the sale of meat and milk, domestic employment, and/or wet nursing; the rhetoric that surrounds these practices oscillates between reproval of the widespread and horror at the imagined unlikely. Tolan seizes upon tensions, contradictions, and controversies to show how a series of papal texts presage later accusations of host desecration. Indeed, one of Tolan's underlying assertions is that the 1215 doctrine of Eucharistic transubstantiation is key to the anxieties that come, with increasing ugliness, to inhabit the material and bodily aspects of interfaith co-habitation.

Did Jews consider Christians idolaters? This was a central question for thirteenth-century Jewish-Christian encounters. Despite the views on this point articulated during Talmud trials, for example, in "The Image of Christians in Medieval Ashkenazic Rabbinic Literature," Ephraim Karnafogel argues that nuanced comprehension of Jewish views of Christian idolatry exceed the theological, that economic interests and concerns for the security of the community were too important. Karnafogel reviews in detail the legal opinions of rabbinic thinkers in France and beyond, regarding business dealings with Christians on the days of Christian festivals, in relation to objects related more and less closely to Christian worship.

Jessica Marin Elliott's "Jews 'Feigning Devotion': Christian Representations of Converted Jews in French Chronicles before and after the Expulsion of 1306" presents a series of tales that center on the relationships between Jews, conversion, and holy objects such as the Eucharistic wafer or representations of the Virgin Mary. Whereas in the earlier texts, accidental encounters between Jews and the Eucharist provoke sincere conversions, by the end of the period studied, converted Jews feature as duplicitous traitors, hell-bent on desecrating the Host or stabbing Mary in the face, before either returning to Judaism "like a dog to his own vomit" (p. 174), or, better still, perishing in dramatic acts of divine justice. Marin Elliott concludes by asking whether such tales might represent a Northern version of the "crisis of identification" David Nirenberg has brought to light regarding post-conversion Iberia.

Anne E. Lester's "Women Behind the Law: Lay Religious Women in Thirteenth-Century France and the Problem of Textual Resistance" is primarily devoted to the "sparse and tantalizing" (p. 191) archival traces of women living in ambiguous situations as lay religious, either as individuals or in loose networks, sometimes in the margins of religious communities and sometimes in ways that resembled those of religious communities, but in any case, beyond the institutional reach of the Church. Lester's deeper points concern scholarly and historiographical practices that have tended to artificially segregate the study of distinct groups along religious lines, studying one margin or another while failing to reckon with the potentially paradoxical centrality of marginality itself. Her call to examine the uses and

practices marginality itself makes for a fitting conclusion to the volume's second part, and a timely reminder of the historian's most timeless responsibilities.

Each chapter in the book's third and final section, *Cultural Expressions and Appropriations: Art, Poetry, and Literature*, explores the extent to which Jewish cultural life was marked by the influence of the surrounding Christian ethos.

First, in "Mirroring Samson the Martyr: Reflections of Jewish-Christian Relations in the North French Hebrew Illuminated Miscellany," Sara Offenberg examines a single medallion from British Library Add. MS 11639 in order to understand its depiction of Samson and the Lion. Jewish-Christian relations factor into the reception and interpretation of this image in several ways, including the manuscript's probable production and provenance, the distinct valence Samson held for each religious group, or the depth of one community's familiarity with the other's iconography or reading practices. Offenberg probes the possible identity of "Samson the Martyr," likely Rabbi Samson of Metz. Here Offenberg arrives at a fascinating conjecture: that the medallion illuminates the lament for a martyred Jew forced to convert to Christianity.

With "The Lament on the Martyrs of Troyes as a Monument of Judeo-French on the Verge of the Expulsions," Cyril Aslanov proposes the detailed linguistic examination of an Old French *selikhah* commemorating thirteen Jews burned in Troyes in 1288 as the result of a blood libel. This well-known *selikhah*, that appears in MS Vatican Ebr. 322, has previously been the object of several translations. Aslanov aims to demonstrate that it contains enough distinctive elements to support his claim that a distinct form of Judeo-French existed prior to the expulsions that began shortly after its writing.

Susan L. Einbinder's "Exegesis and Romance: Revisiting the Old French Translation of Kallir" provides the book's penultimate chapter, a further study of the linguistic markers of poetic hybridity and specificity. At stake this time is the translation of a Hebrew hymn by fifth-century poet Eleazar Beribbi Kallir written out in Old French using Hebrew characters. Einbinder argues that a group of three such hymns by Kallir accidentally preserved in the manuscript fragment Heidelberg OR 490, "illustrate new ways of relating to sacred Hebrew texts" (p. 236). Her essay explores the relations between translation and exegesis, while calling into question the ways that our own reading practices may mitigate our capacity to appreciate the sophistication of the medieval re-versioning of Kallir's dense verse. An appendix uses a two-column format to present, side-by-side, Einbinder's translation of Kallir's Hebrew text and a translation of the Old French version prepared by Samuel N. Rosenberg.

The volume concludes with Rella Kushelevsky's "Abstinence in Medieval Northern France: A Comparison of 'A Slave for Seven Years' in *Sefer Ha-Ma'asim* to 'The Life of Saint Alexis.'" One of the longest tales found in the thirteenth-century *Sefer Ha-Ma'asim*, or *Book of Tales*, "A Slave for Seven Years" recounts the fate of a man who becomes distracted from the study of Torah by the erotic pleasures of a new marriage. To set things right, Elijah appears, kidnaps the man, and sells him into slavery; the man eventually returns to a more tempered domestic life. After comparing the nuances of this tale to other Jewish writings about balancing sexuality and Torah study, Kushelevsky turns to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Old French versions of the *Vie de Saint Alexis*, ultimately suggesting that "A Slave for Seven Years" conveys markers specific to Northern France, and thus a greater-than-usual resemblance to the Christian attitudes revealed in Alexis.

These sixteen chapters will appeal to scholars in a range of subfields and disciplines. While some contributions seem likely to be more broadly accessible than others, the collection as a whole moves fluidly from one theme to another, and the quality of most pieces is outstanding. This is a highly recommended volume.

## LIST OF ESSAYS

Elisheva Baumgarten, et al, "Introduction: Jews and Christians in Thirteenth-Century France"

Part 1: Learning, Law, and Society

Lesley Smith, "Continuity and Change in the Study of the Bible: The Ten Commandments in Christian Exegesis"

Margo Stroumsa-Uzan, "Psalms for Men, Books of Hours for Women: Arras as a Case Study"

Ari Geiger, "What Happened to Christian Hebraism in the Thirteenth Century?"

Karl Shoemaker, "I Have Asked for Nothing Except the *Ius Commune*: Legal Change in Thirteenth-Century France"

Judah D. Galinsky, "Between *Ashkenaz* (Germany) and *Tsarfat* (France): Two Approaches Toward Popularizing Jewish Law"

Yossef Schwartz, "Authority, Control, and Conflict in Thirteenth-Century Paris: Contextualizing the Talmud Trial"

Part 2: Polemics, Persecutions, and Mutual Perceptions

Daniel J. Lasker, "Joseph ben Nathan's *Sefer Yosef ha-Mekanné* and the Medieval Jewish Critique of Christianity"

David Berger, "How, When, and to What Degree Was the Jewish-Christian Debate Transformed in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries?"

John Tolan, "Of Milk and Blood: Innocent III and the Jews, Revisited"

Ephraim Kanarfogel, "The Image of Christians in Medieval Ashkenazic Rabbinic Literature"

Jessica Marin Elliott, "Jews 'Feigning Devotion': Christian Representations of Converted Jews in French Chronicles before and after the Expulsion of 1306"

Anne E. Lester, "Women behind the Law: Lay Religious Women in Thirteenth-Century France and the Problem of Textual Resistance"

Part 3: Cultural Expressions and Appropriations: Art, Poetry, and Literature

Sara Offenberg, "Mirroring Samson the Martyr: Reflections of Jewish-Christian Relations in the North French Hebrew Illuminated Miscellany"

Cyril Aslanov, "The Lament on the Martyrs of Troyes as a Monument of Judeo-French on the Verge of the Expulsions"

Susan L. Einbinder, "Exegesis and Romance: Revisiting the Old French Translation of Kallir"

Rella Kushelevsky, "Abstinence in Medieval Northern France: A Comparison of 'A Slave for Seven Years' in *Sefer Ha-Ma'asim* to 'The Life of Saint Alexis.'"

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