

47 * NUREMBERG MAHZOR, PRAYERS FOR THE ENTIRE YEAR, INTERSPERSED WITH ILLUMINATED INITIAL-WORD PANELS AT THE BEGINNING OF IMPORTANT SECTIONS OF FEASTS, SPECIAL SABBATHS AND BIBLICAL SCROLLS, ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPT ON VELLUM, SOUTH GERMANY, C. 1330-1331

521 folios 50cm by 37cm, square Ashkenazi script, mostly 30 lines per page in dark brown ink, commentary is written on the three outer margins, in smaller round script, up to 105 lines per page. Two conjoint vellum leaves were attached to the end of the manuscript by the nineteenth century in the Library in Nuremberg, and two loose paper leaves at the beginning and end of the manuscript were part of the binding. The manuscript is composed of sixty-seven quires, mostly of eight conjoint leaves each, except for quires IV of nine leaves, one added at the end for additional text; XLV and XLVI of ten leaves each; LXIV of four leaves, with text of Torah reading; LXV and LXVI are one quire of eight leaves: quire LXVI of six leaves was originally inserted between the two leaves of quire LXV, this and the last quire LXVII consist of Haftara readings. Quires XXXIII-XLV are incorrectly bound and should be rearranged: XXXII, XL-XLIV, XXXIV, XLV, XXXV-XXXIX, XLVI. Ruling by stylus (see especially fols.273ff.). Pricking noticeable in all four margins.

Five hands, related to the contents of the Mahzor, wrote the manuscript

Hand 1. Fols.1v-32v with preliminary prayers.

Hand 2. Fols. 33v-233 scribe of the first part. The name of the scribe who wrote the first part of the Mahzor and some sections of the second part is Matan Ben Menahem. The letters of his full name are marked on fol.400. Additional marked letters: Matan appears on fols.143v, 304, 314. However this scribe did not write the colophon.

Hand 3. Fols.234-512v second part of the Mahzor, written together with hand 2 of part one.

Hand 4. Fols.513-528v the Haftarot ending with the colophon of 1331.

Hand 5. The scribe who wrote the commentaries is named Yaakov. His name is indicated by marked letters on fol.437. Colophon, fol.528v(517v) '...I wrote this mahzor for Rabbi Joshua bar Isaac and completed it on Thursday, the fourth of Elul in 5091 (August 8, 1331)...'

THE GIANT NUREMBERG MAHZOR IS ONE OF THE MOST SUMPTUOUS ASHKENAZI MAHZORIM EXTANT INCLUDING A RICH TREASURE OF *PIYYUTIM*

PROVENANCE

(1)The manuscript belonged to the Jewish Community of Nuremberg until the expulsion of the Jews from the city in 1499. It was then taken to the municipal library of Nuremberg (shelf marked Ms.centus, Nr.100).

(2)In 1808, during the Napoleonic conquest of Nuremberg, eleven leaves were cut out of the manuscript. Five of these detached leaves found their way to the Meir Selig Goldschmidt collection from Frankfurt. After his daughter's marriage in 1918, they were transferred to the Heinrich Eisemann collection. In 1937, one page was given to S.Z. Schocken. In 1938, he bought three more pages, while the fifth leaf is in the Ernst Bodenheimer collection in New York.

(3) The manuscript was acquired by the Schocken Library in Jerusalem in 1951.

TEXT

The Nuremberg Mahzor, like other Ashkenazi mahzorim consists mainly of a large section of *piyyutim* (liturgical hymns), which are added to the regular prayers, for holidays and special Sabbaths. However, the ordinary prayers of *Shahrit* (morning), *Minhah* (afternoon) and *Ma'ariv* (evening), including the regular *Shmoneh-esreh* (eighteen) benedictions, are lacking here and normally do not appear in an Ashkenazi mahzor.

Dividing the giant Mahzor into two parts, at times bound in two volumes, was quite common in Ashkenazi mahzorim of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, mainly because of their content, but also because of their size. The assumption that there are two parts to the Nuremberg Mahzor is supported by the fact that following the Additional Occasional benedictions, there is a blank folio 233v (later foliation:227v), which is followed by the prayers for the New Year on fol. 234 (228). Moreover, the first part was written by two scribes, whereas the second was written by three scribes, and only one of them is the main scribe of the first part (see Scribes below). The Nuremberg Mahzor was, however, never bound in two volumes, since the recto of fol.233 (227) contains the end of the text of the occasional benedictions, and is not blank.



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The First Part

Preliminary Section

The Mahzor starts with a preliminary section (fols. 1v-32v), written by a scribe who did not participate in the rest of the manuscript. The section begins on fol.1v with introductory benedictions to the prayers. This formula is repeated in the beginning of the morning prayer of the New Year in the second part on fol. 321 (315). It continues with some instructions and additional *piyyutim* for different occasions. Fols.2v-7 are variations of *Shahrit* (morning) and *Mussaf* (additional) prayers for Sabbaths and holidays. Fol.8 *piyyutim* for *Shabbat Bereshit* (Genesis Sabbath, first after Sukkot); fol.10 *Shabbat* and *Rosh Hodesh* (new moon); fol.12 *Selhot* (penitential hymns) for Mondays and Thursdays; *piyyutim* for Sabbaths of pericopes; (fol.17v) *Vayera*; (fol.18) *Toldot*; (fol.18v) *Hanukkah*; fol.26v-32v *Selhot* for tenth of Tevet.

Yearly Prayers

The Mahzor then follows (from fol.33v on) the yearly calendar, written by the main scribe of the first part. It starts with the *piyyutim* for the Four Special Sabbaths and for the Feast of Purim. From here on most of the *piyyutim* have an extensive commentary in the margins. Fol.33v Sabbath *Shekalim*; fol.40 (later foliation 39) Sabbath *Zakhor*; fol.47 (46) Purim; fol.52v (51v) Esther scroll; fol.60 (59) Sabbath *Parah*; fol.64 (63) Sabbath *Hakodesh*; fol.69v (68) Great Sabbath before Passover.

Passover Section

Fol.78.v (added cut out fol.76a v) First Day of Passover; Fol.91 (88) Second Day of Passover; fol. 98v (95v) Sabbath during Passover; fol.102 (99) Song of Songs; fol.107 (104) Seventh Day of Passover; fol.120 (added cut out fol.116a) Last Day of Passover. Following are collections of *piyyutim* for six Sabbaths between Passover and for *Shavu'ot* (Pentecost).

Shavu'ot Section

Fol.145 (141) First Day of Shavu'ot, fol.154v (added cut out fol.149a v) *Aqdadut milin*, *piyyut* for the Ten Commandments; fol.171 (165) Second Day of Shavu'ot; fol.180 (174) Scroll of Ruth.

Fol.186 (180) Sabbath *Beha'alotkha*; fol.189v (183v) Scroll of Lamentations; fol.194 (188) Ninth of Av; fol.219v (213v) Sabbath *Nahamu*.

Additional Occasional Prayers

Following are *piyyutim*: for Wedding on fol.223.(217), for Circumcision fol.229v(223v), and for Sabbath before New Year fol.231v(225v). It is possible that these occasional *piyyutim* were placed here because this may have been the end of the intended first part of the Mahzor.

Second Part

The second part consists of prayers for the New Year, Day of Atonement and Sukkot.

The following quires 32-45 (originally fols.249-362) were apparently wrongly bound during the seventeenth century, when the entire volume was probably bound by a Christian binder, who could not read Hebrew, mixed the quires and thereby the order of the prayers and *piyyutim* of New Year and Day of Atonement (see Codicology below). This error in binding was apparently made in the Municipal Library of Nuremberg, before the early foliation of the nineteenth century, since this foliation does not take into account the correct order of the prayers in the Feasts.

The correct order of the folios and the quires according to the sequence of prayers is as follows:

Fol.234-256 (228-250) which are quires 30-32, plus fols.313-319 (307-313), which are the first part of quire 40: Eve of First Day of the New Year. Fols. 319v-320v (313-314v) end of quire 40: Eve of Second Day of New Year(sic). Fol.321-329 (315-323) quire 41: Morning prayer of First Day of New Year; Fols.329-339 (323-333) quires 42 and part of 43: *Mussaf* for First Day of New Year. Fols. 340-352 (334-346) part of quire 43 and quire 44: *Mussaf* for Second Day of New Year. Fols. 256-272 (259-266) quire 34: Fast of Gedaliah; fol.271 (265) other Penitential Days. Quire 45:fol.353 (347) Sabbath of Penitence; fol.355-362 (349-356), and quire 33: fols. 257-264 (251-258), as well as quires 35-39: fols.273-312 (267-306) and most of quire 46: fols.363-missing 371 (357-363) Day of Atonement Eve. Fol.372 (364), continuing with quire 47 to part of quire 51: fols.373-407v (356-399v): Morning prayers of Day of Atonement. Fol.408v (400) *Mussaf* for Day of Atonement. Fol.461 (450) *Ne'ilah* (concluding prayer) for Day of Atonement. Fol.472v Sabbath between Day of Atonement and Sukkot.

Sukkot Section

Fol.474 (463) Eve of First Day of Sukkot; fol.477 (466v) Eve of Second Day of Sukkot; fol.479v (468v) Morning of Second Day of Sukkot; fol.484v (475v) Morning of Sabbath in Sukkot; fol. 485v (9476v) Book of Ecclesiastes; fol.491v(481v) *Hoshaanah* for Sabbath; fol.497 (486) Eve of *Shmini Atzeret*; fol.504v (493v) eve of second day of *Shmini Atzeret*; fol.5049 (498) Beginning of Torah reading: *Hatan Torah* and *Hatan Bereshit*; fol.512v (501v) *Simhat Torah* (Joy of the Torah).

Haftarot

The biblical passages from the Prophets, which are recited after the reading of the Torah, were written by another hand, the one that writes the colophon on fol.528v(517v). This last section of the manuscript is now bound erroneously in three quires (65-67). Quire 66 of 6 leaves, fols. 515-520 (504-509) should be placed in the middle of quire 65 of 2 leaves 513 and



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מחנת פרודת מזר ואשר אנה לתזר אפה חיות עזר

עזר
דבר לשת הזר



אתר

מלבנוז בלה מראש אמנה תטורי בטוחר עררי לובש התכה
התפתח והתפארי בששם ריקוח התבשמי מור ולכונה התקטרי
פי בא עת והגיע טעה אשר למלך תטורי

בין שרי ילד אטפל הפוסר מיצפצפת וניאמה בלה באמרי שפר בני
מכון זבולד רוחטים בלי חפר חוק זכר קדושהו צעריין ונספר במיל
במעלה יהקדש ובמטה יתסלטל תמיד ליל וצפר קדושי

גן נעיל קראני דודי חמק ועבר שומדים נשאו דרירי דלפה
עיני וגרסה בזכר עיני ומרודי רירוי אהבת חשק תאות
דודי הז בלא לבולב בנפש הפינה חתו מתנרב ובלה

הפעה ועל מה זה מתאמר ריני עלינה שלוחים דרני לוח
ולוז במרדעה זכר בה ברית ושמועת אלה אשר בשעת
אירוסיה פרתו למהוללה רפיני ורפיני לקיים בבהלה הע

השיב חתן לשלוחי בלה טענה סגולה את היא יוסר
אמדים נכונה אני ומקוימת בהן חן הדברים וגמול רק
עמי חסר וזכור אהבת נעירים וימחר לפרותי מבין ח

המודים בניני מדפא ושלוהו אמנים נתמצאו ת
תאומים ביוהג חתנים לרבר על לב בלה רברים חתנים
ולחבעור לב חתן בקנאת מצנים מלכה בחתבשורה

ולכונה הקו ליתר שני ומש
והשני עני ומתפל וקמיעו
זנה וינקי ומכב יחד רכני
הגיעו לטנה וריו ערך תטורי
לש טעה סוף עתהו יתל ט
כון שרי ילד נטונה ספר
הועת
ילד נטונה ק נב גמור טוהים
טוהיה חוה ר יהוד חסיה
אטול חוה עג שוטב הקרו
ששם והוא חולד ועל נמוז ען
רדיני ית משועי
לכונה ונסח לט שטרה ו
ומעשה רדיני ס חוטב אונה
ולווה לט יודות לכ נקודת
כה שחיו בלה כמג
עדי ובעודי ופעם
פל שויה שרים
כעבה חושי
ערה ונה פ
פסקיה
יחיה
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514 (502-503) to form one quire of 8 leaves. Quire 67 on fols.521-528 (570-517) follows the text on fol.514. The text of the *Haftarot* for the morning prayers of Passover, Pentecost, New Year, Day of Atonement and for Sukkot are written in one column, while their Aramaic *Targum* is in the second column aside. The *Haftara* for Passover starts on fol.513 (502). The *Haftara* for the first day of Passover starts in Joshua 3:5, and not as was common in Ashkenazi rite in Joshua 5:2. It continues on fols.515-519 (504-508); Pentecost starts on fols. 519v-520v.(508v-509v), continues on fols.514 (503), and then on fol.521 (510); New Year's *Haftarot* are on fols.521v-522v (510v-511v). Instead of the Aramaic Targum to the first day of New Year, in I Samuel 1:1-2:10, an enlarged prayer of Hanna appears in Aramaic in the side column; Day of Atonement on fols.522v-524 (511v-513); Sukkot on fols.524v-528 (513-517).

Peculiar Prayers

There are some prayers and *piyyutim*, which are not usual in Ashkenazi Mahzorim. Examples are the *piyyutim* for the Tenth of *Tevet*, the day the Jerusalem Temple was destroyed (fol.26v). Amongst them is one by an Italian author, Rabbi Hayyim Palti'el (fol.30).

ILLUMINATION

1. Full page painted portal(fol.1v) at the opening of the Mahzor. The top elongated rectangular part is composed of four Gothic pointed trefoil arches, topped by building roofs with pinnacles. The initial-word in the center arches is written in gold over a pink dense field of squares. The flanking arches expose trefoil windows, with an orange criss-cross ground. The two supporting columns are decorated with hybrid dragons, with tails ending in foliate scrolls. They have foliate type capitals and bases resting on the backs of an elephant on the right and a bear on the left.

2. Twenty-one painted initial-word panels at important sections of the yearly prayers, mostly in the first part of the Mahzor. They are on fols. 33v, 40(39), 47v(46v), 52v (51v), 60(59), 64 (63), 69v(68v), 78(76), 91(88), 98v(95v), 102(99), 107(104), 120(116a), 145(141), 171(165), 180(174), 194v(188), 321v(315v), 340(334), 364(357a), 372v(364av), 475(464). Sixteen of these panels are in the first part of the Mahzor, and only five are in the second part. Most panels are elongated rectangles, with the initial-word covered in gold leaf, mostly stamped with small rosettes. All of the panels but one, fol.98v(95v), are filled with a densely decorated ground of consecutive small squares (e.g. fols.33v, 91, 180), lozenges (e.g. fols.40, 102, 364) or roundels (e.g. fols.51v, 340) in different colours: blue, orange, pink, green or magenta.



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The panels are framed either by several lines and fillets of different colors (e.g. fols.33v, 40, 364), or by a thicker band of geometric (e.g. fols.102, 51v, 107, 145), and foliate motifs (e.g. fols.91, 180). Some have two thicker bars flanking the initial-word (e.g. fols.51v, 68v, 321v, 340), decorated with geometric forms or foliate scrolls. Some of them have small animals (e.g.fol.68v), or birds (e.g. fol.321v) interspersed within them. One of them (fol.47v) has two roundels on the side frames, filled with a blue bird on the left and a seated bear holding a banner on the right. Another frame (fol.120) with interspersed animals within the foliate scrolls, exposes four lions in the corners of the panel, a deer on top and a camel below. In the most elaborate panel (fol.78v) the ground of lozenges is in three colors: blue, pink and magenta, topped by a double trefoil arch, flanked by bars decorated with four hybrids within the medallions. One unique panel was probably done by a different artist (fol.98v), who mistreated two of the Hebrew letters in the panel (bet and final khaf). The ground of the panel is done using a pen, in a grisaille-like style, exposing foliate scrolls interspersed with two dogs hunting a hare on top; a goat, two dragons and a dog hunting a deer at the bottom.

3. Many large initial-words in black ink surrounded by pen flourishes in red, mostly in the second part of the Mahzor. The large initial-words are over the most important sections of the prayers, where there are not painted panels. Only five of them are in the first part of the Mahzor (fols.154, 165, 182v, 189v, 194v), and eleven are in the second part (fols.234, 261v, 348, 355v, 408v, 443v, 461v, 479v, 485v, 497v, 506). All but one (fol. 355v *Kol Nidrei*) are written in black, surrounded by pen flourishes in red. The one on fol.355v is written in red with black flourishes. Many of them spread over the entire text space, while others are over some part of the text.

4. Many smaller initial-words at the beginning of most of the *piyyutim*, either in red, black or alternating red and black.

5. The commentary written in smaller script in the outer margins as *carmina figurata* type, forming different geometric shapes, such as roundels, lozenges, triangles and tapering elongated rectangles. Some are outlined in red ink. This may have been done by the scribe who wrote the commentary, or one of the main scribes.

6. Some linear decorations in acrostic to names of authors of *piyyutim*, as well as to the main scribe of the Mahzor: Matania Ben Menahem. His name is indicated by marked letters within the text: (fol.143v - a flower upon the name Matan; fol.304 - Matania; fol.400 - Matan ben Menachem; fol.314 - Matan). The name of the scribe who wrote the commentaries is also marked (fol.437 - Yaakov). Some linear decorations in acrostic to names of authors of *piyyutim* (fol.462v- Meir bar Yitzhak; fol. 134v - Yoseph bar Shmuel Tov Elem).

7. One text illustration of a *shofar* on New Year (fol.343). A text illustration of a curved *shofar* is sketched in red ink beside the sentence 'u'*bitko'a shofar*' (and when the shofar is blowing), part of the *piyyut* '*Adar ve-Hod*' recited in New Year (fol.343).

8. Some of the catch-words are illustrated with brown ink: a stork (in Hebrew *Hasidah*) illustrating the word '*Haside'ha*'; a lamb's head tops the word '*tla'ei*' (fol.420) (your followers - fol.23v); a flag upon the word '*ve-haniglot*'(fol. 404); a hind's head top; a hoopoe's head with a large beak (fol.412)

The style of the painted panels is directly related to the Upper Rhine during the first half of the fourteenth century. Most telling are the frames with animals, birds and hybrids interlaced with foliate scrolls. They resemble the soft undulating scrolls and animals of illuminated manuscripts from the Upper Rhine (see Ellen J. Beer, *Beitaege zur oberrheinischen Buchmalerei*, Basel & Stuttgart, 1959), somewhat later than the famous 'Gradual of St. Katharinenthal' of around 1312 (see E.J.Beer, 'Die Buchkust des Graduale von St. Katharinenthal', in *Das Graduale von St Katharinenthal. Kommentar zur Faksimile Ausgabe des Graduale von St. Katharinenthal*, ed. L. Wuertlich, Luzern, 1983, pp.103-224).

Stylistically, it is hard to assume that the illumination was done later than 1331, when the colophon was written.

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