The North African Jewish Manuscript Collection at the Yale University Library

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Guide to the North African Jewish Manuscript Collection

MS 1825

compiled by Nanette Stahl, Julie Cohen and Hana Rudnick based on information provided by Moshe Bar-Asher

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Group photo of North African manuscripts workshop participants at Yale University, 2012:

Joseph Tedghi, from France, discusses a document with Moshe Bar-Asher
Aomar Boum of the University of Arizona Examines a document from the North African Collection, 2012
Yaakov Bentolilia of Ben-Gurion University
The five people in the foreground are all Tetuan dignitaries (Photo probably taken in 1939 or 1940)

Rabbi Vidal Israel, member of the Rabbinic Tribunal of Tetuan.
Rabbi Yaakov Bentolila, member of the Rabbinic Tribunal of Tetuan, Grandfather of Yaakov ben Tolila, Israeli scholar
Mr. Ach-Ach, the Muslim Governor of Tetuan,
Mr. Juan Luis Beigbeder, the High Commissioner of Spain in Morocco,
Rabbi Yehuda Leon Khalfon, President of the Rabbinical Tribunal of Tetuan
Yeshu’ah ben Hayyim Corcos (1832-1929)
He came from a wealthy and distinguished family whose members had been for two centuries “royal merchants.” Corcos was also a merchant and financier. Like his father he was head of the Jewish Community of Marrakesh and the head of the *hevrat gemilut hasadim*, the Jewish benevolent society. He was an entrepreneur and a philanthropist. He had close connections to the Muslim rulers and later to the French.
Place: Marrakech?.
Confirmation that two people from the city of El-Kala in the Atlas received from Yeshuah Corcos a donation of 100 "doros hassanim" (gold coin with image of Hassan I) to distribute to the community.
Place: Fès. This document is a copy of an earlier document dating back to late sixteenth century or early seventeenth century. This document also deals with the laws of levirate marriage. Many Moroccan rabbis are mentioned.
Place: Marrakech. One of the conditions specified in the ketubah is that the groom, a divorced man, will not remarry his previous wife. The ketubah follows the custom of the autochthon or indigenous Jews (ke-minhag ha-toshavim).
Place: Qaṣr al-Sūq, also known as Er Rachidia. Unique manuscript of an unknown work entitled Taʻanug ve-simhah written by Yehudah ben Avraham Lasri from Qaṣr al-Sūq, southeastern Morocco (Metahra, currently known as a part of the region of Tafilalt), copied by his nephew Avraham ben Mosheh Lasri in 1916. The manuscript has many colophons, one on the first page and a few others on different pages of the manuscripts. All of them indicate the name of the copier and the date. The manuscript consists of exegesis and novellae on the portion of the week from the Pentateuch and other subjects. The language is mostly Hebrew, but a few texts are written in the Judeo-Arabic of Qaṣr al-Sūq. Yehudah Lasri was born in the first part of the nineteenth century and died in 1905. Avraham Lasri was born in 1902 and died in 1988 in Jerusalem.
Place: Sefrou, Taza. One responsum is about a sad story told to leaders of the community of Taza (150 km east of Fès) about a Jewish woman and her daughter who were taken by the non-Jews by force and the daughter was forced to become Muslim. The mother and her husband were allowed to stay in the Muslim neighborhood. The people of the community related that the husband became accustomed to the life of the non-Jews and had his wife to prepare meals for him with meat and milk together. Everybody said that the whole family behaved like non-Jews. The people asked the rabbis to do everything to save this family from this new life. To save them the community gave a lot of money to the non-Jews. Probably this document comes from the city of Sefrou around 1800. Another document raises the problem of neighbors whose windows are opposite each other and therefore lack privacy. The next text is the answer to the problem of the windows. A third text deals also with the problem of windows giving a different opinion. Somebody added the name of five rabbis: Mordekhai Botbol, Yitshak Zanou, Yosef Abbu, David Turgeman, and Hayim Ponti.
Place: Constantine. Date: 1788. One page from a prayer book with liturgical poems (piyyutim) for the Days of Awe according to the distinctive version of the Jewish community in Constantine, Algeria. Manuscript in Hebrew written in block letters and North African script; later binding. Includes notes with instructions for the prayer leader. Signed by the scribe Farag’ Bouchoucha.
Letter to the chief rabbi of Algeria requesting a rabbi and a teacher for the community of Gherdaia
Place: Gherdaia. Document concerning a man who did not participate in the fundraising for the synagogue of the community—To build a new synagogue everyone had to give 10 doros, but sons of Yaakov Baloka decided not to contribute and they knew they would have no rights to use the synagogue. The community was very upset about their decision
485 - ATLAS MAROCAIN. - Groupe de Juives à Tin-Mel.
MOORISH ATLAS. - A group of Jewish women at Tin-Mel.

1019. DEBDOU (Maroc) - Jeune femme Juive
SCÈNES ET TYPES. — Famille juive. — LL.
1414 Rabbins du Maroc

RABAT. — Le grand Rabbin Yacoutel Berdugo Juge-Président du haut Tribunal Rabbinique
Grande Rue du Mellah

DETALLE DEL BARRIO HEBREO
FES. — Intérieur de maison israélite