

Jewish Travelers from Europe to the East, 12th-15th centuries

Viajeros judíos desde Europa hasta Oriente, siglos XII-XV

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Resumen

Estudio bibliográfico de ocho obras escritas por viajeros judíos de la segunda mitad del siglo XII hasta finales del siglo XV. La revisión bibliográfica comprende cuatro categorías: una lista de los manuscritos de las obras; diversas ediciones hebreas impresas, junto con las traducciones a otros idiomas y un listado de los estudios sobre el tema y los autores.

Palabras claves: Bibliografía; Literatura de viajes; Benjamín de Tudela; Petahiah de Regensburg; Jacob hijo de Nathanel ha-Cohen; Judah Alharizi; Meshulam de Volterra; Joseph de Montagna; Obadiah de Bertinoro; Viajero judío anónimo.

Abstract

Bibliographic study of eight works written by Jewish travelers of the second half of the twelfth century to the late fifteenth century. The bibliographical revision includes four categories, a list of the manuscripts of the works, and various printed Hebrew editions, along with translations into other languages and a list of studies on the topic and authors.

Keywords: Bibliography; Travel literature; Benjamin of Tudela; Petahiah of Regensburg; Nathanel son of Jacob ha-Cohen; Alharizi Judah; Meshulam of Volterra; Joseph Montagna; Obadiah of Bertinoro; Anonymous Jewish traveler.

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1. Preface

- Benjamin of Tudela (1173)
- Petahiah of Regensburg (c. 1175)
- Jacob son of Nathanel ha-Cohen (second half of the 12th century)
- Judah Alharizi (1220?)
- Meshulam of Volterra (1481)
- Joseph of Montagna (1481)
- Obadia of Bertinoro (1488)
- Anonymous Jewish traveler (1495)

Pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Jews in the Middle Ages was a routine matter. The inducements for pilgrimage were essentially religious; the desire to venerate in prayer at the graves of the forefathers, namely the ancient saints the longing to be at the holy places in different localities in the Land of Israel; to have a deep religious experience and spiritual uplifting while fulfilling the commandments that are unique to the Land of Israel or to fulfill a vow after personal salvation and deliverance with the help of God. These feelings of spiritual elevation that existed throughout the course of the generations during the Middle Ages and even earlier, led to the implementation of the desire of the individual to undertake a journey under conditions that were not easy in any way at all, whether by sailing the sea or by way of the land.

Between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries, there remained a small amount of Jewish Pilgrims from Europe, Spain, Germany and Italy, who documented their journeys eastward, whether in written memoirs and letters or in oral accounts of their experiences along the way. For the most part, these travelers went directly to the Land of Israel, but we know of two who made their way in an eastward circuitous route, to distant regions in Central Asia, and along the way, whether going out or coming back, they passed through the Land of Israel since their main goal was to visit the ancient holy sites of Jerusalem. These two were Benjamin of Tudela and Petachia of Regensburg.

A study of the contents of the descriptions of the Jews who traveled to the East crosses all boundaries. They are not only the heritage of Jewish intellectuals but they also capture the interest of intellectuals who are not Jewish, from many different nations. This led not only to their translation into many different languages, especially in the West, but also in the East, but even more so, to a good amount of research on the part of people of all nations, dedicated to understanding their historical significance. It is no wonder that the knowledge that comes from these travelogues is important beyond measure for understanding the general reality of those times, both in Europe and in the East, in many different areas; geography, economics, nature, climate, folklore and political changes, among others.

Presented in this framework is a bibliographical survey of eight written works of Jewish travelers from the second half of the 12th century through the end of the 15th

century. There is no doubt that the number of Jewish travelers was far greater than this. Certainly, some of them saw no need to transmit their experiences in written form. It is also highly probable that the travelogues of others were not preserved.

This bibliographical survey is made up of four categories: a list of manuscripts of the works; also various printed editions together with a list of languages of translation, and a list of studies on the topic and the authors.

2. Benjamin of Tudela (1173)

A famous Jewish traveler (12th century) in Tudela (Navarra), northern Spain. No biographical data, and no dates of birth and death are known. It seems that his journey to the Near East took place between 1165 and 1173, but it may have begun as early as 1159. It included: Northern Spain, Provence, Italy, Greece, the Balkans, Turkey, Syria, the Holy Land, Babylonia and Persia. From there he sailed through the Persian Gulf and around the Arabian Peninsula to Egypt. From there he sailed to Italy via Sicily, and returned to Spain through central Europe. Benjamin's travelogue *Sefer ha-Masa'ot* (Book of travels) which was written in Hebrew contains important historical information and folkloristic traditions, both Jewish and non-Jewish. The descriptions include much imaginary material, especially concerning life in Yemen, India, Ceylon and China, which he never actually visited.

The purpose of his journey is not clear. Some suggested that Benjamin wanted to investigate the status of the Jewish communities in the Mediterranean countries and the Near East. Some others claim his voyage was a commercial venture. He reports on the social, economic and spiritual life of the Jews in all localities he visited and also gives demographic data. In addition he frequently mentions prominent spiritual and communal Jewish leaders, especially in Babylonia, where he wandered for a relatively longer time.

More than twenty-four Hebrew manuscripts of Benjamin's itinerary are extant, and some dozen Hebrew editions have been published since the first (Constantinople, 1543). In addition, the book has been translated into most of the major Western languages. No contemporary report on the Mediterranean world or the Near East is of comparable importance.

2.1. Manuscripts

ספר מסעות שחבר ר' בנימן בר יונה מארץ נבארה נ"ע London – British Library Add. 27089 (Margoliouth 1076), fol. 149r-161v. 13th-14th century. Ashkenazic script.
ספר בנימן Roma – Casanatense 3097, fol. 1r-27r. 1428. Italian script.
Oxford – Bodleian Library Heb. 80 36 (Neubauer 2425), fol. 58r-63v. 15th century. Spanish script (incomplete).

- Jerusalem – The National Library Heb. 80 2647 (formerly: Wien-Bibliothek der israelitische Kultusgemeinde and, before that, in the possession of Solomon Zalman Hayyim Halberstamm and Abraham Epstein), fol. 1r-39r. 16th century. Italian script.
- Oxford – Bodleian Library Reggio 23 (Neubauer 2234). 16th century, fol. 40r-40v (only a few paragraphs were copied). Italian script.
- New York – JTS Ms. 3847. 17th century, fol. 1r-23v. Yemenite script (only one third from the beginning).
- Jerusalem – R. Kook Institute 1240. 17th century, 14 folios. Italian script (the beginning is missing).
- London – Sasson 134. 17th century. Page 1-61. Oriental script.
- Cincinnati – Hebrew Union College 854, Kronach 1769, fol. 77r-123r. Spanish script: copied from Amsterdam 1698.
- Frankfurt a M – Stadt und Universitätsbibliothek Oct. 244. Fiorenzoula 1796, fol. 65r-117v. Italian script. Was copied from Amsterdam 1698.
- Cincinnati – Hebrew Union College 855. 18th century, 23 folios.
- Jerusalem – The National Library. Heb. 80 134. 18th century. 36 folios. Italian script (the beginning is missing).
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- Ramat-Gan – Bar-Ilan University 1218 (Moussaief 129). 18th-19th centuries, 7 folios. Oriental script (only part).
- Oxford – Bodleian Library Ms. Opp. Add. 80 58 (Neubauer 2580). 18th century, 57r-57v (a fragment). Karaite script.
- London – Valmadonna Trust 17 (Richler 288). 18th-19th centuries, fol. 1-61. Oriental script.
- [מסעות של רבי בנימין ז"ל] Jerusalem – M. Benayahu A8. Jerusalem 1852, fol. 24r-41r. Oriental script. Copied from Ferrara 1555.
- Jerusalem – R. Kook Institute 1093. 19th century, 27 folios. Yemenite script.
- New York – JTS Ms. 3616 (Adler 4154). 19th century, 52 pages. Ashkenazic script (was copied from London – British Library Add. 27089)
- Jerusalem – R. Kook Institute 486. 19th century. [27] folios. Oriental script.
- New York – Ms. 3850. 19th century, 21 folios. Yemenite script. Copied from Ferrara 1555 (one page from the beginning is missing).
- New York – Public Library, Jewish items 44. Baghdad 19th century, 95 folios. Oriental script. Copied from Ferrara 1555.

נימין של רבי מסעות של רבי בנימין New York – JTS Ms. 3838. Baghdad 19th century, 32 folios.
Oriental script. Copied from Ferrara 1555.

2.2. Hebrew Printed editions (selection)

There are some dozen Hebrew printed editions. Only a selection of them will be listed here (only complete text) and also will be listed below bilingual editions in the translation category.

נימין של רבי מסעות (Constantinople 1543)
ל"ל מסעות של רבי בנימין ז"ל (Ferrara 1555)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Freiburg 1583)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Leiden 1633) (See below in the list of Latin translation)
פואר הרבי בנימין מסעות של רבי בנימין (Amsterdam 1762)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Altdorf 1762)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Sulzbach 1783)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Zolkiew 1806)
נימין של רבי מסעות (London and Berlin 1840) (See below in the list of English translations)
לא סט. פטרבורג שלשה בעלי המסעות, ר' בנימין מטודילא (St. Petersburg 1881)
נימין של רבי מסעות (Jerusalem 1904) (See below in the list of German translations)
נימין של רבי מסעות (London 1907) (See below in the list of English translations)
נימין של רבי מסעות (New York 1926, In *Ozar Massa'oth*, edited by Judah David Eisenstein, pp. 15- 44 Tel-Aviv 1969)

2.3. Translated editions

2.3.1. Latin

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Itinerarium D. Benjaminis, cum versione & notis Constantini L' empereur ab Oppyck, (S.T. D.& S. L. P. Lugd[unum]). Batavorum: Officinae Elzeviriana 1633. Latin and Hebrew (Helmstadt 1636; Leipzig 1764).

2.3.2. Dutch

Jan Bara, *De Reysen van R. Benjamin Jonas Tudelens*, Amsterdam 1666.
S. Keyzer, Leiden 1846.

2.3.3. Yiddish

Chaim ben Jacob Arbich, in *Mikweh Israel* (Menashe ben Israel, ed.) Amsterdam 1691. Frankfurt 1711. Translated from Dutch (See above).

2.3.4. French

J. P. Baratier, *Voyages de Rabbi Benjamin fils de Jonade Tudele*. Amsterdam: Aux dépens de la Compagnie 1734 (Paris 1830).

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B. Gerrans, *Travels of Rabbi Benjamin, son of Jonah of Tudela*. London 1783. Another edition, London 1784.

Abraham Asher, *The Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela*. London-Berlin 1840-1841. English and Hebrew. 2 vols.

Thomas Wright, *Early Travels in Palestine*, London 1848, pp. 63-126. Based on Asher's translation (London, H. G. Bohn, 1848), pp. 63-126 (this is Asher's translation).

Marcus Nathan Adler, «The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, Critical Text, Translation and Commentary» *JQR* 16-18 (1904-1906). Hebrew and English. The same edition came out separately twice in London 1907 (New York, Feldheim, 1983).

Elkan Nathan Adler, *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages...* Edited and with Introduction. London, G. Routledge, 1930, pp. 38-63 (incomplete). Based on London 1907 edition (New York, Dover Publications, Inc. 1987).

2.3.6. German

Adam Martinet, *Reisetagbuch des Rabbi Benjamin von Tudela. Ein Beitrag zur kenntniss der Juden in der Diaspora während des XII. Jahrhunderts*. Bamberg 1858 (Berlin 1918).

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2.3.7. Russian

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2.3.8. Spanish

Ignacio González Liubera, *Viajes de Benjamín de Tudela*, 1160-1173. Madrid, V. H. Sanz Calleja 1918 (1921-1922).

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2.3.9. Vasco (Eusquera)

Benjamín Tuterakoa, *Bidaien Liburua*, Pamplona: Gobierno de Navarra, 1994, pp. 9-110.

2.3.10. Italian

Giulio Busi, *Binyamin da Tudela, Itinerario (Sefer massa'ot)*, Rimini: Luise Editore, 1988.

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2.3.13. Arabic

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- D. J. Wasserstein, «Does Benjamin mention Portugal?», *Journal of Semitic Studies* 24 (1979), pp. 193-200.

3. Petahiah of Regensburg (c.1175)

The twelfth-century itinerary or «circuit» of R. Petahiah of Regensburg, known as *Sibbu* *Rabbi Petahiah* or *Sevivot R. Petahiah*, differs from other medieval Jewish travel books. Unlike other Jewish travelers, who personally recorded their experiences and impressions, R. Petahiah himself did not write down his experiences. Evidently, R. Petahiah related what he saw, heard, or felt in the course of his journey, either to an individual or to a group. In turn, some individual eclectically recorded R. Petahiah's anecdotes.

Almost no biographical details emerge from the *Sibbu*, regarding either R. Petahiah's life, or the date, length, or purpose of his journey. The only specific detail found in the text is R. Petahiah's departure point, which is represented by two traditions. According to some printed editions, he started his journey from Prague. However, other versions, including the one published by Carmoly, state that he left "his birthplace Regensburg for Prague," and proceeded east from there. Based on this and other references in the *Sibbu* we can conclude that R. Petahiah resided in both these cities at various points in time.

It seems that the redactor of the *Sibbu* was R. Judah ha-Hasid (the Pious), who limited himself to selected excerpts from R. Petahiah's experiences and impressions alongside local traditions noted by the traveler. He condensed the account, concentrating mainly on R. Petahiah's travels in Iraq, or Babylonia as it is called in Jewish sources, and Eretz-Israel, less so on Syria. Nor did he adhere strictly to R. Petahiah's actual timetable. R. Petahiah's journey ended in Prague. At a later date he moved to Regensburg where he evidently recounted tales of his journey to his close circle.

R. Petahiah began his journey in the early 1170s, proceeding east via Poland and Russia, and south through the Caucasus to the Black Sea and Turkey, to the lands under Muslim dominion: Iraq, Persia, Syria, and Eretz-Israel.

The account takes note of local customs in the places through which R. Petahiah passed on his journey, intermittently providing interesting details on the life and mores, even the dress, of the Jews in Iraq, which he visited in 1175. He stopped in the following places: Nisibis, Nineveh (Mosul), and Baghdad. Of particular interest is the information

about the Jewish communal leadership, both secular and religious, which was located in Baghdad. The head of the Babylonian academy, R. Samuel ben Eli ha-Levi, who was active at the time of his visit, made a strong impression on R. Petahiah.

R. Petahiah's account also reflects his interest in geographical aspects, and includes topographical conditions, descriptions of the landscape, details of his travel route, estimated distances (usually measured in days on foot), contemporary means of transportation, climatic conditions, political situations, and the like.

Petahiah placed an emphasis on local Jewish traditions concerning holy tombs, and the purported burial sites of the following biblical figures: Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, and Baruch ben Neriah. It seems that R. Petahiah's interest in Eretz-Israel, then under Crusader rule, as reflected in the text, centered on local traditions concerning the veneration of the Patriarchs' tombs.

3.1. Manuscripts:

פתחיה מביהם Warsaw (Warszawa) University 258, fol. 127, v-131v. 15th century. Published by Abraham David, in: *Kobez al Yad*, 13 (1996), pp. 235-169.

מרתעגנשבורג London – Beth Din and Beth Hamidrash Library 146, fol. 1-10. Copied in Kleve (Germany) 1678.

פתחיה שסבב כל הארצות אשר סבב ר' פתחיה מרתעגנשבורג Leipzig – Universitätsbibliothek B. H. 4.38, fol. 1-5. 17th century. Published by Johann Christoph Wagenseil, Altdorf 1687, 1697.

ספר סבוב העולם לרבי פתחיה מרתעגנשבורג Strassbourg 3982. 97 pages. Colmar 1650. It seems that the colophon of that manuscript was forged by E. Carmoly who copied it in the first half of the 19th century. Published by E. Carmoly Paris 1831.

רבי פתחיה New York – The Jewish Theological Seminary of America Ms. 5601 (incomplete, approximately half the text). Copied in 18th century.

סבוב ר' פתחיה St. Petersburg – Institute of Oriental Studies of the Academy of Sciences A 147. Copied in 1930 by a Karaite scribe from printed edition, Dubno 1795.

3.2. Hebrew Printed editions (selection)

There are some dozen Hebrew printed editions. Only a selection of them will be listed here. Bilingual editions will be listed below in the translation category.

דיא אויסררינגלונג רבנו פתחיה החסיד מרתעגנשפורג (Prague 1600)

סבוב הרב רבי פתחיה מרתעגנשפורג (Prague 1695)

סבוב הרב ר' פתחיה מרתעגנשפורג (Altdorf 1687; Altdorf 1697. See below in the list of Latin translation)

סבוב העולם (Wilhermsdorf 1736) (see below in the list of Yiddish translations)

מרעגנשפורג סבוב הרב ר' פתחיה (Padova 1750) (see below in the list of Latin translations)

לאנד קארט אונט וועלט בישרייבונג (Frankfurt de Oder 1770) (see below in the list of Yiddish translations)

סבוב חידושים ונסים ונפלאות שראה בארצות רבות...הרב פתחיה מרעגנשבורג (Altona 1770) (1778. the second edition I have not seen).

סבוב חידושים ונסים ונפלאות שראה בארצות רבות...הרב פתחיה מרעגנשבורג (Zolkiew 1772) (1792. the second edition I have not seen).

סבוב חידושים ונסים ונפלאות שראה בארצות רבות...הרב פתחיה מרעגנשבורג (Dubno 1795)

סבוב חידושים ונסים ונפלאות שראה בארצות רבות...הרב פתחיה מרעגנשבורג (Sklow 1817)

סבוב העולם של רבי פתחיה מריגנשבורג (Paris 1831) (see below in the list of French translations).

סבוב הרב רבי פתחיה מרעגנשפורג (Fürth 1844) (see below in the list of German translations).

סבוב הרב רבי פתחיה מרעגנשפורג (London 1856) (London 1861. See below in the list of English translations)

שלשה בעלי מסעות, ר' פתחיה מרעגנשבורג (St. Petersburg 1881) (see below on the Russian translation)

סבוב רבי פתחיה מרעגנשפורג (Jerusalem 1905) (see below in the list of German translations)

סבוב ר' פתחיה מריגנשפורג (New York 1926, Tel-Aviv 1969. In *Ozar Massa'oth*, edited by Judah David Eisenstein, pp. 46-56)

3.3. Translated editions

3.3.1. Latin

Johann Christoph Wagenseil, *Peregrinatio R. Petachiae Ratisbonensis*. Altdorf (Germany) 1687. Based on the abovementioned Leipzig manuscript. Latin and Hebrew (Altdorf 1697).

Johann Christoph Wagenseil, Nürnberg, *Andere Ausgaben*, 1719. Latin and Hebrew (I have not seen it).

Johann Christoph Wagenseil, *Peregrinatio Rabbini Petachiae*. Padova 1750 by Antonio Zanolini. *Peregrinatio Rabbini Petachae*. Latin and Hebrew.

3.3.2. Yiddish

דיא אויסררינגלונג רבנו פתחיה החסיד מרעגנשפורג, Prague 1600.

Phillip Ernst Christfels, Wilhermsdorf, Hirsch ben Hayim of Fürth, 1736. Based on the Wagenseil Hebrew edition.

Frankfurt de Oder 1770. A different translation. Based on the Wagenseil Hebrew edition.

3.3.3. French

Eliakim Carmoli, *Tour du Monde ou voyages du Rabbin Pethachia de Ratisbonne*, ... Par M. E. Carmoly...Paris imprimerie royale M. DCCC. XXXI. Based on the manuscript number 4. Hebrew and French.

Haim Harboun, *Les voyageurs juifs XII^e siècle*, Aix-En-Provence: Editions Massoreth, 1986, pp. 141-185.

3.3.4. German

David Ottensoser, *Reise des Rabbinen Rabbi Pethachjah aus Regensburg*...von David Ottensoser. Fürth, Zürndorffer und J. Sommer, 1844. Based on the Wagenseil edition. Hebrew and German.

Lasar Grünhut, *Die Rundreise des R. Petachjah aus Regensburg*...von L. Grünhut, Jerusalem Frankfurt a/M 1904-1905. A critical edition with German translation, based on the Prague edition with variants from Leipzig manuscript and some other printed editions.

Stefan Schreiner, *Jüdische Reisen im Mittelalter*, Leipzig und Köln: Parkland Verlag, 1998, pp. 121-164, 231-237.

3.3.5. English

Abraham Benish, *Travels of Rabbi Petachia of Ratisbon*...by Dr. Abraham Benish with explanatory notes, by the translator and William F. Ainsworth...London, Messrs Trubner & Co. Paternoster Row, 1856. Based on the Wagenseil edition. Hebrew and English. (London, Longman and Co., Paternoster Row, 1861).

Elkan Nathan Adler, *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages*...Edited and with Introduction by Elkan Nathan Adler, London: G. Routledge, 1930, pp. 64-91. Based on the Prague edition. (New York, Dover Publications, Inc. 1987).

3.3.6. Russian

Pavel. Margolin translator, (Three travelogues), St. Petersburg 1881. Based on the Carmoly edition. Russian and Hebrew.

3.3.7. Spanish

José Ramón Magdalena Nom de Déu, *Palestina y Eurasia a finales del siglo XII* (Viajes de Rabi Yaa'qob bar Netane'el ha-Kohen y Rabi Petahyah de Regensburg)...por José Ramón Magdalena Nom de Déu, Barcelona: Universidad de Barcelona, 1989, pp. 19-59.

3.3.8. Italian

Isabella Ventrice, *Il viaggio di Rabbi Petachiah di Ratisbona*, A cura di I. Ventrice, Firenze: Giuntina, 2009. The Hebrew text is a photocopy of the Benish edition.

3.3.9. Czech

Jirina Sedinova, *Benjamin z Tudely Petachja z Rezna, Dva stredoveke Hebrejske Ces-topisy* Prelozila Jirina Sedinova, Prague: Argo, 2002, pp. 55-73.

3.3.10. Dutch

Rondreis van rabbi Petachia uit Regensburg, Amsterdam: P. Broers, 2005. Dutch and Hebrew.

3.4. Studies

א' דוד, 'סבוב ר' פתחיה מרגנשבורג בנוסח חדש', קבץ על יד, יג (תשנ"ו), עמ' 235-269.
 א' יערי, מסעות ארץ-ישראל, תל-אביב תש"ו, מהדורות נוספות: רמת-גן 1976, תל-אביב 1996.
 י' פראוור, 'תיאורי מסע עבריים בארץ-ישראל בתקופה הצלבנית', קתדרה, 40 (תשמ"ו), עמ' 56-62.
 י' פראוור, תולדות היהודים בממלכת הצלבנים, ירושלים תשס"א, עמ' 206-213.
 מ"א שולוואס, 'הידיעה בגיאוגרפיה אצל היהודים בתחום התרבות של היהדות האשכנזית בימי הביניים', ספר יובל לכבוד... אברהם ווייס, ניו יורק תשכ"ד, עמ' תקכט-תקלו, תקמב-תקמד, תקמט-תקנא.

C. R. Beazley, *The Dawn of Modern Geography*, vol. II, London, pp. 267-273.

P. Borchardt, «Der Reiseweg des Rabbi Benjamin von Tudela und des Rabbi Petachia aus Regensburg in Mesopotamien und Persien», *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft*, XVI (1924), s. 137-162.

A. David, «El itinerario de Rabi Petahia de Ratisbona, una reconsideración», *Oriente desde Occidente, Los escritos de viajes judios, cristianos y musulmanes sobre Siria-Palestina (ss. XII-XVII)*. En M. José Cano Pérez, T. M. García Arévalo (eds.), Granada: Editorial Universidad de Granada, 2012, pp. 64-101.

A. David, «R. Petahiah of Regensburg's Itinerary – A Reconsideration», *L'écriture de L'histoire Juive. M'elanges en l'honneur de G'errard Nahon*, Paris-Louvain 2012, pp. 321-334.

G. Hassan-Rokem, «Homo viator et narrans Judaicus», *Medieval Jewish Voices in the European Narrative of the Wandering Jew, Europäische Ethnologie und Folklore im internationalen Kontext*, Festschrift für Leander Petzold zum 65 Geburtstag, Frankfurt am Main 1999, pp. 93-102.

A. Kuyt, «Die Welt aus sefardischer und ashkenazischer sicht: Die mittelalterlichen hebräischen Reiseberichte des Benjamin von Tudela und des Petachja von Regens-

burg», *Chloe*, Beihefte zum Daphnis, Erkundung und Beschreibung der Welt zur Poetic der Reise- und Länderberichte, Herausgegeben von X. von Ertzdorff und G. Giesenmann, Amsterdam – New York 2003, pp. 214-215, 223-231.

J. Praver, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford 1988, pp. 206-215.

R. Röhricht, *Biblioteca Geographica Palestinae*, Jerusalem 1963, pp. 40-41.

4. Jacob son of Nathanel ha-Cohen (second half of the 12th century)

This traveller came probably from Germany to the Land of Israel in the first half of the Crusade period, namely before the conquest of the country by Saladin in 1187. He started his short account by describing his journey in the country and mentions several localities, such as: Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Acre and some other places in the north and the south, which he passed. He also mentions the holy graves of Biblical and Tanaitic figures in most of them. It seems that his description is a draft, since there is disorder in surveying the places from a geographical point of view. Maybe this has been done by a copyist of this text. It seems that the direction of his homeward journey was south via Sinai peninsula to Alexandria, but he did not leave details of that trip, just a short description of the town of Alexandria and its harbour.

4.1. Manuscript

ספור מסעות ומקומות א"י וקברות הצדיקים אשר הם שם שחבר כהר"ר יעקב בר נתנאל כהן כשנכנס לארץ ישראל. Cambridge – University library Add. 539, fol. 139v-140r. 16th century. Italian script.

4.2. Hebrew Printed editions

גורג Lasar Grünhut, An appendix edition in Petahya of Regensburg *Sibbuv* edition of L. Grünhut, Jerusalem 1905, pp. 1-14.

יהודה דוד אייזנשטיין, אוצר מסעות Judah David Eisenstein, *Ozar Massaoth*, New York 1926, pp. 58-62. Second edition Tel-Aviv 1969.

יערי, מסעות ארץ ישראל Abraham Yaari, *Maso't Eretz-Israel*, Jerusalem 1946, pp. 55-62. Second edition, Ramat Gan 1976.

4.3. Translated editions

4.3.1. English

Elkan Nathan Adler, *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages*, London 1930, pp. 92-99.
Second edition, New York 1987.

4.3.2. French

Haim Harboun, *Les Voyageurs juifs du Moyen Age XII^e siècle*, translated by H. Harboun.
Aix-en-Provence 1986, pp. 187-204.

4.3.3. Spanish

José Ramón Magdalena Nom de Déu, *Palestina y Eurasia a finales del siglo XII*, Barcelona 1989, pp. 8-18.

4.4. Studies

” פראוור, ’תיאורי מסע עבריים בארץ-ישראל בתקופה הצלבנית’, קתדרה, 40 (תשמ”ו), עמ’ 41-45.
” פראוור, תולדות היהודים בממלכת הצלבנים, ירושלים תשס”א, עמ’ 187-192.

J. Praver, *The History of the Jews in the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, Oxford 1988,
pp. 184-191.

José Ramón Magdalena Nom de Deu, *Palestina y Eurasia a finales del siglo XII*, Barcelona 1989, pp. 5-7.

5. Judah Alharizi (1220?)

Distinguished poet, philosopher, translator and physician from Toledo (1165-1225). He is known for his Judeo-Arabic works and as a great translator from Arabic into Hebrew, inter alia: *Guide for the Perplexed* of Maimonides and part of Maimonides’ commentary to the *Mishnah* as well as Al-Hariri’s *Makama*. He is also well known as a great poet whose comprehensive collection of poetry was well known both in the west and the east, and many of his poetical works were preserved in the Cairo Genizah. His most famous treatise is *Makama Tahkemoni*, which is divided to fifty chapters. Chapter 46 is called *Moznei ha-Dor* (The Appraisal of the People) and includes his travels to the East and in the East. He started his journey from Toledo in 1215 and traveled through Catalonia, southern France, and Provence. From Marseille he sailed to Alexandria and

went to Cairo. From there he found his way to Jerusalem and other localities in the Land of Israel. He continued his travels in Syria and Iraq. The last stop in his journey was Aleppo where he resided and where passed away in 1225.

Tahkemoni is a well-known text, which is preserved in several Hebrew manuscripts containing the complete text. Hundreds of fragments were also preserved in the Cairo Genizah. An excellent critical-philological edition of this text was recently prepared by Joseph Yahalom and his pupil Naoya Katsumata, Jerusalem 2010.

Alharizi's travel description to the East is included in *Tahkemoni*, chapter 46 as mentioned above. It was published separately a few years earlier in a scholarly edition by Joseph Yahalom and Joshua Blau, entitled: *Masei Yehudah*, The Wanderings of Judah Alharizi. The editors published this text in two different versions (pp. 49-76). Actually, Alharizi's travelogue to the East is known in five different versions, which are included in the edition of *Masei Yehudah*.

One version - part of his journey to the East is preserved in a short Makamah which was published for the first time by Samuel Miklos Stern. It is found in the Oxford - Bodleian Library, Pocock 50 (Neubauer 1976). This is a brief description of his journey from Spain to the East. This Makamah republished in *Masei Yehudah* as *Mahberet ha-Nedivim* (Patrons), (pp. 77-89).

Those Hebrew versions were composed in different time by Alharizi in the second half of the second decade of the thirteenth century. Alharizi also left after 1220 his journey description in Arabic which called: *Al-rawadah al-aniqah* is included in *Masei Yehudah*, pp. 91-167 as a synoptic edition: Arabic and the Hebrew translation.

5.1. Hebrew editions

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni*, Constantinople 1578

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni*, Amsterdam 1729 .

תהכמוני *Tachkemoni Makamen oder Divan* von Jehuda ben Salomo al-Charisi...herausgegeben von M. G. Stern. Vienna 1854.

Judae Harizii, *Macamae*. Pauli de Lagarde studio et sumptibus editae, Goettingen 1883. Introduction in Latin (Photo copy: Hannover 1924).

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni*, edited by Aharon Loeb Bisco. Warsaw 1894.

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni*, edited by Aharon Kaminka. Warsaw 1899. Including: introduction and annotations.

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni*, edited by Judah Toporovsky, with introduction by I. Zemora. Tel-Aviv 1952.

תהכמוני *Tahkemoni or The Tales of Heman the Ezrahite*, a critical edition, edited by Joseph Yahalom and Naoya Katsumata. Jerusalem 2010.

5.2. Translation

5.2.1. English

Victor Emanuel Reichert, *The Tahkemoni* of Judah Al-Harizi, Vol. I-II, Jerusalem 1965-1973. A facsimile of the first printed edition, Constantinople 1578, was printed in the second volume

David Simha Segal, *The Book of Tahkemoni. Jewish Tales from Medieval Spain Judah Alharizi*, London, Portland, Oregon 2001.

5.2.2. Spanish

Carlos Del Valle, *Las Asambleas de los Sabios (Tahkemoni)*, Murcia 1988.

5.2.3. German

S. I. Kampf, *Die ersten Makamen aus dem Tachkemoni oder Divan des Charisi, nebst dessen Vorrede*, Berlin: A. Duncker, 1845. Hebrew and German. Only the first chapters.

5.3. Studies

ח' שירמן, תולדות השירה העברית בספרד הנוצרית ובדרום צרפת, ערך והשלים וליווה בהערות ע' פליישר, ירושלים תשנ"ז, עמ' 145-221.
י' יהלום וי' בלאו, מסעי יהודה. חמישה פרקי מסע מחוזים לאחריו, ירושלים תשס"ג.
י' יהלום ונ' קצומטה, יהודה אחריו, תחמוני, ירושלים תש"ע
(in the end there is a comprehensive list of studies on him and his workings).

M. Steinschneider, *Die Hebräischen Übersetzungen des Mittelalters und die Juden als Dolmetscher*, Graz 1956², 251, 273-274, 354, 428-433, 851.852, 857, 899, 923.

J. Schirrmann, *Die Maqamen des Hariri*, Frankfurt a M. 1930.

S. M. Stern, «An Unpublished Maqama by Al-Harizi» *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies London*, vol. I, Jerusalem 1964, pp. 186-210.

J. Sadan, «Un intellectuel juif au confluent de deux cultures: Yehuda al-Harizi et sa biographie arabe», M. Fierro (ed.), *Judios y musulmanes en al-Andalus y el Magreb*, Madrid 2002, pp. 105-151.

6. Joseph de Montagna's Letter from Jerusalem (1481)

This letter was sent from Jerusalem to his children in the Lombardy region (North Italy) in the end of 1480. In this letter he briefly describes his overland journey from Beirut (in Syria) to Jerusalem in that year. From Beirut he went to Damascus. From there he traveled after a short while to the Land of Israel via the Golan heights and crossed the Jordan River on his way to Safed. From Safed he journeyed southward on the main road on the Samarian and Judean mountains to Jerusalem. In his letter he mentions some interesting geographical details in some localities that he passed on his way to Jerusalem. He also mentions some traditions of holy graves, mainly of Biblical figures which were located on his route to Jerusalem and in the town. He immediately became the main figure in the Jerusalem Jewish community leadership.

6.1. Manuscripts

Oxford – Bodleian Library Opp. Add. 4^o 178 (Neubauer 2585), pp. 92r-92v.

Warsaw – Żydowski Instytut Historyczny (Jewish Historical Institute) 253, pp. 120r-120v.

6.2. Editions

אברהם משה לונץ, מכתב מסע משנת רמ"א *Jerusalem*, edited by Abraham Moses Luntz, 6 (1904), pp. 336-338.

אברהם משה לונץ, טופס הכתב ששלח כמ' יוסף מנטבייא האשכנזי מירושלים ללונברדיאה משנת רמ"א *ha-Meamer*, edited by Abraham Moses Luntz, 3 (1920), pp. 89-92.

אברהם משה לונץ, אגרות ארץ ישראל, אברהם יערי, *Abraham Yaari, Iggerot Eretz-Israel*, Jerusalem 1943 (Ramat Gan 1971), pp. 89-93.

אברהם משה לונץ, אברהם דוד, שאלו שלום ירושלים *Abraham David, Shaalu Shelom Yerushalayim*, Tel-Aviv 2003, pp. 111-119 (a critical edition).

6.3. Translations

6.3.1. Spanish

José Ramón Magdalena Nom de Déu, Epístola de R. Yosef da Montagna, *Relatos de viajes y epístolas de peregrinos judíos a Jerusalén (1481-1523)*, Barcelona 1987, pp. 95-100.

6.3.2. Czech

Daniel Bousek, *Dopis Rabi Josefa da Montagna z Jeruzalema (1481), Dopis Rabi Ovadjí otci a dalsi Hebrejke renesanci cestopisi*, Praha 2004, pp. 19-23.

6.4. Studies

ש. ה. קוק, ר' יוסף דמונטניא אשכנזי פרנס בירושלים, ציון, א (תרצ"ו), עמ' 255-256.
 ש. ה. קוק, עיונים ומחקרים, ב, ירושלים תשכ"ג, עמ' 303-305.
 א' דוד, שאלו שלום ירושלים, תל-אביב 2003, עמ' 111-113.

7. Meshullam of Volterra (1481)

Meshullam (Buonaventura) ben Menahem (Emanuele) came from a wealthy Tuscan Jewish family. He resided in Volterra and appears to have conducted a money lending business there and in Florence for some twenty years. He was also a very successful merchant who dealt with a variety of commodities.

Meshullam's fame is mainly due to his journeys which he recorded in Hebrew describing his journeys around the Mediterranean, Egypt, the land of Israel, and Syria in 1481. In one of his journeys, he writes that he took a vow, which he intended to keep. However, it is clear that besides his spiritual and religious motives, trade was on his mind. The original unique manuscript is preserved at the Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana in Florence. Large parts from the outset of his journey up to the Aegean Sea voyage close to Rhodes are missing. His description is clear; he gives a detailed account on the daily life of each location he arrives at. However, his descriptions from a geographic and economic perspective are much more significant. Volterra also gives an exhaustive description on the Jewish life in Egypt and the land of Israel, and Jerusalem in particular. His voyage ends with a short description of his journey back to Italy, which ended in Venice.

Meshullam traveled again to the Near East, seven years later, as mentioned by Obadiah of Bertinoro in a letter from Jerusalem to his father in Italy in 1488. Obadiah notes that he met Meshullam on the ship, and that they sailed together from Palermo (Sicily) to the East (Alexandria) but that between the islands Chios and Rhodes in the Aegean sea, Meshullam changed his mind because of an incident that occurred to him (he had words with one of the sailors, and harshly punished for it) and, instead of continuing to Alexandria, he traveled to Constantinople on a different ship.

7.1. Manuscript

Firenze – Medicea-Laurenziana plut II, 44.

7.2. Editions

David Castelli, in דוד קשטלי, 'מכתב מסע לר' משולם בכמ"ר מנחם מוואלטרס משנת הרמ"א לב"ע' *Jerusalem*, edited by Abraham Moses Luntz, Jerusalem 1882, pp. 166-219

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8. Obadiah son of Abraham of Bertinoro (1488)

Italian Rabbinical scholar who is well known as the most famous Mishnah commentator whose family or he himself came from Bertinoro in Forlì region in Italy. In the autumn 1486 he started his journey to Jerusalem from his hometown Citta di Castello where he had a financial business. From there he passed through Rome, Salerno and Naples. There he embarked on his voyage to the Land of Israel along the Mediterranean basin, via Palermo and Messina in Sicily, and Rhodes to Alexandria in Egypt. From there he sailed on the Nile river to Cairo, and from there he went in land route via the Sinai peninsula to the Land of Israel. The first place he passed in that country was Gaza, on the southern border. From there he went northward to Hebron on his way to Jerusalem where he arrived two days before Passover (March the 25th) 1488. He settled there and became a prominent leader of the small Jewish community.

His journey as well as his first steps in his new residence are described in a comprehensive letter that he sent to his father in Italy, which was written six months after his arrival in Jerusalem. In that description he gives wonderful geographical and climatic details, the maritime and land route he traveled in his journey as well as on the daily life in the ship or the caravan. He also draws attention to the nice panoramic view of the port towns he stayed in for a short time while in his journey. He also emphasizes his own impressions on everywhere he found a Jewish community. He also left his impressions about Jewish life, such: size of the community, the leadership, economic and spiritual life. His journey lasted approximately a year and a half. As we have seen, his journey began with a voyage from Naples in 1486 to Alexandria in Egypt, traveling via a circuitous route which obliged him to spend extended periods in various ports. Rabbi Obadiah mentions that if he would have known that the shorter maritime route from Venice to the Near East would be opened, he would not have sailed from Naples. For a long

time it was closed to Jewish people as there was an edict forbidding ship's captains to transport Jewish travelers from Venice. The background of this edict, which was issued by Pope Martin V, was a reaction to a deep struggle between the Franciscans and the Jews in Jerusalem at the end of the third decade of the 15th century.

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9. The anonymous traveler (1495)

An Italian anonymous traveler who embarked from Venice on August the 5th 1495 together with his brother Yekutiel and proceeded across the Mediterranean to Beirut after 34 days, on September the 8th. In his letter from Jerusalem to one of his friends or relatives in Italy two three months later he describes his journey both in sea and land. In the maritime route he sailed from Venice via Pola, Corfu, Modone, Rhodes, Famagusta and Beirut. He preferred instead of the via Marris route southward to take the longer, but more secure, route from Beirut to Safed via Damascus and Golan Heights. He arrived in Safed on October 7th and after a short stay there he arrived in Jerusalem on November 6th 1495 and settled there. The writer gives some typical topographical and economic details of what he found in the above mentioned port cities where he disembarked. He left more details about the other localities he passed in his land route

(Beirut, Damascus, Safed and Jerusalem), which also includes a few details on the Jewish communities in each one. During his short stay in Safed he specifically sought out the venerated gravesites of ancient Jewish saints, which are located around Safed. In Jerusalem he also describes in more detail Jewish communal life and also surveys several ancient sites in that town and its vicinity. At the end of the letter the writer appended a short guide, useful shipboard advice for travelers embarking in Venice in the direction to the Land of Israel.

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