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The Earliest Texts of the *Birkat Haminin*

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Contents

- 1 *Ezekiel as the Voice of the Exiles and Constructor of Exilic Ideology*
Dalit Rom-Shiloni, *Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion*
- 47 *Siqoriqin Forfeited Land*
Moshe Gil, *Tel Aviv University*
- 63 *The Earliest Texts of the Birkat Haminin*
Uri Ehrlich, *Ben Gurion University of the Negev*
Ruth Langer, *Boston College*
- 113 *The Blemished First-Born Animal*
A Case Study in Tannaitic Sources
Tzvi Novick, *Yale University*
- 133 *Justification by Deed*
The Conclusion of Sanhedrin-Makkot and Paul's Rejection of Law
Devora Steinmetz, *Jewish Theological Seminary*
- 189 *The Economics of Jewish Childhood in Late Antiquity*
Amram Tropper, *Ben-Gurion University*
- 235 *The Constitution of the Burial Society of the*
Bucharest Sephardic Community, April 30, 1850
Isaac Jerusalmi, *Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion*
- 259 *Abraham Firkovich and the Dedication Inscription of the Aleppo Codex*
Yosef Ofer, *Bar-Ilan University*
- 273 *An Exploratory Study on the Use of a Phylogenetic Algorithm*
in the Reconstruction of Stemmata of Halachic Texts
Avishai Yorav, *Jerusalem*
Tal Dagan, *Heinrich-Heine Universität, Düsseldorf*
Dan Graur, *Tel Aviv University and University of Houston*

289 *Jewish Biblical Theology: Whence? Why? And Whither?*
Ziony Zevit, *University of Judaism*

א „ותשם בפוך עיניה ותיטב את ראשה” מלכים ב ט 30
Yossi Leshem, *Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion*

יא רב ששת לעומת רב נחמן
שתי שיטות פרשניות למקורות תנאיים
Barak S. Cohen, *Bar-Ilan University*

ג „עלייה וירידה”
מפתח לפתרון חלום יעקב
Yitzhak Peleg, *Beit Berl College, Israel*

The Earliest Texts of the *Birkat Haminin*

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The *birkat haminin* petitions God to doom groups of people deemed harmful to the Jewish community, both Jews and gentiles. The blessing's text consequently was often adapted to reflect new realities. Throughout its history, it has attracted attention from those, especially Christians, concerned about Jewish attitudes to them. This concern led to extensive censorship of the text. However, modern scholars pondering the early history of the blessing had only limited evidence for its actual formulations.

This article presents a panoramic study of the text of the *birkat haminin* from the earliest preserved manuscripts (from the Cairo geniza) until official Catholic censorship began in the sixteenth century. The six centuries plus of texts presented here allows us to document the medieval development of the blessing. Across the regional variants, we find an extremely stable structure together with significant openness to addition, deletion, or rearrangement of the parts. This data and its analysis provide a firm basis for understanding the prayer's subsequent developments and a firmer basis than previously available for reconstructing its earlier history. This evidence will serve, we hope, as a resource for scholarly discussion about the place of the *birkat haminin* in the complex array of relationships between Jews and gentiles.

In his classic work on Jewish liturgy, Ismar Elbogen begins his commentary on the *birkat haminin*¹ saying, “No benediction has undergone as many textual variations as this one, some through the natural effect of changing times, and others through censorship. It is most doubtful that we will ever be in a position to recover its original text.”² Elbogen is neither original nor unique, either in his recognition that the text of this prayer has undergone numerous transformations or in his sense that reconstruction of an original text is perhaps not possible.³ However, systematic research among the findings of the Cairo

1 Literally, the “benediction of the heretics,” better but still inadequately translated as the “malediction of the heretics,” the twelfth benediction of the weekday *ʿamidah*, the central prayer of rabbinic communal liturgy.

2 Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History*, trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin (Philadelphia, Jerusalem, New York: Jewish Publication Society, Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1993) 45; Heb. ed., p. 40, §9.b.12.

3 See, for example, the commentaries on this blessing of Seligmann Baer, *Seder ʿavodat yisraʿel* (Roedelheim, 1868. Repr.; Tel Aviv: Schocken, 1957) 93–95; Joseph Hertz, *The Authorized Daily Prayer Book* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1948, 1975) 143–44, and the literature on this blessing to be discussed below.

geniza and in later prayer book manuscripts and editions allows us today to understand much of the history of this blessing and its development. This article assembles and analyzes the medieval texts of this blessing beginning with the earliest texts of the blessing that have been preserved and suggests ways to understand its medieval history.

SCHOLARLY DISCUSSIONS

In 1898, Solomon Schechter published the first findings from the Cairo geniza, revolutionizing the study of Jewish liturgy.⁴ In this short article, he included a selection of prayers of a rite, until then unknown. Scholars quickly came to recognize this as the rite of *ʿereṣ yisraʿel*.⁵ This rite, although adhering to the basic structures and ideas of known rabbinic liturgy, differed significantly in its precise formulations of the individual prayers. Included among Schechter's geniza fragments were two versions of the *birkat haminim*, both of them deviating in significant ways from the familiar versions of the prayer. Although Schechter did not comment upon this in his brief article, most striking to his readers was that these versions of the *birkat haminim* explicitly included among the malefactors being cursed *noṣerim*, the common Hebrew term for Christians. Many through the centuries had understood the prayer to have been anti-Christian in its origins and ongoing intent. Scholars were aware that the Church fathers, and especially Justin Martyr (d. c. 165),⁶ accused Jews of cursing Christians during prayers, and that Epiphanius (d. 403) and Jerome (d. 420) specifically identify this as a curse against Nazarenes, suggesting that the *berakhah* had included somewhere an explicit reference to *noṣerim*.⁷ However, no previously discovered liturgical text of the blessing had included this precise language.

4 S. Schechter, "Geniza Specimens," *JQR* OS 10 (1898) 654–59; repr. in Jakob J. Petuchowski, ed., *Contributions to the Scientific Study of Jewish Liturgy* (New York: Ktav, 1970) 373–78. For the texts of the *birkat haminim*, see pp. 657, 659 and 376, 378 respectively. A geniza is a storehouse for Hebrew manuscripts that, although they are no longer useful, are considered too holy to be destroyed.

5 See, for instance, Emil Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im zeitalter Jesu Christi*, Zweiter Band (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1907. Repr.; Heidelberg: Georg Olms Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964) 542–43. He, and most since, have referred to this rite as Palestinian. In today's English usage, "Palestinian" does not designate a Jewish culture. We will instead transliterate the Hebrew designation for the Land of Israel.

6 *Dialogue with Trypho*, esp. §96 and §137. There is no scholarly consensus on how many of Justin's references, if any, are actually relevant.

7 William Horbury, "The Benediction of the Minim and Early Jewish-Christian Controversy," *JTS* 33 (1982) 20–23 (repr. in his *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998]) cites the relevant literature. The patristic texts are collected in A. F. J. Klijn and G. J. Reinink, *Patristic Evidence for Jewish-Christian Sects* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1973) 174–75, 200–201, 218–19, 220–21, 224–25. For the pre-Schechter discussions, see esp. S. Krauss, "The Jews in the Works

Once Schechter's article was noticed,⁸ this blessing received renewed attention by both Jewish and Christian scholars as they began to try to understand the Jewish origins of Christianity and the history of the "parting of the ways."⁹ According to rabbinic tradition, this blessing was added to the *amidah* at Yavneh.¹⁰ This places the origins of the *birkat haminim* firmly in the late first century C.E. The explicit inclusion of *nošerim* in the geniza text thus suggested that the addition of this blessing was a deliberate move to exclude Christians from the synagogue, an understanding reinforced by a late midrashic tradition that requires one leading the prayers who errs in the blessing to repeat it correctly, thus cursing himself.¹¹ Because of the perception, perhaps correct, that the early history of the *birkat haminim* sheds light on this critical moment in the emergence of Christianity onto the world scene, a huge literature has developed on the subject. Not only does the blessing receive independent treatment,¹² but it

of the Church Fathers," *JQR* 5 (1893) 130–34. Krauss, 133, speculates incorrectly as to which term of the known blessing texts had once been *nošerim*. Adolf Schlatter, *Die Kirche Jerusalems vom Jahr 70 bis 130* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1898; repr. in *Synagoge und Kirche bis zum Barokochba-Aufstand: Vier Studien zur Geschichte des Rabbinate und der jüdischen Christenheit in den ersten zwei Jahrhunderten* [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1966]) 108–10, cites Krauss and offers his own speculation.

- 8 Schürer, in his 1907 revision of the second volume of his history, p. 543 f., is apparently the first to utilize this data. He understands *nošerim* to designate all Christians. Neither Ismar Elbogen, "Geschichte des Achtzehngebets," *MGWJ* 46 (1902) 330–57, 427–39, 513–30 nor Emil G. Hirsch, "She-moneh 'Esreh," *JE* (1905) 11:270–82 acknowledge the geniza materials. Hermann L. Strack, *Jesus, die Häretiker und die Christen nach den ältesten jüdischen Angaben* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1910) 64*–67*, cites the geniza text as support for S. Krauss's 1893 surmise. He provides detailed notes about the two different versions in Schechter's publication (p. 30). Adolf Harnack, "Judentum und Judenchristentum in Justins Dialog mit Trypho nebst einer Collation der Pariser Handschrift Nr. 450," *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literature* 3.9 (1913) 80, cites only Schechter's main text in his discussion of Justin Martyr's report that Jews are cursing Christians in the synagogue and concludes that there must be something to Justin's claim. On p. 90, he lists this among the items that confirm the historicity of Justin's reports. This tendency to cite just Schechter's main text becomes widespread.
- 9 See the substantial literature cited by William Horbury in his analysis of Justin Martyr's references to Jews' cursing Christians, in his "The Benediction of the Minim," 20–23. For a more recent bibliography, see Pieter W. van der Horst, "The Birkat Ha-Minim in Recent Research," in P. W. van der Horst, ed., *Hellenism - Judaism - Christianity: Essays on their Interaction* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994; 2nd enlarged ed.; Leuven: Peeters, 1998) 113–24.
- 10 *B.Ber.* 28b; *y.Ber.* 4:3 8a.
- 11 *Tanhumā Vayiqra* 2 (Warsaw ed.); Buber ed., *Vayiqra* 3. See, for instance, Elbogen's use of this text, §8.10, p. 32 (Eng.; p. 28 Heb.).
- 12 For the most comprehensive survey of the literature, see: van der Horst, "The Birkat Ha-Minim," 1994 ed.: 99–111; 1998 ed., 113–24. Widely cited studies focusing specifically on the blessing include: Reuven Kimelman, "Birkat Ha-Minim and the Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity," in E. P. Sanders, A. I. Baumgarten, and Alan Mendelson, eds., *Jewish and Christian Self Definition, Volume Two: Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period* (4 vols.; Philadel-

receives attention in histories of early rabbinic Judaism¹³ as well as histories of early Christianity, particularly in works on the Gospel of John, explaining his references to the expulsion of Christians from the synagogues.¹⁴

However, in spite of the fact that additional geniza texts of the *amidah* including versions of the *birkat haminin* similar to Schechter's second version were published in English by Jacob Mann in 1925¹⁵ and in Hebrew by Simcha Assaf in 1949,¹⁶ the vast majority of these publications have presumed that Schechter's first version represents the authentic rite of *ʿereṣ yisraʿel*¹⁷ and that it, rather than any other known version, was preserved intact from the earliest promulgation of the blessing. This is even more surprising because in 1925–26, two articles published in the English-language *Jewish Quarterly Review* demonstrated even greater variety in the earliest known texts of the blessing. A. Mar-

phia: Fortress Press, 1981) 2:226–44; William Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998) which collects several of his earlier articles on the subject; and David Flusser, "Some of the Precepts of the Torah from Qumran (4QMMT) and the Benediction Against the Heretics," *Tarbiz* 61 (1991–92) 333–74 (Heb.).

- 13 Influential studies include: Günther Stemberger, "Die sogenannte 'Synode von Jabne' und das frühe Christentum," *Kairoi* 19 (1977) 14–21; Peter Schaefer, "Die sogenannte Synode von Jabne: Zur Trennung von Juden und Christen im ersten/zweiten Jh. n. Chr.," *Studien zur Geschichte und Theologie des rabbinischen Judentums* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978) 44–64; Gedaliah Alon, *The Jews in their Land in the Talmudic Age (70–640 C.E.)*, Gershon Levi, trans. and ed. (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1980. Repr.; Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard Univ. Press, 1989) 288–90; Johann Maier, *Jüdische Auseinandersetzung mit dem Christen in der Antike* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1982) 138–39; Steven T. Katz, "Issues in the Separation of Judaism and Christianity After 70 C.E.: A Reconsideration," *JBL* 103 (1984) 43–76; Lawrence Schiffman, *Who Was a Jew? Rabbinic and Halakhic Perspectives on the Jewish Christian Schism* (Hoboken, N.J.: Ktav, 1985) 56–60; Richard Kalmin, "Christians and Heretics in Rabbinic Literature of Late Antiquity," *HTR* 87.2 (1994) 155–69; Daniel Boyarin, *Border Lines: The Partition of Judaeo-Christianity* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).
- 14 John 9:22, 12:42, 16:2. J. Louis Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (3rd ed.; Louisville/London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003) chap. 2, raised the issue in the most influential way. He received serious refutations from Stemberger, Schaefer, and Maier, cited in the previous note, and most recent scholars follow them rather than him. See also, among many others, Raymond E. Brown, *Introduction to the Gospel of John*, edited, updated, introduced and concluded by Francis J. Moloney, S.D.B., ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 2003) 68, n. 65; Adele Reinhartz, *Befriending the Beloved Disciple: A Jewish Reading of the Gospel of John* (New York/London: Continuum, 2001) chap. 3; Claudia Setzer, *Jewish Responses to Early Christians: History and Polemics, 30–150 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994) 89–93; and Stephen G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70–170 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 176 ff.
- 15 Jacob Mann, "Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service," *HUCA* 2 (1925) 296, 306, repr. in Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 406, 416.
- 16 "From the Order of Prayers in *ʿEreṣ Yisraʿel*," in Yitzhak Baer, Yehoshua Gutman, Moshe Schwabe, eds., *Sefer Dinaburg* (Jerusalem: Kiryat Sefer, 1949) 118 (Heb.).
- 17 Schürer, in 1907, already warned against presuming that the geniza text was original. An egregious recent example of this reliance on Schechter is David Instone-Brewer, "The Eighteen Benedictions and the *Minim* Before 70 CE," *JTS* 54.1 (2003) 25–44.

morstein's article entitled "The Amidah of the Public Fast Days,"¹⁸ presented numerous geniza fragments, including, in the second half, a series of eighteen texts of the *birkat haminim* (from among the thirty manuscripts he checked). According to Marmorstein's summary of his data, he found ten different versions of the blessing. However, he makes no attempt to distinguish between texts originating in *ʿeres yisraʿel* versus Babylonia, or to distinguish between poetic elaborations on the prayer versus prose versions, or to establish relationships between the texts. The importance of Marmorstein's contribution thus lies primarily in his publication of data that gives witness to a much wider variety of possible texts of the *birkat haminim* in the period of the geniza than that suggested by Schechter.

Louis Finkelstein, in his "The Development of the Amidah,"¹⁹ compared the texts of Schechter's versions with those of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* and the *Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon*,²⁰ both Babylonian geonic prayer books dated today to the late ninth and early to mid-tenth centuries respectively. In his notes, Finkelstein also compared these texts with exemplars of the known later rites. He therefore points to the coexistence of at least three contemporaneous rites. Regarding the *birkat haminim* specifically, his selection of texts suggests that only one rite, that of *ʿeres yisraʿel*, actually referred explicitly to *nošerim*, and that of Saadia did not even include mention of the *minim*. His goal in this comparison was to discern shared elements and to reconstruct an original version, inevitably simpler than all known versions, from which all later rites evolved. However, even scholars who today posit a single original composition of the *ʿamidah* and especially of the *birkat haminim* find Finkelstein's methods questionable.²¹

18 *JQR* NS 15 (1924/5) 409–18; repr. in Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 449–58.

19 *JQR* NS 16 (1925/6) 156–57; repr. in Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 163–64.

20 In both cases, citing from manuscripts of these texts. The *Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon* was published only in 1941, from the Oxford manuscript (Neubauer 1096) that Finkelstein used through a photograph then available at the Jewish Theological Seminary. The *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* was in constant circulation from the late ninth century, but as is well known, scribes did not hesitate to make changes, particularly to its prayer texts. Finkelstein here relies on one of the best manuscripts, that of Salzburg, now found in the library of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York, #4074. He himself relied on Alexander Marx's collection of the variants. See his notes, p. 132 (Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 139).

21 Form-critical study of the liturgy, as presented most persuasively by Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns*, trans. Richard S. Sarason (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977. Heb. ed., 1964) suggested that rabbinic liturgy evolved gradually from prayer forms common to various social settings in the pre-rabbinic world, meaning that the origins of the liturgy rarely lie in deliberate compositions. Ezra Fleischer, beginning with his article, "On the Beginnings of Obligatory Jewish Prayer," *Tarbiz* 59 (1989–90) 397–441 (Heb.), raised cogent challenges to this picture, arguing for a deliberate composition of the *ʿamidah* and other prayers at Yavneh in the late first century C.E. (For an English review of his writings, see Ruth Langer, "Revisiting Early Rabbinic Liturgy: The Recent Contributions of Ezra Fleischer," *Prooftexts* 19 [1999]

No further significant contributions²² were made to our understanding of the textual development of the *birkat haminim* until 2000, with the publication of Yehezkel Luger's doctoral dissertation, *The Weekday Amidah in the Cairo Geniza*.²³ The many discussions published in the intervening years had mostly focused on Schechter's version of the blessing, ignoring almost entirely the contributions of Mann, Marmorstein, Finkelstein, and Assaf. Luger, on the other hand, returns directly to the geniza manuscripts. Among the sixty-five manuscripts of the *amidah* that Luger studies, he locates fifteen exemplars of the *birkat haminim*.²⁴ Among these fifteen, he discerns three discrete versions, the second of which he identifies as most characteristic of *ʿereṣ yisraʿel*.²⁵ However, he also suggests in his introduction that the boundaries between the rites of Babylonia and *ʿereṣ yisraʿel* are not as firm as had hitherto been believed. He characterizes separately each blessing within a manuscript as being either according to the rite of *ʿereṣ yisraʿel* or Babylonia and then offers a summary of the mixture found within each manuscript.²⁶ He therefore suggests a much broader variety in reality than these three rites, but does not offer a map of this variety. In his specific presentation of the *birkat haminim*, Luger is the first to demonstrate that Babylonian texts (five of his seven exemplars of version A) in the period of the geniza also included explicit reference to *noṣerim*.

THIS PROJECT

Methodical survey of all known manuscripts of the weekday *amidah* from the geniza as well as the earliest preserved manuscripts of the rites of the various Jewish diaspora communities suggests that the picture presented by all these scholars is significantly oversimplified. In what follows, we present the fruits of this research, first in a detailed discussion of Uri Ehrlich's much broader survey of the geniza materials, and then in a parallel discussion of Ruth Langer's survey of the medieval manuscripts of the European rites. Unfortunately, too few medieval manuscripts have been preserved from North Africa and the Middle East to allow legitimate conclusions to be drawn about those rites. What material exists will appear here only in comparison to the geniza texts which largely derive from that same world.

179–94 and “Controversy” in 20 [2000] 380–87.) Jewish liturgical scholars, including the authors of this article, have as yet reached no consensus on how to reconcile these two views.

22 Flusser, “Some of the Precepts of the Torah,” contains several reconstructions of the blessing based on very limited data, ample guesswork, and questionable methodologies.

23 Yehezkel Luger, *The Weekday Amidah in the Cairo Geniza* (Jerusalem: Orhot Press, 2000) (Heb.).

24 Note that although Luger lists Marmorstein's article in his bibliography, he does not include the fragments that Marmorstein mentioned.

25 Luger, *Weekday Amidah*, 134–35.

26 Luger, *Weekday Amidah*, 17–21.

Based on this data, we offer a revised picture of the history of the *birkat haminim* in its formative stages. The results of this study go a long way to answering Elbogen's questions with which we opened. While we may never know what the original text of the blessing might have been (if there was only one), we now can trace much of its development and can map out its many and shifting formulations before Catholic censorship radically altered them in the sixteenth century.²⁷

THE GENIZA TEXTS OF THE *BIRKAT HAMINIM*

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Among the geniza manuscripts, 112 liturgical fragments include complete or partial texts of the *birkat haminim*. However, twelve of these have been excluded here because they are too fragmentary or in such poor physical condition that their exact contents are unclear. Nevertheless, the collection of manuscripts cited here is close enough to being exhaustive to provide data for an authoritative discussion of the text of the *birkat haminim* in the geniza period.²⁸

Not all materials found in the geniza represent the "geniza period." The geniza contains a huge collection of manuscripts that were copied over a period of more than four hundred years (900–1300), and the liturgical materials typically are anonymous, making it very difficult to comprehend their history. The geniza also contains material that definitely or possibly originated elsewhere in the Jewish world, prayer books that emanated from other diaspora communities or that were copied under their influence. Consequently, each prayer book fragment requires paleographic analysis to provide an estimation of its date and hand. This information, partial and only preliminary though it is, allows a tentative chronological and geographic ordering of this material, at least within the approximately four centuries in which most of the manuscripts were written.²⁹ These criteria resulted in the elimination of an additional six manuscripts that were identified as not (or only doubtfully) Middle Eastern, i.e., from outside the geniza's own world. After sifting out these manuscripts, ninety-four fragments remained for inclusion in our discussion.

It is also critical to remember, even after identifying the useful manuscripts, that we have very little concrete contemporary evidence for how Jews prayed

27 On censorship, see Amnon Raz-Karotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor and the Text* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005) (Heb.). For the effects of censorship on the *birkat haminim* specifically, see Langer's forthcoming book.

28 This collection of texts of the *birkat haminim* is part of Uri Ehrlich's forthcoming synoptic edition of the geniza texts of the entire weekday *amidah*.

29 Dr. Edna Angel performed this preliminary paleographic analysis, and the reservations about the results mentioned here are hers.

before this period. It is highly likely that significant elements of the development of rabbinic liturgy, even those reflected in the geniza manuscripts, are the product of a yet earlier period, sometimes centuries earlier than the dates when these manuscripts were produced. Therefore, simple analysis of the physical characteristics of these manuscripts is insufficient. In most cases, the actual language of the prayer text is a better key to its dating and provenance.

DISCUSSION OF THE TEXTS

The table on pages 10 and 11 presents seven versions of the *birkat haminim* found in the Cairo geniza. The list of manuscripts and a full discussion of the variants among the fragments of the various versions appears in the appendix at the end of this article.³⁰ The discussion that follows will be based on the data in the table and the primary variants in the appendix.

30 Among the manuscripts collected, two groups do not appear in this table, but are listed at the end of the Appendix A. One group, consisting of six manuscripts, has the following basic text: ומלכות זרון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע בימינו והמינים כרגע יאבדו ברוך אתה יי שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים (The empire of insolence quickly uproot, smash, and bring low in our day, and may the *minim* be destroyed in an instant. Blessed are you, Eternal, who breaks enemies and humbles the insolent.) There are two main variants within this group: one manuscript, instead of והמינים (and the *minim*), has והנוצרים והמינים (the *nošerim* and the *minim*); and another lacks the entire phrase כרגע יאבדו והמינים (and may the *minim* be destroyed in an instant). This group is not included in the table because it is to all appearances an abbreviation of an eastern version of the prayer of unknown date or provenance. All of the manuscripts in this group also abbreviate the next blessing (*birkat hašaddiqim*), beginning it with the words ותן שכר טוב וכו' (Give a good reward, etc.), and some of them also abbreviate the blessing for healing, beginning it with the words והעלה רפואה וכו' (Raise up healing, etc.). It is difficult to assess the reason for this abbreviation of the *birkat haminim*; it is possible that some considered the repetition in the language of the blessing to be improper.

The other group excluded from the table consists of two manuscripts whose language is: והמלשינים (כולם) כרגע יאבדו וכל צוררי עמך ישראל ואויביהם וקמיהם וחושבי רעתם (ומלשיניהם) “May the *minim* and the informers (all) be destroyed in an instant, and may all the oppressors of Your people Israel and their enemies and opponents and those who plan evil against them (and those who inform against them) be speedily cut off from the earth, may they be smashed and lost, bring them low speedily in our day. Blessed are You, Eternal, who breaks enemies and humbles the insolent.” These two manuscripts are relatively late (thirteenth-fourteenth centuries). It is plausible that this language is also an abbreviation, perhaps because of an external or internal censor. On this text, see also L. Finkelstein, “The Development of the Amidah,” *JQR* NS 16 (1925–26) 140; repr. in Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 147. Finkelstein copies this text from *Ošar tov* (*Hebraische Beilage zum Magazin für die Wissenschaft des Judenthums*) 1 (1878) 10–13. There, that manuscript is identified as an Arabic rite prayer book manuscript from Rome. Its text for the *birkat haminim* is similar to the otherwise anomalous text that appears in MS Rome Casanatense 3085, an eastern rite siddur with Arabic instructions, dated to the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries. The publication in *Ošar tov* does not identify its author or offer comment on the text.

Even on first glance, one can discern that the geniza texts, in their seven different branches, rest upon a shared textual foundation. All of the geniza manuscripts without exception begin with *תהי תקוה אל למשומדים* (May there be no hope for apostates).³¹ The segment *ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו* (may the empire of insolence be speedily uprooted in our day) appears, with the addition of a word or two, in all the branches except one (1). The petition, *והנוצרים והמינים*, *הנוצרים והמינים* (may the *nošerim*³² and the *minim*³³ immediately perish), with this wording or with slight variants, also appears in all but one branch (6). The eulogy of the blessing concludes without exception with the words *מכניע זדים* (who humbles the insolent). However, within this shared framework, there are identifiable characteristics that differentiate the various rites and their branches and that witness to the developmental history of the benediction.

Among the geniza texts, the most fundamental distinction is between the wording of the *birkat haminim* in the *ʿereš yisraʿeli* rite and in the Babylonian rite.³⁴ In all the *ʿereš yisraʿeli* rite prayer books, the blessing concludes with *מכניע זדים* (who humbles the insolent) alone, while in the Babylonian rite prayer books, the blessing concludes with a double eulogy, either as *שובר ורשעים ומכניע זדים* (who breaks the wicked and humbles the insolent) or as *שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים* (who breaks enemies and humbles the insolent).³⁵ The *ʿereš yisraʿeli* rite is also unique in its citation at the end of the body of the blessing of Psalms 69:29, *ימחו מספר חיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו* (May they be blotted from the Book of Life and not be inscribed with the righteous). A third component that is distinctive in the rite of *ʿereš yisraʿel* is the words *לא ישרבו* אִם

31 Except the manuscripts mentioned in the previous note.

32 As discussed above, the appearance of *nošerim* in Schechter's published geniza manuscripts was a source of much discussion. We will not translate the term here because its meaning is somewhat ambiguous. While the word is clearly derived from the Hebrew name of Nazareth, it is unclear whether this designates Christians in general (as is the contemporary meaning of the word), a category of Jewish-Christians (corresponding to the Greek and Latin for Nazarenes, and variants on this term), or something else entirely.

33 This term too will remain untranslated here. Literally, *minim* means "sectarians." Rabbinic texts use the term in a variety of ways to apply to various sorts of religious and philosophical opponents, some, but not all, of whom were Christians.

34 The differences between the wordings of the daily *ʿamidah* in the rites of *ʿereš yisraʿel* and of Babylonia are clear-cut and the existence of a few prayer books that mix the rites does not blur the boundaries. For some principle characteristics of the *ʿamidah* in the rite of the Land of Israel, see J. Mann, "Genizah Fragments of the Palestinian Order of Service," *HUCA* 2 (1925) 295–97.

35 The words *מכניע זדים* (who humbles the insolent) already serves as the name for the *birkat haminim* in the talmudic sources from *ʿereš yisraʿel*. See, for example, *y.Ber.* 5:3, 9c: *לכל אין מחזירין*: *ארתו חוץ ממי שלא אמר מחיה המתים ומכניע זדים ובונה ירושלים אני אומר מין הוא* (One does not make him [that is, a *sheliaḥ šibbur*] repeat [a prayer in which he has erred], unless he skipped "who resurrects the dead" or "who humbles the insolent" or "who rebuilds Jerusalem." I say that such a person is a *min*). For the language of the Babylonian eulogy, see *Midrash Psalms* 29 (Buber ed., 116b).

² Ereṣ Yisra ² eli Rite		Babylonian Rite				
1 (8 MSS)	2 (2 MSS)	3 (8 MSS)	4A (21 MSS)	4B (17 MSS)	5 (6 MSS)	6 (24 MSS)
למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
אם לא ישובו לתורתך						
		וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו				
		וכל אויבי עמך מהרה יכרתו				
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו		ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע בימינו	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע בימינו	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר בימינו	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו
הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו		הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו	הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו	הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו	הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו	הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו

לתורתך (if they do not return to Your Torah), that come to modify the harsh curse with which the blessing opens.³⁶ However, this component appears only in the more widespread branch of the ²ereṣ yisra²eli rite (1), while in the other branch (2), a phrase which appears in all of the branches of the Babylonian rite replaces it, reading *ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו* (Uproot the empire of insolence quickly in our days).

Quite distinct variations appear within the Babylonian rite. The manuscript evidence suggests that there were five separate branches of this rite, but with clear connections between several of them. It is quite simple to delineate the developmental process between branches 3, 4A, and 4B. The linguistic foundation of all of them is the language of version 3, to which version 4A adds the

³⁶ Based on the fact that these words reflect back on and moderate the previous phrase, and because they are not found in the other version of the Land of Israel (2), Flusser, "Some of the Precepts," 347–48, concludes that they are a secondary addition.

² Ereṣ Yisra ² eli Rite		Babylonian Rite				
1 (8 MSS)	2 (2 MSS)	3 (8 MSS)	4A (21 MSS)	4B (17 MSS)	5 (6 MSS)	6 (24 MSS)
ימחו מספר חיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו	ימחו מספר חיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו					
			וכל אויבי עמך וצורריהם מהרה יכרתו	וכל אויבי עמך וצורריהם מהרה יכרתו		
				ושבור עול הגוים מעל צוארינו ואל תתן תקומה לכל אויבי נפשינו		
ברוך אתה יי	ברוך אתה יי	ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים	ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים	ברוך אתה יי שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים	ברוך אתה יי שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים	ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים

petition against enemies, וכל אויבי עמך וצורריהם³⁷ מהרה יכרתו (May all the enemies of Your people and their oppressors be speedily cut off),³⁸ and version 4B expands upon this addition, saying ואל תתן מעל צוארינו ואל תתן תקומה לכל אויבי נפשינו (and break the yoke of the gentiles off our necks and

37 The word וצורריהם (and their persecutors), functioning only as a synonym for עמך (the enemies of Your people), does not appear in four manuscripts of this version. The word is also absent in all the citations of this segment in version (5). It is possible that these four manuscripts of 4A point to the original form of the segment.

38 Apparently, the text of the *Siddur of R. Shlomo of Sigilmassa* belongs to branch 4A. The manuscript 4L and the combination of manuscripts 22Q and 25Q (see Appendix A) are copies of this sage's *siddur* and their language belongs to this branch. One must remember that processes similar to those which shaped the great *siddurim* of the geonim, Rav Amram and Rav Saadia, also affected this highly esteemed *siddur*. Its usage by various communities in different periods caused the introduction of prayer texts into the manuscripts that were customary in those locales and that were not the original language of the *siddur*. This is how one should understand the text of the

grant no recovery to our enemies).³⁹ These two later additions function to designate additional enemies beyond the מלכות זרון (the empire of insolence). As is common in additions to existing liturgical texts,⁴⁰ these were inserted at the end and hence not in conjunction with the segment addressing זרון ומלכות זרון (and the empire of insolence).

A similar developmental trajectory appears when we consider the verbs petitioning for the downfall of the empire. Branch 3 reads: ומלכות זרון מהרה תעקר (and uproot the empire of insolence speedily in our day). Only a few of its manuscripts add other verbs. In contrast to this, in branch 4A, the majority of manuscripts add the verb ותשבר (and smash) after תעקר (uproot), and in version 4B, in the majority of its manuscripts, the petition is three-fold תעקר ותכניע ותשבר (uproot and smash and bring low). The physical characteristics of the manuscripts support the suggestion that these are indeed later additions. There are more later manuscripts of branch 4B than of 3 and 4A. In addition, it was a text similar to version 4B, rather than its predecessors, that apparently influenced the later middle eastern rites.⁴¹

blowing that is published in the edition of Shmuel Haggai (Jerusalem 1995) that reads: למשומדים ולמינים ולזידים אל תהי להם תקוה ומלכות זרון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע ותאביד אויבינו מהרה כרגע יאבדו והזדים מהרה יכרתו ואל תתן תקומה לכל אויבי נפשינו וצררינו בא"י שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים "May there be no hope for the apostates and the *minim* and the insolent, and may the insolent empire be quickly uprooted and smashed and humbled and led astray, and may our enemies speedily immediately be lost, and may the insolent be quickly cut off and do not grant any recovery to our enemies and our oppressors. Blessed are You, Eternal, who breaks evildoers and humbles the insolent." This section of Haggai's edition is based on an early sixteenth-century manuscript of the *siddur*. See Yosef Tobi, "The Prayer Book of Rabbi Shlomo ben Nathan of Sigilmassa," in Zvi Malachi, ed., *Yad Leheiman: Memorbuch for A. H. Habermann* (Tel Aviv: Habermann Institute, 1984) 348. The text itself is definitely defective and to a certain extent one can recognize in it the influence of the Persian rite (see below, n. 41).

39 This addition is actually a combination of two separate passages. The last phrase, ואל תתן תקומה (and grant no recovery, etc.) is missing in about a third of the manuscripts of branch 4B, and it is possible that it is an even later addition that has the purpose of returning the language of the end of the blessing to a topic that is מעין החתימה (that reflects the topic and language of the concluding eulogy). Compare also the later eastern rites. In Persia, only the second phrase appears; in Aleppo, both phrases appear but in reversed order. On both rites see n. 41.

40 See, for example, the addition, לא יבושו לעולם קוין (May those who hope in You never be ashamed) that was added in many *ereṣ yisra'eli* rite prayer books at the end of the *avot* benediction; or the addition להצמיח לנו תצמיח ברהף עין ישועה לנו תצמיח (May salvation sprout for us in the blink of an eye) at the end of the *gevurot* benediction. For these additions, see: Uri Ehrlich, "A Complete Weekday Amidah According to the Rite of the Land of Israel," *Qovez al Yad* NS 18 (2005) 18–21 (Heb.). See also the discussion of the addition in the next paragraph.

41 See also the Persian rite text (ENA 23, published by Shlomo Tal, *Nusah hatefillah shel yehudei p'ras* [Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute, 1980] 84): להם תקוה ותאוה ומלכות זרון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע ותאביד וכל אויבי עמך ישראל וצרריהם "May there be no hope and desire for apostates and for *minim*, and for the insolent and for heretics and

Finally, it is important to indicate that the linguistic core of this family of branches, found in version 3, is identical word for word to branch 2 of the rite of *ʔereṣ yisraʔel*, aside from the two characteristics that are unique to that rite. This suggests that there was a point of historical connection between the rites of *ʔereṣ yisraʔel* and Babylonia.

The majority of the Babylonian-rite manuscripts belong to this family of branches (3, 4A, 4B). Related to it is branch 5 which includes all the components of version 4A, but in a different order. Here, the petitions against *minim* and against enemies always directly follow the opening segment (against apostates) and precede the one against the insolent empire, which now concludes the body of the blessing.⁴⁴ A consequence of – and perhaps the reason for – this reorganization is that it makes the sequence of topics more logical and harmonious. It juxtaposes the segments against internal sinners, that is, the apostates and the *minim*, at the beginning of the blessing, leaving the segments that deal with external enemies (the enemies of Your people, and the empire of insolence) for the end. Most likely, the earlier order of the blessing's segments was that found in the Babylonian family of branches 3, 4A, and 4B, and the order found in version 5 developed from this, rather than the reverse. That the *ʔereṣ yisraʔeli* branch version 2 also reflects this earlier order underscores this supposition. If this determination is correct, then it is logical to hypothesize either that branch 5 separated from branch 4A which already included the basic version of the addition against enemies, or that it reflects a parallel development to that of branch 4A, constituting a different method of incorporating this addition.

In spite of its limited circulation among the communities represented in the geniza, branch 5 had a deciding and enduring influence on the development of the *birkat haminim* in later centuries. Its order of topics is the order in all

[שחוטם מכניע זדים] רשעים ויש “There are those who conclude the *birkat haminim* with ‘who breaks evildoers’ and there are [those who conclude ‘who humbles the insolent.’]” *Midrash Psalms 29* (Buber ed., 116b) does employ the eulogy שובר אויבים (who breaks enemies), but it is likely that this wording is the product of the influence of the later liturgical rite used in the place of the copyist. This claim is supported by the text itself, which reads: קול ה' יחיל מדבר. אלו הרשעים שמנוקים מכל כנגד שובר אויבים “*The voice of God makes the desert tremble: these are the evildoers who have been cleansed of all mišvot like a desert, and the Holy One, blessed be He, makes them tremble, corresponding to ‘who breaks enemies.’*”

44 We must point out that the geniza contains twelve fragments of this version, not only the six that have been considered in our discussion here. The six that were excluded are either not in a middle eastern hand or are in a doubtfully middle eastern hand. Not a single one can be dated before 1250, and some are significantly later. (A list of these manuscripts may be found at the end of Appendix A). That these manuscripts belong to version 5 is not surprising, for all of the later western rites draw from the wording of this version. On this, see below. Like version 4B whose manuscripts are also mostly relatively late, these manuscripts include many variants in the segment against the *minim*.

European rites.⁴⁵ In contrast, the order of topics that was widespread in the Babylonian rite persisted only in the Middle East, but only until the arrival of Sefardi refugees and the imposition of the Sefardi rite.⁴⁶ The structure of the blessing in the European rites can probably be attributed to the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon's* great influence on the development of prayer there.⁴⁷ In spite of the numerous differences among the manuscripts of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon*, all of them present branch 5's organization of the components of the blessing.

Among the branches of the Babylonian rite, branch 6 is exceptional. Unlike all other Babylonian branches, it contains no segment against enemies, and unlike every other known version of the blessing, it omits entirely the segment against the *minim*. However, in spite of this, version 6 was very widespread among the liturgies of the communities represented in the geniza. This probably derives from the great authority given to the *Siddur Rav Saadia Gaon* by many early communities in the east. That this version received Rav Saadia Gaon's stamp of approval is certain: five of the geniza manuscripts of this version are definitely copies of his prayer book, including that which appears in the printed version. This authoritative source also accounts for the great stability in the wording of this version; there are relatively few variants found among the geniza manuscripts.

However, this version still presents a significant difficulty. How can a text of the *birkat haminim* lack the segment dealing with the *minim*, that which appears to be the heart of the blessing? One possibility is that an activist and authoritative Gaon like Saadia deliberately omitted this segment from a received Babylonian rite text like branch 3. This abbreviation, if he made it, is consistent with Saadia's predilection for short and concise texts. However, we have no proof that Saadia himself made such a change. Another authority might also have been responsible, if such a change in fact occurred.

It is possible to posit a reverse process, that this version was itself a received early text that Rav Saadia Gaon chose to adopt for his prayer book. If so, this could be an extremely ancient text, perhaps the earliest preserved. It would then be witness to the period before the addition of the explicit curse against

45 Maimonides' text, מהרה, זדון תעקר ותשבר מהרה, למשומדים אל תהי תקוה כל המינים כרגע יאבדו ומלכות זדון תעקר ותשבר מהרה, "May there be no hope for apostates, may all the *minim* immediately be lost, and may the empire of insolence be uprooted and smashed speedily in our day. Blessed are You, O God, who breaks [evildoers] enemies and humbles the insolent" also reflects this ordering of the segments. See E. D. Goldschmidt, "The Oxford MS of Maimonides' Book of Prayer," in his *On Jewish Liturgy: Essays on Prayer and Religious Poetry* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1996) 199 (Heb.).

46 See n. 41.

47 No manuscripts have been preserved that might reflect the prayer customs of Jews in Europe preceding the arrival there of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon*. It is therefore impossible to know for certain whether his Babylonian rite displaced a native rite, or whether it was only with the arrival of his text that European Jews began to adhere to rabbinic norms of prayer.

the *nošerim* and *minim*.⁴⁸ As is well known, Lieberman and Heinemann suggest that the establishment or emendation of the *birkat hamininim* that the Babylonian Talmud (*Ber.* 28b–29a) reports was not the composition of a blessing *ex nihilo*, but rather the introduction of the segment against the *minim* into an existing prayer.⁴⁹ This theory is based on a *baraita*:⁵⁰

שמונה עשרה ברכות שאמרו חכמים, כנגד שמנה עשרה אזכרות שבהבו לה' בני אלים
כולל של מינים בשל פרושין, ושל גרים בשל זקנים ושל דוד בבונה ירושלם.

The eighteen blessings that the sages decreed correspond to the eighteen mentions of the Divine Name in Psalm 29. [To achieve this number of blessings] one includes that of *minim* in that of the *paroshim*, and that of proselytes in that of the elders, and that of David in that for the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

As Lieberman suggests, the *paroshim* are those who separated themselves (פרשו) from the ways of the community, and these included apostates.⁵¹ It is possible, then, that version 6 represents an early *birkat haparoshim* into which the Sages added the segment against the *minim*. According to this hypothesis, this addition accounts for the formulation of the two branches of the ²*ereš yisra²eli* rite and also for the foundation of the majority of the Babylonian branches. The more common ²*ereš yisra²eli* branch 1 combined the two parts, substituting the segment against the *minim* for the early segment against the empire of insolence. The ²*ereš yisra²eli* branch 2 added the segment against the *minim* into the full text of its received wording, creating the three-fold blessing text. This same combination generates the body of the Babylonian rite text that is reflected in purest form in branch 3 and from which developed the rest of the branches of this rite (as described above). In Babylonia, though, a remnant of the early wording predating the addition of the segment against the *minim* also survived – in the text of version 6 adopted by Rav Saadia Gaon. However, in spite of the apparent popularity of this rite among the Jews who left their texts in the geniza, version 6 does not persist in any known rite.

Finally, we still need to explain the history of the term *nošerim* in the texts of the blessing. This word appears in all the prayer books of the rite of ²*ereš*

48 This was apparently the opinion of Louis Finkelstein, who saw this wording as the “original text” of the blessing. See his “The Development of the Amidah,” *JQR* NS 16 (1925–26) 157; in Petuchowski, *Contributions*, 164.

49 See Saul Lieberman, *Tosefta kifshutah, zera'im* (2 vols.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1955) 1:54; Joseph Heinemann, *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns* (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977) 225.

50 *T.Ber.* 3:25 and parallels.

51 See *Seder Olam Rabbah*, end of chap. 3.

yisra²el, as it does in all but two of the forty-five exemplars of the Babylonian rite's branches 3, 4A and 4B. However, this is not the situation in branch 5. Although only the word *minim* appears in the text presented in the table, this reflects only half of the manuscripts. Three manuscripts read וכל המינים (and all the *minim*), two have both *noṣerim* and *minim*, and one reads וכל המינים וכל המלשינים (and all the *minim* and all the informers). In light of this, it is difficult to determine whether the early text of this branch was *minim* alone, and the term *noṣerim* was added through the influence of the more widespread branches, or perhaps it was the opposite and the early text read “*noṣerim* and *minim*” but the word *noṣerim* was eliminated.⁵² However, in light of the general picture that emerges from the geniza findings, that so many manuscripts read both *noṣerim* and *minim*, always in this order with almost no exceptions, both in the rites of ²*ereṣ yisra²el* and of Babylonia, it is more reasonable to conclude that the terms *noṣerim* and *minim* entered the blessing together. If one of them is early, then both are, and if one of them is late, then both are.

The evidence of the early prayer books suggests that the separation of the terms is a product of elimination of the word *noṣerim*, perhaps as a result of external pressures. While the meaning of *minim* retained some ambiguity, *noṣerim* became a term applied specifically to Christians, making it more politically sensitive. However it is no less logical to posit that this change reflected an internal shift in Jewish thinking about the gentiles among whom they were living. Perhaps Jews living in Muslim lands, alongside a defanged Christian minority, had no reason to call for their demise. Or, alternatively, dropping the specificity of *noṣerim*, retaining just the more general *minim*, allowed the inclusion of Muslims in the intent of the curse. Version 5 teaches that this process had already begun in the Babylonian rite at the beginning of the period witnessed in the Cairo geniza,⁵³ and it took on, from its beginning, just the form of the elimination of the word *noṣerim*.⁵⁴ Only slightly later, the additions of other groups of

52 A hint of such a process of elimination of the word *noṣerim* might be found in the addition of the word “all” before the word *minim* in this version. Such an addition would hint at what was no longer being stated explicitly.

53 Note that one of the manuscripts of this branch is dated around 900.

54 As was indicated above, the text that appears in the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* belongs to this branch. However, it is difficult to determine whether Rav Amram himself included the word “*noṣerim*” or whether it had already been eliminated. The Oxford manuscript of the *siddur* reads והנוצרים יכלו כרגע (May the *noṣerim* and the *minim* be destroyed immediately) while the manuscript of the Jewish Theological Seminary reads והמינים כרגע יאבדו (May the *minim* be immediately lost). The text found in the manuscript of the British Library is a clear reworking of the wording of the blessing, which reads וכל הזדים כרגע יאבדו (May all the insolent be immediately lost). This manuscript also corrects the beginning of the blessing, reading להי תקוה אל תהי תקוה למלשינים (May there be no hope for informers). Both of these segments reflect language typical of texts rewritten after censorship was imposed in the early modern period.

sinners began.⁵⁵ In this context, it is important to recall again that in the early Babylonian rite, the version that did not include the segment against the *minim* at all was widespread and had the seal of Rav Saadia Gaon on it.

LATER MEDIEVAL VERSIONS OF THE *BIRKAT HAMINIM*

METHODOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION

The Cairo geniza may provide our earliest source of (post-Qumran) Jewish liturgical manuscripts, but its evidence can be fully evaluated only in comparison with the later liturgical materials that were collected and preserved in European and eventually also North American contexts.⁵⁶ Which manuscripts were collected and preserved was largely a matter of happenstance, dependent both on the whim of wealthy Christian collectors (whose collections often ended up in public or university libraries) and on the fate of the Jewish communities of various areas. As a result, there are rather rich collections of manuscripts preserved from Ashkenaz⁵⁷ and Italy, while very few manuscripts survived from Sefarad.⁵⁸ Enough survive from the Romaniot rite⁵⁹ that we include them here, but there are so few medieval texts surviving from the Jewish communities living in the domains of Islam and non-Byzantine eastern churches that no valid conclusions may be drawn about their native rites. What evidence exists has been noted in comparison with the geniza materials in the previous section.

This imbalance makes it necessary to treat each rite according to separate criteria, looking at all available manuscripts when only a relatively few survived, as in the case of the Sefardi, French and Romaniot rites; and looking primarily at those that survived the censor unscathed when there are hundreds of manuscripts, as in the case of the Italian rites. In all cases, there is some variety apparent within each rite. Jewish liturgical scholars are only beginning to under-

55 This also arises from the limited evidence that one can derive from the group of manuscripts described at the beginning of n. 30.

56 Fortunately for the scholar, microfilms of these manuscripts by the thousands have been systematically collected and made available in the Institute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National and University Library in Jerusalem. The data and discussion that follow derives from Ruth Langer's study of this material. Her sabbatical work in 2001–2 was supported by a fellowship from the Yad Hanadiv/Beracha Foundation as well as by Boston College.

57 In medieval liturgical studies, this designation conventionally applies to the three distinct rites of northern France, the Rhineland, and the Canaanite or Slavic lands to the east.

58 That is, the rites of the Iberian peninsula and areas to which Iberian Jews transported their rites. In the period before the mass expulsions of Jews from Spain at the end of the fifteenth century, this especially included areas of North Africa, Italy, and various islands in the Mediterranean.

59 This rite is that of the medieval Byzantine empire. It encompassed the Balkans, Greece, southern Italy, and at least some of Asia Minor. Greek was the vernacular of this community; the rite is sometimes also called "Greek."

stand the characteristics of the regional branches of some European rites; this work has not progressed far enough to inform this study deeply.⁶⁰

Two upheavals in the sixteenth century radically changed the map of texts of the *birkat haminim*, creating much of the informational gap that this article addresses. First, the expulsion of the Iberian Jews (1492 and 1497) and their dispersal throughout the Jewish world resulted in the submersion and disappearance of the local rites of North Africa, the Middle East, and the Balkans, in deference to the Castilian rite of the dominant group of Sefardi refugees. This is almost certainly a significant factor contributing to the disappearance of manuscripts of the native rites of these areas.⁶¹ Second, the printing of Hebrew prayer books for the entire Jewish world was early dominated by the Italian presses, and these were placed under official Church censorship in the 1550's. These two factors resulted in an erasure of local rites and forced radical and universal changes to the texts of the *birkat haminim*, to the point that no one has yet retrieved their previous versions accurately or fully.⁶²

This task is immensely complicated by the fact that Jewish sensitivity to Christian concerns about this prayer probably, and in some cases, certainly, resulted in a degree of self-censorship in Europe, even before the Church imposed changes. Even more significantly, the Counter-Reformation's concern about Hebrew texts was not limited to newly printed editions. The Church objected to the presence of heresy within its domain, including within existing books and manuscripts. These they systematically collected and expurgated or destroyed. Luckily, the relatively limited number of objectionable passages found in Jewish liturgy resulted in regular expurgation by blacking out or less frequently, erasing, the words deemed offensive to Christians and Christianity.⁶³ As a

60 Jonah Fraenkel is currently studying the Ashkenazi rites, including those of northern France. His conference presentations suggest a major contribution to the map of medieval liturgy.

61 Preservation of older unusable manuscripts would likely be done by an elite who could give space to "useless" books. However, in this instance, the elite was precisely the group most likely to accept the Sefardi rite. Local traditions of *piyyut* did continue to exist in manuscript form, but generally written as a supplement to the printed Sefardi statutory prayers. See the sources referenced in Langer, *To Worship God Properly: Tensions between Liturgical Custom and Halakhah in Judaism* (Cincinnati: HUC Press, 1998) 179 ff.

62 Various scholars have made attempts based on the few manuscripts and medieval texts about the prayers to which they had access. See for example, the commentary of Baer, *Seder 'avodat yisra'el*, 93–94; or Hirsch, "Shemoneh 'Esreh," 11:281.

63 On the history of Christian censorship of Hebrew books, see Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *Censorship and Freedom of Expression in Jewish History* (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press with Yeshiva Univ. Press, 1977); Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, "Censorship, Editing, and the Reshaping of Jewish Identity: The Catholic Church and Hebrew Literature in the Sixteenth Century," in Allison P. Coudert and Jeffrey S. Shoulson, eds., *Hebraica Veritas?: Christian Hebraists and the Study of Judaism in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) 125–55; and his *The Censor, the Editor and the Text* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2005) (Heb.); and the sources they cite.

consequence, the majority of medieval European liturgical manuscripts contain texts of the *birkat haminim* whose words are illegible or have been rewritten with acceptable terms. However, we can also frequently guess from the size of the expurgation what might have been the original text. Because it is usually impossible to date a rewriting, we will have to presume that all such texts post-date our period of interest.

EUROPEAN RITES

The table on the opposite page presents single early exemplars of each of the European rites. Appendix B provides critical notes to the variants found in other uncensored manuscripts. Where appropriate, the following discussion will also draw on additional evidence that can be gleaned from censored manuscripts.

As is immediately evident and as has been suggested above, all European rites organize their segments according to Babylonian version 5, apparently according to the rite of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* that was so immensely influential in shaping European liturgical traditions. The variety among these rites lies in the specific words that they employ and not in the ordering or general intention of their segments. The Romaniot/Greek and Sefardi rites demonstrate a tendency to elaborate on that core structure, but not to the degree found in the Babylonian rite's branch 4B, its variants, and its clones in the Eastern Rites. All of these European rites functioned in territory that was either fully Christian or that had a significant Christian presence either before or during the period represented by these manuscripts.⁶⁴ It might seem noteworthy, then, that not a single manuscript contains a reference to the *nošerim*. However, in medieval European Hebrew, the referent of the word *minim* was "Christians."⁶⁵ Christians were well aware of this and knew that the malediction was consistently interpreted as referring to them. The absence of *nošerim* therefore does not signify all that much and may be more a product of its earlier elimination from the Babylonian branch 5 on which these rites depended.

Perusal of the variants listed in Appendix B will also demonstrate that not a single one of these rites has successfully imposed a fixed and authoritative text, in spite of the discussions of textual fixity spearheaded by the *ḥasidei Ṛashkenaz*

64 All Sefardi manuscripts post-date the Reconquista, but we must presume that the Sefardi rite took shape in Muslim Spain, beginning at least from the point of their reception of explicit liturgical direction from the Babylonian *geonim* Natronai and Amram in the late ninth century. We know nothing about the worship traditions of Iberian Jews prior to this. Much of Balkan territory fell at times under Turkish Muslim control, and few manuscripts fully predate this. We have no evidence for the nature of Jewish worship in the rest of Europe before its Christianization.

65 See, for example, the use of the term in the Hebrew text (but not the translation!) of David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages: A Critical Edition of the Nizzahon Vetus* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979).

<i>Romaniot</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>Ashkenazi</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Sefardi</i>
למשומדים אל יהי להם תקוה	ולמלשינים בל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה	ולמשומדים אל תהי תקוה	למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
והמינים והמלשינים והכופרים והמסורים כולם כרגע יאבדו	וכל המינים כלם כרגע יאבדו	וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו	וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו	וכל המינים וכל המלשינים וכל המסורות כלם כרגע יאבדו
וכל אויבי עמך ישראל	וכל גוים אויבי עמך ישראל	וכל אויבי עמך	וכל אויבי עמך בית ישראל	וכל אויבי עמך ישראל [נ"א וכל אויבינו וכל שונאינו וכל מבקשי רעתינו] מהרה יכרתו
מהרה מארץ יכרתון	מהרה יכרתו	מהרה יכרתון	מהרה יכרתון	מהרה יכרתו
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר [ותמגר]	ומלכות זדון במהרה תעקר ותשבר	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר ותשפיל ותשמיד	ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר ותכניע ותשפיל ותפיל כל אויבינו וכל שונאינו ותכלם
ומתכניע אותם	ותכניע אתם	ותכניע כל אויבינו	ותכניע כל איובנו	ותכניע ותשפיל ותפיל כל אויבינו וכל שונאינו ותכלם
מהרה בימינו	במהרה בימינו	במהרה בימינו	במהרה בימינו	במהרה בימינו
בא"י שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים	בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים	בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים	בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים	בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

and subsequently introduced into the halakhic texts of the Iberian peninsula by the Asherides. While the general structure of the *berakhah* is indeed stable, small details are far from stable and even larger details within the lists of nouns and verbs can vary significantly. We lack sufficient information about the provenance of most manuscripts to know whether these represent regional variants or, alternatively, some degree of fluidity in the language of the text. That clusters

of variants do not appear together consistently in the same manuscripts suggests, though, that we are dealing with individual rather than regional decisions. Such variations include the matter of whether the *berakhah* begins with a conjunctive or not (למשומדים or ולמשומדים) where the French, Ashkenazi, and Romaniot rites demonstrate both, or the precise list of verbs and their objects in the segment directed against the government. As would be expected, the eulogy is largely stable, though the Babylonian variant, אויבים instead of רשעים, “evil ones” instead of “enemies,” does appear in one Romaniot manuscript and in a few Sefardi censorship-era editions.⁶⁶

Romaniot Rites. The earliest manuscripts of this rite show significant consistency in their texts. However, none predate the fourteenth century, and the single fourteenth-century manuscript has numerous small variants from the others. Therefore, the base text for our discussion is one dated slightly later, to the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries. As the rite was only printed twice⁶⁷ before the community adopted Sefardi-rite prayer books almost entirely, its preserved history is very short. Most exemplars of the Romaniot rite elaborate somewhat on their presumed Babylonian predecessor, adding emphasis to the opening segment with the word להם (for them) and to the second segment with an extended list of malefactors in addition to the *minim*. Although there are minor differences in grammar, spelling, and order among the manuscripts, the list itself is the same in each uncensored version.⁶⁸

In the third segment of this rite, we see what appears to be a change over time, resulting in a unique text. In the fourteenth-century manuscripts, this segment is very similar to other rites. But starting by the fifteenth century, the prayer is that the enemies be cut off *from the earth* (מארץ יכרתון). In the sixteenth century, this addition becomes מארץ חיים (from the land of the living) forming an obvious allusion to Jeremiah 11:19, ונכרתנו מארץ חיים ושמו לא יזכר, “Let us cut him off from the land of the living, that his name be remembered no more” (NJPS).⁶⁹

As in all the European rites except Italy, the earliest exemplar of the Romaniot rites (27) adds a second mention of enemies in the conclusion of the fourth segment. As a result, the final verb directed against the government in the geniza rites now applies to this added category. It is possible that this is a relic of the

66 See the editions printed in Venice 1564, 1565, and 1617 (בית) ... א"א ספרד ... (ייראני קאיון, שערן), all three examined in the Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

67 Venice 1586 and 1665, both under the aegis of the Catholic censor. (Jewish Theological Seminary, Very Rare Books, Reel 5, #5706 and #5708.)

68 The printed editions both substitute זדים (the arrogant) for the entire list. They also retrieve the להם (to them) which was omitted in the later manuscripts.

69 In addition to the manuscript listed in the appendix, this language appears in the two printed editions and in an uncensored seventeenth-century manuscript, MS Parma 2587 (947).

earlier organization of the *berakhah*, when this segment preceded that about the enemies, as in the Babylonian branches 4A and 4B, and because the boundaries between the segments were not fully clear, this segment retained some of what followed it in that organization. This gives added support to the hypothesis offered above that the reorganization characteristic of Babylonian branch 5 occurred after the emergence of branch 4A, but likely before the elaboration of that branch in 4B.⁷⁰ In all the other Romaniot exemplars, in Italy, and scattered exemplars elsewhere, this specific reference has become “them,” a term that now can apply as well to the empire or perhaps all the preceding discussions of the prayer, thus creating a smoother text. There is no literary imperative to mention “enemies” at this point. The standard reference to the empire as “insolent,” once appearing as the fourth segment of the blessing, fulfills any demand for a literary transition to the eulogy.

Italian Rites. A vast collection of liturgical manuscripts from Italy survived. However, they were routinely subject to censorship, both internal and external, to the point that it is difficult to discern the original versions of the *birkat haminim*. The earliest manuscript that shows no signs of censorship hails from the fourteenth century. The earliest preserved Italian liturgical manuscript is a bit earlier, from the thirteenth century, but this exemplar already includes suggestions of self-censorship — a self-censorship that did not prevent a more severe externally imposed censorship of this manuscript later. However, the Italian practice of self-censorship did generate a ready set of substitute terms that could be instituted once external censors found the original unacceptable. Because the overwhelming majority of early printed Hebrew prayer books emanated from Italy, these substitutions found their way into all other European rites.

Unlike in the Romaniot rite, the Italian-rite manuscripts show so much variety as to suggest the presence of regional subrites. However, the current state of research does not allow their identification.⁷¹ While the critical notes in the appendix cover only the eight apparently uncensored manuscripts (of over 150 witnesses to the text of the *birkat haminim* examined that are dated before the imposition of external censorship), the discussion here will make reference, as appropriate, to the witness of the censored texts also.

The Italian rites are unique in that there is no surviving evidence that they ever addressed their opening segment to משומדים *meshummadim*, “apostates.” The vast majority of manuscripts simply pray that there be no hope for מלשינים *malshinim*, “informers.”⁷² However, approximately a quarter of the manuscripts

⁷⁰ See above, in the discussion following n. 44.

⁷¹ Even the most recent printing of the Italian-rite *maḥzor*, the *Siddūr Benè Romi* (Milan: Morashà, 2000–) contains variants according to the separate usages of Rome and Milan.

⁷² This included, apparently, the *Seder Hībbur Berakhot*, available today only in Solomon Schechter’s

still contain – or show evidence that they once contained – an alternative opening, praying that there be no hope for *minim* and *malshinim*⁷³ (or in the reverse order).⁷⁴ We might speculate that in the period preceding our evidence, the Italian rites commonly began this way, but that the opening term *minim* was dropped, most likely in an act self-censorship, but possibly because of a consciousness that most other rites included it in the second segment. Although our handful of uncensored manuscripts include two that begin just with *minim*, directing the second segment to the *malshinim* instead, this is actually a rare variant. Though other exemplars may have been censored past recognition, it appears in only one other manuscript among those examined, and that one seems to represent a post-censorship version in every aspect except this opening word.⁷⁵

Did the Italian rites once begin with an address to *meshummadim*? Here we can only speculate. Given the virtual universality of this opening line, not only in the geniza but in almost all other rites, this seems likely. The alternative text in the Italian rites would then be the product of an early act of self-censorship, one so early and universally accepted that no traces are left of the original in any known manuscripts. This self-censorship might logically have occurred together with the removal of the *nošerim* from this rite. However, there is

copy (JTS MS 8402) of the only known manuscript, later destroyed in a fire in 1894. Thus, there is no longer a possibility of examining the text for signs of censorship. See Abraham I. Schechter, *Studies in Jewish Liturgy* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College, 1930) 85.

73 In addition to the manuscript listed as 8ט, see, for example: MS Paris Alliance Israelite Universelle 427, fourteenth century; MS Vatican Biblioteca Apostolica 331, fourteenth century; MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 1754 (1056), Cremona 1479; MS Cambridge University Library Add. 491,1, fifteenth century; MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 1739 (561), 1504. In all these, it is either fully obvious or there is strong reason to claim based on a partially legible word that the opening word was לְמִינֵיִם. In a larger group, an initial word that was likely לְמִינֵיִם has been expunged by the censor. See for example: MS Montefiore (Jews College, London) 217,1, thirteenth–fourteenth centuries; MS Paris Bibliotheque Nationale héb. 598, fourteenth–fifteenth centuries; MS Frankfurt a.M. Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Oct. 129, fourteenth–fifteenth centuries; MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 1756 (236), fifteenth century; MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 2740 (1212), fifteenth century; MS Zürich Zentralbibliothek Heidenheim 123, fifteenth–sixteenth centuries; MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 1693, sixteenth century. Such examples span the chronology of the available manuscripts, appearing as frequently in the sixteenth century as in the fourteenth.

74 This appears only in MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 1775 (1060), early fifteenth century, and apparently in MS Cincinnati HUC 311, fifteenth century, where the second word has been expunged.

75 MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina 3504 Stern 25, dated to the fifteenth century. Here the *mal-shinim* receive no explicit mention. The second segment is directed to כָּלֵם (all of them). However, this is a typical post-censorship move, and the third and fourth segments show clear signs of censorship, suggesting that something is suspect about this initial reference to the *minim*.

evidence for a corresponding alternative opening in the rite of Aleppo, which begins with an address just to the *minim*,⁷⁶ as is found in a few Italian rite texts. As the second segment of the Aleppo text (which follows the thematic organization of Babylonian branch 5) preserves its reference to *nošerim*, it is unlikely that the text there represents an act of self-censorship in the presence of Christians, and no other rites from Muslim countries show evidence of pressure to avoid references to apostates. Therefore, the possibility exists that there did indeed exist a version of the blessing, not represented in the geniza, that did not concern itself with apostates.

The Italian rites are also apparently unique in their universal use of בל instead of the common אל to express the negative in this segment.⁷⁷ This is perhaps simply a choice of the more poetic and hence more elevated form.

The address of the second segment in this rite is dependent on the address of the first. Thus, the few texts that address the first segment only to *minim* then address the second segment to *malshinim*. Texts that address the first segment to both present a variety of readings. A few repeat the reference to *minim* in the second segment, perhaps a relic of the deep historical positioning of the term here.⁷⁸ Many have been censored and simply present an erasure. However, others have simply closed the gap, leaving a line that reads וכולם כרגע יאבדו (and may they all immediately be lost). Alternatively, they replaced the original noun, probably usually *minim*, with זדים (insolent), a term that has the double virtue of appearing in the talmudically mandated eulogy of the prayer and of filling the physical space left by an erased “*minim*” quite simply. However, it is possible that self-censorship made this substitution original in some of the manuscripts. It is tempting to suggest that both forms, כולם and זדים, were generated initially in rites that addressed the opening segment to both *minim* and *malshinim*, and that did not want to repeat these terms here. However, these forms appear just as frequently in conjunction with opening segments addressed just to the *malshinim*.

A mere handful of texts preserve witness to what was likely the, or at least an,

76 MS Oxford Bodleian Marsh. 90 (1146), dated fourteenth–fifteenth centuries; MS Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College 407, dated 1410. Compare also MS Casanatense 3085, dated to the fifteenth–sixteenth centuries, of uncertain provenance except that the manuscript contains Arabic instructions, which simply lacks this opening line in all four appearances of the blessing.

77 MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 726, fifteenth century, is the only exception in an Italian text. It is also missing in the *Seder Ḥibbur Berakhot* (Schechter, *Studies*, 85).

78 An example of this may be MS Vatican Bibliotheca Apostolica 331, fourteenth century, but the microfilm was not entirely legible. MS Cambridge University Library Add 491,1, fifteenth century does have this text, as did MS Parma Bibliotheca Palatina Cod. Parm. 1354, fifteenth century, and MS Parma Bibliotheca Palatina Codice de Rossi 1756 (236), fifteenth century, before they were censored. In this last case, the *minim* were apparently erased from the first line but not the second!

original wording of the third segment of this prayer in Italy, וכל גוים ארבי עמך, ישראל.⁷⁹ This might be translated either “all the gentile nations who are the enemies of Your people Israel” or “all the gentile nations, the enemies of Your people Israel.” This seems not to have mattered, for in the vast majority of exemplars, the reference to “gentile nations” did not survive censorship. “Enemies of Your people Israel” was not eliminated entirely, but was transformed to “Your enemies,” a term that Christians (or Muslims) would not apply to themselves. From the earliest manuscripts, as represented in the critical notes in the appendix, an overwhelming majority of Italian manuscripts present this as their original text, while only a minority show gaps where the original terms were erased. The possibility thus exists that “all Your enemies” was indeed the original text of some Italian rites.

Similarly, relatively few Italian manuscripts preserve their witness to the full form of the fourth segment, calling for the downfall of the governing power. However, there is little basis on which to suggest an alternative original to that shown in our table. When censorship removed reference to the empire of insolence, this did indeed unsettle the text, and manuscripts beginning in the fourteenth century do show evidence of a tendency to omit this direct object entirely, leaving one or more of the verbs to refer to the subject of the previous segment, often with the pronominal third person plural suffix ם- attached to them. Thus, a typical Italian manuscript that was probably self-censored reads just ותכניע אותם,⁸⁰ ותכניעם⁸¹ (and humble them), or ותכניע אותם והשבר⁸² or ותכניעם והשברם⁸³ (and smash them and humble them) – speedily in our day. As in all the other parts of the Italian text of the *birkat haminim*, these changes occur even in the earliest preserved manuscripts, suggesting that Italian Jews did not hesitate to adjust this statutory prayer text to prevent Christian displeasure. We can only speculate to what degree this was a product of the Italian Renaissance-era intelligentsia’s interest in Hebrew or, conversely, a self-protective measure among Jews subject to conversionary pressures and informing by former Jewish converts to Christianity.

79 In addition to 1ט, see: MS Cluj Academia RSR MS O. 301, dated 1399; MS London Monte-fiore MS no. 212, fourteenth–fifteenth centuries; MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 726, fifteenth century; MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 741, fifteenth century; MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 3135 (325), Imola 1458; and MS Paris Bibliothèque Nationale Heb. 609, Spello 1648. MS Cambridge University Library Add 491,1, fifteenth century, probably also represents this text, but the scribe skip-ped the word “enemies” in apparent error, leaving the nonsensical וכל גוים עמך ישראל (all nations Your people Israel).

80 For example, MS Cambridge Trinity College F. 12.122, fourteenth–fifteenth centuries.

81 For example, MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 2891 (882), early fifteenth century.

82 For example, MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Cod. Parm. 1793 (854), dated 1326.

83 For example, MS Rome Biblioteca Casanatense 2828, thirteenth–fourteenth centuries.

Ashkenaz. As with the Italian rites, a relatively wealthy collection of manuscripts survives from medieval Ashkenaz. However, while very few Italian manuscripts escaped the censor, close to half of the Ashkenazi manuscripts preserve their original text of the *birkat haminim* intact. As official Catholic censorship was imposed as part of the Counter-Reformation, it is possible that manuscripts then in Protestant lands fared better, but it is impossible to verify this. The text of the *birkat haminim* printed in Ashkenazi prayer books uniformly represents a post-censorship text from the mid-sixteenth century.⁸⁴ The Ashkenazi manuscript evidence is also richer in pre-fourteenth century materials than any other rite, including a number of texts from the thirteenth century. At least two branches of the Ashkenazi rite exist this early, the western Rhineland rite and the Canaanite (Slavic) rite, which become later the German and the Polish rites respectively.⁸⁵ These are easily identified by the latter's elaborate introduction to the Sabbath and Festival Torah procession,⁸⁶ but their texts of the *birkat haminim* are identical. The general uniformity in this rite may be ascribed to the insistence of the *ḥasidei ṿashkenaz* (twelfth-century Rhineland Pietists) on precise liturgical texts,⁸⁷ although not all the variants hew to their insistence that the number of words in the prayer must remain constant. Most of these variants appear to be borrowings from neighboring rites, suggesting that they come from border communities or immigrant groups where the rites were blending. There is essentially no evidence in Ashkenaz for self-censorship or change in this rite over this period.

Just under a third of our manuscripts include a conjunctive *vav* at the beginning of the *berakhah*, similar to the variety found in the French rites (see below). Only one of these, a fifteenth-century manuscript, also has adopted the Italian opening of *malshinim* instead of *meshummadim*,⁸⁸ that which will become universal in the wake of censorship. Otherwise, the Ashkenazi rites

84 This is a result first of the location of most early Hebrew presses in Italy, second of the need of printers even outside Catholic lands to sell to a wide geographical area, and later, of Russian government censorship too.

85 The rite of northern France is distinct and will be treated below.

86 See Ruth Langer, "Sinai, Zion and God in the Synagogue: Celebrating Torah in Ashkenazi," in Ruth Langer and Steven Fine, eds., *Liturgy in the Life of the Synagogue* (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2005) 133 ff. This rite is represented on our list by manuscript numbers 16, 24, 26, 29, 31, and 37.

87 Their commentary with its insistence on 29 words appears in manuscript number 29, MS Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library 8° 4199, dated 1410, quoting the tradition that this number corresponds to the number of punishments God will in the future extract from the evil Edom, that is, Rome. See Eleazar of Worms, *Perushei siddur hatefillah laroqeah*, eds. Moshe and Yehuda Alter Herschler (Jerusalem: Makhon Harav Herschler, 1992) §56, pp. 342–43.

88 MS Oxford Bodleian MS Opp. 156 (Neubauer 1114) – number 32N in our list. It is possible that this is a rewritten text, but it appears original on the microfilm.

universally address the first segment to *meshummadim* and the second to *minim*. There is a small but significant cluster of manuscripts in which “Your people” is given further specificity as “the house of Israel.” This particular form is common in France, but all other European rites specify at least “Israel.” In this, the dominant Ashkenazi form is the only one to preserve the Babylonian precedent which presumes that Israel need not be specified as the ones who are God’s people. The tendency in Europe to add specificity might be understood as a response to Christian supersessionist claims to be the rightful heirs to Israel’s relationship with God. The vast majority of Ashkenazi manuscripts maintain the general European pattern of specifying “all our enemies” a second time at the end of the fourth segment, though a significant cluster, like in the Romaniot rite, and a relatively late cluster, change this to “them.”⁸⁹ The inclusion of additional verbs in this segment in a few manuscripts is an influence from the west typical of the French rites, to which we now turn.

France. Until recently, Jewish liturgists clustered the French rites as a subset of Ashkenaz. While the rites are closely related, there are clear lines of demarcation between the rites of northern France and of the Rhineland. However, because of the expulsion of Jews from all areas of France except the Papal States over the course of the fourteenth century, this rite ceases to exist as the émigrés blend into the communities in which they settle. The one exception is the northern Italian Piedmont communities of Asti, Fossano and Moncalvo (מנהג אפי"מ) which preserve the French traditions. No version of the northern French rite was ever printed.⁹⁰ The rites of southern France are, in general, distinct from those of northern France. However, their text of the *birkat haminim* is distinctively French, so we include them in this discussion. Although Provençal Jews were never expelled from the Papal States and maintained a continuous presence in cities like Avignon, Carpentras, and Lille, each of which preserved its own liturgical traditions, few of their liturgical manuscripts from this period were preserved and even fewer of these contain statutory prayer texts. Also included in this discussion is the single preserved exemplar from the British Isles from this period, from a manuscript written shortly before the expulsion of the Jews in 1295. The Jews of pre-expulsion England were closely tied to the Jews of northern France in their liturgical traditions, as is evident in the absence of significant variants here from our base text.

As in Ashkenaz, only about a third of the French exemplars begin with a conjunctive *vav*. While Jews lived in France, the second segment remained simple, but beginning in the late fourteenth century, expanded versions of this segment

89 See the discussion there.

90 See Stefan C. Reif, *Judaism and Hebrew Prayer: New Perspectives on Jewish Liturgical History* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1993) 167. Jonah Fraenkel in his current work is addressing the specific characteristics of this rite.

begin to appear in both the northern and southern rites, adding *malshinim* and *mesorot* (two words for informers), as is common in Sefarad.⁹¹ However, our evidence is too limited to suggest that there was indeed a deliberate or universal change to this dying rite. As discussed above, the French rites universally identify the enemies of the third segment as “enemies of the house of Israel,” although three northern and both southern exemplars omit “house,” making this segment identical with one of the versions found in Sefarad.⁹²

The most characteristic element of the French rites is their elaboration on the list of verbs found in the fourth segment. Here, the first three verbs appear in consistent order: תעקר ותשבר ותמגר (uproot and smash and defeat). ותכניע (and humble) also appears on every list, after these, but additions precede and follow it. These four verbs are standard in Ashkenaz, the Romaniot rites, and Sefarad, while Italy omits ותמגר,⁹³ the verb represented in the geniza only in a few texts of branch 5. Although its precise location varies, every exemplar except the earlier Provençal text includes ותשפיל (and cast down).⁹⁴ Otherwise, we find two verbs added: ותשמיד (and utterly destroy) appears only in our base text and one other manuscript;⁹⁵ and ותכלה (and annihilate), another harsh synonym, appears in four differently ordered lists in five different northern French manuscripts,⁹⁶ more than a third of our exemplars. In Provence we find a third, ותפיל (and cast down), apparently a Sefardi influence.⁹⁷ It is possible that all these variants represent regional subrites.⁹⁸ This Sefardi

91 See the four French texts and the one Provençal text listed in the variants, all dated to 1394 or the fifteenth century. In addition, this version appears in MS Vatican Biblioteca Apostolica ebr. 324, dated to 1395. This manuscript was censored and then restored/corrected in a later hand.

92 In addition to the two manuscripts listed in the variants, see MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 189, fourteenth century. Given the imprecise dating of these manuscripts, these may also be post-expulsion changes from the same period as those just discussed. However, there is only partial overlap between the manuscripts involved.

93 This word is also absent in one French manuscript, MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 1665, fourteenth century. Here, the text of the *berakhah* is found inserted into a *piyyut* for Purim. As it contains some obvious errors, it is not included in the appendix.

94 And the censored MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 3006 (654), from Tallard (southern France), 1304. However the text has been censored and parts have been rewritten. What appears now for this segment looks like a Sefardi text.

95 6צ, although the reading there is somewhat uncertain.

96 6צ, 7צ, 8צ, and 11צ. It also appears in the censored MS Vatican Biblioteca Apostolica ebr. 324, dated 1395, in a fifth variant: ותכניע ותשפיל ותכלה אה.

97 In both exemplars. It also appears in MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 3006 (654), from Tallard (southern France), 1304. As this and the earlier text are the two not including ותשפיל, one wonders whether this was a scribal omission of a single letter in these two manuscripts. However, the later Provençal text includes both terms, suggesting that ותפיל was authentically part of the Provençal rite.

98 None of the published halakhic texts of this world preserve an intact text of the *birkat haminim* (with the exception of the *Ez Hayyim*, included in the appendix). The Hurwitz edition of *Mahzor*

influence is also evident in the addition of וְכָל שׂוֹנְאֵיךָ (all who hate You) to three manuscripts. That two of these are late⁹⁹ and the third is clearly censored¹⁰⁰ accounts for the shift from “our enemies and all who hate us” to “all Your enemies and all who hate You” which arguably excludes Christians. However, this language does appear in the censored manuscript from Tallard (Provence). In this text, some sensitive language has simply been censored and not replaced (*meshummadim*, *malkhut zaton*), but other terms like *minim* remain, suggesting the possibility that what is there represents original texts. Thus, the change to God’s enemies instead of Israel’s enemies, at least in the fourth segment, may date to the early fourteenth century. Alternatively, it is possible that just the pronominal suffixes of these words were rewritten. This is likely the case in the third segment where the words following “enemies,” presumably “of Your people Israel,” were indeed removed and a second person pronominal suffix added to make “Your enemies.”

Sefarad. Of twenty-five Hebrew manuscripts containing the weekday *amidah* of the Iberian rites before the period of censorship, only eleven preserve enough data to enable recognition of their original texts of the *birkat haminim*, while a few others allow reconstruction of individual segments. In addition, two Ladino prayer books preserve translations from which we can reconstruct the Hebrew. These texts clearly represent several different subrites, but these cannot be identified with certainty. For example, among a cluster of texts that show significant similarity one to another, we find one catalogued as hailing from Catalonia¹⁰¹ in the extreme northeast on the one hand, and two catalogued as from Lisbon¹⁰² in the extreme west of the peninsula, on the other. Several of these texts also show signs of censorship or self-censorship. That Sefardi Jews practiced self-censorship is evident in manuscripts, both liturgical and halakhic, that simply skip the *birkat haminim* entirely.¹⁰³

Vitry (Nuremberg: J. Bulka, 1923) was based on a censored manuscript. The recent Goldschmidt edition (Jerusalem: Makhon Ozar Haposeqim, 2004) 113, presents an Ashkenazi text. I have not located others that include discussions of the language of the *berakhah*, with the exception of the *Perush hatefillot vehaberakhot* of R. Yehuda b"R. Yaqar, ed. Shmuel Yerushalmi (Jerusalem: M'orei Yisrael, 1979). However, R. Yehuda comments only on elements of the *berakhah* common to all the rites. It cannot be determined from this text whether he is writing about his native Provençal rite or the rite of his later Spanish community.

99 83 from northern France, dated 1470, 113 from the Piedmont, dated 1533.

100 MS Parma Biblioteca Palatina Codice de Rossi 3006 (654), from Tallard (southern France), 1304.
101 20.

102 40, 50.

103 MS JTS 4067, SHF 1895:22, dated to the fifteenth century, simply says, וְאָמַר בְּרַכַּת הַמִּינִים (and recite the *birkat haminim*), without giving the text. The first printed edition of this rite, Napoli 1490, simply skips the *berakhah* without comment. Most manuscripts and printed editions of

We begin by noting that not a single Iberian exemplar of the *birkat haminim* begins with the conjunctive *vav*. The one text included here that does hail from Fez, Morocco and contains other unique details, like its inclusion of לָהֶם (to them) in this first segment.¹⁰⁴ However, because this text is otherwise mostly in continuity with the Sefardi rites, we include it here. The address of this segment to כּוֹפְרִים (theological heretics) in a Catalonian rite siddur is a product of a censored and rewritten text and therefore not of concern here. The Ladino texts translate *meshummadim* as “*reñegados*,” a term that apparently did not carry the opprobrium of the Hebrew original as it continues to appear in Ladino translations for centuries, even where the Hebrew had changed.¹⁰⁵

The Sefardi texts expand on the second segment of the *berakhah*. While most of the Hebrew texts add two categories of informers, *malshinim* and *mesorot*, a cluster omit this last term. This cluster includes two manuscripts identified as of the Lisbon rite, one identified as Catalonian, and the two Ladino texts. The Ladino texts, after translating *minim* into Spanish as “heretics,” do not translate *malshinim* at all, leaving it as is when writing in Hebrew characters and writing *malsines* in Latin characters. The Hebrew word had entered Judeo-Spanish and is attested to in pure Spanish texts beginning in the fourteenth century.¹⁰⁶ Borrowed into Spanish, *malsines* comes to serve as a term of opprobrium without obvious specific application.

Most Sefardi texts expand upon our base text’s version of the third segment. This same cluster of texts directs this curse to “all our enemies and all who hate us,” or in the self-censored version found in the Ladino texts, “all Your enemies

David Abudarham’s liturgical commentary delete his commentary on this *berakhah*, though it has been published now in Menahem Avraham Braun, ed., *Tehilah leDavid* (Jerusalem: Makhon Or HaSefer, 2001) 226–28. Most manuscripts of the *Ṣedah laderekh* have something similar to the printed edition, which speaks about the conjunction between the blessings before and after the *birkat haminim*, ignoring our text entirely. However, the fifteenth-century MS JTS 1117, ENA 1757, includes an extremely lengthy discussion of the *berakhah*, one that other copyists simply omitted.

¹⁰⁴ 110.

¹⁰⁵ See the prayer books printed for former *conversos*, called *Orden de las oraciones cotidianas* (with variations in the spelling of the last word), beginning in the late seventeenth century. The earliest examined was printed in 1695 in Amsterdam, the latest in 1771 in London. If *reñegados* carries the sense of “apostates” in these texts, we face a bizarre phenomenon of former apostates cursing their relatives and ancestors. However, none of the Spanish terms carry the necessary association with Christianity that is embedded in the Hebrew terms they replace.

¹⁰⁶ We wish to express our thanks to Ruth Langer’s colleague Dwayne Carpenter for his help with the Ladino texts. The data on the use of *malsin* in Spanish is according to Mark Davies, *Corpus del Español*, <http://www.corpusdelespanol.org>, search for *malsin** (December 15, 2005; August 23, 2006). Davies is professor of Corpus Linguistics at Brigham Young University. One of the fourteenth-century texts is a translation of Judah Halevi’s *Sefer haKuzari*, where this term is paired with “*ereges*,” the translation of *minim*. This would suggest that the oral life of this term is significantly older.

and all who hate You.”¹⁰⁷ Another cluster adds to this, “all who seek ill for us.”¹⁰⁸ However, the base text’s version is equally well attested in this period,¹⁰⁹ and we also find versions that shorten it to “all our enemies” or “all Your enemies.”¹¹⁰

We find a similar variety in the fourth segment. All open by praying that the empire of insolence *תעקר ותשבר* (be uprooted and smashed) and include *והכניע [ם]* (and humble [them]) in their lists of verbs.¹¹¹ Three other versions each add only one word to this core, each different: *ותכלה* (and annihilate),¹¹² *והמגר* (defeat),¹¹³ and *והאבדם* (cause them to be lost).¹¹⁴ Another exemplar adds two verbs, reading *והמגר והכניע והשפיל* (and defeat and humble and bring low).¹¹⁵ Four more versions expand this list even further. These, instead of expanding the third segment to specify “all our enemies and all those who hate us,” place this phrase as the object of this expanded list of verbs here in the fourth segment.¹¹⁶ One text only adds *והתכלם* (and utterly destroy them) after these enemies.¹¹⁷ Our base texts adds another verb introducing the enemies, *והפיל* (and cast down). Another variant reorganizes these verbs, adds *והכריע* (subdue), and intensifies the call for urgency with *כרגע* (immediately);¹¹⁸ another adds only *והשמיד* to the three common verbs listed above.¹¹⁹ Thus, in contrast to the other rites, the situ-

107 Also in MS JTS 5445 SHF 1903:16, third quarter of fourteenth century, Portugal (censored and rewritten with acceptable words).

108 In MS Biblioteca Palatina Parm. 29, fourteenth century (heavily censored except for this segment); MS Biblioteca Palatina Cod. Parm. 2207, dated 1439 (in poor condition and censored); and 8ט, 9ט, and 11ט.

109 In addition, it appears in MS Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 1419, fifteenth century (heavily censored); MS JTS 4112 SHF 1563:13, fifteenth century, probably North African (in poor condition), as well as 7ט and 10ט.

110 MS Oxford Bodleian Library MS Opp. Add. Oct. 17 (Neubauer 1135), fourteenth century. The post-censorship text reads *ואריבך*. See also 4ט, probably self-censored, and 6ט, which maintains *ואריבני*.

111 Except 3ט. This text was censored, but it also contains numerous peculiarities suggesting that this may be a scribal error. 5ט is the only manuscript to contain only this core.

112 2ט plus the Ladino texts which follow this rite closely.

113 4ט, 8ט, and the earlier but heavily censored MS Oxford Bodleian Library MS Opp. Add. Oct. 17 (Neubauer 1133), fourteenth century.

114 11ט.

115 6ט. A similar text appears in 9ט, but the text is not fully legible. There may have been an additional verb and the last two incorporate the direct object “them.” Compare also MS Biblioteca Palatina Cod. Parm. 1917, fifteenth century, which in its current state lists *תעקר תשבר תמגר*, that is, in reverse order from usual and without the conjunctives connecting them.

116 Not all Sefardi rite texts include this language. See 4ט, 6ט, and the less certain evidence from the censored texts: MS Oxford Bodleian Library MS Opp. Add. Oct. 17 (Neubauer 1133), fourteenth century, and MS Biblioteca Palatina Cod. Parm. 1917, fifteenth century. Note, though, that none include this phrase twice.

117 MS JTS 4112 SHF 1563:13, fifteenth century, probably from North Africa, not censored but in poor condition.

118 7ט.

119 10ט.

ation in Spain is one of extreme fluidity with a wide variety of details expressed within the common structure of the prayer. The calls of Asher b. Yehiel and after him Jacob b. Asher for a text of twenty-nine words, following the dictum of the *ḥasidei ʿashkenaz*, went essentially unheeded.¹²⁰

CONCLUSIONS

Until recently, a comprehensive study of the texts of the *birkat haminim* of the kind we have offered here simply was not feasible. The texts of the Cairo geniza have recently been made much more accessible to scholars.¹²¹ Consequently, it is now possible to reconstruct the prayer texts that were common among the Jewish communities of the Middle East between the ninth and thirteenth centuries. Medieval Hebrew manuscripts, scattered among the libraries of the world, have been microfilmed and made available in one centralized collection in the Institute for Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts at the Jewish National Library in Jerusalem. This makes comprehensive study of later medieval Jewish rites achievable, especially for those communities for which ample evidence was preserved. In both periods, where scholars earlier drew conclusions based on one or two manuscripts, we now often bring dozens and sometimes hundreds to the table.

As is clear from this study, by the time of the earliest preserved liturgical evidence, there were multiple co-existent texts of the *birkat haminim*. Among the manuscripts of these texts we find a profusion of smaller and larger differences within what is recognizably the same prayer. Analysis of our fuller collection of the geniza evidence allows us to organize these texts into a new and more certain classification as the rites of *ʿereṣ yisraʿel* and Babylonia and to identify their subdivision into discrete branches.

A focus on the significant number of shared characteristics among the branches suggests the plausibility of positing a shared literary source. We cannot with any certainty reconstruct the precise language of this source, but the analysis of the different texts suggests the very tentative hypothesis that Babylonian branch 3 and *ʿereṣ yisraʿeli* branch 2 (without its citation of Ps 69:29) are the closest to it.

Was this the text formulated by those “establishing” the text at Yavneh or was this a text that emerged at some later date, or was this the product of some general consensus, either at Yavneh or later, about the proper thematic and linguistic

¹²⁰ *Shut HaRosh* 4:20; *Tur* OH 118.

¹²¹ In 2003, the Israeli National Academy of Sciences and Humanities founded the Jewish Liturgy Project (*Mifʿal hatefillah*) in order to collect and catalogue the texts of the early *siddur*. This project, headed by Uri Ehrlich, is located at Ben-Gurion University and makes its materials available to scholars of liturgy by request.

structure of the blessing? We hesitate to answer this question here. This question can only properly be addressed, not with specific reference only to the *birkat haminim*, but within the much wider context of the problem of the emergence of statutory rabbinic prayer, at the heart of which lies the *amidah* in which the *birkat haminim* is embedded. This itself has been a matter of heated scholarly dispute in recent years,¹²² and its resolution requires a much broader engagement with the relevant historical sources for the period.

In the *geniza*, all versions of the malediction first cursed the apostates, those who betrayed the Jewish community by conversion, the *meshummadim*, by asking God to remove their “hope,” presumably of salvation. This segment persists unchanged in medieval Europe, with the exception of in Italy, where only the alternative of *malshinim*, “informers,” sometimes together with *minim*, ever appears in the manuscripts. Given the centrality of salvific claims in Christian missionary address to Jews, it is easy to understand how this language might have resulted from an act of self-censorship to avoid antagonizing the Church. The non-Italian European rites only drop this address to *meshummadim* after the sixteenth century when Catholic censorship forces its removal from the printed and written texts.

The earliest texts of the *birkat haminim* seem also to have included a curse of *nošerim* and *minim*, applying a single verb, אָבְדוּ (may they be lost) to both. Whether or not these were initially two discrete categories of people is unclear. These terms are already attested to by the Church fathers Jerome and Epiphanius, around 400 C.E., who tell us that Jews were cursing Christians, three times a day in their synagogues, referring to Christians or Jewish-Christians as Nazarenes in a blessing called “Minaeorum.”¹²³ The formulation of this segment in the *geniza* texts is extremely stable, always placing *nošerim* before *minim*. Consequently, it is logical to conclude that the word *nošerim* is not a later addition to this phrase (as has been suggested by some scholars)¹²⁴ but rather an integral part

122 The essential dispute is between the methods of Joseph Heinemann and Ezra Fleischer. See Heinemann’s *Prayer in the Talmud: Forms and Patterns*, trans. Richard S. Sarason (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977) chaps. 1, 2, and 9; and Fleischer’s “On the Beginnings of Obligatory Hebrew Prayer,” *Tarbiz* 59 (1990) 397–441 (Heb.). For discussions of Fleischer’s challenge to Heinemann, see among others, Ruth Langer, “Revisiting Early Rabbinic Liturgy: The Recent Contributions of Ezra Fleischer,” *Prooftexts* 19, no. 2 (1999) 179–94, and Uri Ehrlich, “On the Early Texts of the Blessings ‘Who Rebuilds Jerusalem’ and the ‘Blessing of David’ in the Liturgy,” *Pe’amim* 78 (1999) 16–43 (Heb.).

123 See the evidence collected, among others, by Horbury, “The Benediction of the Minim.” Many, including Horbury, understand Justin Martyr (*Dialogue with Trypho*, mid-second century C.E.) also to give witness to the *birkat haminim*. However, Justin’s statements are much more ambiguous and scholars do not agree on whether they refer to the *birkat haminim* or to some other synagogue-based Jewish cursing of Christians.

124 See, for example, Kimelman, “*Birkat Ha-Minim*.”

of its original formulation. If this segment of the blessing is early, then the word *noṣerim* is early, and if it is all later, then the word *noṣerim* is also later. Therefore, one's reading of the liturgical history must also intersect with an understanding of the relationships between Christians (or at least Jewish-Christians) and Jews in the periods in question.

However, the geniza also contains evidence for the beginnings of the process of removing the word *noṣerim* from the blessing. This process finds expression in several manuscripts of branch 5,¹²⁵ the branch that was received by the European rites. It is possible that the form adopted there already lacked this term; *noṣerim* does not appear in a single European manuscript of the *birkat haminim*. In any case, there is no reason to presume that the removal of *noṣerim* from the text of the blessing was the product of official external censorship. It is among the earliest documented omissions from the language of the blessing. This may well have been the result of a change in the historical circumstances of the worshippers, who saw no continuing need to mention *noṣerim* explicitly. Jews living in the realm of Islam may have found the more general term *minim* sufficient. However, this could also have originated as an act of internal Jewish censorship to avoid explicit cursing of their Christian neighbors. If this was the case, then the result was ironic. Medieval European Jews understood the remaining term “*minim*” to refer quite explicitly to their Christian neighbors.¹²⁶

All of the geniza versions except branch 1 (from the Land of Israel) and all later medieval texts also call on God to bring down the gentile government. Such an outcome is a logical necessity for the steps towards messianic redemption that the weekday *amidah* petitions for at this point. As such, this is a key element of this malediction, but one that functions independently of the curses of internal Jewish malefactors. Its importance is evident in its appearance as the second segment of the blessing in all the geniza versions except Babylonian branch 5, the one that spreads to Europe through the agency of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon*. The verbs of this segment were a favored locus for intensifying the malediction, and we find significant variety in the expansions of the list. It is only early modern censorship that forces this segment to lose its reference to the “empire of insolence.”

As the geniza evidence demonstrates, there were communities that continued to elaborate upon the themes of the *birkat haminim*. Most significant was the apparent addition of a specific malediction calling for Israel's enemies “to be cut off” (יכרתו). It may be the addition of this segment that leads to the reorganization of the segments of the blessing evident only in branch 5 from the geniza, but absolutely universal in Europe. The resultant text curses first

125 As regards the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon*, see above, n. 54.

126 This usage can be documented as early as Rashi, i.e., about as early as any European Hebrew texts.

Jewish malefactors (apostates and heretics, if that is the meaning of *minim*) and then gentiles, instead of interspersing the two categories as is common in the earlier rites.

This malediction of enemies was also a favorite locus for elaborating upon the curse, as is evident already in geniza branch 4B. On the other hand, the text of the *Seder Rav Amram Gaon* included only a basic form of this segment; only some of the European rites intensify this language. Of course, this language was also sensitive in Christian Europe; external censorship and sometimes self-censorship leads to a consistent rephrasing of this segment so that it curses God's enemies, not Israel's enemies.

Thus, while Elbogen is correct that we cannot in any absolute sense "recover" the original text of the *birkat haminim*, there is much that we can reconstruct given the textual evidence at hand today. We do know what the European texts were, in all their complexity, before the advent of Christian censorship, and we know how they fit into the picture left to us by the manuscripts preserved in the Cairo geniza. These manuscripts give us significant clues as to the development of this prayer, at least in the geonic period and perhaps even before.

APPENDICES

Following the text of each version we give the critical apparatus indicating the additions or deletions to that text found in the various manuscripts. After this, in the list identifying the source of each manuscript, we give brief notes indicating any physical lacunae in its text of the *berakhah*. These lacunae do not appear in the apparatus. We have not included here information about graphical variants like abbreviations or errors unless they seemed of significance and we do not note corrections or additions made by the scribe himself. We have also not included details about how the scribe recorded the statutory blessing formula. *Note:* נ' = נוסף; ח' = חסר.

APPENDIX A
VARIANTS OF THE BIRKAT HAMINIM IN THE
GENIZA MANUSCRIPTS¹²⁷

²EREṢ YISRA'ELI BRANCH 1

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
אם לא ישובו לתורתך
הנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו
ימחו מספר חיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו
ברוך אתה יי מכניע זדים

לתורתך | 17 בתורתך. || ימחו | א3, 2 וימחו. || חיים | א3, 12 החיים. || ימחו מספר
חיים | ק72 ח'.

Manuscripts

- 3א Oxford, Bodleian Heb. d. 55.33–34, a word is missing between ועם and אל.
- 21 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 694.10, several words are missing between יכתבו and זדים.
- 131 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 3027.7–8, complete.
- 171 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 3810.4–5, the beginning of the text is missing, up to the word תהי; approximately three words are missing between בתורתך and יאבדו; several words are missing between צדיקים and זדים.
- 12ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 24.5, a word is missing between תהי and אם, and between יי and זדים.
- 32ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 18.3, complete.

127 We would like to express our thanks to Vered Raziel-Kretzmer for her help in preparing this presentation of the Geniza texts.

- 34ק Cambridge, T-S K 27.18, approximately seven words are missing between אל and והמינים; approximately five words are missing between ימחו and יכתבו; the concluding benediction is missing after the word יי.
- 72ק Unidentified Schechter 1; information based on Schechter's description.¹²⁸

²ERES YISRA²ELI BRANCH 2

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו
והנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו
ימחו מספר החיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו
ברוך אתה יי מכניע זדים

בימינו | ק31 ח. || והנצרים | ק31 הנצרים.

Manuscripts

- 31ק Cambridge, T-S Glass 20.57, a word is missing between מספר and ועם.
- 35ק Cambridge, T-S K 27.33, complete.

BABYLONIAN BRANCH 3

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו
והנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו
ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים

מהרה | ק33 ח. || תעקר | ק23, 26, נ' ותשבר. ק6, נ' ותשבר ותכניע. ק47 נ' ותשבר תכניע. || והנצרים | ק26 הנצרים. || והנצרים והמינים | ק47 והמינים והמלשינים כולם. || יאבדו | ק47 נ' וישמדו. ק5, 57 נ' ימחו מספר החיים ועם צדיקים אל יכתבו. || רשעים | ק6, 38 אויבים.

Manuscripts

- 5ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 9.12, a word is missing between למשומדים and תהי, and between זדון and תעקר.
- 6ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 10.2, complete.
- 23ק Cambridge, T-S AS 104.168, complete.
- 26ק Cambridge, T-S AS 105.105, two words are missing between למשומדים and תקוה.
- 33ק Cambridge, T-S H 18.6, complete.
- 38ק Cambridge, T-S NS 120.89, three words are missing between למשומדים and ומלכות; two words are missing between בימינו and כרגע; a word is missing between כרגע and ברוך.

128 S. Schechter, "Geniza Specimens," JQR OS 10 (1898) 659.

- 47ק Cambridge, T-S NS 151.96, complete.
 57ק Cambridge, T-S NS 196.5a, the beginning is missing, up to the word ומלכות.

BABYLONIAN BRANCH 4A

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
 ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר בימינו
 והנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו
 וכל אויבי עמך וצורריהם מהרה יכרתו
 ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים

תקוה | 28ק נמחק: אם לא ישובו לתורתך. || ומלכות... בימינו | 7ק ח'. || מהרה | ל, 21ק, 22ק,
 25ק, 33ק ח'. || ותשבר | 16ג, 51ק, 55ק, 63ק, 65ק ח'. 14ג, 19ק, 28ק, 48ק נ' ותכניע. 53ק
 נ' ותכניע מהרה. || בימינו | 2 ח'. || והנצרים... יאבדו | 55ק ח'. || והנצרים | 2, 19ק הנצרים. 7ק
 וכל הנוצרים. 51ק נ' כלם. || אויבי | 51ק צוררי. || וצורריהם | 7ק, 19ק, 51ק, 55ק ח'. 20ק,
 48ק, 53ק, 63ק נ' כולם. || מהרה | ל, 20ק, 53ק, 63ק, 65ק במהרה. 2 חמה. || יכרתו | 20ק,
 48ק, 53ק, 63ק, 65ק יכרתו. 4, 11, 14ג, 16ג, 25ק נ' וישברו. 28ק נ' ביד אחר: ושובר
 עול הגוים מעל צאורינו. || שובר רשעים | 7ק ח'. || רשעים | 14ג, 6ק, 38ק אויבים. 25ק נ'
 במקומו אויבים.

Manuscripts

- 1 ל British Library Or. 5557 O 12, complete.
 2 ל British Library Or. 5557 Z 15-16, complete.
 4 ל British Library Or. 12378.6, complete.¹²⁹
 11 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 694.5-6, very fragmentary: the first word is missing; several words are missing between ומלכות and ותשבר; two words are missing between והנצרים and יאבדו and between עמך and יכרתו; a number of words are missing between ברוך and זדים.
 14ג Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 3240.18, complete.
 16ג Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 3774.9, complete.
 2פ Paris, Collection Jacques Mosseri VIII, 82.2, two words are missing between למשומדים and תקוה; a word is missing between ברוך and רשעים.
 7ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 10.6, complete.
 19ק Cambridge, T-S AS 103.17, two words are missing between ברוך and שובר.
 20ק Cambridge, T-S AS 103.73, two words are missing between למשומדים and תקוה.

129 We would like to express our thanks to Avi Shmidman for drawing this manuscript to our attention.

- 21ק Cambridge, T-S AS 103.97, very fragmentary: several words are missing between למשומדים and ומלכות, between תעקר and והמינים, between עמך and ברוך, and between אתה and זדים.
- 22ק Cambridge, T-S AS 103.277, continuous with T-S AS 105.103 (25ק).
- 25ק Cambridge, T-S AS 105.103, continuous with T-S AS 103.277 (22ק).
- 28ק Cambridge, T-S AS 108.4, a word is missing between ברוך and יי.
- 48ק Cambridge, T-S NS 152.30, complete.
- 51ק Cambridge, T-S NS 153.161, complete.
- 53ק Cambridge, T-S NS 155.3, complete.
- 55ק Cambridge, T-S NS 157.67, complete.
- 56ק Cambridge, T-S NS 157.193, incomplete at the end, after the word והנצרים.
- 63ק Cambridge, T-S NS 271.106, complete.
- 65ק Cambridge, T-S NS 271.234, a word is missing between אתה and שובר.

BABYLONIAN BRANCH 4B

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע בימינו
והנצרים והמינים כרגע יאבדו
וכל אויבי עמך וצורריהם מהרה יכרתו
ושבור עול הגוים מעל צוארינו
ואל תתן תקומה לכל אויבי נפשינו
ברוך אתה יי שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

ומלכות | 10 מלכות. || ותשבר | 6 ומשביר. || ותכניע | 54 נ' ותאביד מהרה. || והנצרים והמינים | 6 והנצרים ומינים. נס 10 נ' והמלשינים וכל בעלי זרוע. ק 3 נ' והמלשינים והמוסרים כולם. ק 15, 64 נ' כולם. ק 27 נ' והכופרים וכל בעלי זרוע. 54 והמינים והנצרים והכופרים וכל בעלי זרוע כולם. 58 הנצרים והמינים והמלשינים והמוסרים כולם. 60 נ' ובעלי זרוע. ק 62 נ' והמלשינים והמוסרים. || כרגע... וצורריהם | 10 ח'. || כרגע יאבדו | ק 27, 60 ח'. || יאבדו | 15 ח'. || אויבי | 60 אויבנו ואויבי. || עמד | ק 54, 60 נ' ישראל. || וצורריהם | ק 3 ושונאיהם וצורריהם ומבקשי רעתם. 15 נ' כולם. ק 27 נ' ומבקשי רעתם כולם. 54, 60 נ' ומבקשי רעתם. ק 58, 64 נ' ושונאיהם ומבקשי רעתם כולם. 69 נ' ושונאיהם כולם. || מהרה | 15, 24, 37 במהרה. ק 64 ח'. || מהרה יכרתו | 6 ח'. || יכרתו | 10 נ' ויאבדו וישמדו. ק 3 יכניעו וישמדו. 27 נ' וישברו וישמדו ויאבדו. 54, 58, 69 נ' וישמדו ויאבדו. 60 נ' ויאבדו. 64 ישמדו וישברו. || ושבור | 10, 3, 69 שבור. ק 27, 54 אנה למען שמך שבור. 60 אנה למענך שבור. || הגוים | ק 42, 54, 69 נ' מהרה. || ואל... נפשינו | 6, 8, 18, 24, 37, 61 ח'. || ואל | 10 אל. || תקומה | ק 42, 54 נ' ואחרית. || נפשינו | ק 3 נ' ומבקש רעתנו. 42 נ' ומבקשי רעתנו בכף אויבנו אל תמסרינו. ק 27, 54 נ' וביד (ק 54: וכף) אויבנו אל תמסרינו. || אויבים | ק 8, 18, 24, 27 רשעים. 42, 54 רשעים ואויבים.

Manuscripts

- 61 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2168.28–32, the fragment ends after the word **אויבים**.
- 101 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2527.8, complete.
- 3ק Cambridge, Or. 1080 3.2, complete.
- 8ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 10.12, complete.
- 15ק Cambridge, T-S Arabic 36.12, complete.
- 18ק Cambridge, T-S AS 102.110, complete.
- 24ק Cambridge, T-S AS 104.228, a word is missing between **יכרתו** and **עול**, and between **מעל** and **ברוך**.
- 27ק Cambridge, T-S AS 107.111, the beginning of the text is missing, up to the word **והכופרים**.
- 37ק Cambridge, T-S NS 120.87, complete.
- 42ק Cambridge, T-S NS 124.109, the beginning is missing, up to the phrase **מהרה מעל צוארינו**.
- 54ק Cambridge, T-S NS 156.7, complete.
- 58ק Cambridge, T-S NS 196.7, two words are missing between **ואל** and **לכל**; a word is missing between **אתה** and **שובר**.
- 60ק Cambridge, T-S NS 197.60, several words are missing between **נפשינו** and **שובר**.
- 61ק Cambridge, T-S NS 271.2, complete.
- 62ק Cambridge, T-S NS 271.44, incomplete at the end, after the word **והמוסרים**.
- 64ק Cambridge, T-S NS 271.157, a word is missing between **עמך** and **ושנאיהם**, and between **וישברו** and **עול**; incomplete at the end, after the word **עול**.
- 69ק Cambridge, T-S NS 273.67, the beginning is missing, up to the word **ושונאיהם**.

BABYLONIAN BRANCH 5

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
 וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו
 וכל אויבי עמך מהרה יכרתו
 ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר בימינו
 ברוך אתה יי שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

תהי | 13 ק' נ' ביד אחר: להם. || וכל המינים | 3 והנוצרים והמנים. ק5 וכל המינים וכל המלשינים.
 ק39 וכל הנוצרים והמינים. || וכל... יכרתו | 3 ח'. || וכל | 5 כל. || וכל אויבי עמך | 7 ק1 וכל
 שנאיך. || אויבי עמך | 5 אויבינו וכל שונאינו. ק39 נ' וקמיהם. || תעקר ותשבר | 5 נ' ותכלם
 ותכניעם. ק40 נ' ותכניע. ק71 נ' ותמגר ותכניע. ק13 ותשבר נמחק ביד אחר ונ': ותמגר.
 ק39 תעקר תשבר ותכניע. || אויבים | 13 נמחק ביד אחר ונ': רשעים.

Manuscripts

- 3 נ Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 920.14–15, the last word of the concluding benedictory formula is missing.
- 5 נ Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 1314.1–6, a word is missing between ומכניע and שובר, and between בימינו and תכניעם.
- 13 ק Cambridge, T-S 10 H 1.5, complete.
- 39 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 120.105, a word is missing between מהרה and תשבר; several words are missing between בימינו and אויבים.
- 40 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 121.37, a word is missing between תקוה and המינין, between מהרה and מלכות, and between ומלכות and מהרה; 2 words are missing between ותכניע and אתה.
- 71 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 289.1, complete.

BABYLONIAN BRANCH 6

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
 ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר בימינו
 ברוך אתה יי שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים

ומלכות | 11 ק, 67 מלכות. || זדון | 15 נ' תעקר. || תעקר | 4, 8, 9, 45, 49 נ' ותשבר.
 ק59 נ' ביד אחר ותשבר. ל3 נ' ותשבר במהרה. || בימינו | 15, 14, 45 ח'. ק59, 68 נ' ביד
 אחר: הנצרים (ק68: והנוצרים) והמינים כרגע יאבדו וכל אויבי עמך וכל צורריהם מהרה
 (ק68: וצורריהם כלם במהרה) יכרתו. || רשעים | א1, ל3 אויבים. ק43 זידים, ותוקן ביד
 אחר: רשעים.

Manuscripts

- 1 א Oxford, Bodleian Heb. d. 51.73–78, complete.
- 2 א Oxford, Bodleian Heb. d. 55.15–16, complete.
- 4 א Oxford, Bodleian Hunt. 448, complete (not a genizah fragment).

- ל³ British Library Or. 6197.33, a word is missing between *ומלכות* and *מהרה*, and between *בימינו* and *אתה*.
- 41 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 964.3–10, complete.
- 111 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2527.9, complete.
- 121 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2947.2–3, complete.
- 151 Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 3751.3, two words are missing between *למשומדים* and *תקוה*; a word is missing between *תעקר* and *אתה*.
- 10 Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College Acc. 1246, a word is missing between *למשומדים* and *תהי*; two words are missing between *ומלכות* and *תעקר*.
- 10 Paris, Alliance Israélite Universelle IV.A.2, incomplete at the end, after the word *בימינו*.
- ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 10.17, complete.
- 11 ק Cambridge, T-S 8 H 11.3, complete.
- 14 ק Cambridge, T-S Arabic 36.11, complete.
- 16 ק Cambridge, T-S Arabic 36.54, complete.
- 36 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 38a.33, complete.
- 43 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 149.140, complete.
- 45 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 150.41, complete.
- 46 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 150.188, complete.
- 49 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 152.235, complete.
- 52 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 154.26, several words are missing between *ומלכות* and *בימינו*; the closing benedictory formula is missing, after the word *שובר*.
- 59 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 196.24, complete.
- 66 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 272.30, complete.
- 67 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 272.65, the beginning is missing, up to the word *מלכות*; a word is missing between *מהרה* and *בימינו*, and between *שובר* and *ומכניע*.
- 68 ק Cambridge, T-S NS 272.77, two words are missing between *למשומדים* and *תקוה*; a word is missing after *תעקר*.

BABYLONIAN MANUSCRIPTS NOT INCLUDED IN THE VARIANTS ABOVE

Manuscripts with the Abbreviation 'ומלכות זרון וכו' ¹³⁰

Cambridge, University Add. 3160.8

Cambridge, University Or. 1081 2.77A

Cambridge, T-S 8 H 10.20

Cambridge, T-S AS 109.83

Cambridge, T-S NS 122.50

Cambridge, T-S AS 105.136

Manuscripts with the Abbreviation 'והמינים והמלשינים וכו' ¹³¹

Cambridge, T-S AS 102.60

Cambridge, T-S NS 278.151

Manuscripts that are not eastern, are doubtfully eastern, or late that were excluded above

Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2219.11

Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2321.1–10

Jewish Theological Seminary ENA 2431.11–14

Cambridge, Westminster College Lit. 11.9–13

Cambridge, T-S AS 108.56

Cambridge, T-S NS 150.17

APPENDIX B

VARIANTS OF THE *BIRKAT HAMINIM* IN THE MEDIEVAL
EUROPEAN RITES

While manuscripts in Appendix A have been numbered primarily by their libraries of origin, here they are identified first by their rite (Hebrew letter). In all cases, the first manuscript listed is the text presented. Except in rare instances, censored manuscripts have not been included in the variants.

ROMANIOT ¹³²

למשומדים אל יהי להם תקנה

והמינים והמלשינים והכופרים והמסורים כולם כרגע יאבדו

וכל אויבי עמך ישראל מהרה מארץ יכרתון

¹³⁰ See above, n. 30.

¹³¹ See above, n. 30.

¹³² Included here are all the exemplars of this rite that predate the Sefardi influence and the censor.

ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר [ותמגר] ותכניע אותם
מהרה בימינו
בא"י שובר רשעים ומכניע זדים

למשומדים | 2 ולמשומדים. 3 נמחק וכתוב מחדש ולמלשינים. || יהו | 2, 3, 4, 5 תהי. ||
להם | 4, 5 ח'. והמינים 2 וכל המינים. || והכופרים | 2, 3 והכופרנים. || והמסורים | 2,
3 והמסורות. || והכופרים והמסורים | 4 והמסורות והכופרני'. || מארץ | 2 ח'. 5 נ' חיים. ||
יכרתון | 4, 5 יכרתו. || ותמגר | 1 ח'. || ותכניע אותם במהרה | 2 ותכניע ותשפיל כל אויבינו
מהרה. || רשעים | 2, 3, 4 אויבים.

Manuscripts

- 17 Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale héb. 596, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 27 British Library Or. 9150, fourteenth century.
- 37 Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1782 (89), 1485, Lecce.
- 47 Paris, Alliance Israélite H.58.A, fifteenth century.
- 57 Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale héb. 616, 1523, Akarnania.

ITALIAN¹³³

ולמלשינים כל תהי תקוה
וכל המינים כלם כרגע יאבדו
וכל גוים אויבי עמך ישראל מהרה יכרתו
ומלכות זדון במהרה תעקר ותשבר ותכניע אתם במהרה בימינו
בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

ולמלשינים | 2, 7 ולמינים. 8 ולמינים ולמלשינים. || המינים | 2, 7 המלשינים. || וכל
גוים אויבי עמך ישראל | 8 אויבי ח'. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 וכל אויביך. || ומלכות זדון...
ותשבר | 5 ח'.

Manuscripts

- 17 Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1901 (1024), fourteenth century.
- 27 Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale MS héb. 595, fourteenth century.
- 37 Leeds, Brotherton Library MS Roth 58, fifteenth century.
- 47 British Library Or. 13260, fifteenth century.
- 57 Moscow Russian State Library MS Guenzburg 679, fifteenth century.
- 67 Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1924 (1149), fifteenth century.

Because the earliest manuscript differs significantly from the others, it has not been used as the base text.

133 There are hundreds of medieval Italian liturgical manuscripts preserved. In my sampling of these, I collected over two hundred texts of the *birkat haminim*, but most of these show signs of censorship. Presented here are the eight manuscripts that seem to have survived relatively uncensored. The discussion in the main text makes reference to the evidence that can be gleaned from the rest and that gives these manuscripts a broader and more accurate context.

- 7ט Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana Conv. Sopp. 33, fifteenth century.
8ט Cambridge, University Library Add 491,1, fifteenth century.

ASHKENAZI¹³⁴

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו
וכל אויבי עמך מהרה יכרתון
ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר
ותכניע כל אויבינו במהרה בימינו
בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זידים

למשומדים | א12, א13, א14, א16, א17, א20, א22, א23, א24, א29, א30, א31, א34, א35
ולמשומדים. א32 ולמלשינים || אויבי עמך | א5, א14, א19, א23, א27, א33, נ' בית ישראל.
א35 נ' מהרה בית ישראל' (כנראה בטעות). א36 נ' ישראל. || מהרה | א2 במהרה. || יכרתון | רוב
כ"י יכרתו. || ותכניע כל אויבינו | א7, א8, א39 ח' כל. א5 נ' את. א9, א20, א31 ח' כל אויבינו.
א10, א16, א22, א31, א32, א34 ותכניעם. א2 ותשפיל ותכניע ותכלה כל אויבינו. א18
ותשמיד ותכניע ותשפיל ותכלה כל אויבינו. א19 ותכניע ותשפיל כל אויבינו. || במהרה |
א4, א6 מהרה.

Manuscripts

- א1 Amsterdam, Universiteitsbibliotheek MS Rosenthal 609, 1236, Esslingen.
א2 Oxford, Bodleian MS Michael 200 (Neubauer 1121), thirteenth century.¹³⁵
א3 University of Toronto MS Friedberg 3–015, thirteenth century, Worms; the end of the word יכרתו is illegible; text between זדון and ותמגר and between ברוך and ומכניע is illegible.
א4 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 410, thirteenth–fourteenth century.
א5 Oxford, Bodleian MS Michael 548, 1308.
א6 Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College 389, 1314.
א7 Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 758 (Neubauer 1105), early fourteenth century.
א8 London, Bet Din and Bet Hamidrash 36, 1392.
א9 Oxford, Bodleian MS Michael 327–28 (Neubauer 1107–8), fourteenth century.
א10 Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 643 (Neubauer 1109), fourteenth century.
134 Over eighty manuscripts from before the sixteenth century contain the *birkat haminim*. More than half, however, have been censored. The Ashkenazi rite preserved a stable text with few variants until censorship forced changes.
135 According to Jonah Fraenkel, this thirteenth-century manuscript is a particularly unique mix of French and Ashkenazi rites (private correspondence).

- 11~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 647 (Neubauer 2274/1), fourteenth century.
- 12~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 649 (Neubauer 1102), fourteenth century; rite of Frankfurt am Main.
- 13~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Michael 161–62 (Neubauer 1110–11), fourteenth century.
- 14~~N~~ Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hebr. 129, fourteenth century.
- 15~~N~~ Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica ebr. 333, fourteenth century.
- 16~~N~~ British Library Add. 26954, fourteenth century.
- 17~~N~~ Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek 1108, fourteenth century.
- 18~~N~~ Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 381, fourteenth century.
- 19~~N~~ Cambridge, University Library Add. 379/1, fourteenth century.
- 20~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 646 (Neubauer 1106), fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 21~~N~~ Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 105, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 22~~N~~ Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 219, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 23~~N~~ Vienna, Oesterreicher Nationalbibliothek Cod. Hebr. 12A, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 24~~N~~ Vienna, Oesterreicher Nationalbibliothek Cod. Hebr. 77, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 25~~N~~ Warsaw, Uniwersytet, Inst. Orientalistyczny 258, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 26~~N~~ Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Ebr. 325, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 27~~N~~ Cambrai, Bibliotheque municipale A. 946, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 28~~N~~ Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica ebr. 318, 1402.
- 29~~N~~ Jerusalem, Jewish National & University Library 8^o4199, 1410.
- 30~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Canon Or. 110 (Neubauer 1124), 1482.
- 31~~N~~ Israel Museum 180/53, approximately 1460.
- 32~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 156 (Neubauer 1114), fifteenth century.
- 33~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 650 (Neubauer 1128/1), fifteenth century.
- 34~~N~~ Oxford, Bodleian Opp. 777 (Neubauer 1131), fifteenth century.
- 35~~N~~ Berne, Burgerbibliothek A423, fifteenth century.
- 36~~N~~ Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 42, fifteenth century.

- 37א Hanover, Kestner-Museum MS 3953, fifteenth century.
 38א British Library Or. 12281, fifteenth century.
 39א Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek Cod. Reuchlin 11, fifteenth century.

FRENCH

ולמשומדים אל תהי תקוה
 וכל המינים כרגע יאבדו
 וכל אויבי עמך בית ישראל מהרה יכרתו
 ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר ותשפיל
 ותשמיד ותכניע כל איובנו במהרה בימינו
 בא"י שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

ולמשומדים | צ3, צ4, צ5, צ7, צ9, צ10, פ1, פ2, אנ1 למשומדים. || וכל המינים | צ5, צ8, צ10, צ11,
 פ2 נ' והמלשינים ומסורות כולם. || יאבדו | צ3 יאבדו. || עמך בית ישראל | צ3, צ4, צ11, פ1,
 פ2 ח' בית. || יכרתו | צ2, צ3, צ5, צ8, צ11, פ1, פ2 יכרתו. || ותמגר | צ11 ח'. || ותשפיל ותשמיד
 ותכניע | צ2, צ3, צ5 ותשפיל ותכניע. צ4 ותכניע ותשפיל. צ9, צ10, אנ1 ותכניע ותשפיל
 את. צ6 ותכניע ותשפיל ותכלה ותשמיד את. צ7 ותשפיל ותכניע ותכלה את. צ8 ותשפיל
 ותכניע ותכלה. צ11 ותכניע ותשפיל ותכלה. פ1 ותכניע ותפיל. פ2 ותכניע ותשפיל ותפיל. ||
 כל איובנו | צ8, צ11 כל איוביך וכל שונאך. || במהרה | צ2 מהרה.

Manuscripts (צ = צפון צרפת, פ = פרובנס, דרום צרפת, אנ = אנגליה)

- 1צ Oxford, Corpus Christi College 133, twelfth century.
 2צ University of Toronto MS Friedberg 3-014, thirteenth century?
 3צ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 759 (Neubauer 1118), thirteenth–fourteenth century.
 4צ Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 2766 (961), thirteenth–fourteenth century.
 5צ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. (336 (Neubauer 1129/1), approximately 1394.
 6צ Oxford, Bodleian MS Opp. 335 (Neubauer 1130/1), fourteenth century.
 7צ Columbia University x 893 J 51 Q, fourteenth century.
 8צ Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1902 (403), 1470.
 9צ Oxford, Bodleian Or. 24 (Neubauer 1122), fourteenth–fifteenth century.
 10צ Warsaw, Żydowski Instytut Historyczny 254, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
 11צ Jewish Theological Seminary 4079/6, 1533, rite of Asti, Fossano, and Moncalvo.

- 1אנ Rabbi Jacob Hazan of London, *Ḥeṣ Ḥayyim*, ed., Israel Brody (Jerusalem: Mossad HaRav Kook, 1962) 1:90, according to MS Leipzig, Universitaetsbibliothek B.H.Qu.40, end of the thirteenth century.
- 1פ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale Heb. 637, thirteenth–fourteenth century.
- 2פ Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1923 (1117), fifteenth century.

SEFARDI

למשומדים אל תהי תקוה
 וכל המינים וכל המלשינים וכל המסורות כלם כרגע יאבדו
 וכל אויבי עמך ישראל מהרה יכרתו
 ומלכות זדון מהרה תעקר ותשבר ותמגר ותכניע ותשפיל
 ותפיל כל אויבינו וכל שונאינו ותכלם במהרה בימינו
 ברוך אתה ה' שובר אויבים ומכניע זדים

למשומדים | ס11, ולמשומדים. ס2 לכופרים. || תהי | ס11 נ' להם. || וכל המלשינים | ס3, ס4, ס5, ס6, ס7, ס10 והמלשינים. || וכל המסורות | ס2, ס4, ס5, ס1, ס2 ח'. ס6, ס7, ס10 והמסורות. ס8 וכל האפיקורסים. ס3 נמחק ואחריו עוד מילה שלא ניתן לקרוא לגמרי, וה-----ים. ס9 וכל המסרים. ס11 וכל המוסרים. || כלם | ס3, ס4, ס5, ס8, ס9 ח'. || וכל אויבי עמך ישראל | ס2, ס3, ס5 וכל אויבינו וכל שונאינו. ס8, ס9, ס11 וכל אויבינו וכל שונאינו וכל מבקשי רעתינו. ס6 וכל אויבינו. ס4 וכל אויביך. ס1, ס2 וכל אויביך וכל שונאיך. || תעקר ותשבר | ס3 ח'. || ותמגר... תכלם | ס2, ס1, ס2 ותכלה ותכניעם. ס3 תכלה. ס4, ס8 ותמגר ותכניע. ס5 ותכניע. ס6 ותמגר ותכניע ותשפיל. ס9 ותמגר [---] ותכניעם ותשפילם. ס7 ותמגר ותכניע ותכריע ותפיל ותשפיל כל אויבינו וכל שונאינו ותכלם כרגע. ס10 ותמגר ותכניע ותשפיל ותשמיד בכל אויבינו וכל שונאינו. ס11 ותאבדם ותכניעם. || שובר | ס3 משבר.

- ל1 אלום דירינגאדורי[ש] נון אלייא אישפראנשה
 אי טודוש לוש איריג'יש אי טודוש לוש מלשינים קומו פונטו שי דיפירדיראן
 אי טודוש טוש אינימיגוש אי טודוש טוש אבורישיינטיש אליינא שיראן טאג'אדוש
 אי ריינו די סובריוויי אליינה אראנקאראש, אי קיבראנטארא[ש],
 אי אטימאראש, אי אבאטירלושאש איליינה אין נואישטרוש דילייאש
 בינדיג'ו טו ה', קיבראנטאן אינימיגוש אי אבאטיין סובריווייווש.

- ל2 A los reñegados no sea esperanza,
 y todos los herejes y todos los malsines como punto (2: momento)
 seran (2: sean) perdidos.
 Y todos tus enemigos y todos tus aborricientes ayna seran tajados
 y reyno dela soberuia (2: malicia) ayna arrancarás, y quebrantarás, y
 atermarás, y quebrantarlos as ayna (2: presto) en nuestros días.
 Bendicho tu, Adonay, quebrantán enemigos y sojuzgan (2: quebrantán)
 soberuios.

Manuscripts

- 10 Jewish Theological Seminary 4601–3602, ENA 861–82, fourteenth–fifteenth century.
- 20 Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1738 (386), fourteenth–fifteenth century; Catalanian rite (the MS shows signs of censorship).
- 30 Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Cod. hebr. 205, fifteenth century (censored, but the stricken text is mostly legible).
- 40 Jerusalem, Ben Zvi Institute, s19 2048, fifteenth century; Lisbon rite.
- 50 Jerusalem, Jewish National & University Library Heb. 8° 844, fifteenth century; Lisbon rite.
- 60 Biblioteca Palatina Codice Parma de Rossi 1752 (975), fifteenth century.
- 70 Cambridge, University Library Add. 438(5), fifteenth century.
- 80 Cambridge, University Library Add. 1204(6), fifteenth century.
- 90 London, School of Jewish Studies 32, fifteenth–sixteenth century.
- 100 Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurentiana Plut. II. 52, fifteenth–sixteenth century.
- 110 Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit Cod. Or. 4814, sixteenth century, Fez.
- 17 Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale hebr. 668, first half of the fifteenth century; published by Moshe Lazar and Robert Dilligan, *Siddur Tefillot: A Woman's Ladino Prayer Book* (Culver City, Calif.: Labyrinthos, 1995) 44–47.
- ¹27 Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, Moshe Lazar and Robert J. Dilligan, eds., *Libro de oracyones: Ferrara Ladino Siddur (1552)* (Lancaster, Calif.: Labyrinthos, 1995) 61.
- ²27 Cincinnati, Hebrew Union College, Moshe Lazar and Robert J. Dilligan, eds., *Libro de oracyones: Ferrara Ladino Siddur (1552)* (Lancaster, Calif.: Labyrinthos, 1995) 90.