



Conference
of the ERC-Synergy project MiDRASH

8-10 december 2025

Tradition, Innovation and Migration :
digital palaeography in search
of wandering scribes and books

INHA 2, rue Vivienne, 75002 and
CAMPUS CONDORCET, Centre des Colloques,
Place du Front populaire, 93300 Aubervilliers

 / **MiDRASH**
Migrations of Textual and Scribal Traditions
via Large-Scale Computational Analysis
of Medieval Manuscripts in Hebrew Script

Zoom Link :



École Pratique
des Hautes Études



Centres et pratiques
Moyen Âge - Époque contemporaine

aprat





Paris, BNF espagnol 30 fol. 3v-4r, Atlas catalan, Abraham Cresque (Majorque, 1375) - © BNF -

In the Middle Ages, Hebrew Manuscripts were produced across the vast Jewish diaspora from France and Portugal in the west to the borders of China in the East, from England in the north to Yemen in the south. Each culture had its own bookmaking traditions and models of the script. However, these different, often remote centres were not isolated. Texts, books and ideas travelled along commercial routes or roads of exile. The conference "Tradition, innovation and migration: Digital palaeography in search of wandering scribes and books" explores the impact of geographical mobility on the transmission and development of the Hebrew scripts. 'Mobility' or 'migration' is defined broadly. It concerns the impact of travel for learning or trade on the circulation of the models of the Hebrew script, follows individual scribes who for whatever reason abandoned their place of origin and exercised their scribal craft in a new environment and deals with networks of scribes across space. 'Mobility' and 'migration' are understood as a methodological framework to understand the transformation of the Hebrew script in a longue durée perspective. The phenomenon of the mobility of scribes, models, and scripts is studied through the most recent traditional, digital, and AI-based methodologies in Hebrew palaeographical research.

Monday 8 December 2025 INHA, salle Vasari

9.00-9.15 / Welcome by Professor Brigitte Mondrain
Director of the Research Lab SAPRAT - Savoir et Pratiques du Moyen Âge à l'Époque Contemporaine (EPHE, PSL)

9.15-9.30 / Judith Olszowy-Schlanger (EPHE, PSL, Paris / University of Oxford, MiDRASH) Welcome and Introduction: Migration as a Factor of Paleographical Change and its Study in the Digital Age

9.30-10.00 / Address by Professor Colette Sirat (TBC)

Session 1 Wandering Books and Texts

Chair: Daniel Stoekl Ben Ezra (EPHE, PSL, MiDRASH)

10-10.30 / Moshe Lavee (University of Haifa)
Material Imprints of Midrashic Works in the Cairo Genizah: A Preliminary Inquiry

10.30-11.00 / Vered Raziel Kretzmer (University of Bar Ilan, MiDRASH)
Tracing Liturgical Transmission: Automatic Palaeographic Analysis of the Palestinian Prayer Tradition

11.00-11.30 Coffee break

Session 2 Scribal Traditions

Chair : Daniel Stoekl-Ben Ezra (EPHE, PSL, MiDRASH)

11.30-12.00 / Rahel Fronda (the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford)

Micrography as an Innovative Scribal Tradition: the Case of Four 13th-Century French and German Hebrew Bibles

12.00-12.30 / Emile Schrijver (University of Amsterdam, the Jewish Museum of Amsterdam)

Otiyyot Amsterdam, a Paleographical Reality or an Early Modern Marketing Trick?

12.30-14.00 Lunch

Session 3 Changing Handwritings

Chair: Ronny Vollandt (University of Munich)

14.00-14.30 / Joseph O'Hara (Corpus Christi College, Oxford, MiDRASH)

The Hand of Abiathar, the Last Palestinian Gaon

14.30-15.00 / Berat Kurar-Barakat (University of Tel Aviv)

Computational Analysis of Scribal Hands in Huntington 200

15.00-15.30 / Mikhail Arsenev (National Library of Russia, St. Petersburg)

At the Crossroads: The Karaite Scribe Hizkiya ha-Levi and his Torah Scroll from 1361

15.30-16.00 Tea break

Session 4 Scribes Far from Home

Chair: Ronny Vollandt (University of Munich)

16.00-16.30 / Evgeniya Zarubina (EPHE, PSL, Paris, MiDRASH)

Yemenite Scribes Outside of Yemen: the

Case of Saadia b. David ha-Teimani

16.30-17.00 / Javier del Barco (Universidad Complutense, Madrid)

An Ashkenazi Scribe copying Rashi's Commentary in 13th-century Iberia?

17.00-17.30 / Emma Abate (University of Bologna/ IRHT, CNRS, Paris)

Models and Scribe's Versatility in the Atelier of Yehiel Nissim Pisa

Tuesday 9 December 2025 Condorcet

Session 5 Mapping the Mobility of the Ashkenazi Script

Chair: Avi Shmidman (University Bar Ilan, MiDRASH)

9.00-9.30 / Caleb Klein (University of Oxford, St. Cross College)

Hebrew Manuscripts in the Far Reaches of Diaspora: The Development of Anglo-Ashkenazi Square Script and the Dating of CCC MS. 133

9.30-10.00 / Ilona Steiman (University of Münster, Project «Books, their Makers and Owners in New Settlement Areas»)

Narratives of Migration: Masoretic Script between France and Piedmont

10.00-10.30 / Agata Paluch (University of Cologne)

Encoding Authority: Script Adaptability and Lurianic Knowledge Circulations in Early Modern Ashkenaz

10.30-11.00 Coffee break

Session 6 Italian Itinerary of the Hebrew Scripts'

Chair: Avi Shmidman (University Bar Ilan, MiDRASH)

11.00-11.30 / Roberta Tonnarelli (the Jewish Museum of Soragna, Parma)

The Otranto School as an example of Italian script amidst attempts at definition and the circulation of models over time.

11.30-12.00 / Margherita Pepoli (DREST, «La Sapienza»-University of Rome and EPHE-PSL)

Italian Hebrew Script in Romagna between the end of the 14th century and the beginning of the 15th: a case of migration

12.00-12.30 / Elena Lolli (EPHE, PSL, Paris, MiDRASH)

Tracing Italo-Sephardi Scripts: The Handwriting of Meir ben Moses ibn Latif as a Case Study of a Migrant Scribe

12.30-14.00 Lunch

Session 7 Migrating Scripts

Chair: Nachum Dershowitz (University of Tel Aviv, MiDRASH)

14.00-14.30 / Ekaterina Belkyna (Researcher, the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts, Russian Academy of Sciences)

A Judeo-Persian Tafsir of the 11th-12th Centuries written in... Syria? Hebrew Palaeography between Byzantium and Iran

14.30-15.00 / Alexander Gordin (National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, MiDRASH-HebrewPal)

Fifteenth-century Hebrew Writings between Constantinople and Kiev

15.00-15.30 / Miruna Belea (EPHE-PSL, Paris, Project HMDA)

One God, Many Signs: Representations of the Tetragrammaton across Medieval Jewish Cultures and their Inventory on HebrewPal

15.30-16.00 Tea break

Session 8 The Dynamics of Palaeographical Change

Chair: Nachum Dershowitz (University of Tel Aviv, MiDRASH)

16.00-16.30 / Riham Mokrani (EPHE, PSL, Paris, MiDRASH)

A Model on the Move: The Wandering Hand of Yāqūt al-Musta'şimī in Arabic Calligraphy

16.30-17.00 / Edward Shawe-Taylor (University of Oxford)

A Zaragoza in Cairo: a Rare Case of Script Migration from Fatimid Egypt

17.00-17.30 / Daria Vasyutinsky Shapira (University of Tel Aviv, MiDRASH)

Migration of texts in space and time: the current state of research in the automatic dating of medieval Hebrew manuscripts

17.30 / Peter Stokes (EPHE, PSL, Paris, MiDRASH)

Concluding remarks

Wednesday 10 December 2025 BNF, Site Richelieu

9.30-12.00 / Visit of the Hebrew Manuscript Collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France

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Zoom link:

<https://campus-condorcet.zoom.us/j/83460736411?pwd=JT5ahuPyYjx7ptlysdRAEIF3H7OXC4.1>