

The Iconography of the Biblical Cycle of the Second Nuremberg and the Yahudah Haggadot: Tradition and Innovation

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For the past fifty years, the study of illuminated manuscripts has been predominantly a search for models. A picture cycle is typically thought of as a copy of a model, which in turn derives from still earlier visual sources, that ultimately lead the scholar back to late antique prototypes. This method, developed in the 1940s by Kurt Weitzmann¹ has given us many productive insights into early manuscript production, the character of prototypes, the development of iconographic types and the origins of specific models. It also yielded important information about cultural exchanges. Recently, however, this approach, which dominated research on illuminated manuscripts for decades and in particular that on Hebrew illuminated manuscripts, has been criticized more and more frequently by a number of scholars, including John Lowden and Anthony Cutler.²

Fascinating though the search for models may be, the preoccupation with this aspect of manuscript illumination has been frustrating to scholars interested in other aspects of art in general, and illumination in particular, such as the creative processes of artists and their role in the complex interplay of tradi-

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¹ K. Weitzmann, *Illustration in Roll and Codex. A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration*, Princeton 1947.

² J. Lowden, "Concerning the Cotton Genesis and Other Illustrated Manuscripts of Genesis", in: *Gesta XXXI* (1992), 40–53; *idem.*, *The Octateuchs—A Study in Byzantine Manuscript Illustration*, University Park 1992; A. Cutler, "The End of Antiquity in Two Illuminated Manuscripts", in: *Journal of Roman Archeology II* (1989), 401–409.

tion, continuity and innovation. Lowden, for example, argues that the Biblical picture cycles of the middle Byzantine Octateuchs, which Weitzmann believed were derived from a late antique prototype,³ were composed largely of tenth century innovations, with only a few scenes that hark back to earlier prototypes.⁴ The importance of the role played by models and tradition in Medieval culture should not be underestimated; nevertheless Lowden's approach, by relegating the (often lost or hypothetical) model to the background, is helpful in that it makes room for the actual work of art and its unique characteristics. It is especially helpful in those frustrating cases where no clear relationship to iconographic tradition can be discovered and the difficulty of finding models or prototypes leaves us to wonder whether they existed at all.

In 1957 the Schocken Library in Jerusalem purchased a manuscript from the German National Museum in Nuremberg known as the Second Nuremberg Haggadah.⁵ The manuscript was in Nuremberg at least since the 1850s,⁶ but nothing of its earlier history is known. In 1955 the late Professor Mordechai Narkiss⁷ re-discovered a manuscript known to German Jewish scholars already in the late 19th century, but later lost for several decades. The manuscript—named after his last owner the Yahudah Haggadah⁸—was presented by Yahudah's widow to the Israel Museum. The Second Nuremberg Haggadah was introduced to scholars by David Heinrich Müller and Julius von Schlosser in their book on the Sarajevo Haggadah, the famous pioneer publi-

³ Weitzmann, *Roll and Codex*, *op. cit.*; H. L. Kessler and K. Weitzmann, *The Frescoes of the Dura Synagogue and Christian Art*, Washington 1990.

⁴ Lowden, *Octateuchs*, *op. cit.*

⁵ Jerusalem, Schocken Library, MS 24087; B. Narkiss and G. Sed-Rajna, *Index of Jewish Art. Iconographical Index of Hebrew Illuminated Manuscripts*, Jerusalem-Paris 1976.

⁶ The number MS 7121 indicates that the manuscript was purchased by the German National Museum between 1852 and 1854; I thank Dr. U. Mende, director of the Library of the German National Museum for her letter of August 14, 1990; see also B. Deneke, "Zur Geschichte der Sammlung jüdischer Altertümer im Germanischen Nationalmuseum", in: *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1981), 141.

⁷ M. Narkiss, "The Yahudah Haggadah (Heb.)", in: *Zmanim* April 6, 1955, 5.

⁸ Jerusalem, Israel Museum, MS 180/50, Narkiss-Sed-Rajna, *Index*, *op. cit.*

cation on Jewish Art in 1898.⁹ The Yahudah Haggadah was described by David Kaufmann in 1899,¹⁰ before it was lost. Neither of the small books contains a colophon; however, an analysis of their style indicates that they were most likely produced in Franconia, either in Bamberg or in Nuremberg during the late 1460s.¹¹ The manuscripts contain respectively forty and forty-one folios, each of which has two or three marginal illustrations. A continuous Biblical cycle, comprising the books of Exodus and Genesis as well as a few from extra-pentateuchal books is interwoven with sequences of miniatures that pertain exclusively to such aspects of the Passover holiday as the preparations for the ceremony and various moments of the *seder*. Some of these Passover miniatures exhibit messianic allusions. The iconography, selection and arrangement of the illustrations in both manuscripts are almost identical. The Old Testament scenes are arranged as a continuous Biblical cycle following the chronology of the Bible and are not directly related to the text of the Haggadah. This is a very uncommon feature in Ashkenazic Haggadot. Extensive Biblical cycles are common in Sephardic Haggadot, where they appear on the first pages of the manuscripts, prior to the text and disconnected from it. Most Ashkenazic Haggadot contain a picture cycle adapted precisely to the text, showing Biblical episodes only when they are mentioned in the Haggadah. In this concern the Second Nuremberg and the Yahudah Haggadah are therefore exceptional.

The main characteristics of the style are the following: the unframed little pictures are drawn in dark, almost black ink in rather heavy lines—outlines and the inner lines are of the same thickness and heaviness. The lines are closed and uninterrupted, there are no sketchy double lines. In comparison to the style of contemporary pen drawings in Germany, they seem much more controlled and disciplined. The lines are straight, meeting in mostly right angles, there are almost no rounded lines. There is

⁹ D. H. Müller and J. von Schlosser, *Die Sarajevo Haggada. Eine spanisch-jüdische Bilderhandschrift des Mittelalters*, Vienna 1898.

¹⁰ D. Kaufmann, “Les cycles d’images du type allemand dans l’illustration de la Haggada”, in: *Revue des Etudes Juives* XXXVIII (1899), 74–102.

¹¹ K. Kogman-Appel, *The Second Nuremberg Haggadah—A Stylistic and Iconographic Analysis*, Ph. D. thesis, Hebrew University, Jerusalem 1993, 178ff.

no hatching. This style reminds to a large extant woodcuts of the late second phase, to be dated around the middle of the century, until 1470 approximately. Typical for this woodcut style are the heavy, uninterrupted, angular lines without hatching, while in drawings of this period we often find much more sophisticated hatching. This style, so different from the elaborately executed miniatures of the 13th- and 14th-century Bibles and prayer-books is therefore not an evidence for artistic decline, but reflects rather the early development of the graphic arts in Germany.

Scholars of Jewish art have long been aware of the close relationship of the two manuscripts, but, as Bezalel Narkiss has frequently observed, the exact nature of this relationship has been puzzling: was one manuscript copied from the other, or were both copied from a common model?¹² In fact, as I have shown elsewhere, an examination of the style and technique reveals that the two Haggadot were produced by the same illuminator in a continuous working process that began with the Second Nuremberg manuscript and concluded with the Yahudah Haggadah.¹³ For this reason, no „stemma“ indicating either their dependence on a common model or their interdependence, can be established. For the same reason, no clear conclusions can be drawn about the iconographic traditions of these manuscripts in terms of Weitzmann's recension method.

As the following analysis of the Old Testament cycles will demonstrate, some pictures have only weak parallels in other cycles, to which they bear little or no resemblance, while some have no parallels at all. This is also true of the pictures related to the text of the Haggadah. A significantly large number of illustrations, then, do not belong to any iconographic tradition. Others, indeed, do possess comparable parallels; however, these do not point to a homogeneous iconographic tradition, but rather suggest that a variety of diverse models was used.

¹² This has been most recently discussed by B. Narkiss in M. M. Weinstein (ed.), *The Washington Haggadah: A Facsimile Edition of an Illuminated Fifteenth Century Hebrew Manuscript at the Library of Congress Signed by Joel ben Simeon*, Washington 1991, 52.

¹³ K. Kogman-Appel, "The Second Nuremberg Haggadah and the Yahudah Haggadah: Were They Made By the Same Artist?", in: *Proceedings of the Eleventh World Congress of Jewish Studies, Jerusalem 1993*, Division D, vol. II, Jerusalem 1994, 25–32.

A scene from the childhood cycle of Moses shows him walking towards a building with Pharaoh's daughter (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 9v, see pict. 3, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 9r). The rhyme in the adjacent text scroll mentions the princess' joy at Moses having been rescued from danger. This could refer either to the Biblical tale in which the princess rescued the infant Moses from the Nile, or to a well-known and frequently illustrated Rabbinic legend in which the child, having snatched off the king's crown provoked the royal counselors' suspect and would have been put to death had not the archangel Gabriel intervened.¹⁴ The second alternative is more likely, because an illustration of this episode precedes the picture under discussion (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 9r, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 8v). Numerous Rabbinic commentaries describe Moses' life as a prince after the event at Pharaoh's table referring to the king's and the princess' affection for the infant.¹⁵ No parallel, not even a remote one, can be found for the depiction of the princess' joy.

Another picture shows Moses imprisoned in a tower and his future wife Zippora bringing food to him (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 12v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 11v, see pict. 4). The text in the scroll refers to a *Midrash* in which Zippora's father Jethro (sometimes identified as one of the royal counselors whose suspicions were aroused by the crown-snatching incident) recognized Moses as the future savior of Israel from the Egyptian captivity. He therefore incarcerated him and attempted to starve him to death. For seven (or, according to some versions, ten) years, Zippora secretly brought food to the tower and convinced her father that Moses was being preserved by a miracle. Jethro then released Moses and gave him Zippora's hand in marriage.¹⁶ This is not a Biblical scene with a *midrashic* element, but a composition drawn entirely from the *Midrash*. As in the previous case, no parallel for this scene can be found.

¹⁴ An early version of this legend appears in Josephus Flavius, *Antiquitates* 2:9, 7. For the relevant *Midrashim* see *Midrash Tanhuma, hamisha humshei tora im perushim 'etz Joseph*, Jerusalem 1960, *shmot* 8, vol. I, 64b or *Shmot rabbah* 1:26, A. Shinan, *Midrash Shmot rabbah, parashot 1-14*, Jerusalem–Tel Aviv 1984, 82f.

¹⁵ For example, *Sepher hayashar*, J. Dan (ed.), Jerusalem 1986, 291.

¹⁶ For example, *Jalqut shimoni*, D. Heimann, D. N. Lehrer, Y. Shiloni (ed.), no. 170, vol. III, Jerusalem 1973–77, 61 or *Sepher hayashar, op. cit.*, 302.

A miniature in the Genesis cycle (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 32v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 31v, see pict. 5), which in our manuscripts follows the Exodus cycle, shows Rebecca and her young sons Jacob and Esau visiting a scholar who sits at a table, with an open book in front of him. This illustrates a *midrashic* elaboration of the Biblical account of the different characters of the two brothers. Both, according to the *Midrash*, were properly educated, but only Jacob became attached to the houses of learning, the *Batei Midrash*, while Esau became a hunter and served in the houses of idolatry.¹⁷ This miniature has no parallels in either Jewish or Christian cycles.¹⁸ It is significant that all the unparalleled pictures illustrate midrashic rather than Biblical traditions.

Another group of illustrations depicts episodes known from other cycles, but does so using an unconventional iconography often drawn from *midrashic* sources and Jewish customs. A striking example of the latter occurs in the wedding of Moses and Zippora (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 12v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 11v, see pict. 4). Moses wears a very common head covering, known as a *chaperon*, with a long extension on the back that is spread over the heads of the couple. This detail is unparalleled, but apparently true to local custom. The *huppa* as we know it from the modern Ashkenazic wedding does not appear before the 16th century. It is first mentioned by Moses Isserles in his glossae to the *Schulhan Aruh*.¹⁹ More common was the *tallit* covering the couple's head instead, as shown in the 13th century

¹⁷ See for example *Midrash Bereshit rabbah* 63:10, Ch. Albeck and Y. Theodor (ed.), Jerusalem 1965, vol. II, 692.

¹⁸ The Old Testament cycle of the Sarajevo Haggadah, Sarajevo, National Museum (currently in the National Bank), fol. 9v, Spain, ca. 1350 contains an image of Jacob as a Rabbinic scholar, based on a related biographical tale, see *Midrash Bereshit rabbah*, 68:5, *op. cit.* vol. III, 4. The illustrations of the Ashkenazic Haggadot and that of the Sarajevo Haggadah were based on different, though related, written sources and have nothing in common; a facsimile edition of the Sarajevo Haggadah was published by C. Roth, New York 1968.

¹⁹ *Orah Hayyim* 376, for further sources see N. Feuchtwanger, "Interrelations Between the Jewish and Christian Wedding in Medieval Ashkenaz", in: *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies*, Division D, Jerusalem 1986, vol. II, 31.

Worms *Mahzor*, from the region of Würzburg.²⁰ Rabbi Moses Mintz, who was active in the second half of the 15th century at various towns in Franconia, described this use of the *chaperon* or *gugel* in a Bamberg wedding ceremony, and noted that it symbolized the union of the couple.²¹ By combining a purely local custom with common Old Testament iconography, the illuminator created an unparalleled genre picture.²²

The departure from Egypt (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 19v–20r, see pict. 6, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 18v–19r) includes none of the conventional elements that typically appear in Jewish parallels. The more “conventional” type includes an architectural setting, well-illustrated in a wall painting from the 3rd century synagogue at Dura Europos,²³ and in a group of Sephardic Passover Haggadot;²⁴ in the latter the departing Israelites are shown with raised hands and the onlooking Egyptians wave to them. A Christian parallel occurs in the Ashburnham Pentateuch,²⁵ a 6th or 7th century Christian manuscript of the Vulgate, probably of Italian provenance, as Dorothy Hoogland Verkerk has convincingly demonstrated recently.²⁶ In view of its numer-

²⁰ Jerusalem, Jewish National and University Library, MS 4^o 781, vol. I, fol. 72v, M. Beit-Arieh (ed.), *Worms Mahzor, Jewish National and University Library MS Heb. 4^o 781/I*, London 1985.

²¹ See M. Güdemann, *Geschichte des Erziehungswesens und der Kultur der Juden in Deutschland während des XIV und XV Jahrhunderts*, Vienna 1888, 121; A. Eckstein, *Geschichte der Juden im ehemaligen Fürstbistum Bamberg*, Bamberg 1898, 292.

²² Mendel and Thérèse Metzger have contended that the wedding ceremony depicted in the Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadot records a custom common throughout Germany. In view of Moses Mintz' testimony and the absence of further evidence, this is rather doubtful, see M. and Th. Metzger, *Jüdisches Leben im Mittelalter nach illuminierten Handschriften vom 13. bis 16. Jahrhundert*, Würzburg 1983, 231f. For a critical review of Metzger's approach see E. Horowitz, “The Way We Were: Jewish Life in the Middle Ages”, in: *Jewish History* V/1 (1986), 75–90.

²³ E. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period*, New York 1968, vol. XI, pl. 14.

²⁴ See for example the Golden Haggadah, London, British Library, MS Add. 27219, Spain, ca. 1320, fol. 14v; B. Narkiss, *The Golden Haggadah - A Fourteenth Century Illuminated Manuscript in the British Museum. Facsimile and Introduction*, London 1970.

²⁵ Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, NAL 2334.

ous *midrashic* elements, it is believed to derive from a Jewish prototype.²⁷ The Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadot, like other Ashkenazic Haggadot, replace this traditional representation with a lively, genre-like scene of medieval German Jews, whose life, due to historical circumstances, involved traveling all too often. This approach is common also in other Ashkenazic depictions of the departure abandoning the conventional type and replacing it by a lively picture of everyday life. The bear in the background, however, is unique to our manuscripts, an apparent reference to the Philistines whom the Israelites avoided on their way to the promised land.

The illustration of the drowning Egyptians (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 21v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 20v, see pict. 7) contains a novel representation of a frequently depicted *midrashic* element. According to the Rabbinic tradition, Pharaoh repented his infidelity and was therefore rescued from the Red Sea.²⁸ The image of Pharaoh almost entirely immersed except for his crowned head and his hands raised in prayer is peculiar to our Haggadot. Although the motif of Pharaoh's rescue is well known in Jewish and Christian parallels, its iconography can vary to a significant extent. The version in the 14th-century Sarajevo Haggadah from Catalonia, for example, shows Pharaoh standing in the flood surrounded by drowning soldiers, while the Israelites cross the sea on curved, dry paths.²⁹ The Ashburnham Pentateuch shows the

²⁶ D. Hoogland Verkerk, *Liturgy and Narrative in the Exodus Cycle of the Ashburnham Pentateuch*, Ph. D. thesis, Rutgers University, New Brunswick 1992, 185–195.

²⁷ J. Gutmann, "The Jewish Origin of the Ashburnham Pentateuch Miniatures", in: *Jewish Quarterly Review* N. S. XLIV (1953–54), 62–69, repr. in: J. Gutmann (ed.), *No Graven Images. Studies in Art and the Hebrew Bible*, New York 1971, 329–346; K. Schubert, "Die Miniaturen des Ashburnham Pentateuch im Lichte der rabbinischen Traditionen", in: *Kairos* 18 (1976), 191–212 and recently *idem.*, "Jewish Pictorial Traditions in Early Christian Art", in: H. Schreckenberg and K. Schubert, *Jewish Historiography and Iconography in Early and Medieval Christianity*, Maastricht–Minneapolis 1992, 141–260. Against the assumption of a Jewish prototype, see F. Rickert, *Studien zum Ashburnham Pentateuch*, Ph. D. thesis, Bonn 1986.

²⁸ For example *Mekhilta de Rabbi Yishmael, beshallah* 7, J. Neusner (ed.), Atlanta 1988, vol. I, 167; see B. Narkiss, "Pharaoh is Dead and Living at the Gates of Hell", in: *Journal of Jewish Art* X (1984), 6–13.

²⁹ See n. 18, fol. 28r.

king seated on horseback on a dry island.³⁰ Some Christian examples of Byzantine origin show Pharaoh with a halo, a clear sign of his repentance and salvation.³¹

One of the more frequently discussed extra-Biblical episodes is that of Abraham in the fiery furnace (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 30v, see pict. 8, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 29v). The *Midrash* of Abraham and Nimrod exists in many different versions³² and was known to Christian writers as well.³³ A poem by Paulinus of Nola indicates that it was depicted on the walls of one of his city's churches, though we have no information what the picture looked like.³⁴ Although some scholars believe, that the various depictions of the fiery furnace derive from a common late antique prototype,³⁵ their iconographic diversity indicates, as Gutmann has pointed out,³⁶ that they were created independently of one another. The depiction in the Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadah, portraying Abraham as an infant is extremely unusual and appears nowhere else.³⁷ The accompanying rhyme refers to the *midrashic* tradition that Abraham knew the Lord at the age of three. This tradition was linked to his later encounter with Nimrod only in later writings, known as "rewritten Bible". A medieval text, the *Ma'ase Avraham*,³⁸ makes the context especially clear and probably had a direct influence on the depictions of the Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadah. Most illustra-

³⁰ See n. 25, fol. 68r.

³¹ For example in the Paris Psalter, Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Cod. gr. 139, fol. 419r, Narkiss, *Pharaoh, op. cit.*, fig. 1.

³² For example *Midrash Bereshit rabbah, op. cit.*, vol. II, 54, Babylonian *Talmud Sanhedrin* 190b.

³³ Jerome, *Questiones in Genesis* II, 28, in: *PL* XXIII, 956; Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 16, 15, in: *CCSL CDLXXXI*, 531ff; and later Peter Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, in: *PL* CXCVIII, 1091.

³⁴ R. C. Goldschmidt, *Paulinus' Churches at Nola—Texts, Translations and Commentary*, Amsterdam 1940, 61-65.

³⁵ Narkiss, *Golden Haggadah, op. cit.*, 44ff.

³⁶ J. Gutmann, "Abraham in the Fire of the Chaldeans—A Jewish Legend in Jewish, Christian and Islamic Art", in: *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 7 (1973), 352.

³⁷ K. Appel, "Abraham als dreijähriger Knabe im Feuerofen des Nimrod", in: *Kairos* 25 (1983), 36-40.

³⁸ Published by A. Jelinek, *Beth hamidrash*, Leipzig 1853-57, vol. I, repr. Jerusalem 1967, 25.

tors followed the more common version found in *Bereshit rabbah* and other late antique sources,³⁹ which do not include the motif of the infant's cognition of God.

Whereas the sacrifice of Isaac is thoroughly conventional in our manuscripts, the following illustration is very peculiar indeed (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 31v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 30v, see pict. 9). It shows Rebecca and Abraham's servant Eliezer, both mounted on camels, approaching Abraham's tent. Above them, on the right margin, appears the inverted figure of Isaac, who, according to the accompanying rhyme is about to return from paradise. This reflects a Rabbinic legend that attempted to explain Isaac's absence from the Biblical narrative between the sacrifice on Mount Moriah and Rebecca's arrival: Isaac, we are told, was slightly wounded during the sacrifice, temporarily died, and spent three years in paradise.⁴⁰ Only one other manuscript, also Ashkenazic, alludes to this *Midrash*, but it renders it in a completely different manner. This is a clear instance of two artists independently visualizing the same Rabbinic tradition.⁴¹

Another example shows Rebecca consulting Sem and Eber (Second Nuremberg, fol. 32v, Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 31v, see pict. 10), Noah's descendents who figure in the *midrashic* tradition as prototypes of Rabbinic teaching and scholarship. The relevant *Midrash* is a commentary to the Biblical narrative in Gen. 25,22 where Rebecca, experiencing discomfort during her pregnancy, asks the Lord and learns that two nations are about to be born from her womb. In the Bible she consults the Lord directly, but according to the legend Sem and Eber acted as her intermediaries.⁴² A parallel to this *midrashic* reflection can be found in the Ashburnham Pentateuch,⁴³ but, again, the two renderings have very little in common. The latter shows a temple-like struc-

³⁹ See n. 32.

⁴⁰ *Pirqe de R. Eliezer*, Warsaw 1852, chap. 31, 71b; see also S. Spiegel, "Aggadot on the Sacrifice of Isaac (Heb.)", in: *Jubilee Volume for Alexander Marx for his 70th Birthday*, New York 1950, 491.

⁴¹ Hamburg, Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. hebr. 37, Germany, ca. 1425; J. Gutmann, "The Sacrifice of Isaac in Medieval Jewish Art", in: *Artibus et historiae* VIII/16 (1987), fig. 14.

⁴² For example *Midrash Bereshit rabbah*, *op. cit.*, 63:6, vol. II, 684.

⁴³ See n. 25, fol. 22v.

ture with an altar and Rebecca on her knees, alluding to another *midrashic* tradition, that identified Sem with Melchizedek, whom both Judaism and Christianity regard as the prototype of the priest. Though both versions share the same basic textual source, it is doubtful that they share a common visual tradition.

To acknowledge that the illustrator of the Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadot was a remarkably creative and inventive personality is not, of course, to say that he never made use of models. Having treated this subject more fully elsewhere, I shall discuss it only briefly here.⁴⁴ Surprisingly, the Southern German tradition of Old Testament illustration, as reflected in exemplars of Rudolph von Ems' chronicle of the world and numerous copies of Peter Comestor's *Historia scholastica*, had very little influence on the artist. Although these cycles constituted his immediate artistic environment, iconographic relations to them are rare and limited almost entirely to extra-pentateuchal illustrations.

The influence of the artistic environment manifests itself largely in decorative features. As mentioned before, some of the pages contain pictures relevant to the Passover ceremony. Because certain parts of the text, such as the recitation of the *Hallel*, offer little material suitable for illustration, these pages are illuminated with stereotypical figures reading the Haggadah or lifting a cup of wine, and with marginal decorations consisting primarily of different kinds of animals. The artist drew most of these animals from a very popular repertoire of motifs found in a large group of illuminated manuscripts, early prints⁴⁵ and engraved playing cards.⁴⁶ These motifs were well-known throughout much of West-

⁴⁴ See Kogman-Appel, *Nuremberg*, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ H. Lehmann-Haupt, *Gutenberg and the Master of the Playing Cards*, New Haven 1966; H. Rosenfeld, "Der Meister der Spielkarten und die Spielkartentraktion und Gutenbergs typographische Pläne im Rahmen der Entwicklung der graphischen Künste", in: *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* V (1964), 1506–1519; E. Vaassen, "Die Werkstatt der Mainzer Riesenbibel in Würzburg und ihr Umkreis", in: *Archiv für Geschichte des Buchwesens* XIII (1973), 1131–1286.

⁴⁶ For more recent literature about the playing card motifs see A. van Buren and Sh. Edmunds, "Playing Cards and Manuscripts: Some Widely Disseminated Fifteenth Century Model Sheets", in: *Art Bulletin* LVI (1974), 12–30; M. Wolff, "Some Manuscript Sources for the Playing Card Master's Number Cards", in: *Art Bulletin* LXIV (1982), 587–600.

ern and Central Europe, but especially in Southern and Middle Germany. They must have been known also in Nuremberg, where they appear in a manuscript produced in the Katharinenkloster during the 1460s.⁴⁷ A bird on top of an architectural frame (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 23v, see pict. 11), for example has a close counterpart in engraved cards by the so-called Master of the Playing Cards (see pict. 12);⁴⁸ a deer (Second Nuremberg Haggadah, fol. 27v, see pict. 13), recalls an engraving by the same Master (see pict. 14), and an elephant with a tower (Yahudah Haggadah, fol. 27r, see pict. 15) reflects a similar design from a closely related set of cards see pict. 16).⁴⁹ The illustrator of the Haggadot apparently had access to this repertoire in some way or the other. As the counterparts occur in different sets of cards, we can assume, that the artist used a model book rather than the cards themselves. In general, the influence of Southern German art was restricted to style and technique, fashions and decorative motifs. The tradition of German Old Testament illustration, however, had almost no influence at all.

For some of his narrative depictions, the illuminator drew upon a number of models from varying dates, origins and cultural backgrounds. One such model must have been of Jewish origin and German provenance, with connections to Northern Italian Jewish art. Some affinity (which, however, should not be overestimated) exists to manuscripts associated with Joel ben Simeon, a wandering scribe and illuminator of Southern German origin, who was active at various locations in Northern Italy;⁵⁰ however, the character and background of this relationship, as well as the question of whether the relevant elements and motifs originated in Italy or Germany, are still matters of debate. A similar model seems to be manifest in a picture Bible produced in 1521 in Venice by the Jewish painter and woodcutter Moses dal Castellazzo.

⁴⁷ Nuremberg, Stadtbibliothek, Cent. I, 50.

⁴⁸ Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Kh 25res and Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstichkabinett; M. Geisberg, *Das Älteste gestochene deutsche Kartenspiel*, Straßburg 1905, 7–14.

⁴⁹ Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

⁵⁰ For this topic, including also the question of the Second Nuremberg and the Yahudah Haggadah and references to previous research, see B. Narkiss in Weinstein, *Washington Haggadah*, *op. cit.*

The Bible itself is lost, but a picture cycle in the Jewish Historical Institute at Warsaw,⁵¹ has been identified by Ursula and Kurt Schubert as a copy of it.⁵² Finally, a small number of pictures in our Haggadot reflect earlier Christian models. This influence is most apparent in the Joseph cycle, but can also be detected in a few miniatures illustrating other parts of the Pentateuch. These pictures reflect a typically Western iconographic tradition frequently referred to as the Cotton Genesis tradition—or, in terms of Weitzmann’s recension method, as the Cotton Genesis recension⁵³—which includes a large group of cycles containing the book of Genesis and other books of the Pentateuch,⁵⁴ the iconography of which seems to be interrelated as well. Many Western cycles, including Jewish cycles,⁵⁵ were influenced by this tradition to varying degrees. In the Second Nuremberg and the Yahudah Haggadot this influence is very slight: the Jewish tradition of miniature painting seems to have had a stronger impact on our illuminator.

It is clear from the foregoing analysis that the Jewish artist of the Second Nuremberg and Yahudah Haggadot, far from being merely a talented copyist, was a highly original, creative and innovative illustrator, well acquainted with recent artistic trends of

⁵¹ Cod. 1164.

⁵² K. Schubert (ed.), *Bilderpentateuch von Moses dal Castellazzo, Venedig 1521*, Vienna 1986.

⁵³ The problem of the Cotton Genesis tradition has been exhaustively discussed by K. Weitzmann and H. L. Kessler in their publication about the reconstruction of the Cotton Genesis: *The Cotton Genesis—British Library, Codex Cotton Otho B VI*, Princeton 1986.

⁵⁴ For the probability that the original Cotton tradition contained not only the book of Genesis but other books of the Pentateuch as well see H. L. Kessler, “Traces of an Early Illustrated Pentateuch”, in: *Journal of Jewish Art* VII (1981), 20–27; S. Arensberg-MacMillan, *The Padua Bible and the Late Medieval Biblical Picture Book*, Ph. D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore 1986; Hoogland Verkerk, *Ashburnham Pentateuch*, *op. cit.*

⁵⁵ K. Kogman-Appel, “Die Modelle des Exoduszyklus der Goldenen Haggada (London, British Library, Add. 27210)”, in: C. Thoma et al. (ed.), *Judentum – Ausblicke und Einsichten. Festgabe für Kurt Schubert zum siebzigsten Geburtstag*, Frankfurt/Main 1993, 269–300; *idem.*, “The Picture Cycles of the Rylands Haggadah and the so-called Brother Haggadah and their Relation to the Western Tradition of Old Testament Illustration”, in: *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library (forthcoming)*.

the developing graphic arts, thoroughly familiar with the Rabbinic tradition and deeply concerned to emphasize the Jewish character of his work. He did not depend upon a single source, but was inspired by a variety of models, elements of which he combined freely with his own unique creations.