STUDIES IN HEBREW LITERATURE
AND JEWISH CULTURE
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VOLUME 12

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STUDIES IN HEBREW LITERATURE
AND JEWISH CULTURE

Presented to Albert van der Heide on the
Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday

EDITED BY

MARTIN F.J. BAASTEN & REINIER MUNK
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According to the sayings of the wise, reaching sixty-five is not much of an issue; at that stage in life one hasn’t even attained the age of ראובן, ‘grey hair’. In present-day academic life, however, sixty-five seems to be a turning point in one’s scholarly career. More often than not the scholar in question is asked to retreat from his position at the university and is relieved from the burden of academic administration and teaching.

The fact that Albert van der Heide will reach the age of sixty-five in July 2007 and, as a consequence, will leave Leiden University and the Vrije Universiteit, provides his colleagues from various academic institutions with an excellent opportunity to honour him with a Liber Amicorum in the true sense of the word. And for someone who signs himself in Hebrew as אודו (AvdH), what other title could such a volume carry than אודה לאודו, ‘Ode to Albert’?

As those who know him will readily acknowledge, Albert takes an unusually broad interest in numerous aspects of Hebrew, Aramaic and Jewish studies, as well as other sides of human culture; his own scholarly development clearly attests to this fact.

Whereas Albert’s MA thesis was concerned with the use of lamed with infinitive construct in Biblical Hebrew, his dissertation explored quite another field: the textual transmission of the Yemenite Targum of Lamentations. But long before, Albert had kept his end up in codicology by publishing a thoroughly revised and updated catalogued description of Hebrew manuscripts from the Leiden University Library. The nature of Rabbinic midrash as well as medieval exegesis, in all its ramifications, including lexicography, would take pride of place during much of Albert’s career, while figures such as Rashi, Maimonides and Moses Hayyim Luzzatto enjoyed his special interest and still continue to do so. The history of Hebrew scholarship in the Netherlands, including Hebrew printing, did not pass unnoticed to Albert, while he also feels at home in Modern Hebrew literature, the novels

and stories of Samuel Yosef Agnon possibly being his all-time favourite. In addition to all this, Albert cherishes an active passion for music (his collection of flutes is impressive), typography and the classic and old-fashioned printing press.

The editors hope that the present volume offered to Albert van der Heide will contain much to his liking. Indeed, most of his fields of interest—what book could actually encompass all of them?—are represented in this volume.

To begin with, several contributions deal with various aspects of rabbinic studies. Harry Sysling (Amersfoort) opted for a comprehensive study of rabbinic ‘Laments at the departure of a sage’, a fitting title for a contribution to a volume such as this, even though, fortunately, Albert’s departure is of a rather different kind. Pieter W. van der Horst (Utrecht University) traces the vicissitudes of early rabbinic traditions concerning ‘The site of Adam’s tomb’ in Jerome. Alberdina Houtman (Protestant Theological University, Kampen) explores ‘The Targumic versions of the martyrdom of Isaiah’, a story inserted in the Tosefta Targum on Isaiah 66.

Studies in medieval Judaism are conspicuously present in this volume, for obvious reasons. Angel Sáenz-Badillos (Real Colegio Complutense, Madrid and Harvard University) places the exegetical concerns of the well-known polymath Abraham ibn Ezra firmly within a broader cultural context in his ‘Abraham ibn Ezra and the twelfth-century European renaissance’. Wout van Bekkum (State University of Groningen) presents us with “The Emperor of Poets”: Immanuel of Rome (1261–1332), an introduction to this Hebrew poet from the time of Dante. Colette Sirat (Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris) emphasises the need for making new catalogues of medieval Hebrew manuscripts: ‘New catalogues for medieval Hebrew manuscripts?’. Nicholas de Lange (University of Cambridge) discusses in detail ‘An early Hebrew-Greek Bible glossary from the Cairo Genizah and its significance for the study of Jewish Bible translations into Greek’. Mauro Zonta (University of Rome, La Sapienza) presents his remarkable discovery of some Hebrew passages of Ibn Rushd not preserved in Arabic: ‘A note about two newly-discovered Hebrew quotations of Averroes’ works lost in their original Arabic texts’. Steven Harvey (Bar-Ilan University) re-examines our view of medie-
val Jewish philosophy by discussing ‘The value of Julius Guttmann’s *Die Philosophie des Judentums* for understanding medieval Jewish philosophy today’.

A specimen of early modern Hebrew studies is presented in the contribution of Johannes Tromp (Leiden University), who offers us a translation, annotation and introduction to ‘The treatise on the Patriarch Henoch by Johannes Drusius (1550–1616)’.

Quite a few articles in this volume are concerned with Judaism in the eighteenth century. Adri Offenberg (Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana, Amsterdam) sets out on an enigmatic journey in order to solve ‘The riddle of the baskets of 1726: a glimpse of Jewish book production at Amsterdam in the first half of the eighteenth century’. Joëlle Hansel (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem) explores the twilight zone between philosophy and mysticism in ‘Philosophy and Kabbalah in the eighteenth century: Moses Hayyim Luzzatto, commentator of Maimonides’. Margaretha Folmer (Leiden University and Vrije Universiteit) studies in detail the structure and phraseology of ‘A Jewish childbirth amulet for a girl’ from the collection of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana. Irene Zwiep (University of Amsterdam) discusses some major concepts of Jewish exegesis in ‘From *perush* to *be’ur*: authenticity and authority in eighteenth-century Jewish interpretation’. Resianne Fontaine (University of Amsterdam) presents a comprehensive Jewish treatise on the concept of neighbourly love: ‘Love of one’s neighbour in Pinhas Hurwitz’s *Sefer ha-Berit*’. Reiner Munk (Leiden University and Vrije Universiteit) offers a discussion of ‘Moses Mendelssohn’s conception of Judaism’.

Two articles are concerned with Hebrew linguistics: Martin Baasten (Leiden University) discusses the grammatical structure of the first three biblical verses in ‘First things first: the syntax of Gen 1:1–3 revisited’, whereas Holger Gzella (Leiden University) examines some ‘Unusual verbal forms in the Book of Proverbs and semantic disambiguation’. Finally, Modern Hebrew literature receives attention in Hannah Neudecker’s (Leiden University) essay on the motif of ‘Buildings in the Love Poems by Yehuda Amichai’.

As much as the contributors to the present volume have jointly endeavoured to do justice to Albert van der Heide’s many fields of interest and to further scholarly research in every respect, they have no
intention to deny that an additional reason to bring these studies together was the wish to praise and celebrate Albert’s human kindness and his inspiring congeniality as a colleague and a friend.

Mindful of the Sayings of the Wise, we, as his friends and colleagues, hereby urge Albert not to consider the age of sixty-five as a turning point of any kind. Instead, dear Albert, simply keep going and, of course, עוד מאה וששים! 

MARTIN F.J. BAASTEN & REINIER MUNK