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## HEBREW SCHOLARSHIP AND THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

This book brings together specially commissioned contributions by leading scholars from around the world, who study the place of Hebrew scholarship in the Middle Ages. Hebrew language is at the heart of the volume, but beyond that there is a specific focus on scholarly investigation and writing, interpreted in the broad sense to include not only linguistic study pursued for its own sake but also as applied in other areas, such as biblical commentary or poetic creation. At the same time there is a stress on contemporary scholarship, and several of the contributions survey recent research in major areas.

The place of Hebrew scholarship within a wider medieval world is a subject that receives special attention in the book – particularly the interaction between Jewish scholars and their Christian and Muslim counterparts.

NICHOLAS DE LANGE is Reader in Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the University of Cambridge. He is a former President of the British Association of Jewish Studies, and is a Council Member of the Jewish Historical Society of England. He is the author of many books, including *An Introduction to Judaism* (Cambridge, 2000).

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NICHOLAS DE LANGE  
*University of Cambridge*



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*For Raphael Loewe*

הספר הזה מקדש  
לכבוד מורי  
רפאל הלוי לועווע

עשה לך רב וקנה לך חבר

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## *Preface*

Raphael Loewe, the doyen of medieval Hebrew studies in Britain, celebrated his eightieth birthday in 1999. In anticipation of this happy event, three of his colleagues and former pupils, Ada Rapoport-Albert, Michael Weitzman and the undersigned, decided to mark the occasion with the publication of a volume of essays. Sadly, Michael Weitzman died on 21 March 1998, at the age of fifty-one, and it was subsequently agreed that I should take over sole responsibility for editing the volume. Since Raphael Loewe has a longstanding association with Cambridge University, I was delighted that Cambridge University Press undertook to publish it.

The purpose of the present volume is not only to celebrate Professor Loewe's long life in the service of Hebrew scholarship, but also to celebrate in an appropriately scholarly fashion the current vibrancy of Hebrew scholarship relating to the medieval period and to reflect on its achievements during the latter part of the twentieth century.

The establishment of major Jewish research and teaching institutes in the United States in the latter part of the nineteenth century and of the Hebrew University, followed by other universities and institutes, in Israel in the twentieth, has borne abundant fruit, which has helped to offset to some extent the irreparable loss of the great institutions of eastern Europe. Meanwhile in the countries of western Europe the universities and state-funded research centres have continued to produce work of the highest level. The study of manuscripts, which is the backbone of medieval research, has proceeded apace, fuelled by remarkable discoveries such as the Cairo Genizah, and, more recently, dismembered manuscripts re-used in bindings, as well as the opening up of the collections in Russia, and particularly the two very rich Firkovitch collections in St Petersburg, referred to in several of the chapters in this book. Techniques for the study of manuscripts have been greatly refined and developed in the same period, largely in the context of a farsighted

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Franco-Israeli collaborative project. Changing approaches to the study of medieval history have also had an effect, and in particular there has been a greater appreciation of cultural exchanges and influences between the Jewish communities and their environment.

The fifteen scholars who have contributed to the volume are all working at the forefront of current research. Some are approaching retirement while others are at the beginning of their scholarly careers, but all have made a significant mark. Together they represent most of the countries where Hebrew studies are currently being most vigorously pursued, and the main branches of the subject. Given the flourishing state of medieval Hebrew studies at present, there are many other distinguished scholars who might have contributed, but the limited scope of the volume imposed a choice. My aim has been to give priority to surveys of research and *status quaestionum* written by leading specialists, and to expositions of subjects that deserve to be better known.

I am grateful to all the scholars who willingly agreed to write for this volume, and in some case put up patiently with editorial bullying. Raphael Loewe himself made a welcome contribution by selecting and compiling the bibliography of his own writings. My pupil Lawrence Lahey made the index, the cost being covered by a grant from Tyrwhitt's Hebrew Fund (University of Cambridge). I am also grateful to those in Cambridge University Press without whom this book could not have seen the light of day.

NICHOLAS DE LANGE  
*Cambridge*

## *Abbreviations*

<i>AJS Review</i>	<i>Association of Jewish Studies Review</i>
<i>BEK</i>	<i>Bulletin d'Etudes Karaïtes</i>
<i>BHM</i>	<i>Bulletin of the History of Medicine</i>
<i>BIJS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>BJGS</i>	<i>Bulletin of Judaeo-Greek Studies</i>
<i>BJRL</i>	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
<i>BMGS</i>	<i>Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>EJ</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
<i>IEJ</i>	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
<i>IMHM</i>	<i>Institute of Microfilmed Hebrew Manuscripts</i>
<i>IOS</i>	<i>Israel Oriental Studies</i>
<i>JA</i>	<i>Journal Asiatique</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JC</i>	<i>Jewish Chronicle</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JMS</i>	<i>Journal of Mediterranean Studies</i>
<i>JPS</i>	<i>Jewish Publication Society</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSHL</i>	<i>Jerusalem Studies in Hebrew Literature</i>
<i>JSJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Periods</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSQ</i>	<i>Jewish Studies Quarterly</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>

<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JWCI</i>	<i>Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes</i>
<i>KS</i>	<i>Kiryat Sefer</i>
<i>MEAH</i>	<i>Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos</i>
<i>MGWJ</i>	<i>Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft des Judentums</i>
<i>MHR</i>	<i>Mediterranean Historical Review</i>
<i>MRS</i>	<i>Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies</i>
<i>PAAJR</i>	<i>Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research</i>
<i>RB</i>	<i>Revue biblique</i>
<i>REJ</i>	<i>Revue des études juives</i>
<i>RH</i>	<i>Revue historique</i>
<i>RHPR</i>	<i>Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuse</i>
<i>SBB</i>	<i>Studies in Bibliography and Booklore</i>
<i>SCI</i>	<i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i>
<i>TAR</i>	<i>Tel Aviv Review</i>
<i>TJHSE</i>	<i>Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>USQR</i>	<i>Union Seminary Quarterly Review</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>ZAC</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Antikes Christentum</i>
<i>ZAL</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für arabische Linguistik</i>
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZDMG</i>	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>