Graduate Research Symposium

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Put a Curse On My Enemy - Encoding the Poetry of Meir of Norwich

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This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 3.0 License.
The poetry of Meir of Norwich research project provides a critical digital edition of the poetry of Meir of Norwich, the only native Jewish poet whose works survive. There is currently no critical digital edition of his poems, and the amount of scholarly work done on the past and archetypal works has been scarce, and thus research building on one another is difficult. The digital edition substitutes all these areas of scholarship, providing an opportunity to gather into a single place where one can read his poems, understand why the poems came to be. The website is built from scratch using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, with the poems themselves encoded in XML with TEI standard. The project consists of a website, which contains four offline poems most prominent works, with side by side English and Hebrew translations. The website also contains an overview of Meir’s life, historical background and persecution, and in medieval England. The complete website will include fully encoded XML of all the poems in both English and Hebrew, with active and dynamic associations and notes, which will provide way for scholars and laypeople to read and enjoy these poems without the need to be able to read a medieval manuscript.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

On the Termination of the Sabbath

The last part of the acrostic here spells out “Eliahu hazak” (Elijah is strong). It is unclear if the “is strong” (or perhaps “be strong”) is directed at himself or his father.

Put a Curse On My Enemy

The first two poems, “On the Termination of the Sabbath” and “Put a Curse On My Enemy,” each letter in poem contain acrostics, a feature common in Medieval Hebrew poetry. The order of the poems in the collection influence from both German-Northern French piyyut as well as Spanish Hebrew poetry. All but the fourth poem contain acrostics.

The original Hebrew poems and the translated English poems each have their own encoding in XML, with TEI standards. The choice of which side is highly specific, as to make the translation from XML to HTML smoother. The translation for this poem is a patch for the translation of “Put a Curse On My Enemy.”

View source code at: https://github.com/Eliora-Horst/Meir-of-Norwich

HTML

The final output displays both the English and Hebrew versions of the poems side by side, and in line with each other, with line breaks between each stanza and the indentation of the first line on every stanza on the English side. The translation for this poem is a patch for the translation of “Put a Curse On My Enemy.” Eliora Horst and Betti Rechtman, and my own basic knowledge of Hebrew, have used my own discretion in poetic tone and form.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

The next steps in development is finishing the XML encoding of the poems. After the encoding is completed, I would like to create several different views for each poem, including a manuscript, printed, and poetic view. While there is valuable information about the contents of these poems, I would like to add phonetic and prosodic information. The phonetic information is both needed to be explored, and would like to include more precise pronunciation from the period of history. I would also like to attempt again to offer a closer view into medieval piyyut, which obtains below. First written into the Latin Vulgate, or for attempts to find the original or any form has been unaccursed, but it is an important piece in the timeline of the poetry and will not be included in this edition in any way or another. Another is only once sacri to English translation of other poems three. I would like to include a translation to other languages, from which can work to find that previous works. The previous works will be part of the future. The manuscript images available for viewing alongside the translations, which provide another viewpoint for the current edition.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


The manuscript itself contains a number of errors, and the 1268 part of the time after the edition was printed in 1290. The last part of the acrostic is highly specific, as to make the translation from XML to HTML smoother. This allows for proper formatting and output of the poem in both Hebrew and English. In the case for the English side, for XML, there is an added class for formatting every third line (the line that is repeated at the end of every stanza).