

Parma. MS 3507 (Stern). Richler-Beit Arie, Catalogue no. 1135 (p. 299).

Richler states: “Anon. Comm. on the prayers. Includes commentaries on *piyyutim* recited in both Eastern and Western Ashkenazic rites.”

Beit-Arie (Cat., *ibid.*) states “Ashkenaz, 1386. Ashkenazic semi-cursive script.”

Colophon on fol. 193 verso. Beit-Arie’s transcription of the colophon has precisely the same readings as those given by Perreau, *Catalogo dei codici ebraici della Biblioteca di Parma non descritti dal de-Rossi*, Firenze 1880, p. 16I, s.v. no. 27, with the exception of the one word *ushemoneh* which is read by Beit Arie as *weshesh ly*[...] — (i.e., yielding a date of 1386 rather than 1388). Yet Beit-Arie states (p. 300) that the colophon “was worn out and deciphered with the help of ultraviolet light”, puzzlingly not mentioning the earlier publication by Perreau.

Richler, *op. cit.*, p. 299: “The compiler quotes ....”his father’s rebuttal of an argument by a bishop from RDWM (variously identified as Dreux or Rouen) ....” The Hebrew text citation that follows contains the author’s quotation of a polemical question asked by the “bishop” (*hahegemon miDRWM*) and the father’s answer. (I have copied the sentences concerning this debate in my Parma notebook, vol. III, p.9.)

The multiple occurrences of DRWM in Hebrew MSS where earlier copies of the same text have RDWM is a clear indication that the conversation was between one of the archbishops of Rouen and the author’s father. The work is apparently a 14<sup>th</sup>-century copy of a 13<sup>th</sup>-century commentary on liturgical poetry composed by a Normannic Jew, similar in content to that composed by Aaron b. Hayyim Hakohen (MS Bodl. 1206), who discusses at length, e.g., a piyyut of the Rouennaise sage Menahem Vardimas b. Peretz (edited in TYR, pp. 193-203).

The description of the MS should thus read not “Eastern and Western Ashkenazic rites” but rather “Northwestern European rites”. The Jews of England, Normandy and Royal France have never been known to have referred to themselves in the Middle Ages as Ashkenazic or as hailing from Ashkenaz, which never meant more, in that time-period, than the German-speaking lands.

(N.B. Text was discussed by I.H. Levine in *Tarbiz* xxix (1960), pp. 162-175; cf also Zunz, *ZfHB* xix (1916), pp. 139-40.)