

כרם חמד—חכמת ישראל היא 'יבנה החדשה' (KEREM HEMED: "HOCHMAT ISRAEL" AS THE "NEW YAVNEH": AN ANNOTATED INDEX TO KEREM HEMED, THE HEBREW JOURNAL OF THE HASKALAH IN GALICIA AND ITALY (1833–1856)). By Moshe Pelli. Pp. 374 + \*xxi. Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes Press, 2009. Cloth, NIS 128; \$43.00.

Following the publication of a monograph and an annotated index on the first two Hebrew periodicals *Hame'asef* (1783–1811) and *Bikurei Ha'itim* (1820–1831), Moshe Pelli presents us with his next book on Hebrew periodicals—on *Kerem Hemed* (1833–1856). Whereas Pelli named his first book on *Hame'asef* "A Gate to Haskalah," his second, on *Bikurei Ha'itim*, is called "The First Fruits of Haskalah," the third goes further; it is called "Yavneh Hahadasha." Yavneh is a symbol. In Yavneh, the foundations were laid for post-Temple Judaism. One can say Yavneh symbolizes a renewal of Judaism, the finding of an appropriate way to cope with problems of a new era. This was exactly the aim of the scholars of the Galician and Italian Haskalah, to find a Jewish answer to modern time problems—hence the name: The New Yavneh—Yavneh Hahadasha.

Moshe Pelli wants to show us in his analysis of *Kerem Hemed* that the contributors were Maskilim, who aimed at a renewal. Not a radical reform of Judaism, but a renewal from within. They did not repudiate the Talmud or any other part of the written or the oral tradition, but they vehemently opposed the dominance of casuistry as practically the only way of learning. They wanted to revive the Jewish heritage, uncover forgotten literary treasures and put them "on the maskilic Jewish bookshelf," as Pelli writes. Within the realm of Judaism, topics such as philosophy, history, poetry, even science and belles letters were discussed. Kabbalah and Zohar as well as Hasidim and Hasidism were fought against. A continuous struggle had been led against superstitions, and customs that seemed corrupt to the Maskilim were exposed as alien to Judaism.

Beyond the attitude of the contributors to *hochmat Israel* (the study of Judaism) and the topics they discuss, Pelli calls the reader's attention also to the literary form of this periodical. Most of the contributions are letters that these learned scholars wrote to each other. Letters are much more intimate than scientific articles; they also contain personal news concerning family and health. Very often the answers to these letters are published in the same volume, thus creating an atmosphere of lively discussions.

Pelli raises the question of who initiated this form. Officially it was the publisher, Shmuel Leib Goldenberg. But, was he the initiator of this form of publication, or in other words, was he also the editor? Pelli discusses all different opinions concerning this question which can be reduced to one—how

much was Shlomo Yehuda Rappaport involved—in all seven volumes published by Goldenberg or only in part of them? The publisher and editor of the last two volumes, which were published in Berlin, was Shneur Sachs. Pelli, who presents us an analysis of every volume, shows the differences very clearly. Contributions come mainly from German speaking countries, from people—scholars who had quite a different attitude to *hochmat Israel*. Rappaport was not involved in these two, neither as contributor nor as editor. Though never stated, this turn to western Maskilim might be the real cause for Rappaport to give up and for others to reduce their contributions (Luzzato).

Another question which Pelli raises concerns the incentive to start a new periodical just two years after a predecessor failed because of financial problems. Pelli states that *Bikure Haitim* published every contribution that landed on the editor's desk. This did not appeal to too many readers. On the other hand, learned scholars felt the need for an adequate periodical. He mentions plans that were contemplated but never materialized. *Kerem Hemed*, under the reign of Goldenberg and with the unofficial help of Rappaport, was an answer to the requirements of many Galician and Italian scholars. The fate of *Kerem Hemed* equaled that of its predecessors: How can you finance a periodical if only the contributors buy it?

Following the monograph, as in both preceding books, is the index part, in every respect a very detailed one, yet clearly presented and easy to handle. It follows the alphabet very strictly not only concerning the names of the contributors, but also the subjects, genres as essays, articles, poetry, biographies, scholarly studies, commentaries, editorial comments, and even announcements. "In addition," states Pelli, "the Index lists all title pages (covers) of the volumes and their tables of contents." Most entries are followed by annotations highlighting major ideas of the specific entry, cross references, allowing for all spelling variations of names and now and then notes are added, which "update bibliographical information on related subjects in modern scholarship." It is a tremendous work, studiously done and enables both the learned and the students to easily find every topic and every item in these nine volumes. Bernhard Wachstein's "Die Hebraeische Publizistik in Wien" published 1928 in Vienna, was a landmark in classifying Hebrew periodicals published in Vienna. Wachstein lists alphabetically all the authors with the list of their contributions. Pelli goes further, not a step, actually the whole way. This index book reflects tremendous work in

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preparing it and is sure to be a companion to all scholars and students researching *Kerem Hemed*.

*Tirza Lemberger*  
*Institut fuer Judaistik*  
*Universitaet Wien*  
*tirza.lemberger@univie.ac.at*