

**Moses Mordecai**: American trader; founder of the Mordecai family in America; born in Bonn, Germany, in 1707; died in Philadelphia May 28, 1781. He went to America about 1750 and settled in Philadelphia, where he engaged in the brokerage business. On Oct. 25, 1765, Mordecai signed the celebrated Non-Importation Agreement, by which the merchants refused to import goods until the repeal of the Stamp Act. In 1777, after the outbreak of the Revolution, he signed an agreement to take the colonial paper currency sanctioned by the king, instead of gold and silver.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**: Hyman Polock Rosenbach, *The Jews in Philadelphia Prior to 1800*, pp. 12, 13, Philadelphia, 1883; *Publications Am. Jew. Hist. Soc.* 1893, vol. 1., p. 60; 1897, vol. vi., pp. 40-41.

A. S. W. R.

**MORDECAI ASTRUC**: French liturgical poet; lived at Carpentras about the end of the seventeenth century. He was the author of several liturgical poems printed in "Seder ha-Tamid," a collection of prayers used at Carpentras, Isle, Avignon, and Cavaillon (Avignon, 1760). His prayer of thanksgiving beginning "Ish hayali be-tam lebabo" is well known for the occasion which gave rise to it. In 1682 a Jew of Carpentras was murdered, and the populace attacked the Jews' quarters, serious rioting being prevented only by the prompt interference of the authorities. The community thereupon constituted the day on which the disturbance occurred (the 9th of Nisan) a feast-day in memory of the rescue, and Mordecai's poem was read in the synagogue.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**: Landsuth, *'Ammude ha-'Abodah*, p. 196; Zunz, *Z. G.* p. 473; idem, *Ritus*, p. 127; Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, p. 612.

A. Pe.

**MORDECAI DATO (BEN JUDAH)**: Italian payetan; lived in Ferrara in the sixteenth century. The name "Dato" is the Italian equivalent of "Nathan." He added some notes, under the title "Hagahot," to Samuel Gallico's "Asis Rimmonim" (Venice, 1601). Azariah dei Rossi ("Me'or 'Enayim," ch. xliii.) ascribes to him a book entitled "Migdal Dawid," dealing with the coming of the Messiah. Dato wrote many piyyuṭim which exist in manuscript. One for the eve of Sabbath has been incorporated in the Italian ritual.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**: Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* col. 1657; Fürst, *Bibl. Jud.* i. 197; Almanzi, in *Kerem Hemed*, viii. 89; Azulai, *Shem ha-Gedolim*, i. 129, ii. 112; Mortara, *Indice*, p. 19; Landsuth, *'Ammude ha-'Abodah*, p. 197; Wolf, *Bibl. Hebr.* i. 791.

W. B.

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**MORDECAI B. DAVID**. See STREISKER, MORDECAI.

**MORDECAI OF EISENSTADT**. See MORDECAI MOKIAH.

**MORDECAI BEN ELIEZER JONAH**: Austrian commentator; lived in Lemberg in the latter part of the sixteenth century. He published an ethical discourse on the "Shema" under the title "Petil Tekelet" (Prague, 1618), in three parts, the first dealing with love of God, the second with abstention from sin, and the last with misfortune.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**: Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* col. 1658; Fürst, *Bibl. Jud.* ii. 324; Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Seferim*, p. 503, No. 1323.

W. B.

S. J. L.

## MORDECAI EN CRESCAS D'ORANGE.

See CRESCAS, MORDECAI EN, OF ORANGE.

## MORDECAI B. HILLEL B. HILLEL:

German halakist of the thirteenth century; died as a martyr at Nuremberg Aug. 1, 1298. Mordecai belonged to one of the most prominent families of scholars in Germany, his grandfather Hillel being on the mother's side a grandson of Eliezer b. Joel ha-Levi, who again was a grandson of Eliezer b. Nathan. Little is otherwise known of his family. His wife Selda and his five children perished with him. About 1291 Mordecai seems to have sojourned at Goslar, where a certain Moses Tako—not the well-known anti-Maimonist—seems to have disputed his right of residence. Although the suit was decided in Mordecai's favor, it was conducted with such bitterness that it was probably for this reason that Mordecai left Goslar and settled at Nuremberg. His principal teacher was Meir b. Baruch of Rothenburg, of whose older pupils Mordecai was one, and in whose presence Mordecai pronounced independent decisions. Mordecai quotes the tosafot, responsa, and compendiums of his teacher, together with many of his oral and written communications. Aside from Meir must be mentioned as Mordecai's teachers Perez b. Elijah of Corbeille, Ephraim b. Nathan, Jacob ha-Levi of Speyer (probably identical with Jacob b. Moses ha-Levi), Abraham b. Baruch (Meir of Rothenburg's brother), and Dan, probably identical with Dan Ashkenazi.

Mordecai is generally known as the author of the great legal code "Sefer ha-Mordekai," commonly called briefly "Mordekai," or designated as the "Great" or "Long Mordekai" ("Mordekai ha-Gadol," "Mordekai he-'Aruk") as distinguished from Samuel Schlettstadt's "Small Mordekai" ("Mordekai ha-Katon"). The "Mordekai" is met with in the form of glosses to Alfasi's "Halakot" in various manuscripts, and also as an appendix to the "Halakot" in many editions. This connection with Alfasi is, however, merely an external one, single sentences, sometimes even single words, of the "Halakot" serving as catchwords introducing the relevant material found in Yerushalmi, the French and German tosafot, the codices and compendiums. Mordecai's range of reading in halakic literature was phenomenal. There were few noteworthy works dealing with halakic subjects and antedating the middle of the thirteenth century which he did

**His Code.** not know and draw upon. As regards the German and French authors, he knew not only all the works that are still extant, but many for which he is now the only source. He quotes about 350 authorities, whose works and written or verbal communications form the substance of his book.

The "Mordekai" is in the first place a compilation, intended to furnish halakic material. At the time of its composition there was great need for such a work. The results of the tosafist schools, whose last representatives were Mordecai's teachers, were ready to be summed up and judged. The condition of the German Jews of the time was such that they were forced to a life of constant wandering, and were in danger of losing, together with their worldly goods, their spiritual possessions if they remained

כנה ובעה תענית וישון עו שטם

**ראורן בר** ר' ל השופר

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שה ורין נכיה נשך ר' כן לט

יניו ר' שופר של עו ורין נח

הנה ר' השופר ורין נחא ונחלה ה

זע"ל סיני מדיניו ר' והשופר

נחיה ורין שרין מענכן התענות

לחזקת זכ משת ר' ע דשר

ד"ר דין ורין להחיד סדעית של

ד"ר

ר' שלו יחיד משמים וג' שמים

נשימה יחיד ולחזקת כל מכה ר'

למעשה ההדירה נידת הקהל נח

שתדל' שמים ר' ורסו והסיד

ערסו ההדיעת ר' שלעט קדש

נש' שעות

ר' תדעית ומכות טל"ה מעמדת ו

יתו ר' ורין שרין מדיני טל עי ע

רשעים נחלה ער סוף ורין עס

שכדות ר' ורין נח

ר' ר' ניד ורין ורין ורין ורין

ר' מהה נחלה ורין ורין ורין

גללים נחלה

**בניהגים מזהגרילים** ר' ע

יח

החטטין נחלה ורין ורין

יחלם סת ר' ורין ורין ורין

ור' נחלה ורין ורין ורין

ועיד ורין ורין ורין ורין

וכ' מיוש

**כליך רה**

ותהיל יוס הכיפר

ר' רה שרין נחלה ורין ורין

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ור' נחלה ורין ורין ורין

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שוק יחלה

ר' ורין ורין ורין ורין

לחלוש עיניו מלחם טחיתה

**אורן בר** ר' שיש מודקה

נפכז עוס ויש

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hidden in numerous folios. It would be erroneous, however, to designate the "Mordekai" as a mere compilation. It not only contains much that is original with the author—although in many passages there are omissions of the names of authorities, due to copyist and editor—but the foreign material also is often introduced in a form which refutes the assertion that the author did not intend to contribute anything of his own. The "Mordekai" contains passages showing that the author had the ability as well as the intention to present in clear, systematic form, in the manner of a codifier, the results of long discussions (see the examples in Weiss, "Dor," p. 82). The fact that the larger part of the "Mordekai" lacks system and form may be explained on the following grounds: The book, as the early critics pointed out, was not issued in its final form by the author. He collected the material for his great work, but could not combine or arrange it himself; this task being undertaken by his pupils, partly during his lifetime and partly after his death. This fact explains not only the evident confusion of the text, but

**The Two Editions of** also its most peculiar history. Within two generations after Mordekai's death "Mordekai" there were two entirely different recensions of his work, respectively designated by the authorities of the fifteenth century as the "Rhenish" and the "Austrian" versions. These were not merely two different copies of the "Mordekai" containing variants—such existed of each of the two editions—but two materially different compendiums. The Rhenish "Mordekai" furnished the text for the printed editions, and circulated during the Middle Ages not only in the Rhine countries, but also in eastern Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. The Austrian "Mordekai" is preserved in manuscript in the libraries of Budapest and Vienna. It exerted, as its name indicates, a great influence on the halakic observances of Austria, Moravia, Bohemia, Styria, Hungary, and the neighboring German provinces, as, for example, Saxony. The following points of difference between these two editions may be noted: The material is differently distributed, entire passages frequently being found in different sections and even in different treatises. The two editions are contrasted, too, in the method of treating the material. In the Rhenish "Mordekai" there is the endeavor to cut down and abbreviate, the printed work constituting only one-third of the matter found in the manuscripts of the Austrian "Mordekai" at Budapest and Vienna. Quotations and extracts from the different *tosafot* collections especially are missing in the printed book, whereas they are included in the manuscripts. The two versions, furthermore, differ greatly in their quotations from the authorities. Rhenish and French scholars are the chief authorities in the Rhenish version; but they are omitted in the Austrian, which substitutes Austrian authorities, Isaac Or Zarua', Abigdor ha-Kohen, and his father-in-law, Hayyim b. Moses, being especially frequently drawn upon. The Rhenish "Mordekai" is notable for its rigorous views. Opinions which interpret the Law leniently, especially those that disagree with the then obtaining

practices, are either omitted entirely or are given in brief quotations and in a form which shows that they are not authoritative. The Austrian "Mordekai" gives these passages frankly and in detail. The conciseness and scrupulousness of the Rhenish version lead to the conclusion that the Austrian "Mordekai," as found in the manuscripts, represents the original form of the work, or at least most closely approaches that form which Mordekai intended to give to his book.

About sixty years after Mordekai's death Samuel b. Aaron of Schlettstadt wrote his "Haggahot Mordekai," glosses to the "Mordekai," consisting chiefly of extracts made by him from the Austrian version in order to supplement the Rhenish; and the text, which was already very corrupt and confused, was still further impaired by these glosses, as text and glosses were frequently confounded. While the "haggahot" are at least derived from the "Mordekai," there are passages in the printed text which have no relation whatever to that work. The "Small Halakot," ("Halakot Keṭannot"), which figures in the editions as a part of the "Mordekai," is Schlettstadt's work, while the "Mordekai" to Mo'ed Qaṭan includes a complete work of Meir b. Baruch of Rothenburg, and other extraneous elements have been introduced in different passages of the "Mordekai."

In consequence of the persecutions in Germany during the fourteenth century and of the resulting

**Diffusion of the "Mordekai."** decline of Talmudic studies, a work of the nature of the "Mordekai" naturally soon became authoritative. The high reputation enjoyed by it is evident from the works of Schlettstadt, which either deal with or are modeled upon it.

The great authorities of Germany of the fifteenth century, as Jacob b. Moses ha-Levi (משה), Israel of Krems, Isserlein, Jacob Weil, Israel of Brünn, and Joseph Colon, the greatest Italian Talmudist of that century, were great admirers of Mordekai, whose work they assiduously studied and whose authority they recognized. The first treatise of the Talmud that was printed (Soncino, 1482) included the "Mordekai" in addition to Rashi, the *tosafot*, and Maimonides. In Caro's and Isserles' codes Mordekai is among the authorities most frequently quoted. Isserles even lectured on the "Mordekai" in his yeshibah, many of his responsa being devoted to the questions of his pupils and friends regarding difficult passages of the book. In Italy and Poland, where the "Mordekai" was especially studied, a whole "Mordekai" literature came into existence. A large number of extracts, indexes, glosses, novellæ, and commentaries are still extant, the most important of these works being Joseph Ottolenghi's index, Baruch b. David's "Gedullat Mordekai," emendations of the text, and Mordekai Benet's commentary.

Mordecai wrote also responsa, which, however, do not seem to have been preserved. S. Kohn ascribes to him the authorship of "Haggahot Maimuni"; but the ascription lacks support. It is noteworthy that Mordekai inclined toward poetry and grammar, a predilection that was rare in Germany at his time. A *selihah* by him, on the martyrdom of a proselyte, was published by Kohn ("Mordekai ben

Hillel," Appendix, i.). But although Mordecai used Hebrew fluently and skilfully, he had no real poetical talent. A metrical poem of his on the Hebrew vowels—one of the few of this kind produced by the German Jews—was also published for the first time by Kohn (*l.c.*). The poem is obscure, the author apparently intending to speak in riddles. Mordecai wrote also a treatise in verse on the examination of slaughtered animals and on permitted and forbidden foods, which appeared under the title "Hilkot Sheḥiṭah u-Bediḥah we-Hilkot Issur we-Hetter" (Venice, 1550 ?). From the nature of the case the author could not confine himself to Biblical Hebrew; but his language is correct and fluent.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Kohn, *Mordechai ben Hillel*, Breslau, 1878, reprinted from *Monatsschrift*, 1877-78; Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl. s.v.*; idem, *Hebr. Bibl.* xviii. 63-66; Weiss, *Dor*, v. 80-81; Zedner, *Cat. Hebr. Books Brit. Mus. s.v.*  
S. S. L. G.

**MORDECAI B. ISAAC OF CARPENTRAS:** French Talmudist; flourished in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Mordecai lived in Carpentras (department of Vaucluse) at the time of the religious struggles (1303-6), and corresponded with Abba Mari of Lunel, who speaks of him very highly. Zunz and Neubauer identify him with Mordecai b. Isaac Ezobi; this, however, can not be correct, because the latter lived between 1303 and 1306 in Carcassonne, and not in Carpentras. Gross identifies him with Mordecai b. Isaac Ḳimḥi, father of Isaac Ḳimḥi, called "Mestre Petit de Nyons." He is designated by Isaac de Lattes as "Gaon," and in "Ḳore ha-Dorot" he is styled "Ornament of Judaism." He is often quoted in the manuscript responsa collection of Solomon ben Adret's ("R. E. J." xii. 81-90) under the name "Mordecai b. Isaac."

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Zunz, *Z. G.* p. 478; Renan-Neubauer, *Les Rab- bins Français*, Index; Gross, *Gallia Judaica*, pp. 386, 607.  
S. S. A. PE.

**MORDECAI B. ISAAC ḲIMḤI.** See **ḲIMḤI**.

**MORDECAI BEN JACOB (MORDECAI SINGER):** Polish translator; lived in Cracow; died 1575. He translated into Judæo-German the Book of Proverbs (Cracow, 1582) and the Book of Job (Prague, 1597), supplying them with commentaries in Hebrew.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* col. 1666; Fürst, *Bibl. Jud.* ii. 325; Zunz, *Z. G.* p. 280.  
E. C. S. J. L.

**MORDECAI JAFFE.** See **JAFFE**.

**MORDECAI BEN JEHIEL (MICHAEL HA-LEVI):** Russian grammarian and ab bet din of Slawatetz-on-the-Bug; lived at the beginning of the eighteenth century. He wrote "Mera Dakya" (Frankfort-on-the-Oder, 1734, and often reprinted), a grammatical commentary on Rashi's commentaries on the Pentateuch, on the Five Rolls, and on many Talmudical passages, rectifying on the basis of grammar some of Rashi's improbable explanations. The introduction gives a short sketch of Hebrew grammar.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* col. 1666; Walden, *Shem ha-Gedolim he-Hadash*, ii. 45; Zedner, *Cat. Hebr. Books Brit. Mus.* p. 561.  
H. R. M. Sc.

**MORDECAI BEN JOSEPH OF AVIGNON:** Provençal Talmudist; flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century; a contemporary of the Dominican Pablo Christiani, a former pupil of Eliezer of Tarascon. Mordecai, as the most prominent Jew in Provence, suffered the most from Pablo's attacks. Prior to 1274 Pablo secured an order from the pope to the effect that the Jews in southern France should wear humiliating badges on their clothing. The Provençal Jews, who had hitherto been exempt from these badges, opposed this decree, and Mordecai ben Joseph and a certain Israel were in consequence imprisoned by the inquisitors. They secured their freedom only by the payment of a large sum of money. Mordecai and Solomon of Tarascon were sent as delegates to the royal court in order to secure the repeal of this odious law; and they succeeded. Charles I., King of the Two Sicilies, and Count of Provence, on March 26, 1276, issued a severe decree against the inquisitors who insisted that the Jews should wear badges. As Pablo was now dead the decree was not opposed by the inquisitors.

Ibn Verga, who relates this event in his "Shebet Yehudah," says that Mordecai was imprisoned after his embassy to the royal court, which, according to Gross, is improbable and not in agreement with the facts given in the introduction to "Maḥazik ha-Emunah." Mordecai may be identified with **Mordecai ben Josiphiah**, who with other rabbis of the last third of the thirteenth century signed a ritual decree at Carpentras (Renan-Neubauer, "Les Rab- bins Français," p. 518; Gross, "Gallia Judaica," p. 607).

Mordecai was the author of the following works: (1) "Maḥazik ha-Emunah," a polemical writing against the above-mentioned Pablo Christiani; (2) "Sefer Eber min ha-Hai," on Gen. ix. 4; (3) "Issur we-Hetter," a halakic work; (4) "Bet She'arim," on the laws concerning marriage contracts; and (5) "Sha'are Nedarim," on the halakot concerning vows.

All these works, with the exception of the first, which is extant in manuscript (Vatican MS. 271), are no longer in existence, and are known only by quotations made by Isaac de Lattes in his "Sha'are Ziyon" (p. 74) and by Gedaliah ibn Yahya ("Shalshelet ha-Ḳabbalah," p. 54b).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Steinschneider, *Hebr. Bibl.* xv. 89, xvi. 42; Grätz, *Gesch.* vi., note 1, § 4, No. 27; vii. 138; Renan-Neubauer, *Les Rabbinis Français*, p. 565; Gross, in *Monatsschrift*, xviii. 156; idem, *Gallia Judaica*, p. 3.  
S. S. A. PE.

**MORDECAI BEN JUDAH (MORDUSCH):** Polish ritualist; lived at Lamkumsh; died 1584. He edited the Maḥzor with the commentary of Abraham Abigdor, to which he added notes of his own (Lublin, 1567); in the same way he edited the latter's seliḥot (Cracow, 1584). Two other editions of the seliḥot appeared, revised and enlarged by his son-in-law Hirsch Sundels (Prague, 1587, and Lublin, 1643).

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:** Steinschneider, *Cat. Bodl.* col. 1667; Fürst, *Bibl. Jud.* ii. 325, iii. 397; Frankel, *Zeitschrift für die Religiösen Interessen des Judenthums*, iii. 386; Benjacob, *Ozar ha-Sefarim*, p. 420, No. 361.  
D. S. J. L.