APPENDIX

Later Transformations of the *Bovo d'Antona*. 17th–20th Centuries

S’iz shver tsu zogn, ver s’zaynen di foters, zeydes, feter un elter-feters fun der yidisher literatur, ober eyn zakh iz zikher, az Elye Bokher iz geven der elter-elter-zeyde fun yidishn lid. [...] Elye Bokher iz geven lekhol-hadeyes der ershter yidisher dikhter, vos hot geboygn dos yidishe loshn in gemostene ferzn un grazmen, ven dos yidishe loshn iz nokh gelegen in di vikelekh.¹

YANKEV GLATSHTEYN

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From its initial composition in 1507 to 20th-century reworkings of the text, the *Bovo d'Antona*, through its various transformations, has accompanied the entire course of Yiddish literature. The title by which it is best known in the Yiddish canon, *Bovo-bukh* or *Bove-bukh* (Bovo-book), was given to the first reprints and to subsequent volumes until the end of the 18th century. In the 19th century it was more commonly called *Bobe-mayse*. Whatever the title, the success of this book has been considerable, as attested by the many reprints, even if these are not identical to—and are sometimes even remote from—the *editio princeps*.² Reprints were mostly produced on cheap paper and not all can have survived. The reprints I have been able to trace are the following (29):

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¹ “It is difficult to say who are the fathers, the grandfathers, the uncles and the great-uncles of Yiddish literature, but one thing is sure, that Elye Bokher was the great-grandfather of Yiddish poetry. [...] From every point of view Elye Bokher was the first Yiddish poet to shape the Yiddish language into measured lines and rhymes, when the Yiddish language was still in its cradle” (Yankev Glatshteyn, “Elye Bokhers Bovo-bukh,” in *Prost un poshet: Literarishe eseyen (Prost un Poshet: Literary Essays)*, edited by Berl Cohen (New York: Fanny Glatshteyn, 1978), 119–124, and in particular 120).

– *Bovo-bukh*, Amsterdam, 17th century, perhaps 1640.?
– *Bovo-bukh*, Prague, 1660.4
– *Bovo-bukh*, Amsterdam, 1661.5
– *Bovo-bukh*, Frankfurt am Main, 1691.6
– *Bovo-bukh*, Amsterdam, 1721.7
– [*Bovo-bukh*], Wilhelmsdorf, 1724.8
– [*Bovo-bukh*], Prague, 1740.9
– *Bovo-bukh*, Prague, 1767.10

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3 See Gutschow, *Inventory of Yiddish Books*, no. 21, 16. We do not know if this edition is older than the 1661 Amsterdam edition, but the date given in the *Bibliography of the Hebrew Book: 1473–1960*, National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, is 1640. The shelf-mark is R 8 = 75 A 1714, and this is, according to the quoted catalogue, the only copy of this print. However it is my impression that this print cannot be older than Amsterdam 1660. Might it be another Amsterdam edition?

4 There is a copy in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; see Steinschneider, *Catalogus Librorum Hebræorum in Bibliotheca Bodleiana*, 2.935, Opp. 8° 1058 (1). See also Weinreich, *Bilder*, 170.


9 There is a copy in the National Library of Israel, Jerusalem, Ro= 54 A 556.