
The Lexikon des Mittelalters (hereafter: LM) aims at covering all aspects of the history of the European Middle Ages, viz. the period between A.D. 300 and 1500. It has already been illustrated in a previous review that LM, though primarily a reference-work for students of European medieval history, can be of great use to islamicists as well, in view of the high standard of the articles related, in one way or another, to Islam (Numen vol XXX, pp. 265-268). The present review aims at presenting an evaluation of the contributions of LM in the field of Jewish studies. At this point it should be stressed that the editorial preface of November 1980 stated: “Ebenso ist die Geschichte des mittelalterlichen europäischen Judentums fester Bestandteil des Lexikons” (my italics, VK).

In the volumes covering the letters A through G I have counted a total number of some 90 articles on Jewish subjects. This number has to be considered as an approximate one only, as I most likely have overlooked several items going through the enormous mass of articles published thus far. Nevertheless, it is my contention that the articles which I have seen faithfully reflect the way Jewish themes are dealt with in LM.

Taking into account the number of articles on Islamic subjects to be found in volume 1 and the first 4 fascicles of volume 2—some 185 items—one is allowed to conclude that LM pays some 7 to 8 items more attention to Islamic than to Jewish subjects. It is of course hard, if not completely impossible, to express arithmetically, in terms of numbers of articles, the relative importance of Islam and Judaism for the history of medieval Europe. No doubt the Islamic world exercised major military, economical and cultural influences on medieval Christian Europe. Judaism, however, had struck root all over Europe itself and the medieval history of the European Jewish communities, quite obviously, is an intrinsical part of European history at large. In this perspective one is perhaps allowed to remark that the number of articles devoted by LM to Jewish subjects is a com-

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paratively modest one. Several Jewish personalities of medieval Europe to whom the Encyclopaedia Judaica (hereafter: EJ) has devoted articles of 2 columns or even more and who are not dealt with in LM in separate articles, could have been given a few separate lines in LM. Confining ourselves to the letter A we can mention as some examples: (1) Abraham ben David of Posquières (Provence, c.1125-1198), known as Rabad (i.e. Rabbi Abraham ben David); (2) Abulafia Meir (1170?-1244), the most renowned Spanish rabbi of the first half of the 13th century; (3) Adret, Solomon ben Abraham (c.1235-c.1310), Spanish rabbi and one of the foremost Jewish scholars of his day; (4) Albo, Joseph (15th c.), a Spanish scholar who took part in the Disputation at Tortosa.

Of the ca. 90 articles I counted, the majority (51) was written by a nucleus of six specialists in Jewish studies who are teaching in Cologne and Hamburg.

P. Freimark (Hamburg), who is the editor of the "Hamburger Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Juden", has contributed at least 5 articles. Three of these (Ahasverus, Apostasie and Chronologie) can be considered to be little more than compilations of corresponding articles of EJ. This remark is not intended to be a kind of reproach of the author, but merely to underline the persisting dominance of EJ in the field. This can be observed in some of the articles of the other authors as well. In his remaining two articles (Bad and Beschneidung) references to the wealth of information to be found in EJ (s.v. ablution, bath, mikveh and circumcision) would have been appropriate as well.

H. Greive (Cologne), who is the author of several well-known books on Jewish neoplatonism and on the religious philosophy of Abraham ibn Ezra, contributed at least 10 articles. Four of these (Abraham ben David; Abulafia, Aben Samuel; Bahr; Erziehung- written in cooperation with H.G. von Mutius) are little more than abstracts of EJ-articles. The other articles have been enriched considerably by the author's thorough knowledge of the history of Jewish philosophy and science (Astrologie, Aristoteles, Brunnenvergiftung, Abraham ben Meir ibn Ezra, Averroes and Crescas, Hasday).

J. Maier (Cologne) who wrote a "Geschichte der jüdischen Religion" and who authored several studies on a wide range of Jewish subjects (i.a. on the image of Jesus in talmudic writings and on the Dead Sea Scrolls), contributed at least 12 articles. Five of these (Abraham bar Hiyya, Bahja ben Paquda, Bann, Benjamin b. Jona von Tudela and Donnolo, Sabbataj) are little more than extracts of EJ-articles. The other articles also contain more or less the same facts as the EJ-articles but they have occasionally been enriched with new bibliographical references and with some lucid historical observations. Thus, in the articles Apologetik and Askese Maier draws general and abstract lines of historical development, whereas EJ