

Acknowledgements

Writing a book commands an immeasurable amount of conviction. While studying the wonders of the *Nuremberg Miscellany*, I was blessed, time and again, with encouragement from so many people, near and far, who were available whenever I sought their help or advice, and who have shared my enthusiasm for the manuscript and its marvels.

The present study could not have seen the light of day without the support of several institutions, which not only believed in me as a scholar, but also granted me the financial help that provided me with carefree time to conduct the research for this book. First, my deepest thanks go to the Goldstein-Goren Diaspora Research Center at Tel Aviv University and its director, Prof. Simha Goldin, who recruited me to conduct my study under the aegis of the Center. The Jewish Art and Visual Culture Research Project within the Goldstein-Goren Center has been my home-away-from-home, and the Mehlman Library of the Center, headed by Evelyn Ofer and her successor Sofia Tels-Abramov, has been a treasure trove of countless invaluable resources. Many thanks go to Prof. Goldin for his conviction that visual culture in general and the *Nuremberg Miscellany* in particular, have a legitimate place in the historical span of research at the Center. Ora Azta and the entire administrative team at the Center have spared no effort to walk me through official and technical issues that came along the way and deserve every word of gratitude. My very special appreciation is extended to Sara Appel, Center's Senior Administrative Assistant, and to the Conference and Publications Coordinator, Adi Moskovitz (and, in her brief absence, Roni Gamlieli). Their constant succour, encouragement and sound advice compare only to their endless support towards the publication of this book with patience, wisdom, and competence.

Two post-doctoral fellowships have sustained this research and have had an immense impact on it. In 2005–2006, I spent a most enriching year at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies (now known as the Katz Center) at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, under the direction of Prof. David Ruderman. The inspiring intellectual encounters with colleagues, each studying a different aspect of the Hebrew book, have deepened my understanding of its physical attributes, illustrations, readership, and beyond. The 2009–2010 Frankel Center for Advanced Judaic Studies fellowship at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, under Prof. Deborah Dash Moore, brought me together with stimulating scholars focusing on material culture. Discussing with them the materiality of objects and artefacts within the setting of their cultural background added new insights and perspectives to my researcher toolbox.

A grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture has made it possible for me to enjoy the world of scholarship, and specifically enabled me to relish the

intimate encounter with the incredible *Nuremberg Miscellany*. The Foundation's encouragement and financial support for this study from its inception through its realisation merit my highest appreciation.

Additional support, received from The World Union of Jewish Studies, is a token of recognition of the importance of my research on the intriguing, yet fascinating *Miscellany* and of its importance for our knowledge of the history and culture of Early Modern Ashkenaz. Without this contribution, the visual appearance of the book with its numerous color images would not be the same.

I further wish to recognise also my teachers, colleagues, and friends for making their scholarship available to me through their learned publications. Reading and learning from their contributions to the vast field of Hebrew illuminated manuscripts, Jewish history, minhag, and Jewish culture and ethnography was an uplifting experience. Standing on the shoulders of giants, I consider it a great honour that scholars I know personally and greatly admire for their work authored so many of the works cited in the bibliography of this present study. While it is always a pleasure to meet old friends in person, knowing them also through their scholarship was a unique experience. Many of them were not even aware of my research on the *Nuremberg Miscellany*, but their indirect help made the bibliographic references a feast celebrated with friends.

Other colleagues have not spared their time, effort, and above all, their infinite knowledge to enlighten, expand, and offer new insights on various issues that arose during the research. My most sincere acknowledgements are due, primarily, to the directors and curators of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg. The first stages of this study benefitted from generous permissions and support of the then library director, Dr. Eberhard Slenzca and, after his retirement, of its current director, Dr. Johannes Pommeranz. When the dream of publishing this research began to become reality, Prof. Dr. Habil. Ulrich Großmann, former director general of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, gave it his blessing and reiterated the museum's commitment to it. The erudition of the museum curators, who made themselves available at all times, was also of infinite help. Special thanks go to my esteemed colleagues, the curators Dr. Frank P. Bär, Dr. Petra Krutisch, Dr. Ralf Schürer, and Dr. Claudia Selheim. Last, but not least, many thanks to the staff of the museum photographic services, notably Ms. Bianca Hendl-Slowik, which provided every possible help towards the publication of this book.

Sharing this journey with friends who are at the same time colleagues and leading scholars in their fields was a special privilege. Prof. Michael Signer, of blessed memory, viewed the manuscript for the last time shortly before his untimely passing, suggesting new and invaluable insights. Prof. Jean Baumgarten, Prof. Stephen G. Burnett, Rabbi Dr. Joab Eichenberg-Eilon, Prof. Marc Michael Epstein,

Prof. Dr. Elisabeth Hollender, Dr. Andreas Lehnertz, Rabbi Dr. Joseph Isaac Lifshitz, Dr. Andreas Lehnertz, Prof. Dr. Emile G. L. Schrijver, and Dr. Ilona Steimann have all proved the value of collegiality and the wealth of sharing their vast knowledge beyond description.

Throughout this long and challenging path, the greatest contribution came from my beloved husband, Dr. Ya'acov Sarig. Sharing an office in our home proved to be an extraordinary experience on every level. Offering endless encouragement and support, adding new insights, offering useful suggestions to improve the text, and—no less important—taking over most of the household chores, he created the space and time for uninterrupted work and provided me with the peace-of-mind that made this publication possible. My sister, Dalia Karplus-Feuchtwanger, was my source of inspiration for English style, sharp editorial observations, and clarity of thought, which guided me in laying my own arguments down in writing. Valuable textual insights were offered by Rabbi Dr. Joab Eichenberg-Eilon, and his transliteration suggestions have become a welcomed part of this book. The finely mastered editorial skills of Shirley Zauer contributed significantly to the flow and readability of the text.

Last, but not at all least: my precious children Yuval and Ronni, the spark of my life and my treasured source of joy, deserve more than an expression of gratitude. Their youth notwithstanding, they supported this endeavour with words, smiles, and encouragement beyond any limit and wrapped me with their love.

My ongoing contacts with De Gruyter publishing house have proved to be a professional joy. All my dealings with the publisher have met with endless support. Special thanks go to Alice Meroz, Content Editor, and Anne Hirschelmann, Production Editor, as well as to the typesetter, graphic artist, and others whose committed work behind the scenes is evidenced in every page of the book.

The invaluable comments and suggestions offered by all my friends and colleagues have contributed greatly to this study. For any errors and omissions, however, I take full responsibility.

