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Author(s): Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald

Source: *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe*, Vol. 43, No. 2, The State of Ladino Studies I (Autumn 2010), pp. 37-51

Published by: Berghahn Books

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41444074>

Accessed: 12-04-2020 13:39 UTC

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TWO SIXTEENTH-CENTURY LADINO PRAYER BOOKS FOR WOMEN

*Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald**

Abstract

Two Ladino prayer books for women dating from the sixteenth century are compared in this article. The first of these (S1) is a manuscript and the second one (S2) is a printed book from Thessalonica. The comparison shows that although both include daily prayers as well as prayers for the Jewish year cycle, S1 includes many psalms that S2 lacks, whereas S2 includes the Passover *Haggadah*, *Birkhot Hanehenim*, and many other prayers that pertain to woman's Jewish life that are missing in S1. S1 might have been used at home as well as in the synagogue, whereas S2 has been restricted to domestic use. S2 is very informative and instructs the woman in detail how to perform Jewish law, whereas S1 has very few instructions and they all relate to the prayers. It is clear that S1 has been written by a non-professional writer in a non-standard way, whereas S2 has been written by a learned rabbi who followed the Jewish law about requirements women need to fulfil. These prayer books had no continuation in Sephardi tradition in spite of their importance.

Introduction

Prayer books for women in the vernacular are known to have existed in Ashkenaz and Italy since the sixteenth century. The earliest prayer book written in Yiddish specifically for women living in Ashkenazi communities was published in 1544.¹ Early Yiddish translations of prayer books were also used by men with limited knowledge of Hebrew. Many of the Yiddish prayer books for women listed in catalogues are in fact *Tehinot* (pleas) (Cowley 1971; Steinschneider 1852–1860; 1888: 49–95). A few complete Judeo-Italian prayer books were also published in Jewish communities throughout Italy from the early sixteenth century onwards, but most Judeo-Italian prayer books

* **Ora (Rodrigue) Schwarzwald** holds a B.A. and an M.A. in Hebrew Language from Bar Ilan University and a Ph.D. in Linguistics from the University of Texas at Austin. She is a Professor at the Department of Hebrew and Semitic Languages at Bar Ilan University; author of *The Ladino Translations of Pirke Aboth* (1989), *A Dictionary of the Ladino Passover Haggadah* (2008), a few books on Hebrew (among them *Grammar and Reality in the Hebrew Verb* [1981], *Modern Hebrew* [2001], *Studies in Hebrew Morphology* [2002]) and numerous articles on Hebrew and Ladino.

for women contained only specific *Tehinot* prayers, written partly in Hebrew, which were recited on specific occasions such as during the Sabbath candle lighting, after *Tevila* (ritual immersion), after giving birth etc. (Ryzhik 2007).

Two Ladino prayer books (*Siddurim*) specifically designed for the use of women were compiled during the sixteenth century. The first of these (S1), a manuscript by an unidentified author of unknown origin, can be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris (Hebr 668), and has recently been published along with a textual transliteration by Lazar (1995; and see Minervini 1998). The second prayer book (S2) was published in or around 1565 and can be found today in the Hebrew National Library in Jerusalem and on its website.² After detective-like research, Dov Cohen concluded that the editor and translator of S2 was Rabbi Meir Ban Beniste from Thessalonica (Cohen 2001).

Whereas Lazar believes that S1 dates from the fifteenth century, Minervini argues that it was written sometime in the sixteen or even seventeenth century (i.e. after the expulsion from Spain). According to Laurent Héricher, the curator of the Hebrew manuscript catalogue at the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris (personal communication), the manuscript reached the library in 1667 as part of a collection belonging to the orientalist scholar Gilbert Gaulmin, and although its origin is unknown, it was certainly compiled before the beginning of the seventeenth century. Based on my own linguistic investigation, it is evident that S1 was written in Italy, probably in Venice, towards the end of the sixteenth century (Schwarzwald, forthcoming).

These two Ladino prayer books are extraordinary for the following reasons: they are specifically designed for the use of women and they are the only existing women's Sephardi *Siddurim* that have never been reprinted or updated since the time of their original publication. In the following sections I shall compare the two prayer books according to various external and internal features.

Form

Whereas S2 includes a title page, S1 does not. In both cases, page numbers have been added by hand at a later stage. S1 comprises 302 pages (a few of which are missing), each measuring 8.7×11 cm and containing an average of approximately 55 words. According to Lazar, several of the pages were misplaced at the time the book was bound, which is why the page numbers do not always correspond to the consecutive order of the prayers.³ S2 totals 315 pages (with only one page missing),⁴ each measuring 7.5×10 cm and containing an average of 85 words.

Contents

Table 1 displays the order of the texts included in both of the prayer books along with their page numbers.

Table 1: The prayers in the order that they appear in S1 and S2

S1	S2
	Title page (1) Hebrew introduction in Rashi script (2–3) Ladino introduction (4–7)
	Introduction: general instructions to women readers regarding the way in which blessings should be said and how to perform specific religious commandments (8–13)
Everyday prayers (morning, afternoon and evening) (1–111)	Everyday prayers (morning, afternoon and evening) (13–53)
<i>Shabbat</i> (113–170)	<i>Shabbat</i> (53–77)
<i>Rosh Hodesh</i> (the first day of the Hebrew month) (171–192)	<i>Rosh Hodesh</i> (77–90)
<i>Hanukkah</i> (193–194)	<i>Hanukkah</i> (90–99)
<i>Purim</i> (195–196)	<i>Purim</i> (99–104)
<i>Pesah</i> and <i>Sukkot</i> prayers (197–203) <i>Musaf</i> for <i>Pesah</i> (204–218)	<i>Pesah</i> prayers, including the <i>Haggadah</i> and <i>Musaf</i> (104–176) <i>Shavuot</i> prayers (176–177) <i>Sukkot</i> prayers (177–180)
<i>Rosh Hashana</i> (New Year) (218–231)	<i>Rosh Hashana</i> (180–232)
<i>Yom Kippur</i> (232–283)	<i>Yom Kippur</i> (232–260) <i>Ta'aniyot</i> (fast days) (261–266) <i>Birkhot Hanehenim</i> (blessings to be said over food, drinks, smells etc.; woman giving birth, mourner) (267–297) <i>Eruv</i> (267–300) <i>Hala</i> (302–307) <i>Tahara</i> (307–311) General warnings to women regarding <i>Shabbat</i> , <i>Kashrut</i> etc. (311–315)
Psalms for <i>Pesah</i> (276–278), for the 9 th of Av (254–288), Song of the day (288–301), Psalm for <i>Shavuot</i> (Pentecost) (301, 299, 29–298, 300)	

As can be seen from Table 1, the order in which the prayers appear is fairly similar in both books and starts with those which are most commonly recited: everyday prayers, *Shabbat* (once a week), *Rosh Hodesh* (once a month), and the yearly celebrations of *Hanukkah*, *Purim*, *Pesah* and *Sukkoth* (both 7–8 days holidays), *Shavuot* (only in S2), *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*. This order of prayers corresponds to that of regular prayer books designed for the use of men.

S2 includes instructions regarding the way in which *mitzvot* (commandments) should be performed after waking in the morning, the Passover *Haggadah* and the blessings to be said after eating a meal (*Birkat Hamazon*), other blessings, *Eruv* (preparations for cooking for *Shabbat* on a Holiday), *Mezuzot*, separating part of the dough when making bread as *Hafrashat Halah*, women's purification laws, keeping Kosher, and additional warnings for women. Whereas S1 does not include all these texts, it does contain numerous psalms to be said at different times during various prayer services.

S1 starts with the blessing to be said after washing the hands which is immediately followed by *Birkhot Hashaḥar* (early morning blessings) on pages 1–2. The hand washing blessing does not appear in S2 until page 14 (following several instructions regarding the way in which the recitation of prayers should be conducted).⁵

S1 starts with the morning prayers in a systematic way. However, as the *Siddur* continues, the selection of prayers and psalms seems quite arbitrary (although this is in fact the same order of prayers found in a traditional men's *Siddur*). In contrast to this, although the prayers are shorter and there are no psalms in S2, the inclusion of the prayers and blessing is very systematic.

Readership

Both prayer books were compiled for the use of women – this is specifically claimed in S2 (as will be discussed below), and is grammatically implied in the following blessings that appear in S1:

1. 'Bendicho tu YY nuestro Dio, rey para siempre que non me fizo sierva' (p. 3b) ('Blessed are You, *A(donay)*, our G-d, King for eternity, who did not make me a maid-servant'; all the translations from here on are mine, OS). Men say 'eved (servant; Spanish *siervo* or *esclavo*) in this context.
2. 'Bendicho tu YY nuestro Dio, rey para siempre que me fizo cumo su voluntad' (p. 3b) (Blessed are You, *A(donay)*, our G-d, King for eternity, who created me according to His will). The expression 'que me fizo cumo

su voluntad' replaces 'šelo 'ašani 'iša' (who did not make me a woman), which would normally be said by men.

Throughout the rest of S1, the only other reference suggesting that this is a prayer book specifically designed for the use of women appears in the instructions relating to the process of getting ready to go to bed:

3. 'Y dira Šema', la Peraša primera no mas y dira: vino'am, cumo lo dizen las muĵeres y dira este pasuq' (p. 92a) (And she should recite *Shema*, only the first verse and no more, and she should say 'vino'am'⁶ as women are used to saying and she should say this verse).

Other than these three instances, the entirety of S1 follows the language and patterns of translations of the standard prayer book for men albeit with some omissions reflecting the translator's editorial decisions. Indeed, in some cases when grammatical agreement is called for, the translator even uses the male form, as in the following example:

4. 'Y cumo serviré mi criador, mientras que yo encarcelado ami yeşer y siervo demi deseo' (p. 252b) (and how shall I serve my Creator, while I am bound to my [evil] inclination and I am a servant of my desires). *Siervo* is used in the masculine form rather than in the feminine (cf. example 1).
5. 'Señor del mundo yo tuyo y mis sueños tuyos' (p. 68b) (Master of the universe, I am Yours and my dreams are Yours). Here, *tuyo* (rather than *tuya*) takes the masculine form.

In contrast, S2 states on the title page that it is specifically designed for the use of women (shown in translation below):

Seder Našim Women's Order (Prayer Book) is a prayer book for women in Ladino for the whole year with its order of the blessings at the end, and the order of washing the hands and many other laws that are necessary for everything that has to do with what happens. And at the end [of the book], the Alphabet [appears] with dots [vowel signs] that support Ladino because they immediately help in teaching his daughters and they [the daughters] won't be bothered to look for them [the signs]. (p. 1)⁷

Both Hebrew and Ladino introductions explain why the book was written. The translator states that men think it might take women a long time to learn to read the prayers and that they are afraid that praying will prevent women from taking care of their families; therefore they refrain from teaching them the prayers and blessings. Since women have fewer religious duties and are

not required to say as many prayers as men, the translator has adjusted the *Siddur* to meet their requirements according to *Halakha* (Jewish law). The relevant texts have been translated into the vernacular, Ladino (as stated on the title page), enabling the reader to understand both the instructions and the prayers. The editor-translator also argues that it is the responsibility of the father and the husband to educate the women in his household (as discussed by Maimonides).⁸

The following examples demonstrate that as is the case with S1, grammatical usage in S2 also indicates that the text was written specifically for women:

6. 'Bendicho tu YY nueso Dio rey del mundo que no me hizo goya' (p. 18) (Blessed are You, *A(donay)*, our G-d, King of the universe, who did not make me a gentile).⁹ The translator uses the Hebrew word *goy* in its feminine form, and comments here that if the reader is a gentile from birth and as at some time converted to Judaism, then she should not say this blessing.
7. 'Bendicho tu YY nueso Dio rey del mundo que no me hizo sierva' (p. 18; cf. 1 above in S1). Note also the difference in the formulation of this blessing: S1 systematically uses the phrase 'rey para siempre' (King for eternity), a phrase never used in any other Jewish prayer book, while S2 utilizes the conventional 'rey del mundo' (Hebrew 'melekh ha'olam' [King of the universe]).

All the instructions in S2 are directed to a female readership as the following examples demonstrate:

8. 'Y beberá cada *una* su baso o lo mas del' (p. 112, my italics) (and each one should drink her cup or most of it). Here, women are instructed to drink wine during a Passover *Seder* which is conducted by women only. The use of *una* rather than *uno* indicates that the reader of the instruction is expected to be female.
9. The Hebrew phrase 've'al beritkha šehatamta bivšarenu' (and for Your covenant sealed in our flesh) is omitted from the blessing after the meal because women are not supposed to say this expression.
10. 'Sean ordenado aquí las berakhot que es *obligada* de dezir para que no sea *apenada* por ellas' (p. 267, my italics) (The blessings that she is obliged to say are ordered here so that she will not be penalized because of them). The use of *obligada* and *apenada*, rather than *obligado* and *apenado* refer to the reader as being female.

Place of Use

Although there is no reference in either *Siddur* relating to where they should be used, the actual instructions indicate the circumstances under which the specific prayers are to be recited. We have previously seen that instructions exist regarding a woman's conduct before going to bed (see 3 above). However, on several occasions, S1 additionally instructs the user as to her conduct when attending synagogue.

11. 'En bendicion de Kohanim diran' (p. 68b) (They should say during the *Kohanim* blessing). *Kohanim* blessings are only recited in the synagogue.
12. 'Y dira el Rebi Kadish y responderan amen, y daquedo diran' (p. 43a–43b) (and the Rabbi will say *Kaddish* and they will answer quietly *Amen*). It is only in public (i.e. in the synagogue) that a rabbi would say *Kaddish* and the congregation would respond in this manner.
13. 'Y diran Kadish' (p. 95b, 142a) (And they should say *Kaddish*). The *Kaddish* is said in public.

These instructions suggest that S1 was also meant to be used in public. However, the extent to which women would regularly attend synagogue and participate in public prayers during the sixteenth century is unclear. It is quite possible that the instructions originate from a traditional men's *Siddur* and that the translator of S1 transcribed them all from memory.

In contrast to S1, S2 was designed to be used exclusively at home. The entire book contains only two references to rabbis:

14. On Purim evening and morning a woman needs to hear the *Megillah* read in Hebrew or in Ladino. She should let the reader know that it is being read for her benefit, but if it is read by a cantor (*hazan*) or by a rabbi (*rebi*), she need not say anything (pp. 102–103).¹⁰ The *Megillah* is not part of the *Siddur*, hence hearing the *Megillah* is irrelevant to the fulfilment of the requirements listed in the *Siddur* itself. Although this instruction can involve a rabbi, it does not necessarily implicate active participation in the synagogue service. It was a common custom for men to come home in order to read the *Megillah* to the women in their households.
15. When a woman has a query about kosher meat she should consult the *Hakham* (the Sephardi rabbi) (p. 314). This instruction is also unrelated to the way in which prayers or blessings should be said.

Unlike in S1, *Kaddish* is not translated anywhere in S2, and public participation is never mentioned. All the instructions assume that the person praying (i.e. the woman) is at home where children might disturb her. Thus, for instance, when standing for the *Amidah* prayer, the woman should distance herself from small children who might get dirty (pp. 10–11). For washing hands she should use a jar without any crack in it (p. 43), etc.

It is clear that whereas S2 was meant for domestic use only, S1 could also have been used in the synagogue.

Instructions

S1 includes very short instructions, as demonstrated in examples 3, 11, 12 and 13 above, and as in the following two examples:

16. ‘Yamando¹¹ a Minḥa diran la ‘Amida nomas’ (p. 22b) (when called for *Minḥa* [the afternoon prayer] they should say just the *Amida* prayer).
17. ‘Y diran Šema’ la escrita en la Tefila de la mañana; en concluyendo, diran YY vuestro Dio’ (p. 83a) (and they should say the *Shema* that is written in the morning prayer service; at the end they should say ‘*A(donay)* your G-d).

All the instructions in S1 are focused on the procedure of prayer and contain no instructions that relate to anything else. S2, on the other hand, includes detailed instructions regarding blessings, prayers and various other aspects of Jewish life as shown in the following examples:

18. ‘Y si esta en *Ḥuṣa La’areṣ* buelte la cara a ‘*Ereṣ Yisra’el* y si esta en ‘*Ereṣ Yisra’el* buelte la cara a *Yeruṣalaim* y si esta en *Yeruṣalaim* bueltela al *Bet Hamiqdaš*’ (p. 22) (If she is abroad she should turn her face towards the Land of Israel, and if she is in the Land of Israel she should turn her face towards Jerusalem, and if she is in Jerusalem she should turn her face towards the Temple).
19. ‘Y arancara el pie izquierdo y dara tres fasos para atras de si abašada y depues dira fazien pas en sus cielos encorbandose ala banda de su izquierda y depues ala banda de su derecha y de pues en medio’ (p. 37) (and she should raise her left leg and take three steps backwards while bowing and then she should say ‘He who makes peace in His high places’

and bow towards the left hand side and then to the right hand side and then to the middle).

20. ‘Cerca de la puesta de el sol acendera candela de Šabat y es menester que antes que diga Berakha diga. Yo no recibo Šabat aun que acendio hasta que sea Šabat y de pues dira: Bendicho tu YY nueso Dio rey del mundo ke nos santefico ensus encomendanças y nos encomendo por acender candela de Šabat: y no eñara mas palabras: y depues acendera’ (p. 53) (Close to sunset she should light the Sabbath candle and it is necessary that before saying the blessing she should say: ‘I do not receive the Sabbath although I light [the candles] until it will be Sabbath’, and afterwards she should say: ‘Blessed are you *A(donay)*, our G-d King of the universe who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to kindle the Sabbath candle’. And she should not add any more words).

The instruction in example 18 relates to the direction a woman should face when saying the *Amida* prayer – towards Israel, towards Jerusalem or towards the Temple (depending on where she is physically located). In example 19 the woman is instructed as to how to say the end of the *Amida* (starting with ‘‘Oše Šalom’ [He who makes peace]), and in example 20 she is instructed on what to say before lighting the candles (it is clear from this example that unlike in the Ashkenazi tradition, she should first say the blessing and only then light the candles).¹²

Although I have not calculated the exact ratio of instructions to prayers in S2, I would estimate that instructions comprise roughly 25 to 30 per cent of the book while the remaining 70 to 75 per cent is made up of prayers and blessings. The percentage of S1 dedicated to instructions on the other hand is perhaps 1 per cent or even less.

The Use of Hebrew in the *Siddurim*

Although both *Siddurim* are written in Ladino, Hebrew is frequently used in the titles of the specific sections, as demonstrated in examples 21a–b.

21. a. S1: *Sidur Tefilot* (p. 1a), *la Šema*’ (p. 50a), *la ‘Amida* (p. 57a), *la Qeduša* (p. 58a), *Nefilat ‘apayim* (p. 77a), *Minħa* (p. 22b), *Salmos de Šabat* (p. 113a)
b. S2: *Seder Našim* (1), *Minħa* (p. 50), ‘*Arbit*’ (p. 51), ‘*Arbit de šabat*’ (p. 55), *Qiduš de noche de Šabat* (p. 60), *Tefila de Šabat* (p. 64), *Musaf de Šabat* (p. 68), *Habdala* (p. 75), *Roš Hodeš* (p. 77)

S1 occasionally uses the Hebrew word that begins the prayer (*dibbur hamathil*) before giving the Ladino translation, e.g. ‘**ašre** bienavebturansas’ (praiseworthy) (p. 16b), ‘**vayəḥarekh** y bendišo’ (and he blessed) (p. 33a), ‘**yištabaḥ** sea alavado’ (be praised) (p. 42a), ‘**barəkhū** bendizid’ (bless [2nd.pl]; p. 44). As can be seen from these four consecutive instances from the *Siddur*, Hebrew words are only rarely used.

Shema Israel is cited in Ladino in S1 on page 40b as ‘olye¹³ Yiśra’el YY noeso Dio YY uno’, in Hebrew on page 42a, and then again in Ladino on page 50a as ‘olye Yiśra’el YY noestro Dio YY uno’.¹⁴ Other Hebrew words rarely appear in Ladino translations, e.g. ‘mišvot’ (commandments), ‘olam’ (world), ‘šofar’ (ram’s horn, Shofar), ‘pasuq’ (verse), etc.

Except for the Hebrew introduction given in Rashi script on pages 2 to 3, S2 contains no Hebrew text other than the section titles (as shown in example 21b). Even *Shema Israel* is written in translation only as: ‘oye Yiśra’el YY nueso Dio YY uno’ (p. 22). A few Hebrew words appear as part of the Ladino text including the name of G-d, ‘YY’ (pronounced *adonay*), ‘šabat’ (Sabbath), ‘afilu’ (even), ‘šaliaḥ’ (messenger), etc. Additional Hebrew words which are conceptually Jewish are integrated into the Judeo-Spanish instructions, e.g. ‘Amida’ (the name of the prayer), ‘berakhot’ (blessings), ‘tefila’ (prayer [mainly the Morning Prayer]), ‘Minḥa’ (afternoon prayer), ‘Arbit’ (the evening prayer), etc.

Orthography and Spelling

Both prayer books are written in square Hebrew letters and use the traditional biblical vowel signs. The letters *Aleph* and *He* in word final position represent the vowel /a/; the letter *Yod* represents the vowels /i/ and /e/; and *Vav* represents the vowels /o/ and /u/. Since the text is systematically vocalized, these vowel letters are inconsistently omitted in S2 more than in S1.

The use of an apostrophe indicates the special pronunciation of some letters, e.g. although *Shin* represents /s/, when it contains an apostrophe it represents /š/ (the *sh* sound), *Pe* represents /p/ but with an apostrophe represents /f/, *Gimel* represents /g/ (as in good), but with an apostrophe represents /č/ (*tš*, as in *church*), /ž/ (*j*, as in French *journal*) or /ǰ/ (*g* in *George*). *Bet* with an apostrophe is quite common in S1 for representing /v/, but is extremely rarely used in S2 (it occurs only five times in the entire *Siddur*).

The Spanish <ll> as in ‘ellos’ (they) is consistently written using *Lamed-Yod* in S2, but is spelled either with *Lamed-Yod* or just with a *Yod* in S1 (cf. ‘yamando’ in example 16 above). The sound /y/ is often spelled in S1 using *Lamed-Yod*, e.g. <’olyir> (for Spanish *oír* [to hear]; cf. the translation of

Shema above). S1 is also unique in its use of the Spanish <gua> or <gue> by <wa> or <we>, e.g. ‘frawar’ for *fraguar* (to build).

The spelling in S1 of words such as ‘čubia’ (rain; Spanish *lluvia*, Portuguese *chuva*; Judeo-Spanish *luvia*), ‘’ođe’ (today; Portuguese *hoje*, Italian *oggi*, Spanish *hoy*), ‘fađe’ (face) next to ‘fase’ (Italian *face*), ‘chamar’ (call) next to ‘yamar’ (Portuguese *chamar*, Italian *chiamare* and Spanish *llamar*) and others, show that S1 is based on oral vulgar pronunciation and that it is influenced by Spanish, Portuguese and Italian oral traditions of the time (Schwarzwald, 2010a; forthcoming). S2 spelling and orthography follow the conventions of the time which can also be seen in numerous other Ladino texts.

Conclusion

As mentioned above, the procedure of translating liturgical texts into the vernacular was common in various Jewish communities from the sixteenth century onwards, and was authorized by rabbis when they realized that the original Hebrew could not be understood by most women nor by a large number of men. This practice started with the translation of the five Scrolls, especially Esther, and was subsequently applied to other prayers and blessings (Massekhet Sofrim 18: 5; Pery 1955). In this context we can understand the appearance of the two prayer books discussed in this article.

I agree with Lazar and Minervini that S1 is a non-normative spontaneous translation from the Hebrew by a non-professional writer who integrated spoken dialectal forms into his translation (Lazar 1995: ix; Minervini 1998: 415–416). The translation is often done from memory and based on traditional men’s prayer books, and consists of prayers cited at home and occasionally in the synagogue.

Unlike S1, S2 was intentionally planned as a prayer book for women. The translator of S2 was Rabbi Ban Beniste, a knowledgeable rabbi familiar with Jewish *Hallakhic* law and literature. In addition to a familiarity with Maimonides who is mentioned in the introduction, the editor of S2 knows the following *Mishnaic* ruling (in translation): for all positive time-related obligations – men are obliged and women are exempt, and for all positive commandments not time-related both men and women are obliged. And all negative commandments, whether time-related or not time-related, are obligatory for both men and women, except for ‘You shall not mar’, ‘You shall not round’ and ‘There shall none defile himself for the dead’ (Mishnah Kiddushin 1: 7).¹⁵ Included in the commandments that women are required to perform are the recitations of prayers, especially the Morning Prayer, Sabbath

observation, *Kiddush* on Sabbath, the blessing to be said after a meal, *Hanukkah* candle lighting, hearing the Scroll of Esther (the *Megillah*), drinking four cups on Passover, eating *Matsah*, etc.

Prayers in S2 are listed systematically and only include those blessings and parts of services that women are obliged to say. All women's duties are listed and explained methodologically relating to various aspects of Jewish life according to the Jewish laws discussed in the *Talmud* and the *Shulḥan Arukh*. Some of the instructions are described above, but there are also many others, some of which are given in the following examples:

22. The translator warns women readers about wearing cosmetics on the Sabbath and explains that they should apply long-lasting make-up before the Sabbath as it is forbidden to do so during the Sabbath (pp. 62–63, and again in 311–312).
23. The translator warns women not to say any additional blessings other than those required regarding taking away part of the *Hala*, after the *Ṭevila* and before lighting the Sabbath candles. In this context he even claims 'que todo el que ñare mengua' (because everyone who adds [to the word of G-d] subtracts [from it]) (p. 304).¹⁶
24. The translator explains that the female reader must listen to the *Megillah* on Purim (cf. 14 above), and in addition may drink during the festive Purim meal more wine than she is accustomed to usually drinking. The reader is also instructed to prepare two kinds of food products to give her women friends as presents and to prepare another two presents for a poor person, in order to fulfil the two Jewish ritual commandments known in Hebrew as 'Mišloaḥ Manot' (Purim food gifts) and 'Matanot La'evyonim' (presents for the poor). This commandment is only applicable however if the woman has no husband or no father (p. 103).
25. The woman reader is told that when she conducts the *Seder* exclusively with her fellow-women, the entire ritual should start with *Kiddush* and end with the final blessing over the last cup of wine. The *Maggid* part of the *Seder* is shortened, but the imperative parts are included with all the ceremonial obligations including grace after the meal (*Birkat HaMazon*) and *Hallel* (Psalms 113–118) (pp. 110–161) (Schwarzwald, 2010b).

Whereas S1 is interesting from a linguistic point of view, S2 is fascinating from a Jewish religious perspective. The prayers, blessings and instructions included in S2 tell us a great deal about the way in which women practised

request of other members of his community. However, despite Rabbi Ban Beniste's open attitude, the traditionally conservative attitudes of men towards women praying and fulfilling additional religious duties (as mentioned in his introductions) prevailed, and women stopped using prayer books written exclusively for them. As they did not know Hebrew, and there were no relevant or available Ladino prayer books, women gradually became ignorant of the laws and practices presented in Rabbi Ban Beniste's *Siddur*.

Notes

1. *Siddur (Sider)* by Yoseph bar Yakar (Ichenhausen, 1544). See Frakes (2004: 246, n° 48), Baumgarten (2005: 40, 41, 59, 63, 288, 303). The authors claim that although men also used this *Siddur*, the translator declared that it was written for the use of women in order to get it rabbinic approval.
2. <http://jnul.huji.ac.il/dl/books/djvu/1808089>. From the print on the final page it is clear that it has been in the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana before being transferred to Jerusalem.
3. For instance, 68b, 81a, 81b, 69a, 80c, 19a–22b,
4. The page between 26 and 27.
5. Washing the hands is of great importance according to S2 and is also listed on the following pages in connection to other circumstances: 41, 44, 47, 60, 51, 55, 62, 70, 114, 136, 169, 231, 249, 299, 308.
6. This word is misspelled and should be *viyhi no'am* (May the pleasantness be) (Psalms 90: 17). The verse is said during evening prayers and at other times.
7. Es *Sidur* de mujeres en ladino para todo el año consu orden de *Berakhot* al fin. Y el orden del lavar de las manos y otros muchos *Dinim* los que vienen aporpozito en cada cabzo que toca deloque mas aconteçe. Y al fin un *Alef Bet* conlos puntos que abogan enel ladino para que luego pongan mano enla obra de abezar asus hijas y no se estorben en irla abuscar.
8. He bases his claim on Maimonides who wrote at the end of *Hilkhot Sota* (4:19): 'and everybody who is not strict with his wife and children and warns them and directs their ways always until he knows that they are free of any sin is called a sinner as it is said in the Bible: "Ufaqadeta navekha velo teḥeta" (And you shall visit your habitation, and shall not sin, Job 5:24)'. My translation.
9. S1 uses this formulation instead: 'que me crio en su judezmo' (p. 3b) (who created me in his Judaism).
10. 'Pero sila oye del Ḥazan o del Rebi delas mujeres no es menester dezirle nada' (p. 103–104) (but if she hears it from a cantor or a women's rabbi [probably a teacher] she need not say anything [about her intention to let her hear the *Megillah*]).
11. The translator does not distinguish between *y* of Spanish <ll>, <i> or <y> origin. The Spanish word is *llamando*. See discussion in the 'Orthography and Spelling' section and note 13 below.
12. The instruction in example 16 is based on Talmud Bavli, *Berakhot* 20a and also on Shulḥan Arukh, *Oraḥ Hayim*, chapter 94, §1; example 17 is based on Shulḥan Arukh, *Oraḥ Hayim*, chapter 123, §1; example 18 is based on chapter 263, §7, where it also says that the Sabbath does not begin before the evening prayer service.

13. It seems that the translator does not know the origin of the Spanish verb *oir* and considers it erroneously to be *ollir*.
14. Note the use of 'noeso' in the first citation and 'noestro' in the second.
15. Positive and negative obligations are 'mitzvat 'ase' and 'mitzvat lo ta'ase', respectively. Time-related *mitzvot* are obligations that are required to be performed at certain times (e.g. sitting in a *Sukkah* (tabernacle) during *Sukkot*). The translation is based on Levin (1987: iii, 14).
16. Based on the Talmudic saying 'vekhof hamosif gorea'' (Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrim 29a).

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